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Mimesis as an embodied imaginative act: The paradox of tragedy and empathic morality

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Abstract

The major concern of this article/chapter is to develop a relatively detailed account of the emotional, symbolic structures that give "to the emotions mentioned by Aristotle in the Poetics" shape and meaning by adopting a psychological perceptive as reflected in the dynamics of embodiment.

The ideas that are advanced here attempt first to untangle issues related to mimesis arguing for mimesis as an embodied imaginative act grounded in the primordial organization of our experience—an enactment of the dynamic qualities of an embodied experience which enables our intentional attunement with others/object creating a "we-centric transitional in-between space" of shared understanding, while retaining differentiation and interdependence, and thus sustaining tolerance to ambiguity, conflict and complexity. As such it presupposes an attitudinal action force (motivation) for deep engagement and an intentional shift/decoupling of functions from things of anticipatory action to things of experiential contemplation, from outward reaction towards inward reflection as constrained and become schematized by our form of embodiment.

It is argued then, that this mechanism scaffolds the propositional more sophisticated cognitive elaboration that tragedy affords having also interesting consequences, both from a theoretical and empirical point of view—for the debate over the paradox of tragedy, the role of negative emotions and the nature of empathic responses in arts, and the possible meanings of catharsis and tragic proper pleasure.

Introduction

Aristotle's Poetics, although ancient, can be a useful intellectual pole on which to concentrate a discussion of the psychology of emotions and arts for the following reasons: (1) the text compares favourably with any contemporary treatise on the subject of the symbolic character of emotional experience in art; (2) the text, although famous among philosophers, is not well known by researchers and especially those interested in cognitive sciences, psychology of emotions and the arts; (3) the text provides the opportunity for an object lesson about the universally appealing yet culturally revealing character of all accounts, about what is "basic" to the emotional nature of human beings (see also Shweder & Haidt, 2000) .

Philosophical debate about the meaning of catharsis has frequently been concerned with whether it could be understood as bearing principally an emotional discharge and a purgation of feelings (i.e., Bernays, 1857/1979) or a "clearing up", a clarification — a removal of some obstacle that makes the item in question less clear than it is, in its proper state (i.e., Nussbaum, 1986; Halliwell, 1987). Meanwhile, the association of tragedy with morality has a long and highly distinguished history, mainly divided into two opposing approaches; the one that assumes fundamental compatibility between both, and the other that comes in different, relatively modern, formulations which is that there is a mutual antagonism between them (for a review see Gardner, 2003; Carroll, 1998).

Our approach in this chapter will not focus explicitly on revealing or discussing the aforementioned issues or approaches. It will rather draw on psychological evidence, especially related to the psychology of emotions, developmental psychology and the psychology of arts as well as, on phenomenological psychological accounts of the emotion experience, attempting to introduce some stimulating or provocative implications for future interdisciplinary research related to the function of art (in our case of tragedy) upon its audience. It might rather be seen as an attempt to model Aristotle's proposal of the experience of tragedies operationally, for differentiating levels of processing in art as well as patterns of empathic responses. This "reverse-design" approach of reconstructing the emotional processes from the characteristics of the stimuli that have been analyzed by Aristotle along with some of his ideas followed a twofold investigation: a horizontal search for relevant issues on emotions across his texts (Rhetoric and Politics) and a vertical search for the organization of meanings within Poetics.

Thus, a major concern of this article and commentaries is the development of a relatively detailed suggestive account of the emotional, symbolic structures that give "to the emotions mentioned in Aristotle's Poetics" shape and meaning. What defines the nature and significance (both aesthetic and socio-cultural) of the elusive emotion of proper tragic pleasure in Aristotle? What could the relationship among pity and fear and the three kinds of pleasure mentioned by Aristotle be? Is the relationship one of identity, such that, for example, the audience's experience of fear is itself a real everyday experience of fear? Or, is the experience of fear a mere simulation of, or pretence of everyday fear? Or, is it perhaps an intensification or amplification of the basic emotion? Alternatively, what could the implications of understanding the role of negative affect in tragedy be?

Apparently, we are going to be faced with many paradoxes that will remain unresolved, since any comprehensive review of answers to these questions would have to address hundreds of years of theoretical arguments, empirical sightings, and philosophical debates in the literature of several different civilizations. In this chapter, our aim is simply to formulate a "built-in form" syllogism that integrates a diversity of approaches that might seem productive for future development.

We start the discussion, with a relatively detailed examination of the notion of mimesis, as found in the text of Poetics. It is through the analysis of Aristotle's accounts that we address contemporary concerns and attempt to untangle related issues. In the first part of the second section

of this chapter, the focus will be on the function of art upon its audience and the varieties of emotion experience, involved; in the second part, we will attempt to unravel issues related to the role of negative emotions and to the nature of empathic responses as revealed throughout the framework of our argument. In the last section, we will attempt to elaborate how negative affect as conditioned in the case of tragedies can become a symbolic vehicle of experiential learning and empathic morality.

Mimesis and the genesis of tragedy

Aristotle speaks of three kinds of pleasure that tragedy generates in its audience, and divides them neatly into those that it shares with other imitative arts [(a) immediate natural pleasure of mimesis—the animated form, (b) mimesis as wonder and learning and the pleasure that results from knowing, and (c) what he calls tragedy's proper pleasure]. The former ones are further elucidated as the very pleasure of mimesis — natural to people from childhood (1448b6) and as that which is brought about by the works of imitation, and which is the only one we experience if the subjects of representations remain unintelligible to us. He says that is natural for all to delight in works of imitation. The truth of this point is shown by experience: though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight in viewing their representation in art (1448b4-19). The explanation for this is to be found in a further fact: to be learning something is the greatest of pleasures, not only to philosophers, but also to the rest of humanity, however small their capacity is. The reason for people's delight in seeing a picture is that while wondering-contemplating, they learn — they gather the meaning of things, e.g., that the man there is so-and-so. However, if one has not seen the things before, one's pleasure will not be in the picture as an imitation of it, but will be due to the execution of colouring, texture or some similar cause... (1448b19).

In fact, in Poetics, chapter 4, Aristotle attributes the general origin of poetry to two causes. The first is that imitation is natural and pleasurable as well as the fact that harmony and rhythm are equally natural to us (1448b22-24). The second is that to learn by means of imitation is pleasurable. This learning however, is not restricted to recognition-learning of what pictures represent; it goes beyond the recognition of things so as to form syllogisms about the very nature of what is represented-of their meaning (1448b5-21). This type of poetry's learning, however, although it requires pre-existing knowledge (one could say, beliefs-propositional representations), is about statements of the nature of universals (1451b6).

It is worth looking at another passage, this time from his Rhetoric, which corresponds with parts of the text of Poetics:

> *"Learning things and wondering at things are also pleasant for the most part; wondering implies the desire to learn, so that the object of wonder is an object of desire; while in learning one is brought into one's natural condition... again since learning and wondering are pleasant, it follows that such things as acts of imitation must be pleasant — for instance painting, sculpture, poetry — and every product of skilful imitation; so that, even if the imitated object is not in itself pleasant; for it is not the object itself which here gives delight; and thus the spectator draws inferences (that is so-and-so) and thus learns something fresh (Rhet. 1371b4-10)."*

In fact, such statements introduce an implicit differentiation between the contemplative, yet experiential character of the proper perception in art, and the everyday more instrumental perceptual mode. In Eudemian Ethics, he also distinguishes between our response to the sight of luxurious food and goods which often stimulates interpretative appetites and desires and the experiencing of pleasure that is generated simply in the perception and contemplation of something, which is quite

different from the pleasure of satisfying an appetite (ibid.: 1230b). This contemplative mode, according to him, is not the object of moral disapproval since it constitutes the ground where emotions, even negative ones such as fear and pity, can be seen as intellectual objects as well as objects of aesthetic pleasure.

Looking at the passages provided above, it seems that Aristotle offers a quite complicated account of mimesis which not only pertains to the primordial organization of our experience, but also to the emergence of intentionality in the very act of imitation which is also the ground for the foundation of referencing abilities and the emergence of reflective thought. The central premise of his argument, as we are going to argue, is to set the basis for developing his argument about tragedy, untangling issues related to mimesis—its very nature and its function. From his writings about mimesis, we are implicitly faced with a number of outstanding paradoxes concerning our responses to fiction, such as the paradox of tragedy, the paradox of suspense, and the paradox of (mimesis) our emotional responses to fiction since we know that the objects of our emotions do not exist (for a review see: Carroll, 1995; Currie & Ravenscroft, 2002; Lamarque, 1981; Yanal, 1996; Walton, 1990). However, in not trying to solve them, unavoidably we are also faced with questions that point to the debate of simulation theory vs. theory-theory with respect to the nature of our emotional responses to art which inevitably is linked with issues related to the nature of mind-reading and the role of imitation in infancy and possibly in the arts.

The notion of simulation is employed in many different domains, often with different, not necessarily overlapping meanings. Simulation is a functional process that possesses a certain representational content, typically focusing on possible states of its target object. In the philosophy of mind, the notion of simulation, often contrasted with the theory-theory approach, has been used by the proponents of the simulation theory of mind-reading to characterize the pretend ("as if") state adopted by the attributer in order to understand others' behaviour (i.e., see Gordon, 1995; Gallese & Goldman, 1998). Unlike theory-theory which proposes that whenever we make claims or predictions about the mental states (or emotion experiences) of others, we refer to theory (explicitly or tacit knowledge base consisting of a set of mental state concepts and laws in systematic fashion; see Stich & Nichols, 1995), Simulation theory does not require that the simulator knows the laws behind the attributions she makes. Instead, simulation theory proposes that something more like a capacity to empathize lies at the roots of our understanding of others' emotion experiences (mentalizing ability)—rather common mechanisms for instantiating and recognizing mental states in the self and the others that can discriminate ownership (see Goldman, 1995). As such, simulation theory emerges over the last decade as a widespread, multifaceted theory in the philosophy of mind. In the realm of arts, it tries to untangle issues related to the very nature of fictional, simulated and actual emotions when engaged with fiction and to shed light on the generated imaginative games of make-believe with respect to the phenomena of representation (see Walton, 1990; 1997; Currie, 1990).

Our approach will not focus explicitly on these issues. However, we will try implicitly offering empirical evidence from children development, imitation and the psychology of aesthetic experience, to argue that, even from infancy, we are confronted with a rather complicated landscape which as projected onto the aesthetic encounter becomes more subtle and complex than philosophers generally acknowledge, often adopting an "all-or- nothing" approach. Our understanding, not following a reductionist approach in aesthetics, is that the "art" as in the case of tragedy is not ours to "read" or "recognize" or "simulate"—it is ours to experience as we interact with its complex living and lived organism. Once this complexity of narrative engagement (which is hardly the only engagement that happens in the arts; see Tan, 2000; Miall, 1987) is appreciated, some of the problems mentioned above at least may take a quite different shape.

Starting our syllogism, we will firstly attempt to untangle problems related to mimesis—which (mimesis) to a certain degree, as we are going to argue, sets the frame of our engagement with arts and the quality of our understanding, while delineating the prerequisites for the unfolding of the myth and the kinds of our emotional responses to fiction. The central claims of this section are that

(a) emotion experiences and dynamic action patterns, forming embodied imitative acts, play a pivotal role in our ability to appreciate the others' emotional experiences (minds) because these mechanisms that allow human beings to send and receive affective cues function in part by evoking emotion experience in the interaction partners, (b) however, this enablement is actualized through shared-coordinated imitative acts of the sender and the receiver that provide the grounds for a progressive differentiation of the self from the other/object, so that the passage from signal dependent affective communication to interpretation of external reference is enabled; (c) the sharing of positively toned experiences or highly arousing emotion experiences with the other/caregiver, directly mediates the development of the child's understanding of others, creating the layer for a newly emergent motivational mode beyond instrumental pragmatic action, beyond immediate self-concerns—this mode is expressive/communicative in nature, forming a creative motivational frame where the self is of becoming instead of being; (d) thus, the formation of expressive/communicative acts of a shared experiential embodied background signifies a shift of function from things-of-action (instrumental) to things-of-wonder/contemplation that leads to the emergence of "intentionality", freeing up the possibility of appreciating how others feel by referencing our own feelings; (e) by the term contemplative, expressive-communicative attitude, we do not mean a cognitive detached stance but rather an affective action tendency (an underlying motivational support for the formation of the perceptual world) to become other/world focused that establishes the relative independence of objects/others, while both keep their mutual ties in a shared interpersonal space. And this is crucial for the development of symbolic communication and possibly of importance in understanding the kind of involvement art affords.

I. The very pleasure of mimesis natural to people from childhood

The ability to coordinate expressive behaviour is crucial to the development of social and emotional communication. There is an ever-growing body of evidence for the existence of evolutionary prepared mechanisms for the elicitation of emotion experiences through emotional contagion (the elicitation of resonant affect in individuals who view the emotional reaction of others; see Nielsen, 2002). Infants' emotion signals elicit caregiving responses in adults. Both facial configuration and infant smiling give rise to positive affect on parents, whereas infant crying elicits negative parental affect and the desire to soothe infant distress (Panksepp, 1998). Infant expression of sadness evokes paternal empathy and helping behaviour, and expressions of joy invite social interaction and serve to strengthen the bond of affection that exists between infant and caregiver (Abe & Izard, 1999).

However, although such mechanisms entail emotional contagion which is crucial survival and to the evolution of social interaction and understanding, especially when negative emotions are involved (see de Gelder, et al., 2004), parental responsiveness should not be confined to emotional contagion, being a far more complicated kind of responsiveness which, on the one hand, seems related to what we call feeling "for" someone—caring for someone and feeling such and such emotion. On the other hand, parental responsiveness maximizes time spent on face-to-face interaction which is crucial to an infant's emotional (arousal) regulation—as to become enabled to engage "attentionally" and "intentionally" on other-appropriate responding; thus, being less absorbed-overwhelmed by over-arousing contagious responses and becoming able to "witness" others' emotions. This is the case which enables the consideration of the others' state and the contextual causes for it, by "witnessing" the resonant processes they elicit in others. Such consideration requires, at least partially, the infant's implicit awareness of the multiplicity if his/her embodied transitory relational "I" positions (Fogel, de Koeyer, Bellagamba, & Bell, 2002) which are formed in relation to the other. In such a case ("witnessing")however, we need an experience dependant, formative process building upon pre-reflexive (see also pre-attentative) levels that do not presuppose self-reflective awareness, which is necessary in order to provide the necessary foundation of a child's experience and understanding of others as individual centres of

consciousness (ascribing them intentionality) with their own psychological orientations towards the world, which is also a shared world (Hobson, 1993). What is stressed at this point is that we cannot have a proper conception of ourselves unless we understand what relations can and cannot exist between the other/object and ourselves—the unit of personal existence is not the individual, but persons in personal relations.

