The Lamenting Brain: Emotion, Action and the Journey of Feelings in the Actor's Mournful Art

Panagiotis Papageorgopoulos

Department of Drama and Theatre

Royal Holloway College

University of London

Submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2009

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a University or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

1/12/2009

Panagiotis Papageorgopoulos

ABSTRACT

This thesis is motivated by the question of how and why actors perform and experience emotion, especially in cases when the emotional demands are as extreme and urgent as in Greek tragedy. In order to answer this question the thesis embarks on two main tasks: (a) to reappraise the position, function and technique of emotion in the work of four key practitioners of twentieth century Western acting (Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Brecht and Grotowski) from the point of view of contemporary neuroscience, and (b) to trace their original paradigm in the professional mourners' psychotechnique of emotion, as found in ancient and modern Greek ritual lamentation for the dead.

The first part of the thesis attempts to reread and reframe twentieth century western acting's technique of emotion by adopting the radically new neuroscientific paradigm of emotion, which reappraises emotion as a catalytic faculty in the formation of motivation, decision-making, reasoning, action and social interaction. It appears that the general shift of emphasis of twentieth century acting theory from emotion to action, as epitomised in the Stanislavskian *Method of Physical Actions*, was in reality a shift from feeling to emotion. The second part of the thesis investigates how Greek professional mourners (*aoidoi*) manage to generate feelings in their audience, by simulating the symptoms of grief, while also motivated by a naturalistic stance towards the community, life and death. By juxtaposing neuroscientific, theatrical and anthropological data, the thesis concludes that both actors and lamenters function as *psychagogoi* and share a common basic emotional psychotechnique, which relies on building and delivering a score of emotional action that combines physiological knowledge with memory, imagination and real pain. The findings are tested for their efficiency and limitations through documentation of the rehearsal process of Euripides' *Trojan Women*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES, PLATES AND TABLES

ABREVIATIONS

AA   *Active Analysis* (Stanislavski's latest rehearsal method, which he developed during the years 1934-8. In this approach the actor approaches the character gradually, through structured improvisations (*études*) on specific facts and events of the play, rather than deciding on the character's actions beforehand).

ANS   *Autonomic Nervous System* (The part of the nervous system that mediates and controls many important visceral and unconscious functions).

AW   *An Actor's Work: A Student's Diary.*

CNS   *Central Nervous System* (The part of the nervous system that coordinates all other bodily functions).

CRT   *Core Relational Themes* (The thematic essence of the appraisal of a given emotion).

ECS   *Emotionally Competent Stimulus* (Type of innate or learned stimuli that can activate an emotional reaction).

EM   *Emotional memory* (The faculty of memory that enables the re-experience of a remembered emotion).

GC   *Given circumstances* (All the information that we can infer about the dramatic world of the play, which affects the characters actions and promotes the plot).

GIT   *Gastrointestinal Tract.*

IM   *Imaginative Memory* (A non-scientific term used in this thesis to describe the closely related functions and faculties of memory and imagination).

MAT   *Moscow Art Theatre.*

MPA   *Method of Physical Actions* (Stanislavaski's key psychotechnical concept, which relies on the Jamesian premise that actors—like all other people—first act and then feel. As a result of this, an actor can anchor the generation of emotion and feeling in a score of actions).

PAG   *Periaquedactal Gray* (The grey matter located in the midbrain which is involved in pain, sexual and various emotional-motor behaviours).

PNS   *Parasympathetic Nervous System* (The part of the nervous system that prepares the body for rest-and-digest behaviours).

SNS[1]   *Somatic Nervous System* (The part of the peripheral nervous system that processes sensory information from the environment and the body and controls voluntary movement).

SNS   *Sympathetic Nervous System* (The part of the autonomic nervous system that prepares the organism for fight-or-flight behaviours).

VM   *Ventromedial prefrontal cortex* (A part of the prefrontal cortex in the frontal lobe that plays, among others, an important role in the generation of feelings and decision-making).

Introduction

The research documented in this thesis was motivated by the extremely unpleasant feeling of being in a dead-end that I have often experienced, both as an actor and a director, when realising that, despite all efforts, my acting or my actors' acting was unable to reach the desired quality or intensity of the character's emotion in a given scene, or that it was impossible to repeat with consistency a previously achieved emotional state from one performance to the other. How is the actress playing Andromache in the *Trojan Women* going to deal emotionally with the scene when the Greeks announce to her that they will hurl her son Astyanax off the walls of Troy? In less extreme situations, how is the actor playing Andrei in *The Three Sisters* going to be simultaneously genuine and repeatedly precise in delivering specific emotional sequences and rapidly alternating affective nuances given by the author such as 'Andrei cries'?[1] Performing and experiencing emotional scenes, or achieving genuine and consistent repetition of emotion whenever demanded by the author or the director, pose the exact same problem: how is control over the actor's emotions gained and maintained?

Every time that I directed or acted in a play, a Greek tragedy in particular, where emotion oozes through every word, this unpleasant feeling kept returning more and more urgently, and it was clear that despite my rather pluralistic training as a performer and director there was something wrong with my emotion *technique*, regardless of whether applied in tragedy, or in any other kind of play. Because I instinctively endorsed and sought emotion in the actor, I needed to clarify, by shuffling through my available tools and training history, how I could stand up for such challenging moments in acting, and how I could help actors—myself included—achieve them in both rehearsal and performance. It appeared, though, that, not only had I never and nowhere been offered a systematic training in approaching emotion, but the current theatrical reality around me had moved past issues of emotion in acting and was in fact disapproving the research on emotion as an unnecessary step backwards. Yet, working with acting teachers and practitioners from Greece, the UK, the US, Japan, Thailand, Mexico, France, Poland etc., in all sorts of acting seminars or performances, I was always faced with the same

---

[1] Chekhov, A., *The Three Sisters*, Act III.

paradoxical stance towards emotion. Though—in theory—most practitioners sternly discarded emotion from the actor's process or even goals, in their practice, the moments that they thought were effective were those when, to my understanding, the actors were clearly managing to activate their emotions. Emotion was theoretically discarded, but practically sought.

There seemed to be an almost unanimous, yet incomprehensible, worldwide departure from what was viewed as *psychology* and a fascination with *physicality*; a passage from emotion towards action, and actor training was now considered synonymous to *physical* training. The *body* was now speaking, but there was no room for emotion in this new body anymore, because emotion was considered too psychological to be examined through or in the body. Stanislavski's teachings was considered completely dated and irrelevant to contemporary acting and was light-heartedly discarded. Emotional acting in the theatre was practically identified with the American Method Acting, and non-American artists often arrogantly and light-heartedly discarded everything American as 'American', that is, as 'kitsch'. Many schools and groups largely adopted this new paradigm of a *physical theatre*, which was often emotionally appealing to the audience, but, to my understanding, usually at the expense of concrete characters and of speech. Speech, in particular, was usually either absent, minimal, or coldly recited, and often completely dissociated from movement and the organicity of the body, in the name of some oddly understood Brechtian *distancing*.

More often than not, many actors who had mastered relatively high levels of dance theatre technique (myself included) did not have the slightest idea of how they could combine physicality with a character that speaks and has thoughts and emotions, beyond the conventions of physical theatre or of politically correct distancing. The rediscovery in Europe of allegedly *physical* actor training approaches, such as Meyerhold's Biomechanics, as well as the emergence of new alternative approaches to acting, such as Tadashi Suzuki's physical training, ignited an overly generic enthusiasm and emphasis on the body, thus further widening the schism between emotion and the body, between physical and psychological, Stanislavski and Brecht. All in all, the discourse on emotion technique was completely absent from the contemporary agenda. Emotion in the actor was discarded technically, aesthetically and politically, and, to my utter disappointment, this series of clichés was perpetuated without challenging by the new generation of drama and theatre

students, as I came to realise through my teaching experience in Greek Drama Schools and Theatre Departments.

This dead-end was brought to a climax when I attended the GITIS course on Stanislavski and Meyerhold in Moscow, in 2003. The training I received there felt unbelievably more integrative and pioneering than the most advanced workshop on physical theatre I had ever attended. For the first time it became clear to me how physicality could become the basis for character, emotion and speech, rather than being exhausted in dance-like routines and endlessly circular improvisations. Even in GITIS though, where they were obsessed with *action*, and even though I could sense beyond any reasonable doubt that their whole approach was intended to ensure the actor's emotional arousal, emotion was still a taboo. The kind of Stanislavski they were teaching had nothing to do with the *idea* of Stanislavski that had been implanted into my head by Western European theatre practitioners and modernist criticism. There was no indulgence in emotional memories like purist Europeans dreaded, no pumping-up of emotions in order to start a scene, no stage hysteria, and no psychotic identification with a fictional construct. Everything we did was physical, but simultaneously psychological, and it *somehow* managed its way into character and performance, rather than remaining at the periphery of a generalised training schedule, and it was obvious that that approach was emotionally engaging the performers, regardless of whether a scene was performed in a realistic or any other kind of acting *style*. Nevertheless, though what my masters at GITIS understood as emotion was denounced as a tool and the emphasis was placed exclusively on action, it was more than obvious to me that everything was done in order to ultimately ignite emotion in the actor.

Two things became clear then: (1) that there is something completely wrong in the idea about emotion in the West, and (2) that there is something completely wrong in the idea about emotion in acting in the West. The vocabulary of theatre practitioners, especially when it comes to emotion, was and still is too flexible, generic, improvisatory and self-contradictory, so, if the proper relationship between emotion, action and acting were to be investigated amidst the chaotic circularities and self-annihilations of contemporary theatre, a solid and concrete methodological tool was needed. It made sense that all aesthetic, social, political and philosophical arguments about emotion in the Western actor be tested against the limitations of the body itself. My background in

biology was suggesting that although the body has fascinating potential for diversity in the production of behaviour, it also has very strict limitations and definite principles on which it works. Identifying whether the body has specific mechanisms through which it generates emotion, and, therefore, whether a psychotechnique of emotion is indeed possible, became the primary task of this research. By answering this question, I would be able to reappraise the position and function of emotion in life and acting, from a contemporary point of view, and by doing so, I would be able to reassess the psychotechnical tools that the key practitioners of twentieth century Western acting have passed on to us, if any.

This research practically coincided with a breakthrough in the study of emotion in Neuroscience. Historically speaking, Cognitive Psychology, which was the dominant dogma until the 1980's, and even Neurology, had been postponing and practically discarding the study of emotion and feeling, which together with the study of consciousness were considered too intangible to become the objects of concrete scientific experiment and research. Nevertheless, as new methods of monitoring brain processes *in vivo* became available in the Neurosciences, the interest in the physiological basis of emotion was reignited, and a series of groundbreaking findings by researchers such as Antonio Damasio, Paul Ekman, Joseph LeDoux and others, endorsed the neuroscientific study of emotion as a fully legitimate and extremely promising field of scientific research. All in all, these findings were destabilising the long-held cliché concepts of emotion as inferior and opposed to reason and rationality, and they were procuring evidence for universal and concrete neural pathways and patterns of physiological activation during emotion. It was thus becoming clear that the western ideas about emotion, about its nature and its function in the body and in culture were being severely reconsidered from scratch, and, for the first time the arguments for this shift in paradigm were not based on hypotheses and unverifiable theoretical models, but on concrete, hard scientific facts.

I decided to adopt this new neuroscientific paradigm hoping that, apart from allowing me to dissociate fact from fiction in contemporary acting theory, it would give me the ability to isolate a series of concrete tools that I could practically apply in the theatre. The more I worked on tragedy and contemplated the possible techniques that ancient tragic actors may had been employing in order to sustain some of the most emotionally challenging scenes in world drama, the more frustrated I was becoming with

the lack of tangible results in modern performances.   From my experience I felt that few things are as hard for an actor as having to perform any lamentation scene from Greek tragedy. These scenes seemed ultimately challenging for me, not only because of the degree of emotional intensity, but also because of the quality of the specific emotion involved.

Grief and crying are physiologically too difficult to fake and most actors have great difficulty engaging in anything more than watery eyes, especially in the theatre. Furthermore, the issue of tears and sorrow is a very hot issue in Western culture, because it connects a series of polarities that are activated by the concept of emotion (gender, body-mind, power etc.) to the issue of genuine or constructed emotion, and therefore to acting. Even in non-theatrical settings many people in the West find it hard to cry or to overtly express grief, perhaps more than any other emotion, let alone produce it on call, like actors are expected to do.

In Modern Greek the word for hypocrite («*υποκριτής*») denotes a person who fakes behaviour, but is also the ancient word for actor. People who fake emotion are readily characterised as hypocrites, that is, actors. Interestingly, the same term can also be used to describe the fake tears of relatives during funerals, and often the tears of professional mourners, who are invited to mourn in the funerals of non-relatives. Having grown up in Nafplion, Argolis, in a culture where ritual lament is still active, and having experienced genuine emotion at the 'hypocrisy' of such mourners during funerary lamentations, I always sensed a direct relationship in the folk description and reception of actors and mourners alike. More importantly, and given that the omnipresence of lamentation in tragedy apart from a challenge was always a big question for me, I came to assume that both actors and mourners were sharing something in common in the way they activated their experience, or their audience's experience, and that a technique of emotion, in a broader sense, is perhaps available for the first time in the West in the mourner's practice of ritual lament.

I decided to track these two threads of emotion in acting and in lament separately and I initially embarked on a practice-based research, which, apart from the theoretical investigation it also included a fieldwork on ritual lament in two Arvanite villages of Nafplion, as well as the application and testing of my overall findings on a production of Euripides' *Trojan Women* that I would direct and document. After an initial period of

research in emotion and acting theory, I proceeded with my lament fieldwork, which included recorded interviews and sung lament performances by several women of Midea and Limnes in the Nafplion region in Easter 2006, as well as participation in proper funerals or memorial services, during which laments were performed. The findings from this fieldwork were extrapolated against a vast pool of photographs, videos, lament texts and other anthropological research performed in other areas of Greece, such as Mani, Crete, Pontos, Hepirus and Kozani, as well as in countries all over the world. Soon after the completion of the fieldwork and the first thorough reappraisal of my emotion and acting material that followed, I started my preparation for the *Trojan Women*, and started rehearsing. It is during this period when I tried to put my findings into test, but after four months of rehearsal and practical research, and only two weeks before the opening night, the owner of the theatre died, and the venue was locked, due to debts of the theatre owner to the state. The production never met its audience, and as the practice-based research was not completed according to my plans and academic expectations, I had to change the character of the thesis. I decided to work on a traditional research thesis, with the difference that I would now be able to use the practical work I had done as an extra source of information, rather than a crucial part of the thesis itself. It turned out that the findings from the rehearsals had seriously reinforced my arguments and this led me to a substantial rewriting of the entire thesis. As such, this thesis in its final form embarks on two main tasks: (a) to reappraise the position, function and technique of emotion in the work of four key practitioners of twentieth century Western acting (Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Brecht and Grotowski) from the point of view of contemporary neural science, and (b) to trace their original paradigm in the professional mourners' psychotechnique of emotion, as found in ancient and modern Greek ritual lamentation for the dead.

Chapter 1

Influential Theories of Emotion in the West

In this chapter we will examine the most influential theories of emotion in the West until the 1960's (leaving the recent developments in emotion research for later), in order to better understand what the central issues in emotion theory have been. In turn, this will prepare us to reflect on the kind of conceptual frameworks with which acting theories of the twentieth century interacted and within which they viewed emotion, themselves, their actors and their techniques.

1.1. Aristotle

References, comments, and even brief concepts of the *passions*, or what we now generically call *emotions*, exist in Plato, the pre-Socratics and even Homer.[2] In *Phaedrus*, Plato uses the famous metaphor of the charioteer steering a wild horse to liken emotion to the horse and reason to the charioteer.[3] The metaphor sums up a set of beliefs about this relationship between emotion and reason: first, it establishes a distinct dichotomy between the two faculties; second, it suggests that emotion is inferior (as more bestial) to reason, and, third, that reason should assert control over emotions, because emotions are disruptive and primitive.[4] This set of ethical beliefs has exerted significant influence on thinking about emotion in the generations to come, and has credited emotion with a set of mainly moral biases, the impact of which is only recently, and very slowly, changing.

Nevertheless, the first Western philosopher to be offering a more systematic approach to emotion not solely confined to ethics comes with Aristotle. His tripartite *Rhetoric,* a tool for the art of *persuasiveness*[5], is founded upon the axiom (rather than argument), that orators can be trained to persuade, by practically manipulating what he calls their audience's *passions*. Though the *Rhetoric* is not a theory of emotion *per se*, it does focus on

---

[2] B. Koziak, 'Homeric thumos: the early history of gender, emotion and politics', *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 4, 1999, pp. 1068-91.

[3] Plato, *Phaedrus,* 246a - 254e, (transl.) W. Hamilton, Penguin, London, 1973, p. 46f.

[4] J. Zhu, & P. Thagard, 'Emotion and action', *Philosophical Psychology*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2002, p. 19.

[5] Aristotle, *The Art of the Rhetoric*, 1355b, (transl.) H. C. Lawson-Tancred, Penguin, London, 1991, p. 139.

the issue of emotional activation and procures proper definitions of emotion and of some of its features. Aristotle defines emotions (passions) as 'those things by the alteration of which men differ with regard to those judgments which pain and pleasure accompany, such as anger, pity, fear and all other such and their opposites'.[6] He distinguishes three major elements in emotion: a state of mind, an object and some cause.[7] Using this triadic structure he studies anger, calm, friendship, enmity, fear, confidence, shame, favour, pity, indignation, envy and jealousy.
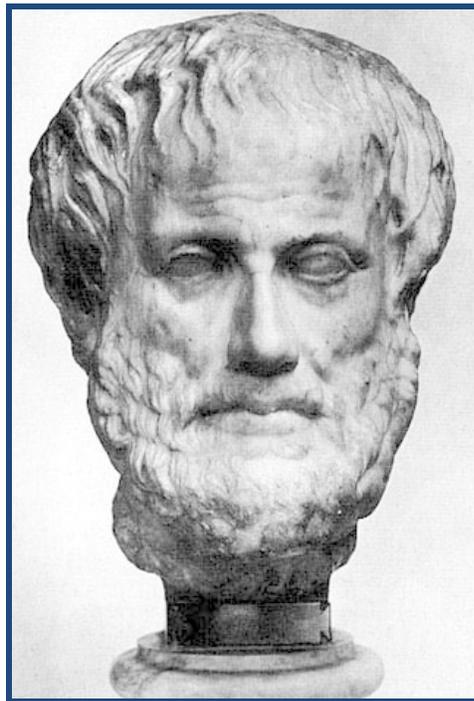
Fig. 1 Aristotle (Stennud, S., 'Aristotle', viewed on 1 November 2009,
<http://www.stenudd.com/myth/greek/images/aristotle.jpg>).

For fear he says: '[l]et fear, then, be a kind of pain or disturbance resulting from the imagination of impending danger, either destructive or painful'[8]. According to his method, in this case pain is the state of mind, danger is the possibly painful or destructive stimulus and the cause is no other than the mental picture of the imminent danger in the imagination.[9] The phrasing suggests a specific physiological order in which things happen: imagination perceives of a stimulus as possibly dangerous and destructive, as a result of

---

[6] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1378a, p. 141.
[7] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1378, p. 141f.
[8] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1382a, p. 153.
[9] «Ἰδέα»- 'idea' in the original. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1381a.

which pain is caused. Therefore the emotion as a state of mind is aroused as a result of a *belief*. Aristotle specifically holds that 'it must be those who think that they will suffer something that are afraid that they will be harmed in certain ways by certain people at a certain time' and that 'none of those who thought that they were going to suffer nothing would fear such things'.[10] It is more than clear here that the factor that controls whether a stimulus will lead to emotion or not is a person's *beliefs,* thus opening the modern issue of *appraisal* or *evaluation*, as we will later see.

It is not at random that Aristotle is considered to be the matrix of the cognitive tradition in emotion theory.[11] *Sine qua non* factors of emotional activation, in all his definitions of emotions are what we now generically call cognitive activities, such as beliefs, judgments, evaluations etc. For anger he says: '[l]et anger, then, be desire, accompanied by pain, for revenge for an obvious belittlement of oneself or one of one's dependants, the belittlement being uncalled for'.[12] Here, the desire (*impulse*) for revenge is a state of mind that cannot be activated, unless a person *evaluates* a stimulus as *insulting* their *concerns*, or unless some *justification* for the insult is provided. Furthermore, the emotion is here associated with a specific *impulse for action*, which is bound to the specific situation brought about by the emotion, in this case of anger.

The study of desire, which Aristotle considers a passion, too, reveals a *developmental* and *social* perspective of emotion as changing according to age. Young men 'tend' to gratify their sexual desires just like 'sick people' do with hunger or thirst attacks, with limited control;[13] elder men have different tendencies, while men in maturity are quite balanced.[14] This developmental understanding of emotion, which suggests that biological determination underlies social organisation, is even clearer in Aristotle's *On the Soul*, where his belief in the unity of the physical and the mental is clearly stated: 'none of the affections [emotions] can exist apart from the body.[15] As Ierodiakonou notes, emotion in *On the Soul* 'is often related to desire and the senses, and somehow indicates a

---

[10] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1382b, p. 155.
[11] A. Hinton, *Biocultural Approaches to the Emotions*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1999, p. 6.
[12] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1378a, p. 141.
[13] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1388b, p. 144.
[14] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1388b, p. 144.
[15] Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 403a6-7, (transl.) W.S Hett, Harvard University Press, Cambridge & London, 1975, p. 15.

psychobiological, rather than a purely psychological function'.[16]

Aristotle's emotions are, therefore, multifaceted. They involve physiology (e.g., pain), cognition (belief), motivation (avoidance of destruction), action tendency (impulse for revenge) and they develop within the framework of a society (men) according to age (maturity). Nevertheless, despite the ingenuousness of his conception, cognition with its connotations of rationality more than anything else, is evidently prominent. Though all emotions are broken down into some pain or pleasure, these latter, together with the notions of evil and good, on which definitions altogether depend, are not devoid of axiomatic moral implications in Aristotle.[17] 'Pleasure' he says[18], is a movement by which the soul as a whole is consciously brought into its normal state of being; and [that] pain is the opposite'. But what is the normal state of being? What is good or evil? We are at the core of his ethics.

Aristotle may not be looking down on emotions the way Plato is, but he is still being rather sceptical about them. He holds that being affected by means other than 'proofs'[19] , that is, because of emotion, is due to the 'baseness of the citizenry'[20] and that this very ability to affect is 'merely ancillary'[21] and 'extrinsic to the business'[22] of persuasion through proofs, therefore the use of emotional speech can 'distract the judge by driving him'[23] into such emotional states, etc. Though he conceives emotion in a holistic way, he does not reject the crucial issue of the ethical dimension of emotion in relation to reason. Unlike Plato, though, his remarks are not exposed in terms of dominance or strict dichotomy, but in contextual terms, where what is needed is not a charioteer, but a moral education that teaches citizens to combine reason and feeling in a wider social context. Anticipating the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI)[24] he said: [a]nyone can become angry-that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right

---

[16] C. S., Ierodiakonou, *Psychological Issues in Aristotle: From a Psychiatrist's Point of View* [Ιεροδιακόνου, Χ. Σ., *Ψυχολογικά Θέματα στον Αριστοτέλη: Από την Πλευρά Ενός Ψυχιάτρου*, Μαστορίδης, Θεσσαλονίκη, 2004], p. 89f, translation by the author.

[17] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1362a; 1363b; 1370a.

[18] Aristotle*, Rhetoric*, 1370a.

[19] *Rhetoric*, 1354a, and by 'proof' he means the 'enthymeme', which he defines as 'rational syllogism'.

[20] *Rhetoric*, 1403b; 1404a.

[21] *Rhetoric*, 1334a.

[22] *Rhetoric*, 1334b.

[23] *Rhetoric*, 1334b.

[24] D. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, Bantam Books, New York, 1995.

degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way-this is not easy'.[25]

Nevertheless, Aristotle's holistic approach to emotion was not enough to disrupt the line of thought that considered reason superior and independent of emotion, and which stood suspicious towards the contribution of emotion to moral integrity. The Stoic tradition that followed, built their doctrine of emotional apathy, the total submission and obliteration of emotion for the sake of a higher reason.[26] Christianity thrived upon further widening the gap between body and mind and officially sealed the understanding of emotion as a base, passive, irrational and immoral faculty. As Robert Solomon notes, within the context of Christian ethics and psychology, emotions were linked to self-absorbed desires, and therefore, to sin[27]. The material body and its tendencies, as the typical field of sin for Christianity, were denounced and the total shift of focus on the spiritual soul, the only proper survivor after death, prohibited any attempt to reconcile a more holistic view of the human body-mind.

---

[25] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1104b13 cited in Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, p. xix.
[26] R. C. Solomon, 'The philosophy of emotions' in *Handbook of Emotions*, (eds.) L. M. Havilland & J. M. Jones, Guildford, New York, 2004, p.5.
[27] Solomon, 'Philosophy of emotions', p. 6.

1.2. René Descartes

Rene Descartes' controversial figure broadened this gap between emotion and reason, based on his body-mind dualism. Paradoxically, Descartes' *Les Passions de l' Âme*[28] was a pioneering attempt to describe and understand emotions in their physiological dimension. Within the mechanistic mentality of his era, he endeavoured to construct a primitive psychophysiological model that would account for the *passions* of the soul[29]. According to his theory, the soul, which does not follow any material rules, is connected to the body through a gland in the brain; the slightest motion of this gland can cause motion of the local animal spirits, and any motion of the spirits causes the gland to move.[30] For Descartes, the passions are 'perceptions or sensations or excitations of the soul which are referred to it in particular and which are caused, maintained and strengthened by some movement of the [animal] spirits'.[31] Causes of the passions are mainly (1) the objects that motivate the senses and, incidentally, the body's constitution, (2) random impressions in the brain and (3) sometimes the action of the soul itself.[32]
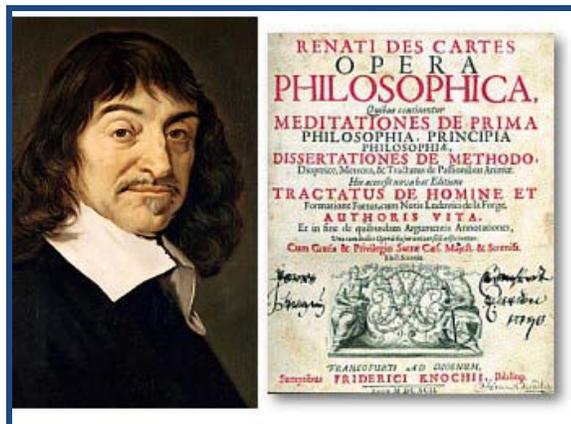
Fig. 2 René Descartes (Hughes, G., 'Rene Descartes meditations of first philosophy', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.btinternet.com/~glynhughes/squashed/descartes.jpg>).

Passions (emotions) develop from one another. Starting from wonder, they expand into three groups-variations of desire, joy or sadness. He recognises six *primary* emotions

---

28 R.. Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, (transl.) S. Voss, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1988.
29 J. R.. Roach, *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2001, pp. 58-92.
30 Descartes, *Passions*, A31, p. 36.
31 Descartes, *Passions*, A27, p. 34.
32 Descartes, *Passions*, A51, p. 50.

(wonder, love, hatred, desire, joy and sadness), from the combinations of which, thirty-four *secondary* emotions occur. Descartes also envisaged a homeostatic function of the passions, when defining their utility as urging the soul to give her consent and contribute in the actions that can be useful to the maintenance of the body or to its best possible perfection.[33] Nevertheless, he added that emotions *distort* the dimension of things[34], so that it is necessary to invoke experience and reason, in order to discern good from evil and get to know their true value, avoiding thus, a confusion of the two and abstaining from any exaggeration.[35]

Descartes' taxonomy of the passions is pioneering not only for its physiological intention but for the differentiation between basic and secondary emotions, as well as for the introduction of wonder as the first emotion, on which all the rest depend. Wonder becomes a matrix, a gate to our emotional experience. Telling from the definition of wonder, in which the surprise at something new is the catalyst[36], in the Cartesian model of emotion it is *novelty* that defines whether a stimulus will activate an emotional response or not. Despite the fact that novelty is a more or less factual criterion, devoid of moral implications, Descartes cannot overcome the belief that emotions ought to be 'mastered'[37] by the rationally accessible constructions of *evil* and *good*, and as such, the animalistic body and its animal spirits remain inferior and hostile to rationality.

It now seems ironic that Descartes' deterministic, psychophysiological model is boycotted by his own idealistic premise: the immaterial substance of the soul. In his treatise, the crucial logical issue of how this soul manages to interact with the different, material substance is left unexplained. We are obliged to accept this difference in substance and the discourse is led directly back into ethics and theological theories. Within this dualistic concept, passions remain an inferior, somatic faculty, distorting reality and threatening rationality. As it is well known, the impact of this dualistic line of thought fully aligned with and supported by all versions of Christianity in the West has been overwhelming and dominant ever since. It is still with us today, though in a different

---

[33] Descartes, *Passions*, A137.
[34] Descartes, *Passions*, A138.
[35] Descartes, *Passions*, A138.
[36] 'When the first encounter with an object surprises us, and we judge it to be new, or very different from what we knew in the past, or what we supposed it was going to be, this makes us wonder and be astonished at it', Descartes, A53, p. 52.
[37] J. Albuquerque, Deshauer, D. & Grof, P., 'Descartes' passions of the soul-seeds of psychiatry?', *Journal of Affective Disorders*, Vol. 76, 2003, pp. 285.

context, and can be traced in the least expected places, such as in scientific terminology[38].

---

[38] For example, 'psychophysiology', 'psychophysical', 'psychosomatic', 'psychology' etc., do not really make sense from a contemporary scientific point of view.

1.3. Charles Darwin

A big blow to this long tradition of dualism and to global thinking in general was given with Darwin's studies in biology and natural selection. Within the concept of evolution, Darwin challenged this dominance of *cognition* as the core in the emotional event, by promoting the notion of *inheritance*. In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals[39]*, based on studies of (1) infants, (2) insane men, (3) the method of muscular galvanisation, (4) art and sculpture, (5) cross-cultural examination of expressions and gestures and (6) lower animals[40], he proposed three principles, which, as he said: '[…]appear to me to account for most of the expressions and gestures involuntarily used by man and the lower animals, under the influence of various emotions and sensations'[41].

The first principle of the *serviceable associated habits* held that:

> When any sensation, desire, dislike etc., has led during a series of generations to some voluntary movement, then a tendency to the performance of similar movement will almost certainly be excited, whenever the same, or any analogous or associated sensation etc., although very weak, is experienced; [...] Such habitual movements are often, or generally inherited; and they differ but little from reflex actions.[42]

Taking up from this first principle that 'certain "states of mind" lead to certain habitual movements'[43], the second principle of the *antithesis* claims that some expressions of man and lower animals that cannot be explained with the first principle, can be understood as actions, which are manifested as physically opposite to the actions explained by the first principle. He explains this by saying that, in this second case, the sets of muscles that are activated are antagonistic to the ones activated in the first case, and that the states of mind they promote are opposite, too.[44] Shrugging the shoulders in helplessness and fear is the action of muscles, which are antagonist to those in the opposite state of anger, where the arms are activated for action. The third principle of the *direct function of the nervous system* holds that 'certain actions, which we recognise as expressive of certain states of mind, are the direct result of the constitution of the nervous system, and have been from the first

---

[39] C. Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, (ed.) P. Ekman, Fontana Press, London, 1999.
[40] Darwin, *Expression*, pp. 20-32.
[41] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 36.
[42] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 33.
[43] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 55.
[44] Darwin, *Expression*, pp. 66-7.

independent of the will, and to a large extent, of habit'[45], implying that neuromuscular activity can give away emotional experience, despite the *will* or the *socially learned* habit or restraint.
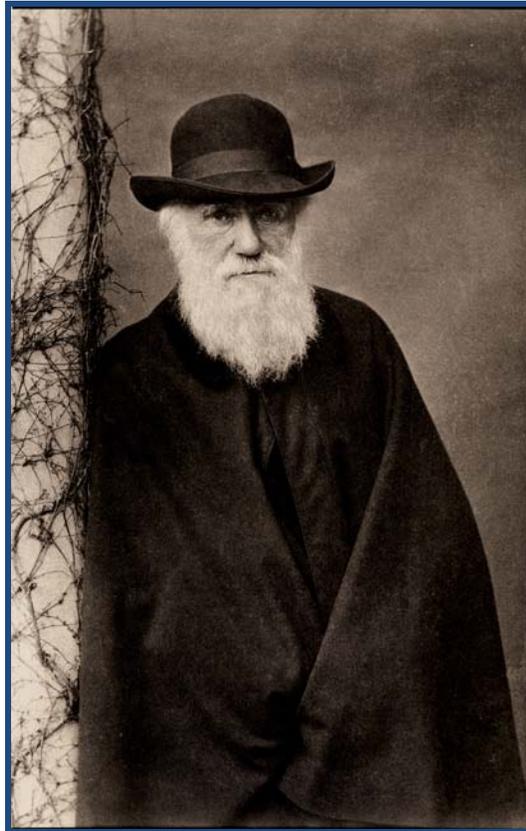
Fig. 3 Charles Darwin (Ely, M., 'What's in a name? Honor Charles Darwin but kiss off Darwinism?', viewed on 1 November 2009, < http://mikeely.wordpress.com/category/science/charles-darwin>).

Darwin's emphasis was primarily on *expression* of emotions, which he viewed as continua rather than units and which he examined in families, such as hatred-anger, surprise-astonishment-fear-horror, anxiety-grief-despair, joy-love-high spirits, and so on. His observation that emotions of the same family differ only in degree and not in physiological form, apart from introducing the dimension of *intensity* it also introduced the concept of emotional *patterns*. Furthermore, he suggested that these *patterns* are, to a great extent, common with homologous ones in animals, another fact that supports the issue of *universality* in humans, as having a common origin from lower forms of being.

Darwin was preoccupied with the *why* behind behaviour. Within his thinking, each

---

[45] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 69.

physical component of the emotion is motivated by a specific goal, a *function* to accomplish. In the case of anger, all the physiological changes that are part and parcel of the emotion are organised in a manner that prepares the organism for biting: 'the heart and circulation are always affected; the face reddens or becomes purple, with the veins on the forehead and neck distended […] The respiration is likewise affected; the chest heaves, and the dilated nostrils quiver […] The excited brain gives strength to the muscles, and at the same time energy to the will. The body is commonly held erect ready for instant action, but sometimes it is bent forwards towards the offending person, with the limbs more or less rigid. The mouth is generally closed with firmness, showing fixed determination, and the teeth are clenched or ground together […] as if to strike the offender. ..The voice sticks to the throat; or it is rendered loud, harsh and discordant […] There is in most cases a strongly-marked frown on the forehead; for this follows from the sense of anything displeasing or difficult, together with the concentration of the mind […] The eyes are always bright […] [the] retraction of the lips and uncovering of the teeth during paroxysms of rage, as if to bite the offender […] etc'.[46] Therefore, expression does not exist for its own sake, but every single 'inherited movement of expression seems to have had some natural and independent origin'.[47] For every single family of emotions a different physiological set of responses is described that accomplishes specific functions. This adaptive understanding of the physiology of emotion established the concept of emotion *patterns*, which has been at the core of emotion discourse ever since.

The implications of Darwin's suggestions were groundbreaking. Emotion became a biosocial, involuntary, inherited reaction (*action tendency*) serving both the purposes of adaptation to environmental stimuli as well as of communication, since the organism's intentions and plans for imminent action were shared through emotional expressions. These expressions and patterns of emotions are *universal*, in that they are similar in all human races and even shared with some animals. The importance of the mediation of cognition in its traditional sense of a conscious evaluation of an emotional (or not) stimulus was reduced to a great extent within the emotional episode sequence and was limited to an *acknowledgment* of the occurring emotion (state of mind). Conscious thoughts, in Darwin's vocabulary, often appear as attempts at concealing the emotional symptoms,

---

[46] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 235f.
[47] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 351.

which, as he says, is almost impossible as there will always be traces of physiological arousal (*leakage*[48], according to Ekman). The new concept that he thus introduces is that emotion is practically its expression. He saw emotions not just as embodied, but as bodily phenomena. The centre of gravity in the discourse on emotion was transferred from the social and ethical construction and control of emotion to *biological regulation* and to the body, in the amoral context of natural selection's own moral code. The body was no longer the seat of base, bestial and disruptive emotions, but the seat of basic, biologically inherited and adaptive, life-saving emotions.

Fig. 15. Cat terrified at a dog. From life, by Mr. Wood.
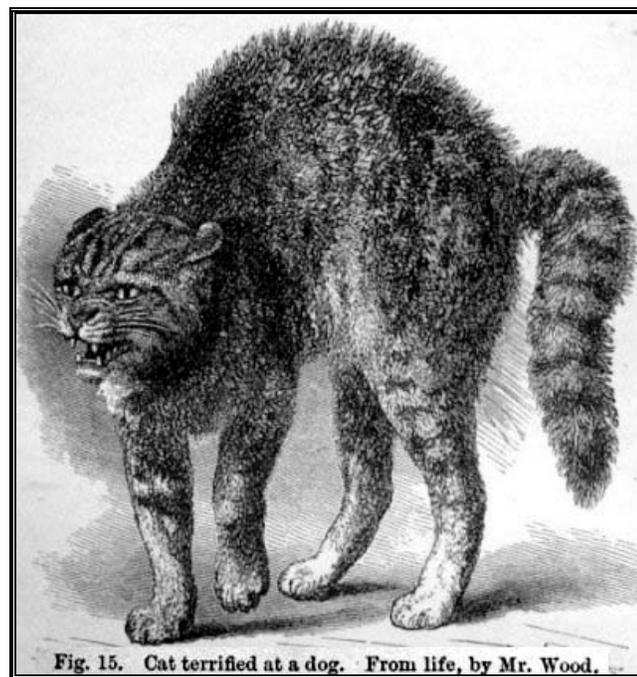
Fig. 4 Cat terrified at a dog (from, Darwin, C., *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*, p. 127).

The inherently revolutionary nature of this line of thought is far from completely understood even today. As Ekman revealed in his editorial comments on the last edition of the *Expression*, one of the reasons why Darwin's work and the related research on biological aspects of emotional behaviour was suppressed by scientific circles of the twentieth century, was the socio-political danger of misinterpreting natural selection behind emotions and the concept of 'survival of the fittest'.[49] His quotation of Margaret

---

[48] P. Ekman, & R. J. Davidson, *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions, Series in Affective Science*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1994, p. 275.

[49] Darwin, *Expression*, p. xxxiv.

Mead's confession of an organised omission of Darwinist and wider biological input in the social study of emotion across cultures is indeed shocking:

> [W]e also recognised that there are dangers in such a formulation because of the very human tendency to associate particular traits with sex or age or race […] and then to make invidious comparisons based on such arbitrary associations. We knew how politically loaded discussions of inborn differences could become; we knew that the Russians had abandoned their experiment in rearing identical twins when it was found that, even reared under different circumstances, they displayed astonishing likenesses. By then [spring 1935] it seemed clear to us [Gregory Bateson and herself] that the further study of inborn differences would have to wait upon less troubled times.[50]

But, Darwin's theory had a much deeper impact on traditional understandings of the self. If emotions are indeed innate, inherited, universal biological relics of some important, rudimentary reactions in the remote past of the human species that served adaptive purposes, then the notions of *will* and *intention* are practically destabilised. This happens, because, if emotions are spontaneous behaviours, then they do not obey our will, we do not decide to activate them, they occur, and possibly for some good reason. Simultaneously though, Darwin admits that the focusing of attention can physically affect the body and interfere with spheres that do not belong to the traditional notion of *will*, as happens in the case of shame, when blood engorges the facial muscles and skin and the face becomes the centre of (social) attention. In this case, the manipulation of attention grants access to the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), a part of the nervous system which was traditionally considered as beyond the reach of *will*. So, emotions are beyond the will, but at the same time, we can exert some influence on them through other processes.

Darwin's impact on science and thought in general is tremendous. The model of the rational man and of his rational morality was for the first time in the West scientifically challenged as inadequate and false. Darwin's studies reminded us that humans are animals, very extraordinary and complex ones indeed, but still animals, and not *sui generis* creations. They are still governed by the same laws that govern the rest of nature. In his context, the human psyche was rooted again back to the body, challenging what is human, rational and voluntary. Through the evolution of emotions he managed to challenge *will*, but this opposition between emotion and will is not just the classic

---

[50] Margaret Mead's *Blackberry Winter* cited in Darwin, p. 445.

dichotomy here. In his concept, emotional activity betrays identity, that is, emotions give a better picture of what human *will* may really be. As he briefly put it, when referring to emotions, 'actions, which were at first voluntary, soon become habitual and at last hereditary, and may then be performed even in opposition to the will'[51], yet, all of them 'reveal the thoughts and the intentions of others more truly than words, which may be falsified'.[52] This is what he calls the 'language of emotions'.[53] Thanks to Darwin, the discourse on emotions, their nature, function and their relation to the forming of consciousness, will and the self was brought to its cutting edge.

---

[51] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 352.
[52] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 359.
[53] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 360.

1.4. The James-Lange theory

Shortly after the publication of Darwin's work in 1872, William James came up in 1890 with a new theory that challenged even further the traditional understanding of emotion and opened a new way in thinking about it. Taking on from Darwin's quest to understand the 'why'[54] behind emotional activity, James argued that 'the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and [that] our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion'[55]; as a result, 'we feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble'[56] and not vice versa.

James took Darwin's theory a few steps further. First he suggested that there are two different kinds of emotion, the 'coarser'[57] and the 'subtler'[58] ones. Coarser are grief, fear, rage and love, while subtler, more 'cerebral forms of pleasure and displeasure', are the 'moral, intellectual, and aesthetic feelings'[59]. In coarse emotions, which are triggered by the same objects that trigger our instincts[60], the triggering 'objects do excite bodily changes by a pre-organised mechanism'.[61] The *state of mind* that other theorists, even Darwin, talked about, was for James nothing but the result of change in the body, which 'is FELT, acutely or obscurely, the moment it occurs'.[62] James believed that if an emotion were stripped off its bodily sensations there would be nothing left to imagine of the emotion. As he eloquently put it: 'a purely disembodied emotion is a nonentity'.[63] What was so far viewed as a state of mind was now being described as the *perception* of the bodily changes.

James' theory imposed the need for scholastic research on the order in which things happen during emotion. He dissociated the expression of an emotion from its experience, a rather blurred area in Darwin. In the order that he suggested, a stimulus activates a pre-organised mechanism (evaluation), the body undergoes changes (expression) and these are felt as emotion (experience). As he said, '*emotion follows upon the bodily expression in the*

---

[54] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 9.
[55] W. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, MacMillan, London, 1890, p. 449.
[56] James, *Principles*, p. 450.
[57] James, *Principles*, p. 499.
[58] James, *Principles*, p. 468.
[59] James, *Principles*, p. 468.
[60] James, *Principles*, p. 442.
[61] James, *Principles*, p. 450.
[62] James, *Principles*, p. 452.
[63] James, *Principles*, p. 452.

coarser emotions at least'.[64] Now the cause (perception) has become the consequence. Though Descartes, for example, was not far from this, when believing that emotions are a result of bodily changes due to motion of the animal spirits, what is now completely different is that the soul, at least its emotions, is not a different substance from the body: the soul has become the body.
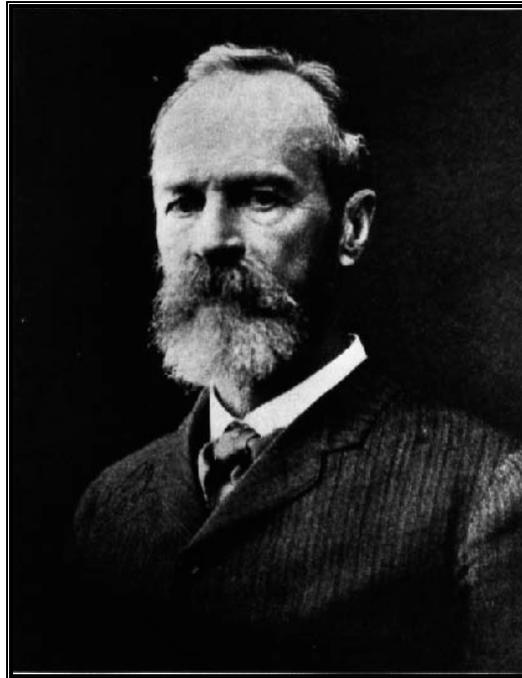
Fig. 5 **William James** (Dillon, B., 'Psyography: Willliam James', viewed on 1 November 2009, < http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/psyography/williamjames.html >).

James' emphasis on the physiological nature of emotion was supported by Karl Lange, who was independently working on the same issue at around the same period, and whose research furnished similar results. Though an actual James-Lange theory of emotion was never articulated, their common findings suggested that emotions entail felt representations of physical changes, dictated, not by cognitive evaluations but, by direct activation of the brain by the environment. This activation occurs almost unconsciously and affects the periphery, skeletal muscles and viscera, whose reports to the brain represent the emotion.[65]

Another topic in James' theory of particular interest to acting is the assumption that

---

[64] James, *Principles*, p. 449.
[65] E. R Kandel et al, *Essentials of Neural Science and Behaviour* [E. R. Kandel, *Νευροεπιστήμη και Συμπεριφορά*, (μτφρ.) Χ. Κάζλαρης, Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης, Ηράκλειο, 2000], p. 624.

if the importance of the periphery is so crucial to the formation of emotion, then deliberate activation of the periphery through simulation of the physiological changes that occur during spontaneous emotion ought to result in the generation of the emotion itself.[66] As we have seen in Darwin too, the observed ability of the nervous system to assume patterns of emotional activation in an automatic, pre-organised manner such as to even evade the power of conscious control (will), is at odds with its simultaneous ability to induce emotion on a voluntary (non-spontaneous) basis, as well. The autonomic nervous system was losing its absolute autonomy and the theory seemed to be jeopardising itself through this peripheral concept.

---

[66] James, *Principles*, p. 487f.

1.5. The Cannon-Bard theory

In 1927, Walter Cannon aimed a great deal of criticism at the James-Lange theory. Supported by Phillip Bard, he doubted the importance of the periphery and, more importantly, of the viscera in the genesis of emotion. Instead of a linear activation of feelings as a result of visceral feedback, he suggested that it is the thalamus, an area in the Central Nervous System (CNS) that relays information from the senses, that commands expressions and feelings 'independently and simultaneously'.[67] The theory was supported with evidence from nerve lesions in animals and injured patients, and held that lesions in the cortices or the afferent[68] visceral nerves did not affect the emotional behaviour. Drawing on Sherrington's studies of the nervous system, Cannon insisted that visceral reactions were too undifferentiated, diffuse, slow and feeble to produce distinct and rapid emotions and that the thalamus (CNS) was the place to look for the spark of emotion, rather than the periphery and the viscera (ANS).[69]

It is not coincidental that the Cannon-Bard theory emerged at a time when behaviourism was becoming the central dogma in psychology.[70] Cannon's critique was based on the study of the *behaviour* of sympathectomised cats, which 'continued to show the usual overt signs of rage in the presence of dogs except erection of the hairs'[71], while the James-Lange theory, on which their criticism mainly focused, was an approach that was dealing with the understanding of subjective change and was describing *felt* experience of physical changes, rather than the generation of the physiological change itself. Therefore, the apparent incompatibility between the two theories, which eventually led to two distinct trends (James-Lange/psychophysiology, Cannon-Bard/neurophysiology[72]), is partly due to research on different objects and different aspects of the emotional episode, and reflects the long-standing difficulty in defining emotion and its constituent elements.

---

[67] J. LeDoux & W. Hirst (eds.), *Mind and Brain: Dialogues in Cognitive Neuroscience*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1987, p. 286.

[68] Afferent pathways transmit (sensory) information from the periphery of the body towards the brain, while efferent pathways transmit (motor) information from the brain to the body.

[69] W. B. Cannon, 'The James-Lange theory of emotion: a critical examination and an alternative theory', *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 39, 1927, pp. 106-24.

[70] C. L. Golightly, 'The James-Lange theory: a logical post-mortem', *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1953, pp. 286-99.

[71] Golightly, 'The James-Lange Theory', p. 296.

[72] Hinton, *Biocultural Approaches*, pp. 4-5.

Though Cannon's arguments, especially about the importance of the periphery in the formation of emotion, are now largely fading[73], the theory provoked a more thorough study of the brain and drew the focus to the interaction between cortical and subcortical areas during emotion, as well as towards a conscientious dealing with the use of order of events in emotion. Despite their discrepancies as to the order of events and the location of the critical neural mechanisms, both theories were clearly based on a physiological study of emotion, moving away from body-mind dichotomies, and opened the way for a serious scientific investigation of the material milieu, in which emotion occurs.

---

[73] LeDoux, *Mind and Brain*, p. 306.

1.6. Behaviourism and emotion

During the first third of the twentieth century *behaviourism* became the prevalent dogma in psychology, challenging the contemporaneous structuralist concept of psychology as the study of mental phenomena through introspective methods. According to the American scientist John Watson, the father of behaviourism, psychology should make a fresh start and become 'a purely objective, experimental branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behavior. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods, nor is the scientific value of its data dependent upon the readiness with which they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness'.[74] The discarding of introspective methods had a significant impact on the study of subjective experience, since emotion, together with consciousness, were too elusive to become the object of hard scientific validation, and therefore research. Though Watson acknowledged emotion as an inherited pattern[75] he believed that nurture was far more defining than nature: '[g]ive me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors. I am going beyond my facts and I admit it, but so have the advocates of the contrary and they have been doing it for many thousands of years'.[76]

Behaviourists held that nurture was mediated by the process of *learning* understood as the construction of relationship between stimuli (S) and responses (R), through repetition or reinforcement. Russian scientist Ivan Pavlov worked on learning through *classical conditioning*, where a response (*Unconditioned Response-UR*) that is usually elicited by the appearance of a specific stimulus (*Unconditioned Stimulus-US*) can be generated by an irrelevant stimulus (*Conditioned Stimulus-CS*), as long as an appropriate time and intensity relationship is built between the two stimuli[77]. In his famous experiment, a dog *learned* to salivate (*Conditioned Response-CR*) when a bell rang (*CS*), because the bell had been

---

[74] J. B. Watson, 'Psychology as a behaviourist views it', *Psychological Review*, 1913, Vol. 20, pp. 158
[75] Watson cited in R. Plutchik, *Emotion: A Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, Harper and Row, New York, 1980, p. 23
[76] J. B. Watson, *Behaviourism,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1930, p. 38.
[77] A. Wickens, *Foundations of Biopsychology*, 2nd ed., Prentice Hall, Harlow, 2005, p. 229.

repeatedly related to the sight of food (*US*). Skinner introduced the concept of *operant conditioning*, in which a behaviour occurs as a result of *reward* or *punishment*: a hungry animal will learn to avoid behaviours that have proved noxious in the past and will repeat behaviours that reward its hunger. Behaviour was read as a chain of reflex responses to stimuli, and similarly, emotion or thought were equally perceived of as reflexes, as was evident in Sechenov's work.[78] Behaviourism thus held that human and animal behaviour were not limited to innate reflexes, but that, through learning and experience, any reflex could be conditioned and ultimately connected to innumerable unconditioned stimuli.

Behaviourism was the last word of science during the period between the two World Wars and remained the dominant dogma until the *cognitive revolution* in the 1960's. This premise of man as *tabula rasa* was quite optimistic and appealed to both the USA and the USSR. Despite the fact that behaviourism opened the way for psychology as a monistic, hard scientific discipline, based on observable and provable processes, the elimination of certain psychological phenomena from its scope due to their *subjective* quality, further postponed the study of emotion and feelings, which were omitted from the agenda of the *cognitive revolution*, too. Though behaviourism anticipated the neurosciences in many areas, it bypassed crucial issues related to emotion, such as inheritance, order of emotional events and levels of consciousness, and its input in the study of emotion *per se* was indirect and rather limited.

---

[78] Sechenov cited in Roach, *The Player's Passion,* pp. 198-9.

1.7. The Schachter-Singer theory

In 1964, Schachter and Singer attempted to reconcile physiological with cognitive aspects of emotion with their *two-factor* (or *self-attribution*) theory. The theory's major point was that during emotion the physiological arousal is undifferentiated and diffuse, and that, when an individual is experiencing such generic arousal, they tend to contextualise it and label it, by looking in the environment for appropriate clues. When either the physiological or the cognitive element is absent, the emotion is not complete, therefore, 'emotion is feeling in a certain context'.[79]

In their famous experiment[80], college students were administered adrenalin (a drug that mimics the arousal effects of the Sympathetic Nervous System) and/or placebo. Some of the participants were misinformed, others uninformed and others adequately informed about the action of the drug they were given, and the experiment showed that uninformed and misinformed subjects presented different emotional reactions, a fact which was (at the time) attributed to insufficient explanatory clues in their environment. Schachter and Singer interpreted the results of their findings as follows: 'in our experiments, precisely the same physiological state —the state of sympathetic arousal induced by an injection of adrenalin —could be labelled by the subject as any of a variety of emotional states or indeed as no emotional state at all, depending largely on cognitive and situational manipulations. It was our conclusion that to be predictively useful, any physiologically based formulation of emotion must specify the fashion in which physiological processes interact with stimulus, cognitive and situational factors'.[81] The theory touched upon the crucial issue of *evaluation* and the degree in which learned cognitions and contextual structures can shape emotional behaviour and experience, but it has been abandoned today, mainly on the grounds of the overwhelming evidence of concretely differentiated, rather than generic, *patterns* of autonomic and behavioural activation during various emotions, as we shall see in Chapter 3.

---

[79] R. C. Solomon, 'Emotions, feelings, and contexts', *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 83, no 11, 1986, pp. 653-4.

[80] S. Schachter & J. Singer, 'Cognitive, social and physiological determinants of emotional state', P*sychological Review,* Vol. 69, 1962, pp. 379-399.

[81] Schachter & Singer, p. 394.

1.8. The social sciences on emotion

Alongside research in physiology of emotion, interest in emotion grew during the second half of the twentieth century in the social sciences, too. Disciplines such as social and cultural anthropology, ethnopsychology, cultural psychology etc., emerged, stressing the importance of social, learned experience in the shaping of the emotional experience and meaning. As Michelle Rosaldo put it, the anthropological study of emotion has tried to understand 'the ways that innerness is shaped by culturally laden sociality'.[82]

As a general trend, these *constructionist* approaches tend to view emotions as cultural productions, within the larger framework that understands the self as a cultural artefact.[83] As such, emotions are primarily studied as 'evaluative judgements'[84], that is, as mental phenomena that are subject to cultural production, and cultural anthropologists explore the terms of this social construction, by emphasising the 'social relational, communicative and cultural aspects'[85] of emotion, as well as their links to class, gender and domination.[86] This kind of work has shed light on the variety and wealth of emotional experience across cultures and within cultural units, and has managed to detect various undercutting agencies that affect emotional behaviour in its public, social dimension, whether it be gender, power, race, sexuality, rationality, passivity or class, which could not as easily be gripped by the psychobiological data and methods.

Very often, though, and as cognitive psychology and computational concepts of psychological research grew more and more influential, many social constructionist approaches were limited to a mere dissatisfaction with the dominant cognitive view of humans as mechanical 'information processors'[87] and denounced almost any biological background in emotion. By favouring the importance of language and culturally constructed experience, they viewed emotions as 'embodied thoughts'[88] residing

---

[82] Rosaldo cited in M. L. Lyon 'Missing emotion: the limitation of cultural constructionism in the study of emotion', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Anthropologies of the Body, 1995, pp. 247.
[83] Lyon, 'Missing emotion', p. 245.
[84] C. Lutz & G. M. White., 'The anthropology of emotions', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 15, 1986, pp. 407.
[85] Lutz & White, p. 405.
[86] C. Lutz, 'Emotion, thought and estrangement: emotion as a cultural category', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 1, 1986, pp. 287-309.
[87] Lutz, 'The anthropology of emotion', p. 405.
[88] Rosaldo in Lyon, p. 252.

predominantly in the 'symbolic domain'.[89] Similar views of emotion, despite their outstanding contribution to the anthropological science and method, have been distinguished for their 'adamant refusal to allow for any physiological, psychological, or other universal determinant or influence on emotional life'[90], and have often led to the formation of extremely relativist concepts and statements such as that 'there is nothing to emotion beyond the local discursive structures'.[91]

Nevertheless, the scene is slowly changing, and anthropology and the social sciences are trying to reverse this disembodied study of emotion, by taking account of the overwhelming pool of data regarding the biological underpinnings of emotion, against which, extreme cases of cultural constructionism, were remaining silent. Within the context of this thesis, the ability of culture to affect emotion is taken for granted, especially in the ways it defines the rules that can shape their expression, yet the emphasis here is on the mechanics of emotion, which, as we shall see in Chapter 3, is universal, and beyond social construction.

---

[89] Lyon, p. 251.
[90] W. Reddy, 'Against constructionism', *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1997, p. 329.
[91] Reddy, 'Against constructionism', p. 326.

1.9. Conclusions

One could detect within these major theories of emotion a few basic axes, on which the debate on the nature and function of emotion has concentrated in the West over the last couple of thousand years. A great deal of this debate has focused on whether emotion is, (1) voluntary or involuntary, (2) cognitive (rational) or somatic, (3) conscious or unconscious, (4) patterned or undifferentiated, (5) peripheral (ANS) or brain mediated (CNS), (6) inherited and universal or socially constructed, (7) cognitively evaluated or sets off automatically and, finally, whether it is (8) under control of the will or not. Many of these dichotomies obviously betray a dualistic culture in the approach to emotion, which reflects the remnants of body-mind dualism in philosophy and science.

From a theatrical point of view, favouring one aspect of these polarities over the other, or coming up with a completely different formulation of the issue, is of paramount importance. The relationship between affect and cognition (emotion and reason), the very function of emotions themselves, the order in which things happen during emotion (expressions, evaluations etc), as well as the ability or not to have any kind of control over such processes, are issues that are fundamental to theatre theory and—crucially— practice, from its aesthetics and principles, all the way to the understanding of character and to sheer technique or stage tricks. From among these issues, though, acting technique as investigated in this thesis is predominantly concerned with the *order* in which things happen in emotion.

The theories that we have addressed here have often offered us completely different models of this order of events. They offer different versions of the relative contribution and causality among the processes of evaluation of the emotional event, of its experience and of its expression (*see* Tab. 1). Does an expression cause the feeling, as in James, does expression rely on contextual evaluation as in Schachter, or do these happen simultaneously and independently as in Cannon? Furthermore, are emotions differentiated according to concrete response patterns or is emotional arousal diffuse and undifferentiated? These questions are key for acting theories, given that each one of them implies and adopts a specific psychophysiological model of emotion, according to which technique is shaped and the actor is trained and expected to perform. Because twentieth century acting grew up within polarities such as those described and summarised in this

chapter, a need for a redefinition, of at least the order of events, is crucial, not only in terms of technical efficacy and terminology, but, predominantly, in terms of the actor's mental health.
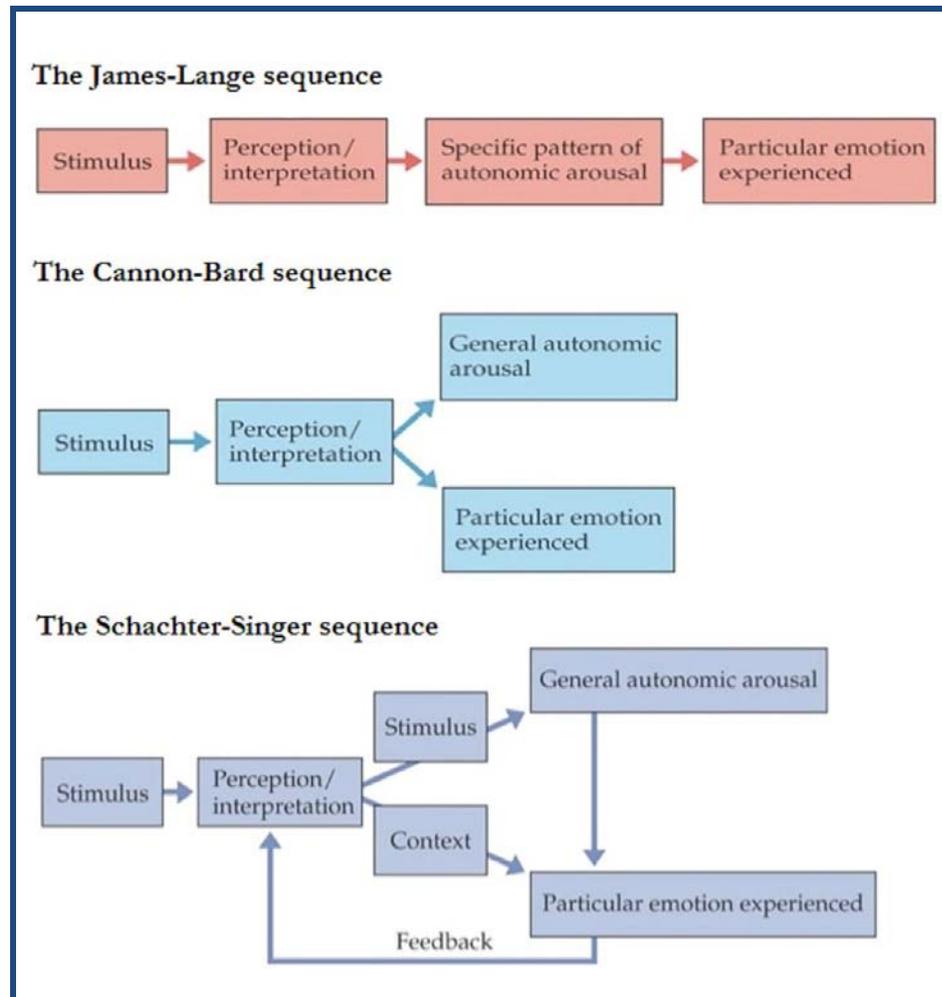
Tab. 1 The James-Lange, Cannon-Bard and Schachter-Singer sequences of events during emotion

This situation reflects of course the contradictory state of the theories of emotion formulated till almost the end of the century, but the scene today is changing dramatically. Over the last decades of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the explosive progress in the neurosciences has upgraded the quality and quantity of research in the function of the mind, and even of those faculties, which, like emotion and consciousness, were traditionally left outside academic focus, as extremely intangible. Groundbreaking techniques and tools of live brain imaging (PET scan, fMRI, etc.), have made it possible

to test and combine psychological theories and cognitive models with neurobiological data, and are now offering tremendous possibilities for the study of the neural, material bases of behaviour, in both its individual and social dimensions.

Within the domain of emotion, a stream of new approaches tries to move away from cliché polarities, such as the aforementioned, by suggesting more holistic views of emotion and of its function in consciousness. A growing amount of researchers stress the importance of synergistic, bio-cultural approaches to emotion, and apply interdisciplinary methods and tools in their study of the human nervous system and its ability to determine itself both biologically (genes, pre-organised programs, etc.) and through its interaction with the environment. Affective neuroscience, systemic theory, neurophilosophy and biomedical anthropology, are but a few examples of these new, 'processual'[92] approaches to the study of emotion, which strive to redefine the relation between key issues concerning emotion, in an attempt at better establishing the limitations and the forms of the malleability of the nervous system, in which the mind seems to be looked for. Clarifying the key issues of emotion that directly affect acting technique (function, order of events, components of the emotion, relation to reason, and manipulation of emotion) from the point of view of contemporary neuroscience and evolutionary psychology, in order to redefine their application in acting, will be the subject of the following chapters.

---

[92]A. L. Hinton, 'Prolegomena to a processual approach to the emotions', *Ethos*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1993, pp. 417-51.

Chapter 2

Emotion in Twentieth Century Western Acting

2.1. Konstantin Stanislavski

Konstantin Stanislavski's teachings and practice have undoubtedly influenced and reformed not only twentieth century western theatre, but theatre throughout the world. His devotion to theatrical art and his eagerness to help actors and directors in their craft led to a concentration of focus on the actor's stage technique. Within this framework, the investigation of the hard-wirings of the actor's apparatus became a *sine qua non*, and Stanislavski's approach remains a point of reference, even for theatre practitioners of the twenty-first century.

Stanislavski's work went through various phases, and though systematic enough, it never reached the form of a handbook or drill, possibly deliberately. His writings are mediated to us today through a misty cluster of critical interpretations, mistranslations, lack of translations, alternative editions, mythologies, attacks, misunderstandings and constantly new claims of finding the 'true' Stanislavski system, while a series of cliché concepts haunt and obscure the main aim of his research: the actor's *creative state*. As he said, 'there are no formulas […] on how to become a great actor or how to play this or that part'[93]; 'what I have wanted to learn was how to create at will a condition favourable to the appearance of inspiration[…]and make this no longer a matter of mere accident'.[94] Actors needed to be trained, not for the sake of training, but in order to be able to artistically portray and communicate 'the life of the human spirit'[95] of their role, which he considered as the main goal of acting, by showing life in both ' its revolting and its inspiring sides in order to *educate* their public'.[96]

The adventure of Stanislavski's published teachings, as well as the political and scientific underpinnings that defined the understanding, teaching and dissemination of

---

[93] K. Stanislavski, *Stanislavski's Legacy*, (transl.) E. Reynolds-Hapgood, Methuen, London, 1981, p. 11.
[94] Stanislavski, *Legacy*, p. 45.
[95] K. Stanislavski, *An Actor's Work: a Student's Diary,* (transl.) J. Benedetti, Routledge, New York, 2008, p. 145.
[96] Stanislavski, *Legacy*, p. 10.

Stanislavski's system in the West, have been discussed in detail elsewhere, in all their startling complexity.[97] Here, it should suffice to say for now that, while an 'ultimate' ten-volume edition of Stanislavski's writings is currently being prepared in Russia, the English-speaking world has only recently had the opportunity to read a new, reedited translation of only *An Actor Prepares* and *Building a Character*, by Jean Benedetti. The new translation-edition, titled *An Actor's Work: A Student's Diary* (*AW*)comprises a much fuller material, especially when compared to the tormented and chopped English edition of *Building a Character*, and brings together in a single volume, as was originally intended by Stanislavski himself, these two parts of *The Actor's Work on Himself in the Creative Process of Experience* (*An Actor Prepares*) and *The Actor's Work on Himself in the Creative Process of Physical Characterisation* (*Building a Character*)[98], as their full titles in the original Russian text were.

2.1.1. The theatre of experience goes beyond style

Stanislavski's life and creation coincided largely with the emergence and dominance of Naturalism in the arts. Within the naturalistic ideology, Stanislavski discarded the representation of formulaic, stock types that decadent theatre of his time was reproducing and sought for *truth* in both acting and directing. This quest for objective *truth* indeed reflects the cornerstone of the naturalist tradition and methodology, in which every effort is put, in order to present in the highest degree of scientific objectivity the new concept of man as a being defined by inheritance, the environment and the pressures of the moment.[99] Theatre and acting had to be reconsidered through the scientific lens and Stanislavski remained loyal to the scientific premise behind naturalism throughout his lifetime, by trying to observe and master the 'laws of nature'[100] on which acting is based. Nevertheless, Stanislavski was far from creating a naturalistic *style* of acting. He held that the principles he was looking for were not limited to style, but were universal and applicable to all sorts of drama[101], as long as they remained faithful to truth; spiritual,

---

[97] J. Benedetti, *Stanislavski: An Introduction*, Methuen, London, 1982 (*SAI*); S. M. Carnicke, *Stanislavski in Focus*, 2nd (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2009 (*SIF*).

[98] Benedetti, *SAI*, pp. 77-9.

[99] L. R. Furst & P. N. Skrine, *Naturalism* [Furst, L. R. &Skrine, P. N., *Νατουραλισμός*, (μτφρ.) Λ. Μεγάλου, Ερμής, Αθήνα, 1990], p. 60-1.

[100] Stanislavski, *AW*, p. 21.

[101] R. Leach, *Makers of Modern Drama: An Introduction*, Routledge, London, 2004, p. 10.

intellectual and, mainly, emotional 'truth'.[102] As he said, truth was needed 'not for the sake of Realism or Naturalism, but in order to stimulate an experiencing of the role's human spirit in us as a natural reflex'.[103]

The actor's *experiencing* (*perezhivanyie*) of the role's spirit, is in a nutshell, the Holy Grail in Stanislavski's system. In sharp contradiction to what he describes as the representational school of acting (pointing at Diderot and his paradox), in which the actor experiences the part only 'once or twice, so as to register the outward form a feeling takes', and not 'during performance, in front of an audience, but only at home or in rehearsal', for Stanislavski acting 'means experiencing every moment in the role', and 'that experiencing must be felt anew and physically embodied anew'.[104] As he explicitly proclaimed, 'there is no genuine art where there is no experiencing. It begins where feeling comes into its own'.[105]

In Stanislavski's writings, experiencing and feeling emotion on stage practically coincide, and are of paramount importance to the actor: 'You *must* experience a role, that is, experience feelings analogous to it each and every time you do it'.[106] For Stanislavski, great acting coincides with these moments when the actors' feelings are aroused according to the role, and thus can be artistically conveyed. These are the moments of 'success', he says, that 'can be termed *the art of experiencing* which we cultivate here in our theatre and study in our school'.[107] As he straightforwardly puts it: 'Every great actor should feel, really feel what he is portraying'.[108] It would be really difficult to find a single page in his writings, in which the necessity of the actor's affective experience during performance is not explicitly or implicitly present and hauntingly urgent. The actor 'must' and 'should' feel. Why?

Stanislavski held that the audience is 'the third artist'[109] in the theatre (after the author and the actor), and that there is a 'two-way communication between the audience and the stage'.[110] When the actor is emotionally active, the audience is homoeopathically

---

[102] Leach, *Makers*, p. 24.
[103] Stanislavski cited in Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 190.
[104] Stanislavski, *AW*, p. 21.
[105] Stanislavski, *AW*, p. 28.
[106] *AW*, p. 19, emphasis mine.
[107] *AW*, p. 16.
[108] *AW*, p. 19.
[109] Stanislavski cited in Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 157.
[110] *AW*, p. 238.

gripped, too.[111] The moments of *success*, are moments when the actor's true feelings reach the audience and engage their feelings, too: 'only acting of this kind can fully capture an audience and bring them to a point where they not only comprehend but, more importantly, experience everything done onstage, and so enrich their own inner lives, leaving a mark that time will not erase'.[112] This link between actor's and audience's emotions is quite direct, but not necessarily linear. Though at times, as he says when coaching one of his famous imaginary student actors, 'you have to play this scene in such a way that you make your own and the audience's mouths water'[113], the audience reacts to the stage action as a whole. The audience does not necessarily weep when the actor weeps as character, but it rather 'creates, so to speak, a psychological acoustic. It registers what we do and bounces its *own* living, human feelings back to us'.[114]

Therefore, if theatre is to fulfil its purpose by reaching and profoundly affecting the audience, it is necessary for the actor to aim at experiencing emotions analogous to his character's. If an actor is to 'astonish and shake'[115] his audience, if he wants them 'moved', 'stunned and fired'[116], 'uplifted'[117] and 'taken in'[118], then 'only this kind of theatre, enriched with the actor's own experiences as a living organism, as a human being, can communicate all the elusive nuances, the hidden depths of a role'.[119] It, then, goes without saying that, within this line of thought, emotion becomes a cornerstone in the theatrical event, not only as a final result of the performance on the audience, but, primarily, as the actor's task and process.

A major problem occurs though, as Stanislavski realised, since emotions, as residing in the realm of the subconscious (though not exactly in the Freudian sense[120]), that is, beyond the direct reach of *will*, are, unfortunately, particularly resistant to any direct attempt at elicitation. If an actor attempts to reproduce an emotion at will, the subconscious, as the seat of emotion, being 'apprehensive, fears it will be attacked and

---

[111] *AW*, p. 146.
[112] *AW*, p. 21.
[113] *AW*, p. 189.
[114] *AW*, p. 238, emphasis mine.
[115] *AW*, p. 33.
[116] *AW*, p. 16.
[117] *AW*, p. 188.
[118] *AW*, p. 177.
[119] *AW*, p. 20.
[120] J. Sullivan, 'Stanislavski and Freud', *TDR*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 57-62.

Fig.6 Konstantin Stanislavski ('Stanislavski and naturalism in the theatre', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://freespace.virgin.net/drama.land/projects/Academic/stanislavski/naturalism.html >).

takes refuge once more in its secret depths'.[121] 'That puts us in an impossible situation', he says: 'we are supposed to create on inspiration, but only the subconscious can do that, and we can't control it.'[122] Great acting, upon which the *success* of the whole theatrical event relied, seemed utopian and paradoxical. Actors needed to be able to perform and experience emotion but they could not and should not. Performing emotion became both the main goal and the main taboo. Stanislavski spent his life trying to solve this—rather than Diderot's—paradox, trying to find a conscious technique of reaching the subconscious emotion. This indirect and complex process of luring the actor's own feelings he termed the actor's *Psychotechnique*[123], and this technique of reaching 'the subconscious through the conscious' became, as he said, 'the most important principle of

---

[121] *AW*, p. 19.
[122] *AW*, p. 17.
[123] *AW*, p. 18.

our school of acting'.[124]

2.1.2. The *Psychotechnique*

Stanislavski's development of training and rehearsal processes is usually considered as spanning three major phases: (1) the first years of the dictatorial *mise en scène* (until 1906), (2) the years of the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre (from 1906 until the early 1930ies) with the round the table analysis, also called *affective cognition*[125], during which the main body of the psychotechnique was developed, as documented in *An Actor's Work* (*AW*) Parts 1 and 2, and, finally, (3) the work at the Dramatic-Opera Studio (from the 1930's till his death in 1938), when he devised the *Method of Physical Actions* and *Active Analysis*.[126] Stanislavski originally intended to publish a series of about seven books that would form a 'grammar of acting'[127], but he died before even the second part of the second book (*AW* Part 2-*Building a Character*) was published. As a result, most of the material that he had time to supervise covers rather thoroughly the processes of the actor's life-long *training*, while the material on more concrete *rehearsal processes* such as originally intended for *Creating a Role*, exists in form of drafts that barely cover the very last phase of his work (1934 and on). To our disappointment, it is during these very last four years of his life that he expanded the *Psychotechnique* with the *Method of Physical Actions* (*MPA*) and/or *Active Analysis* (*AA*). Apart from an Appendix to *Creating a Role*[128], his work on *Active Analysis* is disseminated by some of his disciples, whose 'reliability varies in relationship to their ideological points of view.'[129]

The wider development of the *Psychotechnique* during these three phases is marked by a shift of emphasis from *emotional recall* during the first phase, to an (allegedly) complete emphasis on action in the last phase of the *MPA* and/or *AA*. The second, longest, phase monitors this gradual shift, while at the same time the tools for reaching the subconscious through conscious means are established. We do possess a fairly thorough approach to the actor's training process, as documented in *AW* Parts 1 and 2 that cover this second, longest phase from 1906 to the early1930's. Of these two, *AW* Part 1 (*An Actor Prepares*),

---

[124] *AW*, p. 319.
[125] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 194.
[126] B. Merlin, *Konstantin Stanislavsky*, Routledge, London, 2003, p. 9.
[127] Benedetti, *SAI*, pp. 75-6.
[128] *See* Appendix A.
[129] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 189.

originally published alone, has been wrongly celebrated worldwide as conveying the quintessence of Stanislavski's System, at the expense of Part 2. The unfortunate web of events that led to this unequal reception (and to which we referred earlier in brief) has fragmented and destroyed the unity of the actor's psychotechnical training as exposed in the complete approach. Stanislavski's main educational point included in the process documented in *AW* was exactly the, now fashionably called, *psychophysical* unity of the actor's apparatus. Given that the two parts focused consecutively on the 'inner' process of experiencing and the 'outer' process of physical characterisation, not only were they inadequate if taken separately, but also self-annihilating if not studied jointly. The time gap that was created until the first English publication of Part 2 was big enough to promote a very restricted and mistaken perception of the *Psychotechnique* in the US and Europe, focused almost solely on inner experience.

The two parts of *AW*, taken as a whole, describe the cultivation and development of the actor's faculties necessary in order to reach the *creative state* for rehearsal and performance. The *Psychotechnique* was not primarily a tool for rehearsal, but a skill to be acquired through life-long training that would prepare the actor for *any* rehearsal and performance, regardless of style. It was employed to compensate for the disruption of the actor's *inner creative state* that appalled his subconscious creative nature, and therefore blocked his emotions, for two main reasons: stage fright and lack of specific function. Stanislavski believed that the creative state was a state of simplicity, flow and responsiveness identical to the normal state of being in everyday life that all actors naturally possess, but which was being lost at the moment of exposure to the audience. Additionally, it became clear that when actors lacked some specific function on stage, they could not prevent their attention from drifting towards the audience, and this destroyed their creative state and performance. In such a state of disconcertment, fear and embarrassment, actors resorted to stereotypical acting and any chance for truth of feelings was thus *a priori* condemned to failure.[130]

The first year of the *Psychotechnique* (*AW* Part 1) was directed towards setting the foundations for experiencing. Though the emphasis was primarily on mental processes, gaining awareness and control of the musculature and its levels of tension was a prerequisite for the creative state to be founded on. Concrete and effective manipulation

---

[130] Material in this paragraph from *AW*, pp. 5-15; pp. 292-305.

of the concentration of attention was a key that prevented actors from being preoccupied with the audience and, instead, helped them become and remain focused on the world of the stage, their fellow-actors and the actions they had to perform on the stage. This enhanced the actuality of the stage action and the communication among actors, and it promoted a devotion to precision in everything the actor had to do on stage. All these things ultimately facilitated the arousal of emotional memory and enabled truth of feelings to emerge.

Alongside, actors learned how to approach character through working in small scenes (*études*) that would serve as models for approaching larger surfaces, and more complex characters and plays in the future. In order to perform a scene they had to break it into bits, for each one of which they had to find the character's *task* (what the character wants or needs), and his *action* (what the character does in order to fulfil the *task*), as this stems from the scene's given circumstances (GC).[131] Employing the *magic if* ('what would I do if I were in the same situation as my character'[132]) was the lever for activating their memory and imagination, in order to help them better identify the *task* and *action*, and enable the spontaneous engagement of the *magic if* to merge with the character as described through the GC. All this psychotechnical process would be unnecessary to an actor though, if his emotional memory were highly responsive. But that was rare, Stanislavski knew[133].

The second part of the training expanded on the first, by covering more concrete aspects of the technique that further facilitate the generation of feeling, but also secure the clarity in their embodiment. The emphasis here is on vocal technique and analysis of speech and the complex ways in which it can communicate and convey the character's intentions. The major psychotechnical clue of this part, though, is the direct linkage of tempo-rhythm with the generation of feeling through action. Tempo and rhythm prove as inducers of mood and feeling, and are understood as inherently catalytic features of the mode in which each character's action is performed by the actor.[134] By combining these tools with the tools acquired in the previous part of the training, a well trained actor would be malleable enough to construct and embody the character in terms of a score of

---

[131] *AW*, pp. 135-151.
[132] *AW*, p. 181.
[133] *AW*, p. 198.
[134] *AW*, pp. 463-506. Also *see* section 4.3.2.1.1.2.

actions (through-action[135]). Hopefully, this process would lead the actor to experience emotions 'analogous'[136] to his character's during every performance. The actor's experience of emotions analogous to the character's has been described as the acting style of 'involvement'[137] or 'identification'[138], but this cliché term has done more harm than good, as we shall see.

