

**Extension of the Book Review (by Gregory L. Scott) of *The Poetics in its Aristotelian Context*, eds. Pierre Destrée, Malcolm Heath and Dana Munteanu (London & New York: Routledge) 2020**

**The following presupposes that the reader has read the Book Review in *Ancient Philosophy* 42 (2022)<sup>1</sup>**

**Andrea Capra, “Poetry and biology: the anatomy of tragedy”**

Except for one intriguing reference, Capra’s essay will not be missed in my view, being filled, e.g., with problems stemming from the modern prejudices discussed already. The reference is to a passage from Aristophanes’ *Frogs*, in which Euripides says, according to Capra: “I am ready...to bite into the poetry, the songs/limbs (*melē*), the sinews of tragedy (*ta neura tēs tragōidias*)” (29). Capra inadvertently gives support for *melos* meaning “song-dance” or “music-dance” in an infamous sentence in *Poetics* (or *Dramatics*) 6, given the fundamental meaning as “limb” in ancient Greece. That is, “poetry” *per se* is not composed either of songs or limbs, following what the aforementioned Notomi showed us regarding *poiēsis* and its cognates (and it is unclear how Capra gets “poetry” when the surrounding words do not involve a discussion of pure verse and when Aristophanes could be speaking of “creation” or “dramatic ‘musical’ composition” in the whole passage). The infamous sentence in “Poetics” 6 with *melos*, which, as I noted, some have tried to excise, comes immediately following the definition of tragedy: *Legō de hēdusmenon men logon ton echonta rhuthmon kai harmonian kai melos*. A typical translation is by Janko: “By ‘embellished speech’, I mean that which has rhythm and melody, i.e., song.”<sup>2</sup> One problem with this is that the melody already involves rhythm (along with pitch, dynamics, etc). However, at least Janko correctly realizes that the second *kai* is explicative, and, as also alluded to, Tarán and Gutas confirm this, saying, “pace Tyrwhitt, Kassel [whose Greek text was the standard from 1965 onwards, until Tarán & Gutas themselves], and others these words [*kai melos*] should not be excised, since *kai* is probably explanatory: *melos* specifies or defines *harmonia*” (2011, 247, my italics and comment). Better still, *melos* “specifies or defines” both *rhuthmos* and *harmonia*, simply compressing these two means of mimesis from ch. 1, dance and music, into one means, *melos*, “music-dance,” which itself is elliptical for “choral dance.” Later in the chapter, the Northern Greek adopts the equivalent term *melopoia*, “the making of the music-dance,” which scholars have almost to a person over hundreds of years translated as mere (aural) music, stripping tragedy of one of the most important elements in ancient Greek performance.

If you do not take this solution, then, leaving aside that Dionysus will be waiting for you in Hades to treat you as he treated Pentheus in the *Bacchae*, you will probably never understand the statement later in the chapter when Aristotle speaks of the *two* means of mimesis. Sifakis did

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<sup>1</sup> Made available first online at <https://epspress.com/ReviewAP/Extension.pdf> on May 16, 2022, in combination with the final draft of the Book Review, as a “preview” for presenters at the *Colloque international - Relire la Poétique d’Aristote*, May 31 – June 2, 2022, ENS Ulm, Paris. I greatly appreciate the permission of Ronald Polansky, the editor of *Ancient Philosophy*, to distribute the Book Review to the presenters a few months before official publication. For any history of changes to this online Extension, see the end.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Janko, *Aristotle POETICS*, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

but recall that he argues for the importance of spectacle (*opsis*) for the Northern Greek. The following is what I say about this issue in Sifakis' very unique and compelling article:

How does Sifakis glean on p. 5 that what I call the 2-1-3 pattern (for the means, manner, and objects of mimesis) refers to what he states—*melopoia* and *lexis* are the two **means**, spectacle is the single **manner**, and the other three necessary conditions of all tragedy are the **objects**, namely, plot, character, and thought? Determining for sure why, e.g., plot is not the manner and proving manner is spectacle took me part of a PhD dissertation (1992) and then a summary in my article “The *Poetics* of Performance” (Cambridge University Press, 1999). Still, to his credit, Sifakis arrives at the right answer, however he determined it.<sup>3</sup>  
(From <https://epspress.com/ADMCupdates.html#Sifakis>)

In other words, there are *three* “means of mimesis” in ch. 1 for tragedy—music, dance and (versified) speech—and, without my (or Sifakis’) reading, Aristotle would end in ch. 6 with only *two* means for tragedy, destroying his strictures of definition.

In brief, Capra treads yet again a well-beaten, but wrongly directed, path without providing any new and substantial insight, given that scholars like Janko for decades have emphasized the role of biology in the *Dramatics aka Poetics*. Moreover, the episodic nature of this book of essays is shown again by Capra not recognizing David Gallop’s “Animals in the *Poetics*,” cited by Bouchard (of which more below).

### **Hallvard J. Fossheim, “*To kalon and the experience of art*”**

Fossheim concentrates on Aristotle’s differences from Plato, focusing on *to kalon* as being “‘beautiful’ and ‘functionally excellent’” (34). If the article is for those very familiar with these debates, he adds little that is significant, notwithstanding that he cites, for instance, what very few cite, *Politics* VII 17.1333b, when the legislator for Aristotle outlaws shameful talk concerning children’s training. The Northern Greek, then, in some ways would censor, like Plato. If the article is for newcomers, they will have many of the “modern prejudices” of the editors foisted on them. Fossheim adds a new wrinkle, namely, that “what is primarily *kalon* about poetry is the successful making of it, while the product is derivatively *kalon* by being well made” (45). Apart from Fossheim adding immediately “This is not something that can be proven, of course” (45), the immediate question is “So what? How does this show the difference between the Athenian and the Stagirite?” The answer comes two pages later: Tragedy is performed for Plato, but, and here Fossheim genuflects to Heath and to the doctrine that the *Dramatics* is about poems and poets, Aristotle “gets all the relevant material out of a tragedy by treating it as text” (47).

What is also disappointing is that Fossheim never even acknowledges *Dramatics* 15, in which Aristotle is also very Platonic, with “good” (*chrestos*) being the most important aspect of character. Notwithstanding Fossheim’s focus on the *Symposium* (46), neither does he

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<sup>3</sup> Sifakis does not cite my similar conclusions on this topic in his work from 2013, published not only 14 years after my article in Cambridge “The *Poetics* of Performance: The Necessity of Performance, Spectacle, Music, and Dance in Aristotelian Tragedy” but 21 years after my PhD dissertation on the topic. Curiously, he is listed online as a professor of Classics from 1992 onwards at New York University, where I directed the doctoral studies program in Dance Education from 1995-1998. Whether he came to his conclusion completely independently of my own publications, or got a sense of my position from the general intellectual zeitgeist, or chose not to cite me, as has happened with other scholars, I cannot say.

acknowledge Diotima's crucial passage for this whole subject, the meaning of *poiēsis* at 205c! Nor does he make the connection to *Laws* II 667c-673b when he speaks of the pleasure of representational art for the Northern Greek requiring familiarity with the original (which is only part of the story in *Dramatics* 4, by the way, because formalism is allowed there by Aristotle, as it is in chs. 1 & 6). I could continue but I would be merely repeating my amply cited publications from 1999, 2003, and 2016/2018.

### **David Konstan, "Aesthetic Emotion"**

This is in some ways a fascinating article, involving a "universe context" that incorporates, e.g., Seneca, Hume and more modern thought. However, at the end we may well have the strong impression that the ideas are more about Konstan's interests than Aristotle's.

For example, "aesthetic emotion" is a conceptual swamp for those familiar with modern aesthetics. Is there also "athletic emotion," "political emotion," "mathematical emotion," "geographical emotion" and so forth, all distinctive as *emotions* in those different areas, or are the emotions essentially the same, simply being triggered in different areas of life? That is, when I make a mathematical mistake and am fearful of a bad grade on an exam is the fear *qua* fear really any different from an athletic mistake in a competition, when I fear I may lose as a result?

Aesthetic emotion is not an issue that applied to the Northern Greek, according to Konstan, yet he still entitles his article "aesthetic emotion." As he says in a section entitled "Beauty and the aesthetic faculty," unlike later thinkers such as Hume, beauty is not something the Greeks considered to be an essential characteristic of art (52). So far so good: Beauty is not an essential characteristic of "human being" either, but who prefers someone ugly, *ceteris paribus*? Konstan then remarks that in the *Rhetoric* 3.1405b5-8 "the beauty (*kállos*) of a word lies in the sounds or the sense" (52), a passage that I do not recall any other specialist ever mentioning when discussing the topic of beauty relative to tragedy in ch. 7, in which beauty is said to have size and order. Konstan puzzlingly does not follow up on his commendable "discovery" and analyze the passage in ch. 7 in any relevant detail, when Aristotle indicates that something too small or too large cannot be perceived as a whole, which entails that any beauty could not be determined (because the order could not be established). Rather the thing, like an animal, must have a proper size, and the Northern Greek emphasizes that the plot must be the same to be excellent (the equivalent of beautiful in this context), but with memory rather than sight being important.

I for one would like to have heard Konstan's reflections on how the beauty of the words or of the sense (or of the dancers in the chorus or of the music or of the scenery) arises—which in part might involve an analysis of visual attractions vis-à-vis painting, surely an art form that has a direct connection to scenery. In this regard, Konstan does not take advantage of Bouchard's contribution on painting, one reason a collection of disparate essays is like an episodic tragedy (in contrast to a set of essays from a single author that has a common set of full assumptions or a unified outlook throughout, even if the essays had been published at different times).