Gallese (2005) demonstrates evidence of the inevitable link of perception, action and emotion, arguing in a threefold manner that the same neural structure involved in the unconscious modelling of our acting body in space also contributes to our awareness of the lived body[1] and of the objects that the world contains (see Fogassi, et al., 1996; Rizzolatti et al., 1996). He also claims that neuroscientific research shows that there are neural mechanisms meditating between the multi-level personal experience we entertain in our lived body, and the implicit certainties we simultaneously hold about others (see "communicative mirror neurons" in Ferrari et al., 2003). Such personal and body-related experiential knowledge enables us to understand the actions performed by others, and to directly decode the emotions and sensations they experience. Thus, through a process of "equivalence" between what is acted and what is perceived, given its shared and overlapping sub-personal neural mapping, this information can also be used to predict the consequences of action performed by the subject or others as well as when imaginal models are formed (see also Thelen, 2000). For Gallese (2005) a common functional mechanism founds the basis of both body awareness and the basic forms of social understanding: "embodied simulation". The strict coupling between affect and sensory-motor integration appears to be one of the most powerful drives leading the developing individual to the achievement of progressively more "distal" and abstract goals (see Gallese & Metzinger, 2003).

These findings resonate fairly well with what is called "emotional contagion", which may also seen as the basic functional mechanism—the underlying substrate of empathy. They also support Werner's account on the primordial organization of experience in infancy (Werner & Kaplan, 1963), as well as Aristotle's accounts of the natural pleasure of mimesis, rhythm and harmony. Actually, Aristotle's accounts of the natural pleasure ascribed to mimesis and music are far from the researchers' traditional view which highlights the cognitive basis of emotions in his writings (i.e., Nussbaum, 1986).

Furthermore, Gallece (2005) concludes that the self-modelling functioning architecture of the alive body scaffolds the modelling of the intentional relations of other individuals. Thus, by means of a shared functional state realized in two different bodies that nevertheless obey the same functional rules, an "intentional attunement" toward the other is evoked, creating a "we-centric" interpersonal space wherein the objectual other becomes another self—a peculiar quality of familiarity is generated with the other individual by the collapse of the other's intentions into the observer's ones. For Gallese, such simulation processes automatically establish a direct link between the agent and the observer, in that both are mapped in a neural fashion. It is crucial, however, that no specific agent is mapped. This implies that only agentive relations are mapped, and that simply the agent parameter can be oneself or the other… (forming an agentive relation). In the same vein of thought, actions belonging to the motor repertoire of the observer (human action) or very closely related ones are mapped onto the observer's motor system. Actions that do not belong to this repertoire are mapped and henceforth, likely categorized on the basis of their visual properties.

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[1] Panksepp (1998) entertains the idea that a neural principle of self representation is situated in midbrain regions where primitive neural systems of motor maps (i.e. body schema), sensory maps (world schema) and emotional maps (value schema) first intermixed. These affective embodied representations promote certain classes of behavior patterns and with the development of various highly differentiated sensory and motor tools, they become strongly "intermeshed" with the cultural milieu, while increasingly providing a self-referential point for more complex activities.

When following such explanatory evidence, however, we apparently come to face some difficulty in explaining how the transition from “embodied simulation” to “mental simulation” occurred—interpreting the intentions of others as forming individual centres of consciousness (attributing them intentionally) with their own psychological orientation towards the world (which might also be different from ours) and which also emerges situated in the contextual dynamic unfolding of the events in which we participate. In fact, it could equally be hypothesised that these specialized circuits between body scheme and image, between the self and the other/object that constitute the two poles of the “intentional arc”, without the actualization of any agent specific parameter, are inevitably doomed to stay undifferentiated, unless experience and development get on so as to enable the construction of the agentive self, who although keeping its relational ties with the other (being interdependent), is also able to function as a differentiated agent communicating at a symbolic level (Werner & Kaplan, 1963). Indeed, this is the claim that Hobson (1993) makes when he says that the infant’s own responses initially are neither merely behavioural nor solely experiential. Thus, the “intentional attunement” as asserted by Gallece (2005), although supporting the intersubjective embodied nature of infant’s perception, also signifies the fusion (or confusion) of the self and the other in an atmospheric context of feeling and action (Werner & Kaplan, 1963).

Although many could be inclined to analyse such phenomena solely in terms of the infants’ responsiveness to “behaviour”, the extreme alternative is to suppose that such young infants already have a sophisticated concept of the “mind” behind behaviour. There is controversy as to whether such behaviour demonstrates that infants understand others as intentional agents at this early age, or whether it is through such behaviour that infants come to understand others as intentional agents (Tomasello, 1993). Furthermore, evidence suggests that along the developmental trajectory from primitive emotional contagion to full emotional understanding are intermediate stages, experience dependent, in which infants’ behaviour indicates a rather tacit developing appreciation of the emotional meaning of the others’ display, but without a clear understanding of ownership of mental states (Hobson, 1993). Hoffman (1982) describes the passage of the child from the first year’s “global empathy” in which the distinction between the emotion felt by the self and the other is blurred, and the infant is more or less at the mercy of the affective cues available in the situation; through “egocentric” empathy in which the child appreciates that emotion belongs to the other, yet responds by offering comforts more appropriate to the self, indicating a remaining difficulty distinguishing states of the self and the other and a difficulty in regulating arousal so as to become other/world-focused. The latter enables advanced perspective taking involving awareness of the possibility of differences between affect and inner mental states, and a full differentiation of the self and other. This implicitly asserts a progressive differentiation between the self and the other as an inner/subject and outer/object (I-me relationships) towards the ability to recognize itself as a bodily-locatable stimulus to and the focus for other people’s affective attitudes, so that it can take the role of the other toward itself.

What appears crucial is that particular forms of caregiver interaction during infancy are required for the development of emotion regulation for achieving perceptual stability and promoting engagement, and the ability to differentiate one’s own emotional states and appraisals. Within this regulatory process, interpersonal schemata (and neural networks) for social interaction are forged and strengthened (see also approaches stressing the evolutionary role of the arts as a form of emotion regulation; Dissanayake, 1992). There is ample evidence that this process relies heavily on the neurochemical circuits that support positive affect experience (other affective triggers such as music and dance can do the same; see Pankseep, 1998) and contribute to the development of brain mechanism for emotion regulation (see Panskepp, 1998; and Messinger & Fogel,1998 for a discussion).

Embodied simulation as conceived in Gallese’s term is an automatic pre-reflexive functional mechanism, nonetheless, we are not ultimately equipped to be able to understand how the possibility of an infinite regression across the pre-reflective senses is filled up so as to allow the possibility of

self-reflective awareness (probably the mechanism of empathy and imitation or "schematized embodiment" can be considered as the missing link; see I. U. Neisser, 2003; Nielsen, 2002). It does give us, however, a starting point, that social-affective relatedness of motor–affective origins, and shared, positively toned emotional experiences might hold a key role in providing the very early foundations of the developing infant attributing intentionality to others persons. Thus, this natural attunement awaits realization through experience and action (development) in order to found our ability to discover by reflection as well as by reaction that a given object or event can have an affective meaning-for-self and a different affective meaning-for-other (thus, the capacity to reflect on the attitudes of the self and the other).This is because the ascription of self-consciousness to others seems also to require a form of role-taking and a role-making that does presuppose the "projection" of first-person experiences onto other people. The appreciation of the "perspectival" nature of mind and the triangulation among self, other person, and the focus-of attention (attitude) at the end of the first year provides a setting within which the infant may discern the contrasting person-based attitudes and things. This, however, also implies a partial shift of function from pragmatic-instrumental action to expressive/communicative action which is sustained by a world-focused affective motivational mode that affords an ongoing feedback loop of internal dynamics (kinesthetic feedback) on external ones (perceptual engagement with other/object) which constitute the two poles of the "intentional arc," so that a sort of reflective awareness is enabled and a flexibility in shifting perspectives emerges (Fogel et al., 2002; Werner & Kaplan, 1963). This emerge, enabled through mean-ends imitative acts, stabilizes the differentiation between behavioural-instrumental and experiential functioning (Hobson, 1993) and fosters experiential leaning—novel category formation, and the development of protosymbolic abilities. Thus, at least partly, an individuals potential for more detached forms of cognitive appraisal, evaluation and elaboration seems to develop out of such primary models of "cognitive-curn-affective" relatedness (cf. Werner's, 1954, view on physiognomic perception[2]).

That is, we need the evolutionary or developmental passage from the earliest forms of signal-depended affective communication to more sophisticated modes of achieving and interpreting external reference and symbolic function. Thus, even if such models, like Gallece (2005), hold some truth on the primacy of motion and affective relatedness to others, it is the schematizing formative process of expressive-communicative formats (imitative gestures—imitative acts) that carry on and enable, although non representational in nature, the possibility of symbolization and reference. This option possibly accommodates Aristotle's accounts of the genesis of tragedies well. This may be better understood if we see mimesis which affords pleasure as the missing link between signal and symbols in the development of symbolic communication. The aforementioned approaches in relation to Gallese's findings also suggest that the full appreciation of fictional characters like us, no matter how explicitly we are aware of them, depends upon the involvement of body-related, first-person, experiential knowledge. At the same time, facing again the notions of "embodied" and "mental" simulation, we came to realize its possible insufficiency in expaining subtle phenomena even at the level of mimesis, being a rather overriding concept with little explanatory power which obscures rather than clarifies what happens. Alternatively, even assuming its necessity, we cannot acknowledge its sufficiency in explaining the phenomenon of mimesis (this may become clearer in the next section). Meanwhile, the mechanism of "embodied" simulation, being a more natural than really "intentional" attunement towards others, might save us from "pretending" everywhere, when representations are involved, and feeling "quasi" emotions in order to understand others! Thus, we

[2] Werner (1954) focused on a class of phenomena dealing with expressive symbolism, and argued for two deferent modes of perception: the physiognomic[2] and the geometric/technical. The physiognomic mode, implicit in our everyday life—however, quite explicit in infancy—becomes strikingly explicit in the phenomena of empathic responses and comes particularly to the forefront in the spheres of myth, art and religion.

may probably partially solve some issues related to the paradox of mimesis (the paradoxes of our emotional responses to fiction). However, this possibility simultaneously creates more problems for the paradox of tragedy (negative emotions) in art as well as for the full appreciation of the dynamics of intentionality as deployed in the contextual-situated cues of the unfolding plot (for example: for the former. imagine not being able to become less overwhelmed by an over-arousing, negative, contagious responses such as fear, not being able to engage attentionally and intentionally to what you are looking at; or, for the latter, imagine, not realizing why it makes such a difference to kill the father rather than the enemy as in the Oedipus case). For such understandings, we need alternatives of intermediate explanatory levels.

II. Learning by means of imitation: expressive/experiential function and the foundations of agentive intentionality

Tomasselo (1999) emphasized that unlike mimicry, imitation is more complex because it requires grasping the purpose (intention) behind the modelled event. Rizzolatti and Arbib (1998) sketch the following scenario for the role of mirror neuron system in the development of verbal communication in humans. Initially, it was used for action recognition, and some six million years BC, it was extended for the purpose of imitation of goal-directed actions. A crucial step was realized when our ancestors used the system for the production, perception and imitation of actions without involved objects (pantomime), creating the first formation of explicit representation, through shared, coordinated means-ends activities (autotelic) which were initially highly iconic signs of that action (see imitative postural/gestural re-occurent and co-regulated articulatory expressive patterns). Since, the mirror system provides a basis for parity—an externally observed and self-produced action are in some sense "schematized" through the body-affective matrix and become categorized as equivalent, however shared in a coordinated manner between the sender and receiver. Thus, it becomes signifying a shared relational meaning where action and intention are bound. This also implies that through the formative activity of schematization as it becomes a "stylized" visible and felt action (schematized embodiment or embodied schematism), the possibility of the emergence of "participant" roles (the actor, the object, and the other) is generated. With stabilization (morfo-dynamics and learning, see Peritot, 1995), these parts would have been further differentiated from the action itself, founding the act of symbolizing[3] relation, events as well as things.

This scenario is quite plausible with Werner's (1954) and Vygotsky's (1978) accounts of "outside—inside" distinction, according to which "higher mental functioning" first emerges between people in communication before it can be mediated between the subject and the object or within the individual's own mind. It also resonates well with Werner's claims that with development, these primordial operations become subordinated and integrated with higher functioning so that an increasing distancing emerges between the symbol and its referent (the structuring of the symbolic vehicle becomes "denaturalized"—the symbol divorces from its formative activity). The transformation of pragmatic or reactive movements and contagious mimicry into imitative depictive-articulatory expressive/communicative forms suggests that the child has begun to translate realistic events into a medium with its own expressive features by means of imagination. Thus, this epigenetic process stands as a prerequisite for reaching the higher functions, integrating the natural and cultural (Tomasselo, 1999), pointing also to the mediating role of mimesis-imitation for the

[3] In this case however, the motivation for the transition would not only be "external", but also "internal", since the body affective matrix would introduce a greater "arbitrariness" in the mapping between expression and meaning and greater differentiation, thus pushing the development of "natural symbols—proto-symbols" to higher symbolicity and conventionality.

acquisition of symbols. This also implies that imitative acts function as the basis of the emergence of "intentionality", "selectivity", "creativity" and "volitional control", in a manner of sucking reflexes but on a higher level of complexity—which requires adequate social interaction in order to lead to the development of imitation of praxis, possibly along with the self-consciousness and reference which in fact models a "goal-directed" behaviour. This requires an increasing understanding of the self as an intentional agent which enables participation in a "referential triangle" with the self and the other and an external object or event, where both are aware that they are sharing attentional focus (joint attention; Butterworth et al., 2002).

However, it need NOT be, as suggested by Tomasello (1999), that this is done solely in the Inside-Outside manner of "mental simulation": the child's sense of itself grows by imitation of you and its sense of yourself grows in terms of itself in the form of a "loop"—the causality can run in both directions, however, implying an increased control over the motivational frames of actions (e.g., self-focused or world-focused, instrumental or experiential), as well as an increased objectification of one's body. In this sense mimesis may stand as the "bridge" from embodied simulation to mental simulation or from attentional to symbolic communication (Camaioni, et al., 2003). This is better achieved during "positively valenced" frames in which mutual creativity occurs—when new I-relational positions can be highlighted by some social or intrapersonal dialogical process so that the directionality of the perspectival agent, and the emergence of form-meaning relationships becomes into being (Camaioni, et al. 2003).