Throughout his lifetime Stanislavski was becoming growingly convinced that fixing the physical aspect of the character was a prerequisite for dealing with the repetition of emotion and the generations of spontaneous feeling, through a process of automaticity:

> The physical approach to a part can act as a kind of storage battery for creative feeling. Inner emotions and feelings are like electricity. Scatter them into space and they disappear. But fill up the physical life of your part with feelings, and the emotions aroused will become rooted in your physical being, in your deeply felt physical actions. They will seep in, be soaked up, they will gather up feelings connected with each instant of the physical life of your role and in this way lay hold of the ephemeral sensations and creative emotions of an actor. Thanks to this approach the cold, ready-made physical life of a part acquires inner content. The two natures of a part, the physical and the spiritual, merge in each other[…] This is the approach from the exterior to the interior. Make this bond a firm one, repeating your pattern of the physical being of your part many times over. This will confirm the physical actions but at the same time strengthen the emotional response to them.[139]

This concept became known as the *Method of Physical Actions* (*MPA*), and has been understood by scholars as the direct application of his contemporaneous neurophysiological research, as found in the works of Sechenov and Pavlov.[140] During the 1920's, the notion of *reflex* was the pioneering dogma in the schools of objective psychology and reflexology. Pavlov's experiments were already famous, while Sechenov's reflex theory viewed 'reflex excitation and inhibition as the physiological basis of all behaviour' and that 'all manifestations of brain activity can be reduced to muscular movement propelled or repressed by reflex'.[141] The score would then be fixed, repeated and rendered *quasi* spontaneous for performance through reflex automatism.[142] Through this shift of emphasis towards physical action, performing emotion became an even

---

135 *AW*, p. 319.
136 *AW*, p. 19.
137 E. Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 1997, p. 36.
138 Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 37.
139 Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, pp. 149-50, p. 209
140 Roach, *The Player's Passion*, pp. 201-3.
141 Roach, p. 198.
142 Roach, p. 207.

greater taboo. Actors were further discouraged from performing emotion, and physical action was now understood as the antipode to emotion. As we shall see in full scientific detail in Chapter 4, the Pavlovian reflexes only partly account for Stanislavski's *MPA* and *AA*. More importantly, despite this alleged shift from emotion towards action, which summarises a key shift in twentieth century acting, actors cannot but perform emotion.

2.2. Vsevolod Meyerhold

2.2.1. Burn with the spirit of the times

Among the artists who apprenticed and collaborated with Stanislavski, Meyerhold was one of the most prominent and controversial figures. From his very early, amateur years, Meyerhold had a vision of a popular theatre that could entertain and educate by 'bringing culture to the masses'.[143] Though he was one of the Moscow Art Theatre's (MAT) leading actors, where he played parts such as Treplev and Tuzenbach in the first productions of Chekhov's plays, Meyerhold soon felt that the naturalistic aesthetic of the MAT was unsuitable for his artistic quests, and friction with the management of the theatre soon led him away, to Saint Petersburg and the province, where he started putting his experiments for new theatre forms into practice.[144]

By 1905, when he returned to Moscow, invited by Stanislavski to take over the Theatre-Studio of the MAT, Meyerhold had mounted more than 170 performances, most of them with the Company of New Drama that he had founded in 1902. Despite the fact that his 3-year work with the Theatre-Studio never saw the light of the public, Meyerhold was already developing his own distinct theatrical aesthetic, that of a New Theatre that would catch up with developments in the other arts and the new era.[145] He embraced the Revolution of 1917 and was embraced by the Soviet, leading to his obtaining high administrative rank and artistic influence. In 1923 he was honoured as *People's Artist of the USSR* but, after a period of triumphant success and publicity, he fell into disfavour and was executed on February 2nd, 1940.

Meyerhold's writings and career cover a wide range of aesthetic concerns and tendencies, sometimes to the degree of contradiction. His departure from the naturalistic school of Meiningen, Antoine, and ultimately of Stanislavski was an attempt to reorient modern Russian theatre and help it catch up with the other arts, which he believed were more advanced, by trying to restore, in a modern context, the principles of ancient Greek theatre and commedia dell' arte.[146] Meyerhold was envisaging a New Theatre, the theatre of 'theatricality'[147] that would adopt the popular, entertaining, educative and democratic

---

143 R. Leach, *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 2.
144 Meyerhold, *On Theatre,* (ed.) E. Brown, Methuen, London, 1998, p. 17.
145 Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 19.
146 Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 63.
147 Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 126.

character of the past, and that would transcend the stagnation of his contemporaneous bourgeois theatre, by making again the theatrical event a communal experience, a 'corporate creative act'.[148] This led Meyerhold to a radical reconsideration of the whole theatrical event and his new ideas about the audience, the function of the director and, of course, about the centrality of the actor's craft, being more than his famous and misunderstood Biomechanics, revolutionised and anticipated theatre practice and research, and are still with us today, possibly more than ever before.

Meyerhold's approach to acting and the evaluation of the place of emotion within it is a task obscured by a series of reasons. Apart from the fact that Meyerhold, unlike Stanislavski, did not spend enough time writing about his ideas, as well as from the fact that his teachings have been largely repressed within the USSR, a large part of his heretical writings come from a very early period, and too much critical emphasis on his ideas of that period, has done injustice not only to the recipients of his polemic, but also to him. The Anti-naturalism, which is the leitmotiv of this period, is clearly an anti-MATism, but has unfortunately been received as an indirect anti-Stanislavskiism.

Though the MAT had possibly gone to extremities during that period in terms of verisimilitude on the stage, we today know that this criticism cannot by any means be directed at Stanislavski's technique as it evolved later on. But it has. By fiercely deconstructing the practices of both actors and directors of the MAT during the early years before 1906, when neither the *Psychotechnique*, nor the *MPA* or *AA* had been crafted and put into effect, Meyerhold unintentionally contributed to the later spreading of completely false and misguided ideas about Stanislavski's whole body of work and approach, as disseminated mainly by scholars and practitioners who disliked Stanislavski, the MAT, naturalism or all of them. Though Meyerhold's and Stanislavski's work clearly did not coincide, he himself knew that they were both working on the same direction, but with different tools: 'Konstantin Sergeyevich and I are like contractors building a tunnel; he works from one side, I from the other'.[149] Nevertheless, Meyerhold's approach to acting has been classified by critics as 'detachment', anticipating Brecht, in that the actor's emotions do not coincide with the character's, and therefore as the antipode to

---

148 Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 60.
149 Meyerhold in S. Jestrovic, *Theatre of Estrangement: Theatre, Practice, Ideology*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2006, p. 6.

Stanislavski's 'involvement' style of acting.[150]

Fig. 7 Vsevolod Meyerhold (Meyerhold Memorial Museum, 'Timeline', viewed on 1 November 2009,
< http://www.meyerhold.org/Images/timeline/Book.1.03.jpg>).

2.2.2. The audience-stage relationship = the modern director

Meyerhold's New Theatre of theatricality placed huge emphasis on the function of the spectator, whom he believed should be the 'fourth creator, in addition to the author, the director and the actor'.[151] The influence of Pushkin who held that 'drama originated in a public square and constituted a popular entertainment'[152] is evident in Meyerhold's research of the audience-stage relationship at the beginnings of drama. Though Greek theatre remained among his top ideals, he suggested that much of his contemporaneous decadent theatrical tradition had its roots in as early as the 5th century Greece. The mere

---

[150] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 39.
[151] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 63.
[152] Leach, *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, p. 17.

division of theatre into tragedy and comedy, the gradual obliteration of the religious and ritualistic character of the original theatrical event, the degradation of the choral element into mere illustration in favour of the protagonist-based action and plot, and the eventual objectification of the 'universal "I"'[153] of the mask by the notion of character, marked the beginning of a gap between the stage and the audience. This process, which, he believed reached its climax in the naturalist theatre era, excluded the spectator from the creative process and turned him from an active participant of the communal ritual into a passive 'onlooker of the festive "spectacle"'.[154]
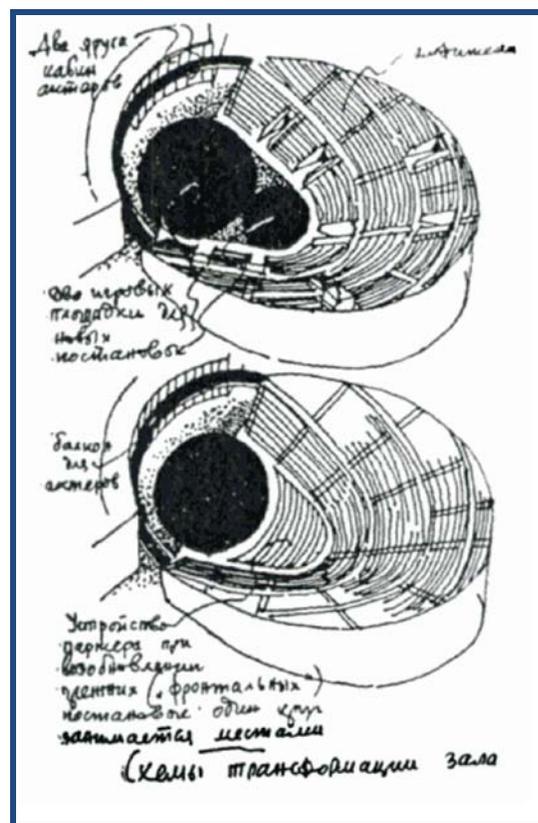
Fig. 8 Meyerhold's plans for the new theatre building (Leach, R., *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, p. 39).

Meyerhold felt that if the relationship were to be restored, drastic changes ought to be made, and the theatrical space was one of them. He started working on his vision of what a theatre building should be like (*see* Fig. 8). This theatre was largely based on the Greek and Elizabethan stage and had a steep auditorium similar to what Fuchs was imagining at

---

[153] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 60.
[154] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 59.

the beginning of the century.[155] He abolished the curtain from his productions and went on with eliminating the footlight area from the stage, promoting thus the forestage as a first-class performing space, just like in Japanese theatre.

The immediate purpose of these changes was to weaken the naturalistic fourth-wall and diminish the distance between the stage and the spectator. Mainly, though, this distance was being attacked in another more indirect way. Meyerhold's exploitation of the forestage demanded and dictated a heightening of movement, a stylisation, by the mere promotion and display of the anaglyph qualities and plasticity of the actor's body. This focused the audience's attention on the actor 'as a work of art in his own right'[156] and revealed 'the inner dialogue by means of the music of plastic movement'[157] that Meyerhold always sought. This device was meant to reflect back to the audience, through the whole theatrical experience. The stylisation and expressiveness of movement was in accordance with a non-illusionist performance narrative. The denouncing of naturalist repertory and psychological consistency, the fragmentary language of the performance and the new space itself were designed in such a way as to collaborate with this heightened movement, in order to reveal to the spectator not 'everything', as the naturalist directors did, but 'as much as is necessary to direct our imagination on the right track, letting it have the last word', as he quoted Schopenhauer.[158]

Though Meyerhold eventually paid dearly for such 'formalist' elements in his productions, among the major aims of his stage system was that the 'spectator should not forget for a moment that an actor is performing before him, and the actor should never forget that he is performing before an audience'.[159] He would have set changes in front of the audience's eyes[160] in order to comply with his purpose, but this, as well as his other formalistic devices for estrangement and activation of the audience, were, perhaps, too pioneering for his era and time had to go by, before these could be welcome and acknowledged as revolutions in the theatre, made by other directors, such as Brecht.

Despite all this, Meyerhold's aesthetic and socio-political concerns naturally involved this thorough investigation of the stage-audience relationship. Together with all

---

[155] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 39.
[156] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 92.
[157] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 47.
[158] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 27.
[159] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 63.
[160] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 38.

his other knowledgeable treatises he adopted a clearly scientific stance towards the understanding of the audience's behaviour. Not only did he hold open rehearsals, during which, people who did not necessarily have any theatrical expertise were invited to watch rehearsals and give their feedback as to what they understood, felt or thought, he also gave audiences questionnaires to fill in, while in order to directly observe the audience's reactions he would have trainee directors to keep live, systematised 'Reports of Spectators Responses'.[161] This conscientious structuring of the theatrical machine according to the ancient model, did not just revolutionise the space, the function of the audience and, as we will see later, of the actor. In Meyerhold's theatre everything is studied for the way it functions best, according to principles and goals, and the science of things has constantly fed Meyerhold's work, equally with the history of things. This science of how theatre, as a whole structured event, occurs at its most efficacious, was the emergence of the modern director.

The modern director was in a nutshell an anti-naturalist. According to Meyerhold, the naturalist director, by explaining everything, by analysing everything, by being rationalist, by copying architectural styles and patching them together in 'a kaleidoscope of rapidly changing tableaux'[162] of every-day life, was transforming the stage to a 'display of authentic museum pieces'.[163] As such, the modern director was unable to go beyond the external mask of things, towards that inner dialogue that springs from the music of the plastic movements, and if he wishes to reveal this inner dialogue to the audience, 'the dramatic artist must develop new means of expression'.[164] Nevertheless, for Meyerhold, the dramatic artist *par excellence* was not the director, but the actor. It is through the actor, that both the author's and the director's art can be communicated to the audience. As he explicitly said, 'above all drama is the art of the actor'[165] and 'the theatre's sole obligation is to assist the actor to reveal his soul to the audience'.[166]

---

[161] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 42.
[162] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 63.
[163] Meyerhold, *On Theatre,* p. 23.
[164] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 37.
[165] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 53.
[166] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 38.

2.2.3. The modern theatrical actor

Traditionally, Meyerhold's approach to acting has been largely understood within the context of his method of Biomechanics. Biomechanics was a series of solo or group *étude*s, which involved codified sequences of movement, aiming at self-awareness, control, rhythmical training and economy of energy.[167] This system of actor training was not an acting style *per se*, but a preparation of the 'psycho-physical apparatus of the actor'[168], and aimed at providing the new skills necessary to combine the need for promoting the sculptural power of the forestage actor with the new scientific concepts of the body-mind.

In Meyerhold's rehearsal system the definition of the character follows a seemingly different route from Stanislavski. The actors start structuring the role, not on the individual characteristics and motivation of their understanding, but on the dramatic function of their character: their closest *emploi*.[169] The concept of the *emploi* is based on a comparative study of dramatic practice and reveals the overall function of the character: the messenger in Greek drama is the *emploi* of the character who brings anxiety and disturbance with the news he brings; the confidante of *commedia dell' arte* is the *emploi* of the character with whom the protagonist shares their drama, etc[170]. The *emploi* is also contingent upon specific characteristics and skills of the actors, such as their vocal range and timbre, their physique etc.[171] Stanislavski consciously forbade his actors to use types-stencils for their roles, on the grounds that such a practice deadens the actors' originality, leading them to cliché performance, as it was happening with actors of his time. Though Meyerhold did not exhaust characterisation in the use of the *emploi*, he clearly admired the old actors' simplicity, with which they used it for their inspiration. He sensed that if the *emploi* could be used creatively, it could further emphasise the character's function, and this was fully appropriate for revealing the deeper, the 'hidden'[172] messages that he sought for behind the realistic representation.

For Meyerhold, justification of the character's actions in a Stanislavskian sense was

---

[167] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 53.
[168] Ilinsky cited in Leach, p. 53.
[169] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 154.
[170] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 203.
[171] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 203.
[172] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 21.

absolutely necessary, regardless of the final form of its depiction.[173] As Meyerhold gradually viewed his experiments tested on the stage and as his methods evolved, some of his characterisation devices changed. As Muza notes, 'in Meyerhold's late work the *emploi* was internalised in the actor rather than being externalised in the production'.[174] Though Meyerhold was the first to dynamically integrate improvisation in the process of acting[175], a technique he borrowed from *commedia*, a great deal of the characterisation process and synthesis remained beyond the actor's control. The structuring of the performance by the director as a musical score and Meyerhold's obsession with *rhythm* is a critical part in the characterisation process, because the rhythmical score frees the actor from his own temperament and lucidly communicates the performance to the audience.[176]

Meyerhold was deeply influenced by Taylorism, known as studies of 'motion economy', which sought for the scientific principles that could describe and define the 'most efficient movements and gestures for each kind of work'.[177] He adopted this concept of aiming at 'the greatest work output with the least amount of strain'[178] as an acting principle, and structured Biomechanics on the model of 'work cycles'[179] that Taylorism indicated. The *étude*s followed the 'acting cycle', a *triune analysis of action* as preparation (intention), execution (realisation) and reaction or new preparation (intention) for the next cycle[180]. The ultimate goal of this process, and therefore, the fruit of mastering the Biomechanical *étude*s, was to cultivate the actor's 'innate capacity for *reflex excitability'*.[181]

Just like in Stanislavski, the issue of reflex is centrally located in Meyerhold's equation 'N=A1+A2', whereby the actor (N) is the originator (A1) of the artistic concept and the executor (A2) of this concept.[182] The transition from A1 to A2, that is, the proper acting task of executing the character, was dependent on the physiological ability of the

---

[173] A. Muza, 'Meyerhold at rehearsal: new materials on Meyerhold's work with actors', in *Theatre Topics*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1996, p. 17.

[174] Muza, 'Meyerhold at rehearsal', p. 18.

[175] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 118; p. 127; p. 146. For more detail on Meyerhold's concept of structured improvisation *see* section 7.2.1.

[176] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, pp. 81-6.

[177] M. Gordon, 'Meyerhold's Biomechanics', in Zarrilli, P., (ed.) *Acting Reconsidered*, Routledge, New York, 2001, p. 108.

[178] Gordon in *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 109.

[179] Gordon in *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 109.

[180] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 201.

[181] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 199.

[182] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 198.

actor to execute with precision, speed and efficiency, in an almost automatic manner. This 'ability to realise an externally prescribed task with the minimum amount of forethought' was nothing else but the '*reflex excitability*'.[183]

The emphasis of Biomechanics on movement as 'the most powerful means of theatrical expression'[184] betrays a solid, though often misunderstood, relationship and concern about the actor's emotion. The concentration during the *étude*s on sequences of dynamic postures managed to cultivate the actors' *reflex excitability*, because as he thought 'the idea forces the actor to sit in a sad posture, but the posture itself helps to make him sad'.[185] James' peripheral theory of emotion was already available and the concept of emotional activation via the periphery is clearly at the core of Biomechanics, which were 'causing him [the actor] to experience an entire gamut of emotions owing to a constantly changing arrangement of his musculature'.[186] Ultimately, this would 'lead naturally to an emotional state in the actor and, by extension, affect the audience'.[187] Therefore, not only is the emotional 'involvement' of the actor not excluded in Meyerhold, but the last word of science is put into effect, in order for the actor to experience and transmit emotion, exactly like in Stanislavski. Apparently, this structuring of the acting task on the priming of the actor's emotions is incompatible with the description of Meyerhold's acting style as 'detached'[188]. By often mistaking Biomechanical *training* for an acting *style* and by dualistically misunderstanding the emphasis on the 'rhythmical base, rooted in a musical conception of both the role and the play'[189] as a method from the 'outside-in', Meyerhold's work has been viewed as opposite to Stanislavski's allegedly 'inside out' approach.[190] But then, how are we to explain his direct application of scientific emotion theory if not for inciting the actors' experience of emotions?

---

[183] Gordon in *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 111.
[184] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 48.
[185] Leach, *Meyerhold*, p. 54.
[186] Gordon in *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 111.
[187] Meyer-Dinkgräfe, D., *Consciousness and the Actor*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 1996, p. 34.
[188] Konijn, p. 40.
[189] Gordon in *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 111
[190] Muza, p. 16.

2.3. Bertolt Brecht

2.3.1. Petroleum resists the five-act form

By the 1920's, and while Stanislavski and Meyerhold were working on their methods, Bertold Brecht was already active in German theatrical literature. The acquaintance and collaboration with Karl Valentin's political cabaret and the communist director Ervin Piscator reinforced Brecht's political perspective on theatre and helped him shape his own distinct and influential voice as a playwright and director. The contentious and arty Berlin during the period between the two wars, the impact of both capitalism and Marxist ideology on European thought and the rise and fall of the Third Reich, as well as Brecht's own controversial personality, were the backdrop against which Brecht conceived and evolved his vision of a theatre of the 'scientific age[191], the epic theatre.

Brecht held that the epic theatre was the antipode to dramatic theatre of the Aristotelian type, which relied on empathy, therefore epic theatre was first of all 'not dependant on empathy'.[192] In his essay 'The modern theatre is the Epic theatre', written in 1930[193], Brecht summarises the differences between these two kinds of theatre. In dramatic theatre, the theatre of 'feelings', actors enact the 'plot' of the play, and this 'implicates the spectator in a stage situation', which 'wears down his capacity of action'; therefore the 'spectator is involved in something', in an 'experience' of the world, through stage 'suggestion', and his 'instinctive feelings are preserved'. On the other hand, in epic theatre, the theatre of 'reason', the play is conveyed through 'narrative', which 'turns the spectator into an observer' and 'arouses his capacity for action'; thus, the spectator is 'made to face something', to obtain a clear 'picture of the world', through 'argument', while his instinctive feelings are 'brought to the point of recognition'. While in the dramatic theatre, 'the human being is taken for granted' and viewed as 'a fixed point' and as ultimately 'unalterable', in the epic theatre, the human being is 'the object of the inquiry', it is viewed instead as a 'process' and as both 'alterable and able to alter'.[194]

Brecht thought that the new reality dominated by capitalism could not be reflected, problematised or changed through the existing theatrical language: 'plays of the Aristotelian type still manage to flatten out class conflicts […] although the individuals

---

[191] B. Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, (ed.) J. Willett, Methuen, London, 1990, p. 26.
[192] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 91.
[193] Brecht, *On Theatre,* pp. 33-42.
[194] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 37.

themselves are becoming increasingly aware of class differences'.[195] In order for this to happen, the new epic theatre had to stir the audience's intellect rather than just offer an emotional purgation, as he thought. He was seeking for a new kind of 'cold, clear, unsentimental' realism, one which, as Piscator said, 'is thought through so scientifically, that it reproduces reality on a higher level'.[196] This new epic theatre was to address the 'audience of the scientific age'[197] by adopting a dispassionate reporting of events as its language.[198] The characters were not meant to be portrayed in a manner that fostered 'identification', as the dramatic theatre's actors did: 'by hypnosis. They go into a trance and they take the audience with them […] If the séance is successful it ends up with nobody seeing anything further, nobody learning any lessons, at best everyone recollecting. In short, everybody feels'.[199]
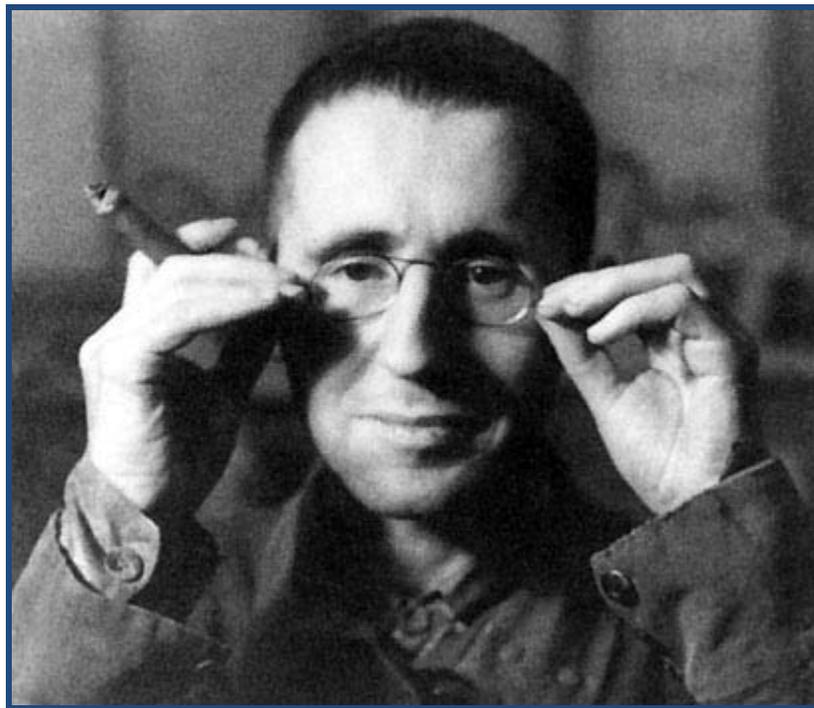
Fig. 9 Bertolt Brecht (Goldberg, E., '*Gallileo* in Hollywood', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://web.ard.de/galerie/bilderpool/Radio/Brecht/brecht1_1.jpg>).

---

[195] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 60.
[196] A. Patterson, *The Revolution in German Theatre*, Routledge, New York, 1986, p. 16.
[197] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 26.
[198] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 25.
[199] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 27.

In order to reverse this conventional communication between the stage and the audience that was based on empathy, the actor 'does not allow himself to become completely transformed on the stage into the character he is portraying. He is not Lear, Harpagon, Schweik; he shows them'[200]; 'once the idea of total transformation is abandoned the actor speaks his part not as if he were improvising it himself but like a quotation'.[201] 'Because he doesn't identify himself with him, he can pick a definite attitude to adopt towards the character whom he portrays, can show what he thinks of him and invite the spectator, who is likewise not asked to identify himself, to criticise the character portrayed'.[202] A scene was not intended to be a depiction of reality *per se*, but rather a sociological (Marxist) revelation of the scene, in which the audience was called to 'observe the mechanism of an event like the mechanism of a car'.[203]

This emphasis on the socio-political function of theatre is not just an emphasis on observation of reality, but on the very presentation of this reality and serves a simple goal: social sensitisation and, therefore, commitment to social change.[204] Despite the fact that, at the time, the mainstream version of socialism was no other but the Soviet Socialist Realism and the denouncement of Formalism, Brecht felt that that kind of realism was not enough. What he understood as a proper (socialist) realism was the ability to master reality through theatre rather than just to reproduce it.[205] This meant that both the form and not just the content had to be 'historicised'. 'Historicising', he believed, 'involves judging a particular social system from another system's point of view'[206], but for that to happen, the traditional relationship of empathy between the audience and the performance had to be severely destabilised. Devices that would defamiliarise the empathetic narrative, in order to concentrate on it anew, had to be used. This could then be a really Marxist art that could read current reality and lead to social change.

---

[200] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 137.
[201] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 138.
[202] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 26, p. 139.
[203] Brecht cited in Leach, *Makers,* p. 117.
[204] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 235.
[205] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 269.
[206] Brecht cited in Leach, *Makers*, p. 117.

2.3.2. Acting

2.3.2.1. Creating a character: *Verfremdungseffekt* **and** *Gestus*

Brecht's approach to acting has often been read as directly opposite to Stanislavski's.[207] This was mainly because Brecht rejected the notion of uncritical emotional empathy between audience and actors, which both Stanislavski and Meyerhold held (even with some differences). Additionally, the *Verfremdungseffekt* (*V-effekt*) in the actor's training and method has blurred even more the function and importance of emotion in Brecht's theatre. Brechtian theatre tends to be viewed as a coldly political, intellectual theatre, where actors are 'detached' from their characters and the audience are called to participate in a dull, but educative sociological debate; emotion 'seems' absent from this theatre and politically dangerous. Again, emotion is a taboo.

There is a great problem in understanding the actor's technique in Brecht and this is to a great extent due to some misunderstanding of the *V-effekt*, which has been translated as *defamiliarisation*, *estrangement*, *distancing* and *alienation*, and has been viewed as having evolved from the Russian formalist tradition.[208] With regards to the acting process, this is thought to be identified as the distinct Brechtian way of performing on stage, the style of 'detachment' from the character, as opposed to Stanislavski's style of 'identification'.[209] What he proposes is a rehearsal process, during which, as we will shortly see, the emphasis shifts from conveying inner experience to emphasising behaviour in (social) context.

An important step in dissolving the cliché conception about the incompatibility of the actor's process in Stanislavski and Brecht is to understand that the celebrated *V-effekt* is not an actor's task and it is not *alienation* of the actor from the character. The *V-effekt* is primarily addressed to the audience, as a means for interrupting the uncritical observation of represented reality. Brecht holds that the *V-effekt* 'consists in the reproduction of real life incidents on the stage in such a way as to underline their causality and bring it to the spectator's attention'.[210] Bloch understands the *V-effekt* as 'a displacement or removal of character or action out of its usual context, so that the character or action can no longer

---

[207] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 39.

[208] B. K. Eaton, *The Theatre of Meyerhold and Brecht*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1985, p. 102.

[209] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 39.

[210] Brecht cited in Leach, *Makers*, p. 118.

be perceived as wholly self-evident'.[211] As such, the *V-effekt* is primarily a narrative structure, a theatrical syntax, which manages form and content in a way that aims at manipulating the audience's attention to a desired location; in this case of surprise and redefinition, where (social) change maybe possible. It is primarily aesthetics, philosophy, politics, playwriting and directing.

Distanzierung, on the other hand, is an actor's process: 'it is a method that the actor recruits to create the *V-effekt* and demands a different approach to the role'.[212] The actor then goes through the process of *Distanzierung*, in order to achieve a *V-effekt*, which in turn is contingent upon the whole structure of the myth of the performance (*Fabelbau*). Brecht stressed that 'the study of the role is at the same time a study of the fable; more precisely it should at first be the study of the fable'.[213] As a result, *Distanzierung* on the actor's task level mediates the structuring of the myth, and its distillation is what the actor will perform in the performance: the *Gestus*.

The *Gestus* summarises, as Brecht understands it, 'the mimetic and gestural expression of the social relationships in which the people of a particular epoch, stand to each other'.[214] 'Gesture and gist, attitude and point', as Wilett saw the *Gestus*, is 'one aspect of the relation between two people, studied singly, cut to essentials and physically or verbally expressed'[215]; it is the fragments of the model that the actor has to perform, the actor's task. Brecht wrote and directed his plays in such a way that what was clearly visible would be the very social *relation* between two characters, rather than an individual's own emotions. As he said, 'from what happens *between* them, people get everything that can be discussed, criticised, changed'.[216] The spine of the Brechtian performance and dialectic is based on this narrative of revealing the relations, the 'what happens', which is nothing else but the structuring of the myth, the *Fabelbau*, and this 'building up of the fable-is the principal goal'.[217]

---

[211] E. Bloch et al, '"Entfremdung", "Verfremdung": alienation, estrangement', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 121.

[212] P. Markaris, *Brecht and the Dialectic Discourse* [Μάρκαρης, Π., *Ο Μπρεχτ και η Διαλεκτική Ηθική*, Ιθάκη, Αθήνα, 1982] p. 38f.

[213] Brecht cited in J. Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 1, The Interpretive Actor, 1984, p. 37.

[214] Brecht cited in Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', p. 31.

[215] J. Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*, Methuen, London, 1992, p. 175.

[216] Brecht cited in Rouse, 'Brecht and the Contradictory Actor', p. 28.

[217] Rouse, 'Brecht and the Contradictory Actor', p. 37.

2.3.2.2. Performing the *Gestus*

How exactly this *Gestus*, the task, is executed, a question which brings us closer to the central concern of the thesis and the blurred area where performing—or not—emotions creeps in, is the least clear area in Brecht. As we have seen, 'Brecht was not concerned with the presentation of inner life but with the deed'.[218] The actor follows a three-part process during rehearsal: *observation*, *identification* and *objectification*.[219] Brecht himself admitted that 'the second phase is that of identification [*Einfühlung*, empathy] with the character, the search for the character's truth in a subjective sense, you let it do what *it* wants to do'[220]. During that phase, the actor uses the *magic if* and the given circumstances, exactly like Stanislavski's actors in the *Psychotechnique*.[221] What changes in the third stage of defining the *Gestus* of the character is that the selection of the actions in this case is filtered through a sociological lens, 'sociological in that it allows historical determinants to be concretely manifested in the physical elaboration of the motivated actions that move the characters from beat to beat'.[222] Though the character's emotion is understood and structured differently here, in a way such as to 'provide insight into the social contradictions affecting the most seemingly personal, emotional behaviour'[223], the actor's task remains to perform a behaviour that is clearly connected to both motivational and emotional reality, albeit from a social point of view.

The promotion of the characters' contradictory action through the *Gesten* serves the very purposes of epic theatre by creating a *V-effekt* for the context in which human interaction and action occur. As Leach notes, '[T]he fragmentary, episodic style of acting was meant to show man not as a consistent whole, but as a contradictory, ever-changing character whose unity comes "despite, or rather, by means of, interruption and jumps"'.[224] Still, regardless of the layers of social or socialist critique on the character, regardless of the process through which the character's behaviour is constructed, incorporated in the fable and put in perspective, the actor still needs to procure a score of actions, or what Brecht preferred: behaviour. Why is this emphasis on behaviour different from

---

[218] J. Chaikin, 'The actor's involvement: notes on Brecht', *TDR*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1968, p.149.

[219] B. Brecht, 'Notes on Stanislavski', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1964, p. 159f.

[220] Brecht cited in Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', p. 39.

[221] Leach, *Makers*, p. 142.

[222] Strehler cited in Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', p. 31.

[223] Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', p. 36.

[224] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 55

Stanislavski's and Meyerhold's shift of emphasis towards action, and where is the place of emotion in all these anyway? The tension that has been created among these schools of acting is legendary, but it does need to be as such. Apparently, the Brechtian conceptual framework related to emotion and its function in society, which is affected by a social version of Behaviourism, cannot answer this question. In order to examine the relationship between emotion and behaviour, we need to obtain a more scientifically updated view of emotion, which we will do in the next chapter.

2.4. Jerzy Grotowski

2.4.1. Theatre as ritual

Polish director Jerzy Grotowski is considered one of the key personalities of twentieth century theatre and acting theory. Following the tradition of the actor-centred theatre of Stanislavski and Meyerhold, Grotowski deliberately widened the gap between the scenic technique of the actor and all other versions of acting, such as in cinema and in television, in an effort to find what is 'irreplaceable' in theatre, 'what discerns its function [theatre's] from other forms of performance and spectacle'.[225] In 1959 he founded the Theatre of Thirteen Rows in Opole, Poland, and moved to Wroclaw in 1965 working there with his Teatr Laboratorium. The Laboratory was dedicated to researching the theatrical phenomenon —at the expense of a repertory—at the core of which, Grotowski believed, exists the live communion between actor and spectator.[226] His experimentation on this relationship between actor and spectator led him, like Meyerhold, to innovatory spatial relationships during the performance-events.

As Grotowski's experiments with this 'encounter'[227] grew along with his invasive and 'consistent focus on [the actor's] martyrdom as a heroic act'[228], the ritualistic function of the performances gradually became a central issue in his work and its reception. In 1998 Grotowski said:

> My last performance, as a theatre director, is entitled *Apocalypsis cum figuris*. It was created in 1969 and its representations ended in 1980. Since then I have not made any performances.[229]

According to some critics, Grotowski's later phases of work moved clearly beyond a traditional understanding of theatre, towards paratheatrical and ritualistic events-performances.[230] Nevertheless, and without further addressing this issue here, a key concept throughout his lifetime and research linking these phases with the more

---

[225] J. Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Methuen, London, 1969, p. 29.

[226] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 19.

[227] L. Wolford, *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, Routledge, New York, 1997, p. 210.

[228] Wolford, *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, p. 27.

[229] J. Grotowski & M. Biagini, 'Untitled text by Jerzy Grotowski, signed in Pontedera, Italy, 4 July 1998', *TDR*, Vol. 43, No. 2, p. 12.

[230] Roach, *The Player's Passion,* p. 226.

'orthodox' theatrical ones was the question 'how one should live?'.[231]

In Grotowski's various processes, the model, act, task or character to be executed or performed by the actor served as a pretext, a tool to explore the self and 'to stimulate a process of self-revelation'.[232] Within the 'poor theatre' that he originally envisaged, the actor, through the total use of his body and mind, the 'total act', performs not a character but 'himself'; this is an act of 'self-sacrifice', through which he becomes a 'holy actor'.[233] Assuming the function of the scapegoat in ancient rituals the actor manages to emotionally purge the audience by causing their 'life-mask [to] crack and fall away'[234] just like his or through his. It is a social theatre as well, but in a different way than Brecht's is.[235]
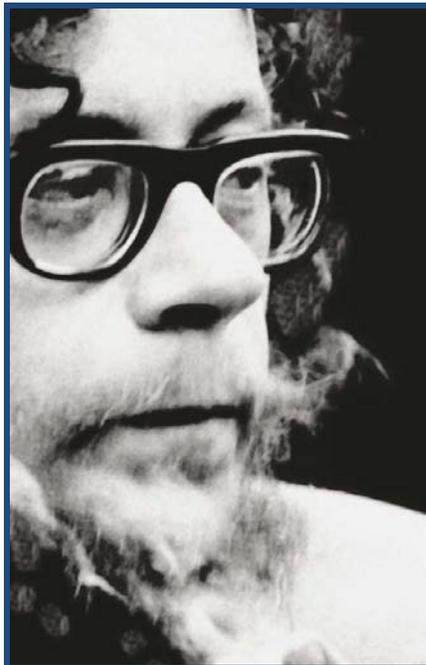
Fig. 10 Jerzy Grotowski ('Grotowski in Poland: the photographs of Andrzej Paluchiewicz', viewed on 1November 2009, <http://www.nyu.edu/kimmel.center/exhibit.grotowski.html>).

2.4.2. The art of the *total gift*

The emotional demands in the actor's task are, here, *a priori* tremendous. The actor makes a 'total gift of himself', by fully accomplishing, rather than imitating, acts which are not

---

[231] S. Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal*, Routledge, New York, 1992, p. 82.
[232] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 21.
[233] Grotowski, p. 43.
[234] Grotowski, p. 23.
[235] Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal*, pp. 78-134.

destined for the ears of the world, acts that break all social rules through their public (social) confession.[236] 'This is a technique of the '"trance" and of the integration of all the actor's psychic and bodily powers, which emerge from the most intimate layers of his being and his instinct, springing forth in a sort of 'translumination''.[237] In order for an actor to achieve this state, he must eliminate 'the time-lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction in such a way that the impulse is already an outer expression. Impulse and expression are concurrent'.[238] The actor, then, reaches a state of 'passive readiness to realise an active role'; instead of trying to achieve something, the actor 'resigns from not doing it'.[239]

This state of translumination and 'identification' between emotional impulse and expression is at the peak of the actor's creativity. But, for Grotowski too, creativity is a combination of spontaneity and discipline. The actor does not improvise during performance because, as he said, 'searching for spontaneity without order always leads to chaos'.[240] Actor training becomes the 'elimination of resistance to translumination'[241], not a 'collection of skills' but a 'via negativa' aiming at an 'eradication of blocks'[242] that prevent the actor from reaching this state of holy creativity. This via negativa 'necessitates the stripping away of "how to do", a mask of technique behind which the actor conceals himself, in search of the sincerity, truth and life of an exposed core of psychophysical impulses'.[243]

Grotowski stresses the importance of discipline and precision in the actor's work on a character. He places specific emphasis on the construction of a score of actions, without which an actor is unable to perform during performance: 'I want to advise you never in the performance to seek for spontaneity without a score. In the exercises it is a different thing altogether. During performance no real spontaneity is possible without a score'.[244] Drawing on Stanislavski, whose work Grotowski admits to be continuing[245], he held that physical actions were the core component of the actor's craft. A score was

[236] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 16; p. 131.
[237] Grotowski, p. 27.
[238] Grotowski, p. 18.
[239] Grotowski, p. 7.
[240] J. Grotowski, R. Schechner & J. Schwat, 'Interview with Grotowski', *TDR*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1968, p. 45.
[241] Wolford, *Grotowski Sourcebok*, p. 31.
[242] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 23.
[243] D. Bradby & D. Williams, *Directors' Theatre*, Macmillan, London, 1988, p. 124.
[244] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 192.
[245] T. Richards, *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*, Routldege, London, 1995, p. 6.

meant to be a score of physical actions worked in the fullest detail, which should then be reproducible in the *quasi* automatic manner that Stanislavski conditioned his actors.

The construction of the model begins through the actor's memory. The importance that Grotowski placed on emotional memory is huge, but has usually gone unnoticed, in favour of other aspects of his work. Nevertheless, in reality, the actor during rehearsal (re)constructs an appropriate event from his personal affective history. Appropriate here means challenging for the actor and relevant to the 'character', that is, substituting extreme character acts (e.g., homicide) with the closest act that the actor has really performed (e.g., killing an animal), while at the same time maintaining for the actor the highest degree of difficulty in 'confessing' this act.[246] The actor then elaborates on the score of actions through which the event was actualised; this is the 'individual structure', which had to be 'precise and repeatable like a mini-performance'.[247] But 'before the physical action, there is the impulse, which pushes from inside the body, and we can work on this'.[248] For Grotowski, *impulse* is a result of finding the appropriate tension in the body.[249] By insisting on the clarification and fortification of the impulse, through the elimination of resistance to its generation, 'physical actions can be better rooted in [your] nature […] One can say that the physical action is born'.[250]

The work on the *impulse* reveals issues of motivation. Motivation is understood as intention, that is, as being in a state of tension. As he said, 'there is no intention if there is not a proper muscular mobilisation […] The intention exists even at a muscular level in the body, and is linked to some objective outside you […] It is not at all true that the actor must just be well relaxed […] The process of life is an alternation of contractions and decontractions. So the point is not only to contract or to decontract, but to find this river, this flow, in which what is needed is contracted and what is not needed is relaxed'.[251] The character comes as a result of the directorial manipulation of this material from the actors, as the potential inherent in the montage of their relative lines of action. It is in this sense that the actor is considered not to be 'identifying' with the character,

---

[246] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 136.
[247] Grotowski in Richards, *At Work with Grotowski*, p. 58.
[248] Grotowski in Richards, p. 95.
[249] Grotowski in Richards, p. 96.
[250] Grotowski in Richards, p. 95.
[251] Grotowski in Richards, p. 96f.

undergoing rather a 'self-expression'.[252] The ultimate goal of the process is to find 'a meeting between the text and the actor', where the actor 'is obliged to refer to himself within his own context and find his own line of impulses'[253], in the process of integration, the discarding of masks, the revealing of the inner substance'.[254]

As Roach noted, Grotowski's acting theory and practice evolved in a vitalistic era when the concept of the inhibited body and emotion prevailed. The idea of an absolute, original self, being constantly 'blocked' by social masks and rules lies behind the *via negativa*: that of a self resisting to confess. The actor looks for this self in public, reveals it and is penetrated by it, by himself.[255] Through highly structured and psychophysically exhausting detailed re-construction of this 'fixed score'-self, without which, 'a work of mature art cannot exist', the 'actor does not play, does not imitate, or pretend. He is himself'.[256] Still, exactly like in Stanislavski, the question of performing emotion is a great taboo. Though the process towards translumination goes through the actor's total emotional strip down, 'pumping up emotion' is always a technical mistake that prevents from any emotional activation, let alone revelation.[257] Echoing Stanislavski, he urged his actors: 'One must not think of the result and the result will come'.[258]

---

[252] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 41.
[253] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 206.
[254] Grotowski, p. 211.
[255] Roach, *The Player's Passion*, p. 225.
[256] Flazsen cited in Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal*, p. 89.
[257] Grotowski in Richards, *At Work with Grotowski*, p. 65.
[258] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 201.

2.5. Clichés about the place of emotion in the actor's art

Within the work of all these four major practitioners of the twentieth century emotion holds a central place in the art of the actor, even when the actor is seemingly called to denounce it, transcend it or transform it into something else. As a general trend, it would be fair to say that acting theory in the twentieth century shifted from emotion towards action, as the paradigms of Stanislavski's *MPA*, Meyerhold's *triune action analysis* and *reflex excitability*, Brecht's social *Gestus* and Grotowski's pre-active *impulse* suggest. In terms of intended effect on the audience, Stanislavski, Meyerhold and Grotowski were aiming at the maximum emotional activation of the audience, while Brecht was working specifically against their very uncritical emotional reaction. But if all of them were structuring their models of the actor on science, as they admittedly were, how is it that they arrived at such seemingly different conclusions about action, emotion and feeling, to the degree that Stanislavski's work is viewed as 'identification', Brecht and Meyerhold's work as 'detachment' and Grotowski's as 'self-expressive', and all of them as incompatible with one another? Is it just aesthetics that differentiate the actor's task from one case to the other? Is it the critical and scholarly reception of these theories that has stressed mainly their differences instead of their similarities, or did science evolve so dramatically in that last century? Can we see beyond the clichés that are still surviving in rehearsal rooms or even criticism, and procure some solid scientific appreciation of the place of emotion in twentieth century acting? In a nutshell: what technical tools can a contemporary actor use from these approaches, when it comes to the urgent and heated issue of performing emotion on stage?

2.5.1. Russia

The beginning of the misunderstandings could perhaps be traced back to the relationship between Stanislavski and Meyerhold, and the stance they held in relation to Diderot's paradox. Stanislavski turned it down, by suggesting that theatre at its best works through the audience's emotion, which in turn is contingent upon the actor's emotional arousal. In taking his turn to face it, Meyerhold clearly favoured the experience of the audience, and avoided talking about the actor's emotion, though he worked to that direction too.

Consciously or not, he initiated an unfortunate series of misconceptions, especially in relation to Stanislavski's early work, and eventually to his own work, by attacking the Naturalist extremities of the early MAT, before the *MPA* or *AA*, and, therefore, by indirectly undermining Stanislavski. The attack was not personal, but it was fierce, and to some extent accurate. According to him, the Naturalist theatre was obsessed by the idea that everything on stage should be as 'lifelike'[259] as possible, and concluded that the concept of the fourth wall resulted in a 'series of absurdities'.[260] The naturalist directors were immersed in that 'fear of not showing everything, the fear of Mystery', but, as he believed, 'this is not art', because it excludes the spectator by denying his 'capacity to fill in the details with his imagination'.[261] Furthermore, he likened the actor of that tradition to a 'wax figure', who 'resolutely denies all technique: '"Technique hinders the freedom of the creative act"-is how this actor speaks'.[262]

These words may be accurately reflecting the situation at the MAT before 1906, and Stanislavski himself was no less troubled by this lack of *technique*. Nevertheless, lack of technique is the last thing that can be attributed to Stanislavski, especially as years passed by and his system developed into more concrete forms. The two practitioners were working apart, before meeting again towards the end of their lives, but their work deeply and constantly affected each other's. Meyerhold was all too aware of this, and as far as we know, he 'never missed an opportunity to emphasise that his condemnation of the MAT did not embrace Stanislavski'.[263] In his article 'The solitude of Stanislavski', written within the optimism of the post-revolutionary ecstasies, and well before Stanislavski's system was solid enough, Meyerhold acclaimed: 'In Moscow there is only one guardian of genuine traditions-the ever solitary Stanislavski[…]In his solitude, he alone has the power to restore the desecrated rights of theatrical traditionalism'.[264] Though both of them died at around the same period of time, tumultuous times prevented us from having written appreciations and evaluations of each other's work, and as such, the technical relationship between the two has been distorted through biased mediations of all sorts. The more direct involvement of Meyerhold with the Soviet system, at least for some good while, in

---

[259] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 41.
[260] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 31, p. 38.
[261] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 26.
[262] V. Meyerhold, & N. Beeson, 'Farce', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1959, p. 145.
[263] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 179.
[264] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 179.

combination with the overamplified echoes of his original anti-naturalist critique, as well as with the fragmentary dissemination of Stanislavski's written work on the system, were among the factors that created a negativism in the reception of Stanislavski, especially in Europe, and imposed anew Diderot's false paradox between 'identification' or 'detachment', now in the form of a dilemma[265].

2.5.2. Europe

Indeed, Meyerhold's innovations and political stance were more appealing to young Marxist Brecht in Europe, than the seemingly idealist tones of inner self and emotion-obsessed actors that were described in *An Actor Prepares*, and which was the only material from Stanislavski available in publication then. Many alienating features that Brecht became later associated with, were originally Meyerhold's formalist devices employed to destabilise stage conventions 'such as film projections, posters which comment on or announce the action, interpolation of dances and songs, grotesque costuming, emphasis on stage movement and exaggerated gestures, abstract or highly simplified stage settings, and the training of actors as artistically and socially conscious performers'.[266] Brecht was not aware of how the acting techniques within the MAT were evolving through time, but his own constant fear that the actor should not, like in 'hypnosis', 'become completely transformed on the stage into the character'[267], is indeed much closer to Meyerhold's fear and contempt at the naturalist actor's task, which the latter once described as such: 'Instead of developing his aesthetic sense to exclude all coarseness, the actor's task is to *lose his self-consciousness*'.[268] The interrelation between Meyerhold's and Brecht's theatre has been examined thoroughly as for such aspects[269], but because the technical relationship between late Meyerhold and Stanislavski, as examined earlier, has usually been totally overlooked, the conflation of Meyerhold and Brecht into a 'detachment' style of acting is totally incorrect, as we shall see.

Whether Brechtican actors themselves, to start with, were indeed meant to (or can now be understood to be able to) be 'detached' at all, is an issue that we will pursue in a

---

[265] Konijn, pp. 30-3.
[266] Eaton, *The Theatre of Meyerhold and Brecht,* p. 9.
[267] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 137.
[268] Meyerhold*, On Theatre*, p. 24.
[269] Eaton, *The Theatre of Meyerhold and Brecht.*

detail in Chapter 4, when our scientific view of emotion will have been compared with up to date knowledge of emotion theory. In 'Notes on Stanislavski', perhaps the most interesting, concise and neglected article, where Brecht speaks with his own voice and not with that of a critic or follower, and which tackles precisely with the very hot issues Brecht and Brechtian criticism have evoked, Brecht admits his frustration with the inadequate dissemination of Stanislavski's complete body of ideas about acting. Stanislavski's worst fears that publishing his work separately would destroy the psychophysical unity and philosophy underlying his approach to acting were once more confirmed. Therefore, apart from the political biases, Brecht's original opposition to Stanislavski is based primarily on his fragmentary exposure to the system.

In this article, Brecht admits that empathising in a Stanislavskian sense is absolutely necessary for the actor during rehearsal, because alienation relies on empathy for its effect.[270] Stanislavski of course knew that there is no such thing as a complete identification or loss of self-consciousness that Brecht and (early) Meyerhold assumed his actors to undergo. His actors are constantly aware of themselves, through the automated inner *monitor*[271], exactly like Meyerhold's actors' process of self-awareness, and they are constantly aware of the audience, though they are able, and choose, to concentrate on stage action, rather than the audience. Though Brecht himself was quite frustrated with his mediated contact with Stanislavski's ideas, as soon as he came in direct contact with that body of work beyond *An Actor Prepares*, he himself acknowledges some substantial proximity of the two approaches (albeit some high level differences too), and adopts a tone much less absolute than his earlier fireballs against the kind of dramatic theatre that he thought that Stanislavski roughly represented when he was writing his theories of the Epic Theatre[272].

2.5.3. From the US back to Russia and Europe

While in the US the hot issue has been the reception and transformation of Stanislavski's system into the 'Method' of the Actors' Studio and on the different degrees of the importance attributed to action and emotional memory by Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler and Sonia Moore, Russia was immersed in a debate on the interpretation of Stanislavski's own

---

[270] Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal*, p. 49.
[271] *AW*, p. 122f.
[272] *See* section 4.2.1.

definition of the exact nature of the physical action in the *MPA* and/or *AA*. With a delay of almost fifty years, this dichotomy is now becoming a central issue in the rest of Europe today, when gradually more material from Stanislavski's own work and that of his disciples slowly penetrates acting theory and the English language. Because both the concepts of emotion and action are at the very core of the actor's training, rehearsal and performance, they are constantly referred to themes in the system, as documented in *AW* and *Creating a Role*. More than once, during his documented experimentations, even Stanislavski himself seems to be using them in rather self-contradictory terms, while a series of scientific, political and scholarly biases favour one aspect of this continuum at the expense of the other. It is at this point, that another series of clichés has formed, in relation to the 'keys' or the general qualities of the system. Many of these clichés are still with us today and need some redefinition.

Many influential scholars and practitioners have established the idea that Emotion or Affective Memory was to be found only during the first phase of Stanislavski's work, which he later expressly abandoned and ardently rejected.[273] We know that Stanislavski borrowed, with some modifications, the term from the French psychologist Théodule Ribot, and elaborated on it in order to help actors find parallels with the character's emotions, especially those that were too extreme or inaccessible to them. During that early phase of the *Psychotechnique* the actors are believed to have been retrieving personal emotional events as close to the character's situation as possible, and, by then calling up as many sensory and physical details of the emotional event as they could, the associated feeling would finally arise. The actor would then be able to merge it with the character's given circumstances, endowing his performance with vibrant feeling.[274] Though some scholars accept that Stanislavski rejected this emotional recall because it was too slow[275], others suggest and proclaim that it caused 'tension' and 'exhaustion'[276] to the actors, while others hold that, after Michael Chekhov's nervous breakdown during experiments on emotional memory with Stanislavski, the emotional recall raised issues of mere mental hygiene; that it was considered as inducing 'stage hysteria', and that artistically it failed to

---

[273] Benedetti, *SAI,* p. 90f.
[274] Merlin, *Stanislavsky*, p. 16.
[275] Roach, *The Player's Passion*, pp. 210-11.
[276] Benedetti, *SAI*, p. 90.

convey other than 'the sick nerves of the actor and not the hero's'.[277] The later adaptation of, and emphasis on, *emotional recall* by Strasberg, combined with the polemic against the partial, misinterpreted and psychoanalytically oriented, americanised flair that cinematic actors and their teachers attributed to their version of the Stanislavski, as well as the growing Soviet philosophical, political and scientific hostility towards such elusive, idealist and self-indulgent emotionalities, were all factors that contributed to turning this device into another taboo that needed to be buried away and discarded as at least faulty. The taboo was not only limited to emotional memory but, unfortunately, it encompassed emotion in general, too, further distorting our already tottery grasp of the System, and of emotion. The perseverance of this taboo has become a cliché, which is still with us today.

Summing up, our investigation of twentieth century acting has shown a consistent shift from emotion towards action but was there indeed such a shift? What does this new paradigm signify on a physiological level, and how does contemporary science understand these hot issues of action, emotion, feeling and emotional memory today?

---

[277] Markov cited in Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 155.

Chapter 3

Evolutionary Neuroscience of Emotion

3.1. The framework

As we saw in the previous two chapters, a great deal of the debate on the nature and function of emotion in life, and theatrical life specifically, focuses on two main issues: the order in which things happen during emotion and on the relation of emotion to reason, cognition and action, with obvious moral and technical implications. A great deal of criticism in theatre has sprung from the doctrine of emotional 'detachment' of both audience and actors, which tends to adopt a rather platonic view of emotion as disrupting and antithetical to reason. This view also favoured the behavioural over the subjective aspect of emotion and, by extension, questioned the function of emotion in social and ethical terms. Simultaneously, the greatest concern of acting theory and technique has revolved around the physiological relationship between emotion and action, in terms of what happens first and how linked these two aspects are. Advances in neuroscience and multidisciplinary approaches to emotions seem to be promising a redefinition of the nature and function of emotion, by providing a more holistic context, in which traditional cliché dichotomies of nature-nurture, emotion-reason or emotion-action cannot be sustained any more.

The approach to emotion that will be pursued here views emotion mainly from the point of view of Evolutionary Neuroscience, the interdisciplinary approach that studies the nervous system by combining Evolutionary Psychology and Biology with Neuroscience. This gives the approach a set of advantages (or biases): first, it allows for a wider understanding of the evolution of the function of emotion from the lowest to the higher forms of living organisms. It is a sort of history of emotion throughout the species. Second, modern findings from the brain sciences tend to do away completely with the artificial division between mind and brain, by providing solid (thought not yet definitive) models of physiological infrastructure, to account for the most complex mental functions, such as feelings, consciousness, etc. Therefore, the set of polarities is recontextualised

here, through a definition of the emotional properties (limitations and capabilities) of the nervous system, as for the form and degree of its malleability. Finally, by clarifying which aspects of the emotional event are inherited and which are culturally constructed, we can reappraise twentieth century acting theories on the purely technical level, that is, in terms of the physiological validity or not of their proposed models of emotion. This is important not only for testing the relation of these techniques to one another and to contemporary science, but, mainly, for identifying which of the tools these formulations offer are valid for actors today.

From a very practical point of view, the major problem in emotion discourse, as formulated in the emotion and acting theories we have examined, stems from imprecision and substantial discrepancy in the use of the term *emotion*. It seems that theorists are practically arguing about different aspects of a complex phenomenon, jumping indiscriminately from observation of behaviour to explaining experience or its communication, always through the generic use of the term *emotion*. The implications of this overgeneralisation become more acute, as soon as the issue of order, therefore of technique, comes along. If an actor needs a technique of emotion in theatre, then he needs to know the *machine* of emotion in life, in order to put it in effect during rehearsal.

How is a stimulus discerned from the rest and evaluated as emotional? Once a stimulus has been recognised as emotional, what kind of activation occurs in the body? Are there hard-wired patterns of response which are activated automatically beyond our *will* or do we improvise according to our background and culture? Is this response a brain launched, undifferentiated and diffuse one as Cannon argued or is it peripherally patterned, as Darwin and James suggested? As a result, are emotions universal attributes, are they culturally constructed or something else? Can we stop an emotion once it starts, or, in theatre, can we start an emotion that is not there? In terms of experience, is it possible to have an experience without expression and physiological change? Is it possible to have an expression or physiological change without experience? Are these two different? Are we always aware of physiological change? Can we be unaware of our feelings? What do we need feelings for? Are they different from emotion? What is the function of emotion? What is an emotion? Answering these questions from a contemporary neuroscientific point of view will allow us to re-examine the major twentieth century acting theories from a fresh and concrete point of view, and reappraise

the issue of the actor's emotion in relation to the portrayed character the way modern neural science would. These will be the subjects of the following two chapters.

3.1.1. Emotion, homeostasis and the tree of life

Putting things in evolutionary perspective, neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux proposes that emotions 'evolved as behavioural and physiological specialisations, bodily responses controlled by the brain, that allowed ancestral organisms to survive in hostile environments and procreate'.[278] Similarly, neurologist Antonio Damasio views emotions as 'curious adaptations that are part and parcel of the machinery with which organisms regulate survival'.[279] The regulation of survival as the primary function of emotion is of course a Darwinian concept, but modern neuroscience links it to another key concept in the biological science, that of *homeostasis*. Walter Cannon introduced this term (from the Greek «*όμοιος*»-'same' and «*στάσις*»-'state') in 1932 embracing in his definition the 'coordinated physiological reactions which maintain most of the steady states of the body'[280].

To relate emotion to survival is not just to reduce emotion to generic reflex reaction, but to view survival in its wider context, from reactions in life-threatening situations (pain avoidance) to imaginative well-being (happiness seeking). It is true though that emotions can be reflex-like reactions, unmediated by higher cortical (rational) processes, as much as they can be felt results of long and highly complex, conscious work, as we will later see. This continuum of diverse complexity events, from reflex to emotions, to feelings and to consciousness, reflects the product of millions of years of evolution, which in humans has reached its most admirable and simultaneously tragic form.

Going up the evolutionary ladder, behaviours and therefore action control mechanisms become more complex. In higher mammals the ability and necessity for (or illusion of) society and self-regulation expands. The definition of homeostasis and survival broadens dangerously, as decision-making shifts from inherited automaticity to a range of possible action. But it all starts earlier, in lower forms of life: 'All living

---

[278] J. LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain*, Phoenix, London, 1999, p. 40.
[279] A. Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness*, Vintage, London, 2000, p. 54.
[280] Cannon cited in Damasio, *The Feeling*, p. 138.

organisms from the humble amoeba to the human are born with devices designed to solve *automatically*, no proper reasoning required, the basic problems of life'.[281] Damasio eloquently crystallises the concept of homeostatic continuum in a metaphor of a tree.[282] At the lowest part of the tree (the trunk) one can find the basic life-sustaining devices: metabolism, basic reflexes and the immune system, which automatically coordinate equilibrium in the internal milieu. At the middle branches we find pain and pleasure behaviours, which relate to punishment and reward respectively, and can generate basic behaviours such as withdrawal or approach. In the next levels we can find drives and motivations, such as hunger, thirst, sex, play etc, while near the top we finally encounter emotions. Still, even at this high level of organisation and evolution, emotions 'aim directly at life regulation by staving off dangers or helping the organism take advantage of an opportunity, or indirectly by facilitating social relationships'.[283] The tiny branches of the tree are about feelings, which are experiences of the emotions or some of the lower processes, and finally, the leaves are awareness of these experiences, that is, consciousness.

Going up the tree, evolution has preserved diverse processes for dealing with the health and survival of the organism. The evolutionary advantage for an organism, as these processes evolve from complete, stereotypical automaticity of reactions to important stimuli, towards the experience and awareness of the reactions and the processes themselves (awareness of fear and awareness of awareness of fear), is the ability to reflect on the stimuli, their importance and their treatment, and to regulate behaviour in more imaginative and effective ways. Human emotions stand at the very point between drives and feelings, between the moving forces and the experience, where automaticity seems to be at stake. But not exactly.

3.1.2. The emotional brain

The dissociation between emotions and the feelings they usually evoke is not just an elucidation of the emotional episode, which, as we have seen, has always been a highly problematic area. It is a matter of investigating evolutionarily different phenomena, which usually cooperate, just like all other levels of homeostatic control, but are not the same.

---

[281] A. Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Human Brain*, Harcourt, New York, 2003, p. 30.
[282] This part is drawing largely on Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 31f.
[283] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 39.

For the discourse on emotion, this properly physiological differentiation is not another segmentation of the whole. It is a macro-historical contextualisation, a deconstruction of the experience machine, through evolution.

An attempt to correlate the evolution of emotion with the anatomy of the brain was made by Paul MacLean's idea of the *limbic system*. The limbic (from latin *limbus*, 'border') system was based on his previous idea of the *visceral brain*, which involved the 'no-man's land'[284] area between the hypothalamus and the neocortex, and assigned great functional importance to the hippocampus, in which he thought that the integration of external and internal stimuli took place, forming the base for emotionality. By the 1970's MacLean's concept had developed into what he called the *triune brain* (*see* Fig. 11). The triune brain suggested that 'there results a remarkable linkage of three cerebrotypes which are radically different in chemistry and structure and which in evolutionary sense are eons apart. There exists so to speak, a hierarchy of three-brains-in-one, or what I call, for short, a triune brain'.[285]
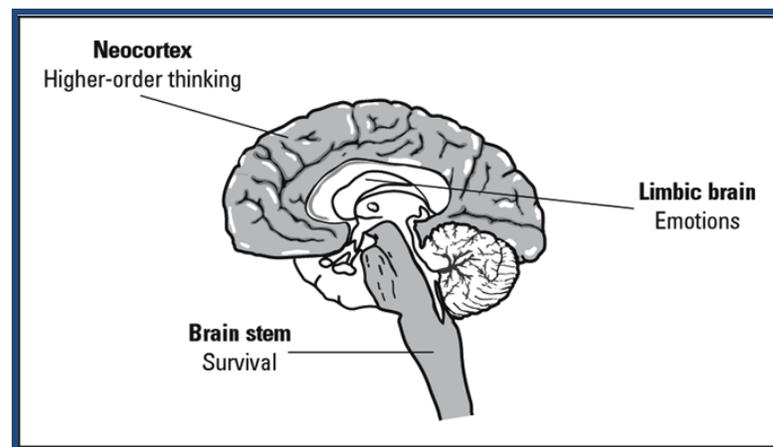
Fig. 11 The three layers of the brain (Erlauer, L., 'A walk through the brain', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/101269/chapters/A_Walk_Through_the_Brain.aspx>).

Though MacLean's theory, as well as the whole idea of the limbic system as the emotional system *par excellence* has been criticised by some modern scientists for oversimplification and lack of anatomical and functional specificity[286], neuroscientists today accept that the observation of the triune structure indeed 'points in the right

---

[284] LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 101.
[285] P. MacLean cited in LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 98.
[286] *See* LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain*, p. 98f.

direction'.[287] The theory accepts that the phylogenetically oldest structure of the brain is the *reptilian brain*, comprising mainly of the *basal ganglia*, and that this part of the brain controls basic motor animal plans. The second-intermediate part is the *limbic system* or *old-mammalian brain* (*see* Fig. 11) which involves areas such as the *amygdala, hippocampus, septal area, preoptic area, hypothalamus and central grey* of the *mesencephalon* (*see* Fig. 12) which are today considered necessary for the generation of 'emotions that mediate various pro-social behaviours'.[288] The third part is the *neo-mammalian* brain or *neocortex,* structured in six layers and operating the neural representations of the sensory inputs, and the higher 'cognitive' functions. Panksepp schematically calls these three layers, which were thought to have been the highest control systems in each referred evolutionary stage, the *instinctual* motor brain, the *emotional* brain and the *rational* brain[289].
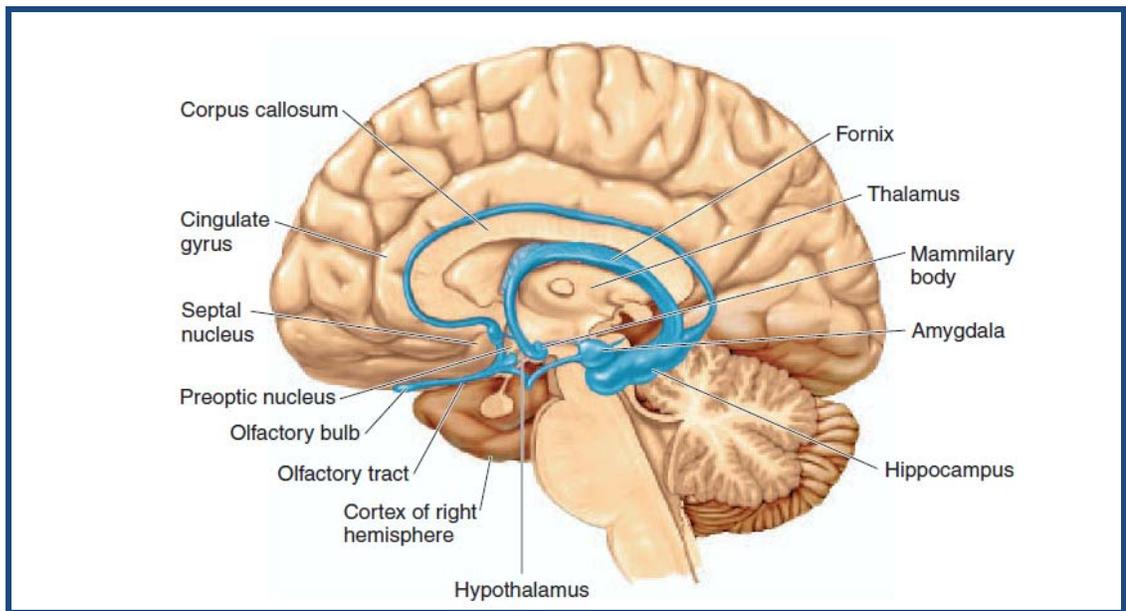
Fig. 12 **Limbic System** (from Fox, S. I., *Human Physiology*, McGraw, 2004, p. 200).

Just like Damasio's homeostatic metaphor, Panksepp compares the function of these three layers of control to a tree. These layers work hierarchically, with the lower ones being rather *closed* since they deal with functions of literally vital importance, and the higher ones being more *open*, as they can and do exert filtering and control over impulsive

[287] J. Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1998, p. 70.
[288] From Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, p. 70f.
[289] Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, p. 70.

lower functions, but are not fatally debilitating for the organism once impaired.[290] In both examples, a 'nesting principle' exists: circuitry subserving lower functions can participate in higher functions, so that 'some of the machinery of the [lower] levels […] is incorporated in the machinery of the emotions-proper'.[291] The body responds as a whole to stimuli, keeping hierarchy of goals and transactions, towards the common goal of survival and well-being. When it comes to emotions, these responses are complex and multi-faceted and, eventually, a distinction needs to be made between three key aspects of emotion: *evaluation, expression* and *experience.*

---

[290] Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, p. 74.
[291] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 38.

3.2. Evaluation

3.2.1. Minimum cognitive requirements

From the innumerable stimuli that storm our brains every single moment, how is it that some lead us to respond emotionally, while others do not? How does this filtering of information take place? The issue of evaluation of emotion was posed by Aristotle a long time ago. His definition of fear reads: 'Let fear, then, be a kind of pain or disturbance resulting from the imagination of impending danger, either destructive or painful'.[292] Clearly, the response is set off after the mediation of some *evaluation* of the situation, and, as we discussed in the first Chapter, unless the situation is evaluated *as* danger, there will be no fear response. But how is such meaning attributed to some events? Since not all perceived stimuli lead to emotional activation, there has to be some mechanism that performs this process of evaluation-appraisal. The critical question related to evaluation is how the mechanism recognises and then assigns to incoming stimuli their emotional significance. This raises issues of quality of stimuli *processing* (mechanisms-circuits), as well as qualities of *stimuli per se* (antecedents), which in turn problematise to what extent it is our experience that defines our emotional reactivity, some other inherited mechanisms, or a combination of the two.

3.2.2. Emotionally competent stimuli (ECS)

Common sense suggests that the evaluation of events comes before the response to them, but the degree in which this process is conscious or not, is not a matter of common sense. Revising related psychophysiological literature, Damasio suggests that emotions occur *automatically*, as neurochemical responses to *emotionally competent stimuli* (ECS) that change the body and brain state, and activate a repertory of actions, some of which are handed down by evolution while others are conjured from experience.[293] More importantly, for emotions to occur 'there is no *need* to analyse the causative object consciously let alone evaluate the situation in which it appears […] Emotionally competent stimuli are detected very fast, ahead of selective attention'.[294] An emotion

---

[292] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1382a.
[293] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 53.
[294] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 55.

starts before we are aware of it. LeDoux summarises two ranges of emotionally competent stimuli: 'natural' or 'learned triggers'. Natural triggers are hard-wired by evolution 'to detect certain input or trigger stimuli that are relevant to the function of the network', whereas learned triggers 'tend to be associated with and predictive of the occurrence of natural triggers'.[295] The way the latter happens is through learning (social experience), which consists in the process of associating stimuli with responses as in conditioning.

This is exactly the arena of the construction of experience and behaviour through culture, especially in those cases when culture may seem as counter-intuitive as the Jamesian motto. Theoretically, learning through conditioning can make it possible that under appropriate circumstances emotional value can be attributed even to the most irrelevant stimuli.[296] This is especially true and obvious in cultural differences, where different emotional significance can be attributed to the 'same' stimuli. Bumping into a cow in the street, in downtown Thessaloniki does not trigger the same response as it would in New Delhi, even if the same person were involved. Equally, eating worms may be perfectly normal in some cultures, but the ultimate trigger of disgust in others, and, though one may eventually acquire gourmet delightedness in worm-eating through learning, others will always remain surprised at the sight of the cow in front of an ATM machine. Nevertheless, while the possible conditioned (learned) reactions to stimuli seem to be theoretically infinite, a convergence of unconditioned (unlearned) human emotional reactions towards specific *ranges* of stimuli is also concretely apparent. If there were no common ground in the generation and perception of emotionality, if signs and their interpretation were completely arbitrary, cross-cultural communication would be completely impossible.

3.2.3. Autoappraisers and core relational themes

This topic of the *antecedents* of emotion is another area of debate. Whereas extreme social constructionism accepts cultural experience as the sole constructor of emotional springboards, annihilating the contribution of inheritance and thus conceiving man as *tabula rasa*, there now seems to be agreement in psychology on what cognitive-appraisal

---

[295] LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 127.
[296] One just needs to read the list of various phobias that can develop to humans like hydrophobia (fear of the water) etc.

theorist Richard Lazarus calls *core relational themes* (CRT). For Lazarus, a 'core relational theme is the molar, cognitive-motivational-relational essence of a prototypical emotion, a configuration that defines the key harm or benefit implied in the person-environment relationship. Knowing the CRT should enable us to explain and predict the emotion that is aroused'.[297] For example, he defines the CRT for sadness as 'having experienced irrevocable loss' while for anger as 'a demeaning offense against me and mine'.[298] The connection between a CRT and an emotion is specific and innate, that is, inherited and, therefore, as long as two individuals appraise an event as involving the same CRT, their emotional reactions will be the same.[299]

Similarly, Paul Ekman talks about *themes* and *variations* on the themes, as antecedents of emotion. Ekman suggests that we possess innate automatic appraising mechanisms, the *autoappraisers*, which continuously scan the environment to detect within events and objects a theme or its variation (learned or associated). The closer an event is to a theme, the faster the appraisal will be (*automatic appraising*); the further the variation is from the theme, the appraisal is delayed by complex (cognitive) processing. This is what he calls *extended appraising*.[300] Still, for Ekman too, though experience and learning can create variations, the themes are innate, inherited and therefore universal.[301]

3.2.4. The High and Low roads of the amygdala

LeDoux's work on fear has furnished some ground-breaking results about the level on which such appraisal mechanisms operate. LeDoux discovered that sensory input from the *thalamus* (the first relay station of raw sensory input) can reach the *amygdala* (a formation of the so-called limbic system), which has some important control over ANS activation through its connections with the *hypothalamus* (a structure mainly involved in memory) in two different ways: the High and the Low Road (*see* Fig. 13). The High Road is more extensive and precise but also slower, since the information travels from the thalamus to the cortices where it is represented and processed, and only then reaches the

---

[297] R. Lazarus in Ekman & Davidson, *The Nature of Emotion*, p. 164.
[298] The similarity of the CRTs with Aristotle's definitions of emotions is striking.
[299] Lazarus, in Ekman & Davidson, *The Nature of Emotion*, p. 165.
[300] P. Ekman in N. Frijda, A. S. R. Manstead, & A. Fischer (eds.), *Feelings and Emotions: the Amsterdam Symposium,* Cambridge University Press, New York, 2004, p. 119f.
[301] Most researchers agree with Ekman, at least on this issue. Curiously, the divergence is greater on the universality of basic emotions rather than on their antecedents.

amygdala. In the Low Road, thalamic input reaches the amygdala directly from the thalamus, without the mediation of higher-order cortical elaboration. Despite the fact that bypassing the cortical processing compromises the accuracy of information related to the object or event (so that one may mistake a branch for a snake) the direct Low thalamo-amygdala path is shorter and faster. In the latter case, had the represented object really been a snake, the advantage of this Low Road would have been clearly one: time.[302] The amygdala practically 'sees' an ECS before our cortex does, therefore, while the amygdala already initiates the emotional response, 'the cortex's job is to prevent the inappropriate response rather than to produce the appropriate one'.[303]

Conversely, the cortex can corroborate the validity of the amygdala's auto-appraisal and eventually confirm the emotional reaction, with even greater urgency and options, or it can cancel the emotional activation as a false alarm. Though cortical and subcortical processing usually occur hand in hand, especially in humans, it is nevertheless crucial to acknowledge the fact that subcortical activation can *precede* higher elaboration from the cortex. This gives away the automatic, homeostatic function of emotion systems in humans, which like in all other animals evolved and can still occur with *minimum requirements* for cognitive processing. The implications of this are evidently huge: we do not *need* to attend, that is, to be consciously aware of an ECS for an emotion to ignite. Instead, emotions can start, and usually start, unconsciously, before their cause is brought into consciousness. Just as in the case of the Jamesian bear, our common sense impression that we *consciously* run away from the bear or freeze at the sight of a gun pointed at us is also mistaken.

Though our evaluation may be *gradually* becoming conscious, as we realise that the gun which a 'friend' aims at us is not a farce, emotions are not manufactured to rely on such extensive analyses. Steering the wheel and stepping on the brake instantaneously when a young child unexpectedly crosses the street, or when a truck veers toward us, could not occur successfully unless the assessment of the situation were automatic enough, so as not to rely on our conscious examination of the situation, calculation of the odds, estimation of each scenario, selection of option and execution of such sharp and precise a movement. This does not mean that all emotions occur without cognition, but,

---

[302] LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 138f.
[303] LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 165.

rather, that in some cases the amount of cognitive processing required is minimal. By using the term cognition here, the intention is not to shrink the concept of cognitive processing, but rather to exclude the *necessity* of complex or conscious cognitive schemas, as prerequisite for the generation of emotion, as has been the case with various schools of thought.[304]
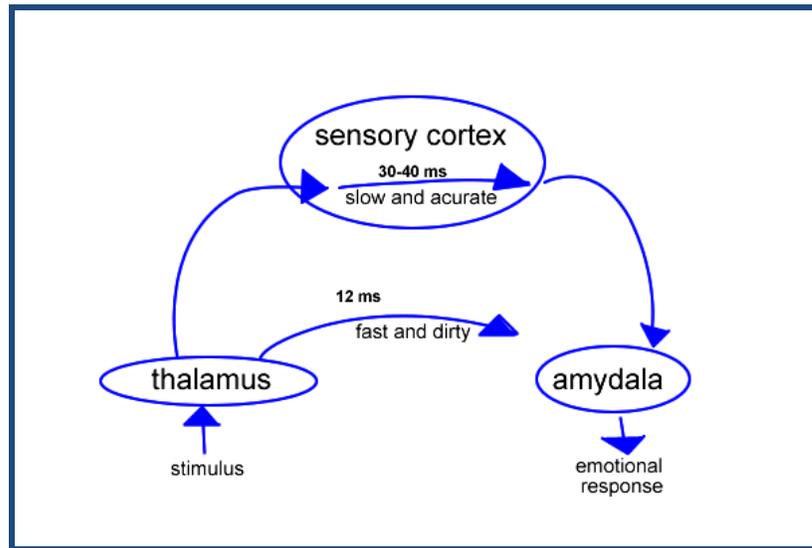
Fig. 13 The High and Low Routes of the amygdala ('Neurology of a phobia', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.keane-hypnotherapy.com/audio/phobia.png>).

3.2.5. Induction-Triggering

So, *where* do emotions occur anyway? The hot issue of localising the generation of emotion in the brain and the debate on the importance of the periphery and the viscera (James) or the brain (Cannon) has shifted emphasis. Along with the view that there are not specific brain *centres* for specific functions and that it is rather *systems* of brain areas that could account for them, it is now a fairly widespread agreement that there is not a single organ or system for specific emotions: 'there are likely numerous circuits for different types of emotions'.[305] Nevertheless, the control starts in the brain. How?

Just as single-celled organisms possess inherited structures to detect danger in the environment (such as steep changes in temperature or light), or young birds freeze in their nests when a *large* bird dives *suddenly* towards them, higher animals and humans have the innate capacity to react when they recognise a stimulus that ignites a theme, or its

---

[304] Ekman, *Nature of Emotion*, p. 181.
[305] J. Schulkin et al, 'Demythologising the emotions: adaptation, cognition, and visceral representations of emotion in the nervous system', *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 52, pp.15–23, 2003.

variation, of importance to them. In neural terms, when an image, in the form of specific configurations of neural patterns arises (a) as a result of sensory processing and representation or (b) as an image from memory, *emotion-triggering structures*, such as the amygdala, the periaquedactal gray (PAG), the anterior cingulated region or the ventromedial prefrontal cortex are activated: sadness, for example, 'consistently activates the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, hypothalamus and brain stem'.[306] The induction happens in relatively few brain sites, but before the body-proper is activated, other areas of the brain, the *execution sites*, have to ignite first. Expression (physiological change) starts in the brain.