Given the modern tradition, surprisingly "aesthetic emotion" for Konstan becomes, not emotion from proportion or color or design, but "pity and fear," given the (in)famous definition of tragedy, in which those two emotions are essential conditions according to Aristotle's rules of definition, whether or not Konstan recognizes this (52 & especially 58). The rest of the article attempts to demonstrate how pity and fear are still real, and not merely "inflected," emotions, even if a result of experiencing them in an "inflected" manner by viewing a tragedy rather than experiencing them in real life.

Two thoughts come immediately to mind. Why not entitle the article—“Pity and fear as real when watching tragedy,”—and why take 14 *pages* to arrive at the conclusion that is given in about 8 *lines* in *Politics* VIII 5, which Konstan completely ignores and which would have saved him (and us) much grief? There the Northern Greek says:

Dance (*rhuthmois*) and music (*melesin*) supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of courage and temperance, and of all the qualities contrary to these, and of the other qualities of character, *which hardly fall short of the actual affections*, as we know from our own experience, for in listening to such strains our souls undergo a change. The habit of feeling pleasure or pain at mere representations is *not far removed from the same feeling about realities*; for example, *if anyone delights in the sight of a statue for its beauty only, it necessarily follows that the sight of the original will be pleasant to him* (1340a19-27).<sup>4</sup>

Two remarks: First, Aristotle might intend instead “dance, that is (*kai*), choral art” because music is in some ways more important in Book VIII than dance (although I have shown in Scott 2018a, ch. 4 that dance is still often important), and he now wishes to address the kind of choral dance *that has music with it*, allowing him to focus on the latter. However, clearly “poetry” or language is not at all in play in any of this, and the switch in focus to visual representations proves how little the Stagirite cares about speech in Book VIII 5 (again, see Scott 2018a, ch. 4 for a rigorous discussion of this whole topic). Second, one could take pleasure in a visual depiction, whether painting or sculpture, of, say, one’s loving ancestor, even if the ancestor is unsightly, merely because the ancestor was superbly intellectual, noble in action and deed and ultimately responsible for one’s existence, as a progenitor. Thus, there are many reasons one can take pleasure (or pain) in artistic representations; beauty is merely one reason.

On this topic, Konstan says “I know of no passage in which an ancient Greek wondered whether a representation of an unattractive or repulsive object might nevertheless be said to be beautiful as a work of art” (52). Yet, two pages later he notes one passage in which Aristotle addresses exactly this issue: “...we enjoy contemplating the most precisely done images of the very things we view with pain, for example the forms of the basest animals and corpses [4.1448b9-10]” (54). Clearly the “precision” of the work is what gives the enjoyable contemplation, despite the subject matter.

Moreover, Konstan ignores not only the *lack* of pity and fear in many plots of serious drama, as I have noted regarding other contributors, but the problem of the *epieikēs* (virtuous) protagonist *not having any pity or fear* when going from fortune to misfortune because such a plot is *miarōn* (shocking or disgusting) (13.1452b34-36); cf. Scott 2018a, especially 415-429. All of this creates grave inconsistencies with the definition of tragedy for those who continue to believe that the Stagirite himself wrote the catharsis, pity and fear clause, because, to underscore, without any pity or fear there can be no catharsis of pity and fear. Finally, while on this topic and while then speaking of happily-ending serious drama, which come in the ranking of the four types of plot in ch. 14, Konstan ignores how one type, exemplified by *Antigone*, can have pity and fear when the Northern Greek says it has no *pathos* (Scott 2018b, 14 and 24-27).

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<sup>4</sup> Transl. B. Jowett, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1984; my italics and corrections for *rhuthmos* and *melesin*, which Jowett renders as *faux-amis* “rhythm” and “melody.”

Konstan also rushes past a very intriguing issue that hardly any commentator discusses satisfactorily (and I had to devote much of Scott 2018b to the issue), stating “Of course, not all tragedies ended unhappily, as Aristotle knew perfectly well, and those that do not *might not elicit pity and fear*, on my interpretation of Aristotle’s argument, though again they *might*” (60, my italics). For such important emotions *that for him and the editors are essential conditions in the definition of tragedy*, this does not suffice. He begins to address the issue, setting himself at odds with not only those like Dana Munteanu (and John Ferrari in other publications) who wish to claim that the (relevant) pity and fear can happen in the middle of the play but with his (Konstan’s) own declaration that the emotions pertain to the *whole* play. As he emphasizes, “tragic pity and fear are responses not to any bad thing that happens to a character with whom the audience sympathizes, but rather to the *complete action* that is represented in the play, with *the final closure that brings it to a proper termination...* the tragic emotions are a response *to a story*, not just to a *shocking event*” (60, my italics).

At least the final phrase of this remark is incisive; it aligns with what I call the Dominant Emotion (or Set of Emotions) that a play evokes, and in other paragraphs Konstan prudently recognizes that individual events within “the” action can have pity or fear. In this context, obviously “the action” must be like a trip that has many individual highways, perhaps a multitude of close calls with other vehicles and rest stops. Thus, many emotions can, and do, happen throughout a play, with Konstan also recognizing “sympathy” and anger, but it is typically the final, most lasting one that Aristotle is (primarily) concerned with, as, again, Konstan recognizes (60). Speaking of anger, though, Konstan mysteriously presents Seneca on this emotion, rather than the Northern Greek’s own analysis in *Rhetoric* II 1. So much for the important “global context” that the editors emphasized would help us solve the problems of the *Dramatics* (for, surely, Aristotle had no time-travelling power himself, similar to the one the editors impute, if inadvertently, to Halliwell, much as Seneca would presumably have enjoyed a visit from the legendary Stagirite).

Konstan properly refutes Destrée’s and Heath’s claim that the experience of pity and fear in the theater, as opposed to real life, is pleasurable (55). Relying on the *Rhetoric*, he also undercuts Halliwell’s claims about the relevant fear being for the character *in the play* (which itself might indeed in part portray a histrionic fear, that is, one felt by actors conveying the emotion of their fictional characters); fear is something felt for oneself or one’s own family, and perhaps by extension someone very dear to one, not to someone very distant from one’s family. Konstan recognizes that Aristotle explains fear in the *Dramatics* 13 as that which “concerns the one who is similar.” Still, with the guidance above, this all could be a helpful introduction to resolving how and why pity and fear result in certain *subtypes* of serious drama that end badly, with the subtypes being laid out in ch. 18 and with the other strictures about the type of character deserving pity and fear laid out in ch. 13. I could go on but, again, would be repeating my previous publications and especially Scott 2018a, ch. 6.

### **Franco V. Trivigno, “Was *phthonos* a comedic emotion for Aristotle? On the pleasure and moral psychology of laughter”**

In some ways, this was one of the most disappointing essays for me, not because Trivigno is a poor scholar, rather just the opposite. I have seen him in action at a conference and believe he may be one of the notable philosophers of his generation. Plus, the clarity of his analysis in the essay is admirable. Yet, again, in part because he does not coordinate with the other contributor on

comedy, Valeria Cinaglia, of which more below, we are again reminded of the episodic nature of this book and its ideas. In addition, given Trivigno's past excellence, I was excitedly expecting a revealing exposition of the topic that, to me, still remains too unexplored in the Northern Greek's theory of drama. Indeed, as Trivigno acknowledges, the chapter "provides a partial and speculative reconstruction of Aristotle's promised, but apparently lost, account of comedy..." (66).

It is one thing to speculate about some minor points, or a small section of what is contained in the *Tractatus Coisilianus*, which Janko thought was the lost second book, but to speculate about a very large account is a very different matter, betraying extreme boldness, if not arrogance or the kind of *hubris* that got Oedipus into great trouble. If an account is to be a reasonably authentic speculation of the Northern Greek's fuller theory, all the important and significant passages must be examined. Trivigno downplays too much what appears to be the one authentic Aristotelian source of laughter in drama, the section of the *Tractatus Coisilianus* on how laughter can be generated *from language* and *incidents* (cf. Janko, 1987, 44-5), merely mentioning the section in passing. Especially for a contextualized book that continually (and wrongly) emphasizes drama *as literature* (rather than as full performance, in which case the incidents become equally vital), this is a stunning lack of emphasis. As we will see, Cinaglia in this regard is often more sensible because she focuses, for example, on masks and the other sources of laughter that comic dramatists could resort to in addition to those from language, as part of their whole toolkit. Moreover, Trivigno omits any significant discussion of wit in *Nicomachean Ethics* IV 8. Yet, given what we saw in the previous essay, *Politics* VIII 5 entails that what is funny in real life is funny in representational theater, and it is incomprehensible to me how the reflections on wit, the mean, and buffoonery and boorishness, the extremes, are not crucial for how a comic playwright accomplishes his goal.

What is that goal for Trivigno? We can reasonably deduce, as he himself suggests, a "proper pleasure," but then, in contravention of Aristotle's rules of definition, e.g., *Topics* 6 8.146b10-13 & 6 12.149b33-49 (cf. Scott 2018a, 391), the intermediate catharsis rather than the ultimate result of catharsis as *pleasure* (as confirmed in *Politics* VIII 7) is improperly included in the definition of comedy. For the sake of argument, however, let us accept what I would never accept normally, namely, that the catharsis-clause is legitimate for serious drama (*tragōidia*). Trivigno then takes a reasonable approach in assuming that the definition of comic drama would be similar, the only difference being that the catharsis-clause involves different emotions and that "serious" drops out, with "some [different] evaluative term" included instead, probably "laughable" or ridiculous (67 & 70). Apart from the new catharsis-clause, this is indeed empirical, captures what comedy was in ancient Greece and *might* convey what the Northern Greek had said. However, rather than the definition involving a catharsis of pity and fear, for Trivigno the catharsis would then be of an emotion like *phthonos* (malice or envy) and he justifies this with a citation from Philodemus, who, according to Trivigno, "*does not mention comedy*, [but]...does make the emotion of fear parallel to that of *phthonos*, which, at least, *suggests* that he has the 'opposite' of tragedy, i.e. comedy, in mind here" (76, my italics).