That is, the infant's ability to coordinate smiles with gazes at a parent, between 9 and 15 months of age, in the service of sharing experiences about an object may have its origins in the increasing precision with which infants communicate their positive affect at 6 months of age (see Messinger & Fogel, 1998). Results suggest that the still face triggering negative affect is an age-appropriate factor that reduces an infant's coordination of all expressive behaviours (Jones & Hong, 2001). For Messinger and Fogel (1998), these results suggest a greater understanding of means-ends relation and an empirical distinction between actions and gestural patterns used instrumentally to obtain objects and imitative actions used to initiate, through the co-occurrence of "gazing at" (as a contemplative action attitude of affective origins) and smiling as well, the expressive function of infants' gestures in order to share a creative positive social contact.

The developing capacity for emotion regulation, on the one hand, and the developing schematization of imitative motor-gestural articulatory shared patterns probably drive this change so that infants who can regulate through affective triggers of caregiving become less absorbed by instrumental requests by them, enabling the engagement with another which frees up processing capacity for consideration of the other's state and the contextual causes for it, enabling more other-appropriate responding. Besides that, the formation (schematized process) of motor-gestural and vocal-acticulatory imitative patterns creates the field for the expression of reference—the field of denotation which gains its significance as it refers to objects of shared contemplation—gaze at in a shared interpersonal space, that tunes—projects kinaesthetic felt temporalities into spatio-temporal cues that leave perceivable consequences. This synchronization between production, movement and perception in the shared interpersonal space acts as a coordinator constructing consciousness as integrated awareness and founds anticipatory perceptual action (image schemata and experiential learning), while sustaining an ongoing feedback loop of internal dynamics on external ones that fills our sense of coherence and unity. This mirroring process originating in means/ends autotelic, shared, imitative activities with the caregiver signifies a mutually constrained expressive-communicative action which, on the one hand, constitutes meaningfulness (a subjective self-reference—internal space that gives an intrabody significance and a sense of ownership; see Gallagher, 2003. On the other hand, when motor /expressive patterns become the object of attention, they form anticipatory ongoing action patterns (external visual control, in our case, and regulation of behaviour) that, although shared, do not always coincide with both partners, introducing a distance/decoupling between the self and object/other which models agentivity and grounds a primitive sense of

reflection, the denotation of possible meaning to the form and the imaginative “as if” transformation of objects.

Fogel et al. (2002) characterizes this function as forming creative frames which enhance self development, unlike rigid frames which limit the opportunity for growth. During participation in creative frames, the self is not an experience of being but an experience of becoming, a self-constructive process of improvisational dynamic co-activity which constitutes a praxial—self-inclusive synthesis (the continual readjustment of people’s actions on the basis of the continually changing action of their partners towards sustained, unfolding communication, as well as the dynamics of creativity required to “keep up” or “stay in” the dialogue that is continually unfolding; see also Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Josephs, 1998). Thus, each of the main features of the dialogical-self—multiplicity of I-relational positions, embodiment of situated I-positions, and intersubjectivity as constitutive of the dialogues between I-relational positions—can be observed. The development of the infant’s ability to distance herself from her own perspective creates imaginative acts beyond perception, and a flexibility of shifting from one I-relational position to another, swaying from the “I” reflected to the “I” reflecting (Camaioni, et al, 2003).

Thus, following this line of reasoning, mimesis of praxis (organized in a form of praxis-a gestalt synthesis) can be considered as an embodied imaginative act of productive (creative) quality. It is a schematizing function which, by employing embodied means that enact lived significance, aims at the production of intentional expressive/communicative forms (i.e., imaginal models). As such, it situates the image within our form of embodiment and allows the relative values to unfold, creating an “as if” frame of mind and the feeling of being in touch; and thus a circuit of interpretation is thereby established (see Neisser, 2003). This according to Fogel et al. (2002) emerges as a playful activity which exercises and expands different perspectives on the self. It is this relational frame, then that allows infants to imitate others in the role “of”, to imagine and shift from one I-relational position to the other. As such, it generates, peculiar quality of “feeling into”—a coordinated coupling of the other’s intentions into the observer’s ones where the “objectual other/object” becomes “another self”; while retaining differentiation and interdependence, and thus sustaining tolerance to ambiguity, conflict and complexity while allowing reflections. In this sense, in mimesis the very act of imagination is not a detached pretence stance of “as if make-believe” but is an invitation of entertaining a creative constructive process of image-schematic becoming representations (schematized embodiment; see J.U. Neisser, 2003) that we use to formulate and organize our experience. Thus, mimesis as an imaginative embodied act becomes the vehicle of thought that structures our experience into meaningful units or as Langer (1953) puts it “imagination is the symbolic transformation of our experiences” where action and intention are all bound up in the unfolding of the action. It is argued, then, that this mechanism scaffolds the propositional more sophisticated cognitive elaboration that tragedy affords.

If such a possibility holds some truth, the aesthetic/ethic mind is “becoming” emergent through the primordial organization of experience which enables a novel adaptation, when the precondition of having a positive (safe) context is achieved—thus, a shift of function from pragmatic (i.e. getting the maximum results-ends) to experiential (i.e., getting the maximum means) action is enabled (i.e., doing some action for being deeply engaged in the action itself, while flexibly shifting in a loop fashion between the internal and external side of the embodied self—as to form a complete-in-it-self action than getting the best ends). That is, on the one hand, monitoring our experience from the inside, whereas on the other hand, controlling and regulating our behaviour externally so as to co-ordinate with the unfolding event or the other. This allows the possibility of experiential learning and the formation of imaginative embodied meaning-constructive acts that are self-implicating, although other/world focused.

This, as I am going to argue, is the frame of arts, however, not setting a ready-made “frozen” game of make-believe—the self is of becoming not of being—the roles and the rules become emergent throughout the unfolding action, forming anticipatory action patterns of the morphology of the event and setting the poles/points that take on semantic signification. Thus, creating the ground

for imaginative acts and inward reflections drawing on the intentionality of praxis as an integrated whole. This kind of exegesis enables a phylogenetic approach to aesthetic activities seen as evolved particular ways of unsettling the stereotypical and recalibrating our emotional responses—a "making special" mode of mind which prepares individuals for recognizing and participating in unusual or beyond themselves experiences (see also issues related to negative affect in the arts; Dissanayake, 1992; see also Kuiken, et al., 2004). To this end, it is also suggested that the "very" notion of mimesis as a simulation model, although probably necessary, it cannot sufficiently explain this "missing part" which qualifies the shift of function from instrumental and pragmatic action to expressive/experiential, interactive and communicative action that constitutes praxis—integrative communication and the specific phenomenological quality of being able to flexibly shift from the one to the other.

Especially about tragedy

Aristotle develops an intricate argument about tragedy that is difficult to summarize in its nuance and with the array of topics that it incorporates. An appreciation of his theory can be garnered by considering his treatment of three issues: tragedy as mimesis of action; tragedy as a formal entity and tragedy's main function. Tragedy is defined by Aristotle as follows:

> *"Tragedy is the mimesis (imitation) of a serious and complete-in-itself action (praxis) of some magnitude; in language embellished in various ways in its different parts; in dramatic — action performance, not narrative form; achieving, through pity and fear, the catharsis of such emotions (1449b)."*

The objects of mimesis are the plot-myth, the characters and the reasoning and decision-making process (ways of thinking); the means are the style of words as well as that of the narration in terms of harmony and rhythm and music; imitation is performed through opsis/stage arrangement (1451a12-14).

When Aristotle settles down to discuss tragedy, what rapidly emerges from his writings is the great importance he attaches to the plot — the story, or as we might say, the action of the play. He also insists that tragedy is not really a representation of people (Husrthouse, 1992), but of action and life, of happiness and misery (1450a). It is not apparently a representation of actions either, but an imitation of an action (1449b, 1450a, 1459a, 1461b). Indeed, action in Aristotle is purposeful, not random, and the poet's function is to describe not the things that have happened, but a kind of thing that might or should happen, i.e., what is possible as being probable or necessary (1451a41-44). He repeatedly insists that the main purpose of tragedy is to deploy the plot of myth and that the audience would be able to experience its proper pleasure if the tragedy's plot is constructed so as to resemble an organism — a unified whole (Collinson, 1992) in that its parts are related in such a way that if any one of them "makes no perceptible difference by its presence or absence, it is no real part of the whole" (1451a).

Aristotle sounds like a modern abstractionist film director when he claims that in tragedy, we can have plots without characters, but not the inverse (1450a28-29). Tragic characters are not developed per se by the poets: characters are inclusive in the development of the plot (1541a24). Characters would act and react in a predictable manner — according, that is, to probability or necessity... however, habituation and predictability of behavior do not invalidate the way one uses his will or makes his choice..., since the persons are active entities employing differentiated traits in terms of their characters/personalities and their way of thinking..., so that we can say that actions can

also have two causes: the character's personality (ethos) and his way thinking... which both are the reason of their success or failure (1451a2-4).

And indeed, it is this interplay between characters and the plot that results in the statement of the universals (katholou) [by a universal statement he says — I mean one as to what such or such a kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do —]. This statement, taken together with the requirement that the free choice (ethos; 1454a20) of the dramatic personaes should be made clear by what they say and do, in relation to the action in which they are involved, reveals the characters of tragedy to be morally specified archetypes — symbols rather than stereotypes (Sifakis, 2001). The protagonist's incidents and dilemmas that arouse pity and fear in us are the result of a notorious flaw, a mistake that is woven into his habitual character (1453a19). However, the protagonist's error (hamartia) is not something for which he is blameworthy or morally culpable (Nussbaum, 1986), since as Aristotle insists the characters shall be good — better than ordinary men (1454b3-8). To put it another way, it is the very qualities of character that are liable in certain unforeseeable situations to lead to disaster — which at the very end induce in us pity for the fragile estate of man and fear for a world whose laws we do not understand (Eldridge, 1994). In fact, the protagonist somehow exercises his virtues in alliance with powers or structures that embody conflict. This failure then, that results from error (hamartia) which is pitiable and fearful, must be depicted in a plot in which the incidents occur unexpectedly and at the same time in sequence (1452a3-4). And such incidents have the very greatest effect on the mind when they occur unexpectedly — however, neither by chance nor by sheer nature (1452a3-12).

In chapter 14, Aristotle introduces further the fact that tragedy's aim or main function is the catharsis of the emotions of pity and fear. He also sets the frame within which these emotions can be induced in the audience by saying that when poets, by the sight of things, arouse the dreadful and terrific instead of the fearful, they should not be considered as tragic poets, since tragedy's function is to offer this pleasure that arouses pity and fear (not terror) through the imitation of praxis (1453b). Later on, he explicitly points out what kind of character induces empathic emotions such as pity and fear (we will say more on this later) to the audience (1453b19-40). In chapter 13, he also sets the conditions that allow empathic emotions to be generated by means of imitation. The poets should avoid showing "good" men fallen to misery, since this does not generate pity and fear but terror. They should also avoid showing bad men fallen from misery to happiness — this is excluded from every sense of the word tragedy since it cannot even generate empathy, let alone fear or pity. Also, the very bad men should not be shown to fall from happiness to misery, since this can arouse empathy (philanthropon: 1453a), but not fear or pity. This happens because pity is for the one who falls to misery because of a fatal error in action that is causally intelligible and yet not the outgrowth of a settled defective disposition of his character — What causes Oedipus's ruin is his own strength and courage and loyalty to Thebes and his loyalty to the truth (Eldridge, 1994). However, fear is generated for someone who is similar to us (1452b-1453a).

I. Varieties of emotion experience

Aristotle's argument rests on a conception of mimesis as an active process of selective presentation. Following his claim about a plot that results in statements of the nature of universals — not of particulars (see also Hursthouse, 1992; Neil, 2001), Aristotle possibly provides a highly conditioned pattern of simulation (if we can say this about Poetics) by setting frames wherein each of the aspects of the simulation model has to be activated and transformed. Or, in other words it might be better to speak, as we are going to argue, of the multilayered nature of possible kinds of simulation in the same sense that Kreitler and Kreitler (1972) argued that in aesthetic experience, stimuli to do with emotion evoke kinaesthetic imitation, which leads to physiological arousal.

Emotion experience's awareness might follow when such physiological changes are linked to cognitive orientation and further elaboration, where a stimulus turns into a cue only after it is subjected to a series of processes designed to determine its actual meaning and the relation of this meaning to other external and internal stimuli. To clarify this possibility, it is important to keep in mind that the feelings of the beholder's experience during the course of an aesthetic experience might be related to a variety of domains which is better to distinguish. Thus, spectators may experience evaluative immediate feelings toward the artwork as a whole, emerging early with the depicted event with gradual adjustment throughout that may affect the spectators' mood. Spectators may also experience aesthetic feelings—that is a heightened interest prompted by formal elements which capture attention providing a psychological space within which to reflect on intense narrative or self-modifying feelings. Narrative feelings (R-emotional responses to the represented elements of the artefact) may be evoked in responses to the settings, characters and events of the imagined world of the myth. They induce shifting perspectives providing also a sense of shared understanding. Beholders may also experience self-implicating as well as self-modifying feelings (for a review see Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora, 2004). The first functions like similes or metaphors where the spectators dredge up personal memories to identify with, or imply metaphoric (sympathetic) identification through mimesis as an imaginative act—expressive/embodied enactment. This may lead to experiencing unconventional flows of feelings not previously experienced in such combinatorial gestalts, so that self-modifying feelings become implicated. In this presentation, we are not going to depart on discussions related to all of these possibilities. We will predominantly focus on aspects of sympathetic identification as indicating a close emotional orientation with a special "feeling into" quality, since we consider these aspects as more related, however, crucial to understanding how complicated the landscape of the aesthetic encounter emerges.

Lambie & Marcel (2002) claim that although it is acknowledged that the conscious experience of different emotions differs, it is not always widely explicitly recognized that the experience of each emotion can take different forms. Emotion experiences differ phenomenologically and their different content inherently informs one about different things, for example one's bodily state as opposed to who has done what to whom. But why should we be concerned with emotion experience in understanding emotion in tragedy? However, it seems that it is the phenomenal counterpart of them or reflexive awareness of such phenomenology that underlies what people really mean when saying that one fails to empathise, even sympathise or understand others' experiences and motives if one does not have quite similar experiences oneself—an acquaintance with "what it is like". Even if what is being referred to is second-order introspective awareness or appreciation of one's emotions, it is nonetheless hard to see how one could have that without having a first-order phenomenal experience of a kind that people implicitly characterize as emotional. If one's knowledge of the existence of one's emotions were neither of these kinds, it would be difficult to understand how one can achieve the multi-perspectival view which forms the third person perspective, identical to outside observation; or it would even harder to understand how one can think in an entirely impersonal transcendental manner, identical for example to abstract thoughts related to "generalized others" as an evidentially appearing sensed objectivity. Although Aristotle's claim about universal statements entails aspects like the above, his insistence on mimesis might make us curious of how we can reach such an option. Indeed, to return to social adaptation and understanding, it has been argued (Hoffman, 1982) that empathy that is based on one's own emotion phenomenology is one of the basis of social intersubjectivity, social expressivity and communicability, value systems and morality. Moreover, as evidence suggests, the time course and regulation of emotions are often dependent on awareness or lack of awareness of emotion experience. Indeed, the regulation of anger in therapy is crucially dependent on the "becoming" presence and kinds of conscious experiences of the person.