---

[306] Damasio, *The Feeling*, p. 61.

3.3. Expression and action

3.3.1. Execution in the brain: *opening the lock*

The activation of these areas due to the evaluation of an ECS as a core relational theme, in a fashion that Damasio describes as similar to the antigen-antibody or key-lock function of the immune system, results in the electrochemical activation of other *emotion-execution systems*, mainly in areas of 'the hypothalamus, the basal forebrain and some nuclei in the brain stem tegmentum'[307], which will eventually command the series of physiological changes that will occur. Different participating areas form different systems for different emotions, thus, laying distinct foundations for the distinctly different *feel* of each emotion.

The activation of the triggering and execution systems results in the generation of a profound physiological change within the whole organism effected through the connections of the limbic system to emotion *effector systems* (*see* Tab. 2). These effector systems involve activation (1) of the autonomic nervous system (ANS), (2) of the skeletomotor or somatic nervous system (SNS), and (3) of the endocrine and peptide systems.[308] This coordinated neurochemical explosion eventually leads the organism on the verge of action and eventually of feelings.

3.3.2. Autonomic patterning and basic emotions: *the wisdom of the ages*

The Autonomic Nervous System (from the Greek «εαυτόν»-'self' and «νόμος»-'law') is considered to be working independently of our *will*, it is self-regulated. It innervates the heart, the smooth muscles of the viscera and blood-vessels, as well as all the glands in the body. Functionally it belongs to the Peripheral Nervous System, but anatomically it also enters the Central Nervous System (CNS), with the *hypothalamus* being its higher control centre (*ganglion*). The ANS is further divided into the Sympathetic (SNS) and Parasympathetic (PNS) branches, which have competitive and complementary action.[309]

---

[307] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 62.

[308] J. Martin, *Neuroanatomy: Text and Atlas*, McGraw-Hill Medical, New York, 2003, p. 392.

[309] Most of the material for this section comes from R. Snell, *Clinical Neuroanatomy for Medical Students* [Snell, R., *Κλινική Νευροανατομική*,(μτφρ.)Ν. Ι. Παπαδόπουλος, Λίτσας, Αθήνα, 1995], p. 519f.
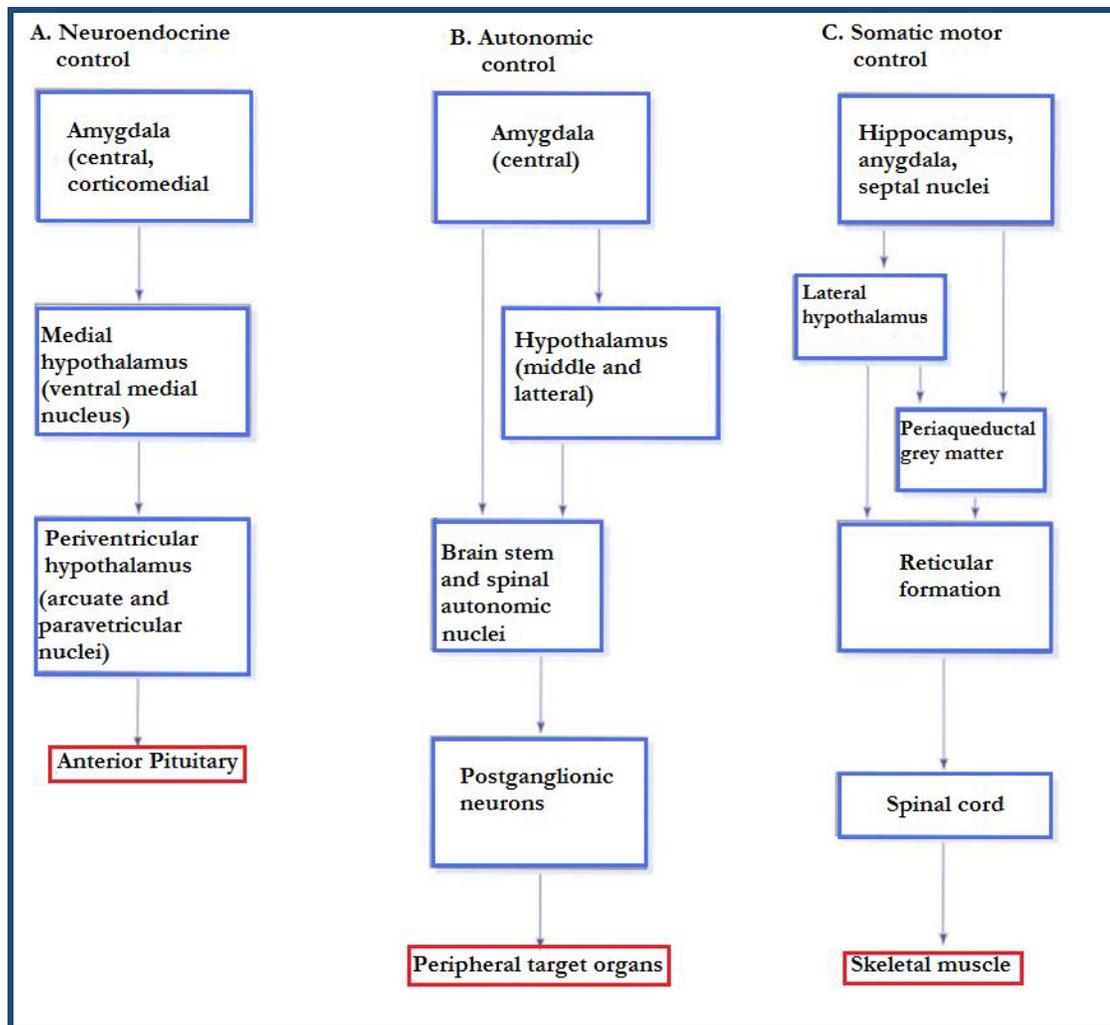
Tab. 2 Neural connections of the limbic system to effector systems involved in emotion A. Neuroendocrine Control B. Autonomic Control C. Somatic Motor Control (Martin, J., *Neuroanatomy: Text and Atlas*, McGraw-Hill Medical, 2003, p. 392).

The Sympathetic branch is an excitatory system that sets the organism in readiness, by accelerating heart rate and respiration, contracting the skin, gastrointestinal tract (GIT) and blood-vessels (vasoconstriction), while dilating skeletal muscles' vessels (vasodilation) and the eye pupil, erecting skin hair, causing perspiration and rising blood pressure. This means that the SNS prepares the organism for immediate action through a redistribution of blood. Blood carries oxygen, glucose and hormones, which leave the skin and GIT to hit the muscles, brain and heart, into what is called the *fight-or-flight response*[310].

---

[310] D. U. Silverthorn & W. C. Ober, *Human physiology: an integrated approach, 4th ed.,* Benjamin Cummings, San Fransisco, 2006, p. 378.

Effector Organ	Sympathetic Effect	Parasympathetic Effect
Eye		
Iris (radial muscle)	Dilation of pupil	—
Iris (sphincter muscle)	—	Constriction of pupil
Ciliary muscle	Relaxation (for far vision)	Contraction (for near vision)
Glands		
Lacrimal (tear)	—	Stimulation of secretion
Sweat	Stimulation of secretion	—
Salivary	Decreased secretion; saliva becomes thick	Increased secretion; saliva becomes thin
Stomach	—	Stimulation of secretion
Intestine	—	Stimulation of secretion
Adrenal medulla	Stimulation of hormone secretion	—
Heart		
Rate	Increased	Decreased
Conduction	Increased rate	Decreased rate
Strength	Increased	—
Blood Vessels	Mostly constriction; affects all organs	Dilation in a few organs (e.g., penis)
Lungs		
Bronchioles (tubes)	Dilation	Constriction
Mucous glands	Inhibition of secretion	Stimulation of secretion
Gastrointestinal Tract		
Motility	Inhibition of movement	Stimulation of movement
Sphincters	Closing stimulated	Closing inhibited
Liver	Stimulation of glycogen hydrolysis	—
Adipose (Fat) Cells	Stimulation of fat hydrolysis	—
Pancreas	Inhibition of exocrine secretions	Stimulation of exocrine secretions
Spleen	Contraction	—
Urinary Bladder	Muscle tone aided	Contraction
Arrector Pili Muscles	Erection of hair and goose bumps	—
Uterus	If pregnant: contraction; if not pregnant: relaxation	—
Penis	Ejaculation	Erection (due to vasodilation)

Tab. 3 **Effects of Sympathetic and Parasympathetic action on various organs** (Fox, S. I., *Human Physiology*, 8th ed., McGraw, 2004, p. 227).

The Parasympathetic branch, on the other hand, tends to preserve and restore the organism's energy and resources, by slowing down respiration and heart rate, constricting eye pupil, increasing peristalsis and hormonal secretions and relaxing sphincter muscles. This response is usually termed the *rest-and-digest* response[311]. Yet not all organs have this double SNS and PNS innervation (*see* Tab. 3). For example, the smooth hair erector muscles (*arrector pili*) have SNS but no PNS innervation. The overall function of the ANS is controlled by the hypothalamus, which coordinates and complements the ANS with the endocrinal system, preserving, thus, the homeostasis of the body. Though the functions of the ANS occur unconsciously, some of them can be put into a degree of control, mainly through the manipulation of breathing.

Darwin was the first to suggest *functional* similarities in the autonomic physiology underpinning emotional *expressions* among people from different cultures and, mainly,

---

[311] Siverthorne & Ober, *Physiology*, p. 378.

between man and other higher animals. James, who endorsed Darwin's view, talked about *patterns* of responses that were pre-organised and inherited, and divided between coarse and subtle emotions. As we remember, the patterning of response was criticised by Cannon's model of undifferentiated arousal, but the main attack still comes from anthropology and the social sciences, which often deny such universality and patterning among cultures.[312]

3.3.3. Basic emotions and secondary variations

The patterning of these responses suggests that there are specific, prototypic and distinct kinds of emotion usually called *basic emotions*. Paul Ekman is the most prominent *basic emotion* theorist, whose large body of work has furnished indisputable evidence that there are distinct ANS patterns and facial expressions, which distinguish basic emotions.[313] Ekman's experiments entailed cross-cultural research, research on animals, children and blind people, and verified distinct and predictable autonomic responses (heart rate, skin conductance, skin resistance, respiration etc). This reinforced the evolutionary premise that these ANS patterns evolved because they subserved patterns of motor behaviour that were adaptive for each of these emotions, preparing the organism for quite different actions'.[314] Although he accepts that in an evolutionary sense 'all emotions are basic'[315], given 'their adaptive value for dealing with fundamental life tasks'[316], he nevertheless distinguishes six basic emotions that can be observed cross-culturally: *joy, sadness, fear, anger, disgust* and *surprise*.[317]

Tackling the issue of cultural construction of emotion, which stands as an antipode to this universalist concept, Ekman suggests that in reality it is not *just* discrete emotions, but rather families of emotions, with each basic emotion being the inherited *theme* and the rest of the family of emotions reflecting socially learned *variations* on the theme.[318] Despite the large appeal of the constructionist approach to emotion within the social sciences, the famous experiments done by Ekman, Friesen and Levenson based on the Darwinian-

---

[312] *See* section 1.8.
[313] P. Ekman, R. W. Levenson & W. V. Friesen 'Autonomic nervous system distinguishes among emotions', *Science*, Vol. 221, 1983, pp. 1208-10.
[314] Ekman, *Nature*, p. 17.
[315] Ekman, *Nature of Emotion* p. 14.
[316] Ekman, *Nature of Emotion*, p. 15.
[317] P. Ekman, *Emotions Revealed: Understanding Faces and Feelings*, Phoenix, London, 2003, p. 10.
[318] Ekman, *Nature*, p. 19.

Jamesian concept and Sylvan Tomkins' doctrine of *primary affects*, have been further confirmed by numerous studies, which establish the existence of distinct patterns of physiological response during specific emotions.[319] Though most psychologists and neuroscientists now generally agree with the concept of basic and secondary emotions, there is some disagreement as to which emotions they consider as basic (*see* Tab. 4).

Following this line of thought, Damasio suggests three main levels of emotions: *primary*, *social* and *background emotions*[320]. His definition of basic emotions coincides with Ekman's, and so does his definition of the *social* or *secondary* emotions such as *sympathy, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride, jealousy, envy, gratitude, admiration, indignation* and *contempt. Social emotions* emerge as combinations and mixtures of primary emotions, just as happens with colours, all of which emerge from different combinations of the three basic colours. Though social emotions are variations neurologically 'nesting' within the basic ones, higher social organisation would most probably have remained fairly primitive, without the development of emotions such as *sympathy* or *shame*. Nevertheless, Damasio stresses that social emotions are not encountered only in humans, as one may infer from the term 'social', but in other animals too.[321] Background emotions, on the other hand, involve 'the largely unpredictable result of several concurrent regulatory processes engaged within the vast playground that our organisms resemble'[322], such as 'feeling down' etc. Though background emotions reflect the organism's 'state of being' at that moment as a result of 'basic homeostatic processes, pain and pleasure behaviours, and appetites', they should be discerned from *moods*, which involve 'the sustaining of an emotion over long periods of time'.[323]

---

[319] Ekman et al, 'Autonomic nervous system', pp. 1208-10. For a thorough list of ANS-specificity scholarship *see* C., E. Collet, E. Vernet-Mauray, G. Delhomme & A. Dittmar, 'Autonomic nervous system response patterns specificity to basic emotion', *Journal of the Autonomic Nervous System*, Vol. 62, 1997pp. 45-57; P. Rainville, A. Bechara, N. Naqvi & A. R. Damasio, 'Basic emotions are associated with distinct patterns of cardiorespiratory activity', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 61, No. 1, pp. 5-18.
[320] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 45.
[321] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 45f.
[322] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 44.
[323] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 43.
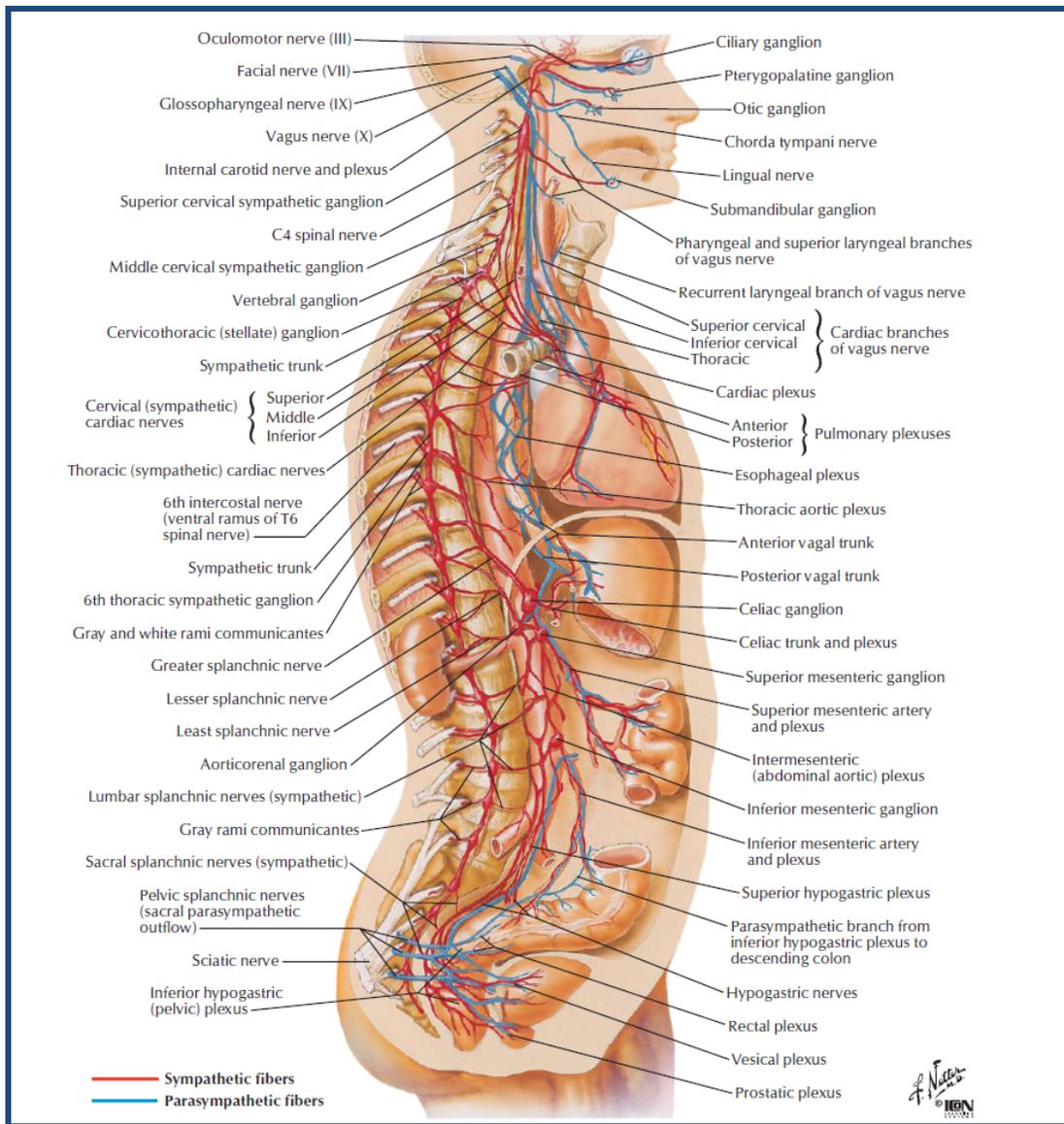
Fig. 14 The Autonomic Nervous System (Netter, F.H.M.D., *Atlas of Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology*, Icon Custom Communications, Teterboro, 2002, p. 2).

3.3.4. The endocrine and peptide cooperation

A slower form of emotional response involves the recruiting of the endocrine system. The endocrine system functions through the secretion of hormones into the bloodstream, such as thyroxin, testosterone, estrogens, insulin and adrenaline from specific glands throughout the body such as the thyroid, gonads, pancreas and adrenals. The whole system of glands is coordinated by a master-gland in the brain, the pituitary gland, which through feedback with the hypothalamus, detects hormonal imbalances and responds by secreting regulatory hormones. Though neural reactions occur in milliseconds, it may take

minutes for hormonal secretions to reach their target. Nevertheless, they exert more steady and lasting behavioural effects.

The feedback from the hormones in the bloodstream further affects brain function, which is already affected by the secretion of neuropeptides directly into the brain, by the brain itself. Neuropeptides are chemicals such as β-endorphin, oxytocin, as well as neurotransmitters (dopamine, monoamines etc.), which are released from neurons in the hypothalamus, basal forebrain and brain stem, and affect the 'processing style', the pattern of brain functioning itself.[324] The function of the neuropeptides, now a subject of growing interest, aspires to link the immune, neural and endocrine systems of the organism (*psychoneuroimmunology*), by serving as the biochemical basis, the molecules of emotion.[325]

3.3.5. Somatic Nervous System activation

Alongside ANS and endocrine arousal, the execution of an emotion comprises commands to the Somatic nervous system (SNS[1]), which is usually under voluntary control, mainly through the pathways that connect the limbic system to the *reticulospinal tract* in the brainstem. The reticulospinal tract belongs to the *extrapyramidal* motor system, which is believed to (involuntarily) exercise control on muscle tone, facial expressions, balance, posture, coarse limb movements and inborn stereotypical responses.[326]

3.3.5.1. Universality in facial expressions of emotion and display rules

A very well examined area of the activation of the SNS during emotion is the face. Duchenne de Boulogne used electrical stimulation of musculature to investigate their functions and dynamics (s*ee* Fig. 15), while Darwin, tracking the origin of emotional facial expressions as inherited from ancestral action, suggested that 'whenever the same state of mind is induced, however feebly, there is a tendency through the force of habit and association for the same movements to be performed, though they may not be of the least use'.[327]

---

[324] Damasio, *The Feeling*, p. 68.
[325] C. Pert, *Molecules of Emotion: Why You Feel the Way You Feel*, Simon & Schuster, London, 1998.
[326] E. Nicpon & K. Hoehn, *Human Anatomy*, 7th (ed.), Pearson, San Fransisco, 2007, p. 478.
[327] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 34.

Theory	Emotions
Evolutionary approaches:	
Plutchik (1962, 1980)	fear, anger, sadness, joy, acceptance, disgust, anticipation, astonishment
Scott (1980)	fear, anger, loneliness, pleasure, love, anxiety, curiosity
Epstein (1984)	fear, anger, sadness, joy, love
Neural approaches	
Tomkins (1962, 1963)	fear, anger, enjoyment, interest, disgust, surprise, shame, contempt, distress
Izard (1972, 1977)	fear, anger, enjoyment, interest, disgust, surprise, shame/shyness, contempt, distress, guilt
Panksepp (1982)	fear, rage, panic,* expectancy†
Psychoanalytic approaches:	
Arieti (1970)	fear, rage, satisfaction, tension, appetite
Brenner (1980)	pleasure, unpleasure
Autonomic approach:	
Fromme and O'Brien (1982)	fear, anger, grief/resignation, joy, elation, satisfaction, shock
Facial expressions approaches:	
Ekman (1973)	fear, anger, sadness, happiness, disgust, surprise
Osgood (1966)	fear, anger, anxiety-sorrow, joy, quiet pleasure, interest/expectancy, amazement, boredom, disgust
Empirical classification approaches:	
Shaver and Schwartz (1984)	fear, anger, sadness, happiness, love
Fehr and Russell (1985)	fear, anger, sadness, happiness, love
Developmental approaches:	
Sroufe (1979)	fear, anger, pleasure
Trevarthen (1984)	fear, anger, sadness, happiness
Malatesta and Haviland (1982) ...	fear, anger, sadness, joy, interest, browflash, pain, knitbrow
Emde (1980)	fear, anger, sadness, joy, interest, surprise, distress, shame, shyness, disgust, guilt

* Panic is associated with "sorrow, loneliness, and grief" (Panksepp 1982, p. 410).
† Expectancy is understood as "joyful anticipation" (Panksepp 1982, p. 414).

Tab. 4 **Table of basic emotions according to various theories** (Kemper, T. D., 'How many emotions are there? Wedding the social and the autonomic components', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 93, No. 2, 1987, p. 266).

In the Darwinian analysis 'extreme disgust is expressed by movements round the mouth identical with those preparatory to vomiting. The mouth is open widely, with the upper lip strongly retracted, which wrinkles the sides of the nose, and with the lower lip protruded and everted as much as possible. The latter movement requires the contraction of the muscles which draw downwards the corners of the mouth[…]They all consist of

actions representing the rejection or exclusion of some real object which we dislike or abhor[…]and through the force of habit and association similar actions are performed, whenever any analogous situation arises in our minds'.[328]

Fig. 15 **Duchenne's electrical stimulation of mimic muscles involved in emotion** (Duchenne de Boulogne, G. B., *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine ou analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions*, Librairie J.-B. Bailliere et Fils, Paris, 1876, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duchenne_de_Boulogne_2.jpg>).

Ekman's studies of literate and pre-literate cultures have found consistency in facial emotional expression cross-culturally. Subjects could recognise emotional expressions on others, while 'there was no difference between cultures in the expressions shown in response to emotion-inducing films when the subjects thought they were alone'.[329] Furthermore, voluntary simulation of the emotional facial expressions caused emotion-specific ANS activation and feelings analogous to the simulated emotion. The fact the facial musculature used during involuntary (spontaneous) emotional expression is partially available to deliberate control blurs the boundaries between expression and *communication*.

---

[328] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 256.
[329] P. Ekman, 'Facial expressions of emotion: an old controversy and new findings', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 335, No. 1273, Processing the Visual Image, p. 63.

Though the facial activation during emotion is involuntary, it is possible to both inhibit expression to some extent, as well as to simulate emotion-like expressions when emotion might be absent. Ekman and Friesen launched the term *display rules* 'to designate attempts to manage involuntary expressions of emotion that include attenuating, amplifying, inhibiting or covering the involuntary expression with the sign of another emotion'.[330]

Display rules imply that 'a given emotion will not always be displayed in the same fashion due to the influence of personal habits, situational pressures and cultural norms'.[331] Display rules are learned through cultural experience and account for the diversity of emotional expression through cultures, as well as within the same cultural groups. Though learned, display rules can end up operating automatically through habit, or they can be a conscious behavioural choice rather than force, when not performed often. It is also possible that they can be in operation when an individual is alone, and there is no direct or present reminder of the rules.[332]

3.3.5.2. Posture

The impact of emotion on posture was also observed by Darwin, who assumed a link between 'varying motivational states of emotional reactivity and specific postural responses that reflect accompanying behaviour'.[333] The relation of emotional states with postural tendencies, primarily *approach* and *withdrawal*, has been experimentally tested by Hillman, where the shifts of the centre of pressure (COP), which is closely related to the centre of mass (COM), during affective picture viewing were monitored in the anterior (approach)-posterior axis (withdrawal). The experiment showed consistent withdrawal behaviour towards negative picture viewing, and sex differences in the degree of COP movement during withdrawal (women presented larger COP sways)[334].

---

[330] P. Ekman, 'Should we call it expression or communication?', *Innovations in Social Science Research*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1997, p. 339.

[331] Cacioppo, *Principles of Psychophysiology*, p. 357.

[332] Ekman, 'Should we call it expression or communication?', p. 340.

[333] C. H. Hillman, K. S. Rosengren, & D. P. Smith 'Emotion and motivated behaviour: postural adjustments to affective picture viewing', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 66, 2004, p. 51.

[334] Hillman et al, 'Emotion and motivated behaviour', pp. 51-62.
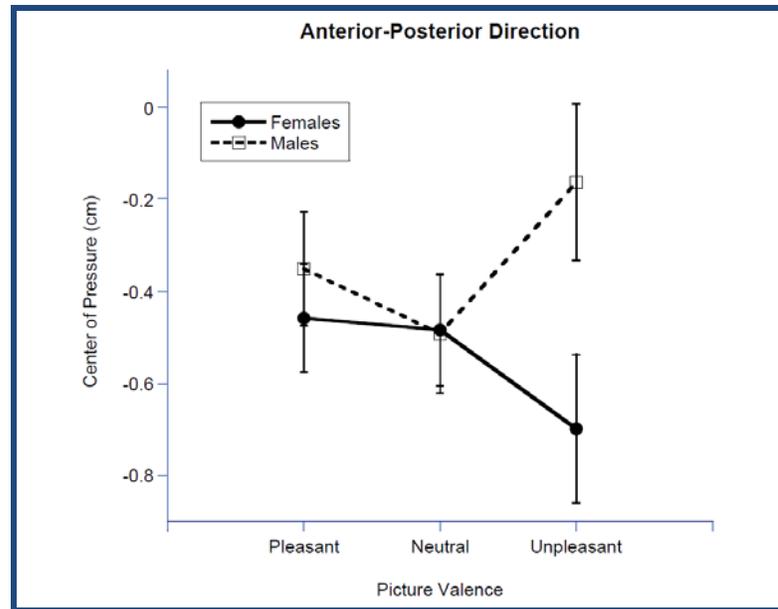
Fig. 16 Posture and emotion Center of pressure movement (cm) in the anterior–posterior direction for females and males across the three picture valence categories. Positive values indicate COP movement in the anterior direction and negative values indicate COP movement in the posterior direction. A zero value would indicate no change in COP (C. H. Hillman et al 'Emotion and motivated behavior: postural adjustments to affective picture viewing', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 66, 2004).

3.3.6. Emotion, motivation and action

3.3.6.1. Emotion as motivation

According to the nesting principle of the homeostatic tree metaphor, an emotion system uses some of the circuitry that underlines previous levels of organisations, in this case of drives and motivations. Though drives such as hunger, thirst, play or sex are not emotions, Frijda suggests that 'motivation for action—changes in motivation and motivational processes—is part and parcel of what we mean by emotions'[335], whose functions are 'to signal events that are relevant to the individual's concerns and to motivate behaviour to deal with these events'[336]; '[e]motions signal the relevance of events to concerns[…]in each emotion-eliciting event some concern can be identified[…][D]etecting concern-relevant events is useful for ensuring satisfaction or protection of these concerns'.[337]

Once an event has been appraised as emotionally competent, the organism is motivated to act in relation to the event, it is motivated to maintain or modify a particular kind of relationship with the environment. Frijda puts it quite clearly: 'Passions […]

---

[335] Frijda, *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 158.
[336] Frijda, in *Nature of Emotion*, p. 121.
[337] Frijda, in *Nature of Emotion*, p. 113.

exemplify *action*: behaviour that not only goes, but goes *somewhere*. Passions blatantly exemplify motivation. A passion wants *something*; it is driven toward something or away from it'.[338] Similarly, according to Buck 'motivation may be viewed as a potential that is manifested in emotion: with emotion being, in effect, a readout of motivational potential'.[339]

The gist is clear: emotion tells us what is important for us. An occurring emotion reveals that an event or object is of importance, and thus reveals the motivation and action tendency of the organism in relation to it. As such, the language of importance in our relation to the world is emotion. This is why emotion is a readout of motivational potential: because motivated behaviour is haunted by present emotions and by avoidances or pursuits guided by predicted emotions. Furthermore, even though we are not always emotional, we are most of the time in some mood and always in a background emotion.[340] Though we might not be attending, the emotion or mood can easily become an object of our attention and awareness. This might be easier for observers, as it often happens that we are better able to detect background emotions in others, rather than in ourselves. If this sounds like emotion being a holygrail, it is exactly because emotion is about the organism's holygrails.

3.3.6.2. Emotion as action and as action tendency

When an emotion happens, one of its main features is exactly the motivational state that we referred to earlier, which is no other but a state of *action tendency*.[341] We saw in Chapter 1, how both Aristotle and Darwin anticipated the notion of *action tendency*, the former by attributing to each emotion its specific appraisal and urge for action, and the latter by justifying every single one of the physiological changes that occur during each emotion as a preparation for the primordial action (e.g., *attack* in anger, *flight* in fear etc.). The emotion urges the organism to enact the prototypical action inherent in the emotion, and if the emotion is not censored by the environment or the self, the primordial action will be fully re-enacted. In humans, the stereotypical manifestation of emotionally patterned action does not overtly occur all the time. We do not *literally* bite, cry, fly away, or vomit

---

[338] Frijda, *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 159.
[339] R. Buck, 'The psychology of emotion', in LeDoux, *Mind and Brain,* p. 279.
[340] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 51.
[341] K. Scherer in *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 139.

all the time. Nevertheless, even when the environment does not allow the literal re-enactment of the primordial act, the emotion will still urge the organism to fulfil the motivation, and in one way and degree or another, the primordial action will be enacted, literally or metaphorically. Young children may bite or hit a hostile person, while adults may find alternative and more complex ways to enact the same impulse, such as through verbal attacks, or elaborate revenge plans. In either case or form, the primordial action is by definition re-enacted, and some degree of the related physiology is always present in the behaviour.

Robert Plutchik came up with an interesting synthesis of the 'basic adaptive behaviours', which 'are defined in terms of gross behavioural interactions between organism and its environment' and which 'may be conceptualised as the basis for emotional reactions seen in all animals and humans'.[342] Plutchik suggests that these adaptive behaviours correspond to the basic emotions, which deal with equivalent general types of survival problems by providing specific impulses to action. His theory offers a different language for each level and aspect of emotion that we have encountered so far. Each kind of *stimulus* (threat, obstacle, potential mate, loss of valued individual, gruesome object, or unexpected object), brings about an inferred *appraisal* (danger, enemy, friend, abandonment, poison, novelty). As a result, we can use the *functional* language to describe the motivational state (protection, destruction, reproduction, reintegration, rejection, orientation), and we can employ the *behavioural* language to describe the impulses for action through which the function of the emotion is or tends to be accomplished (escape, attack, mate, cry for help, vomit, stop behaviour). Finally, we can use the *subjective* language to name the feelings that each emotion ultimately brings about (fear, anger, joy, sadness, disgust, surprise).[343]

---

[342] R. Plutchik, *Emotion: A Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, Harper and Row, New York, 1980, pp. 144

[343] Plutchik*, Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, pp. 145-50, p. 154, p. 289, pp. 354ff. In order to smooth out the complexity of each researcher's approach for the reader's sake, and for greater homogeneity with Darwin, Ekman and Damasio, *acceptance* and *anticipation* have been removed from the basic emotions examined here by the author. Plutchik himself acknowledges their brief duration, which soon gives place to some other emotion, and their omission in this paragraph is perhaps untactful, but hopefully, not debilitating.
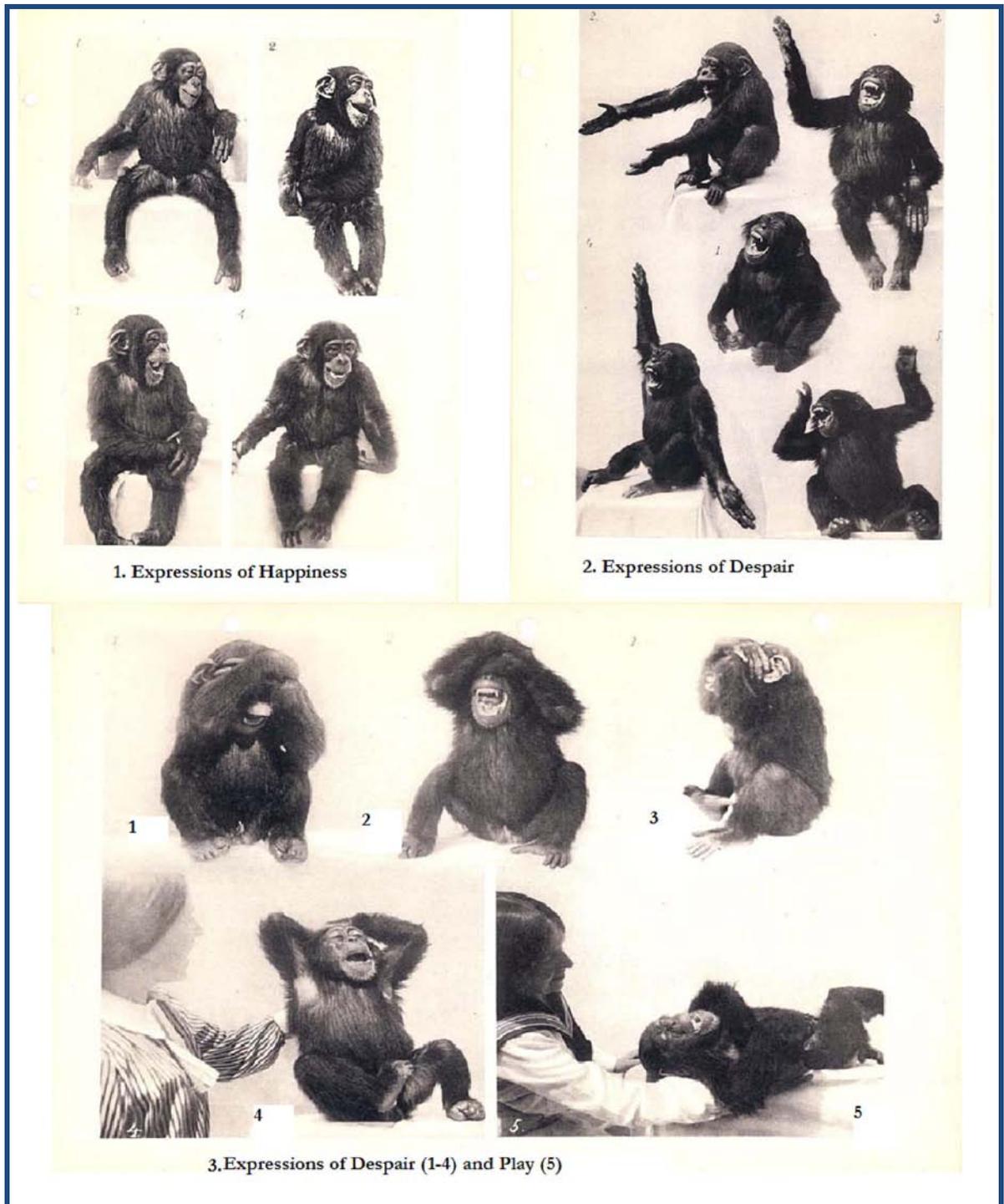
Plate 1 Emotional behaviour and expressions of a chimpanzee Russian experiments by N. N. Ladygina-Kohts during the 1930's (Ladygina-Kohts, N. N., viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.kohts.ru/ladygina-kohts_n.n./ichc/html/apes02.html>).

This theory, though possibly susceptible to a series of objections, nevertheless presents a coherent, interesting and integrative overview and understanding of all evaluative,

physiological, motivational and behavioural levels inherent in emotion. Emotion effects goal-directed behaviour, which exhibits specific patterns of physiological change, causes specific feelings and prepares the organism for specific, emotion-bound actions, through specific impulses for action. If the emotion is not hindered or regulated (*see* 3.5.2.) for any contextual reason, the specific action tendency will be enacted in fully overt behaviour. Differently, it will be disguised or adapted to the circumstances.

3.3.7. Before feelings

The chain of events that have been described so far can be summarised as follows: an emotionally competent stimulus is appraised as a core relational theme by activating triggering sites within the brain, which, in turn activate execution sites. As a result of the activation of the latter, a complex but coordinated set of changes occur, involving patterned ANS, SNS, CNS and neurochemical responses. With the organism being on the verge of primordial emotional action, the ground has been prepared for emotion to enter consciousness. Though the organism is already undergoing the given emotional state, and has already started acting, it is not yet conscious of it. A state of feeling has to be represented in the brain, before the organism is aware of experiencing an emotion and a feeling.[344]

---

[344] Damasio, *Feeling,* p. 79f.

3.4. Experience

Returning for a moment to the James' theory we remember his assumption that we feel sad because we cry. It is now clearer to understand that the crying refers to *expression of physiological change*, that is, to the *emotion,* while sadness refers to the *experience* of this change-behaviour, to *feeling.* The differentiation between an emotion and a feeling relies on physiological differentiation, we now know, and reflects an evolutionarily more complex organismic function. By considering the structural and functional differences of these events, it will become clear to what great extent the interchangeable use of the two terms has been a source of misunderstanding and circularity in research, both psychological and theatrical.
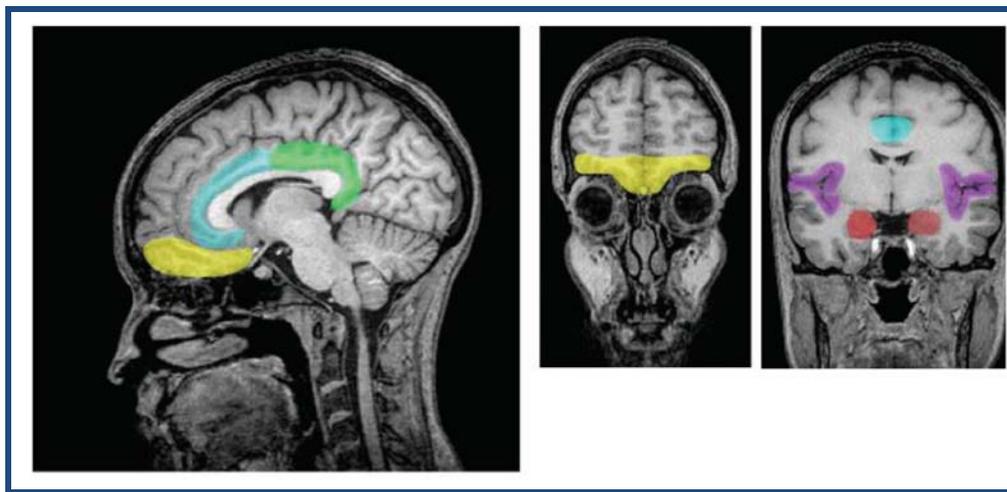
Fig. 17 Feelings Brain regions implicated in emotional experience include orbitofrontal cortex (yellow), insular cortex (purple) and anterior (blue) and posterior (green) cingulate cortices. The amygdala (red) is involved in linking perception with automatic emotional responses and memory (R.J. Dolan, 'Emotion, cognition, and behavior', *Science*, Vol. 298, 2002, p.1193).

3.4.1. Feeling an emotion

Panksepp suggests that 'feelings emerge more directly from the neurosymbolic and neurodynamic representations of viscera and other components within the brain […] the primary source of emotional feelings may be the fluctuating neurodynamics of a "virtual body" image that is constructed primarily by spontaneously active neural nets representing 'selfness' in the midbrain and lower brainstem', in order to provide 'some

homeostatic reference point'[345]. Similarly, Damasio defines feelings as '*the perception of a certain state of the body along with the perception of a certain mode of thinking and of thoughts with certain themes'.*[346] The bases for feelings 'are the mappings of myriad aspects of body states in the sensory regions designed to receive signals from the body' and their neural patterning results in 'a mental image of the body state'.[347]

Evidence from other studies too confirms that the representation of feelings is closely bound to the function of the somatosensory mapping areas of the brain, with an emphasis in the insular area[348]. The implication of the insular cortex, further supports the concept of feelings as *representations of body states*, because anatomically it serves as the final destination of neural pathways that carry data from the interoceptive senses (the sense of one's own body), which convey proper body state information, such as temperature, pressure, itch etc.[349] Damasio describes this process as such:

> The substrate for the representation of emotions is a collection of neural dispositions in a number of brain regions located largely in subcortical nuclei of the brain stem, hypothalamus, basal forebrain, and amygdala. In keeping with their dispositional status, these representations are implicit, dormant, and not available to consciousness. They exist, rather, as potential patterns of activity arising within neuron ensembles. Once these dispositions are activated, a number of consequences ensue. On the one hand, the pattern of activation represents, within the brain, a particular emotion as neural "object." On the other, the pattern of activation generates explicit responses that modify both the state of the body proper and the state of other brain regions. By so doing, the responses create an emotional state, and at that point, an external observer can appreciate the emotional engagement of the organism being observed. As for the internal state of the organism in which the emotion is taking place, it has available both the emotion as neural object (the activation pattern at the induction sites) and the sensing of the consequences of the activation, a feeling, provided the resulting collection of neural patterns becomes images in mind.[350]

The totality of physiological changes that occur in the body-proper during emotion as we have described them so far, as well as the changes in the pattern of the brain's function itself, are represented in the brain as feelings of the specific emotion. In a nutshell: a feeling is the result of the representation within the brain of the whole body state during

---

[345] Panksepp, 'Emotions as natural kinds in the brain' in *Handbook of Emotions*, p. 152.

[346] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 86.

[347] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 88.

[348] Dolan, *Feelings and Emotions*, pp. 204-222.

[349] Damasio, *Spinoza*, p. 106.

[350] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 85-6.

emotion. James' conclusion that 'a purely disembodied emotion is a nonentity'[351] has proved to be more than accurate.

In most of the cases, this representation of the emotion in the brain follows this linear sequence, which Damasio calls the 'body loop'.[352] But there is a twist: because the *representation* of the body state occurs *within* the brain and because 'after somatic states have been expressed they form patterns in nuclei of the brainstem and insular/SII, SI cortices, one possible chain of physiologic events is to by-pass the body altogether, activate directly the insular/SII, SI cortices, and or the brainstem nuclei holding covert patterns of somatic states'. This process, which Damasio calls the 'as-if body-loop' (*see* Fig. 18), suggests that the formation of feelings need not always occur from afferent data from the body, but that 'somatic states can be in fact "simulated" intra-cerebrally in the "as if body loop"'.[353]

The deviation of the body proper accounts for the feelings of emotions that do not '(f)actually' occur in the world (within or outside the limits of the body), but rather, 'directly in sensory body maps, under the control of other neural sites, for instance, the prefrontal cortices'[354], through thoughts or memory. Specifically, Bechara and Damasio discriminate between *primary inducers*, which refer to both the natural and learned triggers as emotionally competent stimuli (seeing a cow in the elevator), while *secondary inducers* refer to the recalling or thinking about primary inducers (remember seeing the cow in the elevator). This differentiation does not only rely on the usually minimal effects of the secondary inducers on the body[355], but also, on physiologically different operating systems, with structures such as the amygdala predominant for the operation of primary inducers and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VM) for the secondary ones.[356]

Exactly because feeling the emotion relies on its representation, and because the once induced patterns remain recognisable even without their equivalent emotion, what counts here is the *representation*, the *mapping* of the emotion, which is available even without the emotion. Just as emotions may never find their way to conscious feeling, so

[351] James, p. 452.
[352] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 86.
[353] A. R. Damasio, & A. Bechara, 'The somatic marker hypothesis: a neural theory of economic decision', *Games and Economic Behaviour*, Vol. 52, 2005, p. 342.
[354] Damasio, *Feeling*, pp. 79-80.
[355] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 75.
[356] Damasio, 'The somatic marker hypothesis', p. 340.

there can be a feeling *as if* there were an emotion, when there is none. The phantom-limb experience, when people with amputated limbs report having feelings of their missing part, is a similar situation: even though the represented body part is missing, the representation is still available in the brain. In any case, with emotion either generated traditionally from the body or imaginatively from the brain, though the organism will eventually feel some emotion, it is not *aware* of this feeling yet. We have just reached the borders of consciousness.
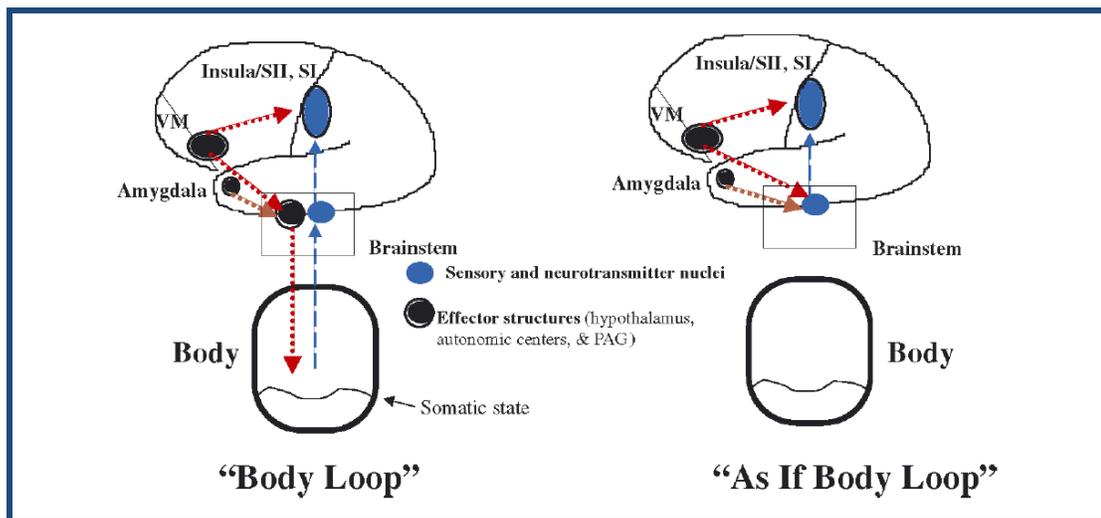
Fig. 18 **'Body loop' and 'as if body loop'** Simple diagrams illustrating the "body loop" and "as if loop" chain of physiologic events. In both "body loop" and "as if loop" panels, the brain is represented by the top black perimeter and the body by the bottom one (A. R. Damasio, & A. Bechara, 'The somatic marker hypothesis: a neural theory of economic decision', *Games and Economic Behavior*, Vol. 52, 2005, p. 342).

3.4.2. Knowing an emotion is felt

The *awareness* of an organism that *it* is experiencing an emotional feeling is part of the process of consciousness. The issue of consciousness has been one of the biggest philosophical and scientific debates, as it urgently poses questions of substance. Matter or spirit, interaction, dualism or monism, the consciousness doctrine has opened the arena for some of the strongest and weakest arguments from diverse conceptual backgrounds. Despite the dominance of the idealistic and vitalistic argument and its softer versions for thousands of years, the materialist point of view that consciousness is a higher form of matter organisation has now managed to articulate some convincing theories and models. Though it is beyond the scope of the paper to investigate the issue in depth, it will be

assumed here that consciousness is indeed materially constructed and we will very briefly refer to Damasio's neurobiological model that links consciousness with feelings and emotions.

In a nutshell, his theory suggests that the generation of emotional feelings, either from body or as if body loops, occurs thanks to the representations constructed by first-order neural maps, forming thus a *proto-self*, whose relation to its emotional object (the activity in the emotion sites) is further represented thanks to the mapping executed by higher, second-order structures.[357] The evolutionary advantage for the organisms that evolved this adaptive feature is that consciousness 'may have prevailed because it was useful for organisms to know their emotions'.[358] As emotions provide an immediate, automatic, and traditionally successful repertory of responses and as feelings bias the organism towards its emotions, the conscious awareness of an occurring emotional feeling provides room for more original, non-stereotypical planning and action, the most appropriate possible in a complex context, such as the contexts that conscious organisms found themselves in.

---

[357] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 283.
[358] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 285.

3.5. The social emotion

3.5.1. Emotion and decision making: the somatic marker hypothesis

Leaving the huge issue of consciousness aside, with the organism on the verge of primordial action, decision-making has to occur for the most appropriate course of action to be taken. The action tendency will not necessarily result in its correspondent action, especially in humans. This is when the cortex plays a more discrete part and makes people think they can exert control over their emotions, by using reason as the leash of the Platonic charioteer. Yet, the division is not so clear-cut, since the Low and High roads of emotional induction by the amygdala (in fear for example) are not necessarily walked separately. Though by definition the emotion starts before its awareness, the processes complement each other. But is it really reason that governs this ultimate decision, at this all so crucial moment in the emotional chain of events?

A ground-breaking finding from Damasio's work on the case of Phineas Gage has destabilised our commonsensical beliefs about exactly this cross-road. Phineas Gage survived a severe accident in the late 19th century, when a metal rod travelled through his skull, damaging his ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VM). The VM is located in the front part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex, and is an area that plays a crucial part in the engagement of the organism with the social environment. Though to the surprise of Gage's doctors he maintained his intellect intact, he showed significant impairment in his judgments and decision-making within real-life settings.[359] The study of this and other similar cases of patients with VM damage helped scientists identify these frontal lobes as an area of the brain directly connected to 'judgment, decision-making, social conduct, and personality'.[360]

Patients with damage in the VM prefrontal cortex, though intellectually intact 'develop severe impairments in personal and social decision-making. They have difficulties planning their workday, as well as difficulties in choosing friends, partners, and activities. The actions they elect to pursue often lead to losses of diverse order, e.g., financial losses, losses in social standing, losses of family and friends. The choices they

---

[359] Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, p. 50f.
[360] Damasio, 'The somatic marker hypothesis', p. 337.

make are no longer advantageous—the patients often decide against their best interests—and are remarkably different from the kinds of choices they were known to make in the pre-morbid period. They are unable to learn from previous mistakes as reflected by repeated engagement in decisions that lead to negative consequences'.[361] More importantly, these individuals demonstrate 'compromised ability to express emotion and to experience feelings in situations in which emotions would normally have been expected and would presumably have been present during the premorbid period. In other words, along with normal intellect and abnormal decision making, there were abnormalities in emotion and feeling'.[362]
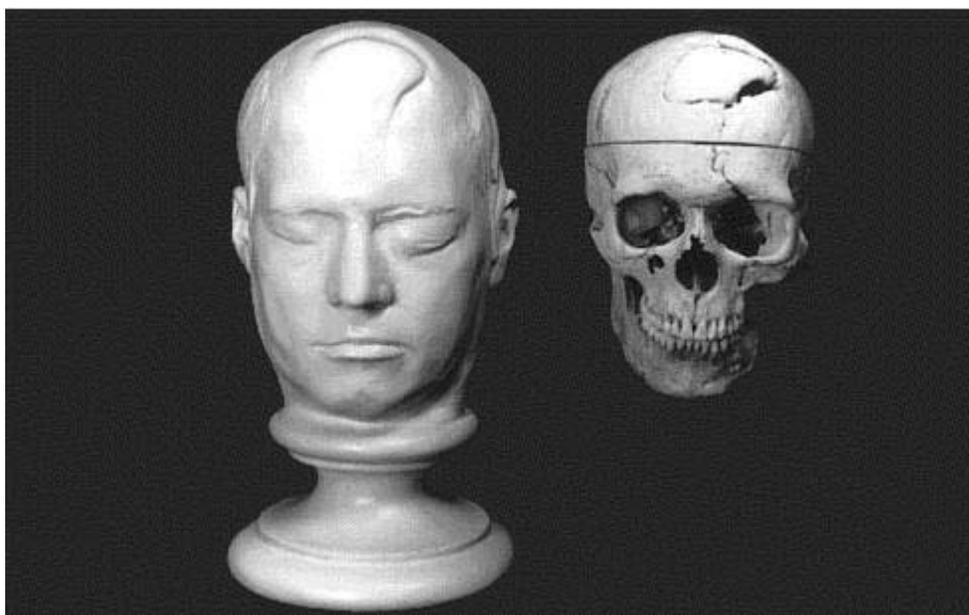
Fig. 19 Skull and death mask of Phineas Gage ('The animated brain', *Brainviews*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.brainviews.com/abFiles/ImgGage.htm>).

Damasio's work demonstrated that these VM prefrontal cortices 'generate and map bodily states, a role that may facilitate guidance of behaviour'[363], in a 'dispositional' manner, that is, not explicitly by holding the representation of the emotional state, but by having 'the potential to reactivate an emotion by acting on the appropriate cortical or

---

[361] Damasio, 'The somatic marker', pp. 337-8.

[362] A. R. Damasio, 'The somatic marker hypothesis and the possible functions of the prefrontal cortex', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 351, No. 1346, Executive and Cognitive Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex, 1996, p. 1414.

[363] Damasio, in *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 211.

subcortical structures'.[364] Damasio calls these gut feelings *somatic markers*: 'These somatic markers are a special instance of feelings generated by secondary [social] emotions. Those emotions and feelings have been connected, through learning, to predicted future outcomes of certain scenarios. When a negative somatic marker [gut feeling] is juxtaposed with a particular future outcome the combination functions as an alarm bell. When a positive somatic marker is juxtaposed instead, it becomes a beacon of incentive'.[365] Damage to the VM prevented individuals from taking into consideration the felt representations of these body states through feelings, the somatic markers or gut feelings, which as we saw, are bound up with an automatic appraisal of the environment and bring us to the verge of an adaptive act, by affecting our reasoning apparatus.

The *somatic marker hypothesis* has had a huge impact, and proves of ultimate importance within the context of this thesis, mainly because it demonstrates that reason is ultimately guided by emotion, and that emotion is by definition social. A mind that possesses a fine-tuned reasoning machinery, but lacks the emotion with which it can fuel, motivate and direct that machine, is unlikely to produce socially and personally adaptive behaviour. The inability of an organism, when representations of emotion are malfunctioning, to engage in meaningful action to the best of its interest and benefit, as well as to engage with others in socially acceptable terms, reflects the phylogenetic precedence of emotion and elucidates the relationship between these two faculties: *reason can control emotion, but reason needs to be guided by some emotion*. Though neurologically and evolutionarily speaking, emotion and reason are distinctly separate processes, in the reality of human life the organism works as a system in the production of behaviour, in which the two faculties depend on each other for the best possible behavioural result. Without losing the distinction between the two, modern science urges us to get rid of cliché charioteers and leashes, and invites us to adopt a more holistic framework, in which emotions and reason collaborate for the organism's better adaptation to the urgent challenges of social reality.

---

[364] Damasio, 'The somatic marker hypothesis and the possible functions of the prefrontal cortex', p. 414.
[365] Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, p. 19f.

3.5.2. Emotion regulation and the agency of culture

As we have seen, the activation of a pattern of response as it occurs in basic or social emotions is criticised by cortical processing from the prefrontal cortex (decision-making), as well as from the basal ganglia (movement control), which communicate with induction structures such as the amygdala, in order to come up with the best available motor plan, the best possible *action*.[366] The range of possible ultimate actions relies on several factors, such as the felt degree of importance, the availability of action, and its acceptability in the social and the individual's own context.[367] To ask whether emotional regulation is possible is to ask whether we can have any control over the evaluation, expression (physiological change) or experience of affective states. Viewing emotions as passive is often attributed to biological approaches, because they recognise an inherited regulatory function that is more or less beyond the individual's will, but is actually linked to the whole stream of theoretical thinking that puts emotions against rationality, as disruptive, irrational passions.

Robert Levenson suggests that emotional control can take many forms, in relation to *direction* of control (amplification, inhibition), *number* of controlled emotions, nature of the *transformation* (intensity alterations, substitution, masking), *locus* of attempted control (antecedents, physiology, experience), *volition* (voluntary or not), *awareness* (conscious or not), *onset* of control (prior to or following emotion) and *target* (our emotions or others').[368] By using evidence from suppression studies of disgust, he observed that suppression can decrease the levels of visible expression, though *never completely*, as there always was some amount of emotional expression *leakage*.[369] Also, though people are 'quite adept at inhibiting the behavioural signs of emotion[…]this is *not* an effective way to reduce the subjective experience of emotion'.[370]

As for the effects on physiology, the study first showed a decrease in heart rate activation, which was then followed by an increase in vasoconstriction, blood pressure and gland secretion activation, suggesting that the energetic effort to suppress the emotion concluded in some increased sympathetic activation. This state, when an

---

[366] LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*, p. 178f.

[367] Frijda, *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 160.

[368] Levenson, in *Nature of Emotions*, p. 273.

[369] Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, p. 15; p. 122.

[370] Levenson, in *Nature of Emotions*, p. 277.

increased arousal is not hosted in a body that has adjusted its metabolic needs to accommodate the behaviour matching the arousal, that is, physiological arousal in excess of metabolic demands, has devastating consequences on the organism's health.[371] The implications of such a relation between regulation (at varied levels of consciousness or control) and health, open up a huge issue about the limitations and balances that ought to be found between cultural biases and organism tendencies.

Differences in individual temperament, personal experience and, mainly, socio-cultural incentives can make use of the malleability of the nervous system, and do so, by attaching emotional value to ranges of stimuli and situations, as well as emotions and feelings about these feelings and emotions. This arbitrary organisation of values through cultural construction can devalue the emotional significance of natural triggers and their themes (boys don't cry, snakes are tender pets etc) or amplify it (arachnophobia, kamikaze behaviours). It can also attach emotional value to neutral objects and events (hydrophobia, racism etc), through learning. Substantial regulation can also affect the expression of emotion as we saw, and even feelings. Psychoanalysis by definition works with the release of feelings that have been kept away from consciousness and which it might take a life-time to realise and recontextualise appropriately.

At the same time, behavioural strategies such as avoidance or seeking of specific people, situations, states etc., chart the world around and inside us in emotional terms. One may avoid contact with immigrants, or transsexuals, or seek alcohol induced states, attend football matches and not opera concerts, motivated by *occurring* or *predicted* culturally learned emotions, and simultaneously motivating oneself, by feeding the circle of such behaviours. This intricate influence of culture on bioregulatory *potentials* such as the emotion enterprise, suggests that one can never be completely sure of the origin and function of the presence or absence of an emotion, expression or feeling, while at the same time the need for such an awareness and redefinition of emotional life crucially emerges, as shown in the somatic marker hypothesis.

When an emotion occurs, in a simpler example, one may attempt to moderate it or decide to go along with it. At the other end of the spectrum, to ponder at any given time why an emotion seems *not* to be present and attempt to provoke it is a chaotic, though not necessarily irrational, process. Actors do this professionally. But actors are not gurus,

---

[371] Levenson, in *Nature of Emotions*, p. 279.

nor another species. They rely on the mechanics of the nervous system, on its very malleability, to make their earning, a process that occurs to everybody else, everyday. A social (or 'pyramidal'[372]) smile dictated by display rules, like that of a flight attendant, might vanish into thin air behind the galley curtain, but might as well not. Apart from hypoxia, the learned guidance of the face musculature might indeed cross a threshold, activating thus ANS physiology and consequent behaviour and feelings. Tampering with the ANS, and therefore the CNS, occurs as we learn through social incentive, or even in yoga, meditation, and therapy: the ability of individuals to 'train themselves to regulate or control their physiological responses is the basic premise of biofeedback'.[373]

The primordial action from which emotions emerged, and the preparation for which the patterning of emotion still serves, may or may not be re-enacted. The inherited wisdom of the ages in emotional patterning may be followed or rejected, either at the sight of a bear or of a colleague insulting us in front of others, yet it happens first. For humans, emotion and patterned action, though intimately related, are not analogically linked all the time. Rather, emotion creates an action tendency that remains to be evaluated for its adaptive value within a specific historical and cultural context, according to our genome, experience and goals. If all goes well, a good combination, or even an original and efficient action plan can occur. Nevertheless, there is a price for response originality.

Complex situations, or culturally transmitted complex ways of processing simple situations, may extend the appraisal of the situation and of the repertory of available action to the degree that the evolutionary advantage of extended appraisal eventually becomes socially maladaptive. It is in such cases that one does not know *what to do*, or even *what to feel*. The theoretically vast pool of possible action, though significantly narrowed down by the incentives of action tendency, creates a state of choice, or an illusion of such a state, even if the choices are two; anything more than one choice, anything more than automatic action, may be closer to human, but is also closer to tragedy. In front of a snake this could lead to death. In front of a Jason this leads to *Medea*.

Society, cultural incentives and morality rely on this sense of choice, defined as

---

[372] The pyramidal motor tract, as opposed to the extrapyramidal, actualises most voluntary movements.
[373] D. Sloan, 'Emotion regulation in action: emotional reactivity in experiential avoidance', *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, Vol. 42, 2004, p. 1266.

freedom, and take a stance: they interpret nature and wish to channel it. In reality, though, this sense of freedom does not exist as such, but is a result of the interplay between natural and cultural incentives. It is this interplay that charts the themes and variations of the possible emotional stimuli, situational appraisals, expressions of emotions, subjective feelings and available actions, in which people engage. The desire to extend beyond the tyranny of both nature and culture and of their prescribed emotions through reason is a reasonable quest, but as Einstein said, even this 'desire to arrive at logically connected concepts is the emotional basis of productive thought'[374], or, what Damasio described as the human 'passion for reasoning'.[375] To suggest and acknowledge today, that even decision-making and, therefore, rationality is motivated by emotion, restores the nature of things, but also their tragic nature.

---

[374] Albert Einstein cited in Plutchik, *Emotions and Life: Emotions and Life: Perspectives from Psychology, Biology and Evolution,* APA, Washington DC, 2002, p. vii.
[375] Damasio, *Descartes' Error,* p. 245.

3.6. Conclusions

In this Chapter we have investigated the contemporary paradigm of emotion from the point of view of Neuroscience and Evolutionary Psychology. This modern perspective which attempts to heal the body-mind dichotomy, has given a different response to long-lasting issues regarding emotion theory, mainly on the relationship between emotion and reason, in the differentiation of separate aspects of emotion in physiological terms, and mainly, in the order in which things happen during emotion. Summing up this investigation, we could isolate and summarise a few key concepts related to emotion as viewed today:

1. *Emotions are inherited, adaptive bodily responses for dealing with important external and internal stimuli-situations.*

2. *Emotions occur automatically with minimum cognitive appraisal requirements.*

3. *There are basic emotions that are inherited, universally common and are differentiated by inherited and specific evaluative, physiological, motivational and action tendency patterns.*

4. *There are social, culturally constructed emotions that stem from combinations of the basic emotions. There are also moods and background emotions which are in constant operation.*

5. *Feelings are different from emotions, in that they are ultimate representations of emotions in somatosensory areas of the brain.*

6. *Emotions and feelings are inherently social phenomena in that they play a crucial part in motivation, decision-making and action, and therefore effect the engagement of the organism with the world.*

7. *Emotions guide reason by motivating it towards the accomplishment of the organism's deepest concerns.*

8. *Rather than being disruptive, emotions inform the organism of what is important to them and collaborate with higher mental faculties for the best possible plan of action.*

9. *Aspects of the emotion can be partly controlled and regulated, but never fully.*

10. *Society, culture and experience can, through learning, affect all aspects of emotion (competent stimuli, relational themes, evaluation, expression, behaviour and action), but only within the limitations of the nervous system, and not necessarily without adaptive cost.*

Chapter 4

Twentieth Century *Method of Emotion* in Acting

If someone from another planet or era were to read the writings of the key twentieth century acting theorists and practitioners, they would clearly notice a departure in acting technique from emotion, understood then as an intangible, inner, self-indulgent and nerve-racking approach and a reorientation towards action. As has been described in Chapter 2, emotion in the actor's process became a standard taboo: for Stanislavski and Grotowski a technical one, for Brecht and Meyerhold both technical and aesthetic. All of these practitioners were motivated by the vision of a scientific theatre that could reveal deeper layers of realism and truth, and for all of them the source of knowledge and inspiration for this vision was often to be sought within science and its objective rules that describe human nature and behaviour.

The further we move from their physical era, the more this access is mediated by thick layers of criticism, more often than not by armchair critics, with little or no practical theatrical experience. As a rule of thumb, the legacy of this criticism defines Stanislavski's acting style as 'identification', Meyerhold's and Brecht's as 'detached' and Grotowski's as 'self-expressive'.[376] This jargon reflects the cliché and dualistic ideas that still dominate our ideas of how these practitioners allegedly viewed the relationship between the emotions of the actor and the portrayed character. In this chapter we will apply our scientifically updated understanding of emotion, in order to go beyond these clichés, re-examine the position of emotion in these acting approaches and isolate a series of tools that could serve as a *Method of Emotion* for actors of the twenty-first century.

---

[376] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, pp. 36-44.

4.1. Aesthetics of 'affecting' the audience: empathy

In this section we will shortly investigate the position of emotion in the audience through the scientific concept of *empathy*. This will clarify empathy as a crucial, inevitable but malleable process in the theatrical event, and will also prove that, like all other practitioners, Brecht too was interested in arousing particular emotions in the audience.

4.1.1. Brecht versus Aristotelian drama

The strongest objection to emotion in the theatre, and the thickest cluster of related misunderstandings—still with us today—in the twentieth century theatre comes from Brecht's theories of epic theatre. Striving to achieve that higher level of scientific realism that would reveal social structure in its reversible, changeable dimensions, Brecht fought against the Aristotelian view of theatre, which he considered to be the conceptual error on which modern theatre was based. He held that this kind of theatre, relying on uncritical empathy turned the audience into a 'victim of hypnotic experience [...]completely "entangled" in the action'.[377] This hypnosis, he believed, was effected through the actors' technique, which was in a nutshell a 'trance' into which they lured their audience.[378] By presenting events as causally developing, the inexorable view of the unfolding of life that was being generated discouraged the audience from any motivation or sense of ability to alter society and prevent misfortune outside the theatre. In order to attack this allegedly fatalistic Aristotelian theatre, both emotional identification and narrative causality had to be dislocated through historicising. 'Feelings' in the audience had to be replaced by 'reason'.[379]

Aristotle's much debated views on theatre are laid out mainly in the *Poetics* where he linked Greek tragedy to the doctrine of catharsis of the emotions, exerting a huge impact on world theatre ever since, as well as on our view of tragedy. The relation of empathy, emotion, catharsis, acting and playwriting in the Aristotelian tradition of criticism and dramaturgy is a huge issue on which centuries of criticism have not been adequate for even an elementary convergence of interpretations, and is by no means within the scope

---

[377] Brecht in Mitter, *Systems of Rehearsal*, p. 42.
[378] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 26.
[379] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 37.

of this thesis. Despite the fact that a thorough critique of Brecht's anti-Aristotelianism cannot be afforded here, it will suffice to discard a first set of cliché associations by stressing that Aristotle was offering (1) his own interpretation of Greek drama and (2) his own recipe for playwriting according to that interpretation of Greek drama. As a result, Brecht's attacks on Aristotle should only reflect his own understanding and objections to the Aristotelian model of Greek drama and playwriting, and not to Greek drama itself. Finally, (3) we should remember that Aristotle's theory of emotion proved to be quite thorough, systematic, holistic and remains largely unchallenged today, unlike Brecht's understanding of the importance and function of emotion in life and theatre.

Especially in his early writings, Brecht must have been really convinced that empathy was a really destructive process, possibly understood as a process of linear emotional identification between characters and audience (the character cries, I cry).[380] But what exactly is empathy and how does it relate to emotion? Was Brecht's attempt to interrupt it a reasonable and effective process or was it a fight with a chimera?

4.1.2. Empathy and mirror neurons: internalising the 'other'

In contemporary neuroscientific research the definition of empathy comprises three 'primary components: (1) an affective response to another person, which often, but not always, entails sharing the other person's emotional state; (2) a cognitive capacity to take the perspective of the other person; and (3) emotion regulation'.[381] But when do we empathise with others? What does this mean about our own emotions? How does this start and how does it end? Do we have any control over any of its phases? What is the value and function of empathy and how should we understand it?

The discovery of 'mirror neurons' in macaque apes which 'fire both when the monkey performs an action itself and when it merely observes another monkey or human performing the action' suggested that these 'mirror neurons represent the neural basis of imitation".[382] Analogous neuroimaging studies revealed that in humans too the 'mere observation of another person performing an action recruited partly the same circuitry

---

[380] *See* section 2.3.1.
[381] J. Decety & P. L. Jackson, 'A social-neuroscience perspective on empathy', *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 54.
[382] T. Singer, 'The neuronal basis and ontogeny of empathy and mind reading: review of literature and implications for future research', *Neuroscience and Biobehavioural Reviews*, Vol. 30, 2006, p. 857.

elicited by the execution of the same action'.[383] This reintroduces perception as a process of active internalisation of the environment, in that perception dramatically borders action and enacting. The previous experiments were further extended from mere motor execution to the realm of emotional empathy and in line with the previous findings it was proved that 'observation or imagination of another person in a particular emotional state automatically activates a representation of that state in the observer with its associated autonomic and somatic responses'.[384] This process, which utilises the same emotional neural circuitry as in the observed or imagined emotion, is automatic, in that it sets off without mediation of conscious processing, and can in fact operate beyond our conscious experience, allowing us to 'share the affect of others even though we are not aware of doing so'.[385]
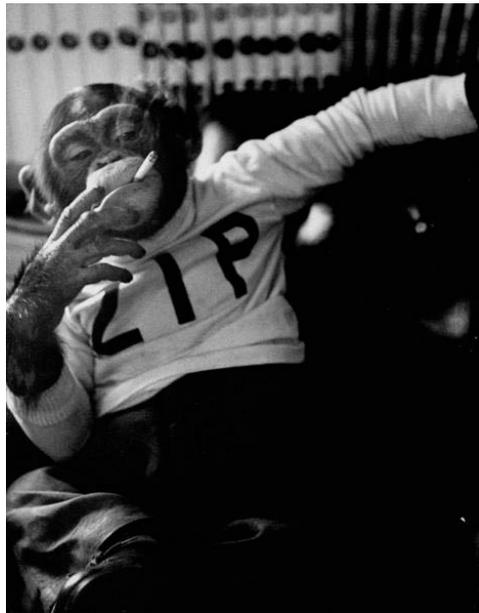
Fig. 20 Mirror Neurons: performing chimpanzee Zippy, smoking a cigarette (M. Rougier, 'Performing chimpanzee Zippy smoking a cigarette', *Life*, viewed on 1 November 2009,
<http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=2f3c3623c6e86335&q=zippy%20smoking%20chimpanzee&prev=/ima ges%3Fq%3Dzippy%2Bsmoking%2Bchimpanzee%26hl%3Del%26um%3D1>).

This groundbreaking finding, which sets the foundations for a thorough theory of perception, imitation, learning and social interaction in the future (alongside the evidently

---

[383] Singer, p. 857.
[384] Singer, p. 858.
[385] F. De Vignemont & T. Singer, 'The emphatic brain: how, when and why', *Trends in Cognitive Science*, Vol. 10, No. 10, p. 437.

huge implications in the area of theatre studies and drama), instigates a reasonable question: if we constantly empathise with others, then when is there time for our own emotions? Furthermore, how can this finding be reconciled with our obviously non-linear emotional response to other people's emotions and actions?

In Chapter 3, we saw how the Low Route of the amygdala, through a highjack of the raw sensory information gathered from the hypothalamus can command the outset of an emotional reaction, by directly activating the ANS. In that case, the cortex would be *not* the one to initiate the ANS reaction, but the one to reject or confirm it. In a nutshell, the reaction was first launched and only then was there some contextual interpretation put in effect: first we (re)act and then we feel.
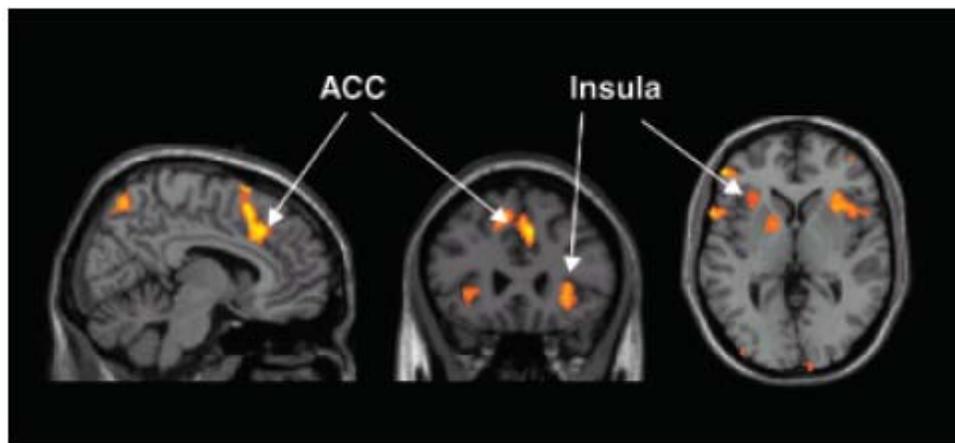
Fig.21 Mirror neurons: brain image Activation sites in the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and insula elicited in individuals watching pain in others. (J. Decety, 'Social neuroscience perspective on empathy', *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 15, No. 2, p.56).

Independently of whether, in the case of empathy, the occurrence of the contextual appraisal is an early (before the ANS response) or late one (after the ANS response), it is certain that such a feedback occurs and should be able to occur quite fast. Otherwise we would risk losing the boundaries between ourselves and others, or there would only be one single emotion contaminating the whole world. Indeed, empathy modulation, like emotional regulation, occurs in two major ways: either *explicitly*, by voluntarily 'using the control has over one's emotional responses', or *implicitly*, as a result of the gradual appraisal of all the components of the situation. The intensity, saliency and valence of the displayed or imagined emotion, the relationship (similarity and familiarity) and direction of the emotion between empathiser and target, the gender, age and past-experiences of

the empathiser, as well as the wider situational context in which the episode occurs, are factors that affect the implicit appraisal mechanisms that modulate the outcome of the empathetic response[386], towards fortification, rejection, cognitive-perspective taking[387] and so on.

Brecht was right in suggesting that empathetic responses can be *implicitly* recontextualised, without having to rely on the audience's *explicit* (voluntary) emotional control, and through the *V-effekt* the audience's attention can be redirected towards another wanted aspect of the performance, in his case, of more urgent sociological focus. By having Mother Courage insist on going back to war business, even after having lost all her children because of war, the play manipulates the context of the actress' performance in such a way as to defamiliarise the feeling of sadness or compassion that would be naturally borne towards her. By bringing her naiveté, poverty and despair in conflict with one another, through this *V-effekt*, Mother Courage invites the audience to reconsider their thoughts and emotions about her, about war and capitalism and, hopefully, about themselves.

4.1.3. Empathy as inevitable

Nevertheless, it is absurd to imagine that any performance can do without empathy. Empathy, as we saw, is an automatic process, which will occur and will keep occurring at any occasion, either consciously or not. There is no way of eliminating empathy from the procedure because this is just not possible. In life people never cease transmitting and receiving affective information. Even though we might not always be in a state of acute emotion, we are always in a mood or background emotion, and beneath this, our temperamental disposition[388] colours and motivates all our life and actions, consciously or not. The automatic neuronal mirroring of observed subjects' emotions, moods and even movements and actions as we previously saw, engages the observers in this constant process of *internalising the other*. The boundaries between perception, affect, consciousness and action are dramatically destabilised.

More specifically, empathy and emotion become intertwined in terms of their

---

[386] De Vignemont, p. 437f.

[387] Singer, p. 856.

[388] J. Kagan, 'On the nature of emotion', *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, Vol. 59, No. 2/3, The Development of Emotional regulation: Biological and Behavioural Considerations, 1994, pp. 7-24.

proper adaptive function, and Brecht's arguments become somewhat circular. Emotion is there to inform us and our social environment about what is *important* to us and how we are planning to act, which is consequently important to the environment, too. Empathy has been attributed various adaptive advantages, all of which stress its central position in social life, as we can now infer. For some, empathy facilitates mother-child bonding or reciprocal altruism[389], while for others, it constitutes 'a faster route for the prediction of [others'] behaviour'.[390] Some go as far as to suggest a direct affinity between empathy and consciousness, in that in reality 'the first use of human consciousness was—and is—to enable each human being to understand what it feels like to be human and so to make sense of himself and other people from the inside'[391] and therefore empathy satisfies 'the human need to understand, respond to and manipulate other human beings'.[392]

4.1.4. Empathy as necessary

Furthermore, it is even more absurd to suggest that one does not need empathy. Even if such a thing were possible, without empathy, without the ability to *really* affectively understand*,* i.e. *feel*, what Mother Courage's stupidity or despair consists in, either consciously or not—but always affectively—there would only be a conflict between stupidity and poverty on an information level and nothing else. This case excludes proper internalisation of the environment and is, therefore, dualistic and poor in its representation of social reality. In this case, Mother's conflict between stupidity and poverty could perhaps result in some affective response, which would nevertheless be contingent *only* upon the spectator's own explicit regulatory processes, and therefore, the performance as such would not exert any proper *V-effekt* on the audience. This would signify a failure of the *V-effekt* and the performance. On the other hand, the realisation and affective internalisation of a conflict *feels* like a conflict within oneself, which is a completely different story, and by definition the *V-effekt* comes closer to any possibility of motivational shift within the spectator.

Indeed, Brechtian criticism has acknowledged that, often, the effect of the scenes

---

[389] De Vignemont, p. 439.

[390] R. Gross, *Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behaviour*, 5th ed., Hodder Arnold, London, 2005, p. 109.

[391] Humphrey cited in Gross, *Psychology,* p. 109.

[392] Gross, *Psychology*, p. 109.

was becoming too comical to suit plays other than comedies.[393] To some extent, comedy in general shuns dealing with dramatic situations affectively, because in most cases, that would lead to tragedy. It has been said that 'the world is a comedy to those who think, tragedy to those who feel'.[394] Though this aphorism perpetuates the dated schism between emotion and reason, it suffices to point that without being affected by what poverty or stupidity means, the drama of a desperate stupid woman, though not uninteresting, is nevertheless far reduced from what Mother Courage is possibly about. If an audience member is to be prompted to change behaviour and commit to social change, they have to be convinced that something is important, that is, they have to be emotionally affected and motivationally prepared.