Obviously, even though for me (and many others) there are no longer sustainable grounds for insisting that the catharsis-clause is legitimate in the definition of serious drama (instead, a proper pleasure is its true goal), catharsis might well be part Aristotle's account of *comedy* and, according to my publications, indeed was discussed there. Moreover, given where catharsis had been explained, it was primarily relevant to *that* form of drama and maybe to the satyr play (Scott 2018a, ch. 8). The question is: Should, therefore, *phthonos* be part of *all* comedy, which it should

be if it is an essential condition in the definition? No. Trivigno grants that linguistic play and parody might be part of comedy, all of which “may have nothing to do with *phthonos*” (79). Why, then, is *phthonos* being considered the, or one of the, *essential* emotions associated with catharsis in the definition of comedy, given that a whole comedy could be made of linguistic play and parody? Trivigno also ignores that there could be various sub-species of comic drama, just as there are four sub-species of serious drama (ch. 18) and of epic (ch. 24). Why would comedy be any different, even if there are 2, 3 or 5 sub-species instead? It might be that catharsis of *some* emotion or emotions could be essential to *one* or a mixture of these sub-species of comedy, but to assume that catharsis or *phthonos* or both apply to all types of comedy is too simplistic and constrains the Stagirite in ways he should not be constrained, limiting his theory to a slice of all comic drama not only in ancient Greece but historically. There are many other ways that the audience can achieve, not catharsis, but a proper pleasure, which the end of ch. 13 suggests is the end of comedy. Again, *phthonos* need not be involved, and, to his credit, Trivigno notes some options like parody, even if he does not leverage his insight. In addition, the previously noted similarity of fear and *phthonos* as being *painful* in no way entails that Philodemus *contrasted* a “tragic” and a comic emotion. Comedy is of the ridiculous and of incidents *that do not cause pain* (*Dramatics* 2). Lastly, Philodemus appears to be analyzing *not* our *Dramatics aka Poetics* but the early *dialogue*, Aristotle’s Platonic *On Musical Dramatists (aka On Poets)* that even on Janko’s account involves music along with verse (Scott 2018a; 446, 496, and 526). No specialist to my knowledge, including Halliwell and Destrée, accept that the dialogue is anything other than the Stagirite’s youthful theory.

Consider also that *phthonos* is like anger, fear and jealousy, as Trivigno acknowledges (74-75), with the first two of these being explicitly mentioned in ch. 19 and the last alluded to there (as being discussed in the *Rhetoric*). So why is *phthonos* not a “tragic” emotion also? On my interpretation of Aristotle’s overall theory, it could be either, because even fear or pity or both could occur *at times* in comedy, especially if vulgar characters are being represented. Whether either or both could be the final, dominant emotions, in line with Konstan and myself, is a very intriguing question. I can imagine slapstick comedy with a truly loveable, albeit lower-class, character, who keeps slipping on ice or tripping or spilling a drink on himself, as well as trying much too hard and making embarrassing statements, looking foolish to the romantic target he is trying to court and thereby destroying by the plot’s end any reasonable possibility of reciprocal affection, but with no other “harm.” That play would involve comic incidents *and pity*, it seems to me.

One salvageable part of Trivigno’s essay, apart from scattered discernments, is the section on the *Philebus*: *phthonos* for Plato helps (at least from Aristotle’s perspective) explain *one* reason we laugh at characters in comedy, and for the Northern Greek it is also the “pleasure in seeing the other fail and/or be deprived of success (75-76). (Notice that there is no issue of catharsis here.) I trust the audience laughs because the other *should* fail, given considerations of justice or ethics in general, although it is surely not fitting or funny when a deserving soul is continually hindered. *Schadenfreude* is universal across cultures and epochs and hardly started with the Germans.

Another salvageable part of the essay is where the imposter and the ironist are illuminatingly compared (80-1), along with the intriguing suggestion that the kind of performance for the lower classes at the end of *Politics* VIII 7 is comic. This topic deserves more examination because, although I think Trivigno rightly suggests that the lower classes (*assuming* they can be identified with the kind of character for comedy in *Dramatics* 2) will be inclined to sympathize

with *vulgar* folk in action, some of which is burlesque, still I imagine that even lower classes for the Stagirite enjoy serious drama in terms they can understand, especially the kind like *Cresphontes* that ends happily (adjusting perhaps the language) or even the kind that is mentioned at the end of ch. 13, of a *serious play* with Orestes and Aegisthus nevertheless ridiculously walking off as friends. As the Northern Greek says there, *the pleasure*, one of the crucial concepts in the sub-title of Trivigno's essay, is more (*mallon*) appropriate to *comedy* than to "tragedy," but still this plot would be performed as a *serious play* in ancient Greece, considering the other factors provided by Aristotle in the whole examination of plots with "double structures" that occasioned the silly ending. That is, the Northern Greek emphasizes that *others* consider this "double structure" to be the best kind of plot of *tragōidia*, which is the art form now under examination (14.1453a30-35). Some commentators misconstrue Aristotle as now having switched to comic plots with this one (and only one) statement, but this cannot be right, another reason being that the personages are not the vulgar sort as required by comedy in ch. 2 but the nobles Orestes and Aegisthus.

### **Elisa Bouchard, "Painting as an aesthetic paradigm"**

As indicated, it is delightful to find a scholar focusing on the non-literary arts for Aristotle, especially as they relate to drama, which of course is immediately pertinent because of the visual elements of stage performance. I go systematically through some of her themes, having already warned potential readers about the disproportionate damage done to her goals because of her own emphasis on poems and poets.

She declares that "some of the most unsettling features of his poetic theory can be explained by the pervasive influence of the visual paradigm" (88), and she correctly emphasizes how Plato also uses painting alongside of drama to develop his own theories (89). For the Stagirite, we find the comments in chs. 1, 2, 4, and 6, all of which she covers. In examining ch. 1 and how painting is used to explicate mimesis, she misapprehends, though, the motivations for the Northern Greek, stating "...the addition of arts that use 'colors and shapes' next to the ones already mentioned [which are all musical, even if some, but only some, have speech and dance also] amounts to an unexpected complication, rather than a simplification, of the passage, creating as it does a multilevel taxonomy of mimetic productions" (90, my bracketed comment). This follows all the others who have wrongly assumed that Aristotle wants a taxonomy rather than a simple transition into explaining what mimesis is, with him using a handful of examples to accomplish that immediate aim. She, like so many others, then assumes he uses *rhuthmos* as "rhythm" rather than as dance *qua* Plato's "ordered body movement" of *Laws* II 665a (and this notion not only is *much* broader than "steps done to music" but does not *require* that the ordered movement has rhythm *qua temporal* ordering). In short, at this point in ch. 1, the Stagirite *only* cares to outline the modes of mimesis, namely, the means, objects and manners, which get explicated respectively in chs. 1, 2, and 3. He absolutely is not trying to establish a different, and especially broader or deeper, taxonomy of all the arts or of many of the arts in general.

Bouchard offers stimulating thoughts on painters and types of character in ch. 2, in ways that deserve to be put side by side with Munteanu's own observations on this theme. However, Bouchard then errs badly concerning ch. 3, asserting that the "parallel between painting and poetry...breaks down upon...the mode of representation (*to hōs*)...[and that the modes are] purely literary" (91, my comment). She misses that "the direct enactment of all roles," the third "manner of mimesis" in contrast to (i) Homer's mixed narration and enactment and (ii) pure narration, is



just that, namely, actors on stage directly *enacting the roles* (Homer and other epic singers or rhapsodes would have changed their voices, facial expressions, gestures and postures to represent different characters, while switching to narrative on occasion). She therefore rejects the “poems” as having temporal continuity (91 & 96) because she conceives of them as mere text, something like a book that exists, like a painting, whole at one time, whereas, ironically, she correctly grants that *speech*, whether prose or verse, is as temporal as music or dance (92 & 99). That is, the “poem” seems for Bouchard to be something like an illustrated manuscript with exquisite calligraphy, to be prized more for the look than for what the letters represent: the vocal utterances. Granted, as a concrete object, the “poem” *qua* leather-bound book is indeed like a painting or sculpture or automobile, in the case of drama, the ontological priority is reversed, which is why Lope de Vega, Shakespeare and Molière did not care about publishing their scripts until, at least in the case of the latter, pirate-publications forced his hand (Scott, 2018a 571). As is commonly known, for Aristotle in the context of language, the thought has priority; the vocal utterance is simply an expression of that thought; and a text the recording of the vocal utterance or of the thought, sometimes to help maintain the thought for years to come (although, if I might add my own twist, a spy’s letter would be purposely destroyed once the words were read by the recipient).

Bouchard offers some stimulating connections concerning character in ch.15, which, as we saw before, itself takes up the four important aspects of character, with ch. 2. She also explores how painting is employed to help prioritize plot (*muthos*) in ch. 6 above the other five constituents of tragedy (again, a term I use in a technical fashion, as Aristotle defines it without the catharsis-clause, and which can have a happy ending as well as an unhappy one). However, after many, seemingly original observations on this whole topic, she ends this section (at the end of the first paragraph of 95) “tragically.” That is, in analyzing ch. 17 and how the poet outlines the incidents (either in his mind or as a blueprint) before filling in names, she indicates: “As previous commentators have concluded, in this chapter *logos* ‘is hardly to be distinguished from *muthos* in the sense of plot [which Bouchard had perfectly recognized is “defined” by the Northern Greek in ch. 6 as “the arrangement of events”]” (95, my comment). Yet *muthos* can be given by pure dance or pantomime, as revealed in chs. 1, 2 & 4 (cf. Scott 2018a; 144-47, 152, 177-8, 185, 190-1, and 201-4). *Muthos* clearly is distinguishable, and is distinguished by Aristotle, from *logos* in ch. 6: *muthos* is ranked first and *lexis* (which, as speech or language, must be the substitute for *logos*) fourth, despite some translators trying to embed plot into *muthos* as “myth/language,” and needing subsequently to translate *lexis* as “style” or the like in order to obviate a definition-killing redundancy.