Whether one is aware of the phenomenology (how and what it feels like[4]) of the emotion state, or which components of it one is aware of depends on aspects of what underlies and modulates such awareness (e.g., attention; for a discussion see Lambie & Marcel, 2002). Thus as we are going to argue, emotion experiences[5] take on various forms, their content (as content of awareness in emotion) and their phenomenological quality (what it feels like; i.e., intensity and dynamics) depends on 3 aspects of attention which also seem related to motivational aspects (mode: analytic-synthetic, detached-immersed; direction: self-world; focus: evaluation-action). Hence, if emotion experience depends on attentional mechanisms it also seems strange that the pre-attentive level (e.g., positive affect background) does not play a role in the quality (intensity and dynamics) of the evoked emotion experiences. Additionally, it also seems quite clear to us that different emotions may have different experiential characteristics as well as, the fact that different modulations of directedness and attention may result in different experiential combinations-gestalts of "what it is like". In the same fashion, we may see related issues to the hedonicity aspect[6], action vs. evaluation (action patterns are always relational and directed towards or away from).

The immediacy of one's experience, the degree to which it is felt as part of oneself, and its hedonicity are functions of the degree of immersion or detachment of one's attentional attitude. These are the senses in which first-order phenomenology is subject to attention. Second order awareness, which supports reflection, report, and purposive recall, is underlain by focal attention, which is associated more with voluntary control—focal attention is what creates second order-awareness (see mimesis and the role of joint attention). This refers to the degree one is attending holistically (see perceptual grouping, Arnheim, 1974) or analytically (attention is directed to components-local details of narrow space), to a lower or higher level of description or category, or to significance. The more analytic the more one's experience is abstracted, the more decontextualized.

There is evidence which rarely appears in the psychological research data[7], about a holistic emotion experience in the sense that it does not focus on particular sensations or body parts, but rather on the functioning of the whole body (holistic) in relation to the world or to self (direction). For Lambie and Marcel (2002) these experiences are immersed rather than detached, and consist in the immediate phenomenology of one's physicality and bodily relation (body-affective matrix) to the world introducing a peculiar quality of "for-me-ness"—its existence is both a stance of an emotional force (closeness) and a part of perceptual content where experience is either of my body affective matrix (physicality; see also "ecological awareness" where perspectival perceptual content provides self-location; Neisser, 1993) or of "the-world-for me"[8] (i.e. hodological space of an inviting/frightening world). The question of truth vs. seemingness does not arise: for the experiencer is just "is" (see also Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). It is often said that these experiences are ineffable

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[4] That is, what constitutes phenomenology (what it is like) is not a stage of processing or of representation, but rather is a kind of content with a structured articulation.

[5] Adopting the view of Lambie & Marcel (2002) we consider that the term emotion experience covers both that experiences we are explicitly aware of and those which we are not, at an explicit level, since we think that it is quite bizarre to talk of most human emotions, at least for the non-pathological cases, as separate from phenomenal experience relying only on second order awareness or interpretation.

[6] Hedonic tone, according to Lambie and Marcel (2002) is related both to whatever is attended and to the extent of immersion of attention—the more immersed, the more "for me" which arises (a) in perception of an affecting world and (b) in all the bodily aspects of the evaluative or the action dimension. In both cases, the emotion phenomenology can be reduced by a detached stance, distancing the purely cognitive apprehension from one's self rendering a disembodied evaluative judgement or a self observation rather than emotion thought (thought will have its own phenomenology proper to the experienced ownership of conscious judgement or observation).

[7] It, however, appears in clinical settings or in psychological aesthetics (see Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990).

[8] In the Lambie & Marcel's (2002) proposal it is the addition of the "for me" that is crucial to understanding what someone may mean that something is phenomenological rather than neurophysiological or informational.

(Takahashi, 1995), and there are good reasons to think why this kind of experience is rarely reported…However, these experiences have gestalt properties, and it is that aspect of experience that people describe using what seem to be metaphors "floating on air". Lambie and Marcel (2002) see these experiences as characteristics of what they call first-order phenomenology, we also see them as an option of the physiognomic/expressive perception (see the previous section related to mimesis) related to the primordial organization of experience and positive affect background that fosters attunement towards the world/other and generates a peculiar quality of familiarity (for-me-ness) with the world/other. As such, they highlight the attitudinal action dimension (force dynamics) rather than the evaluative one of the emotion experience, which points to the engrossment (immersion) in an inviting dynamic experiential space so as to perceive the affective/expressive properties of the objects (Werner & Kaplan, 1963). Besides that, this mutual co-ordination, emphasizing the centrality of physicality—experiential quality of emotion experience (spatial in the full sense, that is three dimensional with solid bodies that interact and are subject to dynamic forces in relational terms with the world), grounds signification—that is, the experiential correspondence of the significance of the situation or action linked to the hedonic quality of the experience. Appraisal awareness emerges within the course of action as focal attention comes in. Thus, the operation of focal attention not only creates awareness of first-order phenomenology, but by its selectivity, it creates focus on only some aspects of experience.

For Lambie and Marcel (2002), one possible problem in understanding the notion of variation in emotion experience further is that most psychological data in emotion are concerned with experiences focused on the self (either subjective or agentive). The distinction between self-focused and world-focused experience is one of content, but it relies particularly on experienced location and locational directedness. This however suggests that voluntary control of attentional directedness to self or world requires that these alternatives foci must be able to figure in intention. For this to be the case there must be, as previously said, an even implicit distinction[9] between self and world, between subject and object. Thus, the effect of directionality is to alter the figure-ground relation to the self and world because emotion phenomenology is always relational—however, it is probably more productive to think of the relation of general directedness (figure-ground articulation) and focal attention as interactive than as independent stages (Marcel, 1998). Such directedness may be due to: immediately prior directionality, individual or cultural biases toward world focus or self-focus, or to occurrent aspects of the emotional state: intensity of evaluative dimension, intensity of somatic effects of arousal, salience of world objects, or intrinsic intentionality of the emotion. Wegner and Giuliano (1980) found that an increase in general bodily arousal can induce self-focus, in the same sense novel, unexpected, threatening or related to an emotional concern stimuli induce world-focused experience. Regarding the influence of the specific emotion, Wood, Saltzberg and Goldsamt (1990) found that sadness induces self-focus but joy is world-focused, or the intentionality of anger is typically world-focused, whereas thart of fear is self-focused (the most self-focused).

Besides that, most psychologists put emphasis on the appraisal aspect of emotion experience which seems mostly related to those experiences that are self-focused (the object of appraisal is the self) and in a rather detached analytical mode. Although this may hold for many cases, emphasis on the appraisal mechanism might be not sufficient to explain the function of emotions in art (Stamatopoulou, 2004) where sights, rhythm, perceived force dynamics, motor imagery, and textural elements are brought into focal attention and are actively ascribed with meaning and cross-modal

[9] This is not to say, however, that attenders consciously attend to focus either on one or the other, but rather that there is a feedback loop of internal dynamics on external ones and a growing flexibility of shifting perspectives in relation to attentional mechanism such as focus (action-evaluation), direction (self-world) and mode (detached-immersed; analytic-holistic).

elaboration. They are also word-focused emotion experiences where the self is implicit[10], not being the explicit focus of conscious experience. Depending on how immersed or detached we are when experiencing the world the world can be appraised as experienced in emotion (a frightening world). This option stresses the role of expressive/physiognomic perception in arts as the underlying force for the unfolding (emotional and conceptual) of the aesthetic experience. Thus, it allows figure ground differentiation, cross-modal elaboration and schematized embodiment that generates emotional meaning, which in turn gives synthetic unity to our experience and functions anticipatory through action, offering a structuring of the meaning of the aesthetic object and enabling both a constructive response to be made and a distancing mechanism to be activated (Stamatopoulou, 2004). This, also means, that in the case of total engrossment in an activity or in one's perceptual world[11] (Csiksentmihalyi, 1990) such that in extreme cases one is in an almost trance-like state of immersion or non observation, appraisal awareness is removed. Since awareness of appraisals as appraisals is a reflective or detached consideration and not an immersed world-focused experience. That is, an attentional modulation that converts perceptual emotion experiences[12] into thoughts (Lambie & Marcel, 2002) where the focal content is either the self or the world. The specific content of awareness in a world-focused emotion experience thus depends on mode of focal attention and on focus either on evaluation or action attitude. Thus, for Lambie and Marcel (2002), when focused on evaluation, the content of awareness (second order emotion experience) can be in the form of either (a) propositional thoughts that correspond to the evaluated self or event, or (b) non-propositional awareness of the evaluated self (offended, frustrated). When focused on action, one becomes aware of "what it is like" of the action attitude. If directed to the self, as an analytic bodily sensation or in a more synthetic form as one's urging to act. If directed on the world, the experience of the "hodological" space (a phenomenal "path space" of possibilities-impossibilities and imminences of action) is in the form of "gerundival perceptual description" of objects/events; that is, an experience of the affective property of the object/world (i.e., a dreadful world; see also physiognomic perception) to which there is an attitudinal background stance (i.e., to engage with by participating in the unfolding action). This option may take on a paradoxical form pertaining to differential experiential prominence of the components of an emotion episode (see views related to the "making special" mode of mind in arts; Dissanayake, 1992). In other words, the subjective state resulting from the affective description of the events –a "dreadful" world that is "to-be-acted-on" (by me) in specific ways may be unpleasant or frustrating for the spectator, however, the object of his desire (the attitudinal background stance) is to engage with. In this option, since the spectator concerned is not the agent of gerundival implementation and given that arousal is not out of hand, the satisfaction of the gerundival imperative "by me" is usually vicarious, that is by identification with the agent (the actor) or in a highly detached mode, by accepting that the "dreadful" simply occurred (Lambie & Marcel, 2002). The more synthetic and reflective form of this, due to attention modulation, can be transformed into propositional emotion thoughts such as "I want to help him" or as a corrective "as if" imaginative thoughts of how things should have happened. In the case of tragedies, as we are going to argue, due to the relational structure of self-world in the perceptual experience, this option implies an invitation to enter into a "dreadful world" of conflicting possibilities of identifying with.

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[10] Implicit does not coincide with unconscious. Rather, it means that it is present but recessive in a representation or mental state, either by being entailed by what is explicit or by being subsidiary as in ownership, or by being in the ground rather than figure of experience.

[11] Music, body posture, mimicry, contagion

[12] With regard to perceptual experience, Lambie and Marcel (2002) distinguish between internal (it refers to the space of the body from inside) and external experienced locations of conscious perceptual content. A basic point is that all perceptual experience is spatial and always includes one's own bodily spatiality within the total egocentric space specified at any moment by the various sensory modalities (multimodal space) including proprioception.

The aforementioned detailed theoretical framework of emotion experiences, provided by Lambie and Marcel (2002), might offer insights to understanding Aristotle's accounts of the function of tragedy to its audience as well as, in realizing what might happen during the course of an aesthetic experience. For example, when focusing on Poetics, at first we came across an emotional "filter" induced in the audience by the very fact that mimesis is pleasurable, having a direct effect on motor programs from birth (see Nadel & Butterworth, 1999; Schmidt & Trainor, 2001). The same effect is also attributed by Aristotle[13] to harmony and rhythm (see Zenher & Scherer, 2001). Both conditions as already said, point to expressive/physiognomic perception, joint co-ordination and positive affect background, as well as to a holistic, immersed emotion experience. The characteristic of this mode is its pervasive dynamics, the relative fusion or lack of differentiation of self and world, the total organismic involvement, and the embeddedness of the perceived stimuli in an atmospheric context of feeling and action. This mode becomes strikingly explicit in the phenomena of empathic and synesthetic responses [for physiognomic perception, see Werner (1954)] and allows openness and flexibility of perception and thought which encourages metaphoric thinking (Glicksohn & Yafe, 1999).

Additionally, Aristotle in his Rhetoric, where he also speaks about emotions (1356a, 1378a, 1377b), clearly recognizes that effective rhetoric presumes a theory of emotion, at least implicitly. He says that the orator should not only make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief, but should also put his audience, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind, i.e. emotional state (ibid.: 1377b, 21,23-24). If we transfer what he says in Rhetoric about emotions, to Poetics, we can draw the following parallelism: the poet should not only construct his plot in such a manner so as to state the universal, but also put his audience into the right frame of mind-emotional state — to provoke the empathy of the audience towards his characters — to gain a better understanding of the characters and their predicaments, and a fair judgement of their choices and actions (Sifakis, 2001). This sounds like a paradox — a deeper understanding through an emotional filter, leading to a fair judgement?

Besides that, Aristotle poses another emotional filter within this background frame which sounds like a motivational mode — the desire to learn-to wonder, which is accomplished through acts of imitation of praxis. The very fact of this (see section on mimesis as learning) underlies the emergence of an embodied thus experiential motivational frame which tunes attention towards the action/interaction and the world. This is best understood as affective sufficiency—an affective attitudinal force to deeply engage in perceptual experiential/embodied interactive acts which enable the construction of a world of others/objects articulating incorporeal intentions. Hence, a transitional in-between space of shared emotion co-regulation, and co-articulation is generated activating a merging of action (see before: co-ordinated imitative patterns that allow the differentiation of self and other; see also Csikszentmihalyi, 1993) that creates the possibility of detached awareness, where

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[13] Aristotle highlights the importance of music in tragedy, attributing the superiority of tragedy over epic to its presence (1462b). For Aristotle, music expresses ethical qualities and emotional states-moods: rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also courage and temperance... unlike visual arts, in which figures and colors are not imitations but signs of character, indications which the body gives a state of feeling. The likeness or imitations of ethical qualities are inherent in the rhythms and melodies as well as in the harmonies or modes of music (Pol. 1340a18-33). Music, in this sense could alter our ethos (1340a7) as each rhythmic pattern induces in us a different disposition, so that the true function of the lyric parts of tragedy can be considered to be a special enhancement of the mimesis of action in tragedies, although not directly, but by helping to set the connotative field of meanings and to reveal ethical qualities and emotions that lie beyond the limits and expressive capabilities of ordinary speech, and often transcend the boundaries of particular characters and impart a specific ethos to a dramatic situation or scene as a whole. This happens especially in the choral songs (Sifakis, 2001).

even negative feelings, as we are going to argue, can be experienced for the long-term benefits of the expressive/communicative quality of the interaction. It will be argued that within this second mode, which further sustains the first, the anticipatory role of feelings (seen as "as if" imaginary transformation of objects into possibilities/potentialities) and the effects of formal elements in gestalt manner (i.e., see "deautomatization" vs. "grouping" perceptual mechanisms, in Kreitler & Kreitler, 1972) induce a heightened state of consciousness wherein negative feelings, which belong mostly to the right hemisphere by virtue of its analogic and holistic function (Cacioppo, et al. 2000) and induce (with the exception of anger) self-focused emotion experience, can be imaginatively transformed in a wider context, so that the concerns of the self can be relocated and contextualized in a wider perspective which allows analogic comparisons, abstractions and emotion thoughts to be made.