4.1.5. Emotion in the audience = *Verfremdungseffekt* + empathy

Brecht was the only one among the four practitioners who expressed *such* urgent objections and restraints regarding the terms and quality of the audience's emotional engagement during performance. Brecht's alignment with Diderot's paradox through the 'Diderot Society'[395] and through his teachings, reopened, despite his sincere ambitions (just like Diderot's) for high order scientific realism in the theatre and his proclamations about the New Scientific Era, the dualistic gap between reason and passion (just like Diderot), which had just started being bridged in the theatre with Stanislavski's and Meyerhold's research and findings.

Initially, Brecht diametrically opposed emotions to reason quite fervently.[396] We have seen in the previous chapter how this cliché polarity, though neurophysiologically partly accurate, is systemically invalid, since the organism functions as a totality in the production of behaviour and its optimal incorporation in the, by definition, social environment. Similarly, the ability for lucid reason in the perception, processing and hierarchy of the environment, as well as one's own position in it, cannot be granted as more important than the very passions that motivate the organism to engage with itself and with the environment, and therefore seek for, and produce, reason, reasoning,

---

[393] Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', p. 34.
[394] 'Horace Walpole 4th Earl of Orford', *Wikipedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009',
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Walpole>.
[395] Roach, *The Player's Passion*, p. 197.
[396] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 34.

decision-making and behaviour.

From a contemporary point of view, Brecht's theory of theatre is based on an inadequate understanding of the function and importance of empathy and emotion in social life. Even though the rigour of his critique may be partly justified by the decadent and self-indulgent practices of his time's theatre, as well as by poor class conflict awareness, from today's point of view his stance reflects a dated scientific and philosophical view of emotion, as of a personal, self-indulgent and petty bourgeois habit, while at the same time it describes a society, which *somehow* floats beyond such individualistic concerns and reflexes. Whether this polarity was also a typical feature of that era's Marxist ideology (apart from its science) is beyond the scope of this paper, but paradoxically, in retrospect, Brecht the materialist director sounds more like Plato the idealist charioteer.

In Brecht's understanding of empathy and emotion in the audience, one can see reflected the rejection of the study of inner experience and an emphasis on behaviour, which is completely in line with the domination of behaviourism in psychology of the first decades of the twentieth century.[397] In Brecht, the conviction of behaviourism that what ought to be the object of psychology is behaviour and not experience is combined with a Marxist dialectic of contradiction within social behaviour. This is reflected in the promotion of contradiction in the portrayal of the character, relations and society that could not be accounted for by individual psychology or neurology of that time. What is missing from that scientific and social perspective, and ultimately from Brecht's overall understanding of emotion, is the *conviction* that emotion is a social phenomenon by definition, and that it takes substantial effort and distortion to view emotion as occurring in the void of an hermetically sealed self, or for behavioural and social change to be effected in the absence of emotional-motivational shifts in the audience and people in general.

Empathy in the theatre, as in life, is both inevitable and necessary and its use during performance is contingent upon the play's own dramaturgical structure and orientation, the actors' unbiased performance and the director's ability to coordinate and promote the two. From a contemporary theatrical point of view, whether a performance has sociologically sensitive dialectics depends on the playwright's and the group's own

---

[397] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 173.

sociological sensitivity, but each component of the whole has its own task. The playwright's task is to write a play as he wants it, while the actors' task is to perform their characters' actions. The rest is partly ethics, and partly technique. Ideally, the audience will be motivated towards (social) change. But, as we know, *motivation* speaks through *emotion*.

Nevertheless, Brecht did not altogether reject emotions in the theatre, and gradually, as we saw, his tone became more dialectic when it came to emotion and empathy[398]. He always rejected uncritical empathy, but this rejection, as he stated, 'is not the result of a rejection of the emotions, nor does it lead to such'.[399] His stage system aimed at social change and he *felt* that in order for that to happen, he had to *affect* the audience in a specific way, and as for specific things. Being a director and playwright rather than actor, he favoured the *what* over the *how* in relation to the acting process, yet, he also admitted that theatre is indeed the place for the emotions (and feelings, apparently). As he said, 'Is that not exactly why we go to the theatre, to allow such diverse feelings to be aroused in us?'[400]; his issue was *which* ones. By making use of contemporary neuroscientific approach to emotion, Brecht's views on empathy and emotion in the audience have been recontextualised and, it is now safer to proceed with the issue of emotion in the actor's craft. Paradoxically, we will start from the Brechtian actor.

---

[398] Brecht, 'Notes on Stanislavski', throughout.
[399] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 145.
[400] Brecht in Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 39.

4.2. Performing emotion: the 20ᵗʰ century's actor's task as taboo

4.2.1. 'Detachment'= 'identification' + super-task

Just like with Meyerhold's Biomechanics, where people, especially young contemporary actors and directors, often have the false idea that Meyerhold's performances were acted in the Biomechanics' *style*, so with Brecht, the idea that actors are and should be detached from character on stage, through alienation, is false too; doubly false, in fact. Additionally, just like in Stanislavski's and Meyerhold's practice there are stages during which their practice developed substantially, so in Brecht, too, the final stages of his work, as well as the very final stage of each performance, are substantially different from the previous ones.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, alienation (*V-effekt*) is not an actor's process but the performance's wanted effect on the audience, which can now be translated as a process of implicit recontextualisation of the audience's empathy, a sociologically sensitive articulation of the emotional dynamics of the scene. *Distanzierung* (distancing), on the other hand, is an actor's process, and just like Biomechanics, many descriptions, exercises, tools, analyses and functions are attributed to them, but on the false premise that they are destined for the performance. Brecht and, mainly, his followers describe in detail the use of past tenses, narration, change in role-playing, cross-gender casting, third person, the linen folding and other exercises as tools in the actors' rehearsal process of *Distanzierung*.[401]

These devices are part of the *rehearsal process, and not of the performance.* According to Brecht's aesthetic code, the actor must be able to show how the character had other choices, despite the selection of the given action, in order for social reality to be depicted as malleable, non fatalistic and non-Aristotelian. As he stated, '[a]s a writer I need an actor who can completely empathise and absolutely transform himself into the character[…] But at the same time and before all else I need an actor who can stand away from his character and criticise it as a representative of society'.[402] This statement by Brecht himself

---

[401] Brecht, *On Theatre,* p. 121.
[402] Brecht, 'Notes on Stanislavski', p. 166.

explains away many misunderstandings related to his view of emotion in the actor. The proper surprise comes from the fact that the actor is challenged to *simultaneously* portray the character and stand away from it, showing it. How is that simultaneous performance supposed to be happening anyway?

Most of the misunderstanding occurs at exactly this point of envisaging what it means to simultaneously detach from character and show or comment on the character, while portraying it at the same time. In 'Notes on Stanislavski' Brecht himself lucidly explains it in the following fragment:

> P.   But of course you, Brecht, are against empathy.
>
> B.   I? Not at all. I'm for it at a certain stage of rehearsal. But then something must be added to it: a focusing on the character with which you empathise, a social evaluation. I recommended to you yesterday, Geschonneck, that you empathise with the peasant you were playing. It appeared to me you were giving only the criticism of the character and not the character. And this morning when Weigel sat down beside the tile stove and froze with all her might, she must have empathised.[403]

The second phase of the rehearsal, the *identification* or *Einfühlung*[404] is practically identical to Stanislavski's emphasis on action, since the actors create a score of their character's actions whose emotions they try to portray and adopt. The whole mysterious issue about Brechtian *Distanzierung* occurs in the third phase, the *objectification*, when the actors try to see the character 'from the standpoint of society'.[405] Better than anyone, Brecht himself explains how the third phase is an *addition* to the second phase of empathetic characterisation. What exactly is added, or what we could define as the distinctly Brechtian characterisation feature, is this *extra focus* on the social evaluation of the character. As he said 'the actor had to be able to criticise. *In addition* to the action of the character, another action had to be there so that selection and criticism were possible'.[406] But what exactly is this standing point and exactly how is it performed?

It appears that the closest we can ever get to a proper definition of how the actor shows the character from the 'standpoint of society' from Brecht's own sayings should come from his following statement: '[i]f the actor understands the super-objective, he is

---

[403] Brecht, 'Notes on Stanislavski', p. 163.
[404] *See* section 2.3.2.2.
[405] Brecht, 'Notes', p. 159.
[406] Brecht, 'Notes', p. 156 (my emphasis).

representing society and stands outside of his character to that extent'.[407] Here Brecht uses the term super-objective (now super-task) in the proper Stanislavskian sense, exactly in a context where an effort is made to study the proper similarities and actual differences of the two approaches. Brecht, frustrated with the fragmented access to Stanislavski's writings, openly acknowledges that Stanislavski's super-task theory has a direct affinity to his own concerns in as early as the 'Short Organum' regarding the issue of the actor's incomplete identification with the character, and admits that Stanislavski himself constantly stresses the importance of the super-task to his actors because he is aware too that 'the actor is both actor and character and this contradiction takes precedence in his consciousness'.[408] Of course, Stanislavski never talked about identification with the character, as we analysed earlier, and Brecht was finally convinced that Stanislavski knew this, when saying that 'Stanislavski knows that civilised theatre begins when the identification is not complete.[409]

Stanislavski, in his turn, does indeed acknowledge that the super-task is the 'quintessence'[410] of the play and the character, it is 'the inner essence, the all-embracing goal, the objective of all objectives, the concentration of the entire score of the role, of all its major and minor units[…][it] contains the meaning, the inner sense, of all the subordinate objectives of the play'[411] and it is the actors' and director's duty to convey this essence which belongs to the author, as it is what 'gave birth to the play'. Stanislavski is also aware that the super-task, which is effected via the *through-action*, constantly faces obstacles, the *counter through-actions*, from where dramatic conflict stems. Very explicitly he proclaimed: 'thus the process *of living our part consists of composing a score for your role, of a super-objective, and of its active attainment by means of the through line of action*'.[412]

This paramount importance Stanislavski pays to the definition, execution and conveyance of the super-task of the characters and of the whole play is indicative of a practical convergence with Brecht's own favouring of the myth of the play, the *Fabelbau*[413]; a statement that Brecht accepted by affirming that from a Stanislavskian point

---

[407] Brecht, 'Notes' p. 164.
[408] Brecht, 'Notes' p. 164.
[409] Brecht, 'Notes' p. 158.
[410] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, p. 79.
[411] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, p. 78.
[412] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, p. 80.
[413] *See* section 2.3.2.1.

of view and terminology his theatre is indeed concerned with the super-task[414]. In both cases the actor's work is destined and figured out to be fully subordinated to the author's intent and social dialectics.

In the reality of Brechtian practice, which is a different thing from the ambitious and disembodied momentum of a written theory, the shaping and execution of the actor's comment on the character, especially in later phases of Brecht's work, coincides with the correct selection and execution of the *Gestus*, which conveys the character in social context. Brecht explains that '[t]he realm of attitudes [*Haltungen*] adopted by the characters towards one another is what we call the realm of the *Gestus*. Bodily posture, tone of voice and facial expression are all determined by a social "*Gestus*": the characters are cursing, flattering, instructing one another, and so on'[415]. *Gestus* here describes an action in the Stanislavskian sense, or simply an emotional action. The precision of the *Gestus* and its ability for *V-effekt* relies on its selection: '[t]he attitude of chasing away a fly is not yet a social gest, though the attitude of chasing away a dog may be one, for instance if it comes to represent a badly dressed man's continual battle against watchdogs'[416].

Far from being a completely different concept from our modern concept of emotion as a social marker, or from being mysteriously or crudely employed, executing the *Gestus* is a much simpler, smoother and subtler task than one might imagine or presume. Instead of doing something less than a Stanislavskian actor, performing the *Gestus* is actually something more, and coincides with performing action according to the super-task[417]. When actor Ekkehard Schall, considered a Brechtian actor *par excellence*, is asked about the process of performing the *Gestus* 'whether in his opinion, this insight is communicated to the audience—whether a spectator could feel the difference, for example, between an actor who had used these rehearsal techniques and one who had not—this, he granted with a smile, would probably not be the case'[418]. Helena Weigel's last moment of her *Mother Courage*'s historical interpretation encapsulates in 'power and grace'[419] the essence of Brechtian character acting: Mother shuffling slowly in her bag for

---

[414] Brecht, 'Notes ', p. 166.
[415] Brecht, 'Short Organum', *On Theatre*, p. 198.
[416] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 104.
[417] *See* section 4.3.1.1.
[418] Braun T., '*Verfremdung* in Action at the Berliner Ensemble', *The German Quarterly,* Vol. 46, No. 4, Bertolt Brecht: 75th Anniversary of His Birth, Nov. 1973, p. 530.
[419] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 139.

the coins to bury Catherine's body, checks them for authenticity and gives the coins, putting one of them back into her bag. *All* actions need to be performed, if we are not to degrade into parody or cheap melodrama, with equal doses of both identification and detachment, if we have to insist on these clumsy terms.

Since *Gestus* entails expression, voice, posture etc., that is, all the proper *prosodic* emotional features of behaviour, now that we cannot view emotion as an independent, self-absorbed process but rather as the enabling factor of social life, it follows that this social *Gestus* can only be conveyed if these emotional features are clearly conveyed by the actors. A Stanislavskian actor that fails to identify *saving money* as an action is equally inadequate in his characterisation as a Brechtian actor who fails to perform *mourn my child* is, and vice versa. Historicising, or objectification of character through *Distanzierung*, or standing from the point of society, of performing the *Gestus*, as it occurs in the third stage of Brechtian rehearsals, is simply *one more layer of action* in addition to those of the second phase, the *Einfhülung*. There is nothing 'self-expressive' or 'detached' or 'identifying' in the score of action when taking back the money, or mourning the child.

Brecht explains that *Gestus* is a quality primarily presented by actors: 'Everything to do with the emotions has to be externalised; that is to say, it must be developed into a gesture. The actor has to find a sensibly perceptible outward expression for his character's emotions, preferably some action that gives away what is going on inside him'[420]. 'Externalising emotion' does not really make sense from our contemporary point of view, since *emotion*, unlike *feelings* to which Brecht apparently refers, is by definition manifest in action and social interaction. The more a scene reveals the details of such action and interaction by revealing motivations and social relations, the more the actor's task of performing the *Gestus* is translated in depicting the fullest range and facets of emotional and motivational attitude possible, through complex action.

If we substituted *emotion* with *feeling* in Brecht's quote, we would have: 'Everything to do with the *feelings* has to be externalised; that is to say, it must be developed into a gesture. The actor has to find a sensibly perceptible outward expression for his character's *feelings*, preferably some action that gives away what is going on inside him'. From the point of view of contemporary emotion theory, even though this statement is perhaps rather self-explanatory, it is nevertheless finally correct. As such, the Brechtian actor's

---

[420] Brecht, *On Theatre*, p. 139.

mysterious task of simultaneous character portrayal and commenting is demystified and translated into the performance of the *Gestus* as layered emotion, or Stanislavskian actions and super-task. From the point of view of acting theory now, this could be a fragment from Stanislavski's *An Actor's Work*, or Grotowski's work on physical actions, and a mere renaming of what we now understand as *emotion* as *Gestus*, and therefore, a more socially aware approach to action-behaviour, which still, does not adequately account for *how* to perform the *Gestus*.

In a nutshell: defining the *Gestus* is architecture; executing it is mechanics. Since the Brechtian actor's task is to perform the *Gestus*, which is practically translated, as we saw, into some affectively meaningful action in space and time, that is, into emotion, then the actor needs to *perform this emotion*. There is no choice as to whether an actor should detach from the task of performing emotion or not. Nevertheless, whether the actor ultimately *feels* the emotion he is performing, is a different question, which shall be dealt with later.

4.2.2. Emotional patterning and the application of the James-Lange theory of emotion

4.2.2.1. Meyerhold

In the case of Meyerhold, who is also considered as favouring the 'detached' style of acting[421], the same things apply. Meyerhold was equally interested in both the audience's and the actor's emotion, but unlike Brecht he was fully aware from the beginning that his ultimate goal was to 'grip'[422] the audience, in order to transform them from mere spectators into participants in a collective praxis[423]. His industrial and formalist influences, his obsession with physical—seemingly anti-psychological—aspects of the performance such as rhythm and postural plasticity, his competitive relation to Stanislavski, the misinterpretation of his Biomechanics, as well as sheer politics, have all contributed to Meyerhold being considered, like Brecht, an antipode to Stanislavski's *psychological* acting style, and pretty much a first version of 'detached' acting in the 20th century, anticipating Brecht.

Yet, it has been already shown how very consciously Meyerhold was applying

---

[421] Konijn, p. 40.
[422] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 147; p. 199; p. 310.
[423] Meyerhold, *On Theatre*, p. 59.

James' peripheral theory of emotion, when it came to the actor's technique. Apart from the fact that the Biomechanics' style was not performed on stage as such—because it was not destined for the stage—and that the use of most of his so considered distancing devices, such as the *emploi*, triune action, distinct rhythmical awareness etc.[424], were later on absorbed and smoothed out in the productions in a rather 'internalised', more 'realistic' and always justified, in the proper Stanislavskian sense, manner[425], Meyerhold's constant challenge to the actor was the heightening of his *reflex excitability*[426] through neuromuscular control. What for?

The demand for high *reflex excitability* suggests the need for an actor whose nervous system can be put into effect in the least amount of time and with the least amount of energy, exactly like in Taylorism and Biomechanics. A body such as the one Meyerhold asks for is able to control a very detailed breakdown of each action and posture, a deep sense of psychologically justified action, as well as a metatheatrical supervision of the part through the *emploi* at the same time, and all this running in a production with a very distinct rhythmical and plastic identity.

Though the selection of the ideal model (or series of *Gesten*), and therefore of the action and postural patterning does not belong primarily to the actor in Meyerhold's productions, the actor is expected to inhabit in detail, without blocks or hesitations and as thoroughly as possible, a patterning that is scientifically designed to elicit the maximum emotional response from the audience. More importantly, though, this patterning is at the same time both artistically and scientifically designed to simulate within the actor's very body the most lucid, physiologically valid and fluent depiction of a specific emotional state. This straightforward, economical and surgically precise neuromuscular and psychological conditioning that occurs throughout the rehearsal, integrated in Meyerhold's longing for optimal and maximum efficiency, inevitably evokes and tests James' premise of the periphery and by definition, prepares and primes the actor to experience feelings, rather than just to express emotion for the sake of the audience alone.

Then, why does Meyerhold avoid talking about feelings and even emotions in the actor, while at the same time he is applying up-to-date affective science on them? We can only hypothesise, that Meyerhold's rupture with the early MAT and their stagnated

---

[424] *See* section 2.2.3.
[425] Muza, 'Meyerhold at rehearsal', p. 18.
[426] *See* section 2.2.3.

preoccupation with feelings, understood mainly through *emotional recall* at the time, as well as his active engagement with the materialist Soviet spirit, of which he became the ideal representative, resulted in a departure from examining issues of individual experience and a reorientation towards the neural, the behavioural and the social(ist). As was the case with Brecht, emotion, again misunderstood as self-indulgent *feeling*, remained a taboo issue within the context of materialist science, and it would be more than sixty years after Meyerhold's creative period before emotion and feeling could become the objects of neuroscientific inquiry. The fact remains, though, that the direct application of the Jamesian principle of feeling and emotion in acting technique, evident in the extensive degree in which the shaping of the physical behaviour of the actor was understood as defining the emotional result of his overall work, was among Meyerhold's unique contributions to theatre, and to acting specifically. The emphasis on the psychophysiology of the actor seemingly went through the patterning of action towards rhythm, but, in reality, it was pointing towards emotion, and ultimately, towards feeling. Excluding both emotion and feeling from the actor's equation in Meyerhold's approach proves plainly absurd. Exactly like Stanislavski, Meyerhold knew: '[t]alent always experiences a role deeply, whereas mediocrity merely enacts it'.[427] No detachment here either, whatsoever.

4.2.2.2. Alba-Emoting

In a very similar, but even more scientifically informed manner, a practical application of the peripheral (Jamesian) concept of emotion through patterning, is the contemporary psychophysiological method of actor training called Alba-Emoting[428](AE). In AE, actors are trained to induce emotional states, i.e. to create the feeling and emotional impulse to act into themselves by assuming the respiratory, postural and facial patterns, equivalent to the six basic emotions that the method recognises (fear, anger, sadness, joy, eroticism and tenderness).[429] Alba Emoting, developed by neurobiologist Susanna Bloch, was primarily destined to be used in psychotherapy, in order to help patients relive and gain control over their emotions. The connection to theatre soon became evident and the approach

---

[427] Meyerhold in E. Braun, *The Director and the Stage: From Naturalism to Grotowski*, Methuen, London, 2002, p. 134.

[428] Much of the material in this section comes from Susana Bloch's unpublished book on Alba Emoting *The Alba of the Emotions*.

[429] Bloch in Zarrilli, *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 222.

adapted to meet the needs of actors, especially in the US, who were looking for ways to enhance their emotional performance without having to indulge in the psychoanalytically oriented paths offered by the Method.

The approach holds that breathing, musculature and facial expression are the three categories of *effector patterns* of emotion, from the 'complex physiological ensemble' of the organism's 'neurovegetative, hormonal and neuromuscular reactions' that are selected 'because they can be started and modulated at will and carry with them most of the other features that are not directly under voluntary control'.[430] Neuroscientific evidence from Bloch's work, corroborating the material on ANS patterns that we have encountered so far, confirm that such a premise can hold true, and the system and its followers claim to be able to understand, express and experience emotions practically at will and without the need to recur to previous emotional memories for inspiration.

Emotion	Posture	Direction	Main breathing trait
Happiness	R	Ap	Saccadic expiration (mouth open)
Sadness	R	Av	Saccadic inspiration (mouth open)
Fear	T	Av	Inspiratory apnea (mouth open)
Anger	T	Ap	Hyperventilation (mouth closed tight)
Eroticism	R	Ap	Small amplitude, low frequency (mouth open)
Tenderness	R	Ap	Small amplitude, low frequency (mouth closed in a relaxed smile)

Tab. 5 Alba-Emoting patterns Representation of the six basic emotions in terms of postural tension/relaxation and approach/avoidance parameters (Bloch, S. et al, 'Effector patterns of basic emotions: a psychophysiological method for training actors', ed. P. Zarrilli, *Acting Re-considered*, Routledge, New York, 2001).

Alba Emoting training is meant to have three major stages: robotic, induction and integration, and is currently divided into 6 levels of mastering and proficiency. During the robotic stage trainees learn to adopt the patterns for the 6 basic emotions and the step-out pattern in a gross and generic way. The step-out is a 'neutral' point of reference from which actors start or return to, when the patterning is completed or aborted for any reason. Gradually, as they manage to learn the patterns they are able to perform them more efficiently, which at some point leads them to the ability to induce, i.e. to access and properly experience the portrayed emotion. During this induction phase they also start combining patterns in order to create mixes of emotions and apply them onto characterisation work, by dividing the character into zones of emotions and shifts.

---

[430] Bloch in Zarrilli, *Acting Reconsidered*, p. 221.

Ultimately, a master of the technique is able to produce any emotion or emotional mix, at any degree of intensity and is able to induce emotion even with tiny, practically imperceptible adjustments. The Alba-Emoting approach borrows the concept of pattern from neuroscience and introduces it to theatrical acting. The emphasis on pattern betrays an emphasis on the tempo-rhythmical elements of behaviour in both space and time, and on levels of tension. The knowledge of Alba-Emoting can be applied either positively, in combination with other acting techniques, such as the *MPA*, or negatively, by eliminating physiological faults in the execution of emotional features of behaviour in acting, in a manner very close to the Grotowskian concept of eradication of psychophysiological blocks in the *via negativa*.

4.2.3. Stanislavski: *Method of Physical Actions* or *Active Analysis*?

In our investigation of the actor's task we have proved that, from the contemporary view of emotion, the Brechtian actor's task of performing the *Gestus* coincides with performing emotion, as well as that this same task of performing emotion lies at the heart of both Meyerhold's approach to acting and of the Alba-Emoting patterning. It will also be proved here that the same task applies for the Stanislavskian actor. The detailed investigation of the actor's task in Stanislavski will be the subject of the following unit (4.3), as the central argument in demonstrating that a modern scientific interpretation of his *Method of Physical Actions* and *Active Analysis* encapsulate all the progress made in the twentieth century psychotechnique of emotion, from which we can infer a *Method of Emotion* available for actors of the twenty-first.

Unfortunately, as we examined in Chapter 2, Stanislavski's own documentation of his last method is minimal and our sources rely mainly on *Creating a Role*, on accounts by some of his disciples such as Toporkov, Kedrov and Knebel, and on the work of some influential scholars, such as Joseph Roach, Sharon Carnicke and Jean Benedetti. Roach, like most scholars, holds that there was one *Method of Physical Actions*, Benedetti combines the two concepts in a single *Method of Analysis Through Physical Action*[431], while Carnicke insists that Stanislavski devised the *Active Analysis* after the *MPA*. She describes the *MPA* in three steps and the *AA* in five. In the *MPA* the actor (1) identifies the 'inner,

---

[431] Beneddeti, *SAI*, p. 91.

purposeful action of the bit', (2) compiles 'a score by listing all the physical actions necessary to carry out this action' and then (3) tests 'the score by means of a silent *étude*, playing that bit of the scene without words'.[432] In the *AA* the actor needs to (1) 'read and assess the facts[…]the event, inciting and resisting actions[…]style, language, images and rhythms', then (2) immediately plays the scene using his own words, incorporating as many facts as possible, (3) re-reads the scene and compares it with what was done, (4) repeats the improvisation and again checks the work again the text, each time adding something to the scene and then he is finally able to (5) memorise the scene for performance'.[433]

Carnicke claims that though the two approaches overlap significantly, what is different in the *AA* is the study of the 'aspects that link text to dramatic structure', in that actors are urged to be inspired in their structuring of the score of actions by the structure of the play itself, too; 'Active Analysis fosters memorisation of a text through a deep experiential understanding of the play's underlying dynamic structure'.[434] More importantly, though, she holds that there is a crucial psychotechnical difference between the two approaches which is evident in the different versions that Knebel and Kedrov gave of Stanislavski's last method:

> Kedrov focuses on logical sequences of physical actions, more precisely activities. By discovering and listing these, the actor can anchor performance in material reality. In an escape scene the actor walks forward, reaches out a hand, turns the knob, opens the door and exits. […]What is missing is action as 'psychophysical', simultaneously combining inner action of the soul with outer action of the body. Knebel's version retains this dimension. [...] In an escape scene the character must strive to avoid an uncomfortable meeting, or save oneself from embarrassment, or beat a hasty retreat, or abscond, or cut and run etc. The chosen action then conditions the physical activities of walking forward, reaching out a hand, turning the knob, and opening the room in order to leave the room. [...] Knebel called Stanislavski's last work 'Active Analysis' to differentiate it from Kedrov's overly simplified version.[435]

---

[432] Carnicke in Hodge, p. 27.
[433] Carnicke in Hodge, p. 29.
[434] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 196.
[435] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 191.

As such, in Knebel's *Active Analysis* the actor needs to perform *psychophysical* action, while in Kedrov's *Method of Physical Actions*, which, as she believes, reflected the Sovietisation of Stanislavski's work, action is reduced to physical movement, perceived as activity.[436]

Nevertheless, both the mottos of *logic* in the sequence of physical action, as well as of action being *psychophysical* can be traced in Stanislavski's own body of work, from as early back as *AW* Part 1 and all the way to *Creating a Role*. The first account of Stanislavski's new tool comes from a letter to his son in 1936:

> I am setting a new device in motion now, a new approach to the role. It involves reading the play today and tomorrow rehearsing it on stage [...] A character comes in, greets everybody, sits down, tells of events that have just taken place, expresses a series of thoughts. Everyone can act this, guided by their own life experience [...] and so we break the whole play, episode by episode into physical actions. When this is done exactly, correctly, so that it is true and it inspires our belief in what is happening on stage, then we can say that the line of the life of the human body has been created. This is no small thing, but half of the role. Can the physical line exist without the spiritual? No. So the internal line of experiencing is outlined.[437]

This letter encapsulates the *Method of Physical Actions*, but at the same time it gives an early version of *Active Analysis*. A more mature version of the *AA* is given in *Creating a Role*.[438] The 25-step plan of work that he proposes there is the closest we can come at this point to Stanislavski's *own* description of the *AA*[439]. Indeed, we can safely infer from the plan a departure from the initial *round-the-table analysis*, given that actors now discover the play through trial and error, on their feet. Of course, Stanislavski nowhere uses the terms *Active Analysis*, or *Method of Physical Action*, and though it is clear from the 25-step plan and *Creating a Role* that his rehearsal method evolved drastically into the *AA*, the same thing does not apply for the *MPA*. The *MPA* is a concept on which Stanislavski works consistently from *AW* Part 1, which evolves very slowly and steadily, and which is *never* abandoned, not even in the *AA*. This happens because the *AA* is a rehearsal technique, while the *MPA* is a scientific concept for the generation of emotion, on which his whole work relied. As we shall also prove, the *AA* involved in order to accommodate in the most integrative way the scientific concept behind the *MPA*.

---

[436] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 196.
[437] Stanislavski cited in R. Whyman, *The Stanislavsky System of Acting: Legacy and Influence in Modern Performance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, p. 63.
[438] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, pp. 253-6.
[439] The full text is given in Appendix A of this thesis.

In *Creating a Role*, there are three basic axes that define Stanislavski's latest work: (1) a growing emphasis and belief in the ability of *the score of physical actions* to capture and release emotional impulse for performance and (2) an equally growing emphasis on the importance of the *gradual and experiential discovery* of the play, character and score of physical action, through structured improvisation (*études*). Both these principles are prompted by (3) a belief in the *interdependence of the physical and psychological*. The thesis suggests that by incorporating Meyerhold's peripheral emotion theory and improvisatory methods into his own system, Stanislavski set the foundations for a very concrete twentieth century *Method of Emotion*, which relies on the concept of the *MPA* and found its more balanced articulation in the *AA*. This *Method of Emotion* engulfs Brechtian tools and tasks such as *Distanzierung* and performing the *Gestus* and was further elaborated by Grotowski's work on Physical Actions, mainly through his work on the *Impulse*.

4.3. Twentieth century *Method of Emotion*; and of feeling

Trying to see the bigger picture in Stanislavski's work, in order to understand the core mechanism of this *Method of Emotion* that underlies all twentieth century acting approaches studied here, we can detect a growing emphasis on the physical aspect of the actor's task, evident in his obsession with physical action: a shift from emotion to action. This shift was not sudden but gradual and can be seen in its early forms already in *AW* Part 1 (*An Actor Prepares*). It reflects Stanislavski's growing conviction that the actor can *experience* feelings during performance if he *does* the correct things. This belief in the interdependence of the physical and the psychological aspect of the actor's work marks a gradual but obvious incorporation of Meyerhold's Jamesian work on posture, musculature, rhythm and improvisation into Stanislavski's later approach. More importantly, it summarises the general shift of twentieth century action from emotion to action, which, as we proved for both Meyerhold and Brecht, was in reality a shift from feeling to emotion.

The basic and indisputable premise in Stanislavski's *MPA* was the Jamesian principle that *action precedes feeling*; that we feel because we act, and that therefore the *actor needs to do, in order to feel*. The paramount importance of this premise is technically translated into the creation during rehearsal of the *score of physical actions*, as a score of patterned behaviour. Fixing a score of physical action, in one terminology or another, was adopted by all practitioners of the previous century examined here, and it is the performance of this score that the audience perceives *as* character anyway. At this point we will start by updating Stanislavskian terminology with contemporary emotion science. This will, first of all, prove that the actor's task in Stanislavski too, is to perform emotion. Later on, this will allow us to examine exactly how the *score of actions* and the *gradual experience* of the play through improvisation facilitate the generation of emotion and feeling, and therefore why Stanislavski's late method can be viewed as a *Method of Emotion* for the twenty-first century.

4.3.1. Updating terminology

In his vocabulary Stanislavski uses terms such as action (*deistvie*), physical action (*fizicheskie deistvie*) and task [formerly 'objective'] (*zadacha*).[440] The actor always has to identify the character's task, which reflects the problem posed by the circumstances, and fulfil it by performing an action (simultaneously mental and physical), through a series of physical actions (activities). One thing we can be sure of is that Stanislavski did not expect the Jamesian peripheral theory to yield feelings in the actors by asking them to rely on the execution of plain physical actions, that is, on generic activities such as turning a knob. Writing a letter, or cleaning the house, or cooking a meal, or lying down on the bed, are things that people can *do* in completely different situations, and for completely different reasons. What changes in these situations and gives 'character' to the physical action is the motivation, the *reason* why am I doing this. The motivation is in turn reflected in the action, which is conceived as combining the mental and the physical, and for that matter, the social (*Gestus*).

In a scene where I invite my boss for dinner, because I want to *ask for promotion*, I may attempt to fulfil my task by *befriending* him through a lovely meal and atmosphere, by *impressing* him with my knowledge of my field, by *seducing* him with my good looks, by *flattering* him for his achievements and authority or by *threatening* him that I will reveal his affair to his wife etc. Throughout these different scenes we may be engaging in the same activities, such as eating, drinking wine or smoking, but in each case I am performing completely different *actions* and conveying different *Gestus*. Conversely, the actions to *impress*, or to *seduce*, or to *befriend* or to *flatter*, may be accomplished through completely different physical actions. I can *seduce* my boss by reciting Homer, or by cooking a meal, or by taking my clothes off. Therefore the *Fabelbau*[441] can be conveyed only through the *action* that the character performs in order to achieve the task. It is through action that the activity is connected to task and motivation, and therefore it is through action that *Gestus* is conveyed. Ultimately, it is through the performance of the action that feelings will be generated in the actor. This action, as Stanislavski says, must be a transitive verb[442], such as I *challenge* you, I *seduce* you, I *interrogate* you, I *disorientate* you, or I *threaten* you, and must be addressed to a fellow-actor, an object, or to oneself.

---

[440] Carnicke, *SIF*, pp. 22ff.
[441] *See* section 2.3.2.1.
[442] Stanislavski, *AW*, pp. 148-151.

How is it that the *action*, conceived as psychophysical, standing between the motivation and the behaviour can connect the two, and can be intelligible to the audience, while at the same time it can grant feeling to the actor? Physiologically speaking, what is it that differentiates the action from the activity, or one action from another when the physical activity is the same, and what connects action to motivation? In other words, since the actor is called to identify and execute the action, in exactly what sense does this action finally link the psychological with the physical, and how is this *Gestus* or action embedded in the score in a way that ignites the actor's same feelings for performance? In a nutshell: what is the exact relationship of emotion and psychophysical action in acting?

4.3.1.1. Psychophysical Action= emotion=*Gestus*

Any serious proponent of *psychophysicality* believes, as Stanislavski did, that in every physical action there is something psychological, and in every psychological action something physical. If this is not to remain simply a fashionable statement, thus flirting with dualism rather than scientific monism to which it appeals, we should translate the statement into scientific terminology. The *task* can be readily connected to the concept of *motivation*, while *physical action* corresponds to *behaviour*. What about action? The suggestion here is that this so celebrated psychophysical action is nothing else but the prosodic, affective, emotional elements of behaviour, which stem from motivation, calibrate the physical action and practically coincide with the *Gestus*. In short: *psychophysical action is emotion*. Not feeling, but emotion. A few examples will make this clear.

Often, in neurological research, a brain with lesions is more helpful in uncovering the function of the neurological system being examined than a normally functioning brain. By analogy, if we were to practically exclude physical action from our sequence, that is, overt behaviour, we could perhaps obtain a clearer understanding of action, namely of emotionally driven behaviour. In the previous chapter two things, among others, were made scientifically clear: (1) that behaviour is always motivated and (2) that emotion is the readout of motivation potential. This suggests that all physical actions occur for a reason and that this reason is somehow manifest in the behaviour, that is, the physical actions. A heated conversation between two people automatically conveys their *angry* disposition, even in the absence of other more overt physical movement. Humans, like all animals who have emotions, are capable of detecting other animals' intentions

through clues from the pitch, intensity, pitch contour, rhythm, timbre of their voice, or from their speed, direction, posture, muscular tensions or facial expressions. These clues are what we call the *prosody* of behaviour and coincide with the physiology of a given emotion.[443] A quadriplegic person is unable to engage in overt physical action but has nevertheless the ability to exert action (*reproach, accuse, condemn, curse* etc.), that is, to behave emotionally. Likewise, an actor does not depend on physical activity *per se* in order to convey action, but his action is conveyed through the *prosody* that conditions whichever physical action he performs; it depends on the emotion.

What differentiates, then, one action from another is primarily the affective, emotional expression or prosody of behaviour, and this is especially evident in the near absence of overt movement, or when the physical action is a mere mundane activity that could apply to innumerable situational contexts (turning the knob or pouring the wine). From the point of view of modern theory of emotion this is absolutely self-explanatory. We already know that once a stimulus is appraised as *threat*, for example, then the situation entails *danger* (fact) and the body is neurochemically alerted in a specific pattern. The body is motivated to *protect* itself from the danger (task), and this motivational stance is effected through an action tendency, through the arming of the body with a specific impulse to act (action). In this case the impulse will be to *escape* the danger as the body is pre-programmed to do in fear. Locating the nearest exit, running towards the door, reaching for the knob, opening the door and exiting the room are physical actions conditioned through the action, which in this case is *to escape* the danger.

As the physiology changes during fear the organism is brought on the verge of the primordial action, and it exhibits what contemporary emotion theory calls an *action tendency*, or *emotional impulse* to act. This emotional impulse to act is not conscious from the beginning. It will eventually result in a feeling of fear, but only once the peripheral physiological changes have occurred. As such, when an actor is asked to perform psychophysical action, he is asked to perform the emotion, that is, those *patterned* physiological changes that would ultimately generate the feeling of fear. It is needless to say that when these physical actions are performed in a patterned manner they entail the posture, muscular tensions, expression, voice, mental functioning and rhythm of the actor and it is through these changes that we know that the actor is performing *escaping from*

---

[443] *See* section 3.3.

danger rather than *celebrating a victory*. Action is conveyed *only* through the performance of emotion.

Summing up, *the most important thing that we need to understand, at this point, is that the psychophysical action practically corresponds to the emotion, by definition. By emotion, we do not refer yet to the feeling associated with the emotion, but to the patterned physiological changes, universal and unique to each specific emotion, which prepare the organism to engage in overt action.*

As a result, if what Stanislavski asks from his actors is to engage in a psychophysical action, he is asking them to engage in an emotion. Not a feeling, but an action tendency, or impulse to act. *Performing action is performing emotion.* This is not true only of Stanislavski. Brecht's *Gestus*, Alba-Emoting's *pattern*, or Meyerhold's *rhythmical postural shifts* and Grotowski's *Impulse* describe exactly the same situation: performing *emotion*. The actor is asked to perform physical actions with a specific prosodic quality, that is, with a specific emotion, which *automatically* conveys motivational and social-relational information about the actor as character.

4.3.1.2. Perception of character and plot by the audience

In life, people determine whether a person is angry or sad and thus predict their possible actions through the physiological clues that can be read in that person's behaviour: through emotional prosody. Emotional prosody is intelligible, and it is meant to be so, as we saw earlier, because it is through such emotional clues that people's intentions are communicated to their environment, and social life becomes possible. Emotion is a nonverbal language. It goes without saying that, as it happens in life, in the theatre the audience decodes the character's intentions through the actor's performance of the physiology that accompanies motivated behaviour. Furthermore, because emotion by definition informs us about something of importance, when the audience detects a shift in the character's emotions, they automatically understand that something important occurs. It is impossible to imagine an actor delivering a scene without using any prosodic element, such as rhythm, tone, pitch, intensity, posture, speed, muscular tension, or expression, exactly like James proved it impossible to think of an emotion without any of its physical sensations. As a result, it is exactly through the actor's performance of emotion and shifts of emotion in the execution of physical actions, that the audience can become aware of simultaneously the character and the plot. This is at the heart of the

nature of drama. Needless to say that without these emotion clues and shifts, the character and the plot of the play (*Fabelbau*) cannot be dramatically conveyed.

Therefore, from the actor's point of view, defining the character's action coincides with defining the character's emotion and this is the actor's first task during rehearsal. Consistent character, structured according to the play's analysis by the ensemble, relies on consistent depiction of the character's emotion, and in all the practitioners that we examined in this thesis, this is effected through the score of patterned physical actions. All the techniques of characterisation in the four practitioners studied here, despite their minor differences, obey this core premise of the *score of physical action*, and though it is perhaps possible to bypass the issue of the actor's feelings altogether, it is impossible for the actor not to perform emotion. If the medium of drama is the actor's action, rather than activity, and if action coincides with emotion, then there cannot be drama without emotion in the actor. Feeling is a different issue.

4.3.1.3. Facts, events and emotionally competent stimuli (ECS)

Stanislavski's whole system provides us with methodological tools for identifying and charting the whole situation in which characters are engaged, in all levels of analysis. This results in a full understanding of all the evaluative, motivational-functional, impulsive-emotional, subjective and behavioural levels of the character, scene and play. Stanislavski in the *AA* suggests starting from the *facts* and the *events* of the play, which in effect summarise the plot, the story of the play or scene (*Fabelbau*). An event emerges from a series of minor facts. A fact corresponds to what we have defined as an *emotionally competent stimulus* (ECS).[444] A fact incites a period of action which ends with the next fact or stimulus, and it follows that a fact is something of importance to a character, which changes his disposition and incites action.

4.3.1.4. Bit and core relational theme (CRT)

This period of action between two facts or events, corresponds to what Stanislavski called the *bit*. He suggested that the bit be defined with an adjective, and from the point of view of emotion theory, this is equivalent to procuring the *core relational theme* of the emotional situation (threat, opportunity, loss, insult etc.). Once the bit or core relational theme is

---

[444] *See* ECS in 3.2.2.

named, the situation is in reality *appraised*, and starting from there, we can practically predict[445] all other levels (motivation, action etc.). Appraisal of the situation automatically depicts the interpretation of the ensemble, and it is at this point that the evaluation of the situation can have a clear sociological focus, as it happens in the Brechtian school.

4.3.1.5. Task and motivation

In each bit a character is faced with a specific *task*. The *task* is the problem that the character must solve, as posed by the given circumstances. If the character's task remains the same, then there is no change of bit for him. Stanislavski suggests that the task must be a verb be in the form of *I want to* or *I need to* do something. The task (*zadacha*) obviously conveys the character's *motivation*, and thus covers the motivational-functional level (I want to *protect* myself, I need to *make my boss give me promotion*, I need to *reintegrate* my lost pet etc.). [446]

4.3.1.6. Action and emotional impulse: basic and complex

In order to solve the problem posed by the situation, the task, the actor needs to identify the *action* of the character, which, as we have proved, is no other than the *emotional impulse for action* that the specific motivation (task) urges him to within the given circumstances, and which coincides with the *Gestus* (e.g. to *fight* the burglar, to *flatter* or *seduce* the boss, to *grieve* for my pet etc.). This is valid for more complex situations, too. When I perform the action I *despise you*, the behavioural strategy to accomplish this action is contingent upon the given circumstances of the scene (social class included), but will entail the tendency to exclude or reject the object from a group, status or relationship, possibly in a harmful and aggressive manner. The action to *despise* conveys the emotion of *contempt*, which is a complex, secondary emotion, and which may be viewed as a combination of disgust and anger (according to one interpretation), therefore, if the action tendency of disgust is to vomit, to reject, to discard in the wider sense, and of anger to harm, to attack, then the complex action of *despising* will only be manifested through combinations of impulses *to*

---

[445] *See* section 3.2.3.

[446] The task should not be confused with the term *tsel*, which is closer to the 'why' behind the task. A hunter's *tsel* is the bird, but his task (*zadacha*) is to kill the bird. *See* S. M. Carnicke, 'An actor prepares/. Rabota aktera nad sobo Chast' I: a comparison of the English with the Russian Stanislavsky', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 1984, p. 491.

harm/attack and *to reject/vomit*. It then follows, that there can be basic actions and complex actions, which can occur from the combination of different impulses to act, just like there are basic and social (complex, secondary) emotions, along with their equivalent feelings.

4.3.1.7. Counter-action, obstacles and emotion regulation

Of course, as we know from life, the action is not always the primordial action itself, as people regulate their emotions. *Regulation* of the emotion, be it either from the self or from another character or circumstance, coincides with *counter-action*[447] or *obstacle*[448], and results in the layers or complexity of actions that the actor ultimately has to perform.

4.3.1.8. Physical action and behaviour

Accordingly, and taking into further consideration the given circumstances and the available action repertory, the author's or the director's instructions, the actor charts the *physical actions* to be taken, i.e. the exact *behavioural* strategy as it will unfold. Seducing the boss in the hospital will involve a different strategy of physical actions than on an executive jet. It is necessary to stress again, that physical action and behaviour never occur in a vacuum, and in reality, there does not exist such a thing as a physical action or behaviour *per se*, devoid of motivational and affective content.

---

[447] *AW*, p. 318.
[448] *AW*, p. 143.

**4.3.2. The rehearsal as *Method of Emotion*

Now that we have updated our acting terminology with modern emotion theory, we are ready to better understand what Stanislavski's latest methods may have entailed, and how these form a twentieth century *Method of Emotion*. It should be already clear that if physical action is perceived as activity, it is inadequate to convey character and plot on its own, without any qualitative or quantitative patterning in its execution. Therefore, and given that we insist on having both character and plot in drama, performing emotion, that is, action perceived as psychophysical, is a one-way road for actors.

But Stanislavski did not ask his actors to perform action only in order to convey character, but because he also wanted them to generate feeling in themselves. Reverting to the *MPA* was his solution for not asking actors to generate this feeling directly through emotion recall. Stanislavski in his *MPA* clearly incorporated the Jamesian principle that *action precedes feeling*, and that the actor needs to *do first in order to feel*. This is the indubitable scientific premise behind his latest system and this is what explains his obsession with the *score of physical actions*. Stanislavski, just like Meyerhold, realised that if the score is constructed *correctly*, its equally *correct* repetition during performance will result in the actor feeling the same emotion through which he conveys character to the audience. Stanislavski relied on this, because he was seeking for feeling in his actors. The Jamesian principle that he adopted, like Meyerhold and Alba-Emoting, explains clearly how the *correctly* patterned execution of physical actions in the score will end up in the generation of feeling in the actor. Though most scholars readily investigate Stanislavski's scientific indebtedness to Ribot, Pavlov, Sechenov and even Freud[449], it should be clear by now that in the *Method of Physical Actions* Stanislavski is principally indebted to James' peripheral theory of emotion, which he adopted from Meyerhold.

In order for the score to to revive the emotional impulse during performance, this score, apart from correctly executed, must, first of all, be correctly constructed during rehearsal. The whole rehearsal then, becomes the procedure during which the actor has a single, but twofold *task*: to *generate* authentic emotional impulse and to *trap* it in the building of the score of physical actions. If the actor manages to generate and trap feeling in the score he has simultaneously solved the major issues of *spontaneous* and *repeated*

---

[449] *See* Roach, *The Player's Passion*, p. 201f; Benedetti, *SAI*, p. 72; Carnicke, *SIF*, 168; Merlin, *Stanislavski*, p. 61; Leach, *Makers*, p. 27.

feeling. The only way an actor can trap feeling in the score is in the form of emotion. This is exactly where the three axes (*psychophysical unity, score of actions* and *improvisation*) meet with one another, where the *Method of Emotion* is shaped and where Stanislavski's latest work gave integrative answers. This Method for the generation of emotion and feeling in the actor does not *generically* rely on reflexes, but relies on the activation of concrete pathways in the nervous system. The actor is limited by the specific possibilities of the nervous system to generate emotional impulses, but it is ultimately these same possibilities that allow the actor to (re)construct feeling through technique. How many possibilities to generate feeling are there, anyway?

4.3.2.1. Creating the impulse for the score of physical action

Let us go back to the brain for a moment, and remember how emotion and feeling can be induced in the human body. We should remember that emotion is a composite phenomenon that entails *evaluation, expression* and *experience*. Feeling (experience) can occur in the following four ways:

1. Through the representation in the brain of the emotion that has been expressed in the body by a stimulus from the senses, as in 'body-loop' situations [I see the bear (evaluation from senses), I run away (expression), I feel scared (experience)].

2. Through a stimulus from memory or imagination, *without engaging the body*, as in 'as-if body-loop' [I remember the bear (evaluation from memory/imagination), I feel scared (experience)].

3. Through a stimulus from memory or imagination that affects the body proper, too, as in emotional memory [I remember/imagine the bear (evaluation from memory/imagination), I feel scared (experience), I contract my muscles (expression)].

4. Through the representation in the brain of the emotion that has been simulated in the body voluntarily, as in Meyerhold or Alba-Emoting [I run away from the bear (expression), I feel scared (experience)].

The first case (1) describes the spontaneous generation of feeling, as in life, from real stimuli, evaluations, and responses. It is obvious that an actor cannot be acting as if the evaluation were true. You cannot believe that you *are* Poseidon in the *Trojan Women*, nor

Ariel in the *Tempest*, not even Anfissa in *Three Sisters*. The spontaneous feelings that may be generated in an actor during an *étude*, or during performance, as a direct result of the communication with another actor, the set design, the music or the audience are crucial but depend more on imagination rather than on actual belief. Even though theatre people easily succumb to dangerous vitalistic sentimentalities, especially during improvisation, there is a clear line between those stimuli that come from the senses and those from the imagination, or memory. Mistaking imagination for the senses is the number one criterion in the diagnosis of psychosis, and though psychosis has always been flirting with the boundaries of theatre and acting, the line needs to be drawn. This opens a huge arena of issues, in which the concept of *play* in acting, as a convention and simulation of reality, could largely contribute, but this would go far beyond our scope. The second case (2) is not useful for theatre either. Feelings are invisible, we should remember, but character is conveyed to the audience through emotion. As a result, nobody needs actors who can really feel emotions analogous to their character's, but are unable to convey them through their body, because then, we have no visible conditioning of behaviour, no motivation, no plot, no *Gestus*, no character, no drama.

The third case (3) describes the generation of feelings through imagination and memory, with the difference that these feelings can resound in the body, too, thus creating character. Memory can engage the body in emotional behaviour and close the circuit of feeling successfully. Strasberg's *emotional recall*[450] depends largely on this process, and, this, as we shall see, is the key, albeit in different form, in Stanislavski and Grotowski, too. The last case (4) describes the generation of feelings as a result of voluntarily simulating the physiological changes that normally occur during emotional arousal. This is clearly the case of Alba-Emoting and Meyerhold, where the more precise the simulation, the more precise the character and ultimately the feeling that will be generated. Surprisingly, perhaps, this case applies to Stanislavski, too.

Therefore, if among the three key aspects of emotion that we have studied (*evaluation*, *expression-behaviour* and *experience*) evaluation in the theatre cannot and should not be as real as in life, and expression should at least be visible, then it goes without saying that stimuli for the generation of feeling and emotion—because we need both— can only come from the expression of the emotion, or from the memory or imagination.

---

[450] L. Strasberg, *Strasberg: At the Actors Studio*, TCG, New York, 2005, p. 101f.

This leaves us only two options for the theatre: *simulation of emotion* and *emotional memory-imagination*.

4.3.2.1.1. Simulation of the emotion

4.3.2.1.1.1. Logic and sequence of physical action

Many would rush to support that Stanislavski nowhere talks about patterning or simulating emotion, and that this kind of acting is completely alien to him. The truth is that Stanislavski *implies* and *applies* correct physiological execution of physical actions through his all favourite 'logic and sequence[451], which is perhaps another way of describing the correct physiological patterns of emotion. He did not have the scientific material available in Alba-Emoting, but he insisted that physical action should be performed in '*proper, logical sequence and possible in the real world*'.[452] What does this mean?

Stanislavski senses the link between the correct execution of a physical action and the results it has on action: 'logic and sequence are part of physical actions. They give them order, stability, meaning and help stimulate action which is genuine, productive and purposeful'.[453] His goal was to tackle the correct experience of feelings, and believed that feelings, too, have logic and sequence: 'let's deal not with outer but with inner action, not with the logic and sequence of outward physical actions but with the logic and sequence of feelings [...] What we have to think about is whether the physical action is being carried out properly, logically and sequentially'.[454] Stanislavski asked for a *correct* pattern in the execution of physical actions only because he knew there is a *correct* pattern in the generation of feelings, and this is what lies behind the *MPA*. He prompts actors to master the logic of patterns: 'you need a clear plan and a line of inner action; to establish that you need to know the nature, logic and sequence of feelings'.[455] Physical action without knowledge of the correct physiological pattern of feelings is useless, because it leads nowhere. But where and when does this knowledge about feelings penetrate his work?

This brings us at a crux. We have analysed how emotion entails specific patterning of physical actions, and we have seen that the *Method of Physical Actions*, based on James'

---

[451] *AW*, p. 509f.
[452] *AW*, p. 46.
[453] *AW*, p. 167.
[454] *AW*, p. 173.
[455] *AW*, p. 180.

theory of emotion, promises generation of feeling from the correct execution of the score of physical actions. But exactly how is physical action to be understood, then? In short: *how far does Stanislavski go in breaking down emotion and action into physical action?* Meyerhold went all the way to rhythmical posture shifts and the triadic structure of every single sequence of action: there he met emotion. Darwin and James saw in emotion a deterministic relationship between experience, expression and physiological change; modern science confirmed this discovery, and Alba-Emoting relies on these patterned physical actions for the generation of feeling. We are at the core of the body-mind dichotomy, which is still present in the dualistic and rather unfortunate term *psychophysicality.*

We should remember that in the case of fear, for example, the blood leaves the viscera to hit the muscles of the legs; heart-beat accelerates and blood pressure rises; muscles contract and might even shiver; the centre of gravity moves away from the possible danger and towards the possible escape route; in order to avoid making any noise, the mouth drops open and breathing becomes shallow and rapid; as a result of breathing quickly from the mouth saliva evaporates and swallowing becomes difficult; the eyes open wide and scan the visual field rapidly in all directions to detect the direction of the danger and the escape route; mental images alternate rapidly as scenarios are swiftly examined in order to decide on the best available behavioural strategy; voice may be employed in order to call for help or intimidate the attacker, and so on. It is all these physiological adjustments that prepare the organism to act (to *escape* in this case) and it is all these physical action that *form* the emotion, and, therefore, the psychophysical action. These physical actions *are* the emotion, these *are* the psychophysical action. Are not actors supposed to perform these physical actions too, and if not, how are they ever expected to convey emotion to the audience and generate feeling in themselves?

How does Stanislavski understand these crucial *effector patterns* of emotion such as breathing, posture and musculature, without which no psychophysical action or emotion is possible? Breathing is the central *effector pattern* of emotion and feeling, as we saw in Alba-Emoting, and breathing may also be the only clue in the absence of overt physical action. We can infer a person's emotion, solely from their breathing, without them having to say or do anything else, even without looking at them. In acting, different breathing will induce different emotion, and different breathing will convey different action when

all other behavioural clues are absent. How does Stanislavski deal with this crucial point? We know that Stanislavski worked on breathing, mainly through Yoga, in an attempt to 'teach [the students] the laws of correct breathing, the correct position of the body, concentration and watchful discrimination'.[456] Though actors were trained in such breathing patterns from as early as 1906[457], it would be erroneous to suggest that he was making use of patterns as concrete as in Alba Emoting, in order to induce emotion to his actors that would serve as impulse for the score of physical action. Nevertheless, it would be equally mistaken to suggest the opposite, namely that he excluded the creation of impulse from simulation of the effector patterns. Stanislavski had a key, which he possibly adopted from Meyerhold rather than yoga, and which is by definition directly related to emotional patterning, and by extension to Alba-Emoting: *tempo-rhythm*.

4.3.2.1.1.2. Tempo-rhythm and the *MPA*

Tempo-rhythm is among the most important and most neglected parts of Stanislavski's whole system. In *AW* Part 2, which of course has not received the same amount of attention as the *AW* Part 1 and in which the impact of Meyerhold's work is much clearer than in Part 1, Stanislavski puts it clearly: 'but what if this doesn't happen spontaneously, if feeling doesn't respond to the call and remains inert? […] What decoy can we use to wake slumbering emotion? In time you will come to know that tempo-rhythm is this decoy and stimulus'.[458] As soon as Stanislavski grasped the ability of physical action to generate feeling, he soon must have realised that in order for that feeling to reignite, physical action should be properly patterned tempo-rhythmically. In his related experiments 'the variations of tempo and rhythms produced a wide diversity of moods: *andante maestoso, andante largo, allegro vivo, allegretto, allegro vivace*'. This is perhaps the most crucial point in the understanding of the psychotechnical basis of his approach. Physical action on its own is completely useless, while psychophysical action is counterpart to patterning, understood in his era as tempo-rhythm. As he explicitly put it: 'it isn't an action as such but Tempo-rhythm which has an immediate and direct effect on us'.[459]

Stanislvaski congratulated his students on understanding this: 'it only remains for

---

[456] Stanislavski cited in Carnicke, *SIF*, p.181.

[457] Carnicke, *SIF*, p. 176f.

[458] *AW,* p. 281.

[459] *AW*, p. 469.

me to congratulate you on having made a highly important "discovery", something everyone knows and actors always forget, namely that whatever you do, proper metre in syllables, words, speech and movement and precise rhythms, are crucial to the process of experiencing'.[460] Stanislavski could sense the manifestation of patterning through rhythm and tempo in every single thing: 'we think, dream, grieve in certain Tempo-rhythms [...] where there is *life* there is *action*, and where there is *action* there is *movement*, and where there is *movement* there is *tempo*, and where there is *tempo* there is *rhythm* […] If actors feel what they are saying and doing intuitively, properly, then the right Tempo-rhythm will emerge spontaneously from within'.[461] He added: 'every human passion, state of mind, experience has its Tempo-rhythm. Every individual inner and outer character type—sanguine, phlegmatic, the Mayor, Khlestakov, Zemlyanika—has its Tempo-rhythm. Every fact, every event inevitably has its own Tempo-rhythm'.[462]

As a result, at this point, we can make an interesting formulation: Kedrov's conviction that in the *MPA* physical action can induce feeling is absolutely true, as long as these mundane physical actions are patterned through, at least, tempo-rhythm, logic and sequence. Kedrov's version, though it appears utterly naive in Carnicke's description, has a main advantage: it is methodologically consistent in its scientific *monism*. As long as the score of physical actions entails the correct tempo-rhythm and all the physiological adjustments unique to each emotion, such as breathing, posture, eye movement etc., that is, as long as the *entire* emotion (or psychophysical action as Knebel would have preferred) is broken down into physical actions and then performed in a patterned way, feeling can be generated. This may or may have not been what Stanislavski said or did in his final years, it may be easier or harder, but scientifically it makes absolute and perfect sense. If in Knebel it is the psychophysical action that conditions the activity, and if this action is, as we proved, the emotional impulse to act, then the patterning of activity through tempo-rhythm may be a different, but equally effective way of, performing action and ultimately experiencing feeling. It is needless to say that without patterning, the physical action will *never* convey emotion to the audience, and will *never* induce feeling in the actor. Conversely, we can *never* think of psychophysical action without actors having to perform emotion. This is what true *psychophysicality* means, and this is the premise that Stanislavski

---

[460] *AW*, p. 469.
[461] *AW*, p. 473f.
[462] *AW*, p. 460f.

gradually adopted.

In *Creating a Role* Stanislavski refers to the *MPA* as 'the approach from the exterior to the interior. Make this bond a firm one, repeating your pattern of the physical being of your part many times over. This will confirm the physical actions but at the same time strengthen the emotional response to them'.[463] The dichotomy exterior-interior echoes a dualistic, rather than monistic view of the body-mind that often lurks in Stanislavski, but from the scientific point of view, interior here denotes *feeling* while exterior denotes *emotion*. Science today has made a clear neurological and sequential distinction between emotion and feeling, but in the experience of everyday life, these two usually occur as if simultaneously, and we are left with the impression that we *do* because we *feel*, and not the other way around, which, though counter-intuitive, is still true. As a result, this dichotomy means that an actor can act after (inside out) or before (outside in) the feeling has been generated: in other words, either from emotional memory or from simulation.

Stanislavski acknowledges the validity of the simulation approach and is aware that simulation through tempo-rhythm is an extremely powerful and legitimate tool. The tempo-rhythmical patterning of the physical action affects breathing and muscular tension and, by extension, has a total impact on feeling by finally urging the actor to mentally justify this physiological change in terms of psychophysical action: 'tempo-rhythm can't be recalled or used without creating the mental images or given circumstances to go with it, or without feeling our tasks and actions. They are so closely linked that each produces the other, i.e. given circumstances evoke Tempo-rhythm and Tempo-rhythm reminds us of the relevant given circumstances[...]tempo-rhythm not only stimulates emotional memory, as we saw, by tapping it out in previous classes, but brings our visual memory and mental images alive'.[464] Stanislavski confirmed the validity of both routes, and expressly stressed it as an option: 'one must give actors various paths. One of these is the path of action. There is also another path: you can move from feeling to action, arousing feeling first'.[465]

Though Stanislavski did not employ patterned simulation as thoroughly as in Alba-Emoting, he nevertheless *consciously* employed tempo-rhythmical patterning, in order to stir the actors' feelings. In the following fragment, Tortsov experiments with tempo-

---

[463] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, p. 209.
[464] Stanislavski, *AW*, p. 463.
[465] Stanislavski in *SIF*, p. 189.

rhythm and enjoys the results of manipulating patterning:

> 'Well, now! Playing happily? Having fun?' Tortsov laughed. 'You see what a wizard I am! I can not only control your muscles but your feelings, your mood as well. I can first lull you to sleep and then whip you up into a frenzy and make you sweat buckets,' he joked. 'But I'm not a wizard. It's Tempo-rhythm that has the magic and affects your inner mood,' Tortsov summarised.[466]

Obviously, the actors did not possess the knowledge of the pattern, as neither did Meyerhold's actors, but Stanislavski as a director was clearly knowledgeable enough to coach them himself into *the correct tempo-rhythm for each emotion and feeling*, like Meyerhold did, perhaps even more explicitly. Knowledge of physiology is crucial and is more clearly reflected later in Western acting in Grotowski's *via negativa*. In Grotowski, the intervention on the physiology of emotion is still clearly on the director's side of the room, but this time, through a concrete knowledge of human psychophysiology: 'once we know the actor's natural type of respiration, we can more exactly define the factors which act as obstacles to his natural reactions and the aim of the exercises is to eliminate them. Here lies the essential difference between our technique and other methods: ours is a negative technique, not a positive one'.[467]

In all cases, there was some psychophysiological intervention, always on the director's side, though. Today, this knowledge is on the actor's side of the room, too, and its application not only does not violate human physiology, but can further promote the actor's creativity in the generation of impulse or elimination of blockings, especially in cases of extremely intense emotional scenes or of character situations alien to the actor. Followers of vitalism and purism in art may automatically reject such *artificial* and *exterior* means as anti-artistic because, but as Stanislavski and Meyerhold believed, and as Grotowski confirmed: 'there is no contradiction between inner technique and artifice [...] We find that artificial composition not only does not limit the spiritual but actually leads it [...] we subtract, seeking distillation of signs, by eliminating those elements of "natural" behaviour which obscure pure impulse'.[468]

Summing up, the basic premise behind the *MPA* is the Jamesian principle that simulation of emotion will generate the feeling in the actor. If the emotion (or psychophysical action) is fully broken down into physical action, its patterned repetition

---

[466] *AW*, p. 468.
[467] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 177.
[468] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 16-7.

can arouse feeling in the actor. This is a *sine qua non* for the repetition of feeling in performance, but an *option* for the generation of feeling during rehearsal. This patterning may be as explicit and thorough as in Alba-Emoting, but the less explicit the simulation is, the more the actor needs to look for the generation of feeling outside simulation. The only option left is emotional memory and imagination.

4.3.2.1.2. Emotional memory and imagination: imaginative memory

We have seen in Chapter 2, how the issue of emotional memory has been a huge obstacle to the understanding of the *System*, especially due to the implications brought about by the development of Method Acting in the US and the emphasis on *emotional recall*. If then Stanislavski's last period of work moved beyond emotional memory, as scholars readily proclaim, and given that he clearly did not exhaust his work on simulation of emotion, then where did he expect his actors to generate feeling from, and how are we to explain his preoccupation with emotional memory throughout his writings?

In *AW* Stanislavski boldly states that, ideally, all an actor needs is in reality a good emotional memory.[469] When the 'traces' in the emotional memory of an actor are 'not deep or sharp enough to come alive by themselves, without outside help[...] our psychotechnique is called on to do a great deal of complex work'.[470] The actor's entire *Psychotechnique* is destined and crafted in order to compensate for actors' weak emotional memory:

> [A]ll our work at school, in all its phases leads principally to arousing
> emotional memory and recurrent feelings.

Scholars often rush to discard emotional memory from Stanislavski's last work claiming that it belonged to the early stages of the system and was later replaced by the *MPA* and the *AA*[471]. Here we will prove that not only emotional memory was never abandoned, but that it always remained at the central task of his work, in all its phases. It is exactly through emotional memory that Knebel's psychophysical action, the further development of the *Method of Physical Actions* into the *Active Analysis*, and the emergence of twenty century's entire *Method of Emotion* make sense.

---

[469] *AW*, p. 220.
[470] *AW*, p. 221.
[471] *See* section 2.5.

We should straight away differentiate between the *emotional recall*, as employed in the American Method, and emotional memory as understood in Stanislavski and in modern science. *Emotional recall* is an exercise, a process of direct activation of emotional memory through specific exercises.[472] Emotional memory (EM) in science, on the other hand, is a faculty of human memory that (re)stores emotions. Stanislavski's *whole* work is directed towards the activation of the actor's EM, through a series of psychotechnical tools. Though he indeed originally employed direct emotional recall as part of the early system, the results he got were not satisfactory. Instead of trying to blackmail emotional memory directly through the Recall, he devoted his whole life trying to find a way to arouse it indirectly, to lure it.
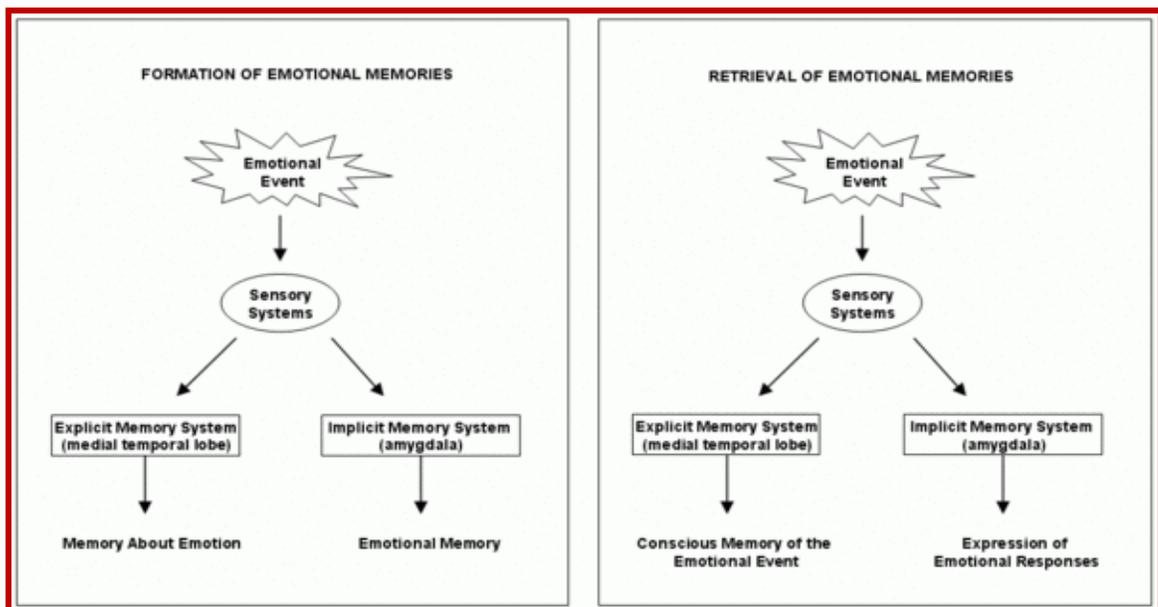
Fig. 22 Emotional Memories vs Memories about Emotions (LeDoux, J., 'emotional memory', *Scholarpedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Emotional_memory>).

Neuroscientifically speaking, emotional memory is not the ability to remember an emotional event, but the ability to actively re-experience a particular emotion with the periphery of the body engaged too (*see* Fig. 22). According to LeDoux[473], the *memory of emotion* is a propositional declaration that depends on declarative (explicit) memory and is mediated by the hippocampus and the temporal lobe. On the other hand, *emotional memory*

---

[472] Strasberg, *Strasberg*, p. 101f.

[473] LeDoux, J., 'Emotional memory', *Scholarpedia*, Viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Emotional_memory>.

(implicit memory) is mediated mainly by the amygdala and entails full emotional arousal. Ideally, these two faculties meet and collaborate in *working memory* (consciousness), but they are not equally important and helpful to actors, when it comes to practice.

If the actor chooses not to generate the feeling through simulation during rehearsal, then the only alternative is to use his EM or his imagination. One would naturally object that the Stanislavskian *magic if* or *I am* (crucial for both the *MPA* and the *AA*) act as a lever to the imagination, not to EM. Here comes the twist, though. Memory is not exactly 'memory', in terms of exact reproduction of an image, sound, sensation or whole feeling as in computer memory. Human memory is a *creative process*, which modifies and reconstructs the experience as it thrusts it back into consciousness.[474] To this extent, an emotional memory, or any other memory for that matter, will never be experienced in exactly the same manner. Given this creative, imaginative nature of memory, the limits between memory and imagination are less austere. Can we really imagine something that is not already there in our minds in some form or another? And if, indeed, memory acts creatively like imagination in the retrieval of an event, does not it make sense that imagination may be also operating rooted on memory?

And here comes a bigger twist: neuroscientists have discovered that there is a surprising connection between memory and imagination. According to recent studies 'people with amnesia caused by damage to the hippocampus, a brain region intimately tied to memory, have difficulty envisioning commonplace scenarios they might reasonably expect to encounter in the future'.[475] It appears that memory and imagination share common neural substrates, since 'in order to have vivid constructions of the past, the future, or of imaginary events, you always need the hippocampus'.[476] The theory further adds that this connection has a long evolutionary and cultural history: 'in prescientific times, many people thought that the role of memory is not necessarily to remember the past but to enable you to imagine the future[…]the ability to predict the future was a major driving force in the evolution of memory'.[477] It seems, then, that the two faculties are explicitly intertwined, as if in a faculty of *Imaginative Memory* (IM), and

---

[474] Cacciopo, in *Feelings and Emotions*, p. 223.
[475] G. Miller, 'A surprising connection between memory and imagination', *Science*, 19 January 2007, Vol. 315, No. 5810, p. 312.
[476] Miller, p. 312.
[477] Miller, p. 312.

drawing too rigid lines between the two is rather risky.

4.3.2.1.3. *Psychotechnique* in *Active Analysis*: a very gradual and indirect emotional recall

Surprisingly, Stanislavski was aware that emotional memory is creative and behaves a lot like artistic imagination does, when he was explaining it to his students:

> What happened to you, he said, illustrates very well the process of crystallisation which takes place in our emotional memory. Everybody, in their time, sees not one but many tragic accidents. They are stored in the memory but not every detail, only the features which have made the most impact. All these traces of similar experiences and feelings are distilled into a single, wider, deeper memory. There is nothing superfluous in it, only what is most essential. This is a synthesis of all like feelings. It is related not to the small, individual parts of the incident but to all similar cases. That is memory on the grand scale. It is clearer, deeper, denser, richer in content and sharper than reality itself.[478]

But he also knew that there is no case the actor can act without somehow activating his EM, because the actor's art relies on his EM, as well as on the *magic if* for creating the central stimulus to the actor's EM. In fact, the whole *Psychotechnique* is there to compensate for a weak EM. As he constantly said: 'all the actor has to do is experience a scene as parallel to the shock stamped on his memory in life. He requires no technique to help him[479][…] But what if this doesn't happen during the creative act?[480][…] In that case we have to rely on a decoy[481][…] In fact, the magic "if", the given circumstances, our imagination, the Bits and Tasks, the objects of attention, the truth and belief in inner and outer actions, provided us with the appropriate decoys (stimuli)[482][...] The actor must be able to respond directly to the decoys (stimuli) and master them, as a virtuoso does a keyboard[…]You must not reject any subject, any stimulus to your Emotion Memory'.[483]

So, how is it that the *magic if* or *I am* can arouse the EM, and why should we not confuse it with an evaluation of the stage situation as real, as one may be tempted through

---

[478] Stanislavski, *AW*, p. 206.

[479] *AW*, p. 220.

[480] *AW*, p. 224.

[481] *AW*, p. 225.

[482] *AW*, p. 225.

[483] *AW*, pp. 205-6.

Stanislavski's emphasis on the sense of 'truth and belief'[484] in the given circumstances?

The *magic if* or *I am* is an imaginative function of the actor's mind that relies on both memory and imagination. It is the actor's personal bias, reflecting his personality, as shaped by memory and inherent in his imagination. But the generation of feeling through the *magic if* is practically useless and possibly irrelevant to the character, unless it is combined with the given circumstances. A genuine laughter, no matter how appealing its scenic truth may be, has no place in a scene where the character is not requested to laugh. Conversely, not everyone reacts to Jason by killing their children. The given circumstances (GC), on the other hand, are all the details that we can gather for the character, scene and plot and even actual rehearsal and performance. The more rigid the character or ideal model (be it either from the author or the director or the actor's conscience), the more the *magic if* has to adjust to the GC. Therefore we have a polarity: on the one hand the *magic if* activates the IM and incites the actor's own emotional responses, and on the other, we have the character's own behaviour as given by the GC, to which the actor needs to adjust. The *MPA* can theoretically grant the reproduction of a genuine feeling once the score has been crafted correctly, but how do actors craft a score with genuine feeling in the first place, if not by simulation? This summarises the distance that the actor has to cover in order to reach the character.

Stanislavski sensed that the *Psychotechnique* ought to enable the actor to *gradually* arouse his EM during rehearsal by slowly bringing the actor closer to *analogous* situations. His greatest achievement, apart from converting the Jamesian principle into the *Method of Physical Actions*, was to devise the best possible rehearsal structure that would enable the *MPA* to break through the restrictions of simulation, and integrate the actor's imagination and emotional memory in their totality. In other words he devised a strategy that would combine repetition and genuineness of feeling in the actor with the character's GC. This is exactly what happened through the use of *études* in the process that has been described as *Active Analysis*. The actor employs the *magic if* and by slowly adjusting his own analogous actions and physical actions to the character's GC, he *gradually* approaches the character. As he said, 'perform each of these actions correctly in your mind, with a proper foundation, thoughtfully, sincerely and fully and you will come near, first outwardly then inwardly, to states and actions analogous to those of a man in love. If you do this

---

[484] *AW*, p. 611.

groundwork, it will be easier for you to understand the role and the play in which this human passion features'.[485] Instead of having to rely solely on EM or solely on simulation for the generation of the original impulse during rehearsal (not the repletion of the ready score), the *Active Analysis* tries to combine the two.

It is this process of gradually uncovering the analogy through *études* in order to finally trap it into the score that lies at the heart of the psychotechnical process and guides rehearsal in the *AA*: 'when rehearsals start, our own human demands, vital goals, analogous to the character's aren't there *already* in our minds. We don't create them in one fell swoop but appear gradually after a great deal of work'.[486] Instead of first defining the character and then performing it, acting and defining the character occur simultaneously. The actors define the situation first, which automatically defines the basic core relational theme, motivation and action (emotion), and by employing the *magic if* they try to arouse analogous feelings from their IM through improvisation: '[w]hat would I do if here, today, this very minute, I found myself in the situation analogous to that of the plot?'.[487] The actors are performing action from the beginning, which is psychophysical as Knebel insists, and is prompted by their IM, but at the exact same time, they are called to translate this action into physical action:

> *Shape a logical, consecutive line of organic, physical actions.* Write it down and fix it firmly by frequent repetition. Clear it of all superfluity—cut ninety-five percent! Go over it until it reaches the stage of being true enough to be believed in.[488]

By constantly translating the action into physical action, and physical action back into action and so on, through *études* that progressively bring the GC into the process, the actors surround the feeling through both simulation and IM. Their *analogous* experience is slowly activated through IM, as if in a very slow Recall, but as soon as it is performed it becomes a first draft of emotional action for a score; immediately this draft becomes an object of scrutiny as for its *physiological correctness* and *organicity* (logic and sequence, tempo-rhythm etc.) and serves as the basis for the next improvisation, when it will act supportively to the invigorated psychophysical action, and so on. As the actor better understands the situation of the character through analysing his concrete physical

---

[485] *AW*, p. 514.
[486] *AW*, p. 616.
[487] *Creating a Role*, p. 253.
[488] *Creating a Role*, p. 271.

behaviour, the Recall from his IM is fortified and further clarifies the successive drafts of physical action. *Active Analysis* thus combines the scientific concept of the *MPA* with the actor's own material into a *Method of Emotion*, by having simulation and IM of emotion gradually challenge, test, filter and enable one another into an organic *score* from day one.

If either the *magic if* or simulation fail to ignite in the actor some impulse that can be, in any degree, analogous to the character's emotion, and therefore useful for the organicity of the score, then this is what ultimately limits the actor. Though the score may convey character to the audience, the actor will not be able to reach experience, and to this extent he will have failed. Stanislavski was not a magician, nor can anyone become an actor or play everything. As he crudely put it: 'you will never be able to play the roles you can't properly find room for. They are not your repertoire. Actors should not be divided up according to type but according to their personality'.[489]

Grotowski, who was consciously continuing Stanislavski's work on physical actions, emphasised the work on creating the impulse. We should remember him saying in Chapter 2 that 'before the physical action, there is the impulse, which pushes from inside the body, and we can work on this'[490], and for him the *impulse* is a result of finding the appropriate muscular tension in the body.[491] 'There is no intention if there is not a proper muscular mobilisation […] The intention exists even at a muscular level in the body, and is linked to some objective outside you.[492] Grotowski's search for the impulse was very accurately set in the actor's emotional memory, and he pushed it to the limits, perhaps, to a degree of precision that borders the Method's *emotional recall.* Actors were encouraged to remember the slightest details of an important-emotional event, creating an exhaustively thorough score of minute physical actions.[493] Then, and given that the score was detailed and accurate enough, he could look for impulse the moment it made its appearance. By clarifying, consolidating and fortifying the impulse 'physical actions can be better rooted in [your] nature[…]One can say that the physical action is born'.[494] This ultimately leads to the elimination of the time lapse between impulse and action which describes the state

[489] *AW*, p. 210.
[490] Grotowski in Richards, *At Work With Grotowski*, p. 95.
[491] Grotowski in Richards, p. 96.
[492] Grotowski in Richards, p. 96f.
[493] Grotowski in Richards, pp. 88-89.
[494] Grotowski in Richards, p. 95.

of translumination.[495]

This work of practically *priming* the impulse is already foreshadowed in Stanislavski's *Creating a Role*. Once the actor makes a score of the physical objectives, he tests it and finds their underlying super-task. Then he fixes the score of inner impulse to action, without performing the action: 'I shall simply move from one proper objective and action to the next without executing them in physical terms. For the time being I shall limit myself to arousing inner impulses to action and shall fix them through repetition. As for the actions themselves, they will develop of their own accord'.[496] This is how both Stanislavski and Grotowski work on action as emotional impulse: when the impulse that 'pushes the body from inside' and motivates the body to perform a psychophysical action does make its appearance, the body is in a motivated state and is emotionally charged. This describes perfectly the psychophysical nature of action, the emotional impulse, as we have understood it so far.

