

Egert Poehlmann, 9.7.2011

Aristotle Politics VIII 7. 1341 b19 - 1342 b 34.

1. Harmonies and rhythms

After the chapter on unwelcome instruments - namely all instruments with the exception of the seven stringed lyre - Aristotle embarks on the inquiry of harmonies, melodies and rhythms. This last chapter of *Politics* is interspersed with many references on the various sources used and is conveniently analysed following the hints given by these references. At the beginning, Aristotle gives a sketch of his program: "We must now turn then, to consider the harmoniai and the rhythms [in general] and with respect to education. We must ask whether all the harmoniai and all the rhythms should be used, or whether a division should be made, and next whether the same division should be prescribed by the people who take pains about education (τοῖς πρὸς παιδείαν διαπονοῦσι), or if they need a different one" (1341 b19-23, translation Barker).

Of course the starting point here is again the chapter about music in Plato's *Republic* (III 399-400). But unlike Plato, Aristotle does not forget, as we shall see later, that there is music outside the educational program for children also. Music for children has to admit the most severe restrictions, while the adult free citizen (ὁ ἐλεύθερος καὶ πεπαιδευμένος) is able to listen to music with more license. For the working people (βάνουσοι καὶ θῆτες) there are no restrictions at all. This way Aristotle is able to accommodate his educational program better than Plato to the realities of life and the situation of his time.

It is interesting also, that Aristotle, unlike Plato, does not limit his analysis to harmoniai and rhythm, but considers μελωδία also, like Aristoxenos, who treated μελοποιία as the last chapter of harmonics:¹ "Thirdly, as we see that music consists in melodic composition and rhythms, we must neither forget the educative power that each of them has, nor neglect to ask whether music with good melody or music with good rhythms is to be preferred" (1341 b 23-26, translation Barker). The last sentence reminds us of a perhaps aristoxenian *dictum* of *De Musica*: "Nowadays people's interest is in the melody, whereas in the past they concentrated on the rhythm" (οἱ μὲν γὰρ νῦν φιλομελεῖς, οἱ δὲ τότε φιλόρρυθμοι; *De Musica* 1138 BC, translation Barker).

¹ See Cleonides 1. 179 Jan, 14. 207 Jan.

When checking this program of Aristotle against the rest of *Politics*, we have to admit that Aristotle only accomplished his model of different strata of music, which match the needs of the different strata of the people in the ideal state. About the moral qualification of rhythms and melopoia we read nothing. Besides, the following pages are a medley of quotations from different sources, to which Aristotle is content to refer: "Now since I believe that many excellent things have been said about these matters both by some contemporary musical experts (τῶν δὲ νῦν μουσικῶν ἐνίους) and by those philosophers who have been well acquainted with education in music, I shall hand over to them the people who wish to pursue a precise account of every detail, and deal with the issues only in general terms for the present, stating no more than their outlines" (1341 b27-32, translation Barker). The philosophers quoted here might be Damon, Plato and Heraclides Ponticus, the contemporary musicologists (οἱ νῦν) Aristoxenos and others.

Aristotle adopts from philosophers a threefold division of melodies, for which we cannot quote a definite source: "We accept the division of melodies that various philosophers make, classifying some as moral (ἠθικά), some as invigorating (πρακτικά) and some as inspirational (ἐνθουσιαστικά). They set out also the type of harmonia that is appropriate to each of them, a different one for each type of melody" (1341 b32-36, translation Barker). The *obiter dictum* of Aristotle, that solo-dancing is able to imitate ἦθη καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις (Poetics 1447 a28), or Aristotle's typology of Epos and tragedies (ἄπλή, πεπλεγμένη, ἠθική, παθητική: 1455 b32-37 and 1459 b7-09) does not help.

2. Paideia, Diagoge and Katharsis.

Aristotle takes pains to reconcile the division of his source with his own threefold division of the aims of music, which he gives first in chapter 5 as παιδεία, παιδιὰ (= ἀνάπαυσις = λύπης ἰατρεία) and διαγωγή (1339 b13/14). This division recurs with modifications in chapter 7 as παιδεία, κάθαρσις and διαγωγή (= ἀνάπαυσις): "But we say that music should be used to give benefits of several sorts, not just one: it should aim at both education (παιδεία) and κάθαρσις (I shall not now [νῦν μὲν] enlarge on what I mean by κάθαρσις, but I shall explain it more clearly later [πάλιν ...ἐροῦμεν], in my work on Poetics), and thirdly at amusement (διαγωγή) for the sake of relaxation (ἄνεσιν)

and relief from tension (ἀνάπαυσιν)"(1341 b36-41, translation Barker).