The above implies that these experiences, however, have to achieve the level of hierarchic integration in the participant's thinking, so that he might be able to perform higher levels of abstraction in symbol production or in symbol comprehension (Glicksohn, Perlmutter & Purisman, 2000-2001). These aspects are mostly related to the schematized embodiment of the ongoing action which relies on mimesis as an imaginative embodied act. Thereby, by means of a positive affect background and by means of mimesis as an embodied imaginative act that enacts lived significance to the unfolding action (expressive enactment), we enter into an intensified meaning constructive action (rather than a coherent simulation[14]) which constitutes "praxis"—not mere action, where the quality of the experience comes from its experiential realm since we are immersed into the experience, swaying from one to another pole of the intentional arc (see absorption: Stamatopoulou, 2004). What is meant here is rather a certain becoming in which something is being accomplished in the sense that it is a praxial-in-structure synthesis (constitution) that leads through imagination to experiences of evidentially appearing sensed objectivities/actualities about the objects/world/others —thus, it synthesizes its (actual) or potential contents in ways that are evidentially effective by applying senses (embodiment) to available and anticipated means (Theodorou, forthcoming). This is the result of a continuous process of self-regulative interpreting synthesis, in the form of a continuous back and forth from part to the whole and back again, from "I" reflected to the "I" reflecting, which reveals the relational morphological structure of the event/myth forming perceptual gestalts that take on semantic roles as intentional beings in their worlds (see also Petitot, 1995).

Thus, it is the experiential qualitative aspect of embodiment that trains the mind attentionally and intentionally as to achieve hierarchic integration and to accumulatively incorporate novel emotion patterns. This is accomplished by an ongoing feedback loop of internal dynamics on external ones, which on the one hand, initiates continuous readjustments so as to fit into the course of the ongoing action and thus, permits flexibility of shifting intentionally attentional perspectives that activate a distancing mechanism (either focusing in the internal body space or on the external) seen as a feeding forward corrective action of adjustment with the affordances of the unfolding action (see also Braun & Cupchik, 2001). On the other hand, it schematizes the morphology of the event and the resulting microgenesis of formal perceptual gestalts that take on contextual references (that is, "from experiential merging of action to contemplation"). The schematized embodiment provides the ground for inward reflections that create the awareness of how the world seems. Thus,

[14] The kind of perspectival content, here (see Lambie & Marcel, 2002), on the one hand, is always relational, and on the other hand, is "for me" and "for my concerns" where the first-person subject is crucial and is more than a geometric point of origin. It is this that makes such content personal—this implies that there is a possible difficulty in imagining as just simulating what something is like to be for another person since this means to fully have the experience as that of the other person (with all that constitutes their identity). At the same time there is a paradox of consensus which mostly relies on the fact that the experience is organised by means of the body affective matrix –that is, on the primary experience of the self which is embodied which entails a shared intersubjective space (Werner & Kaplan, 1963).

this back and forth between perspectives and shifting attentional modes enables the transformation of the awareness "of "how things are, here and now" (deep immersion) to becomes awareness "of how things seem" as relational imagined possibilities of the situated event (a rather detached mode achieved through the differential perspectives of the self and arousal induction when we face conflicting I-relational positions or uncertainty). In this sense, in its optimal option imagination involved is of a productive creative nature rather than simply a re-creative simulation; for us, the latter is the basic (default) mode of our everyday rather instrumental interaction with the world (see also Currie & Revenscroft, 2002; Currie, 2002).

Thus, even if Aristotle allows beholders to run simulation models it seems as we argued that this happens by means of the expressive-communicative experiential function or mode which requires a positive affect background that affords/motivates deep engagement and world-other focus directedness so as to co-regulate and co-ordinate with the others/event-plot where the "objectual" other becomes, transitory-momentary, another dialogical relational self (I – relational position); so that mimesis of praxis to be performed that reveals statements of the nature of universal (impersonal abstractions). As a consequence then, we have to realize that there might be some problems for understanding, psychologically, emotions in art since options like the above that attempt to unravel the "experience" package are often missing from psychological data.

The next consideration is that an emotion state as triggered by a single elicitor is often not a single unchanging state over time, both in having a prosodic contour (dynamics) and in changing as a result of microgenetic aspects of perception (figure-ground distinction) and of awareness and consideration as a result of shifting attentional foci [e.g., emotion thoughts can act as stimuli to secondary appraisal, whose output feeds into the same consequences as primary appraisal, prolonging and increasing the emotion and in this way leading to meta-emotions (Teasdale, 1999). Or, they can also be the primary means by which one can be reflexively aware of one's attitudinal state and thus take steps to change it.] If such considerations, then, hold some truth, it may be of interest to explore further what would the implications of being in a positive affect background in interactive terms and within the experiential (embodied) nature of the expressive/ communicative mode for the formation and content of emotion experiences evoked by fictional tragic heroes that face their vicissitudes be? That is, incidents that induce in us negative emotions such as fear and pity which inherently carry their own differential intentionality patterns. In other words, how the discriminative capacity to focus intentionally on either side of the embodied and embedded self is moulded by attentional modulation so as to create a variety of possible forms of emotion experience; and yet, how the myth is tailored by the poet so as to allow flexibility in shifting perspectives while sustaining this "fragile" experiential mode which, on the one hand, facilitates mimesis of praxis—as an embodied imaginative act that enables an interpretative synthesis about the world/others as intentional beings; and on the other hand, sets the ground for reflections and productive imagination—a meaning constructive process where emotion thoughts are provoked and novel self-modifying emotions emerge.

II. Positive affect background and the influence of the "intentionality" of the specific emotion

A good deal of evidence in neurophysiology points to the asymmetry between the impacts of positive and negative affective states on cognition with positive affect (even one of high arousal) defocusing attention and producing an expansion of attentional focus triggering global rather than local visual processing (Derryberry & Turker, 1994). Thus, it serves as a cue to stay the course of action or as a cue to explore the environment, whereas negative emotion serves as a call for mental or behavioral adjustment by narrowing attention (Isen, 1990), inducing deep down processing. Meanwhile, negative affect, as in the case of fear, automatically prepares the brain for action (fear

fosters flight and activates withdrawal behavioural patterns; see de Gelder, 2004). The separable activation functions serve as complementary, adaptive motivational organization, where the organization of the affect system can be considered as a continued force in the shaping of even our most civilized responses (Cacioppo et al., 2000). In this sense emotion is seen as being the major aspect of the apperceptive process—the voluntary act of the mind that gives synthetic unity to our experience (Haviland-Jones, 2000; Damasio, 1999).

For the most part, emotion theorists have taken their mission to be to explain emotions in general. In pursuing this mission, theorists built their models of emotion to fit the specification of prototypic emotions. A key element in these models[15] is that emotions, by definition, are associated with specific action tendencies which are not simply thoughts existing in the mind. They are embodied thoughts. Thus any review of the psychological literature on emotions will show that psychologists have typically favoured negative emotions in theory building and hypothesis testing. This fallacy has also been transferred to philosophers who generally consider emotions as belonging to one category, attributing to them common characteristics. One reason could be that relative to negative emotions, positive emotions are fewer in number and rather diffuse, not obviously related to social adaptation and situations that contain threats (for a review see Fredrickson,1998).

However, pairing specific emotions with action tendencies seems easy enough when working within the subset of negative emotions, but fitting the positive emotions into this purportedly emotion-general model raises problems, hindering psychology's ability to answer questions related to the adaptive value of positive emotions adequately. For example, Frida's & Mesquita's (1998) descriptions of action tendencies become vague when emotions are positive, associating joy with an aimless, unasked-for readiness to engage in whatever one interacts with or contentment with inactivity. Although affection is linked to approach, and relief to ceasing to be vigilant, one question to ask, as Fredrickson (1998) claims, is to "do what? Additionally, the capacity to experience positive affect seems to be part of human nature (Panksepp, 1998). Fredrickson (1998) proposes a "broaden-and-built" model, offering a wide range of empirical evidence by arguing that many positive emotions, like joy, interest[16] and contentment, broaden a person's momentary thought-action repertoires creating the very ground of resource building in a long-run fashion. Accordingly, experiences of positive emotions prompt individuals to discard time-tested or automatic everyday behavioural scripts and to pursue novel, creative, and often unscripted paths of thought and action as possibility, beyond reality. Consequently, evidence also suggests that positive emotions might serve as effective tools for regulating negative emotions (see Messinger & Fogel, 1998).

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[15] The assumption underlying this strategy is that models of emotion fashioned around prototypic ones (like fear and anger) will also provide a sufficient explanation for others, less prototypic, including positive emotions.

[16] Interest is also sometimes used interchangeably with curiosity, intrigue, excitement or wonder and shares conceptual space with challenge and intrinsic motivation (Izard, 1993). Interest, hardly seen as a cognitive emotion arises in contexts appraised as safe and as offering novelty, change and a sense of possibility or mystery, requiring effort and attention (Tan, 2000). It can also be seen as an option of "flow" where a matching of potentialities and actualities as a product of sustained exploration and attention occurs (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). According to Izard (1993) interest generates a feeling of wanting to investigate, become involved and open, or extend or expand the self by incorporating new experiences with the person or object that has stimulated it associated with feeing animated or enlivened. A closer view of theoretical writings and empirical work on contentment and related emotions suggests that this emotion prompts individuals to savour their current life circumstances and recent success, experience "oneness" with the world and integrate recent events into their self and world view. Not being simple passivity, it also appears to be the positive emotion that follows experiences that Csikszentmihalyi (1990) described as flow: when the flow episode is over, one feels more "together" than before, not only internally but also in respect to other people and to the world in general so that the self becomes more complex.

There is a variety of empirical support proposing that people experiencing positive affect use more inclusive categories and be more flexible categorizers than those in other emotional states, forming fewer categories when focusing on similarities and more when focusing on differences, seeing relatedness and interconnections that lead to more extensive cognitive elaboration although "loosening" information processing strategies (Murray, Sujan, Hirt, & Sujan, 1990). From research on the emotional reactions to dramatic film stimuli, there is also evidence that negative emotions may be less subject to cognitive manipulations than positive emotions and may be influenced by overall affective reactivity (Davis, Hull, Young and Warren, 1987).

A long tradition of research in social psychology also suggests that experiencing positive emotion increases the likelihood that an individual will help others who are in need. More specifically, Forgas (2002) claims that positive mood[17] background may serve as a resource that allows people to overcome defensiveness and deal more effectively with potentially threatening situations, since dealing with negative situations involves powerful motivational conflicts and requires a trade off between immediate emotional costs against long term gain. Trope and Neter (1994) found that people in a positive mood were likely to expose themselves voluntary to threatening but diagnostic information from others. In other words, positive mood functions as a buffer, enabling people to handle the affective costs of receiving negative information facilitating also the process of acquiring self-knowledge (the mood-as-a-resource hypothesis). However, this effect is not unconditional--it is important that people see the potential benefit of undergoing a negative experience before they expose themselves to it. Trope and Pomerantz (1998) found that people in a positive mood not only selectively sought but also processed in greater detail and better remembered negatively valenced arguments. So that, in this case feeling good provided judges with motivational resources to process threatening information. Such motivational effects can clearly override the general tendency for happy people to engage in top-down, rather stereotypic reliance on existing knowledge structures and superfluous schematic processing (positive mood) allowing the possibility of more systematic and bottom-up processing of external, situational information (negative experienced emotions) and open constructive thinking especially when faced with very complex tasks (Forgas, 2002). Substantive-constructive thinking on the other hand, facilitates affect infusion and the maintenance and accentuation of the prevailing affective state. The mood-management model outlined by Forgas (2002) predicts that mood should initially lead to affect infusion until a threshold level of negativity is reached at which point people should automatically switch to motivated mood control and mood-incongruent responses. The principle here appears to be that the more complex and ambiguous a situation, the more likely it is that people will engage in open, elaborate, and constructive thinking which seems the more likely to be influenced by affective states (Forgas, 2002, see also Hoffman, 1990; Damasio, 1999). This rather illuminating point suggests a complementary approach to empirical evidence provided by psychological aesthetics which indicates that the multimodal complexity of the attentional object in the aesthetic experience fosters affectivity inducing higher complexity which in turn triggers an attentional shift from the particular back to the whole, activating a distancing mechanism and fostering a cognitive restructuring where constructive responses and abstractions are made (for details see: Berlyne, 1974; Cupchik & Laszlo, 1994; Stamatopoulou, 2004).

One the other hand, regarding negative emotions, evidence suggests that negative affective states are the most easily recognized, classified, and communicated by people (see for a review Russel, 1994). There is also little research which, concentrating specifically on the recognition of emotion from stylized dance movements from point-light displays (Diitrich, et al., 1996) or live displays performed by dancers (e.g., de Gelder, et al, 2004), introduces the role of force dynamics

[17] We do not make a rigid distinction between emotion and mood, because from our point of view the difference is mainly quantitative of intensity and dynamics rather than qualitative (see also Lambie & Marcel, 2002).

and kinematics or expressive stylistic elements in the perceived-experienced negative affect (Arnheim, 1974; de Gelder, et al., 2004; Stamatopoulou, 2004).

Seeing fearful bodily expression, stretching cross-modal processing (see also embodied automatic action tendencies), functions in a more automatic manner—blocking to some degree extended semantic modulation (de Gelder, et al., 2004) inducing deep-down processing (not at the higher visual areas; see also F4 neurons in Fogassi, Gallese, Fadiga, Luppino, Matelli, & Rizzolatti, 1996) and evoking increased activation in emotional areas as well as more condition-specific activity related to action representation and to the mirror neurons circuit (de Gelder, et al., 2004). Whereas, seeing happy bodily expressions evokes increased activity in higher visual areas and considerably less condition-specific activity in areas related to action representation (de Gelder, et al., 2004). This asymmetry (with the exception of sadness) suggests that the proposed coupling[18] of emotion-related activity with structures involved in action representation and the mirror neurons' circuits emphasises the role of body-schema in emotional communication (Gallese, 2005) especially for negative emotions (see also emotional resonance or contagion). It seems then that force or directional dynamics as related to the specific action tendencies, and proprioceptive/ kinaesthetic feedback in the subjective experience of negative emotions (i.e., fear), which also play a crucial role in the embodiment of agency, contribute to our understanding of human negative emotional expression even if no referential aspects are involved (de Gelder, et al. 2002; 2004). This highlights the role of embodiment in understanding affect in social or (art) communication (Gallece 2005). However, simultaneously, this option points to a rather minimal everyday possibility of dealing with negative emotions (especially fear and anger) beyond bare recognition, in a way that enables their regulation and in a manner that induces cognitive elaboration which prolongs the evaluative and attitudinal dimension of second-order appraisals in a more detached and synthetic fashion so as to form units of meaning—substantial thinking of "coping with" alternatives.