The gist is clear: though Stanislavski avoided the directness of the *emotional recall*, his whole work was intended to arouse the actor's emotional memory. All the tools of the *Psychotechnique* (indirect simulations through tempo-rhythm and through the *magic if*) insidiously arouse the EM, each time deeper and deeper. In fact, the *whole of the Psychotechnique is a very gradual and indirect emotional recall*. The actor gradually gets to know his character, through the use of the *magic if*, the given circumstances, the bits, tasks, actions, counteractions, physical actions, tempo-rhythm, facts, events, super-task etc. Each time one of these decoys manages to work, a clearer analogous picture arises from the EM for every important moment in the role. As better and better material slowly emerges from the EM, prompted or purified by psychophysiological knowledge, it becomes an organic impulse that further fertilises the organicity of the score and conditions the series of physical actions, in a sense of a pattern. Ultimately, and ideally, all aspects of the score are synthesised as having stemmed from valid material from the actor's EM and can grant emotional activation when revived appropriately for performance.

---

[495] *See* section 2.4.2.
[496] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, pp. 226-7.

4.3.2.4. Reviving the impulse for performance

The impulse is then finally trapped in the score of physical actions in all possible terms (action, tempo-rhythm, as if, etc.). At this point, Pavlovian reflex and Jamesian periphery collaborate. Through constant filtering, purification and repetition of the score of physical actions as conditioned by the emotional impulse-action during rehearsal, new neural pathways are shaped in the actors' brains, rendering the score *quasi* spontaneous. The actor has learned the score through neural conditioning, but the generation of emotion through the score, relies predominantly on the Jamesian peripheral simulation of a previously felt emotion. Though rehearsal relies more on the *magic if* to generate the impulse for the score, during performance, and even though automated, the *simulation* of the emotion through the score becomes the dominant function of the actor.

During performance, as the actor attends through the score, the conditioned physical actions reach the somatosensory areas of the brain and thanks to the Jamesian principle the brain reacts *as if* a real emotion were occurring and feeling ignites. This is the cycle of simulation during performance, which grants consistent results when the score has been built correctly. Alongside, there is another cycle of emotion and feeling at operation, the cycle of the stage actuality. During the performance new things happen, and old things are lit in a different light. Though the factual world of the stage cannot be mis-evaluated as 'real' by the actor, the 'active attainment'[497] of the *magic if* and the given circumstances during performance (communication and actuality) provokes Imaginative Memory to generate further relevant feelings, which will hopefully engage the body proper into the related emotional reaction. Ideally, the two cycles will complement each other for optimal results: as the *magic if* incites feeling from memory to become emotion in the body proper, and as the distinctive patterning of the body-proper through simulation of the emotion in the score is read by the brain as emotion occurring in the body, the two processes meet and enhance one another.

---

[497] Stanislavski, *Creating a Role*, p. 89.

4.4. Conclusions

Apparently, following 20th century science, western acting took a step, but that step was backwards in the emotional chain of events. Instead of going from emotion to action as it proclaimed, it moved from feeling to emotion. The uniquely subversive Darwinian and Jamesian lesson 'I feel because I do' was put into effect by practically all the practitioners we have studied so far and they have all contributed in different aspects of creating in detail a comprehensive schema that would translate this premise into stage language.

Meyerhold understood very well that emotion is already present in physical action and its rhythm. By insisting on the actor's posture, analysis of physical action and rhythm, but also by always keeping the Stanslavskian concepts of task and action, he anticipated Alba-Emoting in the generation of impulse from a simulation of emotion in the periphery, as well as Stanislavski's *Method of Physical Actions* in the generation of feeling from the score of patterned physical actions. Stanislavski's integration of the *Method of Physical Actions* in his *Psychotechnique* culminated in the *Active Analysis* in which he devised the fullest and most concrete *Method of Emotion* in twentieth century Western acting. In that *Method of Emotion* he found a balance between emotional memory, imagination and simulation of emotion in the construction of character and the generation of feeling. Aspects of this *Method of Emotion* were questioned or further developed by other practitioners, such as Grotowski's work on the Impulse and on Physical Actions, as well as Brecht who emphasised its social aspects. Though scientific, political and aesthetic limitations, as well as pure artistic competition, did not leave enough room for concrete redefinition in the terminology of emotion used in acting, from today's point of view, the basic structure underlying the actor's process in this *Method of Emotion* connects all acting approaches studied here, is scientifically valid, and shapes the basic legacy of twentieth century Western acting's legacy to the actors of the twenty-first.

Chapter 5

Patterns of Behaviour in Greek Ritual Lamentation for the Dead

So far, our revision of twentieth century acting through a modern scientific understanding of emotion and feeling has shown beyond any doubt the centrality and predominance of emotion in the actor's craft and the theatrical medium in general. But, twentieth century acting theory's fascination and struggling with the physiological and ideological implications of emotion is not a new story in the West. The famous emotionality of classical Athenian tragedy is still a hot debate and, as has been the case with modern acting theory, it is not self-evident to decide the proper place of emotion and feeling in the classical actor's technique. Did they share the same, or similar, technical issues as modern Western actors with regards to emotions and feelings of their character? How did they perform through action and not through narration?[498] Drama[499] was born in ancient Greece and its emphasis on action as opposed to epic's emphasis on recitation is indeed a key differentiating factor, as Aristotle noticed, but, as we have seen so far, performing dramatically meaningful action entails performing emotion. This thesis suggests that performing emotion, which has been identified as the primary actor's task in twentieth century western acting, is the continuation of a paradigm of psychotechnique that does not present itself for the first time in classical drama, but existed hundreds, if not thousands, of years before classical Athens, in the professional mourners' lamentation for the dead.

The relationship between ritual and theatre is an ongoing issue of research, and it is definitely not a new story either. Neither is the relationship between theatre and funerary rituals, especially as it has been studied in the case of Greek tragedy and its relation to ritual lament.[500] But to suggest, as this thesis intends, that there is a very profound psychotechnical affinity between the acting process and the ritual lament is rather virgin

---

[498] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1449b24–28, (transl.) K. McLeish, Nick Hern Books, London, 1998.
[499] «Ɉρᾱμα» from «δρᾱν», 'to do', 'to act'.
[500] Ridgeway, W., *Origin of Tragedy: With Special Reference to the Greek Tragedians*, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2003.

territory, and a quite controversial assumption to be supported.

A preliminary obstacle to reaching such an understanding has to do with the mere existence of professional mourners within lamentation rituals today. As contemporary western cultures are becoming more and more alienated from and oblivious to death, death culture and its accompanying rituals seem functionally and semantically detached from the death event. If on the theatre side we have actors, and on the funeral side we have relatives, friends and professionals, we still have difficulty in seeing through the division. It is difficult to accept that actors, even talented or highly technical ones, share the same reality factor (*evaluation*), when it comes to their emotional involvement, as relatives and friends do. Conversely, even those of us who still have some kind of experience of professional mourning are not easy with the idea that professional mourners might be implementing a process similar to what actors do as part of their technical construction of their character's emotional depiction. This brings us to a kind of question identical to the one we posed for actors earlier on: are professional mourners affected by their performance or do they just affect others? What is their psychotechnique?

Among the challenges of the thesis, is to demonstrate the intricate psychotechnical relationship between acting and ritual lamentation performance, as structured before the emergence and institution of drama and acting into as concrete forms as in classical Athens. This enterprise requires me, for both methodological and contextual reasons, to examine lamentation within the wider framework of death rituals, in order to isolate those behaviours directly related to lamentation that will enable us to compare them with the key behaviours in acting psychotechnique of emotion, as examined in the previous chapters. In this chapter, the focus will be on the isolation of specific patterns of behaviour during ancient Greek ritual lamentation, as manifested in their original context of death rituals, and of the funeral specifically, by making use of the available anthropological evidence.

5. 1. Death, emotion and ritual

5.1.1. Attitudes towards death: dissociating emotion from behaviour

The study of people's attitudes towards death has been the object of various scientific lenses, anthropology, sociology, psychiatry or cultural studies etc. So has the study of grief, in which, some of the central issues have revolved around whether grief is a universal reaction to death (and loss), and consequently whether there exists a 'physiological' and, therefore, a 'pathological' grief process. Anthropological studies tend to differentiate attitudes of mourning in different cultures, suggesting that not all attitudes to death are the same throughout the world. On the other hand, ethology and evolutionary psychology have also proven intense distress manifestations cross-culturally in humans, and even in animals, at the death of one of their group members, claiming thus for a common biological ground in loss reaction[501]. As has been the case with emotions, the two views are not incompatible, if some terminology is clarified.

We should, perhaps, start by differentiating between mourning and grief, where mourning describes the socially influenced *behaviour* (expression) of a person who has experienced the death (or loss) of an important other, while grief is an *emotional reaction* to the loss of this loved one. A state of mourning appears to be devoid of grief reaction in some cases, while the presence of expressions of grief may not always be the reflection of some death or some severe loss. As a result, while bereavement is the construction of responses according to mainly cultural incentives, grief is an emotional state that may or may not be manifested during bereavement. The former is behaviour, the latter is emotion, but, of course, the two terms intersperse with one another, as behavioural and emotional levels do, and the discriminations are not absolute.

Mourning or bereavement, on the other hand, is a culturally constructed behaviour in relation to death, and as such can vary amongst cultures. And this brings us closer to ritual. The information we can obtain about socially systematic attitudes towards death are rather indirect. Neanderthals were the first hominids to bury their dead about 50.000 years ago, but it is with the Cro-Magnon (25.000 years ago) that burial seems to have become a more conscious ritual practice, judging from the tools, weapons, food and toys

---

[501] Archer deals with the issue and provides thorough reference to relevant research in J. Archer, *The Nature of Grief: The Evolution and Psychology of Reactions to Loss*, Routledge, London, 1999, p. 53f.

found in tombs in Wadi el Machara (Palestine), Ferassie-Dordogne (France) Central Asia and elsewhere.[502] Upon European soil, burial customs appear during the Neolithic Era, when some kind of patterning of burial of the dead in caves or the ground becomes evident.[503] In the passage from the Late Neolithic Era to the Bronze Age, above-ground megalithic tombs disappear, giving their place to round earthen mounds.[504] As early as the third millennium B.C.E, grave sites have obtained specificity of purpose and architectural identity, indicating a rather systematic social attitude towards death, possibly ritualised.[505]

5.1.2. Death rituals

5.1.2.1. Anthropological approaches to death rituals

Our understanding of death rituals comes mainly from the field of anthropology. According to Durkheim, death rituals are the oldest and most primary form of ritual behaviour: 'the first rites were funeral rites; the first sacrifices were food offerings destined to satisfy the needs of the departed; the first altars were tombs'.[506] The early evolutionists (Frazer, Tylor etc.) were more interested in *conceptual* aspects of death, mainly as a means for investigating large-scale beliefs, such as the origins of religion, the soul, the afterlife etc, while the functionalist school (Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski etc.) tried to understand the *organisational* concepts of death through the study of its conceptual aspects, and therefore came closer to a study of their function in society[507]. Among anthropological theories, perhaps Arnold Van Gennep's concept of *rites de passage*, according to which, rituals of passage appear in critical moments in a person's life, where a transition from one significant biological or social state to another occurs, has remained largely unchallenged and paradigmatic. Death rituals can be read as *rites de passage* with a tripartite structure of separation, transition (liminality) and incorporation, and their main function is to safely and efficiently complete the passage from life to death[508]. According to Van Genep, death rituals surprisingly emphasise the liminal rather than separational

---

[502] G. Siettos, *Death Attitudes and Rituals* [Σιέττος, Γ., *Νεκρικά Ήθη και Έθιμα*, Κυβέλη, Αθήνα, 1997], p. 34.
[503] Siettos, *Death Attitudes,* p. 34.
[504] J. E. Levy, 'Archaeological perspectives on death ritual: thoughts from northwest Europe', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 4, The Uses of Death in Europe, (Oct., 1989), pp. 155-161.
[505] Siettos, *Death Attitudes*, p.38.
[506] E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1964, p. 52.
[507] P. Palgi, & H. Abramovitch, 'Death: a cross-cultural perspective', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 13, 1984, p. 390f.
[508] A. Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* (transl.), G. L. Caffee, Routledge, London, 2004, p. 11.

aspects of the event. This is why the dead for whom no rites are performed '[a]re the most dangerous dead. They would like to be incorporated into the world of the living and since they cannot be, they behave like hostile strangers toward it. They lack the means to subsistence which the other dead find in their own world and consequently must obtain them at the expense of the living'.[509]

5.1.2.2. Sociobiology and ritual

Not surprisingly perhaps, ritual is not an ingeniously human behaviour, as a result of which, the natural sciences, too, have tried to shed some light on these processes, from their own point of view. Sociobiology asserts that *ritualisation* occurs in most animals too, and this highly communicative phenomenon is understood as 'the evolutionary process by which a behaviour pattern changes to become increasingly effective as a signal'[510], a metabehaviour. For zoologists, animals—just like humans—also display behaviours of *ceremony*, such as changing position in nest, re-establishing sexual bonds, ritual predation, greeting, lip smacking, regulating levels of aggression during close interactions etc., and it is believed that these highly evolved behaviours are 'used to conciliate and to establish and maintain social bonds'.[511] Therefore, given the social origin of ritual from lower forms of being, it should not come as a surprise that most anthropological work suggests that the main function of human rituals is to promote and regulate social unity and a sense of belonging to the community.[512]

5.1.2.3. The function of death rituals

Undoubtedly, a funeral marks the passage of a person from life to death, but biologically speaking, by the time a funeral takes place, the passage has already been completed. Despite the fact that many if not most cultures somehow consider and actually structure their death rituals *as if* there were a proper transition *of* the dead person, as in some kind of continuation of existence after death or *afterlife*, our focus here will be on studying only

---

[509] Van Gennep, p. 160.

[510] E. O. Wilson, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2000, p. 224f

[511] Wilson, p. 224.

[512] *See* Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*; also, D. A. Marshall 'Behaviour, belonging, and belief: a theory of ritual practice', *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 2002, p. 362; also, C. S. Alcorta, 'Ritual, emotion, and sacred symbols: the evolution of religion as an adaptive complex', *Human Nature*, 2005, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 323–359.

the relationship between death rituals and the community of the living. From the point of view of modern science, it is the living to whom these rituals are in reality directed, and by whom these rituals were invented anyway.

For death rituals specifically, Radcliffe-Brown noted that death 'constitutes a partial destruction of the social cohesion; the normal social life is disorganised, the social equilibrium is disturbed. After the death the society has to organise itself anew and reach a new condition of equilibrium'.[513] Therefore, as Felton notes, 'burial ceremonies help the living sever emotional ties with the recently deceased, and the rite of passage involved in death, burial, and the rituals accompanying it brings a sense of finality for the living'.[514] Through death rituals people maintain 'reality in the face of death' and thus 'social paralysis' is avoided; '[t]hrough the performance of these rituals, those who have confronted death are able to resume their reality-sustaining conversation'[515], and some people have become pretty expert in this.

The fact that death rituals are both the first ritual activities to evolve and that they perform such crucial function in society, can perhaps partly account for the remarkable similarities that these death rituals bear cross-culturally. The study of death rituals from the vast Cross-Cultural Survey database of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University repeatedly revealed that 'mortuary ceremonies among so-called primitives around the world fall into a general pattern of human behaviour'.[516] Rosenblatt's huge cross-cultural research on the same issue furnished similar results[517], while Durkheim had realised that, too, when saying that 'ceremonies of mourning repeat the same theme everywhere; the variations are only in the details'.[518]

Charles' study of the Cross-Cultural Survey has demonstrated a series of striking similarities in behaviour as death rituals advance from one phase to the other. The announcement of death is accompanied by loud outcries of—mainly but not only—the women, violent wailing, extraordinary screams and shouts, raising of the arms to the sky,

---

[513] Radcliffe-Brown cited in L. M. Danforth, *The Death Rituals Of Rural Greece*, Princetion University Press, New Jersey, 1982, p. 27.
[514] Felton in D. Ogden (ed.), *Companion to Greek Religion*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2007, p. 99
[515] Danforth, *Death Rituals*, p. 31.
[516] L. H. Charles, 'Regeneration through drama at death', *The Journal of American Folklore,* Vol. 61, No. 240. (Apr. - Jun., 1948), pp. 151
[517] P. C. Rosenblatt et al, *Grief and Mourning in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Human Relations Area Files Press, New Haven, 1976.
[518] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, p. 392.

lowering of the head to the ground, tearing of the hair, shaking of the fists and cursing. Then follows a ritual cleansing of the corpse with hot water, a new sponge, and a new towel; the dead man is dressed in his finest clothing, the face and or the body is painted or ornate, and often a mask is worn on the face of the deceased. The mourners undo their braids and wear their hair flowing, smear their face or entire bodies with clay, charcoal, paint or dirt and sleep in the dirt, sometimes for days. During the wake, friends and relatives gather together to pay respect to the dead through the ritual lament. The ritual weeping may be accompanied by music, dances, representations and even games, and entails tearing of the hair, lacerations and self-cutting of the face, cheeks, neck, legs or the entire body with the nails or sharp objects; these acts of self-injury can develop into mutilations of parts of the body, such as the fingers, or even suicide by strangulation or starvation etc., but they are usually kept under control through conventional checks and comforting. The carrying of the corpse for inhumation takes the form of a procession consisting of the weeping kin. The burial signifies an intensification of the drama, especially through explosion in both conventional and ritual weeping that accompanies evocations, advice, praise and gifts to the deceased, while such gifts, and often personal belongings of the dead person are buried or burnt with him, together with messages to the others that have died before. Gestures of ultimate farewell, such as touching, tapping, hugging, caressing or blowing on the deceased's face, give way to the disposal of the dead corpse. Usually sacrifices, exorcisms, purification rituals and destruction of the dead man's belongings are among the separation rites that follow, before the offering of a conclusive communal meal.[519]

This astonishing account of the similarities among cultures in the Survey, as well as in similar research that corroborates these findings, is not meant to imply that all cultures are the same. Quite the contrary; based on the very knowledge that each culture has the ability to construct meanings and rituals that can differ dramatically from one to another, the similarities and patterns of behaviour that emerge from such accounts of death rituals identify the significance of the event of death for all cultures, but also, the degree in which death rituals are closely interwoven with deeper emotional structures of humanity, that cross beyond cultural limits. It is exactly such universal emotional reactions to death, on both a social and individual level, as we shall later see, that undercut the cultural

---

[519] Material from Charles, 'Regeneration through drama at death', p. 151f.

construction of death rituals so close to the related emotional structures, and that ultimately foreshadow the direct link between ritual lament and acting. It is within this framework that ritual lamentation must be examined.

5.1.3. Universality of grief in the context of death

From the point of view of contemporary neuroscience and psychology, and this is something on which most psychologists now agree as we saw in previous chapters, though behaviours and expressions of emotions might be culturally-bound, their themes, uninhibited emotional patterning and action tendency are universal and inherited.[520] When a loved person dies, several emotional reactions might tend to present themselves, like sadness, anger, surprise, guilt, terror[521], etc., regardless of whether the environmental context will allow for further deployment of the resulting behaviour, or not. Grief seems to be the predominant emotional reaction, especially in the West, with crying (weeping) as its consequent behaviour being perhaps the characteristic one. But is grief somehow specifically related to death? Does death ignite the theme of grief or is this reaction arbitrarily (through association or cultural conditioning) attached to death?

According to Lazarus, who follows the tradition of Aristotle[522], the *theme* in sadness is 'having experienced an irrevocable loss'.[523] Such an appraisal of the situation as loss works as a natural trigger and sadness neuronal systems will be activated. Consequently, and given our knowledge of how emotional regulation operates, two main things may possibly happen next: (1) if the intra- and extra-personal context allows it, the emotion will be also consciously felt or it will remain unfelt until the environment is safer for it to do so, while (2) at the same time and if the same contextual and cultural rules of display permit, the emotional reactions will grow into some sort of equivalent behaviour, in this case of crying. Consequently, in the case of death, the possibility for the action tendency of sadness to be expressed overtly as behaviour, and therefore the study of bereavement as a constructed behaviour, relies mainly on two factors: whether death is perceived as loss, and whether the manifestation of sadness behaviour is endorsed within each given cultural frame.

---

[520] *See* section 3.2.3.
[521] Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying,* p. 4.
[522] Hinton, *Biocultural Approach*, p. 26.
[523] Lazarus, in *Nature of Emotions*, p. 164.

From an evolutionary and biopsychological point of view, the crucial situation of death is not left to chance by nature, since the death of a loved one *is* a loss, it is *meant to be* a loss, and does bring about sadness and grief. Bowlby psychoanalytically understood loss in direct relation to attachment[524], and neurologists have confirmed that attachment as a behaviour is inherited and motivated by genetic and neurohormonal patterning, aiming at ensuring terms of concern and care between individuals, without which human society would be altogether impossible.[525] As Archer puts it very eloquently, '[g]rief, then, is the cost we pay for being able to love the way we do. This view implies that the grief will vary according to the strength of the lost relationship'.[526] Death, as the apparent loss of some important attachment is therefore biologically meant to cause neurohormonal distress, which is effected as emotions and feelings of sadness and most probably as the equivalent behaviour. It makes sense that in evolutionary terms such a distress originally aims at the consequent behaviour (ask for help or mourn[527]), regardless of whether in humans that state of overt action may not be achieved.

Not surprisingly, cross-cultural studies in the expression of grief in funerary contexts have furnished similar results. Charles' study of the Human Relations Area Files, like Rosenblatt's, has demonstrated that there is a core grieving process common in all cultures, when it comes to dealing with the loss of a loved-one. Emotionality is always an element surrounding death, and crying is the most usually encountered behaviour of the bereaved.[528] As a result, and as is the case with all emotions, it is generally agreed that, as Stroebe concludes, there is indeed a universal emotional reaction of grief to the loss of a loved person, regardless if whether in some cases 'cultural beliefs and norms "override" the natural grief reaction and dictate that death is not responded to with grief'.[529]

Death seems to be the archetypal *core relational theme* of loss, universal and inherited, which prompts grief reactions. It is after this point that a cultural incentive can reappraise the value attributed to death and promote or suppress one behaviour over some other, through learning. A smile at the news of the death of a beloved is unlikely to communicate that the person is happy with this death (with smiling being the behavioural

---

[524] J. Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss,* Vols. 1-3, Hogarth, London, 1980.
[525] Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience,* p. 242.
[526] Archer, *The Nature of Grief*, p. 5.
[527] *See* emotion and action tendency in 3.3.6.2.
[528] Charles, 'Regeneration', pp. 153-5.
[529] M. Stroebe, & G. Stroebe, *Bereavement and Health*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987, p. 54.

sign of happiness *par excellence*), but that the person, for cultural or other contextual reasons, is prompted to conceal or transform the feelings of grief, which by definition follow a loss.

In a nutshell, grief is the emotion by which humans are pre-programmed to universally react to the death of a loved one, but through the agency of culture, this emotion may or may not be re-enacted, may not be even consciously felt, and may even be transformed into something else. Other cultural settings may encourage the overt expression of grief, and even its amplification into intensities beyond the given appraisal of the mourner himself. To suggest that death physiologically causes grief, regardless of the manipulation of its expression, has a lot more consequences than fit within the scope of this thesis, but it will suffice to say here that the study of grief suppression follows the same principles that govern any other emotional suppression, or distortion, as dealt with previously.[530]

---

[530] *See* section 3.5.2.

5.2. Ritual lamentation for the dead

5.2.1. A methodological premise

The combination of (1) our knowledge that death rituals are the first and oldest forms of human ritual activity, with (2) the extensive structural and behavioural similarities within death rituals cross-culturally, as well as with (3) the psychobiological knowledge that there is an innate predisposition to perceive death as loss and to emotionally react to it with specific action tendencies and feelings, suggests that our investigation of ritual lamentation can benefit from information that comes from almost any cultural setting where lamentation is still practised. Practically, this suggests that, given all due caution, we can obtain a fuller picture of the ancient Greek lament and funeral, not only from archaeological information, but first and foremost, from the relics of the practice in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and even from the surprisingly similar data that emerge through cross-cultural research. This can allow for some serious spatial and temporal perspective, as well as a sense of the evolution of lament, that is, of its function, structure, forms, aesthetics, philosophy and mere technique.

This methodological postulation about the study of lament was first endorsed by Ernesto De Martino, the key researcher of the continuity of ritual lamentation in the *Euro-Mediterranean.* The Euro-Mediterranean is a term which he coined to describe the wider area of the Middle East, Italy, Greece, the Southern Balkans and Northern Africa[531], and which is today being studied as a cultural area with 'overlapping "dialect areas", beginning at least in the third millennium B.C.E. and probably much earlier'.[532] According to De Martino, the issue of continuity of lamentation through the relics of the surviving death rituals is definitely not a straightforward mission, nor an impossible one, either. In his own words 'even if the folkloric lamentation for the dead has lost its organic link with the major issues of the ancient world's religious cultures, and even if its mythic horizons have become narrow and fragmentary, it can still furnish, at least in the areas where it is best preserved, useful indications for reconstructing the ritual experience[...]If we still insist on investigating this remotely familiar experience, returning to the actual

---

[531] E. De Martino, *Morte e Pianto Rituale: dal Lamento Funebre Antico al Pianto di Maria*, 3rd edn., Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2000, translation by the author.
[532] Bachvarova in Sutter, *Lament*, p.37.

folkloric data in order to reintegrate them with the ancient documentation is not only legitimate but possibly a one-way road.[533]

5.2.2. Lament cross-culturally

Lamentation is part and parcel of death rituals and its origins can be dated back to human prehistory, when in areas such as Mesopotamia, Israel and Egypt lamentation was prevalent. It is from these areas that lamentation is believed to have been introduced to Greece and later to Rome.[534] Equally, the concept of professional mourners, as people hired to grieve in funerals, may be rather striking for many of us today, but it was a standard thing in those areas. The practice continued to Rome and in some cases, it made it through the Middle Ages to the present day, especially within the wider Euro-Mediterranean area.

Lamentation did not only flourish in the Euro-Mediterranean. In sharp contradiction to many other subjects of anthropological research, or even of other mortuary customs, which gloriously depict the limitless possibilities and imaginative wealth with which cultures shape their various rituals, the practice of lamentation, in some way or another, is—or was—present in all cultures. As Lutz suggests, 'the tendency to cry at funerals is a human universal'.[535] The Aborigins of Australia[536], the Andaman Islanders[537], the Gusii in Africa[538], the Chinese, New Guineans, Indians, Saudi Arabians and Irish[539], the Truk Women of Korea, the natives in Alaska, the Ashanti, the Dogon of Sudan, the Aranda in Oceania, Ifugao in Philippines, the Huichol Indians in Mexico [540], the Jewish, Maori, Coptic, Fijian, Portuguese, Ghanaian, Highland Scots, French and Russian women[541], the Amerindian Brazilians[542], the Azeri Women and the Spanish[543], are

---

[533] De Martino, *Morte e Pianto*, p. 58.

[534] N. Loraux, *The Mourning Voice: an Essay on Greek Eragedy*, (transl.) E. Trapnell Rawlings, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2002, p. 55.

[535] T. Lutz, *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears*, Norton, New York, 2001, p. 195.

[536] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, Chapter 5.

[537] Radcliffe-Brown cited in R. Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State*, [Seaford, R., *Ανταπόδοση και Τελετουργία: Ο Όμηρος και η Τραγωδία στην αναπτυσσόμενη Πόλη-Κράτος,* (μτφρ.) Β., Λιάπης, ΜΙΕΤ, Αθήνα, 2003], p. 153.

[538] R. A. Levine, 'Gusii funerals: meanings of life and death in an African community', *Ethos*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1982, pp. 25-65.

[539] G. Holst-Warhaft*Dangerous Voices: Women's Laments and Greek Literature*, Routledge, London, 1992, p. 20

[540] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 204, p. 207, p. 208.

[541] Ashenburg, *The Mourner's Dance*, p. 42.

[542] G. Urban 'Ritual wailing in Amerindian Brazil', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 90, No. 2, pp. 385-400.

just a few examples of the cultures that have been studied, not only because of the generic presence of sadness, grief and crying within their death rituals, but as for their strong traditions in proper ritual lamentation and even professional mourners, in which mourners, both relatives and non-relatives exhibited the behaviours related to lament as previously studied.

5.2.3. Lament in the Euro-Mediterranean

Within the given area of the Eastern Mediterranean that De Martino focused on, the similarities in the performance of ritual lament are indeed more than striking. In favour of this remarkable cultural similarity in the behavioural expression of lament James Amelang gives the following account of a lamentation scene, worth quoting at length:

> The actual moment of death electrifies the mourners, even though some of the women lapse into a trance and are senseless until they reawaken and take up the mourning again. They fling open the windows to let the dead man's spirit out and open the doors to invite people in; then they settle down for the harrowing hours of the watch while the women chant, one singing the virtues of the dead man, the others wailing the chorus. They embrace his face and scratch their faces, until their nails grow bloody from the wounds and their faces [are turned] into blood and raw flesh. Then a wailing throng, amid cries of anguish and pain, dance about, twisting and turning back and forth now to one side, now to the other, swaying to the ceaseless flow of the tearful refrain, until the moment when they take the body away. The grieving reaches new peaks of intensity as people throw over themselves to the dead person hugging him and crying out to him in their pain the song reserved for the dead. Their endless, horrible cries of grief are the same, a constant offering, day by day: 'Sorrow, sorrow, sorrow! Cry you mothers who have children, cry with all your pain! Alas, my brother! Death has come up to our windows, it has entered our house! The world is darkening! It has lost its light! Our house is black!'. The special pitch and quavering of the voice, more exaggerated than in singing, along with the weeping and sobbing that accompany it, make this heart-rending[544].

This description is not a proper account but, in reality, a collage of phrases from sources as diverse as Homeric poems, Greek tragedies, the Bible, Moroccan and Jewish traditions etc.[545] According to Amelang, this trick easily reveals a triple continuity in the Euro-

---

[543] M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, Rowman & Littlefield, Oxford, 2002, p. 41.

[544] J. Amelang, 'Mourning becomes eclectic: ritual lament and the problem of continuity', *Past & Present*, Vol. 187, 2005, pp. 4-5.

[545] Amelang, 'Mourning', p.5.

Mediterranean lamentation tradition, in terms of chronology, geography and genre[546] that De Martino attested, thoroughly explored, and confirmed in his pioneering—but surprisingly underrated—work *Morte e Pianto Rituale.*

In *Morte e Pianto*, the Euro-Mediterranean ritual lament is viewed as a strategy of the mourners to maintain a sound feeling of existence at the face of the *crisis of presence*[547] that the death imposes on the community of the bereft living. Within this crisis, the 'grief is too acute and too psychologically risky to be accepted and experienced in its own historical reality'[548], and therefore, it needs to undergo a process of *dehistoricisation.* Possibly perilous emotion is dehistoricised, by being channelled back into structured gestures of socially acceptable patterns: 'the funerary lament confronts the state of cataleptic stupor and unblocks it, it receives the *planctus* [spontaneous outburst of wailing, shouting and weeping] and submits it to the rules of the traditionally fixed rhythmic gestures, by excluding or symbolically mitigating those behaviours which are more risky to the physical integrity of the person'.[549] This marks the ritualisation of the *planctus* from a state of 'irrelevant' grief to a ritually ordered behaviour (*see* Fig. 23).

In a description which matches perfectly the description of behaviours in the accounts by Amelang, Levi, Charles, Durkheim and others, De Martino identifies the actual commencement of the ritual with the ritualisation of the irrelevant *planctus*:

> The sisters, sisters-in-law, the adult daughters and the wife of the deceased, if they have not exceeded middle age, cut their hair, reverse their woollen coats—in such a way that the fleece is on the outside— pull their hair out, plunge to the ground, bang their head against the wall, invoke the name of the deceased, and scream so loud and without interruption, that they lose their voice, often for a long time. The exaltation of weaker natures often leads to loss of consciousness and fainting, during those most robust instances of momentary madness, so that others present always keep an eye on them or detain them. [After the exposure] the women seat around the corpse, and it is only now that the real and proper ritual lament commences.[550]

Once the ritual lament begins, each mourner must lament in their turn and order, and all lamenters must take part in the emotive refrains; this is 'one of the most elementary and most widely diffused forms that disciplines the collective mourning in the funerary

---

[546] Amelang, 'Mourning', p. 6.
[547] De Martino, *Morte e Pianto,* p. 106.
[548] De Martino, p. 106.
[549] De Martino, p. 110.
[550] De Martino, p. 114.

lament; that stabilises the "parts" that each one has to play in the ritual'.[551] This *antiphonal* succession between a leader and a chorus is a key structure that De Martino locates in the ritual lamentation practices not only of the Euro-Mediterranean but also of Asia, and Africa, by which the *ethics of help* is introduced. From the group to the individual lamenter and vice versa, the device controls crucial moments, such as when the ritual tends to derail into irrelevant *planctus*, while simultaneously, the dehistoricisation of grief, whose biosocial function is to elicit help from the environment anyway[552], further intensifies and establishes the ethics of help within the group of the community of bereft women.[553]

Fig. 23 **Ritual lament in Iraq** ('2005 Pictures of the Year', *Fotki*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://public.fotki.com/projectmandarin /news_pictures/2005_news/2005_ pictures_of/42-15494138.html>)[554].

5.2.4. The antiphony in Greek lament

This dehistoricisation of grief and employment of the ethics of help through antiphony is a crucial marker of the ritual dimensions of lament in modern Greek lament, too. Alexiou,

---

[551]De Martino, *Morte e Pianto*, p. 122.
[552] *See* sections, 3.3.6.2.; 7.3.2.
[553] De Martino, p. 122f.
[554] In this picture the possibly physically injurious behaviours of self-aggression have been mitigated in the ritual into symbolic gestures, as De Martino described.

continuing the tradition of Nilsson[555] and De Martino[556] suggests that the antiphonal structure preserved in the laments of contemporary Greece can be traced as early back as Homer, where there already exists a differentiation between two main kinds of lamentation: the *goos* and the *thrênos*. *Goos* refers to the 'spontaneous expression of grief of the female relatives of the dead' [*planctus*], while *thrênos* refers to the 'set dirge composed and performed by the professional mourners'.[557] This division which is present in Homer and archaic poetry is blurred during the classical era, when the terms are used interchangeably, especially in tragedy.

Alexiou proved thoroughly that, within Greece, the key structures and elements of the ancient ritual lamentation have managed to survive through the centuries, partly because, as she too recognises, there are some universally common features in burial customs throughout the world[558], and partly due to cultural factors specific to Greek history. Other researchers have confirmed the validity of this interpretation of Greek lamentation, based on De Martino's assumption that antiphony is the key surviving element of the ritual lament, by analysing the effects of ritual antiphony in the context of areas in Greece, where lament is still present, and culturally influential (Mani, Crete, Hepirus etc). [559]

Though being aware that the reconstruction of the ritual lament pattern relies on ambiguously interpretable material[560], Alexiou agrees with De Martino and Nilsson, that ritual lament consisted in the antiphonal performance between the *thrênos* of the professional mourners, 'who followed a mainly choral pattern', and the *goos* of the female relatives of the dead, who were distinguished for their 'narrative improvisations'.[561] In tragedy we find a third type, the *kommos* (from *koptesthai*, «κόπτεσθαι»-'cutting oneself', 'beating oneself'), also technically called *amoebaeon*[562] (song shared by actor(s) and Chorus). Alexiou suggests that the original form of ritual lamentation for the dead must have been

[555] M. Nilsson, 'Der Ürsprung der Tragödie', *Opuscula Selecta*, Vol. 1, C. W. K. Gleerup, 1951, pp. 504-92, translation by the author.
[556] De Martino, *Morte e Pianto*, p. 179.
[557] Alexiou, *RLGT* p. 103
[558] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 131.
[559] C. N. Seremetakis, *The Last Word: Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991; A. Caravelli-Chaves, 'Bridge between worlds: the Greek women's lament as a communicative event', *Journal of American Folklore*, no 93, 1980, p. 129-157.
[560] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 3.
[561] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 103.
[562] The interchangeability in the use of these terms has been an issue of debate, as not all *amoebaea* are necessarily *kommoi*, nor all *kommoi* are necessarily *thrênetic*.

this antiphonic combination of these two kinds of *thrênetic* manifestations, between a group of 'professional' mourners singing *thrênoi* and the group of relatives responding with *gooi*, which then joined together in an *epodos* (originally a magic spell).[563]

For Alexiou too, like for De Martino, this antiphonal relation between two groups of mourners is the landmark of ritual lament[564], and the tragic *kommos*, which is so closely related to the East from where lamentation is believed to have been introduced to Greece and in which antiphony is structurally prominent, reflects perhaps the oldest form of Greek ritual lamentation.[565] Its problematic near absence from Homer is accordingly attributed to the epic's disinterest towards antiphony and preference of the *goos'* narrative character, while its reappearance in tragedy is related to the tragedians' appreciation of its dramatic and emotive potential.[566] Undoubtedly, the line of thought based on antiphony inevitably identifies the ritual dimension of lament with the mere existence and performance of the professional mourners (*aoidoi*) without whom it is impossible to conceive of ritual at all, and Alexiou does recruit every possible argument to prove the alignment of ritual lamentation with the presence of the *aoidoi*. Cross-culturally, lamentation may be sung for a series of different *purposes,* in different *situations* and in different *places*. Within Greek tradition there are laments for gods, for heroes and for fallen cities, nevertheless, the key situation in which lamentation reaches its full structural and functional power, the very *raison d' être* of lamentation, is the ritual lament for the dead, performed as part of the funeral.

---

[563] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 136.
[564] Alexiou, *RLGT*, pp. 149-50; De Martino, p. 179.
[565] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 211.
[566] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 132.

5.3. The Greek funeral

The modern Greek funeral is not as thorough as the ancient one anymore. Today, life in the cities of Greece makes it difficult, unwanted or even illegal, to keep the deceased at home overnight. By the time of the actual death, which more often than not occurs in a hospital, there can be a period of many days, during which the corpse is kept at the morgue, until the day of the funeral, when the bereft may come in contact with the body again. Very often this time of contact, the *prothesis*, is limited to a couple of hours at the chapel of a busy church. The ceremony is also usually compromised in terms of duration and pace, and even the burial is hastened because the priest has to run for the next appointment. Nevertheless, even in this parody of the ritual, there persists a clear triple structure, in which lamentation can make its appearance, as it clearly does in smaller cities and villages, where some sense of community is still alive, and the rituals are still performed with, at least, more time and a more appropriate mood. This structure is crystal clear in the ancient Greek funeral.

The omnipresence of women, either in the city or the village, today or 4.000 years ago, is a landmark of the dialectics of both ritual lament and the funeral as a whole. Throughout the ritual, it is the women who were in charge of the whole situation. In modern Greece, it is still the women who are in charge of the ritual cleansing, dressing, shrouding and wailing of the deceased[567], and death rituals are by definition female spheres of power and dominance, as well as of the construction of pain and life values.[568] As Danforth notes, 'given the sexual division of labour that exists in rural Greece, caring for other people in life as well as caring for them in death [...] is a task performed exclusively by women. Priests were not taking part in the ceremony, because it was considered miasmatic. It is the women of the family who actually fulfil the family's obligation to its dead'.[569]

Ritual ceremonies for the dead and lamentation were part and parcel in archaic and later Greece. According to ancient Greek beliefs («*τα νομιζόμενα»*-'the rituals'), burial alone is not adequate treatment for the dead body; the dead person has to be wept for and

---

[567] Siettos, *Death Attitudes,* pp. 327-31.
[568] Sporadically in Caravelli-Chaves; Seremetakis; Horst-Warhaft.
[569] L. M. Danforth, *The Death Rituals Of Rural Greece*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1982, p. 119.

lamented for the funeral to be considered complete. Ancient Greek death ceremony was a 'three-act drama'[570] consisting mainly of three distinct phases: the *prothesis*, when the dead person is prepared and put to public view usually within the house, the *ekphora*, when the corpse is carried from the house to the grave and the *taphe*, the actual burial of the dead. To a great extent this structure can still be identified in modern Greek death rituals, and our cross-cultural data from death rituals has already confirmed that this basic triadic structure is present everywhere. Let us now proceed to how the ancient Greek funeral is believed to have been.

5.3.1. *Prothesis*

Once the women had completed the preparation of the dead body, i.e., jaw-strapping, washing, anointing, shrouding, crowing and adorning[571], the body was ready for the *prothesis* (wake). The corpse was exposed on a bier, usually at the internal yard of the house, for a period of time around two days. Though this was partially done to ensure the person was really dead[572], in ritual terms this rather long duration of the *prothesis* was a first-class opportunity for lament to function in full. When the closest woman relative, sister, wife, or the mother, standing behind the dead, embraces the head of the deceased, we can say that we finally have the proper beginning of the ritual lament. With this futile hug, the typical reaching behaviour that usually quenches sadness, the *exarchoi* start their first *thrênos* to the accompaniment of the *aulos* (flute); the first song of lament is now sung by the women.

The *prothesis* has some strict directorial rules for the allocation of roles within the rite. The women closest to the dead person stand behind the head, and the rest of the women are shared to the left and to the right of the deceased. All of them are dressed in black. The *aoidoi* or professional mourners, or *thrênon exarchoi* (leaders of the lament), start their dirge, most likely in the antiphonal structure mentioned earlier (*thrênos -goos-epodos*). As a response to the song the closest relatives burst into their improvisatory *goos,* usually in a specific order. The closure of the *Iliad*, with the ritual lament during Hector's *prothesis* gives Andromache the central place of honour within the ritual; she speaks first and

[570] R. Garland, *The Greek Way of Death*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1985, p. 21.

[571] Garland, *The Greek Way,* p. 23f.

[572] R. Rehms, *Marriage to Death: The Conflation of Wedding and Funeral Rituals in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, p. 22.

longer than the other two[573]; then follow the mother, Hecuba, and Helen, the sister-in-law. After each woman's *goos*, all the women, professional and relatives join together in an *epodos* (refrain) of cries, invocations and interjections; then the *thrênon exarchos* continues further with the *thrênos*.

Fig. 24 *Prothesis* Cutting hair and fondling the head during *prothesis* (Opsopaus, J. 'A Summary of Pythagorean theology: theurgy', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~Mclennan/BA/ETP/ Prothesis-head-BW.jpg>).

Throughout this time, men are outside the room or house. They join the female space almost exclusively in order to salute the dead person, but, though in theory possible, it is rather unlikely that they will actively join the *thrênos*. Most of them confine themselves to some brief emotional outbursts over the head, a brief *goos*, after which they are usually carried out the room by other women, more often than not, completely numbed or overcome with emotion. The typical male gesture of salutation is the raising of the right

---

[573] Tsagalis, in Sutter (ed.), *Lament*, p. 97.

arm towards the dead, whose head is anyway facing the door.[574]

Fig. 25 *Prothesis* **in an Albanian funeral** The lamenters are arranged amphitheatrically, while the closest relative, possibly the wife, fondles the head of the deceased
 (<http://www.reportage.org/PrintEdition2/Albania/PagesAlbania/AlbaniaLadefogedStrip.html>).

5.3.2. *Ekphora*

When the time devoted to the *prothesis* expires and the corpse now has to be carried away to the cemetery, the second act of the drama starts: the *ekphora* (funerary procession). In some communities, a sacrifice (prosphagion) to the deities is made before the departure of the corpse from the house.[575] While it is still daylight, the body is carried on a chariot pulled by horses through the city towards the graveyard. Depending on the situation and even the weather conditions, the route selected might be the shortest, or the longest possible in order to attract attention.[576] Now, it is men dressed in black who lead the way, sometimes armed[577], and the women follow the chariot continuing their lament[578], while the march escorts the dead in his last walk through the village. The appearance of hired

---

[574] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 6.

[575] Garland, *Greek Way*, p. 33.

[576] Garland, *Greek Way*, p. 33.

[577] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 7.

[578] Rehm, *Marriage to death*, p. 26.

flute-players playing Carian music in terracottas[579], most certainly suggests that professional mourners were attending the *ekphora*, too.[580]

Fig. 26 *Ekphora* **and mourners** Terracotta from Attica, 650-600 B.C.E. ('Ekphora and Mourners', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www1.hollins.edu/faculty/saloweyca/AThenian%20Woman/henderson/funerary%20toy.jpg>).

Fig. 27 **Princess Diana's** *ekphora* ('Princess Diana Funeral', *Wikimedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Princess_Diana_Funeral_St_James_Park_1997.jpg>).

---

[579] Garland, *Greek Way*, p. 34.

[580] Garland, *Greek Way*, p. 33; p. 134; Rehm, *Marriage to Death*, p. 26.

5.3.3. *Taphe*

The *taphe* (inhumation) of the dead would involve either inhumation or cremation. Though these two alternatives did not have a semantic effect on the ritual, inhumation is more often met during the Pre-geometric and the Hellenistic periods, while cremation seems to have been the dominant practice during the Geometric and Archaic era; during the Classic era, either practice could be found[581]. While priests seem to be completely absent even from this definitive stage of the ritual, the coffin was lowered to the grave by men, libations were being made, the coffin lid was finally shut and the coffin buried. The women are given their last chance to lament, and offerings made to the dead, complete the *taphe*.[582] While the women return home to prepare the *perideipnon* meal, the men finish up the construction of the tomb.[583]

Lamentation and burial ceremony were and still are very closely interwoven in Greece[584] and, even though in variant degrees and tones lamentation accompanied all three phases of the ritual, it would be more accurate to say that, in proper ritual terms, lamentation is primarily related to the *prothesis*. In fact, it would be even more accurate to state that the opposite was true: the *prothesis* was the phase of the ritual devoted *par excellence* to lamentation. As we shall see, with the mediation of the *threnon exarchoi*, whose performance emulates the behaviour of loss and pain, rage and terror, the originally heterogeneous chorus of lamenters is—consciously or not—driven towards a state of emotional and behavioural homogeneity, where raw emotion meets art, and where art, as filtered experience, gives existential pain some perspective; or some comfort. Everything in the performance of the aoidoi feeds the dialectics of loss, and in order to achieve this, their performance draws on the very construction of loss, as handed in by nature and dealt with by society. Finally, at this point, we will examine *how* professional lamenters ignite and perpetuate the dialectics of loss by embodying the physiology of grief in their movement, voice, word and function.

---

[581] Garland, p. 34.
[582] Garland, pp, 34-6; Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 36.
[583] Garland, p. 37.
[584] To the degree that in the Odyssey l. 72-3, Helpenor threatens Ulysses not to neglect his burial or lament, because the gods will be enraged at him.

Chapter 6

The Physiological Basis of Ritual Lamentation Behaviours

Just like actors, mourners rely on the performance of a score, during their ritual performance. This score is roughly specific, in that its ritual nature, as handed down from one generation to the other, is translated in the preservation of a series of set, more or less, ritual behaviours. The ritual dimensions of lamentation are not limited to the uttering of the—anyway—emotional texts. The emotional mode in which these texts are delivered is equally, if not more, crucial, and the scores of lamentation entail ritual patterning on both the physical and the vocal level. In this chapter, we will examine how the physical and vocal behaviours included in the score, which we identified in the previous chapter, are patterned according to the physiology of grief, in order for professional lamenters to ignite and perpetuate the dialectics of loss through their embodiment, exactly like actors do. In other words, we will try to detect the action that conditions the physical actions inherent in ritual lament.

6.1. Score of physical actions in ritual lament

In ancient Greece, as well as cross-culturally, lamentation is accompanied by a series of specific gestures and movements, such as raising the arms, pulling the hair, beating the chest, knees, thighs or head, lacerating the face, neck, breast and clothes, rolling in the dirt and swaying back and forth or from side to side, conceived as ritual gestures. Here we will observe how these ritual gestures originate in the physiology of human grief. By simulating this physiology lamenters anchor their performance on solid ground and feed the dialectics of sorrow.

6.1.1. Self-injury: parasympathetic arousal via sympathetic acceleration

6.1.1.1. Anger and protest

Anger is an emotion effected through the sympathetic branch of the autonomic system and prepares the organism for fight. Most of lament's typical gestures involve violence, which denotes a substantial amount of anger involved in the situation of lament. The appearance of anger and violence in the mourners should not perhaps be surprising, given that such emotions and feelings are anticipated as normal stages of grieving. According to Kübler-Ross, anger 'does not have to be logical or valid'[585] as it may be 'displaced in all directions and projected onto the environment at times almost at random'.[586] The object of our anger on such occasions, to which, Aristotle suggests, our desire for revenge is addressed[587], may be other persons for not having done whatever possible to save the deceased person's life or not having seen it coming, God for taking away the beloved one[588], ourselves for having been unable to foresee the doom and protect the dead person, the deceased themselves for having 'abandoned us', and 'most of all […][one] may be angry at this unexpected, undeserved and unwanted *situation* in which [they] found themselves'.[589]

Raising the arms or hands is a typical gesture, which, according to Alexiou, is considered to be the commonest and oldest manifestation of the ritual lamentation, but,

[585] E. Kübler-Ross, *On Grief and Grieving,* Scribner, New York, 2005, p. 11.
[586] E. Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying,* Scribner, New York, 2003, p. 64.
[587] *See* Aristole's objects of emotion in section 1.1.
[588] Ashenburg, p. 48.
[589] Kübler-Ross, *On Grief,* p. 12.

fails to provide an explanation of the gesture.[590] Unlike the typical male gesture which involves the raising of only the right arm in salutation, it is possible that the female gesture of raising the arms may be associated with the dialectics of the 'why?'. The 'why?' or 'why me?' is a manifestation of *protest* and *helplessness* within the larger framework of the anger phase of grief stages, where the *cause* of the disaster is sought, in a futile attempt to put the incomprehensible into perspective, to protest, negotiate or even to reverse the order of things. In some cases the lament is addressed to the gods, whose attention it attempts to attract, in order to relieve the human pain or to promote the fertility of the earth[591], and raising the arms can then stand at the midpoint between prayer and lament. Nevertheless, more often than not the gods remain silent and absent, and the raised arms of the lamenters fall upon their own body.

Fig. 28 Raising the arms in: (a.) Palestine, (b.) Ancient Greek *prothesis*, (c.) Ancient Egypt, and (d.) India.[592]

---

[590] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 6.
[591] Bachvarova, in Sutter, *Lament*, p. 18.
[592] a. Palestinian woman (Fitz, M., 'Gaza mourning: is that the road to peace?', *Archive for March 2008*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/BA/ETP/V.html>); b. Ancient Greek *prothesis* (Opsopaus, J., Theurgy, A Summary of Pythagorean Theology, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan /OM/BA/ETP/V.html>); c. Ancient Egyptian female mourners (Lenars, C., 'Wall painting inside Egyptian tomb', *Corbis*, (<http://www.corbisimages.com/Enlargement/ Enlargement.aspx?id =CJ003259&ext=1>); d. Indian woman mourns tsunami victims (Caruso, K.,

On other occasions, the object of anger is blatantly clear, as happens in cases of murder. In Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, the invocation of Agamemnon at his grave by Electra, Orestes and the Chorus of barbarian women, becomes a lament that arms Orestes' hand:

Chorus Leader	The voices of the children – salvation to the dead
	Corks to the net, they rescue the linen meshes
	from the depths. This line will never drown!
Electra	Hear us – the long wail we raise is all for you!
	Honour our call and you will save yourself. Chorus
Chorus Leader	And a fine thing it is to lengthen out the dirge;
	You adore a fate and grave they never
	mourned. But now for action – now you're set
	on action,
	Put your stars to proof.[593]

In such cases, the lament serves as a vehicle for preparing retaliatory action, and it is not at random that in many of the cultures where lament still exists, especially in the Mediterranean, the vendetta laws are still in effect and are perpetuated by female lamentation.[594] In Sophocles' *Electra*, too, lament is Electra's tool for keeping the claim for revenge alive; as soon as the murders are accomplished, she ceases to be heard. This subversive potential of lament to transform pain into anger and unleash the desire for reciprocal violence 'may be among the reasons why laments have fallen into disrepute in modern Greece as they did in the early city-states of antiquity'.[595]

6.1.1.2. Affect regulation and the endorphin hypothesis

Nevertheless, murder is not the sole criterion that defines the lament's intensity and neither is anger the key motivator of lament. Even when people die of more natural causes, the intensity of the emotion involved is not lesser, predominantly because the fact of death itself remains unnatural and profoundly beyond human comprehension. Everyone deserves a proper lamentation. On a social level, the acts of self-aggression and self-defilement that occur when a person dies, and that lamentation ritual later emulates, should be perceived as attempts by the mourners to embrace death directly and inflict it upon themselves, in homeopathy to the deceased («ομοιοπαθεία του κεκμηκότος»), as

---

'Tsunami pictures', <http://www.tsunamis.com/tsunami-pictures-15.html>).

[593] Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers,* ll. 492-9, (transl.) R. Fagles.

[594] H. P. Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2001, p. 24; Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices*, p. 33, p. 159, pp. 225-7; Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 22; Seremetakis, *Last Word*, p. 38.

[595] Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices*, p. 74.

Aristotle suggested.[596] In fact, studies on children have shown that, in most cases, such mutilations are expressions of shadowed sorrow, rather than of plain anger.[597] Given the psychosocial nature of the loss involved in death, self-aggression, according to Burkert, can be understood as 'an inevitable group reflex to protect an endangered member against a hostile force by means of aggressive threats. When faced with the fact of death, this reflex aggression strikes out into a vacuum, and hence returns in upon oneself. With no enemy near, the hand raised to strike comes down upon one's own head'.[598]

From a biopsychological point of view, self-injury in adult individuals may be fulfilling one or more of a series of functions, such as affect-regulation, anti-dissociation, anti-suicide, setting interpersonal boundaries and exerting interpersonal influence, punishing the self, or mere sensation-seeking.[599] Causing pain to oneself in order to avoid feelings of dissociation and depersonalisation, by generating real feelings that urge the person to feel alive and within itself[600] as distinct from the environment and the others, or even to avoid suicide[601], have been documented as some of the functions that self-injury fulfils. The severe *crisis of presence* can be detected behind these cases through which, De Martino believes, ritual lamentation is defined.[602] The feelings brought about by the death of a loved one, or even by the event of death itself, can be too overwhelming to be put into manageable perspective and coped with. Depersonalisation and even suicidal ideation can make their appearance, and thus, self-injury may be an extreme yet efficient homeostatic measure for restoring reality and the self, whose sense has been deranged by grief.

The relationship between lament and self-injury as exertion of interpersonal influence is perhaps not readily evident or defining, but it should not be discarded completely. Feminist approaches to lamentation have been reading death rituals and ritual lamentation specifically, as the activity *par excellence* through which women claim social

---

[596] Aristotle cited in Seaford, *Reciprocity*, p. 151.
[597] A. Borgquist, 'Crying', *The American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Apr., 1906), p. 157.
[598] W. Burkert, *Homo necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, (transl.) P. Bing, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1983, p. 53.
[599] E. D. Klonsky, 'The functions of deliberate self-injury: a review of the evidence', *Clinical Psychology Review*, Vol. 27, 2007, p. 229.
[600] J. G. Gunderson, *Borderline Personality Disorder: A Clinical Guide*, American Psychiatric Press, Washington DC, 2008, pp. 16-7.
[601] K. L. Suyemoto, 'The functions of self-mutilation', *Clinical Psychology Review*, Vol. 18, No. 5, pp. 531−554.
[602] De Martino, *Morte e Pianto,* p. 15; p. 38f.

power[603] by a 'letting-off of steam and societal expression of conflict, as well as an individually expressive aesthetic form'.[604] Thus, given the antagonistic aspect of female lamentation in relation to male power that provides women with 'a compensating sphere of power to the more obvious social dominance of the village men'[605], self-injury during ritual lamentation may also be regarded as an attempt to attract attention and to be taken more seriously by men, but it can also be a cry of help towards the other women, as well as a call (to women, men and even both) to stick together as a group and share affect[606], in a manner that has already been explained earlier.

Though self-injury might be considered a maladaptive strategy for coping with negative-affect[607], there is a physiological explanation for the mechanism by which this extreme solution works. The main physiological theory behind this involves the sympathetic activation of the nervous system in order to alleviate pain[608], mainly through the release of endorphins. Endorphins are the body's natural painkillers, endogenous opioids secreted in response to pain that induce pleasant feelings and alleviate physical and psychological pain[609], in a manner not far from the famous *runner's high*. The endorphin hypothesis does not necessarily suggest that ritual lamentation aims at giving lamenters a high during the ritual, or that they engage in this behaviour solely in order to release negative feelings. By pushing the body to its limits of pain tolerance, all negative affect associated with the death (anger, dissociation, despair etc.) is channelled in a paroxysmal crescendo of physical, concrete pain, which will increase sympathetic arousal to its peak, in order to invoke a release of endorphins and, ultimately, an automatically counterbalancing parasympathetic response, that will eventually calm the individual down for a period of time.[610]

The endorphin theory suggests that controlled acts of self-aggression during ritual are not arbitrarily superimposed into the rite, but have a concrete bioregulatory link with

---

[603] J. S. Cooper, 'Genre, gender and the Sumerian lamentation', *Journal of Cuneiform studies*, Vol. 58, 2006, p. 43.

[604] J. Bowers, 'Women's music and the life cycle'*, ILWC Journal*, October 1993, p. 9.

[605] Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices*, p. 47.

[606] Klonsky, p.229.

[607] Klonsky, p.229.

[608] T. Z. Schlereth & F. Birklein, 'The sympathetic nervous system and pain', *Neuromolecular Medicine*, Vol. 10, 2008, pp.141–147.

[609] C. H. Hawkes, 'Endorphins: The basis of pleasure?', *Journal of neurology, neurosurgery, and psychiatry*, Vol. 55, pp. 247; J. D. Willer, H. Dehen, & J. Cambier, 'Stress induced analgesia in humans', *Science*, Vol. 212, 1981, pp. 680.

[610] *See* section 3.3.2.

spontaneous grief responses. The mere performance of such gestures by professionals may be rather filtered, purer, less intense and more abstract than in the principal mourners, but, it is not less effective. Apart from dehistoricising intense grief into manageable behaviour—or amplifying restrained and reluctant grief on the part of the bereaved—ritual gestures of self-aggression accelerate sympathetic, and therefore parasympathetic arousal in the *aoidoi*, too. More often than not, as the ritual progresses, as intensity rises and as other parameters shape the emotional interaction, the mitigated ritual form eventually meets the physiological function, and real emotion kicks in. As such, the ritual lament, wherever performed in its full power by professional mourners, is not just a symbolic discourse on loss, but a risky journey into the body's darker landscapes, ultimately strapped into safety by a series of rules and techniques, which might be conscious or not, but are specific, and psychophysiologically grounded.

6.1.1.3. Laceration

Laceration of the face, neck, breasts or the clothes is also among the oldest actions of spontaneous and ritual self-mutilation in lament's score. It is usually the culmination of a self-torment sequence, and more often than not, lamenters pass out after tearing their cheeks and are immediately removed from the room.[611] Some recent data suggest that laceration of the face is attested in Greek art long before Homer, in Early Bronze Age Cycladic figures.[612] These figures (*see* Fig. 29a) exhibit vertical striations on both cheeks with preserved red colour, 'intended to reproduce the effect of facial laceration'.[613] In Homer, this practice remained part of the lamentation ritual as suggested by Briseis' lament for Patroklos[614], and continued to be so during the classical era and—of course— in tragedy.

---

[611] Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices*, p. 114.

[612] *See* Fig. 29.

[613] G. L. Hoffman, 'Painted ladies: early Cycladic II mourning figures?', *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 106, No. 4, 2002, p. 526.

[614] Homer, *Iliad*, XIX, 284-5, 'But Briseis, that was like unto golden Aphrodite, when she had sight of Patroclus mangled with the sharp bronze, flung herself about him and shrieked aloud, and with her hands she tore her breast and tender neck and beautiful face', (transl.) G. Murray, <http://www.theoi.com/Text /Homer*Iliad*19.html>.

Fig.29 **Laceration practice** in: (a.) Early Bronze Age Cycladic figure bearing stripes of laceration, (b.) Iraq, (c.) Iran and (d.) Azerbaijan [615].

A passage from Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* gives us first class evidence that acts of self-injury, among which laceration, were performed not only as a spontaneous reaction of the relatives, but also as a ritual gesture by professional mourners. The Chorus of the play consists of Trojan Women, slaves, which are forced to participate in the ritual lament over Agamemnon's grave. Though they are not hired specifically for lamenting, their dirge is a task assigned to them because of their social status and of their relation *par excellence* to lamentation due to their barbaric origin; laceration is part of their *professional* ritual repertoire:

> Chorus   Rushed from the house we come
> escorting cups for the dead,
> in step with the hand's hard beat,
> our cheeks glistening,

[615] a. Hoffman, 'Painted Ladies', p. 526; b. Iraqi woman (<http://images.military.com/pics/HC_Stuff1.jpg>); c. Iranian women mourning death of relatives after earthquake (<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2006/04/01/1143441382388.html?from=rss>); d. An Azeri woman whose cheeks bleed after she clawed them with her nails(Hofman, 'Painted Ladies', p. 543).

flushed where the nails have raked new
furrows running blood.[616]

Laceration and variations on self-mutilation were encountered in most lamentation cultures (*see* Fig. 29), such as in Egypt[617], Israel[618], the Arabs[619], the wider Mediterranean and even far beyond[620] , such as the Scythians, Mexico and the Sioux[621], but it must have become a rather big thing in Greece, given that Solon specifically tried to curb it, among other things, hoping that eventually he would manage to curb professional mourning («*θρηνεῖν πεποιημένα*»).[622] Nevertheless, it seems that the practice was not stifled despite Solon's efforts and that it continued to Roman times, when another attempt to ban it was made by law.[623] Laceration, as both an extreme act of grief and self-aggression and a ritual act during lamentation, continued in the Greek tradition[624], but today is dying out as part of the professional mourners' repertory, alongside lamentation in general.

6.1.1.4. Chest-beating and the thymus

Specific reference should be made at this point to the behaviour of chest-beating. Chest-beating is traditionally bound-up with lamentation and usually goes part and parcel with practices such as the ones studied earlier, for both relatives and professional mourners (*see* Fig. 31). Within Greek tradition it is referred to in Homer, tragedy and modern Greece as a standard 'manoeuvre' that accompanies moments of high intensity lament, and so has been the case with all the other cultures studied here for the presence of self-aggression, where beating the breast is a landmark of the lament (*see* Fig. 30).

Biologically speaking, chest-beating is a behaviour manifested in higher primates, especially gorillas, as a method for discharging tension. According to Schaller, 'the primary causation of the chest-beating sequence appears to be the build-up of tension (excitement) above a certain threshold. After the display, the level of excitement temporarily drops below the threshold, and the animals behave calmly until a new

---

[616] Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, ll. 21-5.
[617] G. Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Black Classic Press, New York, 1995, p. 159.
[618] J. Blenkinsopp, *Families in Ancient Israel*, Westminster, John Knox Press, Kentucky, 1997, pp. 80; p. 206.
[619] Borgquist, 'Crying', p. 170.
[620] Hoffman, 'Painted ladies', p. 541.
[621] G. L. Ebersole, 'The function of ritual weeping revisited: affective expression and moral discourse', *History of Religions*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2000, p. 239.
[622] Plutarch, *Life of Solon*, 12b, in Plutarch's *Lives*, Vol. 1, (transl.) Dryden, J., Modern Library, Toronto, 2001.
[623] Hoffman, 'Painted ladies', p. 541.
[624] Alexiou, *RLGT*, pp. 12-18.

accumulation of tension erupts in display'.[625] Schaller gives us an example from sports events, which links chest-beating to exactly how the ritual *aoidoi* control and pattern the emotion of the participants from irrelevant *planctus* into dehistoricised grief:

> Man behaves remarkably like a chimpanzee or a gorilla in conflicting situations. Sporting events are ideal locations for watching the behaviour of man when he is generally excited and emotionally off-guard. A spectator at a sporting event perceives actions which excite him. Yet he cannot participate in them directly, nor does he want to cease observing them. The tension thus produced finds release in chanting, clapping of hands, stamping of feet, jumping up and down, throwing of objects. This behaviour is sometimes guided into a pattern by the efforts of cheerleaders who, by repeating similar sounds over and over again, channel the displays into a violent, synchronised climax. The intermittent nature of such behaviour, the transfer of excitement from one individual to the next, and other similarities with the displays of gorillas are readily apparent.[626]

In the case of ritual lament, the natural tendency of humans for dealing with overwhelming emotion through drumming and dancing behaviours is orchestrated into a score of dehistoricised action, through the agency of the *aoidoi*, who function as grief-leaders, rather than cheerleaders.

Fig. 30 Chest-beating in former Yugoslavia (Guzy, C., '2000-feature photography', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.pulitzer.org/ archives/5259>).

---

[625] G. B. Schaller, *The Mountain Gorilla: Ecology and Behaviour*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963, p. 233.
[626] Schaller, p. 232.

Some later scientific findings shed perhaps more light on the intricacies of the breast-beating mechanism, on a physiological level. The beating of the breast that occurs universally as an emotional act, and is consistently present in most lamentation practices around the world, and predominantly in the Euro-Mediterranean, may be considered to be related to a famously ambiguous organ of the human body: the *thymus gland*. Both ritual and spontaneous chest-beating is performed by rhythmical thumping of that upper chest area, and regardless of minor differences, such as whether the palm is open or closed, the target seems to be cross-culturally common.

The *thymus* (*see* Fig. 32) is a bilobed organ situated behind the sternum and over the heart.[627] The word thymus derives from the ancient Greek word «*θύμος*» (*thymos*). In Homer, *thymos* is the organ which is considered to be the seat of the emotions and which affectively motivates the person into action.[628] Despite the fact that the thymus had been an issue of medical inquiry since the ancient Greeks and Galen, it was later abandoned as an organ that had no specific function. Over the last years, scientists suggest that the thymus is critical for normal immune function and is highly susceptible to the effects of stress.[629] It was observed that the major function of the thymus is to harbour a category of lymphocytes, the T-cells (a group of white blood cells known to be playing a central role in immunity), and to select the functional ones that can be exported to the peripheral immune system.[630] Due to these cells' sensitivity to corticosteroids, the rapid and dramatic elevation of corticosteroids as a response to stress results in compromised immune function, and even involution of the organ itself, while relief of stress has been proved to repopulate the thymus.[631] The presence of serotonin and other mood affecting hormones in the thymus further widens the horizons of its relation to affect regulation, though no extensive research has been done in this direction.

---

[627] M. S. Vacchio, 'Thymus', Fink, G. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Stress*, Vol. 3, Academic Press, San Diego, 2000, p. 738.

[628]B. Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind* [Snell, B., *Η Ανακάλυψη του Πνεύματος: Ελληνικές ρίζες της Ευρωπαϊκής Σκέψης*, (μτφρ.) Δ. Ιακώβ, ΜΙΕΤ, Αθήνα, 1989], p. 28f.

[629] Vachio, 'Thymus', p. 738.

[630] Vachio, 'Thymus'. pp. 738-9.

[631] Vachio, 'Thymus', p. 741.

Fig. 31 Terracotta professional mourners Athens archaeological museum. ('Miniature Gaming table and dice with figurines of mourners, 580 BC', viewed on 1 November 2009, (<http://gssq.blogspot.com/2006_05_01_archive.html>).

The thymus has both sympathetic and parasympathetic innervation, and due to its position, it stands as a bridge between the CNS, the immune system and the ANS. A very interesting hypothesis may be formulated here: the effectuation of relief during breast beating may be mediated by the connections of the thymus to these systems. Indeed, thymus-thumping is considered beneficial to the organism and is being practiced as a stimulator of immunity and emotional well-being.[632] Though there is no research on whether thymus thumping boosts immunity through the neural or the chemical route (through the complex mechanism of cytokines' secretion)[633], and though both routes might be implemented, it seems more plausible that the main effect of thymus thumping is through its neural connection to the Vagus nerve.

---

[632] W. H. Jr. Schmitt, 'Merging contemporary chiropractic neurology and nutritional biochemistry in the tradition of applied kinesiology, *The Uplink',* Issue No. 31, Spring 2004.

[633] K. J. Tracey, 'Physiology and immunology of the cholinergic antiinflammatory pathway', *Journal of Clinical Investigation,* Vol. 117, No. 2, 2007, pp.290; Gallowitsch-Puerta, M. & Pavlov, V.A., 'Neuro-immune interactions via the cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway', *Life Sciences*, Vol. 80, 2007, pp. 2325–2329; U. N. Das, 'Vagus nerve stimulation, depression, and inflammation', *Neuropsychopharmacology*, Vol. 32, pp. 2053; J. P. Konsman et al, 'The Vagus nerve mediates behavioural depression, but not fever, in response to peripheral immune signals; a functional anatomical analysis', *European Journal of Neuroscience*, Vol. 12, No. pp. 4434.
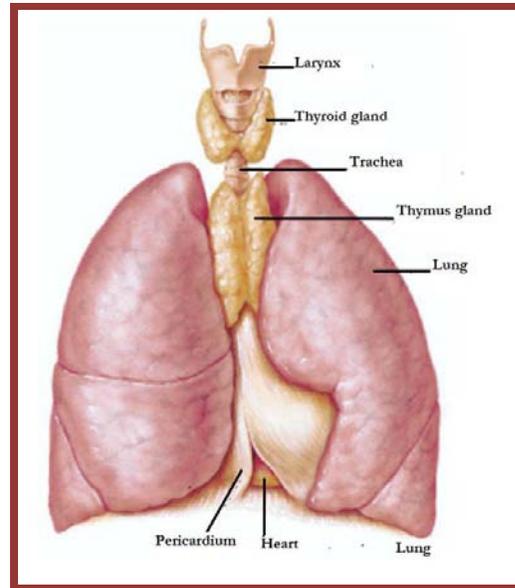
Fig. 32 **The thymus gland** (adapted from Fox, *Human Physiology*, p. 315).

The Vagus nerve (also called *pneumonagastric* nerve or cranial nerve X) is a sensory-motor nerve which, with a few exceptions, provides parasympathetic innervation to all the viscera and organs in the trunk, and also controls some skeletal muscles as well as the larynx and speech. The Vagus nerve is the seat of the ANS, as it provides 75% of its fibres in effector organs as crucial to emotion as the heart, the lungs and the diaphragm (*see* Fig. 14). It is possible then, that breast-beating, through the thymus gland, activates the parasympathetic system via the Vagus nerve's fibres and promotes crying behaviour, thus eventually bringing the body to a state of relaxation, balance and relief, thus promoting immunity and emotional catharsis. Interestingly enough, Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) has been one of the latest medical tools for dealing with treatment-resistant depression and autism[634], while pharmacological activation of the thymus promotes T-cell production and is used as a therapeutic measure in the fight against AIDS.[635] Alternative medicine and Eastern body traditions endorse thymus activation and thymus-thumping as invigorating processes, given that the thymus is identified as the heart chakra which mediates the emotions.[636] Though the exact physiological pathway implemented in the beneficial effects of chest-beating remains to be proved by Western

---

[634] A. H. Milby et al 'Vagus nerve stimulation for epilepsy and depression', *Neurotherapeutics: The Journal of the American Society for Experimental NeuroTherapeutics*, Vol. 5, 2008, pp. 75.

[635] <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=87369>.

[636] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chakra>.

medicine, the practice is cross-culturally associated with lamentation and the promotion of catharsis through crying behaviour.

6.1.2. Grief, meditation and direct parasympathetic arousal

6.1.2.1. Rocking of the body and sleep

While self-injury aims indirectly at parasympathetic arousal as an over-compensation for the sympathetic explosion it directly provokes, ritual lament entails direct activation of the parasympathetic branch. Another key physical aspect that is omnipresent in ritual lamentation is the rhythmical rocking of the body. Though extremely underrated within studies of lamentation, rocking of the body (or the equivalent impulse) is a fundamental, *sine qua non* behaviour in the lamenting process. Euripides perfectly observed and conveyed the centrality of this feature of lamentation in the *Trojan Women*, when having Hecuba succumbing to her urge for swaying the body from side to side:

> Hecuba   Oh, my head, and temples, and ribs, how I long to
> rock my body, to shift my back and spine to either
> side, in my endless tearful laments.[637]

The rocking of the body is a behaviour that aims at altering the level of consciousness of the lamenter and is predominantly related to sleep and pre-sleep drowsiness states, very close to meditation. Such sleep-related rocking of the body is considered normal for infants and children, within a certain range, while it may be an indication of autism or retardation when out of similar context in adults.[638] In lament situations though, it is employed once a threshold of emotional intensity is crossed; in our case of overwhelming grief. In Darwin's description '[a]s soon as the sufferer is fully conscious that nothing can be done, despair or deep sorrow takes the place of frantic grief. The sufferer sits motionless, or gently rocks to and fro; the circulation becomes languid; respiration is almost forgotten, and deep sighs are drawn'.[639]

De Martino further investigates the relationship between rocking of the body and lamentation: 'the rhythmic oscillation of the trunk adds to the musicality of the lament, and to the dream-like state of concentration that characterises the ritual presence of lament; it is the movement that accompanies the lullaby and—just like it—it has a sleep-

---

[637] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 115-9, (transl.) S. Barlow, p. 62.
[638] A.B. Cunningham, & L. Schreibman, 'Stereotypy in autism: the importance of function', *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, Volume 2, Issue 3, July-September 2008, p. 469.
[639] Darwin, *Expression,* pp. 79-80.

inducing function'.[640] Rocking can also occur on the sagittal axis, that is, back and forth, and together with other rhythmic movement clues, such as the pulling of the handkerchief, of the headscarf, or of the hair, they function by internalising the focus of attention of the performer and by coordinating the group into a chorus, moving together, possibly towards a common psychological, meditative state.[641]

Rhythmical rocking of the body on either axis brings the body to a state of meditation, which can be viewed, not as sleep but, as a 'wakeful hypometabolic state of parasympathetic dominance'.[642] The sleep-inducing quality to which De Martino refers is partly misleading, as the stage promoted by the rocking of the lamenter's body is neither sleep nor hypnosis. This meditative state is an alert, though restful, state of mental activity[643], during which the autonomic system is guided to a decrease in sympathetic activity[644] and an increase in parasympathetic activity.[645] For mourning relatives, the meditative effect of the rocking has a soothing, affect-regulation and stress-management function[646] by activating the parasympathetic system. For the *aoidoi*, though, parasympathetic arousal does not aim at dampening their arousal, but, quite the contrary, during that state of concentration they are more susceptible to the patterning and induction of grief that they themselves construct and instruct and that others experience.

6.1.2.2. Low level muscular tension and the sadness pattern

Muscular relaxation of both professional and relative lamenters, understood here as parasympathetic dominance and energy management, rather than paralysis (a common mistake in acting), is also promoted by the position and posture of the lamenters. Despite the fact that the iconography of mourning often has a preference for the more dramatic, ecstatic phases of the ritual, where women move about the bier pulling their hair and beating themselves, a substantial amount of the ritual is performed at low muscular tension and gestural activity, and even immobility. Traditionally, lamenters sit on the

---

[640] De Martino, *Morte e Pianto*, p. 101, translation by the author.
[641] Siettos, *Death Customs*, p. 261f; De Martino, *Morte e Pianto*, p. 108f.
[642] J. Ding et al, 'Meditation as a voluntary hypometabolic state of biological estivation', *News of Physiological Science*, Vol. 13, 1998, p. 149.
[643] Mason in T. Takahashi et al, 'Changes in EEG and autonomic nervous activity during meditation and their association with personality traits', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 55, 2005, p. 204.
[644] Takahashi, p. 204.
[645] Takahashi, p. 204.
[646] Takahashi, p. 204.

ground, on their knees, or on low stools or chairs, and, thus, gravity is enabled significantly in exerting its effects on the muscles and the parasympathetic arousal. Grief and sadness are emotional states operated by the parasympathetic, and are characterised by a *tendency* of the antigravitational muscles, which normally erect the body, to collapse and surrender the body to gravity[647] as well as to limit drastically the amount of movement and gesture to the absolutely necessary and, as a result, movement becomes purer. Because sadness has the intrinsic meditative tendency to slow down the production of mental images, to direct the attention of the person towards itself and to preserve its energy[648], in order to put things into perspective and therefore eventually cope, movement becomes heavy and slow and so does mental imagery, which becomes deeper and more contemplative, rather than fast, brisk and sharp, as in fear[649].

6.1.2.3. Focusing of attention

The dominance of black colour further focuses the women's attention from themselves to the group. The black clothes and scarves worn by all have a *uniform effect* on the women, who are now urged to behave as a chorus rather than distinct personalities. The whole amphitheatrical arrangement of the women in the space naturally focuses their attention towards a centre shaped by the body and the closest relatives. Because they are seated close to the ground, as well as because very often the coffin is on some table, prolonged eye contact with the group of women seated on the other side of the corpse is impeded, while the semi-circular orientation of their seating makes it difficult to turn their head sideways. Even without headscarves, unravelled hair or physical obstacles, the eyes do not stare; they are soft, heavy and unfocused, the gaze is usually directed downwards and inwards, the way eyes behave in sadness[650], since now it is not the environment that matters but how they cope with it. As such, extensive one to one interaction among the women is unconsciously discouraged, vision and imagery are focused on the issue at stake and concentration is encouraged to shift from the self towards the group, and from vision towards the sound of their singing and the dreadful images, thoughts and emotions it calls forth.

---

[647] S. Bloch, *The Alba of the Emotions*, unpublished book.
[648] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 282.
[649] Damasio, *Feeling*, p. 282.
[650] Bloch, *The Alba of the Emotions*.

The meditative, emotionally susceptible, state of the lamenters during these low phases of the ritual is further promoted by another set of devices. The headscarf in many areas of Greece and the Euro-Mediterranean is worn open on the head, covering the face to a great degree, practically limiting the visual field. This limitation of the visual field functions as a partial sensory deprivation, and enhances concentration and meditation by minimising irrelevant sensory input and by focusing the lamenters' attention on the ritual. In rural Greece, an alternative way of wearing the scarf in contexts of intense mourning is by covering the face completely, leaving hardly any opening for the eyes. The same function can be fulfilled by the hair, too. In some areas, women unravel their hair-locks covering their face and either leave them there or pull them rhythmically, to the beat of the dirge.[651]

6.1.3. The waves of emotion and the Vagus nerve

The low and the high tones of the ritual alternate within a given period of time, following the succession of sympathetic and parasympathetic arousals and compensations. Darwin described these emotional shifts occurring within the grief context: 'Persons suffering from excessive grief often seek relief by violent and almost frantic movements, as described in a former chapter; but when their suffering is somewhat mitigated, yet prolonged, they no longer wish for action, but remain motionless and passive, or may occasionally rock themselves to and fro'.[652] The wave-like pattern that the *aoidoi* follow in their orchestration of the ritual's emotion relies upon specific physiological laws for its effect. Regardless of whether the *aoidoi* are consciously or unconsciously applying them, the succession of sympathetic and parasympathetic arousals abide by the rules of the autonomic nervous system.