Bouchard’s attempts afterwards to use painting to solve dilemmas that are artificially constructed disappoint (because the events really are simply the events on stage). Indeed, it is disconcerting to read her avowing:

Thus for Aristotle both poetry and painting produce representations of actions, and since “mimesis of a *praxis*” is in fact the very definition of *muthos* (*Poet.* 6.1450a3-5), we would be *stricto sensu* justified in calling the action in a painting “*muthos*” (97, my italics of the English words).

Perhaps *analogically* we might say all of this, but strictly and literally speaking it is absolute nonsense, and, to reiterate, previous commentators were equally blinded by the notion that plot

was part of *language*, not recognizing, to reiterate, that it is something that could be done, e.g., wholly with dance. Obviously, Bouchard forgot that the *corps de ballet* in ch. 1 can with their figured (or “gestured”) dances represent *ethos*, *pathos*, and *praxis*, and, indubitably, if they did it in the right way, they could easily create a plot, like in our story-ballets. They might put paint on their bodies and writhe around on canvases, like Jackson Pollock, but the end result in this particular case is not a temporal *praxis per se*. Instead, the result would be an artifact and complete at any moment. Similarly, a “trip” or “game” in hindsight, as a label or word, like an illustrated text, might *seem* to be like a sculpture, and in some ways is, as a completed memory, but, *stricto sensu*, the action *per se*—and drama—had taken place sequentially, one part going away as another enters.

Section 5.2, “Cognition and ethics” onwards, which explores recognition and moral value while considering the visual arts, is the most satisfying part of the essay for me, and I only suggest that, if she were to develop all of this more fully in the future, she takes into account painting versus drama from *Republic* II, III and X, as well as *Sophist* 267a, where “impersonation” (*qua* mimesis) is said to be primary and “imitation” using a tool (like a paintbrush) secondary. Also, the visual aspect of character in dance’s figures (such as a pose between movement-phrases) hopefully would entice her to examine *Laws* II and VII, along with the already emphasized *Politics* VIII 5. There are historically famous explorations of character types in ballet that were grounded in a knowledge of Plato and Aristotle (cf. Scott 2018a, “Appendix,” especially the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century renowned figures Claude-François Menestrier, Jean-Georges Noverre and Carlo Blasis; pp. 561-565, 574 and 577-580).

**Pierre Destrée, “Family bounds, political community, tragic pathos”**

Destrée recounts Edith Hall’s discussion of the lack of a *polis* in the “*Poetics*,” which is to say, that Aristotle ignores the founding of tragedy in Athens and that no discussion takes place of political values in the book itself. Destrée describes how Heath has replied to Hall, emphasizing that tragedy is more fundamentally a *natural* process stemming from mimesis, with *rhythm* and *melody* (dance and music in my interpretation, of course) also being *natural* instincts. The political history is merely contingent (114). Hall’s account is fairly accurate, and, in my mind, Heath aptly replies, notwithstanding that he, along with every other scholar who accepts the “literary” perspective of the “*Poetics*,” now is stuck trying to explain convincingly how *poetry* results from these three causes, because the “natural instincts” and mimesis were given by the Northern Greek in ch. 4 to explain how *poiētikēs* came about and developed (1448b4). How does pure *verse* (the meaning for Gorgias, Hall, Heath and Destrée) come from mimesis, which is being explained in ch. 4 using impersonation and painting, and from a predisposition for music and dance (or as the previous commentators translated, “rhythm” and “melody” / “harmony,” given that *harmonia* is the term)? As explained in Scott (2018a, 181-201), James Hutton is the only one in the recent previous generations to my knowledge who recognized the depth of this dilemma, and his own solution is partially but only partially satisfying. Janko and Heath, to name just two who even recognize the dilemma, address the issue superficially and in no convincing way. Rather, there are four possible solutions that are much more sensible if *poiēsis/poiētikēs* assumes the Diotiman meaning *that involves music* (Scott 2018a, 180-200).

Destrée supplements Heath’s reply to Hall, arguing that “the way he [Aristotle] presents his claim for the “finest tragedy”...is (if implicitly) embedded in some of his own, most central, political views” (114). Such a hypothesis (or conclusion) is doubly fascinating for me, given that

Destrée wrote in 2011 that catharsis is *only* an aesthetical concept in the “*Poetics*,” and not a political one, all of which is supposed to reconcile the Stagirite *not* explaining catharsis in the treatise, contrary to the account of *Politics* VIII 7.<sup>5</sup> This was one of his arguments explicitly against Scott 2003, and it is stunning that he does not now counter the systematic refutation of his arguments by Scott 2016 (which again has been superseded by the second edition of 2018a; 384-392). I know Destrée had the 2016 version, because he promised to review it if I sent a complimentary copy to him, which I did (although, given the poor editing of this first edition, I am glad that a review never appeared). Again, so much for the editors’ promise in *The Poetics in its Aristotelian Context* to inspire *robust* discussion (and I should emphasize that in the Bibliography of the Book Review in *Ancient Philosophy* itself, I provide the URL for those who can show proof of purchase of Scott 2016; they can receive a complimentary copy of Scott 2018a, including free shipping and taxes, because of the editing issues in that first version).

Fortunately, this essay by Destrée is much more convincing than the one from 2011; indeed, it is rewarding in absolute terms, exploring, as the title suggests, the relation of family to both politics and serious drama. He begins by developing an important Aristotelian tenet that is too often under-appreciated: “correctness (*orthotēs*) is not the same thing in politics and poetry, nor in any other art and poetry” [25.1460b13-15] (114, his translation). Also, despite his view that poems are the subject of the “*Poetics*,” Destrée, citing A. Rotstein (2004), ironically discovers something that I, in advocating the necessity of performance, had missed: the arts at the very beginning of ch. 1, which I claim (still) are not given to develop a whole taxonomy but simply to help explain the three modes of mimesis, implicitly refer to the competitions at the City Dionysia (114 & 127n3). None of those are ‘pure poetry’; rather they all have musical components. *Milles mercis*, Prof. Destrée.

The following are minor objections and in no way despite their length should undercut my recommendation regarding the essay as a whole because there are 14 more pages of worthwhile exploration and insights.

He states that “...in Chapter 13...a tragedy must end with a *pathos*,” (116) which is absolutely false, assuming *pathos* involves significant suffering (and here the term is not mere “feelings” but something very negative for Destrée). The Northern Greek gives a number of plots there that do not end with *pathos* (Scott 2018a, 427-9). *Some* do, and granted, even the best ones *in this chapter* do, because Aristotle is, I have argued, focusing on the subset of serious drama that indeed has pity and fear. However, ch. 14 and the discussion of *Antigone* (which must be the happily ending version of Euripides), *Cresphontes*, *Helle* and *Iphigenia* also disprove Destrée’s allegation because they all end well, and, except for *Antigone*, are ranked conspicuously above *Oedipus*.

Speaking of ch. 14, Destrée notes that the passage describing how deeds should be done between family members involves pity *and* fear. Yet only pity is mentioned. Perhaps Destrée could develop how fear *necessarily* follows but the issue of pity and fear being always intertwined is contested by scholars, and I am on the side of those arguing they are not (Scott 2018a, 352). *Rhetoric* II 8 states clearly that too much fear in fact drives out pity (1385b33), with the story of Amasis confirming this: The terror that he feels in seeing his son led to his death prevents him

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<sup>5</sup> Pierre Destrée, “La Purgation des Interprétations: Conditions et Enjeux de la Catharsis Poétique chez Aristote,” *Littérature et Thérapeutique des Passions. La Catharsis en Question*, ed. J.-C. Darmon (Paris: Hermann) 2011: 13-35.

from weeping and feeling pity, whereas he did weep (and feel pity) when he saw his friend begging (1386a19-23). Moreover, to my knowledge not one scholar in history, including Destrée, Heath or Munteanu, has accepted Lessing's famous challenge to explore the four permutations of how pity and fear could or should go together in a play: none, *both*, only fear, or only pity (Scott 2018a, 424-5 & 577). It is also peculiar that Destrée recognizes (117) the reversal at the end of the *Lynceus*, when the villain King Danaos dies, without acknowledging (as, e.g., Janko and I do) that this is a happily-ending play. Hence, no relevant *pathos qua* suffering applies (for the ending); the death of Danaos does not cause pity because it is deserved, and pity only results from *undeserved* suffering (13.1453a4).

Destrée focusses on the types of inter-familial plays that the Stagirite recommends in chs. 13 and 14, but he ignores the praise given to Agathon's *Antheus* in 9.1451b2off. Aristotle states there that one need not keep to the traditional stories, all of which helps confirm that different chapters have different views (if only slightly) and that the "*Poetics*" is an agglomeration of related texts, written by Aristotle at different times. While on chs. 13-14, the French-Belgian scholar also states that *Oedipus* is "arguably the paradigmatic tragedy in the *Poetics*" (125); he then adds that "...Aristotle seems to be claiming the contrary at the end of Chapter 14" (127). "Arguably" and "seems" are strikingly weak. *Oedipus* is *explicitly* the second-best type of play in ch. 14 and there are no if's, and's or but's about it. Destrée suggests he will give his own account in the future on this problem. If he really wishes a robust discussion, perhaps he will then address Scott 2018b, in which I explain how serious drama (*tragōidia*) *in general* is the focus of the second half of ch. 14, whereas the type with pity and fear (and *Oedipus* being the finest in ch. 13 and in the first half of ch. 14) presupposes a discussion of a *subtype* of "tragedy."