The meaning of κάθαρσις in the *Poetics* of Aristotle shall be explained at the end of this paper. It is interesting that Aristotle refers in the *Politics* to the *Poetics* as a treatise which he has not yet written. This means that the layer of *Politics* we are dealing with now, is still older. Thus, the meaning of the *terminus* κάθαρσις must be explained first only on the basis of *Politics*. The *terminus* κάθαρσις itself was coined before Aristotle. The simple word καθαίρω (to clean, purge) has many derivations. Interesting is κάθαρμα in the sense of ritual purification in the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus (458 B.C), where Apollo cleanses Orestes from blood-guilt (μύσος) by washing his hands with the blood of a just butchered young pig.² Aristotle himself uses κάθαρσις in the sense of ritual purification of Artemis polluted by Orestes.³ Very often κάθαρσις is used as a medical term,⁴ denoting the excretion of morbid humours with the help of a medicament, the effect of which in the body is described in the *Problemata* as κάθαρσις,⁵ which might be the evacuation (κουφίζεσθαι) of a full stomach by an emetic, of excrements by a laxative, or of a surplus of bile by a cure with hellebore.⁶

Aristoxenos ascribed the *terminus* κάθαρσις to the Pythagoreans, who used medical means for the therapy of the body, and musical means for the therapy of the soul.⁷ Aristoxenos himself seems to have used music for psychotherapy, as Theophrast in a treatise *About the Enthousiasmos* mentioned.⁸ Musical therapy is ascribed also to Damon in a story, which sneaked later into the biography of Pythagoras himself: Damon encountered an aulos-girl playing a phrygian melody for tipsy youngsters who were behaving crazily. After he had ordered her to play a dorian melody instead, they stopped immediately their mad behaviour.⁹ It is interesting to see that the musical therapy

²*Eumenides* 283: Φοίβου καθαρμοῖς ἠλάθη χοιροκτόνοις.

³Aristotle, *Poetics* 1455 b13-15: οἷον ἐν τῷ Ὀρέστη ἡ μανία δι' ἧς ἐλήφθη (IT 260-339) καὶ ἡ σωτηρία διὰ τῆς καθάρσεως (IT 1033-1055; 1163-1221).

⁴See Hellmut Flashar, "Die medizinischen Grundlagen der Lehre von der Wirkung der Dichtung in der griechischen Poetik", in: *Hermes* 84 (1956) 12-48.

⁵Ps.Aristotle, *Problemata* 864 a31 ff: καὶ καλεῖται τοῦτο κάθαρσις.

⁶See Horace *Sat.* II 3.82/83, *A.P.* 300-3002.

⁷Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles, Texte und Kommentar, Aristoxenos*, Basel 1967, Fr. 26: ὅτι οἱ Πυθαγορικοί, ὡς ἔφη Ἀριστόξενος, καθάπερ ἐχρῶντο τοῦ μὲν σώματος διὰ τῆς ἰατρικῆς, τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς διὰ τῆς μουσικῆς.

⁸Aristoxenos, Fr. 6 Wehrli.

⁹Galen *De Hipp. et Plat.* 5, 455 Müller; Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* 9, 926 Eysenhardt. Die Geschichte wird auf Pythagoras bezogen von Philodem *De Musica* col. 42,39-45.p. 69

attributed to Damon uses the method of allopathy: in order to check the enthusiastic effect of phrygian melodies the aulos girl has to play a stately Dorian melody.¹⁰ We shall see, that the musical κάθαρσις of Aristotle uses instead a homoeopathic method.

Unlike Plato, who banishes in the *Republic* (399) all harmonies except the Dorian and the Phrygian, Aristotle is able by his threefold division of aims of music, to use all possible harmonies, by distributing them on different levels: "It is clear, then, that all the harmoniai should be used, but not all of them in the same way. The most moral ones (ἡθικώταται) should be used for education, while the most invigorating (πρακτικαί) and inspirational (ένθουσιάστικαι) ones should be used when we listen to other people performing (1342 a1-4, translation Barker). Thus, the case of educational music, παιδεία, seems settled: children must learn to sing and to play the lyre themselves, using morally appropriate harmonies like the Dorian and the respective melodies and, as we may guess, appropriate rhythms, in order to develop the ability to judge about good and bad music.