Taken together these findings, in relation to the variation in the forms of emotion experiences, indicate that it is the positive affect background that underlies the induction of the attitudinal force to become involved in an animated experiential world of action (world-focused emotion experiences). This pre-attentive layer plays a crucial role in attention modification (directional focus and mode of attention) rendering differential combinations-gestalts "of what it is like" to be in the emotional states[19] as mentioned by Aristotle (see Rhet.) Thus, it is suggested that the experience of these emotions is something entirely different from the experience of these emotions in everyday instrumental experiences. It is suggested then, that this "positive" background layer generates an amplifying effect for both—it induces an attitudinal force to become experientially engaged in a holistic manner with these emotions that entail the most embodied quality in their nature. That is, it stretches the embodied/experiential nature of our experiences and imagination to the edge, thus stressing communication and shared understanding, indicated by a close emotional orientation (a feeling into[20]) while initiating explorative meaning construction processes. If such a possibility emerges, the (implicit) self becomes inevitably self-implicated in two-forms: feeling similarities between some personal memories and some aspects of the world-

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[18] It is suggested that the two structures play a crucial role in evolutionary adaptation and social communication—this mechanism for fear contagion and for preparation of action in response to seeing fear (or while imitating action), which presumably operates in a direct, automatic and non-inferential fashion as argued by researchers in facial expression, has great evolutionary value (see de Gelder, 2002; 2004)

[19] That is, specific negative emotions that carry their own intentionality which also suggests the differential modulation of attention. Aristotle differentiates to some extent the "intentionality" of these emotions by saying that fear is for us (self-focused) while pity is for someone (world-focused). This also implies that for pity a certain degree of detachment is involved.

[20] This encompasses both a situation where the spectator use memories of previous emotional experiences with the relevant aesthetic stimuli being attenuated, and a tendency to imitate kinaesthetically (expressive enactment) perceived motor and affective patterns (see Kreitler & Kreitler, 1972; Stamatopoulou, 2004)

characters (this is hardly the case of tragedies as we see later on) in a top-down fashion; or as imaginatively identifying with the world of action through physiognomic perception and expressive enactment of the embodied qualities of the unfolding action (in a rather bottom up fashion, as a congruence of feeling patterns, which triggers sympathetic identification rather than an identity of feeling; see Takahashi, 1995). It is the second case that it is considered more crucial for understanding emotions in art, since this is an internal, integral part of the aesthetic experience (Stamatopoulou, 2004).

That is, if positive affective mood background mediated our emotional responses when engaged in ART we might have to reset the argument of the function of negative emotions when encapsulated in a positive experiential frame—thus, generating an attitudinal force to become involved, open or expanded by incorporating new experiences with the person or object that has stimulated it, associated with feeling animated and enlivened. So that, induced or evoked emotion experiences become more a matter of potentiality than actuality—this allows the amplification of the emotion experience beyond self-concerns deactivating (a defamiliarizing mode of mind) cognitive bias, letting the self embark on an open-ended unusual experience (see issues related to "willing suspension of disbelief": Levinson, 1997; or "evolved ways of unsettling the stereotypical": Dissanayake, 1992).

On the other hand, the crucial point here is that fear, by means of a shared embodied background, fosters the active fusion of the self with the "objectual" other because of the peculiar embodied quality it entails that establishes a shared ground for communion (fear images produce increased activation in well known emotional areas inducing a coupling of emotion and action; de Gelder, et al., 2004) and compassion with the other, while inducing deep-down processing in a more analytical manner. These considerations become more intriguing when realizing the degree of immersion and the modulation of focal attention as being interactive during the unfolding of the myth that can range from immersion to more detached, experiential contemplation. Meanwhile, when immersed in world-focused experience, holistic attention to the world of action increases awareness of that world, not particularly of the self (see Deffenbacher, 1995). So that the argument can be stated as: "*If affective mood background is consistently and pervasively present, as in the case of "being in the expressive/communicating mode", another possibility for negative affect could be created such as experiencing it an immersed in action/world focused fashion (from immersion to experiential contemplation), suspending around its uncertainly-threatening dimension, without however inducing withdrawal action patterns, although eliciting action representations which might be crucial for communicating it. That is, negative emotions in real-life situations, although most easily recognizable or classified (de Gelder, 2002) are the most unbearable to cope with inducing "flight". However in art, holistically perceived or imagined fear, embodying a common "action" background of motor-affective cues becomes a conditioned psychological space that allows reflective imaginative acts, compassion-witnessing emotions and contemplative thoughts to unfold"*.

That is, in a well-woven plot that affords and sustains deep engagement and, given the fact that our imagination is motivated and constrained by our form of embodiment, the quality of our emotional responses do not seem to be related to certain beliefs on our part (for example, whether or not the objects of our emotions do exist). That is, if the object of our emotional engagement is the experience of the emotions as deployed in the unfolding action, evoked perceptual emotion experiences are generated by physiognomic/affective perception[21] that initiates embodied-kinesthetic imagination than by any actual beliefs—seen as the relevant cognitive evaluative component when applied to self-focused emotion experiences. However, modulation of the degree of immersion and shifting perspectives of the attentional foci, due to induced high negativity or

[21] Physiognomic perception requires the relative fusion of person and world in ongoing action patterns, and applies in the person's body-affective matrix, so that the person attributes affective qualities to the object/world.

arousal increases, might render perceptual emotion experiences into emotion thoughts, creating "as if" loops and the imaginative transformation of objects. At this point, emotion experiences entail the cognitive evaluative component of second-order appraisals creating awareness of the world or the self, not only as an appreciation of self-concerns, but also an awareness of the self and one's being in the world and acting in the world of others in relational culturally meaningful patterns.

III. The experiential, expressive-communicative mode: a merging of action and detached awareness

Lambie and Marcel (2002) state that there are states of immersion where second order awareness is minimal—in such cases the content of one's conscious experience approximates first-order phenomenology. We can be, however, veridically aware of first-order phenomenology to the extent that we attend in a highly holistic manner. Paradoxical though it seems, we are sometimes in states of both detached awareness and immersion, in which we are aware of our concurrently phenomenology. Sometimes this can be an act of will, at other times it is in states of heightened sensibility, such as during intense emotional experiences, including accidents and negative events, or during flow states in highly practised activities, such as sports, or theatrical performances. However, it has to be stated that to be accurately aware of one's first-order phenomenology one has to avoid what one normally brings to the act of attending it at a local level (see Gallagher & Marcel, 1999; see also Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) introduced the concept of flow as an optimal psychological state to designate the subjective experience, which can briefly be summarized as: setting goals wherein goals and challenges define a system of action operated by skills; becoming an integrated part of the system by matching opportunities with action and investing attention in the task at hand, wherein involvement is facilitated by the ability to concentrate, paying attention to what is happening; wherein concentration leads to involvement, which can only be maintained by constant inputs of attention (see for a review Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 1990, 1993). Flow is generally viewed, although not the same (see Wind et al. 1995), as a peak performance state. When in flow, a person becomes totally involved, being absorbed in the activity—the time itself changes—and undergoes a number of positive experiences, including freedom from self-consciousness (loss of ego), great enjoyments of the process, clarity of goals and knowledge of performance, complete concentration, feelings of control, and a sense of being totally in tune with the performance. Its value is considered to be in promotion of psychological growth, maintaining inner harmony and integrated complexity[22] . However, learning to enjoy immediate experience while being in control of the mind is something very fragile to be maintained and it requires determination and discipline. Within "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990;) what all responses to artwork have in common is a tendency to fuse with the artwork, and this tendency may be an emotional action tendency when the beholder cannot resist exploring the artwork in search of meaning structures and cognitive elaboration and enjoyment of its meaning, form and style (Tan, 2000). The core of the appraisal, then, is experiential challenge mixed with promise — the emotion is interest, and it could hardly be seen as a merely cognitive attitudinal state (Izard, 1993; Tan, 2000).

Self-consciousness according to Csikszentmihalyi (1990) is the most common source of distraction, when someone is worrying about how he is doing, or looking from outside. In some cases, as in "flow" it is the depth of involvement that pushes self-consciousness out of awareness,

[22] Subjects who experienced flow as optimal experience were found to score highly on measures of psychological well being.

while sometimes it is the other way around: it is the very lack of self-consciousness that makes deep involvement possible. *In flow a person lacks fear for the future and guilt for the past* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). However, a person who pays attention to an interaction instead of worrying about the self obtains a paradoxical result—that is the ability to control the environment by limiting the attentive stimulus, while being an integrated part of the system which take form from the rules of the activity and its energy comes from the person's attentional adjustments to the ongoing action—this is one side of the flow experience. The other side paradoxically, is a feeling which seems to make the sense of control irrelevant[23]. Thus the flow experience is typically described as involving a sense of control—or, more precisely, as lacking the sense of worry about losing control that is typical of the instrumental functioning of everyday life. The important thing to realize here is that flow activities are constructed so as to allow the person to coordinate with the activity so as to reduce the margin of error, while at the same time what is enjoyed is not the sense of being in control, but the sense of exercising control as perceived possibility of control. Csikszentmihalyi (1993) states that the absence of the self from consciousness does not mean that a person in flow has given up control, or that she is unaware of what happens in her body or in her mind. In fact the opposite is usually true[24] . This is a self-contained activity, one that is done not with the expectation of some future benefit, but simply because the doing itself is the reward. In fact, this aspect is what Lambie and Marcel (2002) proposed by saying that the more immersed the experience, the more "for-me-ness" quality it carries. This is also related to the hedonic tone which is more related to the experience of the action attitude (to becoming immersed as forming an integrated part of the system) and the subjective state resulting from the experience, than to the appraisal per se.

An analogous perspective introducing the paradox of control is the concept of absorption. Tellegen and Atkinson (1974) spoke of absorption as a readiness for experiencing deep involvement, a heightened sense of the reality of the attentional object, imperviousness to normally distracting events, and an appraisal of information in unconventional and idiosyncratic ways. Wild et al. (1995) proposed that absorption is an organismic disposition that, when activated by the absence of instrumental striving and "telic" goals, and by the perceived absence of coercion, enables experiential involvement with attentional objects. Tellegen [personal communication to Roche and McConkey presented in their article "Absorption" (1990)] defined absorption as "a general disposition to enter, or a capacity for entering, experiential states characterised by marked cognitive restructuring, which undoubtedly takes place on a very high level in the cognitive structural hierarchy, [and] can have a dissociative (disaggregative) or holistic (reaggregative) character depending on circumstances, as well as on the individual's personal characteristics" (see also Rader & Tellegen, 1987).

Apter (1984, 1999), applying his reversal theory of motivation to the arts, substituted the notion of a single dimension of arousal with that of pairs of metamotivational modes ("proto-functions"; see also Apter, 1999), by distinguishing the telic and the paratelic mode. For Apter (1984), many of the phenomena of human culture would appear to be essentially paratelic, in that they help to induce this paratelic mode, they maintain it for periods of time once it has been induced, and provide the means by which pleasurable intense experience of high arousal may be achieved while it endures. The function of this mode, where the focus is upon the activity itself rather than upon the goal, is that high arousal is actively sought by the individual. With this distinction, Apter (1984) offered an explanation of the "paradox of tragedy" by introducing the notion of parapathic

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[23] Many people interviewed by Csikszentmihalyi (1990), especially those who most enjoy whatever they are doing, mentioned that at the height of their involvement with the activity, they lose a sense of themselves as separate entities, and feel harmony and even a merging of identity with the environment, letting the structure of the aesthetic activity shape the structure of the experience (see also Braun & Cupchic, 2001).

[24] A good runner is usually aware in a holistic manner of every relevant change in his body, the rhythm of his breathing as well as the performance of his competitors.

emotions in the paratelic mode. Within this mode, “cognitive synergies” (the experience of mutually-exclusive properties in relation to the same identity) are especially welcome and enjoyable, so that, even negative emotions can take on a special quality, which allows them to be experienced as pleasant (i.e., “empathy-alienation synergy”). Synergies, then, allow suspension and tolerance to ambiguities and provide a special phenomenological quality over and above this, which is described as “fascinating”, “delightful” or “intriguing” experience of arts.

In fact, the main function of this meta-motivational mode is to encapsulate the situation, removing it from the immediate self-concerns, while through the induction of cognitive synergies, cognitive dissonant components are brought into the same conceptual space, and the identity with which they are associated are experienced more intensely, and enhance its other phenomenologically (Apter, 1984). This mostly relies on the person’s capacity to adjust and regulate shifts from one mode of attention to the other in relation to the situational demands and the task at hand, while this interplay of shifts can become an indication of successful coping and fulfillingness. Within this framework, the potentiality-actuality dimensions can be seen as an aesthetic synergy between the actual and the potential, a conjunction of impossibility and actuality — a clash of incompatible self-concepts; or a clash of conflicting self-world I-relational positions that induce “as if” thoughts and hierarchically integrated thoughts that provide self-coherence. In this mode, the thinking is more likely to be sensitive to a variety of possibilities, normally anxiety-provoking topics are not avoided and so we are in a better position to overcome the effects of “set”; challenging through “conceptual blendings” pre-existing emotional schemata and the cognitive bias of everyday life in a rather detached manner, restructuring relational meanings in a rather novel way that allows for enormous flexibility of thought (Finke, Ward & Smith1996); while at the same time, regulating self-concerns and implications for others.

This mode is inevitably related to mimesis of praxis in creative frames which on the one hand, being naturally pleasant, stresses and sustains the communicability (co-regulation of emotions) and on the other, by means of expressivity and arisen interest, challenges novel communicative expressive patterns. Thus, it allows understanding of the novel that contradicts our formed “sets”, beyond stereotypic categorizations. This line of reasoning brings to mind Averill’s approach to catharsis and the tragic proper pleasure wherein he states that catharsis is a process that refines, stretches, and ultimately transforms the emotions, challenging us to be creative in the emotional as well as in the intellectual domain (Averill, 2000). While this might also be the case, especially for our Western culture, if we focus on the contextual frame of references of Aristotle’s work, we might see that the aspect of the regulation of self-concerns and implications for others that reveal the authentic rather than the novel is more pronounced (Averill, 2001). However, one possible answer to this dilemma comes from the very notion of “indeterminacy” applied to aesthetic appreciation (Cupchik, 1999). Thus, the act of productive embodied imagination becomes a vehicle—a built in form process for the concrete embodiment and transformation of the emotional themes-episodes embodied in tragedy unifying the “thinking-I” and the “being-I” into the “becoming-I” (see Cupchik, 1999).