Curiously, Destrée asserts that "...murders among kin which destroy family bonds [and thus which undermine the foundation of the *polis*] must be seen as threatening human happiness in its deepest roots, and that is why they should evoke fear and pity in a particularly strong way" (126, my comment). What about anger, which in some ways is a more logical reaction and which is listed as one of the other legitimate emotions in ch. 19 for tragedy? Finally, Destrée concludes his article with the assertion that:

It may be thought that enjoying tragedies where that political end is put in jeopardy is the oddest thing in the world. But perhaps that constitutes the most paradoxical feature of tragedy (besides what we normally call the paradox of tragedy, i.e. the fact that we enjoy reading or attending a play centered on painful events) enjoying the *fictional* staging [of?] the worst *kakodaimonia* thinkable as part of our *eudaimonia* (127, his own italics but my bracketed word).

I appreciate Destrée addition here of "staging" but, to close the circle for his essay, must highlight that he poignantly misses what Hall intuited accurately: The satyr play puts the collective in a joyous mood, and the satyr play always finished the trilogy of the serious plays until about 340/339 BCE, after which, in my view, at least happily ending serious plays did not require the satyrs to purge the painful and undesirable emotions of pity, fear, anger and the like (Scott 2018a, 442-3). Hence, this (in)famous "paradoxical feature" simply vanishes, at least for those plays, and one can argue, following both ch. 26 and the advantages of tragedy over epic, that wonderful singing and dancing and spectacle would make even *Oedipus* attractive, like *Romeo and Juliet* for us (assuming it is enacted or filmed or danced, as with Ulanova and the Kirov Ballet). If merely

written and not to be performed, there is still the beauty of the language, which Konstan touched upon, before leaving the topic as fast as one of the younger servants of the Capulets flying from Mercutio's sword in a group fight.

### **Thornton Lockwood, "Is there a *Poetics* in the *Politics*?"**

Imagine one of the superb professional tennis players in the world like Federer or Nadal being asked to compete against professional basketball players and to make others understand the subtleties of *basketball*. You will have a sense of an excellent political theorist, Lockwood, trying to make sense, as an apparent novice of ancient dramatic theory, of the "*Poetics*" (and its relationship to the *Politics*). Of course, a tennis player might reveal how certain training methods help athletes in multiple sports, and, leaving aside some questionable interpretations of "music" (*mousikē*) and the goal of the "musical" arts, Lockwood elegantly and illuminatingly summarizes *Politics* VII and VIII, which would benefit even those with some experience of the treatise (Section 7.2, 133 to the bottom of 136). However, the rest of his essay is so riddled with misinterpretations of crucial "musical" terms and related issues that it would be excruciating to repeat what I have already said in many publications. The primary reason has already been mentioned many times, and I provide the source of all, or almost all, of his problems. Thornton states:

I would like to argue that the influence of the *Poetics* upon the *Politics* is largely negative because the former defends a view of tragedy which de-emphasizes performance and shares with the *Politics* a central concern about the illiberal effects of performative arts in general upon the citizens of an ideal polis (130).

For starters, he typically misapprehends passages that deal with performance, spectacle, music and dance in, e.g., "*Poetics*" 6, and, even though he focusses on the differences with epic, he ignores the passage in ch. 24, 1450a12-17, in which *epic* is more amazing because it is *not* performed onstage, like tragedy, a condition that therefore constrains the ability of the tragedian to jump around in time. Ironically, Lockwood is one of the few scholars, if not the only one in this volume, to cite Gregory Sifakis, who appreciates the importance of spectacle in ch. 6, but Lockwood essentially ignores his good arguments (141n15 & n17), as he effectively does the advice of Munteanu and Heath, of all people, who despite being purveyors of poems and poetic theory, tell him that "Aristotle ultimately envisions the ideal tragedy as one which is performed rather than read" (144n49)! Actually, Munteanu herself has explained some issues of the "*Poetics*" by using musical performance in at least one previous publication,<sup>6</sup> so it is not surprising that *she* advises Lockwood on this matter, although I wonder how she as an editor reconciles (i) her emphasis on performance with (ii) "poetry" being the subject of the treatise for all the essayists in this collection.

For a short list of the basic principles reflecting Aristotle's more sensible theory of drama in this regard, see: <https://epspress.com/ADMCupdates.html#GeneralRemark>

### **Dana Munteanu, "Varieties of characters: The better, the worse, and the like"**

Because I have only a couple of serious doubts and a few cavils with Munteanu's essay, and because it is an exploration of various issues under the loose rubric of character, I take care quickly

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<sup>6</sup> Dana Munteanu, "Timing Recognition: From Aristotle's Comments on *Iphigenia in Tauris* to Gluck's Opera," *Animus. The Canadian Journal of Philosophy and Humanities* 13, 2009, 50-59.

of the minor points first before focusing on the more tantalizing issues, namely, providing my promised detail on the “tragedy of character” from ch. 18 that, were Aristotle’s explanation ever discovered, might confirm (or disconfirm) some of Munteanu’s findings.

As alluded to in the Book Review *per se*, Munteanu begins by providing the backgrounds of some of the dramatists and painters listed in ch. 2, who represent characters better, worse or the same as us. I would only caution her on the translation of “flute and lyre” for *aulos* and *kithara* (146). *Plagiaulos* is the word for flute, and the *aulos* is the double-stemmed oboe-type instrument made famous in drama even into Roman times (where it is known as the *tibia*). Also, a lyre can be very large and the *kithara* is the small version often carried and used in the chorus. It is important not to disguise, if even inadvertently, what these instruments are and how they were used in the relevant performances, because a lyre, like our harp, is often associated with someone having to sit and play it. Imagine suggesting that chorus members carried and played a grand piano in the choral performances, whether in drama or any other time. Also, on the same page, Munteanu translates *lexis/lexeōs* as “diction,” when “speech” or “language” would be more appropriate (Scott 2018a; 153, 214, 219 and 267). Now to the more fascinating, or at least newer, issues. First, Christopher S. Morrissey writes:

The *Phthiotides* (“Women of Phthia”) and *Peleus* (the father of Achilles) ... are perhaps less clear for us as examples, for the plays do not survive. Based on what evidence we do have, however, it is sound to conjecture that they had “happy endings.” For example, the famous myth of Peleus, Achilles’ father, tells of how he wrestles the goddess Thetis who, in spite of her best efforts to change shape and escape, nevertheless is compelled to be his bride. A wedding is the classic example of a happy ending, and the wedding of Peleus and Thetis could have been the happy finale of a *Peleus* (cf. Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, 1036-1079).<sup>7</sup>

It is not clear how any of this applies to character that is better, worse or the same as us, or to pity and fear, which Munteanu has written about in great detail over the years. Her views on the topic would be warmly welcomed. (I should mention in passing that I disagree with Morrissey on his attempted solution to the dilemma of the best tragedies of chs. 13 and 14; see Scott 2018b, 3-4 for the details, but, in summary, he claims that “form” applies to one type and content to the other. However, the chapters themselves contradict that kind of split.)

Next, Munteanu emphasizes that “tragedies ought not to portray decent people (*epieikeis*) passing from good to bad fortune, for that type of action stirs neither pity nor fear but disgust (*Poet.* 13.1452b34-6)” (149). Yet “decent” as the translation triggers even worse dilemmas with the definition of tragedy that requires, as essential conditions, pity and fear, than the dilemma in which the *epieikeis* are “(very) virtuous.” Strictly speaking, Oedipus is decent. He simply makes a mistake or two, *unknowingly*, and thus the pity and fear is warranted; as ch. 14 says, there is no disgust in his case (because for the Stagirite the error was done without knowledge, given one of the criteria that Aristotle is employing now to rank the tragedies). Disgust really results when the protagonist has exhibited no flaw whatsoever and yet still suffers horribly; this is the dilemma, which I have mentioned numerous times, that Butcher long ago highlighted (e.g., Scott 2018a,

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<sup>7</sup> Christopher S. Morrissey, “Oedipus the Cliché: Aristotle on Tragic Form and Content,” *Anthropoetics* IX, no. 1 Spring/Summer 2003, p. 5; available at, and pagination taken from: <http://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/category/apo901/>

415). It is disappointing that someone of Munteanu's caliber is not addressing this core issue, considering that she seemingly continues to maintain that the two emotions are authentic in the definition of tragedy. This is especially the case because she (perhaps wisely) stays removed from the debate about catharsis. I say "perhaps wisely" because presumably at some point sitting on a fence, especially if it is hard and narrow, is going to be painful and she will have to decide which side of the debate she is on. At any rate, Munteanu focusses then on music and character, stating:

While discussing the appropriateness of teaching music to the young in the *Politics*, Aristotle gives an account of how various arts represent characters and emotions (8.1340a). He notes that in rhythms and melodies there is the *closest resemblance* to the true nature of anger and gentleness, also of courage and wisdom, as well as of all the opposite and of other character trends... (149-50, my italics).