The two other aims of music, κάθαρσις and διαγωγή, need more explication. Aristotle assumes that the soul of every man is affected by passions (πάθη) like pity, fear and inspired ekstase, though with different intensity. It is important that these three passions are mentioned as examples (οἷον ἔλεος, φόβος καὶ ένθουσιασμός), without excluding other similar passions. We notice that the definition of the tragedy in the *Poetics* (δι' ἔλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τήν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν: 1449 b27/28) is prepared. But here Aristotle selects the ένθουσιασμός as example: (1342 a7-11, translation Barker): "Some people are capable of being entirely possessed by this last disturbance (κίνησις), but we observe that when these people make use of melodies that greatly excite the soul (έξοργιάζουσι μέλεσι), out of the resources of sacred melody (ίερῶν μελῶν), they are put right again, just as if they had been given medication and purgation (ὥσπερ ίατρείας τυχόντας καὶ καθάρσεως).

This example makes evident that the aristotelian *terminus* κάθαρσις has a twofold root, namely ritual and medicine. Besides, it appears that the aristotelian treatment by κάθαρσις is a homoeopathic one. Enthousiasmos is created by orgiastic

Delattre, Cicero *De consiliis suis*, fr. 2 Orelli; Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 1, 10, 32, Boethius *Institutio Musica* 1, 1.

¹⁰See Andrew Barker, *Psicomusicologia nella Grecia antica*, a cura die Angelo Meriani, Napoli 2005, Guida editore, 141.

melodies. The soul is discharged (κουφίζεσθαι) of it by an emotional crisis, which is provoked by still more supply of the same orgiastic music. This is the peculiarity of the aristotelian κάθαρσις, which is far away from the primitive allopathy (Dorian against Phrygian) attributed to Damon (see above).

But the passions pity and fear and other similar passions are not forgotten. They may be aroused and treated in the same way as the enthousiamos by listening to the respective melodies, which are not specified here, and after an emotional crisis the afflicted shall be discharged of the respective passions: "This must also happen to those who are particularly prone to pity or fear or emotion of any kind (τοὺς ἐλεήμονας καὶ τοὺς φοβητικούς καὶ τοὺς ὄλως παθητικούς) and to others to the extent to which such things affect them: katharsis and alleviation come to all, and pleasure with them" (1342 a11-15, translation Barker). Again we see that pity and fear are only examples for a wider range of possible passions. The *terminus* for the discharge after the emotional crisis, κουφίζεσθαι, is borrowed from the medicine, as we can see in the Pseudo-Aristotelian Problems.¹¹ It is important that the discharge of the respective passions is bound up with pleasure (κουφίζεσθαι μετ' ἡδονῆς).

Thus, the case of the enthousiastic melodies is settled also. Their aim is the release of passions by homoeopathic musical therapy, which was usual in the bacchic ritual with phrygian aulos-music, as we shall see. About the invigorating melodies (πρακτικὰ μέλη) Aristotle has nothing to say - if we do not adopt a convincing correction of the transmitted text by Sauppe: "In the same way invigorating melodies also provide harmless delight for people (ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ μέλη τὰ πρακτικὰ [Sauppe; καθαρτικὰ *codd.*] παρέχει χαρὰν ἀβλαβῆ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις; 1342 a15/16, translation Barker). Thus, the invigorating melodies have found their aim also: it is harmless pleasure which contributes to amusement (διαγωγῆ), for the sake of relaxation (ἄνεσιν) and relief from tension (ἀνάπαυσιν), thus affording a good way of life..

3. The spectators in the theater.

Aristotle does not specify the musical means for enthousiastic and invigorating melodies. He requests only the permission for the contestants in the theater, to use the

¹¹*Problems* 868 a36: κουφίζεσθαι ἐκ τῶν περιπρωμάτων (about the excretion of superfluous humours); 873 b21/22: παρ' αὐτοῖς δὲ γενόμενοι οἱ αὐτοί, κουφισθέντες τοῦ πάθους (after intoxication by drunkennes).

respective harmoniai and melodies. This leads to a lengthy excursus about the spectators of theatrical performances, which consist of free and educated men (ἐλεύθεροι καὶ πεπαιδευμένοι) on the one hand, of vulgar people, artisans, hired menials and similar folks on the other hand (1342 a19-21), which must have their spectacles and contests for relief from tension (ἀνάπαυσις) also. The souls of these folks are said to be bent away from their natural composure, just as there are deviating harmonies and melodies which are high-pitched and over-chromatized. But as everybody enjoys pleasure according to his nature (ποιεῖ δὲ ἡδονὴν ἑκάστοις τὸ κατὰ φύσιν οἰκεῖον), the contestants in theatrical spectacles must have the liberty to use this kind of music in front of this class of spectators also.