Meanwhile, it can be suggested that the quality of the emotion experiences in art seems to depend on this heightened state of consciousness as described above which allows feelings to constitute attentional objects in their multimodal complexity (see Wild at al., 1995; Stamatopoulou, 2004) resulting in prolonged emotional responses. That is, it is the experiential (motivational) realm that enables the activation of imaginative embodied acts (mimesis) as to form “mimesis of praxis”, so that the intentional (attitudinal) object of the emotion experience is of experiencing through perceptual engagement and active participation in the perceived world of action, the emerging emotions afforded by the unfolding myth (see also Currie, 2002). However, this also implies that once spectators imaginatively re-enact (expressive enactment) the lived experience of the emotional postures or movements of the actors, they are not pretending—they are inevitably to some extent in the state that is expressed by their “body”, at least at an implicit level, since their attention directional focus is on the word rather than the self (see Walton 1990; Currie, 2002). For us,

however, the real argument starts afterwards when we realize the peculiar “for-me-ness” quality of our perceptual world-focused engagement and the paradox of control that is entailed—seen, not as a detached or conceptual for me, but its existence as both a stance and a part of perceptual content. That is the more immersed we are in the action, the more “for-me-ness” we feel; the more for-me-ness we feel, the more concentrated on the course of action we become. This is maintained by continuous feedback loops in attention modulation which function as the underlying force of reflection and corrective anticipatory imaginative acts. Thus, the structure of the aesthetic activity structures the aesthetic experience. This results in a continuous self-regulative interpreting synthesis of the multiplicity of the I-relational embodied positions of the others (a kind of content with structured articulation) that we experience as spectators that reveals the relational structure of emotion experience and a new world that we are not quite familiar with. Hence, the sense of self is directly put into question (each transitional-momentous I-relational embodied position of the self who stays in the background, comes to constitute a full “circle” of embodied physiognomiesc within the self; see expressive perception). This implies a transformative potential. This can be specified as we realize that the more immersed we are in the action, the more “for-me-ness” we feel, which in the case of arousal increase and negativity induction, is activated in a twofold manner: it induces frustration (see gerundival imperative), while on the other hand, felt unresolved frustration modulates attention, inducing distance which allows the deployment of sympathetic identification—compassion. Meanwhile, imaginative anticipatory action patterns related to the consequences of the unfolding action are triggered that push the self to become involved (i.e., to help). Hence, this aspect, given our implicit background overview induces empathy of a medium distance so as to “witness” the emotions of others (emotion perceptual experiences where we feel empathy/sympathy for) and become involved in other-centered responses. That is, arousal increases modulate attentional shifts which activate distancing mechanisms and directional shifts that bring the self to the front as experiencing the urge for motivated control. In the case we face, very intense, complex and uncertain conflicting issues while not being the agents of the action, high arousing affectivity creates the possibility of feeling imagined fear for us (in the case we are in the position of the other—being the other), while feeling even more compassion for the other. Thus, the very possibility of reflections and self-focused rather detached corrective “as if” imaginative thoughts emerges (this can also be pleasurable; see Lambie & Marcel, 2002). This pattern also points to a mixed hedonicity pattern due to different components of the emotion state—in which the object of desire is pleasant (to engage imaginatively) but the state one is, is unpleasant (enactively embodying the emotion experiences of others—thus, transitory being the others), so that we become (not pretending) anxiously fearful[25], stressing at the edge our ways of experiencing (which might also be pleasant, since hedonicity can lie in the experience of the action attitude; i.e., as self-regulation of force dynamics) and giving way to thought processes (see also the becoming I). The subjective state resulting from appraising the world of action in which we are participating can be also experienced as pleasant, either seen as relief—contentment or an insightful deeper understanding.

The dual character of the plot and the organic role of arousal

According to Apter (1984), the “paratelic” frame has to be sufficiently strong to maintain the paratelic mode in the spectator. Or, it may be the case that artwork contains such cues so as to sustain it and challenge us to integrate both formative elements and subject matter, or the theme of

[25] This is true of occasions when we voluntarily put ourselves in situations that provoke fear which we suppose to be safe, such as unbowdlerized fairy tales (Lambie & Marcel, 2002).

the myth as well as abstract ideas; so that our engagement in imagining that we are part of the represented world, not to form an inclusive self-sufficient "dead end", but to activate a process of intellectual elaboration which generates abstractions, and sets the ground to get the most emotional satisfaction out of this complex experience.

At the heart of Berlyne's theory is the claim that art elicits pleasure by acting on arousal, that is, on the person's level of attention, alertness or excitement which is affected by the psychophysical, ecological and collative properties (such as complexity, incongruity and novelty) of the material object (Berlyne, 1971, 1974). The perceiver is motivated to explore the aesthetic pattern until it is understood. This assimilation and consequent resolution of uncertainty is accompanied by a reduction in arousal, to the optimal level, which is experienced as pleasure (tension-relief process). Kreitler & Kreitler, (1972) claimed that the concept of arousal could be applied not only to "collative" variables of form, but also to the meaningful representational content of art.

And it is indeed this dynamic merging, not confined to semantic structures that provides the multilayered nature of meaning in an aesthetic experience (Kreitler & Kreitler, 1972, Braun & Cupchic, 2001). Thus, the concept of arousal may play an important role when linked to kinaesthetic imitation and expressive enactment (expressive perception and mimesis as an embodied imaginative act), hedonic value, attentional modulation and interpretation-cognitive orientation, contributing to the experienced intensity of an emotion experience and standing as an organic link between emotional and cognitive processes as well as a threshold point that leads to awareness (see Mandler, 1982; Lambie & Marcel, 2002). However, as we already said, it is the addition of the "for me" dimension that is crucial in relation to arousal activation—not as a detached or conceptual stance—but as both a stance toward and a part of perceptual content as it becomes schematized through expressive enactment—mimesis as an embodied imaginative act. Cognitive approaches to emotion that stress the role of arousal in appraisal mechanisms tend to disregard issues concerned with its role in immersed holistic emotion experiences, or in the blending of empathic emotions with the formal and structural elements of arts (i.e., rhythm and texture) when tension is introduced (see de-automatization process), as well as, in the dynamic plasticity of these dimensions within the aesthetic experience (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990; Takahashi, 1995).

Aristotle seems to know this quite well and he offers a highly conditioned model by stressing the dual character of plot: a gestalt formal entity and the theme of the myth (goal directed actions by human actions that meet incidents). Aristotle's emphasis on the formative elements which constitute the medium of tragic mimesis, as well as his insistence on the primacy of plot highlight the relation between the materiality-formal organization of the tragedy and the representation of something besides the artifact itself, setting the conditions through which they complementarily (sometimes as a weakening, controversial, or intensifying condition) sustain each other while preparing the ground, so that a multistage appraisal process is achieved. In addition, his definition of plot as a formal entity resembles the definition of the law of Praegnanz in Gestalt theory to an amazing extent (we can also see that the characters and their way of thinking are built in the same manner; see also Arnheim, 1974).

In this sense, plot and characters which are inclusive to the plot have a special formal quality that contributes to the continual search for meaning structures as the myth unfolds. At a first level, the perception of some pattern within a piece of art is affectively pleasing, as it may answer a concern for order. At a second level, finding a structure in the plot that unfolds is challenging (Arnheim, 1974). It becomes, thus, an exercising of control created by the perceived possibility of control that rolls within the unfolding plot, where the beholder restores ambiguities and irregularities which are stimulating-intriguing (see collative variables and cognitive synergies; Berlyne, 1971, 1974), while the emotion potential of the myth unfolds in interactive manner, so that it provokes and sustains interest, and gives further enjoyment when unity (meaningfulness) in variety is settled (Arnheim, 1974). Aristotle in fact, insists on this: on the one hand, he emphasizes structural elements which through "de-automatization" (see also defamiliarization; Shklovsky, 1917/1988), induce a sort of "emotional distancing", so as to regulate arousal preventing it from becoming out of hand so as

the focus of experience turns back to the self and self-concerns, as well as, to overcome cognitive bias and reinvest attention in formal aesthetic qualities (see also Miall & Kuiken, 1994). On the other hand, he insists on a type of plot that offers unexpected instances which induce to a certain degree pleasurable uncertainty seen as interest in the unfolding of the story-narrative, so that a sort of emotional closeness is also attained (world-focused experience). As the degree of arousal increases, the uncertainty (the veil of ignorance) element is turned to be frustrating, so that when we are inevitably faced with a hopeless situation, the implied at the background (implicit) self comes to the front and motivated control is triggered. Thus, the quality of the emotion experiences depends on how well the plot and the audience can sustain and maintain the "paratelic" experiential realm which allows feelings to constitute attentional objects in their multimodal complexity, deepening R-emotion into compassion and contemplation while offering the structural pattern for integrated multilevel appraisals (Cupchik et al., 1998; Tan, 2000) that assimilate very complex conflicting information.

In relation to the development of the plot, Aristotle insists on the avoidance of any extreme arousing element in the plot as well as in the sight. He says that the worst thing for poets to do is to induce the feeling of terror. However, he also says that the "happy ending" is not for the proper tragic pleasure (1453a36-42). In fact, he insists on the induction of negative emotions but under a certain "conditioning". The best plot for him is one that induces moderate levels of arousal (see also Winner, 1982), which increases slowly in suspense (i.e., he disregards the sudden emergence of the god that offers the solution to the tragic action). This happens through the hero's adventure that entails a shift to the reverse end of what is expected (peripeteia) and the act of discovery (anagnorisis), so that the arousal mechanism and the interruptions in the narrative flow functions so as to induce emotional distance (see also the deautomatization process) that yields imagined anticipation of what is to come and retrospection regarding the meaning of what has already happened (Cupchik et al., 1998). This is further sustained by the very fact that intervals-interludes come in between the unfolding of the myth with a corresponding change in perspectives: from the first to the third person or even to an impersonal narration of abstract ideas. Aristotle's suggestion to poets is to treat the chorus as one of the actors (1456a25-31) as an integral part of the myth. This increased complexity, rich in stylistic devices and thus connotative meanings as well as rich in abstract ideas, controls arousal over time and thus, extends, amplifying the evoked emotions while inducing distance so that the audience realizes the fearful, the pitied and the wonderful (1452a). This enables subtle discriminations on emotion expressive/communicative patterns to be made.

Aristotle, possibly being aware of the emotional impact of the unfolding myth, sets the conditions of how pity and fear, which presuppose empathy (philanthropon as mentioned in the first case: 1453a), can be moderated so as to be not too weak and also not too intense, if their catharsis has to be achieved [in fact these accounts are amazingly similar to what Hoffman (1990) suggests on empathy; see later]. Furthermore, in relation to the type of characters, he insists that for pity to be aroused the imitated characters must neither be strangers, nor enemies (1453b20-27). In addition, he insists that the characters instead should be better than us. This aspect is somewhat an unrealized aspect of Aristotle's accounts, although it possibly contains interesting implications. For Aristotle, then, the best conditions for empathic feelings to be aroused is when the character causes the tragic outcome, which is causally intelligible, in ignorance (1453b40-46). Tragic characters violate what, if they were true to their nature, they should be honoring. They commit this error just in virtue of their one-sidedness, so they are in conflict not only with others but also with themselves (Eldridge, 1994). However, in real life we would not ordinarily expect qualities such as courage and wisdom as in the case of Oedipus to lead to such horrible results. In this sense, there is something pitiable and fearful and something for us to learn about our lives in social structures — to what end or with what right is the exercise of virtues naturally and appropriately directed (Eldridge, 1994; Nussbaum, 1986). How can conflicts of this sort be resolved? The answer to this question could possibly to be found in Aristotle's moral philosophy. Eudaimonia is something final and self-sufficient, the end of an action — it is the activity of soul in accordance with virtue. Unconsciously or inculpably, we can deploy

our best qualities of character in social interaction in such a way that the achievement of eudaimonia is blocked, for oneself — or for the others (Eldridge, 1994). And tragedy depicts the undoing of eudaimonia by the very qualities most necessary for its achievement. Nussbaum (1986) proposes that tragedies make us aware of the discrepancies between reality and possibility, and thus may affect our moral beliefs.

For Aristotle, tragic action proceeds according to the law of probability or necessity, but the logical character of the action is not an end in itself (Sifakis, 2001). Tragic action structures our empathic feelings. Catharsis—the tragic effect—seems to presuppose that we can be moved by emotions such as pity and fear in watching what we take to be a tragic fiction. The tragic hero, who has committed an act that is pregnant with horror, but in ignorance, and who redeems himself and proves his essential innocence when he discovers his mistake, has established an unassailable claim to our pity, especially if the steps that lead to the discovery, and thus our pity, are logically connected from the first to the last. These causal generalizations about the formation of action, assume that emotions, for Aristotle at this stage, have a cognitive evaluative basis — they fulfil an element of judgment — so that they can be a genuine source of understanding.

Some realizations beyond Simulation and Make-Believe

It is argued that emphasis on the role of participation in games of make-believe with respect to the phenomena of representation may be seen as more appropriate in dealing with the evaluative cognitive basis of secondary appraisals in emotions, offering an understanding of the paradox of our emotional responses to fiction (see Walton, 1990, 1997; Carroll, 1995). So that make-believe could be seen then as a condition for empathy, and empathy involves feelings that the subject has about other people. The beholder in games of “make as to believe” pretends to see people, but he actually feels for the pretend people. And just as certain actual beliefs generate feeling states in us, our fictional believing, which is achieved as an imaginative state of pretending, causes in us what Walton (1990) would call quasi-fear (see also simulated emotions lacking the action tendencies of actual emotions; Walton, 1997). So that we do not actually feel fear for; it is only fictional that we feel fear for Oedipus.