It is impossible to list here how many scholars have attributed the same preposterous view to one of the greatest empiricists of all time, because, yet again, of the *faux ami* of translating *rhuthmos* as "rhythm," and how they have tried to justify the view for the grounded Stagirite. Could Aristotle really have believed that a triple meter or a rhythm based on it gives the closest resemblance to, say, courage or anger, versus a duple meter, which resembles other types of character or precise emotions? Moreover, could he really have believed that instrumental music more closely resembles character and (precise) emotions than acting, pantomime or dance (because the meaning of sung words is not at issue in this chapter)? Of course, melodies can evoke certain (vague) feelings but *precise* and distinguishable emotions? The paradoxes are legion, and I explain in detail many of the absurdities of this passage and the surrounding chapter if one takes *rhuthmos* as "rhythm" and how the absurdities simply dissolve if *rhuthmos* means instead "ordered body movement" or "dance" à la Laws 665a (Scott 2018a, 299-318). Moreover, with the more suitable translation, which captures ancient Greek practice, *Politics* VIII 5 completely harmonizes with Aristotle's statements in "*Poetics*" 1 about dancing (and in ch. 2 about dancing and music) conveying character, statements that Munteanu herself touches on.

Finally with regards to this chapter in the *Politics*, "melodies" is Munteanu's word for *melesin* but *melon* in the passage right before at 1340a9-10 is often translated as "song" (by, e.g., Jowett). "Song" need not have words and can be simply music with the vocal apparatus, whether hitting pitches like Bidu Sayão in the first movement of *Bachianas Brasileiras #5*, or vocalizing "nonny-noes," or yodeling, as is recognized in the *Problems* XIX 10 (918a29-34) when Aristotle (or the other Peripatetic author, if not authentically by Aristotle) confirms that the ancients sometimes "sang" without words (Scott 2018a, 33). Arguably "song(s)" is still better for the occurrence that Munteanu renders "melodies," because Aristotle is presupposing choral performance in the theater in the surrounding text, as revealed by the focus on Olympus, a dithyrambic composer who apparently used the Phrygian mode (obviously with dance, given everything we know about the dithyramb). Once *rhuthmos* is mentioned first, as occurs in the aforementioned passage, the Greek reader would know that *melos* cannot then mean *song-dance*, because the dance has just been separated off. Hence, *melos* must mean the musical aspect of the choral performance, which *includes* melody, *but is not limited to it*. Thus, song or music is a more helpful translation for *melesin/melon* here.

I finish with one puzzle about Munteanu's exploration of character. She indicates that the "the last two books of the *Politics* sketch some moral implications of the arts on audiences, which is one of Plato's major aesthetic concerns, but not a prominent theme in Aristotle's *Poetics*" (152). Yet, in concluding correctly that "Aristotle seems to endorse a little airbrushing in depicting characters in art" (157), she acknowledges "*Poetics*" 15 and "the four important features of the tragic character: worthiness (specific to the peculiar types: man, woman, slave), appropriateness, likeness, and consistency (*Poet.* 15.1454a16-28)" (157). The word used for "worthiness" (*chrēstos*) also means, and is typically rendered by other translators here as, "good," and the Stagirite is thus more than just airbrushing the characters while still making them believable: The *most* important consideration of character is goodness (15.1454a15-16). If this particular priority is not utterly Platonic, I do not know what is. Furthermore, the other three considerations of character are essentially hearkening back to *Laws* II 667c-673b, as mentioned above regarding Fossheim. Alternatively, as I have come to realize only recently, ch. 15 may well have inspired that section of *Laws* II, not vice-versa, or the student-colleague and mentor-colleague may have mutually inspired each other after years of discussing the related topics; see Scott 2021, 13, available at: [www.epspress.com/NTF/AlcmaeonOfCroton.pdf](http://www.epspress.com/NTF/AlcmaeonOfCroton.pdf)

Similarly, ch. 15 and other considerations in the *Dramatics aka Poetics* may have been the reasons that inspired the Athenian Stranger to allow both tragedy *and* comedy into the ideal state (*Laws* VII 816d-817d), if the censors approve, relaxing the extreme Puritanism of the *Republic* (Scott 2021, 13). Indeed, we have seen how the Stagirite advocates some censorship himself in *Politics* VII 17. Finally, to complete the comparison (revealing that Aristotle is close to Plato, or at least closer than typically thought, in terms of character in the arts and the relation to performance), Plato's worry about the audience affecting the artist—in this case the dramatist via the performers—is *identically sounded by Aristotle* at the end of *Politics* VIII 6 and repeated in "*Poetics*" 26.1461b30-2, when he remarks that bad double-oboe players (*hoi phauloi aulētai*) try to accommodate the audience by striking all kinds of deplorable attitudes or by whirling about if the players have to perform "the Discus."

Thus, the treatment of character, insofar as both the Athenian and the Stagirite are being compared and contrasted, could use even more of the delicateness and deftness than Munteanu often displays. We need to reject the simplistic view, indeed, the caricature, that Aristotle is primarily or wholly concerned in this arena about not only reacting to Plato but defending the arts against the Athenian's extreme censorship. In other words, we need to explain precisely where they agree and disagree, and, without doubt, just because they disagree on one point or three points does not mean they cannot agree on others (Scott 2018a, ch. 7).

### **Valeria Cinaglia, "The ethical context of *Poetics* 5: Comic error and lack of self-control"**

In addition to the sources of laughter already mentioned—ugliness, jokes, and accidents (that presumably result only in shame or embarrassment, not harmful pain involving wounds or deaths)—Cinaglia adds the kind of "inconsistent reasoning" that is found in the *Tractatus Coisilianus* (174). Moreover, she considers "ethical failures [to have] a substantial role in the comic plot" (166, my bracketed insertion), all of which is plausible. She focusses on lack of self-control (*akrasia*), which I also find perfectly legitimate, even if too disproportionate in her account. That is, irrationality in general or lack of ethics in general, which she alludes to at times (e.g., 174-175), in some ways strikes me as a broader source of comic error. Consider, for example,



how, based on the *Philebus* and *Symposium*, Richard Patterson explains how self-ignorance is the source of “comedic errors,” to use Cinaglia’s term, at least for Plato.<sup>8</sup> Leaving aside that Patterson, like everyone else at his time and before, ignores Diotima and *Symposium* 205c and continues to speak usually of “poet” and “poetry,” rather than of “‘musical’ composition,” I see no reason why we cannot accept self-ignorance as *another* source of comedic error for Aristotle, too, along with the host of reasons that Cinaglia discusses or at least alludes to. Otherwise, as mentioned regarding Trivigno, we unwisely restrict the Northern Greek’s theory to a mere slice, or a few mere slices, of comedy in general, no matter what the era.

An aside on Patterson is warranted before continuing. In my mind, appealing to self-ignorance, although extremely helpful, is by itself still too narrowly scoped, despite what the *Symposium* and *Philebus* say. Consider the *Laws* VII 816-817 and the Athenian allowing tragedy and comedy in the ideal state, which Patterson perspicaciously focusses on, even if I disagree with his ultimate solution, namely, that Plato requires (philosophic) tragedy and “apparent” comedy in which the protagonist is someone like a publicly-conceived “silly” philosopher, for example, Socrates (because Patterson tries to resolve VII 816-817 with, e.g., a dilemma in other works like the *Symposium*, namely, the issue of *technē* involving knowledge or art versus inspiration). On my reading, the Athenian’s account at 816-817 only requires that the Guardians approve of *either* type of drama, after any prospective play is auditioned, and the issue of *technē* versus inspiration is completely left aside. That is, the Athenian no longer seems to care whether the dramatist-composer creates by inspiration or knowledge (i.e., understanding) *or both*, as long as he gets it right. Note Patterson’s own statement at the very top of 85, in which he leaves aside for the purpose of his article understanding *combined with* inspiration. His “sting of philosophy” (87) that non-professional philosophers sometimes have, meaning, in my words, that they might simply intuit philosophical perspectives, reasons or conclusions, presumably would also help handle this issue, because otherwise it appears that philosopher-composers have to create the works that are being auditioned for the Guardians, and, unless I misinterpret Patterson’s article, *only* characters like Socrates are to be the butt of the humor.

Much more likely in my view is that Plato changed his mind from, e.g., the *Republic* *because* of his brilliant student-colleague, after realizing that the Stagirite’s precepts protect the integrity of the state if the Guardians understand them (and recall that Aristotle also accepts that the composer has a bit of madness at 17.1455a32-34 and, moreover, as emphasized already, insists on some censorship in *Politics* VII 17). Thus, in my opinion, Patterson is right about self-ignorance as long as he does not exclude other reasons from being possible sources of laughter. Even though Socrates could be the butt of the jokes—as he infamously was at least once, standing up in the audience, and for additional reasons that Patterson provides—truly low-life characters could also be the butt *and be represented*. The reason that the Athenian gives at *Laws* VII for the state allowing comedy (as long as noble people do not enact the roles) is for us to learn what buffoonery is so we are not trapped by our ignorance into doing or saying ridiculous things in real life (maybe a slight of Alcibiades coming into the symposium and being drunk and ridiculous, as described in the *Symposium* and as discussed by Patterson). The self-ignorance might well have been inspired, too, by Aristotle’s doctrine of wit being the mean between buffoonery and boorishness (*Nic Eth* IV 8), all of which is consistent with one major part of Patterson’s thesis.

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Patterson, “The Platonic Art of Comedy and Tragedy,” *Philosophy and Literature* 6, 1982, 1-2: 76-93.

To return to Cinaglia and to recall the remark made earlier, Aristotle's theory follows Plato in some ways *and* counteracts him in other ways, depending on the precise issue, for example, relative to the *Republic* (Scott 2018a, especially Section 2: "Aristotle's Response to Plato"). Given the importance for her of the *Nicomachean Ethics* for understanding character and comedy, Cinaglia, like Trivigno, surprisingly and disappointedly does not focus on wit in IV 8 and why laughter on the stage would or would not be akin to laughter in real life, as conveyed by *Politics* VIII 5.