This section reminds us of a puzzling chapter in Plato's *Laws*, where he installs different competitions for choral lyric and dance for children, young men and maidens on the one hand, and monodic genres on the other hand, which are imitative (περὶ μονωδίαν τε καὶ μιμητικὴν). These competitions are reserved for Rhapsodes, Citharodes and Aulos-Players.¹² Aristotle however, in order to defend the theatrical spectacles against Plato, admits only the lower class and adult citizens as listeners of invigorating and enthusiastic music in the theater, while he limits the music for children: "But for education, as we have said, we must use those melodies that are moral, and harmoniai of the same sort. The Dorian is of this kind, as we said earlier [sc. 1340 b3/4]" (1342 a28-30, translation Barker). But this does not exclude other harmonies, insofar as they may be qualified as moral.

4. Two Polemics against the Socrates in the Republic.

It is puzzling that Aristotle seems to loosen his strict norm, the privileged position of the Dorian harmonia in education, in the last sections of *Politics*. This might perhaps find an explanation by a new source: "But we should accept any other harmonia that is recommended to us by those who are participants in the pursuits of philosophy and in musical education (1342 a 31 δέχεσθαι δὲ δεῖ κάῳ τινα ἄλλην ἡμῖν δοκιμάζωσιν οἱ κοινωνοὶ τῆς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατριβῆς καὶ τῆς περὶ μουσικὴν παιδείας, translation Barker). Earlier, Aristotle had already quoted contemporary musical experts (1341 b27/28: τῶν δὲ **ῥῶν** μουσικῶν ἐνίους). We have to ask if the "participants in the

¹²Plato, *Laws* 6, 764-766).

pursuits of philosophy" quoted for the polemics against the Socrates of the *Republic* in the last sections of *Politics* might be identified with Aristoxenos, the pupil of Aristotle. Therefore, we have to establish the biography of Aristoxenos:¹³

Aristoxenos was born in Tarentum. His *floruit* is the 111th Olympiad = 336-332 B.C. (Fr. 1 Wehrli). He went from Mantinea to Corinthus, where he met Dionysius II after 344 B.C. His visit to Thebes (Fr. 6 Wehrli) cannot be dated. When Aristotle entered the Platonic academy (367 B.C.) Aristoxenos was about 5 years old. When Plato died (347 B.C.) Aristoxenos was about 25 years old. This excludes an early contact of Aristoxenos with Aristotle. Later, Aristoxenos was pupil of Aristotle (Fr. 1/ 2 Wehrli) in the peripatos (335/34-322). After the death of Aristotle in 322 B.C. he applied for succession and made scandalous remarks about the election of Theophrastus (Fr. 1 Wehrli). Nevertheless, he was pupil of Theophrast also and παράσιτος of Neleus (Fr. 62 Wehrli). Thus, the older stratum of *Politics*, which we should like to assign to the academic period of Aristotle (see above), cannot have been influenced by Aristoxenos. But it is possible that Aristotle later, after the foundation of his own school, the Peripatos, reworked the end of his manuscript (1342 a30-42 b34), wishing to integrate suggestions of his pupil Aristoxenos.

The first polemic against the Socrates of Plato points to an inconsequence: Socrates retains in the musical chapter of the *Republic* (III 399) only the Phrygian along with the Dorian (οὐ καλῶς τὴν φρυγιστὶ **μόνην** καταλείπει μετὰ τῆς δωριστί), while he dismisses all high-pitched and low-pitched harmonies.¹⁴ On the other hand Socrates banishes the aulos, the phrygian instrument κατ' ἐξοχήν, from the ideal state. This is the introduction of an interesting excursus on the phrygian harmonia (1342 b3-12):

"Among the harmoniai the Phrygian has the same power as does the aulos among instruments: both induce ecstasy and emotion (ὄργιαστικὰ καὶ παθητικά). For all bacchic revelry and all dancing of that sort is done to the auloi more than to any other instrument, and this things also find what is appropriate to them in phrygian melodies, out of all the harmoniai. Poetry itself makes it clear how the dithyramb is by common consent a phrygian form" (1342 b1-7, translation Barker).

¹³See Wehrli (1967), Fr. 1-9. S. 47/48.

¹⁴Plato *Republic* 398 e: Τίνας οὖν θρηνώδεις ἄρμονίαι ... μειξολυδιστί ... καὶ συντονολυδιστί ... Τίνας οὖν μαλακαί τε καὶ συμποτικά τῶν ἄρμονιῶν; Ἰαστί ... καὶ λυδιστί αὖ τινες χαλαραὶ καλοῦνται.