According to the polyvagal theory[653], there are 'three phylogenetic stages of the development of the vertebrate autonomic nervous system. Each stage is associated with a distinct autonomic subsystem or circuit that is retained and expressed in mammals. These autonomic subsystems are phylogenetically ordered and behaviourally linked to social communication (e.g., facial expression, vocalisation, listening), mobilisation (e.g., fight–flight behaviours), and immobilisation (e.g., feigning death, vasovagal syncope, and

---

[651] Siettos, *Death Customs*, p. 221.
[652] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 176.
[653] S. Porges, 'The polyvagal perspective', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 74, 2007, pp. 116–143.

behavioural shutdown) [...] when the higher are suddenly rendered functionless, the lower rise in activity'.[654] The latest system relates (communication) to the myelinated Vagus or 'smart' Vagus, the second (mobilisation) to the sympathetic system, and the oldest one (immobilisation) to the vegetative Vagus. The hierarchy in their adaptive function suggests that failing of one system leads to the activation of the following one, and this dynamic alteration of behavioural strategies can explain—among other things—the fluctuations in the ritual lament's emotional tone and action tendency.

Fig. 33 **Vasovagal syncope and the shutdown of behaviour-Palestine** ('Getting a clue', *Soccerdad*, January 2, 2008, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://soccerdad.baltiblogs.com/archives/2008_01.html>).

The empty look on people's faces, immobile, frozen and 'lost', is exactly the vegetative function of the Vagus, during which, 'the circulation becomes languid; the face pale; the muscles flaccid; the eyelids droop; the head hangs on the contracted chest; the lips, cheeks, and lower jaw all sink downwards from their own weight. Hence all the features are lengthened; and the face of a person who hears bad news is said to fall.[655] This vegetative state more often occupies the position of a contemplative pause in the ritual after parasympathetic arousal has been completed, but in extreme cases it may reach

---

[654] Porges, p. 120.
[655] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 176.

the extremity of vasovagal syncope (see Fig. 33). In Amelang's description in the previous chapter (5.2.3.), the ill-ominous pause was broken by an explosive acceleration of tension into screams and self-injurious behaviour, which, on a physiological level is effected through the sympathetic branch of the Vagus, and, which, on a ritual level, is attenuated or even instigated by the ritual performance of the *aoidoi*. As tension builds past a threshold, the smart Vagus kicks in, by promoting soother and calmer facial expression, vocalisation and communication[656], thus, regulating sociability. Combinations of fear, anger and grief construct a series of emotional waves that can vary in terms of valence, intensity, and complexity. From shock to rage, and from relief and acceptance to despair and agony, the sympathetic and parasympathetic branches of the ANS alternate in the lamenters' joint effort to cope with loss and its consequences, but sadness dominates, and the whole ritual seems to be coordinated into ultimately allowing sadness to be deeply felt, in order to properly fulfil its restorative adaptive function. As such, the physical actions in lament obey a specific task and accomplish specific actions.

---

[656] Porges, p. 120.

6.2. The score of vocal actions in lament

The central role of the voice in ritual lamentation should already be anticipated now by the shift of attention from vision towards sound that we just examined earlier. The vocal actions in lament belong to the domain and repertoire of physical actions, but the voice is the *sine qua non* element in lament. Though we may have ritual lament without overtly extreme physical actions, this cannot happen without the agency of the voice, since it is primarily through the voice that the *aoidoi affect* their audience, as well as themselves. Here we will examine the relationship between emotion, music and voice, and will understand how this relationship enables lament to emulate the *noise of trauma*.[657]

6.2.1. Mode and metre of lament

The direct relationship between certain features of sound and their impact on the emotions has been attested and elaborated on since antiquity. The ancient Greeks had studied extensively this interrelation, especially as far as rhythm and tonal mode were concerned, to the degree of attributing specific emotional 'character' (*ethos*) to specific rhythms or melodies. Rhythms and modes were given names according to their believed national origin[658] as Aristotle describes:

> Some of them make men sad and grave, like the so called Mixolydian, others enfeeble the mind, like the relaxed modes, another, again, produces a moderate and settled temper, which appears to be the peculiar effect of the Dorian; the Phrygian inspires enthusiasm. The whole subject has been well treated by philosophical writers on this branch of education, and they confirm their arguments by facts. The same principles apply to rhythms; some have a character of rest, others of motion, and of these latter again, some have a more vulgar, others a nobler movement.[659]

Already in the classical era, orators, actors and tragedians were making concrete use of meter in order to convey certain states or shifts in states of mind: 'normal' speech was usually conveyed through iambic meter, ecstatic states were usually represented by

---

657 L. M. Austin, 'Lament and the rhetoric of the sublime', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 53, No. 3, 1998, p. 279.
658 Plato, *Laches,* 188d: 'for truly he has in his own life a harmony of words and deeds arranged, not in the Ionian, or in the Phrygian mode, nor yet in the Lydian, but in the true Hellenic mode, which is the Dorian, and no other', (transl.) B. Jowett, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2004, p. 15.
659 Aristotle, *Politics*, 1340 b, (transl.) B. Jowett, Dover, Toronto, 2000; also, *Politics*, 1290a.

dochmiacs etc[660]. As far as we know, in tragedy ritual lament is usually delivered in iambic and sometimes iambo-dochmiac[661] meter, in ancient choral laments in elegiac meter[662], and though some theories link ritual lament to the anapaestic meter[663], there is no unanimity as for whether proper ritual lamentation was exclusively linked to a specific meter; it is possible that it was linked to none.[664] Equally, for mode, while some scholars suggest that the high pitch Syntonolydian mode was suitable for ritual lament[665]—and Plato's disgust at the Mixolydian and Syntonolydian modes of sorrow songs serves as evidence for that[666]—for others the Phrygian mode was more directly associated with ritual lamentation[667] given the barbaric character and origin of the lament.[668] Contemporary musicological analyses suggest that the descending tetrachord is a key element of the melodic structure of the lament.[669]

6.2.2. Voice, affective prosody, music and the human brain

Ritual lamentation first and foremost emulates the crying voice by formulating the *noise of trauma*, and crying, as we have already seen, is by definition the behaviour most closely related to grief. How exactly is it that crying and sadness, or any other basic or complex emotion for that matter, can be communicated through lamentation, song and music in general? The majority of people admit that they listen to music because of the moods and emotions it communicates.[670] The ability to appreciate music is believed to be genetically predisposed in humans and is exhibited as early as infancy and childhood[671]. Unless such wiring existed within our socio-emotional brains, music would probably be 'little more than cognitively interesting sequences of sounds and, at worst, irritating cacophonies'.[672]

---

[660] Aristotle, *Rhetorics*, Book II.

[661] Suter, 'Lament in Euripides' "Trojan Women"', *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 56, Fasc. 1 (2003), p.3.

[662] Austin, 'Lament and the rhetoric of the sublime', p. 279.

[663] S. G. Brown, 'A contextual analysis of tragic meter: the anapaest', in D'Arms, J. H. & Eadie, J. W. (eds.), *Ancient and Modern: Essays in Honour of Gerald Else*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1977, p. 48f.

[664] Austin, p. 279.

[665] R. P. Winnington-Ingram, 'Ancient Greek music: a survey', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Oct., 1929), p. 341.

[666] Plato, *Republic*, 398e, (transl.) B. Jowett, The Echo Library, 2006, <www.echo-library.com>.

[667] M. L. West, 'The singing of Homer and the modes of early Greek music', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 101, 1981, p. 125.

[668] Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, ll. 413-417

[669] Austin, p. 279.

[670] Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, 1995.

[671] S. E. Trehub, 'The developmental origins of musicality', *Nature Neuroscience*, Vol. 6, pp. 669–673.

[672] J. Panksepp & G. Bernatzky, 'Emotional sounds and the brain: the neuro-affective foundations of

By this we do not mean that the human brain adapted specifically for music, but, rather, that music may 'reflect the pre-existing emotional adaptations of the brain'.[673]

The link between the brain, emotion and music is the human voice. We have seen in previous chapters how discrete emotions are formed into patterns of physiological activity, into what we understand as moods, basic and complex emotions, and their ensuing feelings[674], in order to actualise the organism's wider biosocial homeostasis, by preparing the organism for action and by communicating these intentions to the group through this behaviour. Vocal expression is considered to be the most phylogenetically continuous and one of the most crucial channels of non-verbal communication for all social mammals, since it provided a medium for resolving conflict and coordinating vital group activities[675], especially when vision or touch were not possible. It is worth remembering here that voice, as sound, is another kind of touch.[676]

Because emotions, as we have seen, are innate neural mechanisms related to motivational states and action tendencies, it would make sense that the vocalisations related to these emotional states would equally present some kind of cross-cultural—and even cross-species—similarities, too. Indeed, scientists generally agree that most animal vocalisations are related to motivational states that directly relate to what we understand as emotions[677], and that there is some remarkable similarity in the kind of situations eliciting such vocalisations.[678] Given the specific physiological and behavioural patterning related to each emotion, it follows that some acoustic parameters in the perception of the vocalisation will be giving away the related emotional state. Indeed, facial or postural changes need not be greater than a smile in order to be audibly perceived and decoded by a listener.[679] This feature which gives us the 'ability to express emotions through variations of different parameters of the human speech, such as pitch contour, intensity

---

musical appreciation, *Behavioural Processes*, Vol. 60, 2002, p. 134.

[673] Panksepp, 'Emotional sounds and the brain', p. 138.

[674] *See* sections 3.3.; 3.4.

[675] P. N. Juslin & P. Laukka 'Communication of emotions in vocal expression and music performance: different channels, same code?', *Psychological Bulletin*, 2003, Vol. 129, No. 5, p. 771.

[676] Panksepp, 'Emotional sounds and the brain', p. 139.

[677] N. L. Wallin, B. Merker & S. Brown (eds.), *The origins of music*, MIT Press. Cambridge, 2000, pp. 77–102; Scherer in J. Rosenblatt et al (eds.), *Advances in the study of behaviour*, Academic Press, New York, 1985; Snowdon, in R. J. Davidson et al (eds.), *Handbook of Affective Sciences*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003, pp. 457–480.

[678] Juslin & Laukka, 'Communication of emotions in vocal expression', p. 773.

[679] K. Milligan et al, 'Maternal attachment and the communication of emotion through song', *Infant Behavior & Development*, Vol. 26, 2003, pp. 1-13.

and duration' is called affective or *emotional prosody*.[680]

Infants as old as 2 or 3 days have been proved to display preference for their mothers' voice over some stranger's[681], indicating that the mechanism by which affective prosody is perceived is also innate. Vocal singing is considered by many the first kind of music to have evolved in humans[682], and it is possible that this kind of musical performance evolved prior to speech.[683] Brain imaging studies have already shown that singing and speaking are processed by different neural substrates, and that while generative speech is related to the left hemisphere, singing and automatic speech are processed by the right.[684] According to Panksepp, the human ability to sing, first manifested in babies' sing-song, is suspected to be 'an adaptation that facilitates teaching and learning between mother and child. Perhaps an especially important affective-cognitive transition was made when mothers started to communicate with their infants with attention grabbing shifts in tempo and melodic intonations within their spontaneous, affectively tinged communications known as *motherese'*.[685]

The anatomical evolution of the human vocal apparatus is accompanied by the outstanding and uniquely human achievement of gaining voluntary control over it[686]. 'Vocal expression of discrete emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and love probably became gradually meshed with vocal music that accompanied related cultural activities such as festivities, funerals, wars, and care-giving'[687] and, therefore, music *per se*. Still, the decoding of the affective prosody of the voice operates on the decoding of more or less the same series of cues with which emotional content is decoded in musical performance: pitch (or Fundamental frequency= F_0), fundamental frequency contour (intonation contour), intensity (loudness), attack (rapidity of voice onset), speech rate (velocity of speech), pauses (amount of silence in speech), articulatory effort and voice

[680] M. Besson et al 'Emotional prosody: sex differences in sensitivity to speech melody', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.6, No.10, 2002, p. 405.

[681] Besson et al, 'Emotional prosody', p. 405.

[682] D. E. Callan et al, 'Song and speech: brain regions involved with perception and covert production', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 31, 2006, p. 1327.

[683] Trehub, 'The developmental origins of musicality', pp. 669–673; Juslin & Laukka, p. 799.

[684] Callan, 'Song and speech', p. 1328.

[685] Panksepp, 'Emotional sounds and the brain', p. 140.

[686] We should remember that the Vagus nerve provides parasympathetic innervation to the larynx and mediates speech, *see* section 6.1.1.4.

[687] Juslin & Laukka, p. 777.

quality.[688]   In non-performative contexts, the recognition and decoding of these cues (*see* Tab. 6) as emitted by some individual gives direct information about their emotion, motivation and imminent action, and prompts the receiver to behave accordingly, while during musical performance, the decoding of the cues' pattern manages to communicate emotion, consciously or not.

Summary of Cross-Modal Patterns of Acoustic Cues for Discrete Emotions

Emotion	Acoustic cues (vocal expression/music performance)
Anger	Fast speech rate/tempo, high voice intensity/sound level, much voice intensity/sound level variability, much high-frequency energy, high F0/pitch level, much F0/pitch variability, rising F0/pitch contour, fast voice onsets/tone attacks, and microstructural irregularity
Fear	Fast speech rate/tempo, low voice intensity/sound level (except in panic fear), much voice intensity/sound level variability, little high-frequency energy, high F0/pitch level, little F0/pitch variability, rising F0/pitch contour, and a lot of microstructural irregularity
Happiness	Fast speech rate/tempo, medium–high voice intensity/sound level, medium high-frequency energy, high F0/pitch level, much F0/pitch variability, rising F0/pitch contour, fast voice onsets/tone attacks, and very little microstructural regularity
Sadness	Slow speech rate/tempo, low voice intensity/sound level, little voice intensity/sound level variability, little high-frequency energy, low F0/pitch level, little F0/pitch variability, falling F0/pitch contour, slow voice onsets/tone attacks, and microstructural irregularity
Tenderness	Slow speech rate/tempo, low voice intensity/sound level, little voice intensity/sound level variability, little high-frequency energy, low F0/pitch level, little F0/pitch variability, falling F0/pitch contours, slow voice onsets/tone attacks, and microstructural regularity

Note.   F0 = fundamental frequency.

Tab. 6 Cross modal patterns of acoustic cues for discrete emotions (Justin & Laukka, 'Communication of emotions in vocal expressions', p.802).

6.2.3. Grief and crying behaviour

Ritual lament, among other cultural constructions, has the unique quality of using the full range of affective performance[689] and the understanding of the interrelation between emotion, speech, song, and music will hopefully prove useful, since lament is 'the most prominent and widespread discourse genre where one can comparatively study stylised progressions moving back and forth on all continua relating to the speaking and singing voice. This alone makes lamentation an important locus of research on questions of the boundaries of speech and song, in both genre-specific and performance-specific terms'.[690]

As was mentioned earlier, crying at funerals and contexts of death is a human universal. Furthermore, emotional crying is considered to be a uniquely human feature, as 'of all the vertebrates, including the primates, humans alone possess the psychogenic type

---

[688] Juslin & Laukka, p. 791.
[689] Feld & Fox, 'Music and language', p. 41.
[690] Feld & Fox, p. 39.

of reflex secretion, designated as crying or weeping. This affective lacrimation is controlled in the frontal cortex and in the anterior portion of the limbic lobe of the brain'.[691]

6.2.3.1. Icons of crying

Mourning songs for the dead are cross-culturally found to be conveying their grief through specific patterns of their prosodic cues.[692] Laukka's meta-study of the cross-modal patterning of these auditory cues through vocal expression and music performance, has furnished substantial evidence in support of the emulation of grief patterns in music performance, which is clearly predominant within lamentation songs for the dead. According to these findings, the vocal qualities of the crying voice in grief are transcribed and encoded into music, and therefore perceived by listeners, mainly as slow tempos (or speech rate), low voice intensity, low pitch, slow and soft tone attacks (voice onsets), and falling pitch contour.[693]

Given that the Euro-Mediterranean lament endorses overt expression of emotion, crying is predominant, not only as expressed in the original reactions to death (*goos*), but also as coupled within the lamentation ritual itself (*thrênos*). Urban's work on ritual lamentation has isolated a series of cross-cultural devices of affective expression in ritual lamentation, the *icons of crying*: the *cry break*, the *voiced inhalation*, the *creaky voice* and the *falsetto vowel*.[694] The icons of crying summarise the physiology of grief in the crying voice, and their integration in the vocal score of lament cross-culturally gives us a better understanding of how professional mourners embody and spread the *noise of trauma*.

6.2.3.1.1. The cry break

The *cry break* refers to the onset of crying and physiologically it consists in a 'pulse of air initiated by a push from the diaphragm. Pressure from the pulse is built up behind the closed glottis, which is then released with the glottal chords vibrating to produce any of

---

[691] Darwin, *Expression,* p146f; Lutz, *Crying*, p. 17.
[692] L. Zucker, 'Psychological aspects of speech-melody', *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 23, 1946, pp. 73–128; P. N. Juslin, 'Communicating emotion in music performance: a review and a theoretical framework', in P. N. Juslin & J. A. Sloboda (eds.), *Music and emotion: Theory and research*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, pp. 309–337.
[693] Juslin & Laukka, p. 802.
[694] Urban, 'Ritual Wailing', p. 388.

various non-distinct vowels'.[695] The *cry break* is the most apparent index of 'crying', as usually cry breaks are chained together to form the familiar sound of sobbing; the sound produced typically has a falling tone[696], as a result of which, the whole sobbing score has the downward intonational contour originally met in sadness (*see* Tab. 6). While the *cry break* defines the exhalation phase of the crying, voiced inhalation occurs during inhalation, and as the term explains itself, it involves the process in which voicing occurs during the intake of air, while the intonation contour remains falling.[697]

6.2.3.1.2. The voiced inhalation

The voicing during inhalation could be perhaps attributed to the sadness pattern of breathing itself. During sobbing in sadness, the air is completely exhaled in an extremely violent and uneconomic manner; at the last phases of the exhalation there is practically no air coming in or out and no voice heard, but the vocal chords are still 'crying'. This respiratory apnoea can be extremely long during crying, but when it is over, the long overdue inhalation is effected so sharply by the diaphragm that when the blast of air passes through the still active chords voice is heard[698].

6.2.3.1.3. The creaky voice

The third icon of crying employed in the ritual lament, the *creaky voice*, involves the 'production of sounds with the glottal chords vibrating at a lower than normal rate'. Given the severely decelerated motor activity and psychophysical exhaustion that define sadness, which may be serving the adaptive function of restoration but, nevertheless, simulates the effects of sickness, injury and inability of the body, the creaky voice may be 'showing that the person engaged in ritual wailing or crying is afflicted by the situation that occasioned it, much the way an organism is afflicted by external disease or injury', and therefore 'lacks the energy to produce a normal robust sound'.[699]

---

[695] Urban, p. 389.
[696] Urban, p. 389.
[697] Urban, p. 389.
[698] Bloch, S., *The Alba of the Emotions.*
[699] Urban, p. 390.

6.2.3.1.4. The falsetto vowel

Finally, the *falsetto vowel* reflects 'the articulation of a vowel with a pitch well beyond that of the normal voice range accompanied by a slight creaking of the voice and falling intonation over a protracted articulation', which may not be consistent with most studies on sadness that report a generally low pitch, but is in accordance with findings from studies of extreme degrees of sadness, such as despair, to which we referred earlier, and which suggest an unusually high pitch.

6.2.3.2. Grief and the waves of crying

Most scientific studies of sadness tend to focus on the softer and more resigned forms of emotions belonging to the sadness family, rather than on more extreme and intense degrees of grief, such as desperation, during which important increases in intensity, pitch and high-frequency (sharpness of the voice) are detected.[700] Darwin's description of the continuum of sadness is, once more, compelling: 'after the mind has suffered from an acute paroxysm of grief, and the cause still continues, we fall into a state of low spirits; or we may be utterly cast down and dejected. Prolonged bodily pain, if not amounting to an agony, generally leads to the same state of mind. If we expect to suffer, we are anxious; if we have no hope of relief, we despair'.[701]

The neighbouring of despair with terror, given that despair can be viewed as a mixed emotion consisting in the mixture of sadness and terror[702], betrays the practical and ontological terror brought about to people by death. The presence of terror as a sympathetic action within both spontaneous reaction to death and the ritual lamentation for the dead has an effect on the contour of the whole ritual, in a manner similar to what anger does. Despite the fact that both anger and fear are emotions operated by the sympathetic nervous system, and given that within the context of lamentation they operate primarily in combinations with sadness, which is a predominantly parasympathetic activity, they seem to be eventually facilitating the function(s) of sadness. As clinical studies have shown, crying usually occurs *after* the peak of an emotional episode.[703] Because there is little that people can do to resolve the conflict that death

---

[700] Scherer, 'Vocal communication of emotion', in *Handbook of the Emotions*, p. 227.

[701] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 176.

[702] Plutchik, *Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, p. 162.

[703] M. C. P. Hendriks et al, 'Can the distress-signal and arousal-reduction views of crying be reconciled?

imposes, the emotional urge to act against the danger (fear) or insult (anger) brought about by death is frustrated, and this inhibited action increases muscle tone and arousal. This suggests that once sympathetic activity of either fear or anger leads to peaks of emotional behaviour, such as self-injury, the parasympathetic systems kicks in by allowing the person to cry, and thus, to ultimately restore the homeostasis of the body.

Apparently, the wave of the lament is also manifested in the vocal production of lament. The ritual may be starting with the professional mourners singing their artful and musical *thrênos* and with the relatives engaging in the emotional behaviour of *goos*, but this is just the beginning of the ritual. Despite the fact that the strict differentiation between *goos* and *thrênos*—and their combination into an antiphonal structure similar to the tragic *kommos*—does indeed reflect two distinct aspects of the Greek lamentation, the actuality of the ritual suggests a more complex structure. The antiphonic structure may indeed be marking the ritual dimension of the lamentation, but relatives and professionals do not *perform* sequentially, or exclusively within the limits of their original modality. Relatives do not just speak a *goos*, and then remain silent. According to their own condition, they may shift from *goos* to silence, then join the *thrênos*, start screaming, fall back into silence, then talk again, arrange funeral details, give orders to the women helping with the guests, then sob again, join the *thrênos*, fall silent again, crack some joke or laugh with someone else's joke, then scream and sing at the same time, faint, talk again etc. From their point of view, too, non-relatives or professional lamenters may be starting with their songs, but they might as well remain silent when listening to a lament they have not heard before, when they get tired or when they let someone else take the lead, or, they might cry for their own sorrows, engage in brief *goos* or even address the dead and ask them to deliver a message to some other dead person in the Underworld etc.

All the women involved, regardless of their degree of relation to the deceased as a departure point, are headed towards a *common* state where their emotions and feelings are properly and fully engaged and purely expressed, and where the difference between professional and relative, spontaneous and rehearsed, or between music and speech, *thrênos* and *goos*, cease to exist. This meeting of spontaneous and ritual behavioural expressions of emotion is effected through the mirroring and emulation of spontaneous grief in ritual lament by the *aoidoi*, as a means for ultimately overcoming the *crisis of presence*

Evidence from the cardiovascular system', *Emotion*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2007, p. 458.

that the entire ritual attempts to negotiate. This simulation of emotion in the score of physical and vocal actions of the *aoidoi* enables the dehistoricisation process that lament necessitates and establishes the psychotechnical affinity between *aoidoi* and actors, as priests of sorrow.

6.3. Conclusions

Throughout Greek ritual lament, the women are engaged as lamenters and exhibit a behaviour that includes all the manifestations of the negative emotions (sadness, anger, fear), with sadness in all its degrees and variations being the central one. During ritual lamentation, and though there are concrete stages that mark the progress of the whole ritual, there is a constant and synchronic shift of the lamenting voice in all continua involved, from *goos*, to *thrênos* and to inarticulate screams or sobs, from solo performance to 100% choral performance, from improvisation to formulaic laments, from screams to silence, through all possible intermediate stages and states, and in all possible combinations, following the body's waves of sympathetic and parasympathetic arousals. The performance of the *aoidoi* inspires and orchestrates this process, based on the physiological cues they derive from the score and its embodiment in lament performance. With the relatives' emotions being guided as it were, the distinction between spontaneous and ritual emotion is at stake, for both relatives and *aoidoi*. The ultimate blow is given from the last part of the score of lament, which is no other but the laments themselves. The relationship that relatives and *aoidoi* develop towards this part of the score is what catalyses the emotional quality of the ritual and arranges physical and vocal performance in a coherent perspective. It is exactly this relationship that will further confirm and re-inform the premise of the thesis that the first paradigm of acting psychotechnique of emotion is to be found in the ritual performance of the lament.

Chapter 7

Psychagogia: Lament, Acting and the Journey of Feelings

A key question throughout the whole thesis has been the emotional involvement of actors during their performance, in terms of experiencing proper feelings analogous to their characters'. Our examination of their emotional psychotechnique revealed a process of trapping emotional impulse through the gradual construction of a score of physical actions, on the automaticity of which they heavily relied during performance. This process involved both simulation of emotion, as well as techniques of emotion recall from emotional memory and imagination. In Chapter 5 we offered the hypothesis that this psychotechnique of emotion and feeling involved in Western acting is the continuation of a psychotechnical paradigm whose origins are to be traced even before classical Athenian acting, in the ritual lamentation for the dead. Indeed, our examination of ritual behaviours in lament has demonstrated the existence of a score of physical and vocal actions that can be cross-culturally identified as lament-specific. Furthermore, we proved that, as was the case with the building of the score in acting, the selection of the physical actions for the lament score and their ritual performance by the *aoidoi* was not arbitrary but, quite the contrary, was a simulation of the physiology of grief, in which the impulse is partly trapped. To this extent, it can be claimed that a substantial technical similarity has been identified between these two categories of performance in the performance of an affectively dynamic score of actions, which both conveys character to the 'audience' and grants feelings in the 'actors'. In this chapter we will further map the psychotechnical similarities between lamenting and acting, by identifying the overall motivation that enables both categories of performers to use their own feelings as a vehicle for affecting their audience and guide their experience. This motivation entails a naturalistic view of life, death and existence, and provides a common background for the function of both kinds of performance.

7.1. *Aoidoi*: artists in grief

7.1.1. A brief history of the profession

Historically, professional mourners or *aoidoi* (or *thrênon exarchoi*)[704] appear thousands of years earlier than actors and acting as a distinct institution. Professional mourners are depicted in numerous Egyptian tombs' wall reliefs, and are also mentioned distinctly in Mesopotamia, Assyria and the Near East, lamenting not only for the dead but also for kings and Gods.[705] The existence of the *gala* priests, or 'lamentation specialists'[706], in Sumeria is documented as early as 2140 BCE.[707] *Gala* priests were male professionals with knowledge of musical instruments 'who were employed in a number of kinds of ritual displays of grief in the service of temples and were called to perform at high-status funerals'.[708] Their laments are composed in the women's dialect of Sumerian called *emesal*, which derives its name from an area that became famous for the laments performed by its women. *Gala* priests as professionals are often listed together with artists, such as musicians and singers, but given their ambiguous sexuality they were also grouped together with other people of an 'irregular sexual' nature, such as temple prostitutes.[709]

Likewise, the Hittite *taptara*-women were a female group of funerary ritual specialists in the second millennium B.C.E. From their involvement in the *Sallis Wastais* ritual drama we can infer that they were performing solo and choral laments and antiphonal ritual wailings in mostly funerary contexts.[710] Professional mourners in the Jewish tradition are already referred to in the Bible[711], and became a standard in ancient Greece, where they are believed to have arrived through Anatolia.[712] The Spartans enforced their slaves to engage in ritual laments for their kings, as also confirmed by Achilles in the *Iliad* when he promises to the dead Patroklus that Trojan captive women

---

[704] Garland, *Greek Way of Death*, p. 30.
[705] J. H. Walton et al, *The IVP Bible background Commentary: Old testament*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 2000, p. 650.
[706] A.C. Cohen, *Death rituals, ideology, and the development of early Mesopotamian kingship*, Brill Academic, Leiden & Boston, 2005, p. 52.
[707] Bachvarova in Suter (ed.), *Lament*, p. 20.
[708] Bachvarova, p. 20.
[709] Bachvarova, p. 20.
[710] Rutherford in Suter (ed.), *Lament*, p. 53f.
[711] Bible, *Jeremiah*, 9:17-20.
[712] Loraux, *The Mourning Voice,* p. 55.

will lament for him.[713] The practice of enforcing slaves into ritual lament is also evident in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, where they refer to their «ἄμισθος λύπη»[714] ('unpaid for grief'), as opposed to previous examples. Solon prescribed extensive legislation through which he explicitly tried to lower the tone of the funeral by curbing the performance of paid ritual laments, or what he called «θρηνεῖν πεποιημένα».[715] Plato informs us of the Carian women's lament to the *aulos* whose function is to «ἀλλοτρίους νεκρούς ἐπί μισθῶ θρηνεῖν»[716], that is, to mourn the deceased of strangers for money. Aesop distinctly describes the relationship between professional mourners and their payment in the following story:

> There was a rich man who had two daughters, but one of his daughters died. He hired some women to do the mourning and they let loose a whole chorus of weeping. The other daughter remarked to her mother, 'We are surely wretched women if we cannot come up with a lament for our own loss, while these women, who are not even members of the family, beat their breasts and grieve so deeply.' The mother replied, 'Don't be surprised, my child: they do it for the money!'[717]

Professional mourners were also present in China and Asia, as well as in Rome.[718] Lucian expresses his resentment at those 'simpletons' who hire a professional mourner, 'an artist in grief, with a fine repertoire of cut-and-dried sorrows at his command, who assumes the direction of this inane choir, and supplies a theme for their woeful acclamations'.[719] In Rome, professional mourners were accompanied by actors, clowns, musicians and torch-bearers in the funeral processions.[720] Christianity, though in its beginnings it did not avoid hiring professional mourners, gradually became more and more hostile towards the *aoidoi*, whose place it took in mediating death rituals, to the degree that John Chrysostom threatened with excommunication those who hired them.[721]

In the Middle Ages, the laments sung by professional mourners were referred to as *placebo*. '*Placebo Domino in regione vivorum* [...]' ('I shall Please the Lord in the land of the living') is the beginning of the psalm 114 that professional mourners used to sing for the

---

[713] Homer, *Iliad*, XIX, ll. 339-40.
[714] Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, l. 720.
[715] Plutarch *Solon*, 12.
[716] Plato, *Laws*, 800e 1-3, (transl.) Jowett, B., Prometheus, New York, 2000.
[717] Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*, no. 395, (transl.) L. Gibbs, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002, p. 184.
[718] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 10.
[719] Lucian, *Works*, (transl.) H. W. Fowler, Vol. 3, Kessinger, 2004, p. 176.
[720] G. J. Laing, *Survivals of Roman Religion*, Longmans, New York, 1931, p. 86.
[721] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 200.

dead person, but the association with their 'debased way to earn a living' later spread to encompass 'servile flatterers'[722] and parasitical behaviour in general, as well as the suggestive effect of an inactive drug in medicine. The practice of the professional mourners declined during the Middle Ages but did not go extinct. The Irish Church tried to forbid paid keeners, and in 1800 the Archbishop of Cashel prohibited 'all unnatural screams and shrieks, and fictitious, tuneful cries and elegies, at wakes, together with the savage custom of howling and bawling at funerals'[723], without results, though.

The disdain of missionaries and Western explorers for the 'habit' of professional mourning and their understanding of it as operating 'in default of real grief' is characteristic in the description of the practice in Senegal by Antoine Edme Pruneau de Pomgeorge that Lutz cites:

> These are hired women, who most often do not know the deceased. Those who in this capacity show the greatest sorrow by their cries and their lamentations are the best; they are at the head of the procession and of the family […]. They interrupt their tears and their cries only to eulogise the deceased and his widow, after which they enter the hut to receive the compliments of the family and the company, for whom they have played their role well, and they drink as much brandy as one is willing to give them.[724]

The practice, though significantly replaced by priests of institutional religion within Christian, Muslim and Buddhist cultural contexts, is still present in many countries, especially in the Balkans, China, Taiwan, Portugal, Russia, Africa, etc.

Not surprisingly perhaps, this brief historical examination of professional mourning, has demonstrated an interesting net of interrelations between mourning and acting that extends beyond psychotechnical issues. Professional mourners occur constantly and as early as the third millennium B.C.E. in the context of ritual dramas, which bear many similarities with Greek tragedy, as in both cases men engage in trans-gender performance of lament-oriented texts. Furthermore, paid *aoidoi* together with actors and other artists appear in funerary contexts, where it is worth noting that in cases such as Rome, actors develop a relationship of proper reincarnation with the deceased, by wearing his funeral mask, called *imago*.[725] Additionally, professional mourners are grouped

---

[722] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 200.
[723] Ashenburg, *Mourner's Dance*, p. 43.
[724] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 199.
[725] J. Abercromby, 'Funeral masks in Europe', *Folklore*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1986, p. 353.

together with other artists, such as musicians and singers, in lists of sexually ambiguous groups and of socially disputable professions. What links actors and mourners in all these cases is predominantly their involvement in by definition female, 'on call' emotional performance, for which they get paid, a process described blatantly as 'playing a role'. The ability to call emotion at will grants them both honour, while simultaneously an almost marginal social status, which is clearly reflected in the liminal function that professional mourners adopt, as priests of sorrow in the death ritual.

7.1.2. Professional mourners in Greece: relation and criteria of skill

7.1.2.1. Payment

In contemporary Greece, the concept of the professional mourner, though still present in a few areas, is partly modified, especially in relation to the professional aspect of its nature. It is true that some women who apparently were extremely renowned for their emotionally effective performance were practically paid to lament in funerals of strangers, in the straightforward manner that Carian women in Greek antiquity were hired to mourn, or that contemporary Taiwanese professional mourners are still hired to do. In Greece these (mainly) women were sometimes paid for their services in money, but also in kind, such as eggs, grains, legumes etc., as very often they were quite poor. The dissatisfaction of a lamenter in Crete is manifested in the beginning of her lament by saying: 'the corpse seems too long/and the beans too few', while a next of kin promises the lamenter a good payment for a good lament: 'Sing me a fine lament for him/ and you shall have a pile of beans'.[726]

Such examples of explicitly professional lamenting can still be found in Greece, especially in areas where ritual lament is still dynamic, but these cases shine through their exceptional nature, not only because modernity has silenced the ritual lament altogether, but also because where lament is still steadily heard, other sociocultural factors are in operation that define the terms of ritual participation and of professional baptism. Today, ritual lamentation is active mainly in rural Greece, where the sense of community was, and still is, alive. Within such a context, taking part in ritual lamentation is still primarily felt as an instinctual social reaction, a natural communal duty and approved ritual obligation, rather than folkloric relic, or a profession in the strict sense.

---

[726] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 40.

Nevertheless, apart from the rare clear-cut assignments for paid mourning, or the standard communal participation, an exceptionally skilled mourner may be 'invited' to take part in a lament, with the invitation being both an act of further honouring the deceased as well as flattering the lamenter and recognising her skills as being of professional calibre. In such cases a gift may be given as a token of gratitude, possibly at a time other than the funeral, to avoid connecting the gift with the participation in a direct way. Furthermore, such skilled performers, being aware of their talent, spontaneously and actively offer to participate in funeral ceremonies within the extreme limits of (or even beyond) the extended community, so that in effect they may become *inviteable* across communities, pretty much like a television 'guest star'.

7.1.2.2. Community, degrees of relation and ritual status

This sense of community defines the terms of participation in the lamentation ritual, which is also manifested in the spatial arrangement of the participants in relation to the dead body in three degrees: immediate relatives, extended relatives-immediate community, and extended community-strangers. The closest relatives (protagonists), usually wife, mother or sister, will stand next to the head or exactly behind and around it, occupying the centre of the ritual. If the participants are too many and the space allows, two groups (Semi-Choruses) will be formed to the right and left of the body; relatives will be on one side and the rest of the community (and possibly strangers) on the other. Men (audience), regardless of degree of relation, are usually outside the room of the *prothesis*, or at the outmost of the periphery.

The participation of complete strangers in the ritual is rather an unusual phenomenon, but not an impossible one. Usually those people will automatically sit at the outmost of the periphery, but in some cases, as with the case of invited mourners, they might be closer to the principal mourners. An invited mourner will sit closest to the deceased and the principal mourners than anyone else, thus holding the status of a protagonist, an '*as if* relative', in the ritual. In this way she is honoured to be at the centre of visual attention created by the physical presence of the body and the emotional attention created by its absence, but she herself is also expected to honour and further intensify this centre by leading the ritual effectively.

The degree of relation, apart from the spatial arrangement, will canonise the order

and domination of speech in the ritual performance. The relatives engage in *goos* according to this degree, as we have seen, in the *Iliad* where Andromache as the wife speaks first and more than the others, and is followed by the mother and then the sister-in-law. This order, apart from a social-relational hierarchy, also implies an hierarchy of emotional intensity, which in most cases translates directly the degree of relation into degree of felt emotion, and therefore of ritual prominence, but not in the case of a hired mourner. In this case, the emotional commitment is not analogous to degree of relation, and ritual prominence transcends degrees of relation. Most cases though fall somewhere in between.

Fig. 34 **Funeral lament in former Yugslavia** *Goos* (middle), *thrênos* (right) and the community ('50 most tragic pictures in photographic history', Yeeeeee, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.yeeeeee.com/2008/07/18/50-most-tragic-pictures-in-photographic-history>).

7.1.2.3. Witnessing death

As such, the professional aspect of the *thrênon exarchos* becomes an issue of ritual status and, mainly, of skills, rather than of payment or degree of relation. In the most extreme cases the leader of the lament may indeed be a paid stranger located next to the body at the centre of the ceremony; in equally extreme cases, the principal mourner herself may

become the *exarchos*, too. More often than not though, the *thrênon exarchos* is *not* a member of the immediately direct relatives, as they are usually not in a state in which they can sustain and guide ritual order and singing. It is either a relative who is distant enough to be sober enough, or a member of the wider community who can engage enough with the vocal and physical score to ignite emotion. In any case though, the appropriate *exarchos* is the person who, regardless of the degree of relation or of compensation, has some specific skills that allow her to perform the duties. The more the *aoidos* is distant from the deceased and the family, the more she transcends degrees of relation, the more remarkable her skill seems, the closer we come to our notion of actors. As such, the *aoidoi* or professional mourners in the context of this thesis are understood as primarily skilled performers, before anything else.

By definition, 'traditional lament fulfils a double purpose: objectively, it is designed to honour and appease the dead, while, subjectively, it gives expression to a wide range of conflicting emotions'.[727] One the one hand the *aoidoi* instigate, sustain and supervise the expression of grief in the bereaved by channelling them into extreme but definite limits of physiology, as we examined in the previous chapter, while on the other, they sing *on behalf of* the deceased, by bringing messages to the living, *as if* they were the dead person. As such, the lamenters function *as if* they were mediators, standing at the midpoint between the world of the living and the dead.

The skills that are necessary for such a task may be better evident when a ritual lament *fails* to function properly. Seremetakis gives us a few ideas of when such a thing happens. By analysing the social construction of pain through lament in Mani, she describes the silent death as the ultimate disaster: 'the silent death is the asocial "bad death" without kin support. Silence here connotes the absence of witnesses. It implies the deceased was alone, without clan. The silent death is a public shame, for it is considered a "naked" death. Nakedness refers to social divestiture, the absence of the Other(s), and implies the isolate. Trees in winter, without leaves or fruit, are perceived as "naked" and "burnt"'.[728] Examples of the importance of this concept from Greek art forms are many. In the *Odyssey*, Helpenor's ghost in the Underworld appears and urges Ulysses to bury and lament him, while in tragedy the negligence of death ritual (lamentation included) can

---

[727] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 55.
[728] Seremetakis, 'The ethics of antiphony', p. 10.

seriously disrupt the order of things, thus motivating the central dramaturgical axis of the play, as it does in Sophocles' *Ajax*, *Antigone* etc. For the Greeks, an unwept for body, practically corresponds to an unburied one.

As such, a major function of the lamenters is that they actively *witness* the fact of death, and through their lament, understood as *screaming the dead*, the isolation of death is countered. This extreme, literal *screaming* of the dead is the number one psychotechnical premise, which on a social level 'both demarcates and encloses a collectivity of subjects in exile. Of course, those in exile are united in pain. Rooted in shared substance, emotional ethics and memories of reciprocity, "screaming" is a witnessing of "pain".[729] The importance of the voice in the performance of ritual lament has been fully described in the previous chapter. A skilled lamenter first and foremost needs a strong, compact, enduring and agile voice that can deal with all the extremities of intensity, pitch and tempo-rhythm in order to support the full range of lament modalities as manifested in screams, sobs, chants, recitations, songs etc.

Within the modern Greek laments, the exact type of voice quality, as well as of physical endurance and behaviour, needed for a lamenter in order for the lament to be effective is given to us by the dead person himself in the following excerpt:

> -Now that four lads will lift me on their shoulders
> Smash your heads with stones and marbles
> And, everybody, shriek out loud to burn the leaves dry.[730]

The sound of the lament often resembles natural elements, like storms, the sea, or even animals:

> -What's all this blast and all this gust
> Is it the oxen being slain or beasts eating each other?[731]

Such examples are numerous, and in them the proper voice of the lamenter is described as a wild nightingale, a thunder[732] or a church-bell[733], which shakes the mountains, cracks

---

[729] Seremetakis, 'The ethics of antiphony', p. 10.
[730] G. Saunier, *Greek Folk Songs: The Laments* [Saunier, G., *Ελληνικά Δημοτικά Τραγούδια: Τα Μοιρολόγια*, Νεφέλη, Αθήνα, 1999], p. 42.
[731] Saunier, p. 84.
[732] Saunier, p. 214.
[733] Saunier, p. 214.

castles, tears trees apart, [734] etc. Among them, the nightingale is often met in the context of Greek tragedy, as one of the emblems of lament:

> Electra   Closer to my sad heart is the nightingale
>   Bird who heralds the springtime, crazily
>   Constantly moaning for Itys, for Itys.[735]

7.1.2.4. Experiencing death

The piercing, shrieking quality of the voiced lament in modern and ancient Greek lament is not only a theoretical metaphor of the intensity of the felt emotion. These metaphors, often at the ritual beginning of the lament, encapsulate, teach and transmit the psychotechnique of ritual lament and arrest it in terms of psychophysiological causality. In the reality of contemporary ritual practice, the extreme self-injurious physical gestures traditionally bound with ritual lament are perhaps the less maintained elements from among the score of actions. The dead person himself demands that the lament should be sung in a specific way, because this is the only way that lament can work. This urge is summarising the psychotechnique of the lament that the *aoidoi* must follow:

> Don't sing your dirges at pace, don't shed your tears at ease
> Shriek for me with your wildest voice, your fiercest dirge
> So that your tears flood your eyes hot, burning down your cheeks
> And when they drip onto your chest, they'll burn your heart off.[736]

This formulation does not only capture the process of simulation of emotion through extreme vocalisation, as was the case with the score of vocal actions that we examined earlier on, nor does it simply describe the cultural construction of attitude to death: it proves beyond doubt that the ritual itself demands that the lamenter's feelings are activated in full. Indeed, the process of simulation dictates that by pushing the voice, and therefore, breathing to its limits and by delivering lament in an aggressive, frenzied tone, sympathetic arousal reaches its peak and parasympathetic tears follow naturally. Nevertheless, as was the case with acting, the result of this process, when precisely performed, is the generation of proper feelings in the performer.

      Greek tragedy sums up and confirms this psychotechnique of total affective engagement in more than one instance. In the *Trojan Women* Hecuba initiates the first lament of the play, by calling forth the other captive women. Functioning as a *thrênon*

---

[734] Saunier, p. 348.
[735] Sophocles, *Electra*, l. 147-50, (transl.) D. Raeburn & P. Easterling, Penguin, London, 2008.
[736] Saunier, p.

exarchos, it is the intensity and quality of her voice that will mark the beginning of the lament:

> Hecuba   You daughters wed to ruin, come
> Let us keen for Troy, and like
> A mother bird, for her fallen chicks, I'll cry
> The loudest.[737]

Later on, when she finds out she has been given as a slave to Ulysses, her worst foe, she *instructs* herself to lament, first by uttering the shriek cry of lament in tragedy, the "Aiai!" and then by engaging in physically injurious behaviour, which functions as sympathetic acceleration:

> Hecuba   AIAI! Not this!
> Tear the shorn head
> Rip cheeks with nail
> Wail scream.[738]

The full psychotechnical instructions are later on given to Hecuba by the Chorus, during the funeral of Astyanax:

> Chorus   AIAI, AIAI. The earth has opened for you child
> Our unbearable grief.
> Cry out, dear mother [...]
> Hecuba   AIAI.
> Chorus   [...] a dirge for the dead [...]
> Beat your head, your face,
> Beat it over and over
> The way the oar stroke beats the water.[739]

This scene is perhaps the closest we ever get to a description of proper ritual lament within the original context of a funeral from Greek tragedy, since the body of Astyanax is buried on the stage, in front of our eyes, unlike in any other extant play of the classical period. The psychotechnical instructions given in these verses are a standard part of the ritual utterances through which the extremities of self-injury are endorsed in the ritual, but at the same time, they coincide with the spontaneous emotional impulse for action that the specific situations entail.

So, participants in the ritual, be it relatives, extended family or professionals, not only are expected to demonstrate emotion, through ritual emotional expression, but also to experience it, in the highest degree possible. From the point of view of the participants

---

[737] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 165-8, (transl.) A. Shapiro, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.
[738] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 305f.
[739] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 1458-69.

and relatives, a good *aoidos* is the one who is capable of *honouring* and *witnessing* the deceased through her laments, and of *igniting* emotion in the bereft, because these are the two functions that the ritual lament serves, and this is the reason why an *aoidos* is there, to start with. At the same time, the ritual itself, as registered in the ritual texts and as voiced through the representative of the deceased, *demands* from the *aoidos* complete psychophysical dedication, bitter tears that burn the heart with pulsating feelings. In a nutshell: the good lamenter honours the dead by igniting emotion in others, through her own experience.

So, how do lamenters themselves treat and cope with these extreme emotional demands made on them, in terms of emotional arousal? Is the simulation of emotion as prescribed in the score enough? What are their choices? In the case of acting, actors strive to generate both emotion and feelings in them, through simulation, emotional memory and imagination. They might be starting from *expression*, or from *experience*, or from combinations of the two, but whatever they do, actors lack the third central faculty of emotion: *evaluation*. In the case of ritual lament, the degree of relation to the deceased may vary but, by definition, the *aoidoi* in the ritual have both some wider communal relation to the deceased, as well as some considerable distance. What happens with their *evaluation* of the situation? How do they evaluate the situation of death, being in this midpoint between stranger and extended relative? Do they naturally empathise with the loss, or do they too strive to earn their living? The answer to these questions can shed some light on their psychotechnique, as well as give us some insight on the issue of the actors' feelings during performance. This evaluation is to be found in the texts of the laments themselves, which adopt and disseminate a specific attitude towards death, and therefore, indirectly prescribe the function that the *aoidoi* are expected to fulfil within the ritual.

7.2. The score of linguistic actions in ritual lament

7.2.1. Improvisation in acting and lament

Within the context of the study of contemporary Greek ritual laments (*mirologia*), it has often been suggested that improvisation is the key part in their delivery, as a result of which, the performance of the *aoidoi* is often understood as primarily improvisatory. Fauriel, for example, in the first attempt at collecting systematically Greek folk songs in 1824 explicitly suggested that 'what essentially distinguishes *miroloi* [lament-*thrênos*] from other folk songs is that it is by no means prepared in advance, but always improvised in the moment it is being uttered, and always appropriated for the individual to whom it is addressed'.[740] Similarly, Seremetakis' influential analysis of lament in Mani clarifies that in Mani 'the lament is an improvised poetic composition of stressed eight-syllable verses focused on the biographies of the deceased and/or the mourner and the history of corporate groups. The Inner Maniots sharply differentiate this lament from song and poetic genres that have been imported from other parts of rural Greece. The fifteen-syllable epic-heroic ballads and laments, which have nationalistic evocations, are associated with the performances of men, while the eight-syllable laments are almost exclusively identified with the discourses of women'.[741] Other researchers are less absolute in their claims, recognising that 'lament—unlike other types of lyrical poetry such as dance songs—contains a large amount of specific, personal information which varies with the occasion or the individual performer. Consequently, there is much more room for variation in long lament compositions than in other short poetic genres of the oral tradition'.[742]

This issue needs some attention. There is no doubt that Greek lament belongs to the oral tradition, but improvisation is a different thing from ritual. One can readily understand and accept how a *goos* can be, and by definition is, spontaneous and, therefore, closer to a sense of improvisation according to the moment. But suggesting that ritual lament, that is, *thrênos*, is by definition improvisatory is indeed too counter-intuitive a leap.

---

[740] C. Fauriel, *Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, Firmin Didot, Paris, 1824, p. cxxxiv.
[741] Seremetakis, 'Ethics', p. 481.
[742] Caravelli-Chaves, 'Bridge between worlds', p. 140.

On a very superficial level of examination, an improvisatory *thrênos* cancels the ritual dimension of the lament because it cancels the communal element by excluding the rest of the chorus, and because it voids a huge number of ritual and emotional tools that more standard *thrênoi* employ, such as order, repetition, archetypal situations and dehistoricisation. On a less superficial level, one can see how standard laments can and, by default, do accommodate specific situational elements, not by giving way to *sui generis* improvisatory dramaturgy, but by structurally imposing the incorporation of the appropriate, according to the situation, personal themes and variations on the standard forms.

Motsios, in his exceptionally thorough study of Greek lament addresses the issue of seemingly improvisatory personal laments such as the ones from Mani or Crete, and agrees that 'even those *mirologia* [*thrênoi*] that give the impression of being completely personal, are not at all such, but are constructed according to the rules of the local tradition which in these areas of Greece, allows more room for personal expression'.[743] Without making a dogmatic judgment, he nevertheless furnishes many examples in which the *mirologistres* (*aoidoi*) that have composed these allegedly improvised laments are simply lying about their methods. Lying or being unaware of one's methods brings us even closer to actors. In one example he gives, Motsios himself wrote down the lament of a famous *mirologistra* from Crete for her sick husband. She had composed the lament while he was still alive, because she knew he was going to die soon, as he actually did. Some while after the funeral, during which the performance of her prepared lament was perceived as improvisatory, she categorically dismissed the practice of preparing the lament before the time of death and the funeral, even for a terminally ill person, as impossible: 'only during the lament she [the *mirologistra*] finds the words and the tune'.[744]

But even when the *mirologistres* are not consciously lying about their methods, they are simply unaware of how these grow in them. Motsios observed that the ability to absorb and incorporate the local dramaturgical rules of lament synthesis into seemingly original laments could occur even in laments delivered by five year-olds, whose lament verses and tunes were almost identical to their local community's style. On the other hand, other *mirologistres* were not at all ashamed to admit they prepare their laments, and

---

[743] G. Motsios, *The Greek Lament*, Vols. 1&2 [Μότσιος, Γ., *Το Ελληνικό Μοιρολόγι*, τόμοι 1&2, Κώδικας, Αθηνα, 1995], Vol. 1, p. 26.
[744] Motsios, *The Greek Lament*, p. 24.

were even often proud of having spent time working a case out appropriately. In another example, a Maniot *mirologistra* was discussing with Motsios the issue of improvisation and was fervently arguing against any kind of preparation before the actual time of their delivery, only to be interrupted by her daughter who burst into the room saying: 'why are you stuffing the man's head with lies? Before going to lament for X [name deliberately omitted], weren't you standing in front of the mirror, with your hair unbraided and pretending you were punching yourself and you were lamenting saying the exact same words you said the following day at the funeral?'[745]

The issue of improvisation obviously further establishes the analogy between the *aoidoi* and actors, while such 'improvised' ritual performance has been praised for its dramaturgical and poetic qualities.[746] But lamenters are closer to actors than to playwrights. In twentieth century western acting the issue of improvisation became a cornerstone of the rehearsal process. In the previous chapter we examined how Stanislavski embraced improvisation in his system, to the degree of employing it as the key rehearsal strategy, but for Stanislavski as well as for Meyerhold and Grotowski, improvisation was strictly a rehearsal tool for constructing the score, inappropriate for use during performance. Furthermore, improvisation was perceived as having concrete structure and as relying on immaculate acting technique.

Meyerhold, who was the first among the practitioners studied in this thesis to introduce improvisation in twentieth century acting, acknowledged that 'it is precisely in the possibility for the actor to improvise that drama is distinct from opera [...] I will never renounce the right to stimulate an actor to improvise'.[747] But, at the same time, Meyerhold's concept of improvisation was based on excruciatingly precise rehearsal on the score, similar to what musicians do. Though he was deeply impressed by the improvisatory capacities of *commedia dell' arte* actors, he, nevertheless, considered their performance to be an example of technique: 'true theatre of improvisation is not inspirational, but depends always on a firm basis of flawless technique'.[748]

Equally, Grotowski, whose name has wrongly been associated by modern generations of actors with endless and generic improvisation, openly cautioned his actors:

---

[745] Motsios, *The Greek Lament*, p. 24.
[746] Seremetakis, 'Last word', p. 120.
[747] Meyerhold in Schmidt, P., 'Discovering Meyerhold: traces of a search', *October*, Vol. 7, 1978, p. 79.
[748] Meyerhold, 'Commedia dell' arte', p. 864.

'"Don't improvise, please"[…] This warning is paradoxical, he acknowledged, but the word "improvise" has become banal and associated with something fake and spontaneous'.[749] The actor needs to focus on building the score during rehearsal, because this is what will enable him to achieve spontaneity on the stage during performance. Grotowski was very aware that rehearsal and performance are completely different things, and that improvisation during performance is a recipe for chaos and cliché: 'in performance no real spontaneity is possible without a score. It would be an imitation of spontaneity since you would destroy your spontaneity by chaos'.[750]

In the case of the *aoidoi*, how absolute is the score of actions? We have already seen how the ritual has prescribed specific patterns of vocal and physical behaviour to accompany lament performance. Obviously, an *aoidos* does not improvise in the selection of these actions, as these are given, but at the same time, the reality of each lament and ceremony excludes the possibility of a fully austere choreography, as well as of irrelevant gestures. This means that, while the vocal and physical gestures are precise and standard, as in grammar, their sequential arrangement, as in syntax, leaves some room for adaptation, rather than improvisation, according to each situation. The question then becomes: if in the voice and physical behaviour the grammatical rules are standard, how much room is there for syntactical originality, and, of course, how rigid or flexible are the grammatical and syntactical rules that guide the delivery of the texts of the laments themselves? This question reframes the question of *order* in which things happen during emotion as we examined it in the case of acting and real life emotions, and opens the issue of order in the case of ritual lament.

7.2.2. Order in lament

By definition lament as a ritual is defined by a substantial degree of *order* in telestic actions. For example, in Greece, people are and were urgently discouraged from lamenting *before* the person dies, because it was considered miasma and ill-omen[751], while in the series of rituals that follow *after* the funeral lament, the memorial rites attempt to gradually dampen the momentum of lament, by imposing scarcer and scarcer opportunities for lament,

---

[749] J. N. Amankulor, 'Jerzy Grotowski's "divination consultation": objective drama seminar at U. C. Irvine', *TDR* , Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring, 1991), p. 158.
[750] Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, p. 193.
[751] Alexiou, *RLGT*, p. 4.

often prescribed by law. After the funeral, the opportunity for ritual—that is, for socially endorsed—lamentation is given on the third day, then the ninth, then the fortieth, and from then on, the density of memorial services lessens, as prescribed memorials occur on the year and three years. Usually, after the cycle of memorials ends, there follows a ceremony of *ektaphe* (exhumation), when the bones of the deceased are ritually cleansed and are inhumed again. This is a separation ritual understood as a *second burial*, which, more often than not, attempts to ultimately close the death ritual cycle, by proving that all signs of life other than mere bones have disappeared for ever and that the transition is eventually fully accomplished for both the deceased and the living.[752]

The issue of order in ritual lament can be seen on three major planes: (1) the death ritual in general, where specific types of laments accompany specific types of ritual, (2) the order of laments within the duration of the funeral (or of each type of death ritual for that matter), and, finally, (3) the internal thematic arrangement of the laments that are sung in each specific part of the funeral. This implies a specific kind and order of lament sung in the forty days' memorial as opposed to the funeral, different laments sung in the *taphe* than in the *prothesis*, and, finally, different laments that shape the structure of each phase of the funeral. The syntactical order of physical and vocal actions, as well as of texts is indeed affected by these three major planes of order.

The physical and vocal expressions related to lament are tied to the emotion of the principal mourners, as well as of the *aoidos*. On the large plane, the closer we are to the event of death, the more their intensity is high and sustained, and the more one expects it to fade, as we move further in time. 'Time is a good healing', is proverbial advice that can often be heard being given to the inconsolable grieving relatives, and the issue of oblivion is concretised in modern Greek laments in the 'prairies of Arne', with Arne being the *Arnessia* («αρνησιά», from «άρνηση»-'denial'), i.e. the oblivion that dominates as a theme, predominantly in the post-funerary rituals:

> Wake up my bird and tell me, when do you intend to come
> So that I cook a meal for you to eat, and supper to dine
> And fix your bed for you to rest.
> -Listen my mother what I have to tell you
> If you prepare a meal, you eat it, and if you make supper, you dine on it
> And if you fix my bed, you go and have a sweet sleep
> Because they have taken me to the prairies of Arne
> Where the mother denies her child and the child its mother

---

[752] Danforth, *Death Rituals*, p. 32; p. 141; p. 152 etc.

And couples, once beloved, deny now one another.[753]

The denial of the deceased through time and oblivion as it occurs in the prairies of Arne is one more metaphor of Hades, and resembles the betrayal in the oaths of love. This oblivion is always a threat to the lamenter, who experiences it as guilt, and it needs to be constantly fought against. In the above lament, the deceased resigns his rights to be remembered, because there is no purpose anymore. The *aoidos* is aware of the emotional charge operating through guilt in this lament, and the dominance of the variations on this theme of denial-oblivion-guilt is consciously more frequent in post-funeral laments, than in funeral laments, where it functions more as an impending option rather than guilt.

On the other hand, the extended intensity of the physicalities of the lament is in most cases perceived as unhealthy and immoderate, bordering on mental illness and disaster. The *Parodos* (*kommos*) from Sophocles' *Electra* attests this clearly:

> Chorus   O child, child of a wretchedly hard
> Mother, Electra, why are you still chanting
> These insatiable songs of grief […]
> How, how will dirges and prayers
> Help to summon your father back
> Up from the Lake of death which no one escapes?
> No, in your limitless grief you are fatally
> Parting from reason for pain without remedy.
> This sighing offers no release from suffering's chains.
> So, why, why court such endless anguish?[...]
> Time is a good healing […].[754]

By engaging in such extremities of lament over such long periods of time Electra is denying the natural healing capacities of time, and this unnatural perseverance makes her prone to parting reason. As the Chorus give up their effort to moderate her, they warn her: 'Your folly is breeding ruin'.[755]

On the plane of the funeral itself, the laments are sung in a specific order: first come the laments that by definition inhabit the *prothesis*, then those of the *ekphora* and finally the ones that are characteristic of the *taphe*. This internal structure became clear during my fieldwork in Midea and Limnes, two predominantly Arvanite villages of Argolida, where mourners may alternate their laments between Greek and the Arvanitika dialect. As all the women explicitly explained to me, there are concrete laments that mark

---

[753] Saunier, 8e, p134.
[754] Sophocles, *Electra*, ll. 123f.
[755] Sophocles, *Electra*, l. 235.

each phase of the ritual. In both villages, as well as in the wider area, the ritual always starts with a specific lament, delivered when the coffin enters the room of the *prothesis*, thus unquestionably marking its beginning:

> -Ah, tell us whose gift is this beautiful bed you have?
> -This is my [mother's] gift to me, to cherish it in Hades
> -Ah, tell us who has adorned you, and you are so adorned?
> -My [mother] has adorned me; she is sending me to the Black Earth.[756]

This lament has a tremendous emotional impact on the totality of the mourners because it marks beyond the slightest suspicion of doubt the beginning of the ritual, that is, the beginning of the end, and the irreversibility of the situation. The quasi reflex emotional reaction of the mourners to these verses is socially constructed, in that the specific verses have been associated with the beginning of the ceremony and the appearance of the coffin, and automatically blast the emotional memory of the participants with images, feelings, thoughts and sensations associated with the funeral and the context of loss. In this case, the lament shapes the emotional reaction of the mourners, and becomes a weapon in the hands of the *mirologistra* who will attempt to make the best out of it by a head-on performance. In Midea, though the first words or first verse might be delivered by a single woman, who thus spontaneously and momentarily adopts the function of the *exarchos*, immediately all the women join in the lament hence establishing the ethics of help.

To someone who has never heard the lament before, witnessing the sudden shift from silence, sobs and inarticulate whispers, cries or *gooi*, to loud, vibrant and heart-rending harmonic choral singing at the sight of the coffin, is already enough to admit that the function of the *aoidos* has been already accomplished, in that this utterance 'makes even the stones weep'. For someone who has had experience of laments in funerals, the blow goes even deeper, because the mere sound of the lament signifies the recurrence of the all-familiar yet unfathomable situation of death, and the emotional reaction is instantaneous. The pattern in which the emotion is produced here is similar to when listening to the national anthem in a high importance event (e.g., Olympic Games), which has an electrifying impact on the audience not so much because of the musical qualities of

---

[756] This was sung by aunt Garouffalia and Sofia Noti, in Midea, Argolis, on Easter, 2006. The use of the [mother] in the lament was arbitrary, as the mother can be substituted by whoever is the closest relative, according to each case.

the anthem as such, but because of its relative position in the sequence of events, and because of what it stands for. It works as an *anagnorisis*. As such, the *aoidos*, apart from the physical and vocal aspects of the lament, can and does make concrete use of the order in the ritual, so as to intensify, control, sustain or tame the emotional tension.

Finally, within each phase of the funeral there is also order in the laments that construct the specific emotional quality that defines each separate phase. The *prothesis* has different goals to achieve from the *taphe*. In the *prothesis* both a separation from a previous situation, as well as the establishment of deep liminality prevail. The lamenters have to realise that they are entering a new state, that of mourning, a liminal state during which they will open an ironic (as we shall see) dialogue with the dead, inhabiting thus the sphere of betwixt. In order to achieve this, lament will have to both separate them from previous ordinary states, as well as to establish liminality, which is the sphere *par excellence* of the *prothesis* and of the lament itself. As the *prothesis* comes towards its end and the *ekphora* starts, which drives us closer to the final *taphe*, a lament of separation is sung, that marks the passage from the liminality of the *prothesis* to the incorporation in the new state of liminality of the *ekphora* etc.

This suggests that in all three phases of the funeral the lament serves all types of rite of passage, but that at the heart of each phase, there is a *liminal* defining core that supports the goals of each phase, which of course reflects the wider liminal character of ritual lament as a whole throughout the funeral. In order to convey the distinct type of liminality characteristic of each phase, the *aoidoi* rely on the performance of the score of vocal, physical and linguistic actions, which they syntax according to ritual rules and their own dramatic instinct. It is within this context that the *aoidoi* are able to adapt the lament to the specific situation, not so much by properly improvising at that moment, but by making creative use of the locally available variations, and even by delivering, a more or less, original lament, which may have been improvised at some other moment. This combination of order and adaptation highly resembles the process of acting a character during performance, where the actor is called to revive a score of actions, while at the same time, maintaining spontaneity by adapting to the current reality of the stage. As we shall see, the insertion of such adaptations in ritual lament is structurally anticipated by the laments themselves.

7.2.3. Adaptation in lament

In Argolis, as in most areas of Greece, the laments as texts have a specific inner order and a specific structure which, not only allows, but calls for the adaptation of the *aoidos'* lament to the situation. Most Greek laments are brief poetic constructions in 15-syllable verses. Some parts of Greece employ much longer compositions of 8-syllable verse, as happens in Mani or Crete, while others, such as in Midea and the wider area of the Arvanite villages of Argolis, may use both configurations. A crucial difference between these two main metrical configurations rests, not in the male and nationalistic evocations of the 15-syllables verse that Seremetakis refers to, but in the performance *mode* of these laments, as well as their origin. Laments from Mani may reach almost 220 verses, as is the case with the lament *Tou Kalapotho Sakkako*[757] (*The lament of Kalapothos Sakkakos*), while laments composed in 15-syllable mode are much shorter, usually ranging between four to twenty verses. In the 15-syllable's composition tradition the verse is double the size of an 8-syllable verse, and moreover, each verse is repeated twice. As a result, one verse of 15-syllable equates with practically four 8-syllable verses, which are delivered once, and often by a single *aoidos*.

In all areas of Greece where 15-syllable laments are sung, the texts of the laments are quite fixed, in that they create specific patterns of identifiable variations. This has many implications. First of all, the fact that these verses are repeated twice betrays the clear antiphonal structure of these laments and their far-reaching roots into the proper ritual lament practice. It therefore implies their origin in choral performance. Since all women know the laments (or are able to know them since they are more or less standard), *all* the participants function as *aoidoi* (*mirologistres*) and they perform them together, as a Chorus. The forms of this performance may be diverse: there might be a completely choral performance, where all the *aoidoi* repeat each verse twice; there might also be a Semi-choral, responsive technique, where one semi-chorus delivers the verse first and then the other chorus the second; or it might also be that one semi-chorus delivers the verse and they both join in the repetition.

Furthermore, the rather fixed series of laments implies that another key demand made on the *aoidos* is a good memory. A good *aoidos* is someone who, first of all, is able to remember the greatest number of laments possible. Among the primary tasks of the *aoidoi*

---

[757] Saunier, 4.1, p. 514f.

is to ensure that a correct order of the laments is kept, and therefore, a good lamenter remembers very well the full texts of the laments, as well as their sequential succession. This succession is not absolute of course, and it can be that one lament is said before another without distorting the dimension of things, especially within a specific phase of the funeral. But, at the same time, the women themselves are very aware that there is an underlying order, which they may not be able to remember fully when asked outside the context of the funeral, but which kicks in instinctively and automatically within the ritual. The women of Midea confirmed this concept of order and inner succession, the *through-action* that links together the whole ritual. During our encounter they often forgot the following lines of a lament's text, but it usually took simply a word from someone else to remind them what was to be said next. As they explained, 'these things can't be said like this, one by one; you have to say them all together. At that moment [during a proper funeral], they just pop into the mind, you say them '*balla*' [«μπάλα»-'ball', expression that signifies the momentum of a ball].

Indeed, within the context of choral 15-syllable lament that is dominant in Greece, the opportunity for an *aoidos* to rise above the chorus is primarily in her unbiased ability to remember the correct order of the laments, as well as of the verses or even words within a given lament. When at the end of a lament, some women make a 'mistake', either by proceeding with a lament for which it is not time yet, or by omitting a verse or misplacing it, a good lamenter is the one who will superimpose the correct passage, while stopping further confusion either through the urgency or intensity of the voice, through the eyes, through a negative and decisive nodding of the head, or through touching or lightly pushing the hand of the previous *aoidos*. Such corrections, during which the *aoidos* adopts the position of a leader or *thrênon exarchos*, are usually accepted without complications and misunderstandings, though a competitive element can often be present. The choral performance by definition discourages competition reaching beyond certain limits of perceptibility and ritual creativity, and a leader will usually emerge from the group as the *exarchos* quite naturally. Moreover, memory can distinguish an *aoidos* by prompting her with the most touching variation of each motif. This motif might have been heard in another funeral within or even beyond the local tradition, and it is up to the aesthetics of the specific group whether the variation will pass the test of time.

Alongside her memory the *exarchos* will be distinguished for her ability to adjust the

laments to the given situation. According to the sex, age, social status and conditions of death of the deceased, the laments performed will differ, not only in their text, but also tune and mode, and, of course, intensity of physical-vocal action. The lament texts vary in their content, as well as degree of malleability. Some laments are suitable, for example, specifically for violent deaths of young men who have left a widow and children, that is, they have a very specific content and intent, and can be used only within the context of such occasions. Others are more flexible and can address wider groups, such as laments for people who have died abroad, laments for the mother etc. Finally, most laments inherently possess enough malleability to be heard on almost all occasions and are indeed so, with minimum adjustments to fit the case.

The following lament is a composition for a young girl who died of unnatural causes:

> A good daughter was sitting on a large white rock
> She was looking at herself in the mirror, cherishing her beauty.
> -You, great beauty, and painted eyebrows
> Who is going to cherish you, and who is going to win you?
> The rock heard this and Earth responded:
> -I am going to cherish you, I am going to win you.[758]

Though this lament will not be sung for a young man, or for an elderly or wedded woman, some motifs in the composition will be found in other situational frames of lamenting. The same concept underlying the lament, i.e., the encomium of lost beauty, as well as the mythical wedding to Death (here as Black Earth) can be met in another lament for a young man, where the lamenter performs the characters of both the mother and of the Black Earth:

> Please, I beg you Black Earth, old marble full of spiders
> This young man I sent to you, this lad,
> Hold him like a rose, smell him like an apple
> Don't give him any sickness, any disease.
> -Why, am I his mother to hold him in my hands?
> My name is Black Earth, old marble full of spiders
> I eat young girls, I eat young men, I eat the lads.[759]

Of course, to suggest that the laments are limited solely to adaptations for the occasion is just as extreme as claiming that laments are composed *ad libitum* during their performance. Very often, a gifted lamenter propelled by pain, empathy, talent, aesthetics or mere vanity,

---

[758] Motsios, p. 176.
[759] Saunier, 3c, p. 260.

will introduce a surprisingly original variation. As is the case with natural selection, cultural selection will decide whether a variation is adaptive enough to be incorporated as part of the ritual. If the variation does not exhibit distinct advantages because it is too generic, feeble, or personal, it is unlikely that it will be heard again in another funeral. A once improvised variation may have an autonomous literary or dramaturgical value, but unless it abides by the cultural rules of the ritual it will be isolated and will never become part of the standard themes, nor even of their locally available variations.

Saunier has acknowledged that although the *aoidoi* often compose material destined for the deceased specifically, 'the most important element [in the *mirologia*] is the existence of these standard themes and modules that function exactly like other categories of Greek Folk Songs and that owe nothing to improvisation – apart from the adaptation to the lamented person, of course'.[760] He isolates a series of such standard modules in operation in laments, such as (1) the break-down of family, (2) oblivion and denial, (3) loneliness and ineffability of contact, (4) ineffability of resurrection, (5) the decomposition of the body, (6) encomia of lost beauty, (7) the mythical wedding, (8) death as the absolute disaster, (9) Charon and (10) the human attitude to death. He suggests that 'the traditional collective thought, which has a ritual and canonistic character, is expressed only in the standard themes. These texts, that is, express not the real, occasional emotions of the mourners, but those emotions that the community believes should be experienced, and that are supposed to be experienced. This is why a stranger woman can sing on behalf of the bereft mother or wife […] and this is why there are professional mourners'.[761]

Therefore, the improvisatory role of the *aoidoi* lies not in the spontaneous composition of songs inspired by the pain of the moment, but rather, in the emotionally creative synthesis of known material, themes, modules and variations that one might have heard in another funeral or even prepared and composed at another moment. Still, this synthesis is governed by traditional and ritual rules and directives that cannot be superseded by *sui generis* dramaturgy, regardless of the degree of its ingeniousness. On the other hand, laments are neither liturgies nor rigid gospels. The laments themselves are composed in such a way as to *demand* the adaptation of laments to the specific deceased, mostly in terms of 'slots' in the text destined for the incorporation of the name or role of

---

[760] Saunier, p. 10.
[761] Saunier, p. 13.

the deceased, as we saw, or for the insertion of interjections and breathing points.

In terms of musical tonality, laments are usually delivered without any exception (to my knowledge) in minor keys. The descending tetrachord has been identified as the key melodic feature of lament cross-culturally[762], and it is widespread within Greece as well. The melodic and rhythmical lines that can be heard throughout Greece differ substantially but, as a rule of thumb, they follow local tradition and are largely contingent upon the linguistic structures, such as the type of verse involved. Within a given area the tunes and melodic lines (intonational contours) used for a lament can be similar, but might also have variations which rely on geographical and socio-cultural factors.

In the wider area of Midea, in Argolis, the traditional ritual laments that most women share are sung in three or four melodic lines, on which there might be variations. The women of Midea are aware that women in the neighbouring, mountainous village of Limnes, sing 'wilder' laments, with wildness being first of all understood as the emotional impact they have on their listeners mainly through the melody and rhythm of the lament, what they call 'o *havas*', as well as of the text themselves, whose vocabulary and images maximise pain and gruesomeness.[763] Sofia Helioti, a distinguished lamenter from Limnes confirmed this premise from the other end, noting that the 'women of the *kambos* [plain] cry differently, they cry more plaintively than us'.[764] When I asked her to sing one of the laments they would sing in Limnes for a young person who died of unnatural causes, she suddenly switched from a moderate iambic 15-syllable lament, whose melody was a variation of the melodic line I had heard in Midea, to an 8-syllable trochaic lament sung in the Arvanitika dialect, in which interjections were inserted in more than one position in the verse. The first two verses she sang were in Greek and they were sung as following:

	Eisai neos pallikari,	*io!*
Oh!	eisai neos pallikari,	
	Ki o thanatos den sou paei	*io!*
Oh, popo!	ki o thanatos den sou paei.[765]	

One can easily correlate the interjections '*io*' and '*popo*' with the «Ιώ» and «Παπαΐ» cries that

---

[762] E. Rosand, 'The descending tetrachord: an emblem of lament', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 3, 1979, pp. 346-359.

[763] *Havas* is a Turkish word meaning the 'way' and is also a technical term in music, meaning the 'tonality', Interview with Sofia Papageorgopoulos in Midea, Argolis, 2006.

[764] Interview with Sofia Helioti in Limnes, Argolis, 2006.

[765] Translation: 'You are young my lad/ io / Oh /you are young my lad/ And death does not suit you/ io / Oh, popo / And death does not suit you'.

we so often meet in tragedy. Indeed, the line that connects ancient Greek ritual lament with tragedy and tragic acting and contemporary ritual lament and acting practice seems to exhibit vital signs on more than one occasion and from different points of departure. Evidently, their psychotechnical premises seem to be clearly parallel, but their persistence in time suggests that some other, undercutting agency might be at work, which further connects these behaviours.

7.3 The function of lament: *Psychagogia*

7.3.1. Irony and the emergence of impersonation in lament

From the point of view of the thesis, the most important psychotechnical function of the *aoidoi*, which brings them even closer to our long-held understanding of acting, is the use of the *magic if* in their performance, through the impersonation, dialogue and narration devices, inherent in the laments. This magic *if* is the core mental movement of the actor that underlies all dramatic art and motivates the actor's whole personality, imagination and emotional memory into creative action. Though stylistically, the performance of the lament does not take the form of naturalistic impersonation, the whole performance of the ritual lament is a *representation of death and loss* by the *aoidoi* themselves on a physical, vocal and linguistic level. More precisely, ritual lament represents the impact of death on society and the culturally endorsed human stance to death, rather than death itself. By doing so, the lament further canonises the ideology of death that the community ascribes to the event, by presenting the socially 'ideal' reaction to death, according to each situation. This ideal *evaluation* of the emotional valence of the death event is actualised through the degrees of intensity in the performance of the physical and vocal scores of action, but also, through the opening of an imaginary dialogue between the bereft community and the deceased.

The *aoidos* adopts throughout the ritual the function of an actor, in that she will give voice, body and thought to the community of the living and to the deceased. Our study of the vocal and physical behavioural patterns that the *aoidoi* assume during the lament has shown a culturally constructed and transmitted simulation of spontaneous grief, anger and terror through their more or less fixed score. As such, when the *aoidoi* in their laments *give voice* to the relatives of the deceased, or the deceased himself or to Charon or to birds etc., while at the same time they pattern their behaviour in the con-specifics of grief, anger and terror, they create a score which is overarchingly perceived as *character*. When the mother, father, wife or sister, are given the voice of the *aoidos* in the laments, they do not only express their sorrow to the deceased. The relatives in the 'lament dramas' engage in various actions (in the Stanislavskian sense). These actions range from praising the dead, promising to remember him, warning him not to get lost in Hades, and all the way

to reproaching him for leaving them, accusing him of indifference, begging him to return or to come back some day and so on, all of which sum up to the task of *restoring communication*. Nevertheless, within the context of ritual laments, communication with the dead is doomed to failure:

> The place you are going to is not good, the sun never rises there
> The rooster never sings, nor does the sparrow
> Promise to Charon gifts, promise him money
> Maybe he'll let you come, once or twice a year.[766]

The insertion of dialogue in the texts of the *mirologia* has a very long history upon Greek soil that probably goes back to pre-Homeric ages. Though we can safely hypothesise about the antiphonal structure of the original ritual lament, we do not know what was being sung in the *thrênoi* and what exact kind of themes or structures these were following. We do, nevertheless, know how modern *mirologia* incorporate the structure of *gooi*, by following a tripartite-structure whose origins can be safely traced as early as the *Iliad*, and apparently before these were concretised enough to be incorporated in the epics. This tri-partite structure consists in (1) an addressing of the deceased, (2) a narrative and (3) another addressing together with a renewed return to the lament for the deceased. Alexiou has demonstrated this tripartite structure as a significant element in the continuation of lament within Greek tradition, along with the antithetic structure of the poetics and rhetoric of the lament, depicted mainly as an antithesis between the past and the present (Then/Now) and/or the mourner and the deceased (You/I).[767]The impact of narration in the lament is evident in modern *mirologia*, some of which become intensely narrative, like many 8-syllable laments are given the structural opportunity to do, while others take a wider stance. Motsios gives a broad categorisation of modern *mirologia* between *narrative* and *lyric* ones and notices how local traditions have favoured one form over the other, without affecting the ritual effectiveness of either kind.[768] Therefore, we can see how some *mirologia* rely more on the tradition of the *goos* while some others of the *thrênos* of the original ritual, given that the *gooi* were more connected to improvisations of

---

[766] Sofia Papageorgopoulos, Midea 2006; a similar version also by Sofia Helioti, Limnes 2006.
[767] Alexiou, p. 131f.
[768] Motsios, p. 27.

the relatives, while the *thrênoi* had a concrete musical-lyrical structure and were composed beforehand.[769]

A very clear picture and example of how a *goos* can instinctually accommodate dialogue and give natural impulse for impersonation, anticipating thus the *thrênos*'s formal and structural integration of dialogue and first-person recitation, is given in the *Trojan Women*, in Hecuba' *goos* for Astyanax (ll. 1156-1206) .[770] This *goos* follows the tripartite structure of addressing-narration-addressing, but, as often happens in modern *mirologia* too, because the deceased is too young to have had a life that could be narrated in the central narrative part of the *goos*, the narration focuses on what the person did *not* have the opportunity to do during his life-time. To a large extent, this anti-narration is also based on the internal structure of the 'past – present' and the 'I –you' conflict, from where it generates much of its emotional momentum.