One final, bifurcated doubt: Cinaglia asserts that "Aristotle specifies that comic mistakes should not bring destruction and pain, and that they should be likely to lead the action to a happy ending" (172) and that "A perfectly virtuous character would indeed be likely to bring the plot to a happy ending, but that would be in contradiction with Aristotle's definition of comedy as imitation of inferior people" (173).

On the first claim: Although Cinaglia correctly reports comedy not bringing destruction and *its* type of pain, where does the Northern Greek ever say that the comic ending is likely to be happy? It could be simply neutral, neither happy nor tragic. Nothing about the sources of laughter commit the Northern Greek to one type of ending rather than another, even if often, or usually, the ending of ancient comedy in Athens is happy. The example in ch. 13 of Orestes and Aegisthus walking off as friends might be considered by some to be happy, but others might say more reasonably that it is simply non-tragic (even though part of a tragedy in the technical sense) and silly. In other words, leaving aside that this play would have been performed as a serious play given the noble characters of Orestes and Aegisthus, and assuming that the characters were instead vulgar and thus for the comic arena, does that make any similar ending "happy" in alignment with Aristotle's notion of *eudaimonia*? The intelligent audience member might well find the ending annoying, and a similar case is given in ch. 14, 1453b38-40, of the *Antigone* (presumably of Euripides), which because of the "happy" ending is *miarōn* for the Northern Greek! (Scott 2018a, 418-9; Scott 2018b; 12-13 & 23-27). One final example suffices: In some ways, the ending of the *Frogs*, with Euripides losing, is arguably sad. The two competing tragedians *could* have tied for the "prize" even if ties were not allowed in *real* competitions.

On the second claim: How does Cinaglia get from (i) comedy being an imitation of inferior people to (ii) a perfectly virtuous character *bringing the plot probably to a happy ending*? It is far from clear and this again raises the whole issue of the *epieikēs* (virtuous person) in ch. 13 having neither pity nor fear when going from fortune to misfortune and of the happily ending plots in ch. 14 being ranked *above Oedipus*. (I have no issue with Cinaglia's speaking loosely of the "definition of comedy," even though, strictly speaking, the definition of comedy, in a form similar to the definition of serious drama in ch. 6 and of epic in ch. 23, was presumably part of the lost manuscript on comedy.)

### **Thomas Cirillo, "Taxonomic flexibility: Metaphor, *genos*, and *eidōs*"**

I mentioned that an examination of speech is required in the *Dramatics aka Poetics* because speech or language (*lexis*) is the fourth most important element in tragedy in ch. 6, although it does not follow that chs. 20-22 were wholly in the initial, authentic "*Poetics*," as Gerald Else famously stressed. Another reason from my perspective is that the end of ch. 19 rules out the need to discuss many aspects of language (Scott 2020, 46-48). What about epic and comedy? We can only guess about comedy, because the manuscript is lost, unless some points can be gleaned from any authentic part of the *Tractatus Coisilianus*. Yet, as we noticed Trivigno arguing, the definition

would be very similar to tragedy. Thus, language would probably be the fourth most important element there, too, and would be merely one source for the jokes that he and Cinaglia mentioned. Speech in hexameter is probably also the fourth (and last) most important element in epic, although Aristotle never ranks the elements for that art form. Still, it seems impossible to contend that language for him would be more important than plot, character and reasoning (or thought) (*dianoia*), the three most important elements that epic shares with tragedy, given how similar tragedy and epic are for the Stagirite apart from the elements that only tragedy has: Choral performance (the fifth most important necessary condition in ch. 6) and the spectacle (the sixth and least important condition). That is, epic is said to have plots that should be constructed in a similar manner to tragedy, with a single action and a beginning, middle and end (23.1459a16-20); it has four sub-species, like tragedy (24.1459b8-10), including “of character,” and also, like tragedy, has reversals, recognitions and scenes of suffering, *with thought and speech good in their own way* (24.1459b13-14). The four common essential elements of tragedy and epic are ranked in ch. 6, and plot, character and reasoning are ranked above language. Presumably the same holds for epic. In any event, even taking my view that the *Dramatics* is about three performed arts, speech (or language that is composed for the purpose of performance) is clearly a very important aspect to analyze.

On the dilemma that Cirillo (and virtually all others) have missed, about the explanations in the *Rhetoric* having been wrongly re-assigned to texts from the *Dramatics* when the manuscripts were re-assembled after Apellicon purchased the whole scrambled lot from Scepsis, see Scott (2018a, 247-248 and 2019, 207-211). In addition, similes are stressed in *Rhetoric* III 4 as being “useful in prose as well as in verse, *but not often since they are of the nature of poetry.*”<sup>9</sup> Simile is never mentioned in the “Poetics” but is given a chapter in the *Rhetoric*, namely III 4.

One question: When Cirillo dissects the “analogical metaphor” of the wine cup being the “shield of Dionysus” and the shield being the “wine cup of Ares” (190-191), he declares without considering any options that the *genos* is “Emblem.” He may be correct but why not “hand-held”?

### **Silvia Carli, “Poetry and *historia*”**

I have only one question and one correction. For someone who (correctly and illuminatingly) emphasizes the importance of data collection as (part of) one of the major senses of *historia*, it is especially baffling that Carli ignores that not one poem exists in the tract that she keeps assuming is about poems. If she examined afresh an ancient treatise examining three species of snakes and lizards, each of which has subspecies, would she entitle it *Mammals* or *Reptiles*, no matter that scholars in the last 1000 years called it *Mammals*? Also, in the last sentence of her essay, she summarizes her solution to the already mentioned issue regarding the “*Poetics*”:

... the *much-quoted passage*...says that while *philosophy* speaks more of universals than of particulars, history speaks more of particulars than of universals, and is therefore not unrelated to philosophy, but simply less philosophical than *poiētikē* (p. 219, my italics).

I assume she intended to write “while *poetry* speaks more of universals,” given the Greek of the much-quoted passage she herself had just quoted on the previous page (and of course the same

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<sup>9</sup> 1406b24-5; transl. W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes, *op. cit.*; my italics.

solution holds on my Aristotelian-Diotiman rendering: “...while *dramatic composition* speaks more of universals...”). Maybe each and every one of the three editors of the book thought that one of the other editors was proofing her contribution.

### Conclusion

The editors acknowledge the sad state the “*Poetics*” has fallen into. I already gave the three basic reasons, namely, that previous commentators have:

- (i) misconstrued the book as being about literary theory rather than musical dramatic composition;
- (ii) believed Aristotle does not take seriously the performative elements—music, dance, acting and spectacle—for “tragedy” (which, as realized by more and more scholars, including some of the essayists, can end happily for him); and
- (iii) accepted usually without question that the catharsis-clause in ch. 6 is authentic, continuing to this day, it seems, to try to resolve the meaning of *katharsis* there after over 465 years of continued failure, or after almost 1000 years if one considers Avicenna and Averroes working from the Arabic versions.

Regarding (iii), let us take a side-trip from the issues that are covered in *The Poetics in its Aristotelian Context*, but only to reveal the kinds of matters that the three editors and contributors should at times have focused on, given the already discussed recognition of the previous debates about catharsis in their bibliography. I emphasize “kind” rather than the particular article to be now discussed, which came out in 2019, a year before the book now being discussed, which means this particular article appeared probably too late for them to consider. However, by not addressing in their book such a crucial issue as catharsis in the definition of tragedy, the editors and contributors at least indirectly encourage specialists to continue to attempt what has been shown by Petruševksi and his followers to be a fool’s errand, namely, resolving the meaning (and authenticity) of catharsis in that definition.

The attempt in 2019 to determine the meaning of catharsis in a professional journal is by John Ferrari, a classicist at the University of California, Berkeley, who, in seeming desperation and in 50+ pages, claims that the meaning of the catharsis-clause (and not just catharsis) is simply *the whole explanation of plot throughout the book* (while also suggesting that *katharsis* means “satisfaction,” notwithstanding additional meanings he gives it throughout his whole analysis). I offer a tiny fraction of that long article:

What he [Aristotle] means by the catharsis-clause in the definition of tragedy is, in effect, that tragic drama arouses and works with pity and fear in an audience in such a way that the audience gets satisfaction out of that pity and fear. The term ‘catharsis’, then, as used in the catharsis-clause, adds little more to Aristotle’s analysis of plot-construction (his analysis of the devices by which the audience’s pity and fear are manipulated) than the declaration that this (the arousal and working-through of pity and fear in the course of a convincing tragic drama) is something that audiences enjoy. *That is why catharsis itself does not require*

*separate, explicit analysis in the Poetics. The explanation of just why audiences enjoy it, which is the explanation of catharsis, is already contained in the analysis of plot-construction, with its account of what shape a tragic plot must take in order to succeed in gripping or surprising us.*<sup>10</sup>