After this Aristotle adopts from his source (πολλὰ παραδείγματα λέγουσιν οἱ περὶ τὴν σύνεσιν ταύτην) an example, a story about Philoxenus' dithyrambus *Mysians*.¹⁵ According to it Philoxenus tried to compose his *Mysians* in dorian harmony, but the nature of the dithyrambus itself (ὕπὸ τῆς φύσεως αὐτῆς) forced him back to the appropriate phrygian harmonia.¹⁶ The nucleus of this story might have been that Philoxenus used in the *Mysians* bold modulations of tonality. Indeed, for the dithyramps of Philoxenus, Timotheus and Telestes modulations from Dorian to Phrygian and Lydian are attested.¹⁷ This is confirmed by an other version of the same story, told evidently by Aristoxenus,¹⁸ mentioning Philoxenos as an example for modulations from Hypodorian to Phrygian and Hypophrygian and finally to Dorian and Hyperdorian in his *Mysians*. This variant of the story makes sense. Evidently it was wrongly understood by Aristotle as a proof for the cogent phrygian nature of the dithyrambus. The whole excursus about Phrygian must be integrated into the context of the Aristotelian polemic against the Socrates of Plato, who positioned Phrygian on a par with Dorian in the *Republic* (III 399) at the expense of the other, perhaps better qualified harmoniai.

Finally, Aristotle finds some new qualities of Dorian (1342 b12-17): it is not only, according to general consent, the most steadfast and manly harmonia, but keeps also the middle position between the high-pitched and low-pitched harmonies. This is a central aristotelian idea (ἔτι δ' ἐπεὶ τὸ μέσον μὲν τῶν ὑπερβολῶν ἐπαινοῦμεν καὶ χρῆναι διῶκέιν φαμεν, 1342 b14/15). Therefore the Dorian must be privileged in the education of the youth. Yet, this does not exclude other harmoniai, as we shall see immediately. Only the Phrygian is ruled out completely by Aristoteles.

The last section (1342 b17-34) is framed by two new aspects (σκόπιοι, ὅροι), the possible (δυνατὸν) and the proper (πρέπον), which are completed at the end to three by the aristotelian μέσον: "everyone should set his hand to things that are possible and things that are fitting" (1342 b18-20, translation Barker). As this section seems to contradict the norm Aristotle has set out earlier (1342 a27-29) by admitting low-pitched harmoniai (ἀνειμένας ἀρμονίας) with regard to elder people, and the high-pitched

¹⁵1342 10 διθύραμβον τοὺς Μυσοὺς Reiz, Schneider, διθύραμβον τοὺς μύθους *codd.*

¹⁶For the *Mysians* see West (1992) 364/65.

¹⁷Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De comp. Verb.* 131 f.

¹⁸Pseudo-Plutarch *De Musica* 1142 F: ὁ ποιητής {sc. Philoxenos}, οἷον εἰπεῖν, ἐν Μυσοῖς (Bergk, ἐν μούσοις *vel* μούσαις *codd.*).

variety of the Lydian to the children, Susemihl has attributed the whole section to an interpolator. We might prefer to attribute it again to a suggestion of Aristoxenos, which was imperfectly integrated by Aristotle: "For this reason some musical experts quite fairly find faults with Socrates for excluding the relaxed harmoniai from education" (1342 b 23: διὸ καλῶς ἐπιτιμῶσι καὶ τοῦτο Σωκράτει τῶν περὶ τὴν μουσικὴν τινες, ὅτι τὰς ἀνειμένας ἀρμονίας ἀποδοκιμάσειεν εἰς τὴν παιδείαν; translation Barker). With <περὶ τὴν μουσικὴν τινες> Aristotle might point to the same person as Οἱ κοινωνοὶ τῆς ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατριβῆς καὶ τῆς περὶ τὴν μουσικὴν παιδείας (1342 a31/32). The source for the story told about Philoxenus' Mysians (1342 b8/9 οἱ περὶ τὴν σύνεσιν ταύτην) is, as we have seen, Aristoxenus (see above). A parallel to the two polemics against the Socrates in the *Republic* might point in the same direction:

In chapters 17-22 of *De Musica* of Pseudo-Plutarch the source, Aristoxenus, tries to explain by a series of examples, why the representatives of good old music, the παλαιοί, used only a restricted compass of musical means: it was not because of ignorance (οὐκ ἄγνοια) but because of deliberate preference (προαίρεσις). This pattern (οὐκ ἄγνοια, ἀλλὰ διὰ προαίρεσιν) permeates the whole section and is extended to Plato also.¹⁹ The last example stresses "that it was not through ignorance or lack of familiarity with them that Plato rejected the other styles, but because they were unsuitable for the kind of state he discusses" (Δεδειγμένου δ' ὅτι ὁ Πλάτων οὐτ' ἄγνοια οὐτ' ἀπειρία τὰ ἄλλα παρητήσατο, ἀλλ' ὡς οὐ πρόποντα <τῇ> τοιαύτῃ πολιτείᾳ, translation Barker). The προαίρεσις of Plato, his will to regulate the education of the soldiers of the Ideal state, is clear enough. And the first example connects the ἄγνοια-προαίρεσις-pattern with Aristoxenos:

"Since one of these harmonies [tense Lydian] is mournful and the other [slack Lydian] dissipated, it was only to be expected that Plato would reject them, and select Dorian as being appropriate for warlike and temperate men. This was most certainly not, as Aristoxenus says in the second book of his work *On Music*, because Plato was ignorant of the fact that the other two harmoniai can also be of use to a well-ordered state" (1136 EF: Τούτων δὴ τῶν ἀρμονιῶν τῆς μὲν θρηνηδικῆς τινος οὔσης, τῆς δ'

¹⁹*De Musica* 1136 E (Plato), 1137 A (παλαιοί, Olympus, Terpander), 1137 B (παλαιοί), 1137 D (Olympus, παλαιοί), 1137 E (Aeschylus, Phrynichus, Pancrates), 1137 EF (Pancrates: οὐ δι' ἄγνοϊαν οὖν δηλονότι, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν ἀπέχετο), 1138 A (contemporary conservative komponists: διὰ προαίρεσιν), 1138 (οἱ παλαιοὶ οὐ δι' ἄγνοϊαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ προαίρεσιν ἀπέχοντο), 1138 E (Plato).

έκκελυμένης, εϊκότως ό Πλάτων παραιτησάμενος αὐτὰς τὴν Δωριστὶ ὡς πολεμικοῖς ἀνδράσι καὶ σῶφροσιν ἀρμόζουσιν εἴλετο, οὐ μὰ Δι' ἀγνοήσας, ὡς Ἄριστόξενός φησιν ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τῶν μουσικῶν [Fr. 82 Wehrli], ὅτι καὶ ἐν ἐκείναις τι χρήσιμον ἦν πρὸς πολιτείαν φυλακικὴν; translation Barker).

The link between Aristoxenus in *De Musica* and Aristotle's Polemics against the Socrates in the *Republic* is the admission of low-pitched and high-pitched harmoniai beside the Dorian instead of the orgiastic Phrygian. But while Aristoxenos tries to explain the musical poverty of the platonic Ideal State by Plato's προαίρεσις despite his better knowledge, the sources of Aristotle attack the platonic Socrates overtly (1342 a33: οὐ καλῶς; 1342 b23: καλῶς ἐπιπιμῶσι). This does not exclude the possibility that we read in both polemics against Socrates suggestions of Aristoxenus.²⁰

For the admission of slack Lydian and tense Lydian the *Politics* offer a weak excuse "For the sake, then, of a later stage of their lives, that of old men, people should practise harmoniai and melodies of these kinds too, and also any other such harmonia there may be that is suitable for children's time of life because of its capacity to contain both elegance and educativeness together, something that seems to apply to the [tense] Lydian harmonia more than to any other" (1342 b27-33: ὥστε καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐσομένην ἡλικίαν, τὴν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, δεῖ καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἀρμονιῶν ἄπτεσθαι καὶ τῶν μελῶν τῶν τοιοῦτων. ἔτι δ' εἴ τις ἐστὶ τοιαύτη τῶν ἀρμονιῶν ἢ πρέπει τῇ τῶν παίδων ἡλικίᾳ διὰ τὸ δύνασθαι κόσμον τ' ἔχειν ἅμα καὶ παιδείαν, οἷον ἢ λυδιστὶ φαίνεται πεπονηθῆναι μάλιστα τῶν ἀρμονιῶν ... translation Barker). After that there follows nothing more than a nonsensical repetition of the σκόποι (ὄροι) of education, the μέσον, δυνατόν and πρέπον, which leaves all open questions unanswered. Perhaps the librarian, who was in charge to assemble the posthumous papers of Aristotle, tried to give the unfinished book 8 of *Politics* by this repetition some kind of conclusion. At all events, the syntax of the end of book 8 is chaotic: for the protasis ἔτι δ' εἴ τις ἐστὶ ... μάλιστα τῶν ἀρμονιῶν cannot be followed by the apodosis δῆλον ὅτι τούτους ὄρους τρεῖς ποιητέον εἰς τὴν παιδείαν, τό τε μέσον καὶ τὸ δυνατόν καὶ τὸ πρέπον. Therefore Susemihl suspected a *lacuna* before δῆλον.

5. The Katharsis in Aristotle's Politics and Poetics.

²⁰For a different reading of the clause ὡς Ἄριστόξενός φησιν see Angelo Meriani, *Sulla Musica Greca Antica*, Napoli 2003, 72-74.