More importantly, though, this passage gives us a unique example of primitive, spontaneous impersonation by the mourner, in Hecuba's reiteration of Astyanax's disproved words, as well as of the 'poet's indictment' (ll. 1190-1). Hecuba addresses the dead Astyanax and opens an imaginary dialogue with him. Addressing the dead is a behavioural pattern met cross-culturally within the context of death, and though it has often been attributed magical dimensions[771], it nevertheless primarily reflects an instinctual psychological attempt to restore the ruptured communication with the deceased. Apparently, with the years, this instinctual behaviour became a standard ritual act, and a first-class dramatic device for use in the theatre. The totality of laments throughout the world emotionally and technically rely on the construction of the heart-rending *irony* that is generated through this futile attempt to restore contact, and to some extent the lament as a ritual serves to mediate this communication by intensifying irony and ultimately closing it up. Moreover, in the specific example and in the absence of response, Hecuba goes even further by actually *restoring the communication* herself and voicing the response of the deceased, *as if* she were Astyanax, thus, practically *impersonating* him.

---

[769] C. Tsagalis, *Epic Grief; Personal Laments in Homer's Iliad*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin-New York, 2004, p. 5.
[770] *See* Appendix B.
[771] S. I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece,* University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1999, p. xvii.

The rupture of communication and absence of response, the *nonexistence* that by definition describes the death situation is among the recurrent, standard, ritual modules that define the *mirologia* and the most impressive generator of irony that defines the whole poetics of laments. If in the *goos* the futile attempt to communicate is, to a great extent, a spontaneous emotional need of the mourner, its mirroring and incorporation in the *thrênos* is the number one comment on the human condition that structurally underlies the whole ritual and supplies its emotional fuel. The irony that stems from real pain, gives rise to impersonation, and in the *thrênos* this impersonation is used to maximise pain and irony, in order to recontextualise them.

When the deceased speaks from the underworld, the experience that he conveys is more than disappointing; crossing the other side he has found nothing other than decay, destruction and desolation:

> I wandered all over Hades, with two candles in my hands
> Hoping to see young girls in joy, and young lads singing
> To see young children play around and laugh.
> I saw the young girls cry, the young lads cursing
> I saw young children screaming for their mothers.[772]

The 'communication' that may develop between the mourning relative and the deceased is always somehow cancelled, either because the deceased does not answer, or because communication is obstructed by nature or by the decomposition of the body, or because the answer, when there is one, describes the hereafter in the most gruesome, terrible and repulsive terms, which are incompatible with any sense of perspective, life or imagination for the living. In most cases, the answer of the deceased is so bitter, that it can only deteriorate the pain of the mourner:

> -If only I knew my child how Charon welcomed you
> If he welcomed you as a friend, I'll send him a big candle
> -Since you ask my mother, I will confess to you
> He gave me black snakes to feed them in my bosom
> They feed from my chest, they sleep in my lap
> And upon my head they have made their nest.
> If they get hungry for food, they eat my body
> And if they get thirsty for water they drink my tears
> Who drip from my little eyes, as if from a watery spring.[773]

This excruciatingly painful irony is the most important emotional lever that the *aoidoi* employ, in order to convey their messages and accomplish their function. The element of

---

[772] Saunier, p. 242.
[773] Saunier, p. 232.

failure in the laments, depicted here in the bitterest colours of the decay of the human body in death, is evident in all aspects and levels of the ritual, and mirrors the construction of irony, because it is its counterpart. Failure is the irony of the human fall.

If the generation of dialogue by the *aoidos* doubles the irony of nonexistence by addressing the dead, then the use of imaginary dialogue to confirm this very ineffability of imaginary communication by the deceased himself triples it:

> -Your mother is calling you, can't you hear? Your friends, can't you?
> -It's very windy, I can't hear, it's raining, I can't see
> And there's a stormy cloud in front of me, I cannot recognise you.
> -My God, stop the rain, scatter the stormy cloud
> So that his eyes can see, so that his ears can hear
> So that he opens up his lips and answers to his mother.[774]

With this imaginary completion of communication within the laments, as the deceased ultimately responds through the lamenter and cancels communication, irony reaches its peak, dialogue is established, the ritual fulfils its task, and lament itself becomes a primitive type of drama.

The Underworld in Greek laments is utterly ironic: it is a non-environment, in that it is outright incompatible with any sense of life, but it can often *seem* friendly and warm. In either case, though, the experience of death makes even this warmth yet more appalling. The fierceness of this world extends to the world of the living mourners, especially when the deceased has ceased communicating. This fierceness marks the end of communication between the two sides, as well as the liminal, pending condition of the mourner, to whose world the emphasis has now shifted:

> A widow is at the mountains, night is falling, nobody looks for her
> Not from her husband's family, nor from her own.
> Wild beasts jump on her to eat her, to devour her flesh
> And then she screams and shrieks, she calls for her husband
> -Where are you my dearest companion? Where are you my poor
> husband?[775]

In laments such as these, the *aoidoi* create a most intense dramatic environment, by feeding the chorus of mourners with highly charged given circumstances. By concretely and imaginatively defining the dramatic space, instead of generically addressing the deceased or the community, they lure the mourners and themselves into feeling, through insidious details.

---

[774] Saunier, p. 146
[775] Interview with Sofia Papageorgopoulos.

Sofia Papageorgopoulos, who performed this lament for me, had lost her husband (my father's brother) the previous year. She became emotional during the lament, and, despite the silent advice of the other mourners to stop [because the death 'was too close'] she went on. When she completed it, she wiped her tears silently, and while her eyes and body remained fixed in the position she had assumed during the lament, she sealed her performance with a prosaic—yet typically ritual—comment on her own question: 'He didn't hear her'. Such comments reflect the state of bitter *realisation*, on the part of the mourner, which is the ultimate goal of the ironic trajectory underlying ritual lament. The ability to sense the irony and the futility of communicating with the deceased is the act of an observer, which, in the ritual, is initially taken up by the *aoidos*. Nevertheless, the *aoidos* eventually shares the emotion, therefore, the *aoidos*, in Brechtian terms, both shares the pain and maintains the ability of an observer to see the bigger picture. This bigger picture does not give a solution to the pain of the mourner (or of the *aoidos*), other than confirming that 'nothing can be done'. When the mourners adopt—even briefly—the stance of the *aoidos*, they obtain the bigger picture, through which the human condition is understood as fleeting, feeble and ironic.

As such, the deceased as performed by the *aoidos* is a character whose overall action is to *discourage* the living from communicating with the dead, because there cannot be such a thing. The function of this character, its *emploi*, is at the core of death rituals and of lament specifically, because it affectively actualises a step in the process of mourning, by encouraging the severing of ties between the deceased and the community of the living, through impersonation. By making dramatic use of all the biological and socio-cultural components that construct the pain of the mourners, the aoidos—through the character—confirms the emotional validity of these constructions, and ultimately *reorients* the living towards these components as they appear in life, rather than in the context of death, *urging them to cherish and honour life* while they still can.

Summing up, the performance of the *aoidos* doubles the impersonation of the deceased or of the dialogue between the relatives and the deceased with a score of physical and vocal grief. The *aoidos* is the empathetic observer, who knows from the beginning that the other side has nothing, and that the communication with the other side is doomed to failure. Throughout the funeral and the lament, the *aoidos* is aiming at the *reversal points* in the drama, those moments of realisation, when the mourners realise that

death is the ultimate ending and are encouraged to alter their *action*. Throughout this time, the engagement of the *aoidos* with the lament retains the dimension of observation, but is attained through complete psychophysical dedication and affective arousal, coupled with a deeply ironic engagement with the world.

7.3.2. Pleasure, empathy and the function of grief

The laments of the *Iliad* as well as all laments in tragedy, just like all laments everywhere in the world, elaborate on the consequences of *loss* on the bereft, and manage their conflicting feelings and thoughts into perspective. This process, which is shared by relatives and professionals, is hard, but soothing at the same time, and it is exactly this existential soothing that comforts the relatives, but also motivates the empathy of the *aoidoi* in the ritual. Andromache and Hecuba cry for their own sorrows in the *Iliad*[776]; Achilles' lament for Patroclus moves Peleus and the other old men to lament, during which they cry for their own sorrows[777]; in the *Trojan Women*, the Chorus is carried away by the *kommos* between Andromache and Hecuba and admits the following crucial truth:

> Only tears can soothe the afflicted, tears
> And dirges sung to the melodies of grief.[778]

This axiom of the soothing effect of tears is repeated more than once in the *Trojan Women*, which is a play that reveals to us more about lament than any other text from antiquity. Hecuba accepts that 'tears are the only music/left for the wretched, singing the song/of trouble no one dances to'.[779] What is of ultimate interest is that Hecuba is not only aware of the soothing effect of tears, but she is also *aware* of the psychotechnique that will ultimately allow this to happen, when she begs the Chorus:

> But let me sing
> Of happier times one final time, so that
> My old good luck intensifies your pity
> For my bad luck now.[780]

This passage sheds further light on the process of lament in various ways. First of all, it demonstrates the rhetorical effect of emotional *deinosis* (intensification) that the

---

[776]Homer, *Iliad*, 24, 725f.
[777]Homer, *Iliad*, T, 334-9.
[778] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 701-2, (transl.) A. Shapiro.
[779] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 148-50.
[780] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 552-5.

narrative parts of the lament exert on the audience, because they magnify the momentum of the human fall from happiness to misery. Secondly, it betrays the technical awareness that *aoidoi* have over their craft, just as actors have their inner *monitor*[781] or their director. They engage in the act of lamenting, but are also aware of their process, as well as of the effect that they have on their audience, which they obviously try to maximise. Thirdly, it connects the intensity of grief and loss with the intensity and degree of importance of the lost object, which corroborates our knowledge of loss as reversal of the attachment that we examined earlier. And finally, it links again pain with a weird sense of pleasure, as we just saw.

The connection between pleasure and pain as it appears in lamentation was noted by Plato who further anticipated the relationship between lament and tragedy, and therefore acting. In *Philebus* he says: 'there are combinations of pleasure and pain in lamentations, and in tragedy and comedy, not only on the stage, but on the greater stage of human life; and so in endless other cases'.[782] Lutz, in his study of tears confirms that 'images of amorous pleasure, and of nourishment, satiety, and autointoxication through tears, can be found throughout Western History'[783]. Our earliest record of crying and tears comes from Cannanite clay tables and describes the tears of Gods; mourning the death of Ba'al, goddess Anat 'continued sating herself with weeping, to drink tears like wine', suggesting that from early on, tears were perceived as interconnected to grief and were believed to be possessing a satiating and almost intoxicating effect on the person shedding them.[784] Still, today, the words of the *mirologistra* echo the same mentality: 'I prefer to cry my lament, rather than eat or drink'[785]. This concept of ultimately aimed relief is also in accordance with contemporary evolutionary and biopsychological accounts of the function and physiology of grief.

According to Plutchik's psychoevolutionary model, sadness or grief is the prototypical emotion that occurs at 'the loss of a pleasureful or nutrient object that has been incorporated'. [786] On a functional level, sadness aims at the *reintegration* of this lost object, and this reintegration is attempted on a behavioural level by 'crying for help or

---

[781] *AW*, p. 122f.

[782] Plato, *Philebus*, 48a, (transl.) B. Jowett., The Echo Library, <www.echo-library.com>, p. 78.

[783] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 36.

[784] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 33.

[785] Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices*, p.73; p. 188.

[786] Plutchik, *Psychoevolutionary*, p. 145.

mourning'.[787] For Paul Maclean, too, separation cries (distress vocalisations) were the phylogenetically oldest separation calls that helped foster urgent communication[788]. Darwin saw this relationship between grief and calling for help very early; he knew that from an evolutionary point of view, babies who cried more had more chances to be fed, and that, therefore, '[i]n all cases of distress whether great or small, our brains tend through long habit to send an order to certain muscles to contract, as if we were still infants on the point of screaming out; by this order [...] we are partially able to counteract'.[789]

The connection of sadness to relief, suggests a return to a state of resource preservation, digestion and recovery, which as we have already seen belongs to the sphere of the parasympathetic nervous system's operation. Neurological studies on patients with lesions have shown that injuries to sympathetic nerves may promote tears and crying behaviour, while damage to parasympathetic nerve fibres can suppress its presence[790], suggesting that crying ultimately occurs during parasympathetic arousal. Nevertheless, it appears that the physiology of crying is a bit more complex, as it seems to be integrating both sympathetic and parasympathetic arousal. The latest studies have shown that there is a concrete sympathetic arousal before the onset of crying, while the tears themselves appear exactly after the peak of sympathetic arousal and as soon as parasympathetic compensation kicks in.[791]

Vingerhoets observed the phenomenon of *delayed crying* in which people postpone their crying, in order to wait for the appropriate moment when a specific person is absent, or present, or for any other reason that makes any other moment more appropriate than that given moment.[792] This tactic, known to us already as a variation on emotional regulation or as 'complicated grief'[793], may have negative effects on mental health as we saw earlier, and apparently, it is among the urgent priorities of ritual lament to control and limit such lurking psychopathology of constant postponing grief by promoting a here-and-now impetus for crying, promoting thus both an immediate relief, as well as an

---

[787] Plutchik, *Psychoevolutionary*, p. 154.

[788] Mac Lean cited in Lutz, *Crying*, p. 90.

[789] Darwin, *Expression*, p. 190.

[790] Lutz, *Crying*, p. 100.

[791] M. C. P. Hendriks et al, 'Can the distress-signal and arousal-reduction views of crying be reconciled? Evidence from the cardiovascular system', *Emotion*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2007, pp. 458–463.

[792] Vingerhoets, *Crying*, p. 92.

[793] Stroebe, *Bereavement and Health*, p. 210; p. 226.

opportunity for contemplation. During sadness the body is very relaxed and so is the brain. The rhythm in which mental images are shaped is very slow, while attention is more focused and has more inertia. As such, the person is urged to deeply contemplate each given mental picture, rather than rapidly alternate the focus of attention from one to the other, as happens in fear, for example. The body has withdrawn from overt physical action, which is now transferred into the internalised conflict, and everything is preparing the organism for a thorough reflection on the situation, in order to put it into some perspective and eventually cope.

Therefore, the pleasure and relief that lamenters cherish during tears is the homeostatic mechanism through which the body attempts to adapt to the environment by reappraising the situation and shedding some new light on it. Complicated grief, absent grief, extreme self-injurious behaviours and all other possible behaviours that De Martino summed up as irrelevant *planctus*, are channeled back into the wider safety-net of the ritual lament's score of dehistoricised actions. The ritual progresses through a series of successive sympathetic and parasympathetic arousals, monitored, fuelled, checked and limited by the community of the ritual *aoidoi*. As the activation of the parasympathetic smart Vagus promotes emotional expression, vocalisation and communication, balance returns through tears, eliciting nurturing behaviours from the community, ultimately thus promoting bonding and social cohesion.[794]As such, sadness is a very creative emotion, given it is not extended or perplexed beyond a certain degree of intensity or duration, and it is extremely interesting to notice how sadness, as the female, passive and despised emotion in Plato, can today be seen as a medium that promotes thought, reasoning and collectivity.

The best *aoidoi* are not just people with specific physical and psychotechnical skills. The most important skill of an *exarchos*, the skill that organises all other skills lays beyond a bell-like voice or a highly responsive nervous system. The following *miroloi* conveys the skill blatantly:

> He who has not experienced death does not cry for the dead
> He who knows nothing of foreign lands does not cry for those away
> He who has had no wounded ones does not cry for the wounded.
> I have experienced death a lot and I cry for the dead
> I know all about foreign lands and I cry for those away
> I know about wounds and I cry for the wounded

---

[794] D. Gustafson, 'Grief', N*oûs*, Vol. 23, No. 4., 1989, p. 459.

I know about grief and I cry the grieving.[795]

More often than not, the best *aoidoi* have extensive personal experience of death or pain: 'I weep for my own sorrows'[796] is a common *topos* for all *aoidoi*. This does not suggest that the *aoidoi* go to funerals in order to continue lamenting their own misery, nor does it diminish the technical skills that an *aoidos* must possess. It implies, though, that grief caused by the death of a loved one has nourished and motivated what ultimately is perceived as their psychotechnique, because through the experience of loss and its mediation by lament they have learned to deal with the abyss of nonexistence, and this is equally experience and equally technique. But in the absence of accumulated experience, empathy is the only alternative psychotechnical motivator for the *aoidoi*.

In a nutshell, lament performance relies on and propagates *the ethics of empathy*. It is through empathy and the recontextualisation of this empathy through the ritual lament that people learn how to cope. The *aoidoi*, like actors, are trained in grief, first and foremost through experience, but they are also trained in and through empathy. Empathy should not be understood here in the strictest sense of mirror neurons. An *aoidos* does not only train in lament when exercising her voice or gestures or overall performance in the plain, on the mountain, when working on the loom, or in front of the mirror[797]. In Greece, and possibly throughout the world, women as mourners train in grief through life: they are taught to engage with the world empathetically and the natural ability to empathise eventually becomes a skill. The ethics of empathy, that is, of 'feeling what it feels like to be human'[798] is culturally constructed and finds its perfect form in the performance of ritual lament as a response to inconsolable grief. Lament gives grief a structure to channel it and recontextualise it while there is still time.

7.3.3. Afterlife and the motivation of lament

What hides behind lament, especially Greek lament, and what fundamentally motivates the *aoidos* to engage emotionally with the lament, is the deep conviction of the *aoidoi*, as well as of the mourners, no matter how hard they might try to conceal it from themselves

---

[795] Saunier, p. 32.
[796] Alexiou, p. 41; Host-Warhaft, p. 20.
[797] Fauriel, pp. 79-80.
[798] Gross, *Psychology*, p. 109.

or from others, of the absolute absence of any kind of *afterlife*. One does not cry unless they really *evaluate* the situation as loss. Greek ritual lament never and nowhere holds the slightest hope of resurrection or any kind of continuation of life after death, and this is exactly what makes lament dangerous and subversive. As Ashenburg puts it, 'howling and lamentation were worse than unruly; they disparaged the doctrine of the afterlife'.[799] Greek ritual lament for the dead, more coherently and more persistently than any other cultural vehicle ever constructed in Greece, captured and elaborated on the innate disbelief of man in an afterlife. This message of the ritual lament is disarmingly strong, simple and natural, and readily accounts for the cross-cultural basis of the similarities of death rituals throughout the world, on a biopsychosocial level. Within Greece, centuries of Christian occupation have failed to obliterate it. The official reallocation of death rituals to the Church with its doctrine of the afterlife has only led to the construction of an absurd performance of two autonomous rituals during a funeral, separated by an unbridgeable gap of teleological incompatibility.

As Rohde notes, 'an immortality of the human soul as such, by virtue of its nature and composition—as the imperishable force of divinity in the mortal body—never became a real part of the belief of the Greek populace'.[800] As opposed to philosophy and theology, which 'remained the sole repositories of the belief in the immortality of the soul'[801], the Greek ritual lament, by incorporating everything that was traditionally anti-Greek, that is, the feminine, the emotional, the barbarian, the immoderate, the un-heroic, the marginal, the physical, the uncivilised, the un-free and the irrational, described death as the absolute end, as the dissolution of life and spirit, the decomposition of the body and of beauty, and the impossibility of any life after death. By promoting the ugly, the mortal, the painful and the emotional, lament arrested and conveyed a clearer, more rational picture of the world and of human life as definite and ironic. This irony is anything but denial though; denial is only in the afterlife, and lament denies denial, it looks death in the eyes, singing and dancing.

It is in within this receptive, plaintive state that lament creates and promotes communication and cohesion of the community, through the performance of the *aoidoi*.

---

[799] Ashenburg, *Mourner's Dance,* p. 35.
[800] E. Rohde, *Psyche: the cult of souls and the belief in immortality among the Greeks*, Routledge, London, 200, p. 538.
[801] Rohde, *Psyche*, pp. 538-9.

In the primordial situation of grief, which almost without doubt must have been the death of the beloved, the mourners were yearning for help and nurturing from the community. In the contexts of ritual lament, the *aoidoi* register this distress through their experience and ability to empathise, they mirror it, and orchestrate the emotional journeys of the mourners by disseminating the message of lament: that life is limited and precious, and that it goes on. Lament manages to comfort, by denying comfort altogether. This is the deeply embedded irony that describes man as 'mortal'. The hardest thing that can happen to a mourner during a funeral is to listen to the sound of the lament starting. The mere sound of women singing in choruses opposes the despair of loss that seems to tend to stop time, by confirming it. This sound has the metal-hard quality of life, only and simply because it is *present*, it keeps going and invites everybody to join and accept. No matter how bitterly one cries, the lament, like life, is there and keeps going.

7.3.4. Lament and acting: *Psychagogia*

The adoption of the modern concept of emotion in this thesis, has allowed us to investigate the relationship between acting and ritual lamenting, mainly as the use of a psychotechnique that entails simulation of emotion, emotional memory and real pain in both kinds of performance. This relationship has also been confirmed by being the object of various and diverse researchers, while links between the two can be found in many other related disciplines. Though an analytical study of these approaches reaches beyond the scope of the paper, a mere reference to some of them can further establish the interrelationship between *aoidoi* and actors. The direct origin of tragedy in ritual lament has been the claim of Nilsson[802]; Ridgeway also suggested that tragedy emerged from the gradual evolution of dead-cult into hero-cult through the performance of ritual lament[803]; the Dionysiac rituals from which tragedy is believed to have emerged according to other theorists is also characterised by intense lamentation rituals[804]; the antiphonal structures of tragedy and its modes of delivery reflect the modalities and antiphonal structure that we have studied in lament; the mere themes of tragedy reflect thematic areas that are first

---

[802] Nilsson, 'Der Ürsprung der Tragödie', pp. 504-92.
[803] Ridgeway, *Origin of Tragedy*; also, W. Ridgeway, *The Dramas and Dramatic Dances of the Non-European Races*, Benjamin Blom., New York, 1964.
[804] W. M. Calder, 'The dithyramb—an Anatolian dirge', *The Classical Review*, Volume 36, Issue 1-2, February 1922, pp. 11-14.

addressed in lament; the omnipresence of lament in tragedy further indicates the development of a common function as we move from lament to theatre.

The double functional role of the ritual lament, that of appeasing the dead and recontextualising the feelings of the relatives, is effected through the *aoidos*, who has become a mediator between the two sides. This function of the *aoidos* is what we can call an act of *psychagogia*. The word *psychagogia* derives from the words 'psyche' («ψυχή»-'soul') and 'agein' («ἄγειν»-'to lead'). In Ancient Greece, the *psychagogia* or *goeteia* obtained more mystical undertones and was related to magical practices of the 'leading of souls'. This act of soul leading conveys the literal sense of the word, and was allegedly performed by men of Eastern origin, called *psychagogoi* or *goetai*[805]. The word *goes* or *goetai* (plural) derives from our all familiar *goos*. The *goos* was part of the *psychagogia* because the *goetai* relied on the performance of *gooi* in order to achieve the communication and leading of the souls of the deceased, or *psychagogia*. In Aeschylus' *Persians* we have an example of *psychagogia*, when the Chorus of Persian men manage to lead the soul of Dareios to appear from the Underworld through *gooi* and laments. In modern Greek, now, *goes* translates as a charming man, and *goeteia*, (i.e., *psychagogia*) as charm. *Psychagogia*, on the other hand in modern Greek means entertainment and is related to the arts, theatre included. An actor too, then, is considered to be a *psychagogos*.

The net of linguistic affinities between the arts as entertainment of the soul and the 'magical' acts of leading the souls to or from the Underworld betrays a well rooted functional similarity between professional mourners, lament and actors, which complements the historical, professional and psychotechnical aspects of the two activities that we have studied so far. There is nothing metaphysical or magical in this case though. Mourners are neither shamans nor mediums. Ritual lament, like acting, only *pretends* to act *as if* it were looking at the other side. In reality, it just mirrors the grief of the living, uncovering its existential roots. The *aoidos* performs the character of the deceased through grief. The grieving dead are not only the ones that have already died, but the ones that are still alive, that is, the dead-to-be. The *aoidoi* grieve for the ones they have lost, and the ones they will lose; and they grieve the way they would like others to grieve when they will die, because they also grieve for themselves. Again, as in acting, emotional memory largely coincides with imagination. Conversely, the actor uses his own feelings and

---

[805] Johnston, *Restless Dead*, p. 85.

emotions to give presence to a character whose existence is as fictional as a dead person's. The Greek lament and its subversive nature may or may not have been silenced by Solonian legislation[806], but the omnipresence of lament in tragedy seems to be reflecting the uninterrupted cultural evolution of the lamenter into an actor.

For the contemporary actor, and though performing emotion is a *sine qua non* for conveying character, experiencing feelings analogous to that character—unlike what happens with an *aoidos*—is today often understood as an option and a dilemma, rather than a duty or a paradox: to feel or not to feel?[807] The line that we have followed so far indicates to us that the answer to this dilemma is indeed personal, but simple; as Stanislavski puts it:

> One actor does not cry on stage but by giving, so to speak, a semblance of tears, makes the audience cry, another actor is bathed in bitter tears but the audience does not share his feelings. Might one then conclude that real feelings are not needed in the theatre, merely cold artifice, the actor's craft? I may be wrong but no! […] one person has been endowed by nature with a soul that has a natural affinity with everything that is beautiful and good; all that is human is dear to him, he does not stand apart. […] Another man, much more bound up with himself, more self-centred, lives in the world, encountering sorrow and laughter at every step but will only participate in either insofar as he is linked socially to the people concerned, or because it is useful to express his sympathy […] These people judge everything coldly but so as not to reveal themselves as the egoists they are, they make a show of concern as though it were real concern, and since they are always calm and collected express themselves with great clarity. It is the same in the theatre[808].

---

[806] *See* section 6.1.1.3; also, section 7.1.1.
[807] Konijn, *Acting Emotions*, p. 21.
[808] Stanislavski in Benedetti, *SAI*, pp. 10-11.

7.4. Conclusions

Our neuroscientifically informed study of the use of emotion confirmed a direct functional and technical affinity between the processes of acting and lamenting. Both the lamenter and the actor are *psychagogoi*, in that they lead the minds of their audiences, by leading their emotions and feelings to the paths that have been walked by their fictional constructions. This process becomes possible and communicable through the investment with emotion of their score of actions. The emotional direction and momentum of this score is secured for performance through simulation of the physical and vocal physiology of the characters, enough to convey character to the audience and, thus, fulfil the main goal of the process, which focuses on the audience. Yet, the best *aoidoi*, and possibly the best actors, actively embark on this journey of emotion that leads them to feeling, not only because they possess the psychotechnical skill to do so, but also because they share the value that motivates both their journey and the technique to attain it. During their journey they affectively bridge the living with the dead, the imaginary with the tangible, the men with the women, the individual with the society, the body with the soul and emotion with reason. As modern science drastically re-evaluates the function of emotion in life, and as ritual lament seems to be reaching its own end (?), a challenge for the truly *psychophysical* actors is to reconsider: what is my motivation in this journey of feelings in so mournful an art?

Chapter 8

Rehearsing the *Trojan Women*

This thesis was initially destined to be a practice-based project, accompanied by recorded material from the application of emotion technique, and from my fieldwork on ritual lament, on Euripides' *Trojan Women*. Towards the end of the research the plan changed and it was decided that the nature of the research, as it had been conducted, demanded more room for analytical argumentation in the thesis rather than for monitoring how these arguments could be applied during rehearsals of the *Trojan Women*. Because by the time this decision was ultimately made both the fieldwork and the rehearsals had been completed, and most of the material that would form the basis for the practice-based research was already available, this thesis ended up having a composite character: it is a conventional PhD, in that it does not furnish the recorded material *per se* as part of the argument and of the physical body of the thesis, but at the same time, it relies on practice-based research, in that its arguments have been tested on the stage and the practical research is already digested in the arguments.

Our team, the *Kodikas* group, started rehearsing the *Trojan Women* in early October 2006. The rehearsals were programmed to last four months, but twenty days before the opening night, on the 7th of January 2007, the owner of the theatre died, the theatre was closed down because of debts to the state, and our performance was cancelled. The performance never met its audience, and the experiment was never fully completed, but the work that took place during that period redefined dramatically this entire thesis.

I knew from the beginning that the *Trojan Women* would be an immense challenge for applying my findings from the psychotechnique of lament and emotion in twentieth century acting, exactly because of the play's urgent demand for emotional results. My overall *task* in the performance was this: I wanted to direct a performance of the *Trojan Women* the way I believed this play should be performed and directed. I wanted actors who would do justice to the characters' emotions and could mobilise their own analogous feelings, and I needed to direct the play in a way that would promote its existential and ontological aspects, moving beyond the cliché melodramatic line of interpretation that

was available. This meant that my actors needed to *experience*—apart from *expressing*—their character's emotions with the intensity, stability and control that I envisaged, and that I needed to *clarify* exactly how I wanted to direct. This meant that I had to *interpret* the play and *instruct* my actors on how to act.

Methodologically I decided to employ the *Active Analysis* as I had learned it at GITIS, because this gradual process would allow actors to simultaneously interpret and enact the dramatic world of the play, through structured improvisation. On the other hand, and given that the play itself had very concrete and closed structures, facts and behaviours, it was obvious that many things had to be superimposed on the actors, and that they also had to work from simulation. The simulation work is already part of the *Active Analysis*, especially when the improvisatory *études* become fixed into a score, but it was clear that it was impossible to generate the ritual gestures or extreme behaviours that were described in detail by the author—and which I did not intend to bypass—solely from improvisation, no matter how methodically we worked. As a result, I needed to work on the interface between structured improvisation and simulation, and that was the area that my research had prepared me to investigate.

8.1. Interpretation

The process of interpreting the *Trojan Women* had started long before my official preparation for the specific performance. My dissatisfaction at the approaches adopted in performances and analyses of the play, as opposed to what I sensed the play was about, had been growing for years, and by the time I had to interpret the play for performance a series of arguments had accumulated; some of them conscious, others unconscious; some of them cognitive, others affective. Overall, I was convinced that the play was far from limited to the 'consequences of war'[809], but I was somewhat discouraged by the fact that scholarship on the play concentrated on this line of interpretation.

A very important realisation during my preparation was that the *Trojan Women* was part of a trilogy whose other plays were dealing with mythical material very closely related to the dramatic world of the Trojan War[810]. The trilogy was written in 415 B.C. amidst the Peloponnesian War, but the practice of writing thematically connected trilogies like the *Oresteia* had been abandoned for many years. The recurrence of such an overtly ambitious trilogy one year before the Sicilian expedition and shortly before Euripides abandoned Athens forever, along with the completely different spin that the two plays gave to the *Trojan Women,* seemed very suspicious to me, and meant that possibly my dissatisfaction with the interpretation 'refugees' or 'victims and victors of war' was rather justified. Though some scholars disagree on whether the plays of the trilogy are indeed thematically connected[811] as in the *Oresteia*, I sensed that the *Trojan Women* needed to be interpreted in the light of the trilogy, beyond the slightest doubt. By closer examining the text of the *Trojan Women* I started realising that the play, as well as the trilogy, was obsessed with the issue of the forces that motivate human action, and with the ensuing themes of divine agency, institutional religion, power, knowledge, free will, guilt, and freedom. War was just the pretext.

Procuring a solid and thorough interpretation for the play was indispensable for more than one reason. First of all, because I had to interpret three plays, instead of one, two of which were practically missing. More importantly, because interpreting the play,

---

[809] N. T. Croally, *Euripidean Polemic: The* Trojan Women *and the Function of Tragedy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 254.
[810] *See* Appendix C.
[811] G. L. Koniaris '*Alexander, Palamedes, Troades, Sisyphus*: a connected tetralogy? A connected trilogy?', *Harvard studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 77, 1973, pp. 85-124.

that is, finding its super-task or central conflict, coincided with all major acting choices in the construction of every character's task and through-action. The play has been repeatedly accused of not having *peripeteia*[812], but to our understanding there were many 'swift change[s] in fortune'[813], and their interpretation was urgent. Does Cassandra really believe that the Trojans are better off than the Greeks, or is she just trying to console her mother through sophistries? Does Menelaus pretend he is going to kill his wife or does he really mean what he says?

We needed to pinpoint the characters' function within the play, and of the play's function as a performance in Athens in 415 B.C., as well as to *reactivate* their function and conflict within the context of a performance of the same play in the same city 2420 years later, through a process of *analogy*. Most contemporary directors who have worked on the play found their analogy in the historical context of the Melos massacre[814] (shortly before the play was written) and the expedition to Sicily (one year after). This analogy usually translated into the familiar narratives of 'war atrocities' and 'refugees', and these performances often reflected contemporaneous war situations, such as the war in Serbia, Afghanistan or Iraq. Though our ensemble was aware that the theme of war was also in operation in the trilogy, we found our own focus in the context of Euripides' theological beliefs as the main trajectory of conflict in the play. We knew that he had been accused of heresy and that he may have been sent to trial, that he could not speak overtly about atheism if he indeed wanted to[815]; that in his dramaturgy gods were constantly neighbouring human passions, and that the Trojan trilogy was among the last plays he wrote before abandoning Athens forever. On the other hand, we were becoming certain that in the *Trojan Women* the relationship between human and divine power—as a motivating force—was the most recurring theme of all; that Hecuba is constantly contemplating her attempt at establishing a dialogue with the gods throughout the play, and that her struggle to understand the forces that motivate humans and define their

---

[812] Kovacs, D., *Euripides: Trojan Women, Iphigeneia Among the Taurians, Ion*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge & London, 1999, p. 7.

[813] Kovacs, *Euripides*, p. 7.

[814] The Melos scenario is now generally abandoned by scholars, on the grounds that the massacre occurred only a few months before the performance of the tetralogy (*Sisyphus* included), therefore it must have been impossible for Euripides to write, organise and mount the plays in such a short period of time. *See* D. Kovacs, 'Gods and men in Euripides' Trojan trilogy', *Colby Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 1997, pp. 162-76; A. M. Van Erp Taalman Kip, 'Euripides and Melos', *Mnemosyne*, Vol. 40, 1987, pp. 414-9.

[815] D. M. Brooks, *The Necessity of Atheism*, Freethought Press, New York, 1933, p. 274; A. B. Drachmann, *Atheism in Pagan Antiquity*, Kessinger, Whitefish, p. 51.

actions gave to the play the perfect unity and *peripeteia* that scholars thought was absent. Furthermore, we felt that the polarity between male Greek (Homeric) *kleos* and female barbarian lament that was in full operation in the *Trojan Women* was the perfect vehicle for the deconstruction of the complex relationship between male heroism, institutional religion and imperialism on the one hand, and female passion, lament and natural disbelief in metaphysics on the other.

8.2. Instructing actors

Guiding the actors through the specific performance of the *Trojan Women* was a very complex process. First of all, they needed to become familiarised with lament, because most, if not all, of what they had to act was within the context of lament, ritual or not. Simultaneously, I also needed to focus on their acting *per se*, apart from lament, and devise the best way to lead them through the correct paths for achieving emotional participation in each and every performance, and for this I needed to rely on my research. The gist of what I had available from my research on acting emotion was that the ways to generate emotional feelings were two: through *simulation* of emotion or through *emotion memory* and *imagination*[816].

Simulating emotion is a much more difficult task than one might imagine. It might take months for actors to master the emotional patterns and go past the robotic phase of Alba-Emoting, during which the generation of feelings is still random, to a great extent[817]. I had invited Roxanne Rix, with whom I had trained in Alba-Emoting in the US, to join us in Athens for an intensive workshop focused on lament and the crying pattern specifically, but practicalities and busy schedules prevented this from happening. Though I was not yet certified to teach Alba-Emoting to other actors, I was determined not to abandon simulation of emotion as a key tool for generating feeling. At the same time, I was more than aware that none of my actors had real experience of war atrocities, or any other kind of such extreme situations, and my estimation was that trying to arouse their imagination or their memory of analogous feelings through the *as if* and the given circumstances*,* which was the other option, would definitely promote their organicity but it would still be too unstable and inadequate. Though most of the actors were closer to this latter concept of acting through the *as if* and their imagination, rather than to simulation, it was obvious from the descriptions of the physiology of emotion in the play (tearing cheeks, squealing, pulling hair etc.) that the leap of organicity was still going to be too big to take solely through the *as if*.

This methodological dead-end, for which I was supposed to have already found answers, was threatening to take me back exactly where I was at the very beginning of my

---

[816] *See* section 4.3.2.1.
[817] *See* section 4.2.2.2.

journey into this research. I had hoped that modern science would have given me something more than just the ability to describe in scientific detail the two main processes of feeling generation in acting, which seemed incompatible with one another. That was the moment of the biggest pressure throughout the whole research. Though I had been studying emotion theory and acting theory anew for two years, and though I felt I was on the verge of saying something completely different about emotion in acting, my mind's tongue was numbed. I knew I had understood something on a different level, but I was not yet ready to put it into words and practice. That was very unfortunate, given that at the same time my interpretation of the play was being redefined, and there was barely any scholarly support to that direction. Everything was predicting disaster.

I decided to buy myself some more time, and started rehearsals by applying a modular strategy, so that, in the meanwhile, I could review my reading of emotion theory and search for more definitive and combinative answers. The modular strategy during rehearsals meant working simultaneously on different aspects of the actor's psychotechnique during each rehearsal, hoping that these would eventually develop into complementing each other. Furthermore, apart from working with the actors on their role or their technique, I simultaneously needed to work on the actors themselves as personalities. If I was going to have any chance of arousing feelings in them, the work on the modules would have to be done in a way that would affect them not just as actors, but as human beings. Such a thing could not be done separately from the work on the performance, so it was a matter of *how* I would combine and convey the material and the tools, and how I would connect the rehearsal to our own real lives that would affect them on the larger scale. The modules on which I concentrated were three: surrounding the actors, incorporating lament and acting the play.

8.2.1. Surrounding

Surrounding the actors was very close to the idea of arousing the actors' imagination and emotional memory on a larger plane as in *Active Analysis,* and involved engaging in those processes that would *indirectly* prepare the soil for actors to gradually engage. Becoming a team was a primary concern, not only because team-work and common codes are a prerequisite for in depth work, nor because the *Trojan Women* is a play that depends on a Chorus of women, but also because it was necessary in order to prepare them for the

reception of the lament material, as well as for facilitating the generation, circulation and amplification of emotion, when it would make its appearance. There were eight women and one man in the cast. Most of us had worked together before, were members of the Kodikas group and were friends already, but it happened that the four new actors who had just joined us were immediately aligned with the rest. The workload was so heavy from the beginning, and we were so fervently and deeply absorbed in our effort to reach a common interpretation of the play, that all non-related issues were automatically discarded, and without any extra effort, we started working as team almost from day one.

Every rehearsal, regardless of the module(s) on which it would focus, would start with Pontian dancing. This choice fulfilled three functions at once: it was an ideal warm up, it promoted and constructed communal feeling and emotional memory, and it taught the actors dance patterns that I was planning to use in the performance. The rhythmical complexity of the Pontian dances, either in fast dances such as the *Pyrrihios* (war dance, 7/8) or the slow *Dipat* (double-step, the hostess' dance, 9/8)[818], was a first class combination of both warm up and deep but active concentration, which activated the actors' bodies and focused their attention, not individually, but communally, as in *public solitude*[819]. The *Pyrrihios* dance(or Serra), which dates back to ancient Greece, is a war dance[820], and even today, when it is performed, it usually comes as the final part of a lament. This movement from lament to war, from contemplation to assertion, echoes the function of emotion in lament and, to my understanding, it describes perfectly the different version of *kleos* that the play promotes: the female *kleos* of Hecuba and the Trojan women in the play, who move from devastation towards continuing their battle for life, through the knowledge that lament supplies them with. This is exactly why I intended to close the play with this dance, or with the essence of this dance, and why I placed this kind of work on ritual dancing at the crucial point of (ritually) introducing the rehearsal.

Alongside, we watched numerous films, analysed paintings and read novels that somehow related to situations and themes in the play. Given that our direct experience of war was none, we needed to explore similar circumstances, regardless of whether in the play war is the pretext and the context, rather than the theme itself. Among this material,

[818] C. Savvidis, 'Dances of Pontos', viewed on 1 November 2009 < http://www.osepe.de/xoroi.htm>.
[819] *AW*, p. 99.
[820] Savvidis, '42. Serra', <http://www.osepe.de/xoroi_5.htm>.

Elli Papadimitriou's three volume *Koinos Logos*[821] (*Common Words*) proved a very inspiring source, as it entailed first-person narrations from the two World Wars and from the Greek Civil War. This collection of accounts shed light on aspects of life during war that theatre practitioners often bypass or take for granted such as hunger, thirst or lack of personal hygiene etc., while it also gave us a very concrete understanding of how the circumstances of war may lead people to acts of grandeur and self-sacrifice, as well as to depravity and decadence. This process of creating sensation and emotion memories through literature, music, film and art helped us define and embrace affectively the given circumstances that we met in the *Trojan Women*, as well as to come closer to the super-task of the play. The more we juxtaposed given circumstances with themes in the play, the more we sensed that, to a great extent, the *Trojan Women* speaks about the feeling of helplessness that accompanies the rediscovery of the core human condition: that the future is unpredictable and that *free* will is an illusion. This feeling of powerlessness is constantly suppressed during normal life situations by an illusion of having control and power, but is brought urgently to life, when reality proves openly unpredictable and when that ability to act against it somehow evaporates. It was becoming clear that the play registers this human vulnerability by following the fall of Troy as Hecuba's fall, from the bliss of the *Alexandros* and all the way to the desolation of the *Trojan Women,* through lament.

8.2.2. Incorporating lament

Because the *Trojan Women* is a play that accommodates all the modalities of lament, it was imperative that all actors became fully aware of the nature and function of lament. This meant that I had to transmit the findings from my reading and fieldwork on lament to the ensemble in a manner that could enable them to understand the function of lament, as well as to prepare them for embodying lament efficiently. Lamenting in the *Trojan Women* is a recurring *action*, and its form spans from instinctual emotional reactions of grief (Andromache) to full-blown, socially constructed ritual (Astyanax's funeral). As a result, we had to be able to define the action, task and physical action that were being conveyed in each case, and in order to do that we had to take into account the full biocultural

---

[821] E. Papadimitriou, *Common Words,* Vols. I-III, [Παπαδημητρίου, E., *Κοινός Λόγος,* τ. I-III, Ερμής, Αθήνα, 1984].

construction of these expressions of mourning.

At first, we started by reading Greek lament texts as handed down by Greek oral tradition. Because the affective impact of that reading was strong and direct, the need for understanding lament in its ritual original context within the funeral was naturally instigated. While we did not abandon our reading of lament material, we attempted to obtain a better anthropological picture of why and how people lament, and focused on Greek lament. Though Greece is among the cultures where ritual lament is still performed, it soon became clear that most of the actors had very limited experience of observing ritual lament, and almost none of participating actively in such a ritual. Unfortunately, the recorded audiovisual material that is available from Greek ritual lament during proper funerals is so scarce and fragmentary, that we had to depend on brief glimpses of the practice from television news or documentaries, while on the other hand, and though there are quite a few audio recordings of sung laments available, these are almost always outside their ritual context.

I rigorously exposed the group to the findings from my reading on lament and from my own fieldwork, which epitomised key related issues from anthropological research on lament. Alongside, we started working more directly on the performance of the available lament texts. We started by exploring the ritual order and the musical qualities of lament performance, and applied the melodic lines from the areas in Argolis that I had studied. While experimenting with pitch, tempo, rhythm, intensity or mere melodic contour (versions of the melody), I was monitoring the emotional impact that these shifts had on the group. Very often, a specific tempo or pitch (usually in the passage from the chest register to that of the head) would affect some performers more directly than others, while, in some other cases, it was the mere shift from one pitch, tempo or intensity to another that seemed to create the emotional response. These responses were indeed in accordance to what one would have expected from emotion theory, but their intensity was not adequate on its own. Once the group became comfortable with performing these variations, I gradually introduced the *icons of crying* (creaky voice, falsetto vowel, voiced inhalation, cry break)[822] as a more aggressive approach that would combine moderate but concrete physiological simulation with lament-specific vocal gestures. Incorporating the icons of crying into the lament performance immediately created a

---

[822] *See* section 6.2.3.1.

bizarre situation, in that the actors' voices started having a considerable affective quality, which was, nevertheless, being somewhat cancelled by the fact that their feelings were not accordingly *motivated*.

At that point, I introduced the audiovisual material from my research and fieldwork, depicting lamenting women and men not only from Greece, but from all over the world. Working on this material considerably informed my research by proving, beyond the slightest doubt, the cross-cultural nature of the emotions involved in lamentation, as well as the high degree of similarities in lament rituals cross-culturally. By working jointly on the texts, video clips and photographs we first identified all the gestural extremities of both spontaneous (*goos*) and ritual (*thrênos*) lament that we encountered in Greek tradition and the *Trojan Women*, and we then attempted to embody the physiology of emotions that were being depicted.

I asked actors to choose photographs or short video clips and simulate the full expressions or sequence of lament behaviour of the person(s) in the photograph or clip, in an attempt to *reside* in them, while trying to reproduce the voice and action that they thought was equivalent. This process was opening the way for working from the simulation of emotion with more contextual background than merely teaching a pattern, and I was hoping that the memory of this effort to embody someone else's emotion would be available for retrieval later on, even without the feeling that accompanied it. This approach yielded some remarkable results on the individual level, as in some cases actors even started experiencing relevant feelings, but was rather destabilised when we tried to apply it on a larger, choral scale.

It was clear that an overarching narrative was necessary, in order for the achievements in the work on the icons of crying and the audiovisual material to be coordinated, and for individual efforts to become interactive, collaborative dramatic work. There simply was not enough time for this approach. If this work was not going to be left unexploited, it ought to be integrated within the wider process of acting in the play, and the narrative of its dramatic world. The actors had become aware of the form and function of ritual lament, they were familiar with the technique of antiphony, with the melodic lines, rhythmical shifts, manipulations of volume and icons of crying in the physical performance of lament, but they needed an imaginary background to allow those features to thrive into feeling. Once again, an intermediate, combinative solution was

necessary.

8.2.3. Acting the play

Coaching the group's acting in the play was the heart of the task, but already the processes of interpreting the play, surrounding the actors and incorporating lament were part of the wider acting process of arousing the actors' imagination and emotional memory. All these processes are inextricable from *acting* the play, as well as from one another, and all of them relied first of all on the *original* text of the play. I personally do not find any interest in performances of tragedies in ancient Greek. Ancient Greek is a dead language, and though I could perhaps understand it with great difficulty when reading it, I cannot emotionally connect to it as an audience member. It is the translations of plays that have taken over the task of conveying the meaning and poetry of the original texts in each performance of tragedy today, but the reality is that the ancient text operates through an extremely important device, that even the most accurate and perfect translation cannot convey: metre.

8.2.3.1. Metre

As we saw in an earlier chapter, each metre in ancient Greece was believed to possess a specific character (*ethos*), by being clearly indicative of mood and emotional state[823]. To this extent, the ancient texts of Greek tragedies can function as maps of emotion for audience and actors alike. Though there exists a rather stable and common structure that defines all tragedy (*Prologos*, *Parodos*, *Episodes-Stasima*, *Exodos*), there is limitless variation in the creative use of metre in the text by the tragedians. The metrical analysis of the *Trojan Women* proved to be one of the most important hermeneutical tools throughout the process, which defined everything, from the directorial style of the performance to minute shifts in action and characterisation. The *Trojan Women* is remarkably lyrical, in that more than half of the play is in written lyrical metres, clearly suggesting that most of it was performed through *heightened* speech and movement in the original performance. Despite the fact that we do not know exactly how the language was spoken, how the music sounded or what the dancing looked like, the metres and metrical shifts are still extremely useful to us today because they point in specific directions.

---

[823] *See* section 6.2.1.

Monitoring metre and its shifts in the *Trojan Women* revealed important information about the emotional structure of the play and of the action involved. After the iambic trimeter (prose) of the divine *Prologos* (ll. 1-96) Hecuba starts with a recitative of anapaests (ll. 98-121), continues with a threnodic monody fully sung in lyric anapaests (ll. 122-152), while the *Parodos* continues in the same metre (ll. 153-229), suggesting that the semi-choruses join Hecuba's lament respectively. When Hecuba concludes her song (l. 196), the two semi-Choruses finally sing together their first *Ode* (ll. 197-229). The lament is disrupted by Talthybius' entrance which is being announced in recitative anapaests by the Chorus's leader (ll. 230-4). While Talthybius maintains the iambic trimeter of prose, Hecuba addresses her questions to him in sung lyric iambs and dochmiacs, and their dialogue forms an unusual *kommos*, where only one of the two actors engages in lyric metre[824].

In this passage of 234 lines, the elaborate employment of metre registers the scenic action in clearly emotional terms. From a rather cool dialogue between the two gods in the *Prologos*, we move to Hecuba's distress, delivered in growingly lyric metre. From prose, to recitative, to sung lament, a first emotional crescendo is clearly constructed in the play, which is sustained for the duration of the *Parodos* and reaches a climax in the choral song. At the peak of this crescendo, Hecuba falls back into silence. The emotional tension is suspended during the more restrained anapaests of Talthybius' entrance, but explodes again dramatically in the anomalous *kommos* that follows. Hecuba's desperate singing stands out from the procedural mood of Talthybius, who does not endorse her emotional tone and keeps speaking in prose. The metres and metrical shifts employed here do not only affect the audience, or the directorial pace of the performance. Each shift signifies a *fact* and initiates a new *bit* (unit of action), thereby challenging the actor to identify the new *task*, *action* and *behaviour* in which the character engages[825]. Furthermore, they function as orchestrators of the *score* of physical action on the scale of the play, by indicating a pattern actualised through climaxes, crescendos, diminuendos etc. In short, metrical analysis reveals the underlying maps of emotion and action that lurk under the surface of the text, and invites actors and directors to become aware of the tempo-rhythmical patterns that result in the emergence of character and plot.

---

[824] I have followed the metrical analysis of K. H. Lee, *Troades,* Macmillan, London, 1976.
[825] *See* section 4.3.1.

Mapping the metrical structure was among the first things we engaged, and this structural awareness was an extra source of inspiration for the actors. A great deal of that inspiration was tied down in the rehearsal through the work we did with the musician, who was attending many rehearsals, and whose task was to monitor the emotional interaction that was developing between the actors and all the sources of music that were making their way into the play. The music he eventually composed had a contemporary style but it was rooted in the metrical and tonal indications of the original text. As a result, music instigated and enhanced action rather than illustrating it.

8.2.3.2. Given circumstances, *as if,* action and *Distanzierung*

Above all, though, the ultimate focus of the work throughout the rehearsals was on how actors approached directly the dramatic world of the play and embodied their characters. The challenge was to enable the actors to deliver their characters through their own feelings and emotions, but, simultaneously, and in order for that to happen, I had to build a safety-net for the performance, a minimum of directorial narrative that would convey all the basic facts of the plot and below which the performance would not be allowed to fall. Achieving this would automatically mean that the actors had mastered the characters' emotional behaviour as evident in physical action, and that their acting could convey character, plot and conflict to the audience; feeling the emotions they would be performing was the next level. Working from the basic events, facts of the plot and character tasks was in reality the process of *Active Analysis*. I encouraged my actors to identify the main events and tasks in the play, and to do what they would do *if* they themselves were in those circumstances. We were clearly working with action from the *as if* and from structured improvisation (*études*), gradually approaching the structure of the play through personal creative choices[826].

The first and most important decision that had to be made was about given circumstances: space and time. We had to decide exactly who these women were and what kind of space they were being held in. As we find out from the first Stasimon, the night before the fall of Troy people were celebrating their victory and the end of a long war; some had gone to bed, others were working, and most of them were still partying.

---

[826] *See* section 4.3.2.1.3.

This decision was left entirely to the actors. Who were they and what would they do *if* they had won a war yesterday and if there were a huge celebration party? The directorial given was that the women were being held hostages in the exact theatre we were going to perform it. This objectification of space and time seemed to be offering a very plausible given circumstance that would allow the actors to further adjust their acting in tangible, believable and factual detail, and that would provide a further short-cut for arousing their feelings and action tendencies.

Immediately, we started working in the space, and as we were moving back and forth from the stage to the text, each time trying to incorporate more detail about the facts, the structure, the given circumstances and the text itself, the actors were urged to attend to and identify the exact strategy in which they were achieving their task in the given circumstances: their *action*. Apart from their roles in the play all the female actresses were also part of the Chorus. They were free (with a few exceptions) to select the Chorus persona that would inspire them, from what we had read or watched, or from their imagination, as long as it was going to be specific and consistent, and as long as they could translate it into *action*.

Actioning the entire performance, that is, mapping the actions for each scene or bit, through practical trial and error, was at the core of the rehearsals and in the manner clearly outlined in Stanislavski's latest work, but the precise selection of the tasks and actions for each character was further framed, sharpened and objectified by using Brechtian characterisation tools (*Distanzierung*). This entailed promoting the contradictions of the characters' conflicts, motivations and actions, and proved extremely illuminating in the process of interpreting the play, exactly because it promoted the activation of the latent conflicts. This was especially true of Hecuba, whose constant self-contradictions from one scene to the other highlighted her cognitive and affective journey and largely formed the through-line of action in the play and the trajectory of conflict as effected through the conflict with the other characters. Meanwhile, I was still searching for a solution to the question of fine-tuning the synthesis of simulation of emotion with imagination and memory, and I had twice reviewed my reading on emotion theory, but nothing dramatically new made its appearance. Two months into the rehearsals, we were still working in a modular mode, with lament work being more on the simulation side of the spectrum and with the scenes closer to the methodology of the *Active Analysis,*

through improvisation and the *as if*.

8.2.3.3. A methodological dead-end

I then decided that we should start running through the whole play to see where we stood. After the initial disconcertedness that usually comes with the first run-through, it looked like the characters' actions were being conveyed rather adequately, if not clearly, that the story was intelligible, and that there also were a few moments of feeling by the actors. But of course, I was more than aware that we were very far from what my original intention was and, from the point of view of the research, I could detect a dramatic unevenness between the scenes that had been worked through simulation and those that had emerged from improvisation and actioning. Simulated emotion would vary from clear and strong to completely awkward and artificial, while work from the *as if* could range from surprisingly original to desperately flaccid and artificial (too).

For a while, I asked the actors to perform the whole play, without me interfering at all in the acting technique, hoping that running through the whole performance would give the actors momentum and would allow the two approaches to melt naturally into one another. Indeed, the differences started becoming smoother, and the first thing that started to change was the lament scenes, which had been worked in more physiological detail. The actors had already learned how to use action and motivation in their prose scenes and, as a result, applying it on the lament scenes happened quite naturally. While this merging was taking place we were entering the third month of rehearsals and I decided to finalise my directorial choices, which meant that the actors' score also needed to be finalised.

In order for the score to create impulse in the actor during the performance it presupposes that during the rehearsals the impulse has been trapped into the score. This is the Jamesian premise of the *Method of Physical Actions*, towards which we were now moving, and fixing the emotion in a score of physical action became the task of the following period. In our case, genuine feeling had been generated on numerous occasions, most of which, though, involved the prose parts, which had been worked from the *as if*. On the other hand, there were also some astonishing instances when some actors would manage to generate feeling during the simulated lamentation scenes, where they were obviously successful in finally combining pattern with task, action and experience, but it turned out to be that these actors were the same ones who would more easily experience

feelings of their characters in the *as if* approach, too. I knew beforehand that these actors were perhaps more *talented* than the others, but what became clear through this was that there was indeed a link between talent and the ability to incorporate either approach. In terms of the research, this meant that there was a more direct neurological connection between the two approaches, which less talented actors and I as a director were still missing, but which those more talented actors were applying.

As we started pinning down what we were doing (physical action) in order to fix the score, things were further reversed. The scenes that had been worked through simulation demanded minimal work, and were becoming growingly effective and affective, but, on the other hand, the actors were having great difficulty breaking down the actions they had generated through the *as if* into the physical actions that we needed for the score, and even greater difficulty putting them back together into action: they found themselves needing to generate a pattern that would condition their physical actions. This was very confusing. Action was supposed to be there, in order to avoid playing emotion. But playing action and fixing it in a score of physical actions (*MPA*) meant that actors were already playing emotion or that they needed a pattern to condition their score. But if actors could generate this pattern, why did they need to revert to action in the first place, and not play emotion directly?

At that point, I realised that I needed to make a more clear-cut distinction in my mind between the performance and the research. On the level of the performance I needed to smoothen out irregularities, while on the level of the research I needed to straighten things out and concentrate on those actors who were *anyway* managing to reach emotional results. I could not keep pressing actors to break their actions into a score, for the sake of technique or research, since that seemed to be blocking them. This did not mean that I withdrew my researcher's interest from them, or that they were immune to technique, but that they needed more time to train in it and master it than what was available. Though we never made it to perform before an audience, and though these actors kept ameliorating with time, their emotional performance never reached beyond a certain point. That point could have perhaps been considered more than adequate by the audience, but from the point of view of my research and goals, it was not. Nevertheless, I kept working on the play, and focused the research part of the work on those specific actors who happened to be able to control both approaches.

8.3. A break-through

8.3.1. The *Sisyphus* fragment

One morning, I was at home doing some research on the origin of religions, because I was writing a passage for the thesis about the function of professional mourners, when a major breakthrough occurred. I came across an ancient Greek text, which is considered to be the first naturalistic explanation of the origins of religion in the west. The text suggested that religions were a human construction for enforcing the law and for keeping control of the populace, and thus deconstructed the human belief in anthropomorphic supernatural powers as ludicrous. To my absolute astonishment this fragment was attributed by some scholars to Euripides' *Sisyphus*, the fourth play that accompanied the trilogy whose part was the *Trojan Women*[827]. This startling discovery was a moment of utter surprise, joy and relief, because it seemed that our interpretation was on firm ground. The *Trojan Women* was less about the atrocities of war *per se*, and more about the forces that move humanity into action in spite of any sense of will. As is clear in the Helen scene, this force is the human passions*: emotion.* Hecuba's words to Helen are compellingly clear: 'your mind itself turned into Aphrodite'[828].

The discovery had a domino effect, as things started falling into place, one by one. The interpretation of the play was a huge burden for me, not only because it was a very complex and long process, but because I had bitterly admitted guilt to myself for having started rehearsals without having fully resolved that issue beforehand. At the same time, the fragment confirmed my original interpretative instinct, to which I should have adhered more decisively rather than looking for psychological confirmation solely in other researchers' accounts. More importantly, the interpretation was aligning the performance with the topic of my entire research: emotion as a catalytic motivating force.

That same morning, I eventually felt safe enough to define *exactly* what my somatic markers[829] were telling me about that new thing that I wanted to say about emotion in acting, and which I could not put into words yet. That was when I realised that, to the best of my understanding, what we call psychophysical action in acting, or, simply, *action* is nothing else but *emotion*. Playing the emotion pattern is the same thing as performing the

---

[827] *See* Appendix D.
[828] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 1146-7, (transl.) A. Shapiro.
[829] *See* section 3.5.1.

action that conditions physical action. This is what links emotion to action in life, and this is the premise that unified all acting approaches of the twentieth century that I had studied[830]. This is why the actors in the *Trojan Women* who could not master the simulation of emotion easily, could neither break their action into physical action and put it back together: because putting the physical actions back together in the manner that is needed to generate the feeling, consists in playing the emotional pattern, that is, the action. This is also why those actors who automatically incorporated the emotional patterns into a wider motivational narrative in the play were also able to dismantle action into physical actions and then recover the action that conditioned them in the form of a concrete emotional pattern.

8.3.2. Action as emotion

The implications of what I had grasped redefined the whole research and forced me to rewrite many parts of the thesis. The rewriting happened long *after* the rehearsals of the *Trojan Women* were over, and to this extent, the theoretical arguments of the thesis are largely indebted to the practical experience and findings from these rehearsals. But at the moment of realisation, time was already running out, and I urgently needed to put this discovery into practice, and see exactly how this was bridging the gap between simulation and improvisation. I went back to some very central articles and chapters in emotion theory, and with this new premise in mind, for the first time I *affectively* realised that the relationship between emotion and action was much tighter than I had ever thought. In terms of evolution, emotion was a primordial *act* that entailed attack, vomit, escape etc. This primordial act is still the core of emotion today, and regardless of whether it will unfold fully on the behavioural level, it is still the same and it defines all aspects of the emotional episode despite its socially imposed disguises. For acting this meant that the shortest possible distance between simulated (pattern) and felt emotion (*as if*) was to be found exactly in the standard primordial action inherent in emotion, and that if I wanted to find the simplest, most reductive way to combine simulation and improvised emotion, I needed to revert to these very basic *acts* that were part and parcel of the basic emotions.

Asking actors to perform basic emotions, or basic actions for that matter, was the simplest demand one could make on actors, because performing action or emotion is by

---

[830] *See* section 4.3.1.1.

definition combinative, and because no motivation, action or pattern can ever become less simple than this. For example, during fear, everything that happens in the body prepares the organism to protect itself by *escaping* from the danger. All the physiological changes that accompany fear (eyes scanning the space for escape route, quick and shallow breathing that keeps noise to minimum, legs prepared to run, and so on) are minor actions that construct the larger action of escaping[831]. An actor who cannot generate these basic actions by arousing his memory and imagination through the *as if* is unable to play any psychophysical action anyway, and conversely, an actor who cannot generate feeling from assuming these basic patterns is unable to repeat any sequence of motivated behaviour. In short, the key was in managing to perform basic emotions (actions) by *combining* basic patterns with their basic motivation and action through the *as if*. Once basic emotions were mastered, more complex situations could be conveyed through combinations of basic emotions.

Unfortunately*,* and though this breakthrough redefined my whole written thesis and acting work ever since, there was not enough time to fully explore and apply this new approach in the *Trojan Women*. Nevertheless, there was one case, where I thoroughly tested this work and which furnished the results I was hoping for: in Andromache's scene. Fani, who played Andromache, was one of those actresses who managed to activate their feelings repeatedly either way during the rehearsals. She would employ the *as if* and wield results easily, and although she had not been trained in working from simulation, she would embody the pattern while immediately trying to integrate it in a wider narrative, quite automatically. It became clear from the beginning of the rehearsals that the difficult scene that she had to perform was going to reach the intensity that I had envisaged, therefore, I felt safe enough to challenge her to approach the whole thing from this new point of view.

---

[831] *See* section 3.3.6.2.

8.3.3. Working from emotion as total action

The concept was that identifying the task of the character in the scene coincided with identifying the emotion and the action involved. We defined Andromache's overall task and dominant emotion for the whole monologue (*goos*), and separated the monologue into large bits, for each one of which we defined the task and respective emotion. Breaking into bits revealed the facts that motivate the shifts from one section to another, and, as a result, the entire scene was charted as a sequence of facts (plot), tasks, basic emotions and their equivalent action or action tendency. As long as the emotion or action was activated, it could be applied to any directorial blocking.

Working on each emotion as total action entailed implementing and ultimately merging both the pattern and the actress' imagination and emotion memory. The fundamental concern was to reawaken the complete, uninhibited action tendency, the impulse of each given emotion, e.g. *to fight*, in the case of rage, in order to elaborate on it later. I asked Fani to engage in physical fights with me, during which I practically provoked her to really *hit* or *hurt* or *bite* me in any way she felt like. During this phase, we mainly emphasised intensity, and we explored different degrees of the same emotion, very close to the idea of emotion families. At this point, the set of reactions was undifferentiated, including physical, vocal and verbal attacks in different degrees of intensity, and even though originally the fights were rather artificial and generic, Fani often found herself being engaged, and even constructing mental scenarios for justifying this behaviour. Throughout this time, I constantly urged her to be conscious of her breathing and muscular tension pattern, and the more she focused on what she was doing, the more she felt the need to invent a reason for doing it.

As the action tendency was becoming more overt and uninhibited we shifted emphasis towards actual events from her own life experience. Because of her emotional intelligence and maturity as a person, it was easy for her to remember and analyse the mental objectives, structures and strategies that she had employed, when engaged in situations during which she had exerted violence of any type or degree, and, more importantly, she was now in position to link the emotion she had experienced in those cases with specific physical feelings. She had already thoroughly explored Andromache's part and, as a result, she very naturally grasped and penetrated Andromache's structure of rage, especially towards Hecuba—whom she blames for the fall of Troy—and towards

herself, the Greeks and Helen. She chose to probe deeper into anger and rage as the central emotion in the entire *goos*, and even though the raw intensity of her emotion and action were perhaps more than adequate for the scene, we moved on, working in much more detail.

The next phase was about separating the emotional impulse from the overt behaviour, and in order to do so, we differentiated between voice and movement as vehicles of the action. The action tendency of attacking might be fulfilled through physical engagement in a fight or through vocalisation and verbal action, and at this stage we isolated these choices in order to better study them: we were going back to where physical or vocal action were being born in the emotion. Now that the memory of the uninhibited action was fresh and the affective evaluation of the dramatic situation was deep enough, Fani had to focus on specific elements of the physical or the vocal action. Working on only the physical (e.g., clenching the fist, or opening nostrils) or vocal (e.g., sudden explosions of pitch, tempo, or intensity) aspects entailed isolating and focusing on all these minor actions from which the emotion is compiled, and attending to these minute physiological actions while always within the dramatic context of the scene further anchored her experiential understanding of the scene on a moment to moment basis. Experimenting with these aspects was an even deeper dramatic exploration of the scene, and many of the final choices stemmed naturally from the creative combination of these aspects as we proceeded.

More importantly though, as we were becoming growingly immersed in this detailed exploration of emotion as action, there came a moment when there practically ceased to be a differentiation between memory, imagination and simulation of emotion in her performance. She had become so familiar with the affective and motivational details of the dramatic scene, as well as with the ability to take action through almost every aspect of her physiology, that a single input, a word, a shift in muscular tension or a manipulation of her breathing (always as vocal *action*) were enough to ignite feeling in her and double her action, thus immediately closing any 'gap' between simulation and affective memory. Time had exerted its effects. The work that we had done was perhaps very analytical and detailed, but it was targeted and specific, and addressed the relationship between emotion and action, between the psychological and the physical, in a holistic and valid way. Once all physical action was psychologically motivated, and each

mental movement was physically grounded, it was as if some software programme had been 'installed' in the actress, and every stimulus was absorbed and affectively integrated in her performance. She had entered the creative state, her memory and imagination had been activated and her body was sensitive and responsive. With the agency of time, simulation and affective imagination became totally interdependent.

This work that we were doing was largely actor training and simultaneously rehearsal for the *Trojan Women*, and it occurred outside the official rehearsals on a one-to-one basis. I was rather intrigued by the results of this approach, and I decided that I did not even want to insist on further layering the monologue with more complex actions and emotions, so, we kept the raw simplicity of basic emotions, though arranged in a not so simple succession. The selection of anger as the driving emotion had one more important result: it enabled Fani to enter the lamentation part of the monologue surprisingly effortlessly. Not only was she kept away from the cliché melodramatic tone in which this scene is usually performed, but the sympathetic activation though anger would eventually and naturally resolve into the grief that permeates the scene.

The rest of the work on this scene focused on fine-tuning the intensities and combinations that appealed to her apparatus, and, of course, we focused on the adjustment of the score to the reality of the stage, the fellow actors and the *mise en scène*. Needless to say, perhaps, that apart from this last approach that we tried out, all the work that had been done throughout the rehearsals, from the surrounding material, to the lamentation embodiment and to the actioning and interpretation of the play played their part in the success of that last experiment. Admittedly, not all the scenes or all the actors reached that degree of emotional result, and the violent interruption of the rehearsals, twenty days before the opening night, also prevented the rest of the work from flourishing.

8.4. Conclusions

As a director I was only partly satisfied with the result that the *Trojan Women* had reached when we were abruptly forced to silence, and even though many things would have possibly fallen into place by the opening night there was still a long way to be walked. As a researcher, and although mixing research with the tragedies and restrictions of real life performances proved another Trojan horse, I have to admit that there were moments of failure as well as of success in the enterprise, which were not easy to tell apart from one another. In terms of acting psychotechnique, identifying emotion with action, and working on the level of the minor actions that shape the basic, primordial emotional action was perhaps the key finding in my journey, and its impact on my understanding of twentieth century acting from a fresh point of view has been exposed in full theoretical detail in the previous chapters. This same premise, though unconscious at the beginning, had also driven my attention to the performance of skilled ritual mourners. Identifying the same principles underlying their psychotechnique too, may have given some interesting perspective on the history of emotion technique in Western acting and even prepared the soil for addressing more directly the issue of psychotechnique in Greek tragic acting.

More importantly, though, the investigation of the line that connects the history and technique of feeling, emotion, action, acting and lament in the West poses the question of *function*, that is, of *purpose*. The science behind twentieth century acting proved that there is no reason why actors who possess the neurological and technical skill cannot ultimately experience the emotions of their characters, unless they are not motivated enough to do so, or unless they are motivated not to. Diderot needs to be taken with a big grain of salt. But the reality of Greek ritual lament, where one can detect the first pre-dramatic paradigms of emotional impersonation, has also demonstrated that this ultimately crucial ritual depends, almost wholly, on the confirmation of the shared mortal substance that unites the community, and which is exemplified in the professional mourners' voluntary experience of an 'unpaid-for' grief. Though the fact that theatre evolved from ritual means that theatre is not a ritual anymore, there is growing evidence that acting evolved from where lament was forced to stop. If this line of evolution is correctly mapped in this thesis from the point of view of emotion psychotechnique, then

the actor is the new cultural species of mourner in Greece. And if the mourner's feelings, whose technique is ultimately motivated by an empathetic evaluation of the mortals' life, gradually became the object of rehearsal by actors, then a twenty-first century actor should perhaps search for the ultimate tool that can altogether motivate his psychotechnique in the internalisation of the environment and of the *other*, through experience: through *empathy*.

Empathy has an affective, emotional cost, but consciousness and society rely on empathy for their existence. Cultures that shut their ears to the voice of lament, shut their ears to the voice and ethics of empathy, distort their perception of reality and undermine their own existence. Maybe this is what Euripides was warning Athens against, when cryptically casting his oar into the sea, like another Oiax, hoping his message would be decoded in a less censored future. In an unprecedented tragic *parabasis*, and at the ultimate peak of Hecuba's desperate lament in the *Exodos*, Euripides has his male actor say the following words:

| Hecuba | So the gods amounted to nothing after all! There was only my suffering and their discriminating hate of Troy. My sacrifices were useless. And yet had not God turned the world upside down, we should have acquired no significance, and should have remained unsung, instead of giving themes of song for future generations.[832] |

---

[832] Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 1240-5, transl. S. A. Barlow.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Stanislavski, K., 'A plan of work', *Creating a Role*, pp. 253-55.

1. *Tell* the story of the plot (in not too much detail).
2. P*lay the external plot* in terms of physical actions. For example: enter a room. But since you cannot enter unless you know where you came from, where you are going and why, seek out the external facts of the plot to give you a basis for physical actions. This should all be in rough form and constitutes the justification of an outline of given circumstances (just rough, external ones). Actions are drawn from the play; what is lacking is invented in line with the spirit of the play: What would I do if here, today, this very minute, I found myself in the situation analogous to that of the plot?
3. *Act out improvisations dealing with the past and the future* (the present occurs on the stage): Where did I come from, where am I going, what happened between the times I was on the stage?
4. *Tell the story* (in greater detail) of the physical actions of the plot of the play. Produce subtler, more detailed, more profoundly based proposed circumstances and "magic ifs."
5. *Draft a temporary definition,* in approximate terms, and *rough outline* of the superobjective.
6. On the basis of the acquired material shape a rough, approximate *line of through action,* always saying: What would I do 'if...?"
7. For that purpose break up the play into *Urge, physical units* (there is no play without these large physical units, large physical actions).
9. *Execute* (act out) these roughly sketched physical actions based on the question: What would I do 'if?'.
10. *If the larger units are too difficult to encompass,* break them up temporarily into medium-sized units, or even, if necessary, into smaller and smaller units. Study the nature of these physical actions. Adhere strictly to the *logic* and *consecutiveness* of the large units and their component pans and combine them in whole large actions, always without props.
11. *Shape a logical, consecutive line of organic, physical actions.* Write it down and fix it firmly by frequent repetition. Clear it of all superfluity—cut ninety-five percent! Go over it until it reaches the stage of being true enough to be believed in. The logic and consecutiveness of these physical actions will lead to *truthfulness* and *faith.* But this is achieved by being logical and consistent, not by trying to achieve truth for the sake of truth.
12. Logic, consecutiveness, truth, faith, set in the state of being "here, today, this very minute," is now further grounded and fixed.
13. All this taken together produces the state of 'I am'
14. When you have achieved the 'I am' you will also have arrived at *organic nature* and its subconscious.
15. Up to now you have been using your own words. Now you have the *first reading of the text.* Seize on the separate words and phrases which you feel the need of; write them down and add them to your own free text.
When you come to the second and later readings, take down more notes, cull more words to be included in your own invented text of your parts. Thus gradually with small bits and then whole phrases your role becomes supplied with the playwright's own words. The blanks are soon filled in with the actual text of the play according to its style, language, and diction.

16. Study the text, fix it in your minds, but avoid saying it aloud so as not to jabber mechanically or build up a series of word acrobatics. Repeat many rimes and fix firmly your line of logical, consecutive physical actions, truth, faith, 'I am', organic truth, and the subconscious. By giving these actions a basis of justification you will find always fresh, new, subtler given circumstances coming into your mind and a more profound, broad, all-embracing sense of concerted action. As you do this work, go over and over in constantly increasing detail the contents of the play. Imperceptibly you will acquire a basis for your physical actions which is psychologically more subtle because of your proposed circumstances, the through line of action, and your superobjective.

15. Continue to act the play along the lines now set. Think about the words, but when you act, replace them with rhythmic syllables (tra-la-la-la).

16. The true inner pattern of the play has now been laid down by the process of justifying your physical actions. Fix it even more firmly, so that the spoken text will remain subordinate to it and not be jabbered mechanically and independently from it. Continue to act the play using rhythmic syllables. Go over in your own words (1) the pattern of thought, (2) the pattern of visualisation of the play; (3) explain them both to those playing opposite you in order to establish intercommunication with them and also a pattern of inner action. These basic patterns form the subtext of your role. Ground them as firmly as possible and maintain them constantly.

17. After this pattern has been fixed, while you are still sitting around the table, read the play in the author's own words, and without moving even your hands, convey as accurately as you can to those playing opposite you the patterns worked out, the actions, all the details of the score of the play.

18. Do the same thing, still sitting around the table but with your hands and bodies free, using some of the business blocked out for provisional production.

20. Repeat the same on the stage with the business as blocked out provisionally.

21. Work out and fix the plan of the stage sets (inside Jour walls). Each person to be asked: Where would he choose (in what setting) to be and to act? Let each one suggest his own plan. The plan for the sets will be taken from the consensus of the plans proposed by the actors.

22. Work out and record the stage business. Set the stage according to the agreed plan and introduce the actors into it. Ask the actors where they would choose to make a declaration of love; where they would choose to work on the person playing opposite to engage in a heart-to-heart talk, and so forth; where it would be more convenient to cross over in order to hide some embarrassment? Let the actors cross and carry out their physical actions as required by the play—hunt for books on the bookshelves, open windows, light a fire, and so forth.

23. Test the pattern of the stage business by opening arbitrarily any one of the Jour walk.

24. Sit down at a table and carry on a series of conversations concerning the literary, political, artistic, and other aspects of the play.

25. Characterisation. All that has been done so far has achieved inner characterisation. Meantime the external characterisation should have appeared of its own accord. But what is to be done if this does not occur? You should go over what has already been established but add a game leg, terse or drawling speech, certain attitudes of arms or legs, position of the body in keeping with certain mannerisms, habits. If the external character-isation does not appear spontaneously, it must be grafted on from the outside.

APPENDIX B

Hecuba's *goos*
Euripides, *Trojan Women*, ll. 1389-1416, transl., by A. Shapiro.

Hecuba   And you, beloved child, how miserably you've died
If you had grown to manhood, and had married,
And come into possession of a kingdom
Godlike in power, and only then had died,
Defending the city, we could have said you'd lived
A happy life, that is, if happiness
Resides in things like that. But no; however
Much you may have been aware of what
Your heritage would be, you never lived
To know it, you never lived to make it yours.
Instead, your father's walls, the battlements
Apollo built, have ripped the curls from your head,
The curls your mother fussed over and kissed.
The skull now broken, bright blood gushing out
Like wicked laughter between the bones. I won't
Conceal or soften the brutality of this.
Your hands so sweetly like your father's
Hang broken at the joints. Look at them. Look
At the sweet lips that made great promises
To me—promises they couldn't keep, child—
As you stood clinging to mv dress and said
"Grandmother, I'll cut my thickest lock of hair
When you die and bring my best friends
to your tomb
And say goodbye top you with all my heart".
But it is I, who say goodbye to you,
Who bury you, poor boy, and you so young
And I so old, an old heartbroken woman,
Without a child, without a city. O god,
What were they for all those embraces, all
The daily, nightly coddling of you?
They've come to nothing. What kind of epitaph
Would any poet write upon your tomb:
"The Greeks were terrified of this little boy.
And so they killed him." What a shameful
Indictment
Of Greece that epitaph would be.
No. child, no,
You haven't won your father's heritage.
But you'll possess, if only as a coffin,
His bronze-backed shield.

APPENDIX C

The Trojan Trilogy
Barlow, *The Trojan Women*, pp. 26-36; Lee, *Troades*, pp. x-xiv.

From the available fragments and references the plot of the plays is roughly re-synthesised. *Alexandros*: In the mythical background of the *Alexandros* we are informed that when Hecuba was pregnant to Alexandros (Paris) she had a dream that she had given birth to a torch that burned the city of Troy; the dream was interpreted as an ill omen and the royal couple were urged to abandon the boy when it was born. Priam abandoned the newborn but a peasant saved the boy. When Alexandros grew old he took part in a competition. Here starts the dramatic time of the play: Paris won, but Hector and Deiphobus (Hecuba's other sons) lost in the same competition; Hecuba and Deiphobus plotted to kill the stranger, but Hecuba identified the true identity of the stranger. Cassandra warned them not to take Alexandros back to the palace, she was not heard, and she prophesised the coming of the Greek fleet. *Palamedes*: Palamedes was a man who was revered by all Greeks for his wisdom, and was believed to have had invented writing; the play is set during the Trojan War, when Ulysses is plotting against Palamedes, because the latter had once revealed that Ulysses had faked madness in order not to join the War. Ulysses plants false evidence that Palamedes is a spy of the Trojans and Palamedes ends up being interrogated by the General Agamemnon who finds him guilty. Palamedes is executed by the army, but his brother Oiax writes the truth on ship oars and throws them into the sea, hoping that their father Nafplios will find them and avenge Palamedes' unfair assassination.

APPENDIX D

The *Sisyphus* fragment, from Kahn, C. H., 'Greek religion and philosophy in the *Sisyphus* fragment', *Phronesis,* Vol. 42, No. 3, pp. 247-262.