In other words, for Ferrari the Northern Greek's statement in *Politics* VIII 7 that *katharsis* is explained in a *peri poiētikēs* amounts to no separate explanation, *even though explains pity and fear separately in ch. 13!* That is, if, as Ferrari maintains, the meaning of the "catharsis-clause" (and not just catharsis) is that "tragic drama arouses...pity and fear...in such a way that the audience gets satisfaction out of that pity and fear," why, we might ask, would Aristotle feel the need to explain both pity and fear in ch. 13 but not catharsis? Rather than a similar, explicit explanation of catharsis, which *every* scholar throughout history has assumed was meant by *Politics* VIII, for Ferrari the understanding of *katharsis*, which is ostensibly the *goal* of tragedy, is something that emerges *somehow* from: the discussion of tragedy's magnitude; the plot having a beginning/middle/end and being simple or complex; the plot having harmful actions done knowingly *or not* to family members; "tragedy" having a happy ending for its best type in ch. 14; the categorization of all four subtypes of tragedy in ch. 18; the pleasure that Aristotle actually speaks about many times as being the goal, and so forth. Perhaps worst of all for Ferrari, the types of pleasure that one gets from, e.g., reversals and recognition, the aspects of complex plot, or from amazement in stories, immediately give a kind of pleasure in both tragedy and epic; catharsis is unneeded, otiose and absolutely irrelevant (6.1450a32-33 & 24.1459b21-1460a19). Indeed, the "surprise" that Ferrari often emphasizes are related to *these* phenomena, not to catharsis for Aristotle. Other reasons why Ferrari's view is outlandish and, ironically, *worse than just accepting the erroneous interpolation of the catharsis-clause, especially when he himself is perfectly willing to accept that erroneous interpolations have happened in Politics VIII 7*, are given at:

<https://epspress.com/ADMCupdates.html#Ferrari>

This URL points to not only my detailed rebuttal but to my translation of Veloso's own, somewhat different rebuttal, along with Veloso's original French version. Perhaps future scholars will be more circumspect and, at the worst, sit on the fence alongside Munteanu while the relevant debate finishes, unless they care to enter the ring like the young wrestler named Aristocles, who has come to be known as Plato. That is, any would-be participant who actually understands the issues in this *agon* needs to buttress Halliwell's admirable attempted refutation (2011) of Scott 2003 and Veloso 2007 by countering the reciprocal, systematic rebuttals of Halliwell by Scott 2018a and Veloso/Rashed 2018. The crux of the debate is summarized at the end of my own Comments at the link above, in the section "The Status of the Old Guard against the Petruševskians," and in Fendt 2019. Alternatively and naturally, would-be participants can stay mostly passive, playing judge while sitting in a comfortable chair instead of on a fence: "Simply" evaluate the existing arguments on *both* sides.

Contrary to the "long-standing problems" that the editors of the volume at hand never specify, in my view, ameliorating the following ones will help the phoenix, the tiny book that has been extremely influential over many centuries, rise from the ashes:

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<sup>10</sup> G.R.F. Ferrari, "Aristotle on Musical Catharsis and the Pleasure of a Good Story," *Phronesis* 64 (2019) 117-171; p. 164; my emphases.

- 1) Establish the relation of literature to dramatic theory, given Aristotle's adage in ch. 25 that the arts have their own principles; take into account that *our* literature is closer to (sung) epic than to drama (and resolve whether the epic that was *sung* in Plato's time, as proven by the *Ion*, could at times be only "declaimed," especially in the competitions, by the time the Northern Greek wrote chs. 23-26);
- 2) As with literature, adjust the Northern Greek's principles sensibly for comedy and non-literary arts like dance, as Fendt has written about (2019) (and the 3 editors quote some of his other publications);
- 3) Instead of trying simplistically to set a univocal meaning of *mimēsis* and to translate it always the same way, determine which passages most appropriately deserve any of its handful of meanings. Woodruff, Veloso and myself, to name just three, have articulated them, and, as Woodruff first highlighted to my knowledge, the general primacy of "impersonation" over "imitation" is given in the *Sophist* (see Scott 2018a, 255-6); however, this still allows that imitation or representation or expression (with respect to music especially) might be the best rendering in some contexts;
- 4) If I am wrong (Scott 2018b), settle the contradiction between the best type of plot in ch. 13 (*Oedipus*) and the best type in ch. 14 (the happily-ending *Cresphontes et al*), and, of course, give the reasons (and not just say, as Destrée has printed twice over 9 years on related matters, that specialists will not accept the view);
- 5) Clarify what the four subtypes of serious drama in ch. 18 could be, taking into account, if possible, the four similar subtypes of epic in ch. 24 to illuminate this barely touched upon topic, even after at least 465 years;
- 6) Establish which of the four subtypes of serious drama, *if any*, might have catharsis of *pity and fear* as the end, notwithstanding that many scholars now agree catharsis, pity and fear could not have been written by Aristotle himself in ch 6 (but this requires first establishing which type could reasonably have pity and fear as its *ending* emotions, because without them there could be no *catharsis of pity and fear*);
- 7) Establish which of the four subtypes, if any, might have a catharsis of some emotion other than pity and fear; similarly, establish what emotions might be proper if pity and fear are not crucial for certain subtypes and if catharsis is even relevant in those cases;
- 8) Related to this, Fendt, Munteanu and others have shown concern with how pity and fear can be appropriate in the middle of plays. Konstan and myself allow multiple emotions to occur throughout a drama but emphasize that the *crucial* emotion(s) occur at the end; given this, how can pity and fear be justified as essential conditions in the definition of tragedy when a number of plot-types of serious drama are said in ch. 13 and throughout the book not to have them or at least not to have pity? (Scott 2018a, ch. 6);
- 9) Cover the perplexities that result if, as even Destrée, Andrew Ford (whose work is cited in the Bibliography of the volume at hand) and others now acknowledge, music can have its own catharsis *in tragedy* (and not just in a "musical" art in *Politics* VIII 7). For instance, how does a catharsis of plot and a possibly different catharsis of language, to say the least, also occur and do we have potential conflicts of different forms of catharsis? This is just the tip of the iceberg: Spectacle was also famous at times for causing fright in the audience and so might also cause other emotions, like pity and fear. If not, why not, and could spectacle of a certain kind also not cause a catharsis? (These issues and related ones are introduced in Appendix 1 of Scott 2019.)

- 10) Determine why the satyr play, which has plot and the three means of mimesis, is only mentioned in passing in the *Dramatics aka Poetics*, unless it is covered in the lost papyrus roll(s) on comedy, as I have speculated (Scott 2018a; 16, 33, 122, 149, 163, 173-5, 190, 201, 206, 216, 235, and 253-4);
- 11) Decide precisely whether and when Aristotle is anti-Platonic, considering that he advocates censorship in *Politics* VII 17, as a few essayists noted; that “good” (*chrēstos*) is the most crucial of the four aspects of character in ch. 15; and that Plato himself not only uses catharsis extensively in various domains (Scott 2018a, ch. 7) but allows serious drama and comedy in the ideal state at *Laws* VII, 816-817;
- 12) Decide whether ch. 17 was or was not originally (part of) the “published” text that the end of ch. 15 refers to, given the same subject;
- 13) Decide whether some of the sections on metaphor in the *Rhetoric* are really from the original, or a different, *peri poiētikēs* and whether only parts of chs. 22-23 are from the original, given that ch. 19 suggests a study of language in general is not a concern of *poiēsis* (cf. Scott 2020, Comments on chs. 19 and 20).
- 14) Determine whether or not Aristotle’s theory of (“musical”) drama in general and tragedy in particular, a theory that is based on biology and not on a “contingent” political accident in Athens (as Heath and Destrée astutely note in their discussion of Hall), still has relevance for *musical theater* now and in the future (as I believe it does) and how much adjustment needs to be made for opera, which is slightly but significantly different from musical theater *per se* (such as found on Broadway in New York City);
- 15) Grapple with the most wide-ranging problem—namely, that the “Poetics” is, as Zeller said, hopelessly corrupted, with interpolations and inversions—perhaps by re-arranging the chapters into units that are consistent with each other, setting into different units the interpolations (like chs. 17, 18, most of 20-22 and 25) as coming from the earlier *On “Musical” Composers aka On Poets* or from other Aristotelian texts (like *The Homeric Problems*). Call the whole re-arrangement “Collected Texts on Dramatic Theory” or the like, so that insights can be gleaned without trying to force an organic unity onto them, when, for instance, the inconsistencies of the finest tragedy of chs. 13-14 demonstrate that the extant book could not have been written as a single whole, just as we would despairingly try to force an organic unity upon the 11 contributions that comprise *The Poetics in its Aristotelian Context*.

### **Postscript: A Practical Matter or “Judging a Book Cover by its Cover”**

As noted, the 275-page hardcover book is a (remarkable) \$160. An identical book of philosophy, with no illustrations, case laminate, from Ingram Spark *Print on Demand*, with even 107 more pages, costs \$55 - \$73, *or even less*, depending on how large the author wishes the royalties to be (with higher pricing naturally entailing less sales usually). That is, a book of 276 pages costs \$8.89 to print, excluding taxes and the setup, with an ISBN costing no more than \$5 if one purchases in bulk, as Routledge surely does. The one-time setup is normally \$49. If authors know Adobe InDesign, they can upload the required high-quality pdf that is needed for hardcovers; without InDesign or the like but with a pdf from a Word document, they can easily publish a softcover through Amazon KDP (Amazon previously did not produce hardcovers, but that has seemingly changed starting in 2021). The authors then only need to produce the cover (as a second pdf), which, if outsourced, can cost \$200-500 with professional artwork but which can be as low as

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\$100, as probably was the case here, given how basic the cover is for *The Poetics in its Aristotelian Context* and how the design department at Routledge, or an outsourced tech worker in India available through Upwork.com, probably spent no more than 3-5 hours on it (there is text on the front and spine but none on the back cover, with a token graphic and colored boxes comprising the rest). Spread out the costs for the cover and setup over a few hundred to a few thousand copies, and the total expense for printing, excluding the shipping, was *at the most* about \$9-\$14 per copy for Routledge, leaving aside advertising. I only hope that the essayists receive a fair share of the royalties.

5/16/2022

Edits

11/6/23: Added URL <https://epspress.com/ReviewAP/Extension.pdf>, self-referencing this extension, to footnote 1.