Aristotle was content in *Politics* 1341 b38-40 to explain the meaning of κάθαρσις in general (νῦν μὲν ἀπλῶς) and promised to deal with it more clearly in his treatise on poetry (ἐροῦμεν σαφέστερον). But in the *Poetics* as they are transmitted, κάθαρσις appears only twice, once in the familiar sense of ritual purification,²¹ and once more in the famous definition of the tragedy, which is understood as a imitation of a serious action ... producing by pity and fear a katharsis of such emotions (1449 b24-28: τραγωδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας ... δι' ἑλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν). The first book of *Poetics* deals with poetry in general, tragedy and epic poetry, while the second book of *Poetics*, which is lost, treated comedy. As it is extremely improbable that Aristotle attributed to comedy something like katharsis,²² we have to understand his definition²² of tragedy on the basis of his comments on katharsis in *Politics*, which is possible:

Aristotle mentions the *terminus* κάθαρσις first (1341 b38-41) as one of the three aims of music, which are education (παιδεία), connected with moral (ἠθικαί) harmonies and melodies, purgation (κάθαρσις), connected with inspirational (ἐνθουσιαστικά) harmonies and melodies, and finally amusement (διαγωγὴ) for relaxation (ἄνεσις) and relief from tension (συντονίας ἀνάπαυσις), connected with invigorating (πρακτικά) harmonies and melodies.

Enthousiastic music is linked with the auloi and the phrygian harmonia and thus intimately connected with bacchic rites (1342 b1-6). Both are able to induce ecstasy (ὄργιαστικά) and emotion (παθητικά). The emotions aroused by enthousiastic music may be pity (ἔλεος), fear (φόβος) and ecstasy (ἐνθουσιασμός). People who are prone to excess in such affections can receive a therapy by listening to more enthousiastic music (ἐξοργιάζοντα μέλη) out of the store of dionysiac melodies (ἱερά μέλη) until they are discharged of their emotions (κάθαρσις), as if they had received a medicament (ὥσπερ ἰατρείας τυχόντας καὶ καθάρσεως). But the same mode of operation is effective with ordinary people: they also are discharged by enthousiastic music of their respective emotions by κάθαρσις, which is pleasing evacuation (κουφίζεσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῆς). All in all, it appears that the aristotelian notion of katharsis has its roots as well

²¹*Poetics* 1455 b14/15; see above p.■.

²²See Egert Pöhlmann, "Die Komödie und die Klassik", in: Egert Pöhlmann, *Studien zur Bühnendichtung und zum Theaterbau der Antike*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, 213-226.

in ritual as in medicine. A similar mode of operation is attributed to the invigorating (πρακτικά) harmonies and melodies (1342 a7-16).

Already in 1342 a2-4 Aristotle had stressed that only morally accepted music (ἠθικά) might be practised in education, while invigorating (πρακτικά) and inspirational (ἐνθουσιαστικά) music should be relegated to professionals for the delight of the listeners. This kind of music is incompatible with education, but falls into the competence of professionals competing in the theatre before a public, which consists of free citizens and vulgar people like artisans and labourers (1342 a16-28). Thus, their aim is not education, but pleasure according to the nature of everybody (ποιεῖ δὲ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἑκάστοις τὸ κατὰ φύσιν οἰκεῖον).

The aspect of pleasure (ἡδονή) provides a bridge from the *Politics* to the *Poetics*, where Aristotle considers pleasure (ἡδονή) and imitation (μίμησις) the two natural causes of poetry.²³ As for Aristotle the aim of poetry is not education, but pleasure, he has to define the aesthetic pleasure (ἡδονή) of epic poetry, tragedy and comedy, which is produced by μίμησις. Aesthetic pleasure is specific (οἰκεῖον) for every kind of poetry. The pleasure of epic poetry is the astonishment at the supernatural (*Poetics* 60 A 17: τὸ δὲ θαυμαστὸν ἡδύ). Epic poetry and tragedy produce different aesthetic pleasure (*Poetics* 62 B 13/14: δεῖ γὰρ οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἡδονὴν ποιεῖν αὐτὰς ἄλλή τὴν εἶρη μένην). The aesthetic pleasure of tragedy and comedy is different. Not the pleasure of tragedy, but the pleasure of comedy, the laughter, might arise when the arch-enemies Orestes and Aegisthus would leave in a parody of the mythos the stage as best friends (*Poetics* 53 A 35/38: ἔστιν δὲ οὐχ αὕτη ἀπὸ τραγωδίας ἡδονὴ ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τῆς κωμωδίας οἰκεία ... οἶον Ὀρέστης καὶ Αἴγισθος φίλοι γενόμενοι ἐπὶ τελευτῆς ἐξέρχονται). The tragedy must not aim at every kind of pleasure, but only to the specific one (*Poetics* 53 B 10/11: οὐ γὰρ πᾶσαν δεῖ ζητεῖν ἡδονὴν ἀπο τραγωδίας ἀλλὰ τὴν οἰκείαν), as the pleasure of tragedy is produced by compassion and fear (*Poetics* 53 B 11-14: ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου διὰ μιμήσεως δεῖ ἡδονὴν παρασκευάζειν τὸν ποιητὴν, φανερόν ὡς τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐμποιητέον).