There was a time when the life of human beings was disordered
and beastly, and life was ruled by force,
when there was no reward for the virtuous
nor any punishment for the wicked.
And then I think that humans decided to establish laws
to punish [wrongdoers] so that justice might rule
and be master over crime and violence (*hybris*).
And they punished anyone who did wrong.
Then, since the laws held public deeds in check
and prevented men from open acts of violence,
but they acted secretly, then it was, I believe,
that a shrewd and clever-minded man
invented for mortals a fear of the gods, so that
there might be a deterrent for the wicked, even if
they act or say or think anything in secret.
Hence from this source the divine was introduced [with the claim]
that there is a deity who enjoys imperishable life,
hearing and seeing with his mind, his thought
and attention on all things, his nature so divine
that he will hear whatever is said among mortals
and be able to see whatever is done.
If ever you plot some evil deed in silence,
even this will not escape the gods. For they
have knowledge. It was such stories that he told when he introduced
this most delightful teaching and hid the truth with a false tale.
He said the gods dwell there and placed them where
they might make the greatest impression upon human beings,
there where he knew that fears come to mortals
and benefits also [to relieve] the miseries of life,
from the vault on high, where they beheld
the shafts of lightning and fearful blows of thunder and star-filled
gleam of heaven, the beautiful design of Time the clever builder,
parade-ground for the brilliant mass of the sun
and source of rainfall moistening the earth below.
Such were the fears with which he surrounded humans
and by which this clever man established the deity
in the proper place, with a handsome story,
and extinguished lawlessness by means of laws....
It was thus, I think, that someone first persuaded
mortals to believe that there is a race of gods.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. PRINTED SOURCES

Abercromby, J., 'Funeral masks in Europe', *Folklore*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1986, pp. 351-366.

Abrams, G. L., 'The first international conference on mind, body and the performing arts: stress processes in the psychology and physiology of music, dance and drama', *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1985, pp. 97-98.

Adolphs, R. et al, 'Dissociable neural systems for recognising emotions', *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 52, 2003, pp. 61–69.

Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*, (transl.) R. Fagles, Penguin, London, 1979.

Aesop, *Aesop's Fables*, (transl.) L. Gibbs, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002.

Albuquerque, J., Deshauer, D. & Grof, P., 'Descartes' passions of the soul-seeds of psychiatry?', *Journal of Affective Disorders*, Vol. 76, 2003, pp. 285-91.

Alcorta, C. S., 'Ritual, emotion, and sacred symbols: the evolution of religion as an adaptive complex', *Human Nature*, 2005, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 323–359.

Alexander, F. & Saul, L. J. M., 'Respiration and personality', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1940, pp. 110-118.

Alexiou, M., *The ritual lament in Greek tradition*, Rowman & Littlefield, Oxford, 2002.

Ali, O. S. & Peynircioglu, Z. F., 'Songs and emotions: are lyrics and melodies equal partners?', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 34, No, 4, pp.511-535.

Allan, W., 'Religious syncretism: the new gods of Greek tragedy', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 102, 2004, pp. 113-155.

Amankulor, J. N., 'Jerzy Grotowski's "divination consultation": objective drama seminar at U. C. Irvine', *TDR* , Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring, 1991), pp. 155-164.

Amaral, D. G., 'The primate amygdala and the neurobiology of social behavior: implications for understanding social anxiety', *Biological Psychiatry*, Vol. 51, 2002, pp. 11-17.

Ameka, F., 'Interjections: the universal yet neglected part of speech', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 18, 1992, pp. 101-l 18.

Amelang, J., 'Mourning becomes eclectic: ritual lament and the problem of continuity', *Past & Present*, Vol. 187, 2005, pp. 3-32.

Anderson, B., 'Bereavement as a subject of cross-cultural inquiry: an American sample', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 4, 1965, pp. 181-200.

Anselment, R., 'Discordia concors: unity in Euripides' *The Trojan Women'*, *Educational Theatre Journal,* Vol. 21, No. 4, 1969, pp. 403-13.

Appleton, J. A., 'Postulating that our neurological models for musculoskeletal support, movement, and emotional expression come from archetypal forms in early organisms', *Medical Hypotheses*, Vol. 66, 2006, pp. 1029–1035.

Archer, J., *The Nature of Grief: The Evolution and Psychology of Reactions to Loss*, Routledge, London, 1999.

Aristotle, *Politics*, (transl.) B. Jowett, Dover, Toronto, 2000.

-*Poetics,* (transl.), K. McLeish, Nick Hern Books, London, 1998.

-*The Art of Rhetoric*, (transl.) H. C. Lawson-Tancred, Penguin, London, 1991.

-*On the Soul*, (transl.) W.S Hett, Harvard University Press, Cambridge & London, 1975.

Arnott, P., *Greek Scenic Conventions in the Fifth Century*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1962.

Arntz, A. et al, 'Emotional memory is perceptual', *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, Vol. 36, 2005, pp. 19-34.

Ashenburg, K., *The Mourner's Dance: What We Do When People Die*, North Point Press, New York, 2002.

Auslander, P., *From Acting to Performance: Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism,* Routledge, London, 1997.

Austin , L. M., 'The lament and the rhetoric of the sublime', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 53, No. 3, 1998, pp. 279-306.

Babb, R., 'Erasing Meyerhold', *TDR,* Vol. 40, No. 2 (Summer, 1996), pp. 13-14.

Barakat, R. A., 'Wailing women of folklore', *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 82, No. 325, 1969, pp. 270-272.

Barasch, M., 'The crying face', *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 8, No. 15, 1987, pp. 21-36.

Barlow, S. A. (transl.), *Euripides: Trojan Women*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1981.

Bataille, G. & Michelson, A., 'Un-knowing: laughter and tears', *October*, Vol. 36, 1986, pp. 89-102.

Baumgartner, T. et al, 'From emotion perception to emotion experience: emotions evoked pictures and classical music', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol.

60, 2006, pp. 34 – 43.

Benedetti, J., *Stanislavski and the Actor*, Methuen, London, 1998.

-*Stanislavski: An Introduction*, Methuen, London, 1982.

Benn, A. W., 'Aristotle's theory of tragic emotion', *Mind*, New Series, Vol. 23, No. 89, 1914, pp. 84-90.

Bentley, E. 'Are Stanislavski and Brecht commensurable?', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 69-76.

Besson, M. et al, 'Emotional prosody: sex differences in sensitivity to speech melody', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.6, No.10, 2002, pp. 405-7.

Bevir, M., 'Mind and method in the history of ideas', *History and Theory*, Vol. 36, No.2, 1997, pp. 167-89.

Blenkinsopp, J., *Families in Ancient Israel*, Westminster John Knox Press, Kentucky, 1997.

Bloch, S., *The Alba of the Emotions*, unpublished book.

Bloch, S. et al, 'Effector patterns of basic emotions: a psychophysiological method for training actors', ed. P. Zarrilli, *Acting Re-considered*, Routledge, New York, 2001.

-'Specific respiratory patterns distinguish among human basic emotions', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 11, 1991, pp. 141-154.

Bloch, E. et al, '"Entfremdung", "Verfremdung": alienation, estrangement', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1970, pp. 120-125.

Boiten, F. A., 'The effects of emotional behaviour on components of the respiratory cycle', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 49, 1998, pp. 29-51.

Borgquist, A., 'Crying', *The American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Apr., 1906), pp. 149-205.

Borovikova L. V. et al, 'Vagus nerve stimulation attenuates the systemic inflammatory response to endotoxin', *Nature*, Vol. 05, No. 6785, 2000, pp. 458-462.

Bowers, J., 'Women's music and the life cycle', *ILWC Journal*, 1993, pp. 14-20.

Bowker, J., *The Meanings of Death* [Bowker, J., *Ο Θάνατος και οι Θρησκείες*, (μτφρ.) Μ. Κονόμη, Λογιάκη, Α., Εκδόσεις Παπαδήμα, Αθήνα, 1996].

Bradby, D. & Williams, D., *Directors' Theatre*, Macmillan, London, 1988.

Braun, E., *The Director and the Stage: From Naturalism to Grotowski*, Methuen, London, 2002.

-*Meyerhold on Theatre*, Methuen, London, 1969.

Brecht, B., *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, (ed.) J. Willett, Methuen,
London, 1990.

-*On Realism* [Μπρεχτ, Μ., *Για το Ρεαλισμό*, (μτφρ.) Λ. Κοντή, Σύγχρονη Εποχή,
Αθήνα, 1990].

-'Prologue to "The *Antigone* of Sophocles'", *Educational Theatre Journal*,
Vol. 24, No. 1, 1972, pp. 69-71.

-'BB's rehearsal scenes-estranging Shakespeare. Romeo and Juliet: the
servants', *TDR*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Bertolt Brecht (Autumn, 1967), pp. 108-111.

-'Notes on Stanislavski', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1964,
pp. 155-166.

-'On the experimental theatre', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1961,
pp. 2-17.

Brecht, B. & Anderson, E., 'Theatre for learning', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1,
1961, pp. 18-25.

Brecht, B. & Bathrick, D., 'Intellectuals and class struggle', *New German Critique*, No. 1
1973, pp. 19-21.

Brecht, B. & Mueller, C. R., 'Notes on Stanislavski', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No.
2, 1964, pp. 155-66.

Brennan, M., 'Towards a sociology of (public) mourning?', *Sociology,* Vol. 35, No. 1, pp.
205–212.

Briggs, C. L., 'Personal sentiments and polyphonic voices in Warao women's ritual
wailing: music and poetics in a critical and collective discourse', *American
Anthropologist,* Vol. 95, No. 4, 1993, pp. 929-957.

Brison, K. J. & Leavitt, S. C., 'Coping with bereavement: long-term perspectives on
grief and mourning', *Ethos*, Vol. 23, No. 4, Coping with Bereavement, 1995,
pp. 395-400.

Brooks, D. M., *The Necessity of Atheism*, Freethought Press, New York, 1933.

Brown, S. G., 'A contextual analysis of tragic meter: the anapaest', in D'Arms, J. H. &
Eadie, J. W. (eds.), *Ancient and Modern: Essays in Honor of Gerald Else*, University
of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1977, pp. 45-78.

Brown, T., '"Verfremdung" in action at the Berliner Ensemble', *The German Quarterly*,
Vol. 64, No. 4, Bertold Brecht, 1973, pp. 525-539.

Bucci, W., 'The vocalisation of painful affect', *Journal of Communication Disorders*, Vol. 15, 1982, pp. 415-440.

Buchannan, T. W. et al, 'Recognition of emotional prosody and verbal components of spoken language: an fMRI study', *Cognitive Brain Research*, Vol. 9, 2000, pp. 227–238.

Buck, R., 'Social and emotional functions in facial expression and communication: the readout hypothesis', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 38, 1994, pp. 95-115.
-'The neuropsychology of communication: spontaneous and symbolic aspects', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 22, 1994, pp. 265-278.

Buck, R. et al, 'Emotion and reason in persuasion: applying the ARI model and the CASC Scale', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 57, 2004, pp. 647– 656.

Burkert, W., *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, (transl.) P. Bing, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1983.

Cacioppo, J. T. & Tassinary, L.G. (eds.), *Principles of Psychophysiology: Physical, Social and Inferential Elements*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1990.

Calder, W. M., 'The dithyramb: an Anatolian dirge', *The Classical Review*, Vol. 36, No. 1/2, 1922, pp. 11-14.

Callan, D. E. et al, 'Song and speech: brain regions involved with perception and covert production', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 31, 2006, pp. 1327 – 1342.

Cannon, W. B., 'The significance of the emotional level', *The Scientific Monthly*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1934, pp. 101-10.
-'The James-Lange theory of emotion: a critical examination and an alternative theory', *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 39, 1927, pp. 106-24.

Caravelli-Chaves, A., 'Bridge between worlds: the Greek women's lament as a communicative event', *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 93, 1980, p. 129-157.

Carnicke, S. M., *Stanislavski in Focus*, 2nd ed., Routledge, New York, 2009.
- 'An actor prepares/Rabota aktera nad soboi, Chast' I', a comparison of the English with the Russian Stanislavsky', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 1984, pp. 481-494.

Celeste, R., 'The sound of silence: film music and lament', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, Vol. 22, 2005, pp. 113–123.

Chaikin, J., 'The actor's involvement: notes on Brecht', *TDR*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1968,

pp. 147-51.

Charles, L. H., 'Regeneration through drama at death', *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol.
61, No. 240, 1948, pp. 151-174.

Childs, W. A. P., 'The classic as realism in Greek art', *Art Journal*, Vol. 47, No. 1, The
Problem of Classicism: Ideology and Power, 1988, pp. 10-14.

Churchland, P. M., 'Folk psychology and the explanation of human behaviour',
Philosophical Perspectives, Vol. 3, 1989, pp. 225-241.

Cobos, P., Sanchez, M., Garcia, C., Nieves Vera, M. & Vila, J., 'Revisiting the   James
versus Cannon debate on emotion: startle and autonomic modulation in
patients with spinal cord injuries', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 61, 2002, pp.
251-69.

Coger, L. I., 'Stanislavski changes his mind', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1,
1964, pp. 63-8.

Cohen, A.C., *Death Rituals, Ideology, and the Development of Early Mesopotamian Kingship,* Brill
Academic, Leiden & Boston, 2005.

Collet, C. et al, 'Autonomic nervous system response patterns specificity to basic
emotions*, Journal of The Autonomic Nervous System*, Vol. 62, 1997, pp. 45-
57.

Cooper, J. S., 'Genre, gender and the Sumerian lamentation', *Journal of Cuneiform
studies*, Vol. 58, 2006, pp. 39-47.

Crawford, J. P., 'The anatomy of emotion', *Medical Hypotheses*, Vol. 4, 1978, pp. 311-323.

Critchley, H. D. et al, 'Volitional control of autonomic arousal: a functional magnetic
resonance study', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 16, 2002, pp. 909–919.

Crossley, M. L., 'Formulating narrative psychology: the limitations of contemporary
social constructionism', *Narrative Inquiry*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2003, pp. 287-300.

Cunningham, A.B. & Schreibman, L., 'Stereotypy in autism: the importance of function',
Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, Volume 2, Issue 3, July-September, 2008,
pp. 469-479.

Cupchik, G. C., 'Emotion in aesthetics: reactive and reflective models', *Poetics*, Vol. 23,
1994, pp. 177-88.

Curran, A., 'Brecht's criticisms of Aristotle's aesthetics of tragedy', *The Journal of Aesthetics
and Art Criticism*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 2001, pp. 167-184.

Dalla Bella, S. et al, 'A developmental study of the affective value of tempo and mode in
music', *Cognition*, Vol. 80, 2001, B1-B10.

Damasio, A. R., *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Human Brain*, Harcourt, New York,
2003.

-*The Feeling of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness*,
Vintage, London, 2000.

-'Emotion in the perspective of an integrated nervous system', *Brain Research
Reviews*, Vol. 26, 1998, pp. 83–86.

-'Investigating the biology of consciousness', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological
Sciences*, Vol. 353, No. 1377, The Conscious Brain: Abnormal and Normal,
1998, pp. 1879-1882.

- 'The somatic marker hypothesis and the possible functions of the prefrontal
cortex', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 351, No. 1346,
Executive and Cognitive Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex, 1996.

-D*escartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*, Harper Perennial, New
York, 1994.

Damasio, A. R. & Bechara, A., 'The somatic marker hypothesis: a neural theory of
economic decision', *Games and Economic Behavior*, Vol. 52, 2005, pp. 336–372.

Damasio, A. R., Everitt, B. J. & Bishop, D., 'The somatic marker hypothesis and the
possible functions of the prefrontal cortex [and discussion]'(in theories
and models of executive function based on neuropsychological studies
in humans), *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 351, No. 1346,
Executive and Cognitive Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex, 1996, pp.
1413-1420.

Damasio, A. R. & Tranel, D., 'Nouns and verbs are retrieved with differently distributed
neural systems', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of
America*, Vol. 90, No. 11,1993, pp. 4957-4960.

Damen, M., 'Actor and character in Greek tragedy', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 3,
Performance in Context, 1989, pp. 316-40.

Danforth, L. M., *The Death Rituals Of Rural Greece*, Princeton University Press, Princeton,
1982.

Darwin, Ch., *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, (ed.) P. Ekman, Fontana

Press, London, 1988.

Das, U. N., 'Vagus nerve stimulation, depression, and inflammation', *Neuropsychopharmacology*, Vol. 32, pp. 2053–2054.

Davidson, R. J., 'Affective neuroscience and psychophysiology: toward a synthesis', *Psychophysiology*, Vol. 40, 2003, pp. 655-65.

- 'Seven sins in the study of emotion: correctives from affective neuroscience', *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 52, 2003, pp. 129-32.

Davidson, R. J. (ed.), *Handbook of Affective Sciences*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003.

Dawkins, R. M., 'Soul and body in the folklore of modern Greece', *Folklore*, Vol. 53, No. 3, 1942, pp. 131-147.

Decety, J. & Jackson, P. L., 'A social-neuroscience perspective on empathy', *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2006, pp. 54-58.

Denis St, M. & Sanzenbach, S., 'Stanislavski and Shakespeare', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 77-84.

Derrida, J. et al, 'By force of mourning', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1996, pp. 171- 192.

Descartes, R., *The Passions of the Soul*, (transl.) S. Voss, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1988.

De Fruyt, F., 'Gender and individual differences in adult crying', *Journal of Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 22, No. 6, 1997, pp. 937-940.

De Martino, E., *Morte e Pianto Rituale: dal Lamento Funebre Antico al Pianto di Maria*, 3rd edn, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2000.

De Vignemont, F. & Singer, T., 'The empathetic brain: how, when and why?', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.10, No.10, 2006, pp. 435-441.

Diamond, E., 'Rethinking identification: Kennedy, Freud, Brecht', *The Kenyon Review*, New Series, Vol. 15, No. 2, Theater Issue (Spring, 1993), pp. 86-99.

Ding, J. et al, 'Meditation as a voluntary hypometabolic state of biological estivation', *News of Physiological Science*, Vol. 13, 1998, pp. 149-53.

Dolan, R.J., 'Emotion, cognition, and behavior', *Science*, Vol. 298, 2002, pp. 1191-1194.

Domanska, E., 'Necrocracy', *History of the Human Sciences*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2005, pp. 111-122.

Dorter, K., 'The *Ion*: Plato's characterisation of art', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1973, pp. 65-78.

Drachmann, A. B., *Atheism in Pagan Antiquity*, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2005.

Dracopoulou, S., & Doxiadis, S., 'In Greece, lament for the dead, denial for the dying', *The Hastings Center Report*, Vol. 18, No. 4. 1988, pp. 15-16.

Drago, V. et al, 'Spatial-attention and emotional evocation: line bisection performance and visual art emotional evocation', *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 66, No.2, 2008, pp. 140-144.

Dubisch, J., 'Death and social change in Greece', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 4, The Uses of Death In Europe, 1989, pp. 189-200.

Duchenne de Boulogne, G. B., *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine ou analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions*, Librairie J.-B. Bailliere et Fils, Paris, 1876.

Duchaine, B., Cosmides, L. & Tooby, J., 'Evolutionary psychology and the brain', *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*, Vol. 11, 2001, pp. 225–230.

Dudley, D. D. et al, 'Changes in respiration associated with hypnotically induced emotion, pain, and exercise', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 26, 1964, pp. 46-57.

Dué, C., *The Captive Women's Lament in Greek Tragedy*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 2006.

Dunn, J. L., 'What love has to do with it: the cultural construction of emotion and sorority women's response to forcible interaction', *Social Problems*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 1999, pp. 440-459.

Durkheim, E., *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1964.

Dyer, L., 'On the breaking of vessels as a funeral rite in modern Greece', *Greek Folklore,* The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 23, 1894, pp. 29-41.

Dyson, M. & Lee, K. H., 'The funeral of Astyanax in Euripides' *Troades*', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 120, 2000, pp. 17-33.

D'Angour, A., 'How the dithyramb got its shape', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 47, No. 2 (1997), pp. 331-351.

Eagleton, T., 'Brecht and rhetoric', *New Literary History*, Vol. 16, No. 3, On Writing Histories of Literature (Spring, 1985), pp. 633-638.

Easterling, P. & Hall, E., *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2002.

Eaton, B. K., *The Theatre of Meyerhold and Brecht,* Greenwood Press, Westport, 1985.

Ebersole, G. L., 'The function of ritual weeping revisited: affective expression and moral discourse', *History of Religions*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2000, pp. 211-246.

Eggar, K. E., 'Emotion and morals in Greek music', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1930, pp. 124-127.

Ekman, P., *Emotions Revealed: Understanding Faces and Feelings*, Phoenix, London, 2004. -'Should we call it expression or communication?', *Innovations in Social Science Research*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1997, pp. 333-344.

Ekman, P. (ed.), *Darwin and Facial Expressions*, Academic Press, New York, 1982.

Ekman, P. & Davidson, R. J., *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions,* Oxford University Press, New York, 1994.

Ekman, P. & Hager, J., 'Long-distance transmission of facial affect signals', *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 1, 1979, p. 77-82.

Ekman, P. & Friesen, W. V., *Unmasking the Face*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1975.

Ekman, P., Levenson, W. R. & W. E. Friesen, 'Autonomic nervous system activity distinguishes between emotions', *Science*, Vol. 221, 1983, pp. 1208-10.

Ekman, P., Rolls, E. T., Perrett, D. I & Ellis, H. D., 'Facial expressions of emotion: an old controversy and new findings', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 335, No. 1273, Processing the Facial Image, 1992, pp. 63-69.

Ekman, P., Roper, G., & Hager, J. C., 'Deliberate facial movement', *Child Development*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 1980, pp. 886-891.

Ekman, P. & Schechner, P., 'What interests me about performance', *TDR*, Vol. 32, No.4, 1988, pp. 80-81.

Ekman, P., Sorenson, R. E., & Friesen, W. V., 'Pan-cultural elements in facial displays of emotion', *Science*, New Series, Vol. 164, No. 3875, 1969, pp. 86-88.

Emerich, K. A. et al, 'Vocal range and intensity in actors: a studio versus stage comparison', *Journal of Voice*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2005, pp. 78–83.

Erdmann, G., & Janke, W., 'Interaction between physiological determinants of emotions: experimental studies on Schachter's theory of emotions', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 6, 1978, pp. 61-74.

Ethofer, T. et al, 'Cerebral pathways in processing of affective prosody: A dynamic causal modeling study', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 30, 2006, pp. 580 – 587.

Etzel, J. A. et al, 'Cardiovascular and respiratory responses during musical mood induction', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2006, pp. 57-69.

Euripides, *Trojan Women*, (transl.) A. Shapiro, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.

Faguet, E. & Hayden, P. M., 'On the nature of dramatic emotion', *The Tulane Drama Review,* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1958, pp. 81-8.

Fairbanks, G. & Pronovost, G., 'Vocal pitch during simulated emotion', *Science*, New Series, Vol. 88, No. 2286, 1938, pp. 382-383.

Faulkner, W. B., 'The effect of the emotions upon diaphragmatic action', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1941, pp. 187-9.

Fauriel, P.C., *Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, Firmin Didot-Père et Fils, Paris, 1824.

Fatani, J. A. et al 'Parasympathetic innervation of the thymus: a histochemical and immunocytochemical study'*, Journal of Anatomy*, Vol. 147, 1987, pp. 15–119

Feld, S. & Fox, A. A., 'Music and language', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 23, 1994, pp. 25-53.

Field, D. et al (eds.), *Death, Gender and Ethnicity*, Routledge, London, 1997.

Fink, G. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Stress*, Vol. 3, Academic Press, San Diego, 2000.

Fink, S., 'Approaches to emotion in psychotherapy and theatre', *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Vol. 17, pp. 5-18.

Fisher, G. A. & Chon, K. K., 'Durkheim and the social construction of emotions', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1, Special Issue: Sentiments, Affect and Emotion, 1989, pp. 1-9.

Fiske, A. M., 'Death: myth and ritual', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 1969, pp. 249-265.

Fitton, J. W., 'Greek dance', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1973, pp. 254-274.

Foley, H. P., *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2001.
   -'The masque of Dionysus', *Transactions of the American Philological Association,* Vol. 110, 1980, pp. 107- 133.

Foss, J. E., 'Materialism, reduction, replacement and the place f consciousness in science', *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 8, 1995, pp. 401-429.

Fossey, J. M., 'The ritual breaking of objects in Greek funerary contexts: a note', *Folklore*, Vol. 96, No. 1, 1985, pp. 21-23.

Fowlkes, M. R., 'The social regulation of grief', *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1990, pp. 635-652.

Fox, S. I., *Human Physiology*, 8th ed., McGraw Hill, Boston, 2004.

Freeberg, D. & Gallese, V., 'Motion, emotion and empathy in esthetic experience', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.11, No.5, 2007, pp. 197-203.

Freed, P. J., Yanagihara, T., Hirsch, J. & Mann, J. J., 'Neural mechanisms of grief regulation', *Biological Psychiatry*, Vol. 66, No. 1, 2009, pp. 33-40.

Frijda, N., Manstead, A. S. R., & Fischer, A., *Feelings and Emotions: the Amsterdam Symposium,* Cambridge University Press, New York, 2004.

Frijda, N., 'Emotions and the recognition of emotion' in M. B. Arnold (ed.), *Feelings and Emotions: The Loyola Symposium of Feelings and Emotion*, Academic Press, New York, 1968.

Frith, C. D. & Frith, U., 'The neural basis of mentalising', *Neuron*, Vol. 50, 2008, pp. 531–534.

Fuegi, J. et al, *Brecht Performance/ Brecht: Auffuhrung*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1984.

Furst, L. R. & Skrine, P. N., *Naturalism* [Furst, L. R. & Skrine, P. N., *Νατουραλισμός*, (μτφρ.) Λ. Μεγάλου, Ερμής, Αθήνα, 1990].

Gallagher, K. G., 'Emotion in tragedy and melodrama', *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol.17, No. 3, 1965, pp. 215-19.

Gallowitsch-Puerta, M. & Pavlov, V. A., 'Neuro-immune interactions via the cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway', *Life Sciences*, Vol. 80, 2007, pp. 2325–2329.

Garland, *The Greek Way of Death*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1985.

Giles, S., 'Bertolt Brecht, logical empiricism, and social behaviourism', *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Jan., 1995), pp. 83-93.

Gilmartin, K. 'Talthybius in the *Trojan Women*', *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 91, No. 2, 1970, pp. 213-22.

Gladkov, A., *Meyerhold Speaks, Meyerhold Rehearses*, (transl.) A. Law, Harwood Academic Press, Amsterdam, 1997.

Gobl, C. & Chasaide, A. N., 'The role of voice quality in communicating emotion, mood

and attitude', *Speech Communication*, Vol. 40, 2003, pp. 189–212.

Goff, B., *Euripides: Trojan Women*, Duckworth, London, 2009.

Goldin et al, 'The neural bases of amusement and sadness: a comparison of block contrast and subject-specific emotion intensity regression approaches', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 27, 2005, pp. 26-36.

Goleman, D., *Emotional Intelligence*, Bantam Books, New York, 1995.

Golightly, C. L., 'The James-Lange theory: a logical post-mortem', *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1953, pp. 286-99.

Golland, B., *The Sorrow Songs as Lamentation: A Comparative Study of African-American and Hebraic Song Texts*, Unpublished Dissertation, Bogazic University, 2003.

Gomez, P. & Danuser, B., 'Affective and physiological responses to environmental noises and music', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 53, 2004, pp. 91–103.

Gordon, M., *The Stanislavski Technique: Russia*, Applause, New York, 1987.

Gordon, M., 'Meyerhold's Biomechanics', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1974, pp. 73-88.

Gordon, M. & Law A., *Meyerhold, Eisenstein and Biomechanics: Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia*, McFarland, Jefferson, 1996.

Gould, J., 'Law, custom and myth: aspects of the social position of women in classical Athens', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 100, Centenary Issue, 1980, pp. 38-59.

Goward, B., *Telling Tragedy: Narrative Technique in Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides*, Duckworth, London, 1999.

Green, K., & LeBillan, J., *Critical Theory and Practice: a Coursebook*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Gross, *Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behaviour*, 5th ed., Hodder Arnold, London, 2005.

Grotowski, J., *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Methuen, London, 1969.

Grotowski, J. & Biagini, M., 'Untitled text Jerzy Grotowski, signed in Pontedera, Italy, 4 July 1998', *TDR*, Vol. 43, pp. 11-2.

Grotowski, J. & Schaeffer Price M., 'Around theatre: the Orient-the Occident', *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1989, pp. 1-11.

Grotowski, J., Schechner, R. & Schwat, J., 'Interview with Grotowski', *TDR*, Vol. 13,

No.1, 1968, p.45.

Gustafson, D., 'Grief', *Noûs*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 1989, pp. 457-479.

Gunderson, J. G., *Borderline personality disorder*, American Psychiatric Press, Washington DC, 2008.

Hall, G. S., 'Thanatophobia and immortality', *The American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1915, pp. 550-613.

Hamann, S., 'Cognitive and neural mechanisms of emotional memory', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.5 No.9, 2001, pp. 394-400.

Hampson, E. et al, 'A female advantage in the recognition of emotional facial expressions: test of an evolutionary hypothesis', *Evolution and Human Behavior*, Vol. 27, 2006, pp. 401–416.

Hansen, F., 'Distinguishing between feelings and emotions in understanding communication effects', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 58, 2005, pp. 1426–1436.

Hardison, D. M. & Sonchaeng, C., 'Theatre voice training and technology in teaching oral skills: integrating the components of a speech event', *System*, Vol. 33, 2005, pp. 593–608.

Harrison, R. P., *The Dominion of the Dead*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 2003.

Hatfield, E. et al, 'The impact of vocal feedback on emotional experience and emotion', *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 293-312.

Havilland, L. M. & Jones, J. M. (eds.), *Handbook of Emotions*, Guildford, New York, 2004.

Hawkes, C. H., 'Endorphins: the basis of pleasure?', *Journal of neurology, neurosurgery, and psychiatry*, Vol. 55, pp. 247−250.

Hecht, W. 'The development of Brecht's theory of the epic theatre', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1961, pp. 40-97.

Heim, P. et al, 'Emotion, breathing and speech', *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, Vol. 12, pp. 262-274.

Hendriks, M. C. P., 'Can the distress-signal and arousal-reduction views of crying be reconciled? Evidence from the cardiovascular system', *Emotion*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2007, pp. 458–463.

Henrichs, A., 'Loss of self, suffering, violence: the modern view of Dionysus from Nietzsche to Girard', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 88, 1984,

pp. 205-240.

Herbert, R. T., 'Dualism/Materialism', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 191, 1998, pp. 145-158.

Herzfeld, M., 'In defiance of destiny: the management of time and gender at a Cretan funeral', *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1993, pp. 241-255.

-'Performative categories and symbols of passage in rural Greece', *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 94, No. 371, 1981, pp. 44-57.

Hillman, C. H. et al, 'Emotion and motivated behavior: postural adjustments to affective picture viewing', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 66, 2004, pp. 51-62.

Hiltunen, S. M., 'Bereavement, lamenting and the prism of consciousness: some practical considerations', *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Vol. 30, 2003, pp. 217–228.

Hiltunen, J. et al, 'Neuroanatomical correlates of film induced amusement and sadness: PET activation study using correlation analysis', *NeuroImaging*, No. 6, 2001.

Hinton, A. L., *Biocultural Approaches to the Emotions*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1999.

-'Prolegomena to a processual approach to the emotions', *Ethos*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1993, pp. 417-51.

Hocart, A. M., 'Ritual and Emotion', *Journal of Personality*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2009, pp. 201-210.

Hodge, A. (ed.), *Twentieth Century Actor Training*, Routledge, London, 2000.

Hoffman, G. L., 'Painted ladies: early Cycladic II mourning figures?', *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 106, No. 4, 2002, pp. 525-550.

Hoffman, T., 'Stanislavski triumphant', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 9-17.

Holst-Warhaft, G., 'Remembering the dead: laments and photographs', *Comparative Studies of South* Asia, Africa and the Middle East - Volume 25, Number 1, 2005, pp. 152-160.

-*Dangerous Voices Women's Laments and Greek Literature*, Routledge, London, 1992.

Horowitz, G. M., 'Art and lamentation', *Constellations*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2000, pp. 208-229.

Hughes, R. I. G., 'Tolstoy, Stanislavski and the art of acting', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 1993, pp. 39-48.

Humphreys, S. C., 'Family tombs and tomb cult in ancient Athens: tradition or

traditionalism?', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 100, Centenary Issue, 1980, pp. 96-126.

Hunsaker, D., 'The social construction of emotion', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 89, No. 2, 1983, pp. 434-439.

Hutcherson, C.A. et al, 'Attention and emotion: does rating emotion alter neural responses to amusing and sad films?', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 2005, pp. 656-668.

Ierodiakonou, C. S., *Psychological Issues in Aristotle: From a Psychiatrist's Point of View,* [Ιεροδιακόνου, Χ. Σ., *Ψυχολογικά Θέματα στον Αριστοτέλη: Από την Πλευρά Ενός Ψυχιάτρου,* Μαστορίδης, Θεσσαλονίκη, 2004].

Irons, D., 'The nature of emotions', *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1897, pp. 242-56.

Irons, D., 'The nature of emotion II', *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 5, 1897, pp. 471-96.

Irons, D., 'Descartes and modern theories of emotion', *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1895, pp. 291-302.

James, W., *The Principles of Psychology*, vols. 1&2, Macmillan and Co., London, 1891.
-'What is an emotion?', *Mind*, No. 9, 1884, pp. 188-204.

Jansen, A. S. P. et al, 'Central command neurons of the sympathetic nervous system: basis for the fight-or-flight response', *Science*, New Series, Vol. 270, No. 5236, 1995, pp. 644-646.

Jarosy, A. & Fiedler, H. E., 'Emotion in performance', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1936, pp. 54-58.

Jestrovic, S., *Theatre of Estrangement: Theatre, Practice, Ideology*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2006.

Jevons, F. B., 'Masks and the origin of the Greek drama', *Folklore*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1916, pp. 171-192.

Johnston, S. I., *Restless Dead: Encounters Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece,* University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1999.

Juslin, P. N., 'Cue utilisation in communication of emotion in music performance: relating performance to perception', *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, Human Perception and Performance, Vol. 26, No. 6, 2000, pp. 1797-

1813.

Juslin, P. N. & Laukka, P., 'Communication of emotions in vocal expression and music performance: different channels, same code?', *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 129, No. 5, 2003, pp. 770–814.

Juslin, P. N. & J. A. Sloboda (eds.), *Music and emotion: Theory and research*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

Kaeppler, A. L., 'Poetics and politics of Tongan laments and eulogies', *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1993, pp. 474-501.

Kagan, J., 'On the nature of emotion', *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development,* Vol. 59, No. 2/3, The Development of Emotional Regulation: Biological and Behavioural Considerations, 1994, pp. 7-24.

Kahn, C. H., 'Greek religion and philosophy in the *Sisyphus* fragment', *Phronesis,* Vol. 42, No. 3, pp. 247-262.

Kaminska, Z. & Woolf, J., 'Melodic line and emotion: Cooke's theory revisited', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 28, 2000, pp. 133-153.

Kandel E. R. et al, *Essentials of Neural Science and Behaviour* [Kandel, E. R.., *Νευροεπιστήμη και Συμπεριφορά*, (μτφρ.) Χ. Κάζλαρης, Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης, Ηράκλειο, 2000].

Kemper, T. D., 'How many emotions are there? Wedding the social and the autonomic components', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 93, No. 2, 1987, pp. 263-289.

Kensinger, E. A. & Schachter, D. L. 'Retrieving accurate and distorted memories: neuroimaging evidence for effects of emotion', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 27, 2005, pp. 167 – 177.

Kirkpatrick, L. A., 'Toward an evolutionary psychology of religion and personality', *Journal of Personality*, Vol. 67, No. 6, pp. 921-952.

Kleinsmith, A. et al, 'Cross-cultural differences in recognising affect from body posture', *Interacting with Computers*, Vol. 18, 2006, pp. 1371–1389.

Klonsky, E.D., 'The functions of deliberate self-injury: a review of the evidence', *Clinical Psychology Review*, Vol. 27, 2007.

Kokkonen, M. & Pulkinnen, L., 'Emotion regulation strategies in relation to personality characteristics indicating low and high self-control of emotions', *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 27, 1999, pp. 913-932.

Konsman J. P. et al, 'The vagus nerve mediates behavioural depression, but not fever, in response to peripheral immune signals; a functional anatomical analysis', *European Journal of Neuroscience*, Vol. 12, No. pp. 4434-46.

Konstantinidou, C., 'Death, lamentation and the photographic representation of the Other during the second Iraq war in Greek newspapers', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2007, pp. 147–166.

Koniaris, G. L., '*Alexander, Palamedes, Troades, Sisyphus*: a connected tetralogy? A connected trilogy?', *Harvard studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 77, 1973, pp. 85-124.

Konijn, E., *Acting Emotions*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 1997.

Kordatos, G., *The Ancient Tragedy and Comedy: Which Are The Social Roots of Ancient Greek Theatre?* [Κορδάτος, Ι., *Η αρχαία Τραγωδία και Κωμωδία: Ποιες είναι οι Κοινωνικές Ρίζες του Αρχαίου Ελληνικού Θεάτρου*, Μπουκουμάνης, Αθήνα, 1974].

Kovacs, D., *Euripides: Trojan Women, Iphigeneia Among the Taurians, Ion*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge & London, 1999, p. 7.
-'Gods and men in Euripides' Trojan trilogy', *Colby Quarterly,* Vol. 33, No. 2, 1997, pp. 162-76.
-'On the *Alexandros* of Euripides', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 88, 1984, pp. 44-70.
-'Euripides' *Troades* 95-7: is sacking cities really foolish?', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 33, No. 2, 1983, pp. 334-8.

Koziak, B., 'Homeric thumos: the early history of gender, emotion and politics', *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 4, 1999, pp. 1068-91.

Kreifelts, B. et al, 'Audiovisual integration of emotional signals in voice and face: an event-related fMRI study', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 37, 2007, pp. 1445–1456.

Kreutz et al, 'Using music to induce emotions: Influences of musical preference and absorption', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 36. No. 1, 2008, pp. 101-126.

Kristeva, J. & Waller, M., 'Psychoanalysis and the polis', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 9, No. 1, The Politics of Interpretation, 1982, pp. 77-92.

Kroeber, A. L., 'Totem and taboo: an ethnologic psychoanalysis', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1920, pp. 48-55.

Krumhansl, C. L., 'Rhythm and pitch in music cognition', *Psychological Bulletin*, 2000, Vol. 126, No. 1, pp. 159-179.

Kübler-Ross, E., *On Grief and Grieving,* Scribner, New York, 2005.

-*On Death and Dying*, Scribner, New York, 2003.

Kyle, D. G., *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1998.

Lada, I., '"Weeping for Hecuba": is it a "Brechtian" act?, *Arethusa*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 87-124.

-'Empathetic understanding: emotion and cognition in classical dramatic audience-response, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 39*, 1993, pp. 94-140.

Laing, G. J., *Survivals of Roman Religion*, Longmans, New York, 1931.

Lane, R., 'Self-reliance and empathy: the enemies of poverty: and of the poor', *Political Psychology*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 2001, pp. 473-492.

Lane, R. & Nadel, L. (eds.), *Cognitive Neuroscience of Emotion*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2000.

Lardas, K., 'The mourning songs of Greek women', *College English*, Vol. 49, No. 1, 1987, pp. 37-41.

Law, A. H., 'Meyerhold's *Woe to wit* (1928)', *The Drama Review,* Vol. 18, No. 3, Criticism Issue, 1974, pp. 89-107.

Lazarus, R. S., 'Emotions express a social relationship, but it is an individual mind that creates them', *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1995, pp. 253-265.

-'Vexing research problems inherent in cognitive-mediational theories of emotion, and some solutions', *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1995, pp. 183-196.

Leach, R., *Makers of Modern Theatre*, Routledge, London, 2004.

-*Stanislavski and Meyerhold*, Peter Lang, Bern, 2003.

-*Vsevolod Meyerhold*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993.

Leach, R. et al, 'Performance anxiety: loss of the spoken edge', *Journal of Voice*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2001, pp. 257-69.

Leavitt, J., 'Meaning and feeling in the anthropology of emotions', *American Ethnologist,* Vol. 23, No. 3, 1996, pp. 514-39.

LeDoux, J., *The Emotional Brain*, Phoenix, London, 1999.

-'Emotion memory and the brain', *Scientific American*, The Hidden Mind, 2002, pp. 62-71.

LeDoux, J. & Hirst, W. (eds.), *Mind and Brain: Dialogues in Cognitive Neuroscience*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1987.

LeDoux, J. & Muller, J., 'Emotional memory and psychopathology', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 352, No. 1362, Biological and Psychological Perspectives on Memory and Memory Disorders, 1997, pp. 1719-1726.

Lee, K. H., *Troades,* Macmillan, London, 1976.

Leighton, S. R., 'Aristotle and the emotions', *Phronesis*, Vol. 27, 1982, pp. 144-174.

LeVine, R. A., 'Gusii funerals: meanings of life and death in an African community, *Ethos*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring, 1982), pp. 26-65.

Levy, J. E., 'Archaeological perspectives on death ritual: thoughts from Northwest Europe', *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 4, The Uses of Death in Europe (Oct., 1989), pp. 155-161.

Lewin, R., 'The origin of the modern human mind', *Science*, Vol. 236, No. 4802, 1987, pp. 668-670.

Lloyd, M., 'The Helen scene in Euripides' *Troades'*, *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 1984, pp. 303-13.

Loraux, M., *The Mourning Voice: An Essay on Greek Tragedy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2002.
-*Mothers in Mourning*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1998.

Lucian, *Works*, (transl.) H. W. Fowler, Vol. 3, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2004.

Lutz, C., 'Emotion, thought and estrangement: emotion as a cultural category', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 1, 1986, pp. 287-309.

Lutz, C. & White, M. G., 'The anthropology of emotions', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 15, 1986, pp. 405-36.

Lutz, T., *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears*, Norton, New York, 2001

Lyon, J. K., 'Brecht and money', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Distancing Brecht (Dec., 1987), pp. 487-497.

Lyon, M. L., 'Missing emotion: the limitation of cultural constructionism in the study of emotion', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Anthropologies of the Body, 1995, pp. 244-63.

Markaris, P., *Brecht and the Dialectic Discourse* [Μάρκαρης, Π., *Ο Μπρεχτ και η Διαλεκτική Ηθική*, Ιθάκη, Αθήνα, 1982].

Marks, J., 'Emotions East and West: introduction to a comparative philosophy', *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Emotion East and West, 1991, pp. 1-30.

Marshall, D. A., 'Behavior, belonging, and belief: a theory of ritual practice', *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 2002, pp. 360-380.

Martin, J., *Neuroanatomy: Text and Atlas*, McGraw-Hill Medical, New York, 2003.

Mason, P. G., 'Kassandra', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 79, 1959, pp. 80-93.

Massey, G., *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Black Classic Press, New York, 1995.

Maus, F. E., 'Narrative, drama, and emotion in instrumental music', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 1997, pp. 293-303.

Mauss, I. B., Levenson, R. W., McCarter, L., Wilhelm, F. H. & Gross, J. J., 'The tie that binds? Coherence among emotion experience, behavior, and physiology', *Emotion*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2005, pp. 175–190.

Mavrogordato, J., 'Modern Greek folk-songs of the dead', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 75, 1955, pp. 42-53.

McCauley, R. N. & Lawson, E. T., *Bringing Ritual to Mind: Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.

McDowel, W. S., 'Actors on Brecht: the Munich years', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Actors and Acting, (Sep. 1976), pp. 101-116.

Mead, L. M., 'The *Troades* of Euripides', *Greece & Rome*, Vol. 8, No. 23, 1939, pp. 102-9.

Medford, M. et al, 'Emotional memory: separating content and context', *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, Vol. 138, 2005, pp. 247-258.

Meiggs, R., 'The crisis of Athenian imperialism', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 67, 1963, pp. 1-36.

Merlin, B., *Konstantin Stanislavsky*, Routledge, New York, 2003.
     -*Beyond Stanislavski: The Psycho-physical Approach to Actor-training*, Routledge, London, 2002.

Merridor, R., 'Creative rhetorics in Euripides' *Troades*: some notes on Hecuba's speech', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2000, pp. 16-29.
     -'Euripides' *Troades* 28-44 and the Andromache scene', *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 110, No. 1, 1989, pp. 17-35.
     -'Plot and myth in Euripides' *Heracles* and *Troades*', *Phoenix*, Vol. 38, 1984, pp. 205-15.

Metcalf, P., 'Meaning and materialism: the ritual economy of death', *Man*, New Series, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Dec., 1981), pp. 563-578.

Meyer-Dinkgräfe, *Approaches to Acting: Past and Present*, Continuum, London, 2001.

-*Consciousness and the Actor*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 1996.

Meyerhold, V., *On Theatre*, (ed.) E. Brown, Methuen, London, 1998.

Meyerhold, V. & Beeson, N., 'Farce', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Sep., 1959), pp. 139-149.

Meyerhold, V. & Hoover, M. L., 'Two lectures', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1966, pp. 186-195.

Meyerhold, V. & Reynolds Hapgood, E., 'The 225th studio', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 22-23.

Milby, A. H. et al, 'Vagus nerve stimulation for epilepsy and depression', *Neurotherapeutics: The Journal of the American Society for Experimental NeuroTherapeutics*, Vol. 5, 2008, pp. 75-85.

Miller, G., 'A surprising connection between memory and imagination', *Science*, Vol. 315, No. 5810, 2007.

Milligan, K. et al, 'Maternal attachment and the communication of emotion through song', *Infant Behavior & Development*, Vol. 26, 2003, pp.1–13.

Mitchell, R.L.C., 'fMRI delineation of working memory for emotional prosody in the brain: commonalities with the lexico-semantic emotion network', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 36, 2007, pp. 1015–1025.

Mitchell, R.L.C. et al, 'The neural response to emotional prosody, as revealed functional magnetic resonance imaging', *Neuropsychologia*, Vol. 41, 2003, pp. 1410–1421.

Mitchell, G. & Johnson S., 'Plasticity in respiratory motor control invited review: neuroplasticity in respiratory motor control', *Journal of Applied Physiology*, Vol. 94, 2003, pp. 358–374.

Mitter, S., *Systems of Rehearsal*, Routledge, New York, 1992.

Montagu, A., 'Natural selection and the origin and evolution of weeping in man', *Science*, Vol. 130, No. 3388, pp. 1572 – 1573.

Moody, C., 'Vsevolod Meyerhold and the commedia dell' arte', *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 73, No. 4, 1978, pp. 859-869.

Moore, S., *The Stanislavski System: The Professional Training of an Actor*, Penguin, London,

1984.

Moore, S., 'The method of physical actions', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1965.

Morgan, G., 'The laments of Mani', *Folklore*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 1973, pp. 265-298.

Morinis, A., 'The ritual experience: pain and the transformation of consciousness in ordeals of initiation', *Ethos*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1985, pp. 150-174.

Morris, I., *Burial and Ancient Society: The Rise of the Greek City-State*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990.

Motsios, G., *The Greek Lament*, Vols. 1&2 [Μότσιος, Γ., *Το Ελληνικό Μοιρολόγι*, τόμοι 1&2, Κώδικας, Αθήνα, 1995].

Mueller, R., 'Montage in Brecht', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Distancing Brecht (Dec., 1987), pp. 473-486.

Munk, E. & Chaikin, J., 'The actor's involvement: notes on Brecht. An interview with Joseph Chaikin', *TDR*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1968, pp. 147-51.

Muza, A., 'Meyerhold at rehearsal: new materials on Meyerhold's work with actors', in *Theatre Topics* Vol. 6, No. 1, 1996, pp. 15-30.

Nash, R. A., 'Cognitive theories of emotion', *Neurosciences*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 1989, pp. 481.

Nawrot, E. S., 'The perception of emotional expression in music: evidence from infants, children and adults', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 75-92.

Netter, F. H. M. D., *Atlas of Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology*, Icon Custom Communications, Teterboro, 2002.

Nicpon, E., & Hoehn, K., *Human Anatomy*, 7th ed., Pearson Benjamin Cummings, San Fransisco, 2007.

Nilsson, M. P., *A History of Greek Religion*, Norton, New York, 1964.
    -*Greek Folk Religion*, Harper, New York, 1961.
    -'Der Ürsprung der Tragödie', *Opuscula Selecta*, Vol. 1, C. W. K. Gleerup, Lund, 1951, pp. 504-92.

Noice, T & Noice, H., *The Nature of Expertise in Professional Acting*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, 1997.

Ochs, D. J., *Consolatory Rhetoric: Grief, Symbol and Ritual in the Greco-Roman Era*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1993.

Ochsner, K. N. & Gross, J., 'The cognitive control of emotion', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.9, No.5, 2005, pp. 242-9.

Ogden, D. (ed.), *Companion to Greek Religion*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2007.

Okhlopkov, L. et al, 'Meyerhold's bio-mechanic exercises (a photographic series)', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Russian Issue (Mar., 1973), pp. 113-123.

Oxenhandler, N., 'The changing concept of literary emotion: a selective history', N*ew Literary History*, Vol. 20, No. 1, Critical Reconsiderations, 1988, pp. 105-21.

Ozdemir, E. et al, 'Shared and distinct neural correlates of singing and speaking', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 33, 2006, pp. 628–635.

O'Connor, M., 'Autonomic and emotion regulation in bereavement and depression', *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, Vol. 52, 2002, pp. 183– 185.

O' Neil, E. Jr., 'The prologue of the *Troades* of Euripides', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* Vol. 72, 1941, pp. 288-320.

Palgi, P. & Abramovitch, H., 'Death: a cross-cultural perspective', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 13, 1984, pp. 385-417.

Panksepp, J., 'Emotional endophenotypes in evolutionary psychiatry, *Progress in Neuro-psychopharmacology & Biological Psychiatry*, Vol. 30, 2006, pp. 774–784.
-*Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1998.
-'Where, when, and how does an appraisal become an emotion? "The times they are a changing"', *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 4, 1993, pp. 334-342.
-'Toward a general psychobiological theory of emotions', *The Behavioural Brain Sciences*, Vol. 5, 1982, pp. 407-422.

Panksepp, J. & Bernatzky, G., 'Emotional sounds and the brain: the neuro-affective foundations of musical appreciation', *Behavioural Processes*, Vol. 60, 2002, pp. 133-155.

E. Papadimitriou, *Common Words,*Vols. I-III, [Παπαδημητρίου, Ε., *Κοινός Λόγος*, τ. I-III, Ερμής, Αθήνα, 1984].

Parker, R., *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005.

Parr, L. A., Waller, M. B. & Fugate J., 'Emotional communication in primates: implications for Neurobiology', *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*, Vol. 15, 2005, pp. 716–720.

Passow, W. & Strauss, R., 'The analysis of theatrical performance: the state of the art',

Poetics Today, Vol. 2, No. 3, Drama, Theater, Performance: A Semiotic Perspective (Spring, 1981), pp. 237-254.

Patterson, M., *The Revolution in German Theatre*, Routledge, New York, 1981.

Pavis, P., *Analyzing Performance: Theater, Dance, and Film*, (transl.) D. Williams, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2003.

Pell, M. D., 'Cerebral mechanisms for understanding emotional prosody in speech', *Brain and Language*, Vol. 96, 2006, pp. 221–234.

Pert, C. B., *Molecules of Emotion: Why You Feel the Way You Feel*, Simon & Schuster, London, 1998.

Pessoa, L., McKenna, M., Gutierrez, E., & Ungerleider, L. G., 'Neural processing of emotional faces requires attention', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, Vol. 99, No. 17, 2002, pp. 11458-11463.

Pihan, H. et al, 'Unattended emotional intonations modulate linguistic prosody processing', *Brain and Language*, V. 105, No. 2, 2008, pp. 141-147.

Plato, *Phaedrus,* (transl.) W. Hamilton, Penguin, London, 1973.

-*Laches,* (transl.) B. Jowett, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2004.

-*Laws*, (transl.) B. Jowett, Prometheus, New York, 2000.

Plutarch*, Lives*, Vol. 1, (transl.) J. Dryden, Modern Library, Toronto, 2001.

Plutchik, R., *Emotions and Life: Perspectives From Psychology, Biology, and Evolution,* APA, Washington DC, 2002.

-*Emotion: a Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, Harper and Row, New York, 1980.

Plutchik, R. & H. Kellerman (eds.), *Emotion: Theory, Research and Experience*, Academic Press, New York, 1980.

Pollatos, O. et al, 'On the relationship between interoceptive awareness, emotional experience, and brain processes', *Cognitive Brain Research* , Vol. 25, 2005, pp. 948 – 962.

Porges, S., 'The polyvagal perspective', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 74, 2007, pp. 116–143.

Porges, S. W., Doussard-Roosevelt, J.A. & Maiti, A.K., 'Vagal tone and the physiological regulation of emotion', *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, Vol. 59, No. 2/3, The Development of emotion regulation: biological   and behavioral considerations, 1994, pp. 167-186.

Post, R. M. et al*,* 'Neural plasticity and emotional memory', *Development and Psychopathology,*

Vol. 10, 1998, pp. 829–855.

Potolsky, M., *Mimesis*, Routledge, New York, 2006.

Prigerson, H. G. et al, 'Inventory of complicated grief: a scale to measure maladaptive symptoms of loss', *Psychiatry Research*, Vol. 59, 1995, pp. 65-79.

Puzyna, K., 'A myth vivisected: Grotowski's *Apocalypse*', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 1971, pp. 36-46.

Rainville, P. et al, 'Basic emotions are associated with distinct patterns of cardiorespiratory activity', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2006, pp. 5-18.

Ralph, A., 'Neural systems for recognising emotion', *Current Opinions in Neurobiology*, Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 169-177.

Reddy, W. M., 'Against constructionism: the historical ethnography of emotions', *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 38, No. 3 , 1997, pp. 327-351.

Rehm, R., *Marriage to Death: The Conflation of Wedding and Funeral Rituals in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.

Richards, J. M. & Gross, J., 'Personality and emotional memory: how regulating emotion impairs memory for emotional events', *Journal of Research in Personality*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 2006, pp. 631-651.

Richards, T., *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions*, Routledge, London, 1995.

Rickard, N. S., 'Intense emotional responses to music: a test of the physiological arousal hypothesis', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 371-388.

Ridgeway, W., *Origin of Tragedy: With Special Reference to the Greek Tragedians*, Kessinger, Whitefish, 2003.
-*The Dramas and Dramatic Dances of the Non-European Races*, Benjamin Blom., New York, 1964.

Roach, J. R., *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2001.

Robert A. LeVine, 'Gusii funerals: meanings of life and death in an African community', *Ethos*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1982, pp. 26-65.

Rohde, E., *Psyche: the Cult of Souls and the Belief in Immortality Among the Greeks*, Routledge, London, 2001.

Rolls, E. T., 'Vision, emotion and memory: from neurophysiology to computation',

International Congress Series, Vol. 1250, 2003, pp. 547– 573.

Rolls, E.T., 'Précis of the brain and emotion'*, Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, Vol. 23, 2000, pp. 177–234.

Rosand, E., 'The descending tetrachord: an emblem of lament', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 3, 1979, pp. 346-359.

Rose, H. J., 'Black as a Greek mourning colour', *Folklore*, Vol. 60, No. 1, 1949, p. 230.

Rose, H. R., 'Numen inest: 'Animism' in Greek and Roman religion', *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1935, pp. 237-257.

Rosenblatt, J. et al (eds.), *Advances in the Study of Behavior*, Academic Press, New York, 1985.

Rosenblatt, P. C. et al, *Grief and Mourning in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Human Relations Area Files Press, New Haven, 1976.

Ross, E. D. & Monnot, M., 'Neurology of affective prosody and its functional-anatomic organisation in right hemisphere', *Brain and Language*, Vol. 104, 2008, pp. 51–74.

Rossberg-Gempton, I. & Poole, G., 'The effect of open and closed postures on pleasant and unpleasant emotions', *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Vol. 20, 1993, pp. 75-82.

Rouse, 'Brecht and the contradictory actor', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 1984, The Interpretive Actor, pp. 25-41.

Roy, N. et al, 'Vocal violence in actors: an investigation into its acoustic consequences and the effects of hygienic laryngeal release training', *Journal of Voice*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2000, pp. 215-230.

Salmon, A. L., 'Emotion and technique', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 65, No. 972, 1924, pp. 119-21.

Salzen, E. A., 'Emotion and self-awareness', *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, Vol. 57, 1998, pp. 299-313.

Sander, D. et al, 'A systems approach to appraisal mechanisms in emotion', *Neural Networks*, Vol. 18, 2005, pp. 317–352.

Sander, K., 'Audition of laughing and crying leads to right amygdala activation in a low-noise fMRI setting', *Brain Research Protocols*, Vol. 11, 2003, pp. 81–91.

Sander, K. & Scheich, H., 'Auditory perception of laughing and crying activates human amygdala regardless of attentional state', *Cognitive Brain Research*, Vol. 12, 200,

pp. 181–198.

Sanders, T. & Scanlon, V. C. S. T., *Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology,* Davis Company, Philadelphia, 2007.

Saunier, G., *Greek Folk Songs: The Laments* [Saunier, G., *Ελληνικά Δημοτικά Τραγούδια: Τα Μοιρολόγια*, Εκδόσεις Νεφέλη, Αθήνα, 1999].

Schachter, S. & Singer J., 'Cognitive, social and physiological determinants of emotional state', P*sychological Review,* Vol. 69, 1962, pp. 379-399.

Schmidt, P., 'Discovering Meyerhold: traces of a search', *October*, Vol. 7, 1978, pp. 71-82.

-'A director works with a playwright: Meyerhold and Mayakovsky', *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (May, 1977), pp. 214-220.

Schaller, *The Mountain Gorilla*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963.

Schachter, S. & Singer, J., 'Cognitive, social and physiological determinants of emotional state', *Psychological Review*, Vol. 69, 1962, pp. 379-99.

Scheff, T. J. et al, 'The distancing of emotion in ritual [and comments and reply]', *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1977, pp. 483-505.

Scheie, T., 'Performing degree zero: Barthes, body, theatre', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 52, 2000, pp. 161-81.

Schechner, R. & Wolford, L. (eds.), *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, Routledge, London, 1997.

Schechner, R. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, Routledge, London, 2002.

Scherer, K. R., 'Expression of emotion in voice and music', *Journal of Voice*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1995, pp. 235-248.

Scherer, K., Summerfield, A. B. & Wallbott, H. G., 'Cross-national research on antecedents and components of emotion: a progress report', *Social Science Information*, Vol. 22, 1983, pp. 355-85.

Schlereth, T. Z. & Birklein, F., 'The sympathetic nervous system and pain', *Neuromolecular Medicine*, Vol. 10, 2008, pp.141–147.

Schmitt, W. H. Jr., 'Merging contemporary chiropractic neurology and nutritional biochemistry in the tradition of applied kinesiology, *The Uplink,* No. 31, 2004.

Schulkin, J., *Rethinking Homeostasis: Allostatic Regulation in Physiology and Pathophysiology*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2003.

Schulkin, J. Thompson, B. L. & Rosen, J. B., 'Demythologising the emotions:

adaptation, cognition, and visceral representations of emotion in the nervous system', *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 52, 2003, pp. 15–23.

Schwarz, G. A. et al, 'Cardiovascular differentiation of happiness, sadness, anger, and fear following imagery and exercise', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 1981, pp. 343-364.

Scodel, R., 'The captive's dilemma: sexual acquiescence in Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troades'*, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 98, 1998, pp. 137-54.

Scott, J. A., 'Exposure of the dead in Greek funeral processions', *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1937, pp. 41-43.

Scullion, S., '"Nothing to do with Dionysus': tragedy misconceived as ritual', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 52, No. 1, 2002, pp. 102-137.

Seaford, R., *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State*, [*Ανταπόδοση και Τελετουργία: Ο Όμηρος και η Τραγωδία στην αναπτυσσόμενη Πόλη-Κράτος*, (μτφρ.) Β., Λιάπης, ΜΙΕΤ, Αθήνα, 2003].

Segal, C., 'Song, ritual, and commemoration in early Greek poetry and tragedy', *Oral Tradition*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1989, pp. 330-359.

Seremetakis, C. N., *The Last Word: Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991.
-'In search of the barbarians: borders in pain', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 98, No. 3, 1996, pp. 489-491.
-'The ethics of antiphony: the social construction of pain, gender, and power in the Southern Peloponnese', *Ethos*, Vol. 18, No. 4, 1990, pp. 481-511.

Shackleton, C. H., 'The psychology of grief', *Advances in Behavior Research and Therapy*, Vol. 6, 1984, pp. 153-205.

Shapiro, H. A., 'The iconography of mourning in Athenian art', *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 95, No. 4, 1991, pp. 629-656.

Shisler, F. L., 'The use of stage business to portray emotion in Greek tragedy', *The American Journal of Philology,* Vol. 66, No. 4, 1945, pp. 377-97.

Shore, B., 'Emotion: culture, psychology, biology', *Ethos*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1993, pp. 357-363.

Shweder, R. A., 'Everything you ever wanted to know about cognitive appraisaltheory

without being conscious of it', *Psychological Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1993, pp. 322-26.

Siettos, G., *Death Attitudes and Rituals* [Σιέττος, Γ., *Νεκρικά Ήθη και Έθιμα*, Κυβέλη, Αθήνα, 1997].

Sijpesteijn, P. J., 'An unpublished Greek funeral inscription', *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 31, Fasc. 4, 1978, pp. 418-420, 119-121.

Silberman, M., 'A postmodernized Brecht?', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 1, German Theatre After the F/Wall, Mar., 1993, pp. 1- 19.

Silverthorn, D. U. & Ober, W. C., *Human Physiology: an Integrated Approach,* 4th edn., Benjamin Cummings, San Fransisco, 2006.

Singer, T., 'The neuronal basis and ontogeny of empathy and mind reading: review of literature and implications for future research', *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, Vol. 30, 2006, pp. 855–863.

Sloan, D., 'Emotion regulation in action: emotional reactivity in experiential avoidance', *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, Vol. 42, 2004.

Slowiak, J. & Cuesto, J., *Jerzy Grotowski*, Routledge, New York, 2007.

Snell, B., *The Discovery of the Mind* [Snell, B., *Η Ανακάλυψη του Πνεύματος: Ελληνικές ρίζες της Ευρωπαϊκής Σκέψης*, (μτφρ.) Δ. Ιακώβ, ΜΙΕΤ, Αθήνα, 1989].

Snell, R., *Clinical Neuroanatomy for Medical Students* [Snell, R., *Κλινική Νευροανατομική*, (μτφρ.) Ν. Ι. Παπαδόπουλος, Λίτσας, Αθήνα, 1995].

Solomon, R. C., 'Emotions, feelings and contexts', *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 83, No. 11, Eighty-Third Annual Meeting American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, 1986, pp. 653-64.

Sophocles, *Electra*, (transl.) D. Raeburn & P. Easterling, Penguin, London, 2008.

Sourvinou-Inwood, C., *Tragedy and Athenian Religion*, Lexington Books, Lanham, 2002.

Sloan, D. M., 'Emotion regulation in action: emotional reactivity in experiential avoidance', *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, Vol. 42, 2004, pp. 1257-1270.

Stanford, W. B., *Greek Tragedy and the Emotions*, Routledge, London, 1983.

Stanislavski, K., *An Actor's Work: a Student's Diary,* (transl.) J. Benedetti,   Routledge, New York, 2008.

   -*Building a Character*, (transl.) E. R. Hapgood, Methuen, London, 2003.

   -*Stanislavski's Legacy*, (transl.) E. R. Hapgood, Methuen, London, 2001.

-*Constantin Stanislavski: An Actor's Handbook*, (transl.) E. R. Hapgood, Methuen, London, 1990.

-*Actor Prepares*, (transl.) E. R. Hapgood, Methuen, London, 1986.

-*Creating a Role*, (transl.) E. R. Hapgood, Methuen, London, 1981.

Stanislavski, K. & Hapgood, E. R., 'Director and actor at work', *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1964, pp. 57-62.

Stearns, P. N., 'History of emotions' in *Handbook of Emotions*, (eds.) L. M. Havilland & J. M. Jones, New York, Guildford, 2004.

Stecker, R., 'Expression of emotion in some of the arts', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 1984, pp. 409-418.

Stevenson, I. & Ripley, H., 'Variations in respiration and in respiratory symptoms during changes in emotion', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol. 14, 1952, pp. 476-490.

Strasberg, L. *Strasberg: At the Actors Studio*, TCG, New York, 2005.

Stroebe, M. et al, 'Classification and diagnosis of pathological grief', *Clinical Psychology Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, pp. 57–75.

Stroebe, M. & Stroebe, G., *Bereavement and Health*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987.

Stuart, D. C., 'The origin of Greek tragedy in the light of dramatic technique', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 47, 1916, pp. 173-204.

Sullivan, J., 'Stanislavski and Freud', *TDR*, Vol. 9, No. 1, (Autumn 1964), pp. 57-62.

Sumi, G. S., 'Impersonating the dead: mimes at Roman funerals', *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 123, No. 4. 2002, pp. 559-585.

Suter, A., (ed.), *Lament: Studies in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008.

-'Lament in Euripides' "Trojan Women"', *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 56, Fasc. 1 (2003), pp. 1-28.

Takahashi, T. et al 'Changes in EEG and autonomic nervous activity during meditation and their association with personality traits', *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, Vol. 55, 2005, p.p. 199-207.

Tang, R. et al, 'From the funeral mask to the painted face of the Chinese theatre', *The Drama Review: TDR*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Masks, 1982, pp. 60-63.

Taylor, J. G. & Fragopanagos, N. F., 'The interaction of attention and emotion', *Neural Networks*, Vol. 18, 2005, pp. 353–369.

Terada, R., 'Imaginary seductions: Derrida and emotion theory', *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 1999, pp. 193-206.

Thalmann, W. G., 'Aeschylus's physiology of emotions', *American Journal of Philology*, 1986, Vol. 107, No.4, pp 498-511.

Thayer, J.F. & Lane, R. D., 'A model of neurovisceral integration in emotion regulation and dysregulation', *Journal of Affective Disorders*, Vol. 61, 2001, pp. 201 –216.

Thoits, P. A., 'The sociology of emotions', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 15, 1989, pp. 317- 42.

Tian, M., '"Alienation-effect" for whom? Brecht's (mis)interpretation of the classical Chinese theatre', *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1997, pp. 200-222.

Toates, F., 'Cognition, motivation, emotion and action: a dynamic and vulnerable interdependence', *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, Vol. 86, 2004, pp. 173–204.

Tolbert, E., 'Women cry with words: symbolisation of affect in the Karelian lament', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 22, 1990, pp. 80-105.

Tooby, J. & Cosmides, L., 'Evolutionary psychology and the generation of culture, Part I', *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 10, 1989, pp. 29-49.

Tooby, J. & Cosmides, L., 'Evolutionary psychology and the generation of culture, Part II', *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 10, 1989, pp. 51-97.

Tooby, J. & Cosmides, L., 'The past explains the present: emotional adaptations and the structure of ancestral environments', *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 11, 1990, pp. 375-424.

Toporkov, V., *Stanislavski in Rehearsal*, (transl.) J. Benedetti, Methuen, London, 2001.

Tracey, K. J., 'Physiology and immunology of the cholinergic antiinflammatory pathway', *Journal of Clinical Investigation,* Vol. 117, No. 2, 2007, pp. 289-96.

Trehub, S. E., 'The developmental origins of musicality', *Nature Neuroscience*, Vol. 6, pp. 669–673.

Trombley, F. R., 'Paganism in the Greek world at the end of antiquity: the case of rural anatolia and Greece', *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3/4, 1985, pp. 327-352.

Tsagalis, C., *Epic Grief; Personal Laments in Homer's Iliad*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin-New

York, 2004.

Tucker, D.M. & Dawson ,S.L., 'Asymmetric EEG changes as Method actors generated emotions', *Biological Psychology*, Vol. 19,1984, pp. 63-15.

Turner, T., 'Death, passion and politics: the power of grief and the charisma of loss', *Reviews in Anthropology*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 2005, pp. 245 – 256.

Unwin, M. M. et al, 'The effects of group singing on mood', *Psychology of Music*, Vol. 30, 2002, pp. 175-185.

Urban, G., 'Ritual wailing in Amerindian Brazil', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 90, No. 2, 1988, pp. 385-400.

Urmson, J. O., 'Dramatic representation', The *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 89, 1972, pp. 333-43.

Van Erp Taalman Kip, A. M., 'Euripides and Melos', *Mnemosyne*, Vol. 40, 1987, pp. 414-9.

Van Gennep, A., *The Rites of Passage,* (transl.) G. L. Caffee, Routledge, London, 2004.

Van Meel. J. M., 'Representing emotions in literature and paintings: a comparative analysis', *Poetics*, Vol. 23, 1994, pp. 159-176.

Varopoulou, E., 'Brecht's *Gestus'*, *The Drama Review*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 1999.

Vendramini, D., 'Noncoding DNA and the teem theory of inheritance, emotions and innate behaviour', *Medical Hypotheses*, Vol. 10, 2004, pp. 1-8.

Vermeule, E. D. T., 'Painted Mycenaean larnakes', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 85, 1965, pp. 123-148.

Vernet-Maury, E. et al, ' Basic emotions induced odorants: a new approach based on autonomic pattern results', *Journal of the Autonomic Nervous System*, Vol. 75, 199, pp. 176–18.

Viertel, B., 'The Brecht performance', *The Kenyon Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Autumn, 1945), pp. 690-692.

Vingerhoets, J. J. M. & Cornelius, R. R., *Adult Crying: A Biopsychosocial Approach*, Brunner-Routledge, Philadelphia, 2001.

Wagner, H. L. (ed.), *Social Psychophysiology and Emotion: Theory and Clinical Applications*, John Willey & Sons, London, 1988.

Walcot, P. 'The judgment of Paris', *Greece & Rome*, 2nd Ser., Vol. 24, No. 1, 1977, pp. 31-9.

Wallin, N. L. et al (eds.), *The origins of music*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2000.

Walton, J. H. et al, *The IVP Bible background Commentary: Old testament*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 2000.

Watson, J. B., *Behaviourism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1930.
-'Psychology as a behaviourist views it', *Psychological Review*, 1913, Vol. 20, pp. 158-177.

Weber, C. & Munk, E., 'Brecht as director', *TDR*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Bertolt Brecht, (Autumn, 1967), pp. 101-107.

Weinbaum, B., 'Lament ritual transformed into literature: positing women's prayer as cornerstone in Western classical literature', *Journal of American Folklore,* Vol. 114, No. 451, 2001, pp. 20–39.

West, M. L., 'The singing of Homer and the modes of early Greek music', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 101, 1981, p. 125.

Whyman, R., *The Stanislavsky System of Acting: Legacy and Influence in Modern Performance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008.
-'The actor's second nature: Stanislavski and William James', *New Theatre Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 2007, pp. 115-123.

Wickens, A., *Foundations of Biopsychology*, 2nd ed., Prentice Hall, Harlow, 2005

Wierzbicka, A., 'Defining emotion concepts', *Cognitive Science*, Vol. 16, 1992, pp. 539-581.

Wierzbicka, A., 'Human emotions: universal or culture-specific?', *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 88, 1986, pp. 584-94.

Wiethoff, S. et al, 'Cerebral processing of emotional prosody—influence of acoustic parameters and arousal', *NeuroImage*, Vol. 39, 2008, pp. 885–893.

Wijngaards-de Meij, L. et al, 'Neuroticism and attachment insecurity as predictors of bereavement outcome', *Journal of Research in Personality*, Vol. 41, 2007, pp. 498–505.

Wiles, D., *Greek Theatre Performance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003.
-*Tragedy in Athens: Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.
-'The mask in Greek tragedy', *Dioniso*, Vol. 3, pp. 206-15.

Wilkins, D. P., 'Interjections as deictics', *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 18, 1992, pp. 119-158.

Willer, J. D., Dehen, H. & Cambier, J., 'Stress induced analgesia in humans', *Science*, Vol. 212, 1981, pp. 680−691.

Willett, J., *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*, Methuen, London, 1992.

Wilson, E. O., *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2000.

Wilson, G. D., *Psychology for Performing Artists*, Whurr, London, 2002.

Windle , P., 'The ecology of grief', *BioScience*, Vol. 42, No. 5, 1992, pp. 363-366.

Winnington-Ingram, R. P., 'Ancient Greek music: a survey', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Oct., 1929), pp. 326-345.

Worthen, B, W, 'Stanislavsky and the ethos of acting', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 1, Aporia: revision, representation and intertextual theatre, 1983, pp. 32- 40.

Wright, J. P., 'Hysteria and mechanical man', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 1980, pp. 233-47.

Yatromanolakis, D. & Roilos, P. (eds.), *Greek Ritual Poetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2004.

Yun Dai, D & Sternberg, R. J. (eds.), *Motivation, Emotion and Cognition: Integrative Perspectives on Intellectual Functioning and Development*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, 2004.

Zajonc, R., 'Feeling and thinking: preferences need no inferences', *American Psychologist*, Vol. 35, 1980, pp. 151-175.

Zajonc, R., B., 'Emotion and facial efference: a theory reclaimed', *Science*, New Series, Vol. 228, No. 4695, 1985, pp. 15-21.

Zarrilli, P. (ed.), *Acting Re-considered*, Routledge, New York, 2001.

Zhu, J. & Thagan, P., 'Emotion and action', *Philosophical Psychology*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2002, pp. 19-36.

Zilmann, D. & Cantor, J., 'Affective responses to the emotions of a protagonist', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 13, 1977, pp. 155-165.

Zucker, L., 'Psychological aspects of speech-melody', *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 23, 1946, pp. 73–128.

B. ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Unknown author, 'Chakra', *Wikipedia*, Viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chakra>.

Unknown author, 'Duchenne de Boulogne 3', *Wikimedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duchenne_de_Boulogne_2.jpg>.

Unknown author, 'Ekphora and Mourners', viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://www1.hollins.edu/faculty/saloweyca/AThenian%20Woman/henderson

      /funerary%20toy.jpg>.

Unknown author, 'Getting a clue', *Soccerdad*, January 2, 2008, viewed on 1 November

      2009, <http://soccerdad.baltiblogs.com/archives/2008_01.html>.

Unknown author, 'Grotowski in Poland: the photographs of Andrzej Paluchiewicz',

      viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://www.nyu.edu/kimmel.center/exhibit.grotowski.html>.

Unknown author, 'Horace Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford', *Wikipedia*, viewed on 1

      November 2009, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Walpole>.

Unknown author, 'Miniature Gaming table and dice with figurines of mourners, 580 BC',

      viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://gssq.blogspot.com/2006_05_01_archive.html>.

Unknown author, 'Neurology of a phobia', viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://www.keane-hypnotherapy.com/audio/phobia.png>.

Unknown author, 'Princess Diana Funeral', *Wikimedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Princess_Diana_Funeral_St_James_

      Park_1997.jpg>.

Unknown author, 'Stanislavski and naturalism in the theatre', viewed on 1 November

      2009,

      <http://freespace.virgin.net/drama.land/projects/Academic/stanislavski/natura

      lism.html>.

Unknown author, 'The animated brain', *Brainviews*, viewed on 1 November 2009,

      <http://www.brainviews.com/abFiles/ImgGage.htm>.

Unknown author, 'Timeline', *Meyerhold Memorial Museum,* viewed on 1 November 2009,

      < http://www.meyerhold.org/Images/timeline/Book.1.03.jpg>.

Unknown author, '50 most tragic pictures in photographic history', *Yeeeeee*, viewed on 1

November 2009, <http://www.yeeeeee.com/2008/07/18/50-most-tragic-pictures-in-photographic-history>.

Unknown author, '2005 Pictures of the Year', *Fotki*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://public.fotki.com/projectmandarin/news_pictures/2005_news/2005_pictures_of/42-15494138.html>.

Caruso, K., 'Tsunami pictures', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.tsunamis.com/tsunami-pictures-15.html>).

Dillon, B., 'Psyography: Willliam James', viewed on 1 November 2009, < http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/psyography/williamjames.html >.

Ely, M., 'What's in a name? Honor Charles Darwin but kiss off Darwinism?', viewed on 1 November 2009, < http://mikeely.wordpress.com/category/science/charles-darwin>.

Erlauer, L., 'A walk through the brain', *Ascd*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/101269/chapters/A_Walk_Through_the_Brain.aspx>.

Fitz, M., 'Gaza mourning: is that the road to peace?', *Archive for March 2008*, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/BA/ETP/V.html>.

Goldberg, E., '*Gallileo* in Hollywood', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://web.ard.de/galerie/bilderpool/Radio/Brecht/brecht1_1.jpg>.

Guzy, C. 'The Pulitzer prizes: 2000 feature- photography', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.pulitzer.org/archives/5259>.

Homer, *Iliad*, (transl.) G. Murray, viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.theoi.com/Text/ HomerIliad1.html>.

Hughes, G., 'Rene Descartes meditations of first philosophy', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.btinternet.com/~glynhughes/squashed/descartes.jpg>.

Kenare, A, *The Sydney Moring Herald*, '330 villages reduced to rubble', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2006/04/01/1143441382388.html?from=rss>.

Ladefoged, J., 'Turmoil in Albania', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.reportage.org/PrintEdition2/Albania/PagesAlbania/AlbaniaLadefogedStrip.html>.

Ladygina-Kohts, N. N., viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.kohts.ru/ladygina-

kohts_n.n./ichc/html/apes02.html>.

LeDoux, J., 'emotional memory', *Scholarpedia*, viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Emotional_memory>.

Lenars, C., 'Wall painting inside Egyptian tomb', *Corbis*, viewed on 1 November 2009,

    (<http://www.corbisimages.com/Enlargement/Enlargement.aspx?id=CJ003259&

    ext=1>)

Olivetti, P., 'Musical features of the ritual lament in ancient Greece', *Rosetta: Papers of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity* at the University of Birmingham, 2009, viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <http://www.rosetta.bham.ac.uk/Issue_02/Olivetti.htm>.

Opsopaus, J. 'A Summary of Pythagorean theology: theurgy', viewed on 1 November 2009, <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~Mclennan/BA/ETP/Prothesis-head-BW.jpg>.

    -<http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/BA/ETP/V.html>.

Plato, *Republic,* (transl.) B. Jowett, The Echo Library, viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <www.echo-library.com>.

    -*Philibus*, 48a, (transl.) B. Jowett., The Echo Library, viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <www.echo-library.com>.

Rougier, M., 'Performing chimpanzee Zippy smoking a cigarette', *Life* , viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=2f3c3623c6e86335&q=zippy%2 0smoking%20chimpanzee&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dzippy%2Bsmoking%2Bchimp anzee%26hl%3Del%26um%3D1>.

Savvidis, C., 'Dances of Pontos', viewed on 1 November 2009,

    <http://www.osepe.de/xoroi.htm>.

Stennud, S., 'Aristotle', viewed on 1 November 2009,

    < http://www.stenudd.com/myth/greek/aristotle/aristotle.htm>.