Pity and fear arise, as we see, from the construction of the plot, but similarly from

²³ *Poetics* 48 B 4-19, esp.4/5: *Poetics* 48 B 4-9: Ἐοίκασι δὲ γεννηῆσαι μὲν ὅλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτία δύο τινές καὶ αὐτὰ φυσικά. τό τε γὰρ μιμεῖσθαι σύμφυτον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ... καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας.

the visual impressions (*Poetics* 1453 B 1-3: Ἔστιν μὲν οὖν τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ ἔλεεινὸν ἐκ τῆς ὄψεως γίνεσθαι). From the *Politics*, we have to supply that the acoustic impressions contributed to a high extent to the impressions of tragedy (see above p.■). We must not forget that even the late tragedies of Euripides contain not more than about 70 % of spoken dialogue-verse, the trimeters. The rest is more or less music, not only chorusses, monodies and amoibaia, but also anapaestic and trochaic sections, which held the middle between song and speech. The prevailing instrument for accompaniment was the aulos, which, as the *Politics* remind us, had the same effects as the Phrygian: both are orgiastic and emotional (*Politics* 1342 b3: ἄμφω γὰρ ὄργια στικὰ καὶ παθητικά).

6. Misunderstanding the κάθαρσις τῶν παθημάτων.

Given the background of the *Politics*, there seem to be no problems in understanding the definition of tragedy in the *Poetics*. But the problems begin with the translations, especially in German. By translating ἔλεος καὶ φόβος by "Furcht und Mitleid" the greek notions assume a christian and after Lessing a wrong philanthropic colour. The second problem is the meaning of the genitive case in the κάθαρσις παθημάτων. While the *Politics* with κάθαρσις καὶ κουφίζεσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῆς (*Politics* 1342 a14: discharging and release [of pity and fear] with pleasure) point clearly to a *genetivus separativus*, Lessing in his "Hamburgische Dramaturgie"²⁴ tried to see something like a *genetivus objectivus*: "Da nämlich ... diese Reinigung in nichts anderem beruht, als in der Verwandlung der Leidenschaften in tugendhafte Fertigkeiten ..." (As this purgation is nothing but the transformation of the affections into virtuous dispositions). Of course Lessing was biased by his intention to establish a humanistic-philanthropic tragedy. Already Jacob Bernays²⁵ had refuted Lessings opinion. But the philanthropic reading of the *Poetics* survived. Wolfgang Schadewaldt, after having followed the history of the meanings of the words ἔλεος καὶ φόβος, recommended the translation by "Schauer und Jammer", which is much closer to the the greek language, and brought together all arguments in favour of a *genetivus*

24Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Hamburgische Dramaturgie 78. Stück, Den 29. Januar 1768.

25Jacob Bernays, "Grundzüge der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über die Wirkung der Tragödie. in: "Zwei Abhandlungen über die Aristotelische Theorie des Drama, Berlin 1889, 1-132.

separativus in the κάθαρσις παθημάτων.²⁶ His pupil Hellmut Flashar²⁷ has demonstrated that the aristotelian notion of κάθαρσις has its roots in greek medical thinking. Nevertheless, the discussion is still open. Thus, I should like to resume the main facts:

1. The *Poetics* are not a history of tragedy of the fifth and fourth century B.C., but a normative *techne*, derived mainly from Sophocles' tragedies.

2. In the eyes of Aristotle, the greek theatre had nothing to do with education, but was a place for the pleasure of all adult citizens, who see, listen and hear tragedies, satyr-plays and comedies.

3. The aim of tragedy is pleasure, which originates from the katharsis (discharging) of affections, namely pity and horror.

4. The aforesaid affections are aroused by the plot of the tragedy, but also by the visual and musical impressions.

5. The music of tragedy used therefore emotional and orgiastic harmonies like Phrygian and instruments like the aulos, which are relegated from the education of children.

²⁶Wolfgang Schadewaldt, Furcht und Mitleid, in: *Hellas und Hesperien*, Zürich und Stuttgart 1960, 346-388.

²⁷Hellmut Flashar, "Die medizinischen Grundlagen der Lehre von der Wirkung der Dichtung in der Griechischen Poetik", in: *Eidola*, Amsterdam 1989, 109-145.