Assuming solely the cognitive basis of emotions, this also implies that these emotions have intentional objects in respect to which we do have the appropriate sort of beliefs (top-down processing). Being in real-life, instrumental, self-focused situations these beliefs tend to be assertive. Being in a theatre situation, to resolve the paradox of our emotional responses that it seems we feel, we have to be in a state of pretence so as to make-believe. We might say then that we merely pretend to see people as an act of imaginative role-playing. This implies from the very beginning a rather detached stance, lacking the experiential quality of immersed emotion experiences—thus, almost lacking hedonics. This option, however, seems to save the phenomenological integrity of our emotional responses while explaining why negative arisen emotions do not induce withdrawal action patterns. However assuming this, we are faced with two possible problems. The first is that the fact of being aware of the relevance of concerns of an imaginary situation before the fact (such as knowing the rules of the game) rather than afterward also has adaptive value. This might possibly resolve the paradox of tragedy as faced in Aristotle’s Poetics [in fact in ancient tragedies the audience in general knew the outcome of the myth well before the end. The difference was in the way the plot was knitted so as to form mimesis of praxis]. Meanwhile this option maximizes the paradox of suspense (i.e., see Yanal, 1996) and leaves almost untangled the paradox of mimesis. That is, it is still difficult to differentiate between the objects of our emotional states as situations that we “make as if to believe” and as situations that we rather believe. In turn, this is linked to two more possible problems. The first is that it is difficult to explain how the “for” quality of the feeling

(I feel sympathy/agony for someone) is attained at the level of pretence (see also Carroll, 1998; Lamarque, 1981). That means that even if we speak about simulated emotions, the "for" quality is not well justified—it needs a relational position, the agent-object and the shift in directedness. The second is why make-believe situations and "as if" imagination are seen as a confounding phenomenon. This can become: let's pretend "as if" I was playing the role of him… This sounds too perplexed and quite not necessary to explain the "as if I were (being) in his position" imaginative "role-taking" option that leads by reflection to feel "for" someone (which is not contagion, not reactive, but deep compassion and witnessing—a rather more distant stand, thereby cognitive, which however activates our tendency to help while keeping its mutual ties to "what it feels like" being him). However, it would be supposed that we have to play the game of "make as to believe" because we rather "feel", but quasi-emotions which are not connected to motivation or action (to actual beliefs or action tendencies). Nevertheless, if we assume that we have the attitudinal force (motivation; see expressive/communicative mode) to enter into a world of action by becoming an integrated part of the system, the "as if' imaginative role-playing, instead of pretending may emerge as an aspect of the unfolding of the myth/activity that structures our experience, and thus, becomes justified without the need of pretence (see also Currie 2002; Currie & Jureidini, 2004).

Furthermore, the make-believe option seems to create problems with what we really mean when we say that we become engaged, moved, co-ordinated—tuned into the performance. Thus, we still have to explain how we can be moved emotionally by the fate of what we take to be a fictional character. In the rather detached, self-focused mode of pretence, the experiential quality of the emotion is hard to generate (unless what is depicted is self-referential; which is hardly, in the case of tragedies). Accordingly, the embodied communicability and immersion of attention (see negative emotions as embodying a common action background) can barely be achieved since distancing the purely cognitive apprehension from one's self renders a disembodied evaluative judgement or a self observation rather than emotion thought—we rely mostly on rather "cold" knowledge structures (belief system) even if we try to pretend. The latter seems like the re-creative reproduction of ourselves when cramped by ourselves; we cannot really become other- focused so as to perceive the affective qualities of the objects of an affecting world, and all the bodily aspects of the evaluative and the action dimension (intention and dynamics), opening up the possibility of emotional co-ordination and other-focused appropriate responses that induce sympathy for, since attention and effort is spend to keep pretending, especially when faced with unusual or highly negative circumstances. That is, secondary evaluative emotion appraisals that implicate self-compatibility and self-control and urges for action are directed to the self, who has to try hard to keep pretending (becoming more detached and reminding him/herself that he/she is just pretending) when faced with negative affectivity or something he/she does not believe as truth. Although this might also be the case in theatre (i.e., in cases where arousal control is out of hand), we end up feeling "quasi-emotions" or something like simulations of the surface contour of emotion experiences—not the deep articulated structure that enables co-ordination and co-regulation from the bottom to the top, so as to become an integral part of the unfolding action structuring our experience, being aware in a holistic manner of every relevant body change, and achieving the shifting directedness of person-object relationship which enables "as if" imaginative loops and a variety of combinatorial-gestalts of "what it is like" (see Lambie & Marcel, 2002). According to Walton (1990), viewers of art engage in imagining that they are part of the represented word, so that emotion is a response that is both part of the imagination and a result of the vividness of the imagination. But why can the case of re-creative imagination[26] be characterized as vivid when lacking the most of its phenomenal content (i.e., intensity and dynamics)?

[26] Or, what could the answer to such questions as the following be: What about fresh emotions induced by the materiality (stylistic devises) of the art-work? Do they interact with the imagined situation? And if so, what mental blends are generated? And if this is still the case, at the end of the day, no matter which stand we take,

Thus, if the concept of make-believe seems well suited to describing the imagination "as if" processes related to emotion in the spectator of theatre and film, it seems quite obvious that in this case imaginative "as if" role-playing (which presupposes the reciprocity of role-making and role-taking but which is also unclear about how these can be attained) is always reflective and self-focused (let's pretend as "if I were in his position"). The question here is who is going to set up the rules of the make-believe game. The problem is that to imagine being in his position (role-taking,) we have to have options of what his world feels like—which can be achieved in world-focused, holistic, immersed experiences of being in a world like his—otherwise, the world one thinks is his is a rather stereotypical one, which is obviously a non-shared world that abolishes co-ordination and thus learning and understanding (i.e., the emergence of novel). However, from a functional perspective, we can still say that imagination as a simulation of events and other people's mental states can result in real emotion. In this case, the "for-me-ness" quality is still lacking or not well justified. At the same time is not quite clear what sort of simulation do we mean: embodied, configural or conceptual? For us this seems quite self contradictory or takes something as presupposed although missing, and obviously contradicts Aristotle's insistence on mimesis.

What is missing is the formative process of being enabled for role-taking (which is the crucial turning point that we have to reach in tragedies), so that being able to perform role-playing (if actually needed); but in the case of pretending, this comes to be the dead-end—self-inclusive; since the fact that we understand (which is like bare recognition rather than being so moved as to understand while not sharing identical mental states) does not in any way go forward, if we cannot have the possibility of the two co-ordinated options of "being" (in the subject—in the aesthetic object), so as to develop into "becoming-I". How, then, can the resolution of fear and pity in us be achieved—or how can imagined fear for the hero (as pretence) becomes ours (as imagined-embodied[27] fear for us in the case that we were-being in his position) since we pretend, unless we confess to the experiential nature of our engagement at least in the option that Aristotle sets it? If we see how Aristotle builds his argument, relying on mimesis, we may find the resolution of the missing part; that is, a positive affect (pre-attentive) background linked to the experiential motivational mode (see also "flow") that enables us to become openly involved—tuned into, and hence sustains co-regulation—co-articulation—co-ordination. That is, it sustains the expressive-communicative mode, so as to unfold its experiential quality (the reciprocal nature of human perception being both embodied and embedded), so as to deploy the different experiential characteristics that different modulations of directedness and attention afford; so as to constitute-reveal the reciprocity of role-making and role-taking which becomes intensified by the very fact of dealing with negative emotions[28] (embodied emotions and perceived possibilities of exercising control). This in turn, on the one hand, creates chances of arousal regulation (provided that the other or the myth is developed in such a manner so as to keep it regulated). On the other hand, it creates the possibility of shifting directional perspectives, attentional foci and modes (figure-ground, holistic-analytic, more detached), so as to allow reflective acts and the "as if" imaginative transformation of objects—as well as the emergence of the "as if" role-taking options (cognitive empathy). That means that the very fact that we deal with the negative in this mode (which has to be maintained throughout the

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we are faced with the question pointing to the function of arts upon its audience. Is it creative or re-creative? The case of make-believe seems quite closely connected with re-creative imagination. In this sense, works of art must not violate expectations or conventions, since the "imaginative leap", which defies references, has to be minimised in artworks. Is there such a thing in art? We might assume that not even in Aristotle's case, which possibly stretches out the authentic than the novel (instead of the misleading option of re-creative), such a thing can be achieved by the audience (i.e., the absence of any imaginative –leaps that defy reference).

[27] As evidence suggests, see de Gelder, 2004.

[28] Fear can be seen as one of the most embodied emotions; however, in the case of pity which is more detached, we face a hopeless situation on behalf of others. This is very frustrating and becomes unbearable in the case where we imagine ourselves in the position of being pitied by others.

artwork and further challenged by artistic devices that induce emotional closeness or emotional distance when appropriate, so as to sustain interest) provides us with the whole story (from the bottom to the top) of getting to the point of "as if" role-taking without the need for pretending, while allowing us to share the emotional experience of others/world, experiencing the intensity and dynamics of our emotion experience and becoming aware of the phenomenology of the emotional states. Thus, to feel very real emotions on behalf of others and for others (narrative-fictional emotions with the "for" aspect—witnessing, non-shared emotions) and very real and hot self-implicating ones, that will become self-modifying emotions, as well as a variety of meta-emotions related to all these implications. Hence, the whole range of the perspectival self is implicated, awaiting realization. At least Aristotle's option of the function of Tragedy on its audience opens up all these possibilities.

Yet, this is not a mere simulation since the aforementioned feeding forward option is missing from simulation approaches. This "feeding forward" option is created by the fact that intentional shifts of directionality require, at least on an implicit level, the self and the world to be distinctively represented in intention (the case, here is of an intentional fusion with the other, not confusion). The next is that what we refer to as a "hodological" space is a psychological space, rather than a geometric one (see more in Lambie & Marcel, 2002). That is, that even when emotion experiences are world-focused, the self is still at the background, so that in the case of gerundival perception, (given the attitudinal action force to enter into this world of action and the non actuality of the reciprocity of the positions), where we are not the agents of the action, the "by me"--"hot"—imperative urge for motivational control of conflicting perspectival positions—especially when dealing with negative emotions—is transformed into potentiality and imaginative reflective abstract thoughts (a vulnerable world; this is not equal to an assertive belief). These emotion imaginative thoughts can act as a stimuli to evaluative secondary appraisals (i.e., a hopeless situation), feeding into the same consequences as primary appraisal (a terrifying act), amplifying the emotion experience and leading to meta-emotions (empathy "for", as a medium distance "witnessing" meta-emotion; pity for). Yet, it is not mere simulation, since the full personal experience is "encapsulated", immersed rather than detached, varying in focus, direction and attentional mode and thus hedonics can take on various forms: lying in the action attitude of the background layer, lying in the dynamic changes of the emotion experiences, lying in the objects as appraised, in the appraisal result per se, lying in the perceived possibility of exercising control, or in the subjective state from the experience itself.

A crucial point that has to be emphasised in Aristotle's accounts related to tragic heroes is that in tragedies, we cannot really personally identify with any of the heroes, since the formation of similes of personal identification, in our view, is hardly the case. We are not like the tragic heroes—they are not like us, but are better than us; and yet they are not bad or good characters—they take on reference by the way they act in the unfolding of the myth. Thus, characters function as symbolic archetypes — as archetypical (roles) combinatorial gestalts of contradictory values, not as stereotypes, not really as we are. That is, as "actant" relational positions (structural spatiotemporal combinatorial gestalts that imply a deep "iconicity" in the structural organization of the unfolding event) that take on semantic roles by the position they hold in the spatiotemporal unfolding of the event, revealing the deep structural morphology of the event (see Petitot, 1995). This option diminishes the cases of personal identification that encompasses a situation where spectators use memories of previous emotional experiences—that remind them of personal traits or strivings, so as to achieve an identity of personal characteristics, strivings or feelings. However, this does not imply that seemingly different events or characters may not posses a similar emotion structure (a kind of content with a shared structured articulation) which might be personally familiar as an emotion experience of a shared articulation between the subject and the aesthetic object (the other).

Thus, in tragedy, in some sense the characters seem transparent, allowing the act of imagination to unfold in such a way that the beholder can pass through the character experiencing multiple and qualitatively shifting patterns of transitory imaginative identifications— from the first

(I feel what A feels—embodying within me "what A feels"—being A in my lived body) that enables inward reflection, to the second (being emotionally close to A, and knowing "what it feels like", not being the agent of the action, I feel sympathy for A—sympathetic identification which requires a sort of medium distancing), or the third person perspective (an abstraction formed through the multipoint view of an outside observation of all transitory embodied identifications undertaken). This option rather points to enlivenment—expressive enactment and mimesis as an embodied imaginative act of "taking on" the embodied perspective of the "objectual" other (as forming transitory "embodied" identifications with the other, whereas the self is at the back- implicit). This created "transitional shared space" between subject-object/other is interactive and carries forward—rather than matches (see emotional resonance) and externalizes only—a freshly conceived world or a re-centered, "becoming-I", co-regulated self, being in an ongoing intercession with the unfolding event (a realization of potential similarities and differences in positions; see Kuiken, et al., 2004). Emotions within this frame can be seen as social episodes in the way Averill (2001) claims.

We also suggest that what is often overlooked is the temporal sequence of the changing I-relational perspectives we embody, by means of expressive enactment of the emotion experiences of each participating other in the action/myth. This can be seen in a twofold manner: first, implicating the rolling multiplicity of the perspectives we embody (the sensed understanding of another's experiential perspective—embodying the perspectival stance of the other, in a world-focused emotion experiences); so that, we become the "focal" one other, and thus, we momentarily bring to the forefront the one who we are tuned into, while others stand at the background (the self is still implicit in the experience). The second option implicates the shifts of the perspectival directness in the figure-ground articulation as related to the self, which when the self comes to the front, it appears to be either as "I am (like) A", when self-references are implicated—personal identification, self-reference projected from the self to the object; or, as "if I were taking the position A embodies, embodying A's emotions—as if I were (being) in the shoes of A"—embodied "as if" imaginative acts that allow inward reflection and the generation of emotion thoughts. The case of personal identification turns out to be rigid, more emotionally, equally belief laden, "locking" the perspectives on focusing on the one "alike" me character, and reflecting on self who is (alike) the character (thus, the experience turns out to be immersed but indirectly self-focused, implicating self-compatibility secondary emotion appraisals that enabled identification, and allowing, since attentional modulation is constrained, a very limited number of experiential combinations-gestalts). Although this can become a source of further affectivity, this stance does not allow flexibility in shifting attentional foci, and reflecting on (see Braun & Cuphick, 1998). The other option ("I am transitorily being A, X, whoever", throughout all available positions), requires co-ordination with the event, not the character (not commitment to the character), and paradoxically signifies a more detached mode (see dialectical I-relational positions and shifting attentional foci) that restructures the being-I and thinking-I into becoming-I, and enables "as if" possibilities of productive imagination—"as if" imaginative emotion thoughts that maintain the multi-perspectival quality of our perceptual experience (see also Cuphick & Laszlo, 1994). This is further sustained by the very fact that between the transitions across different perspectives of different directionality "blank" moments[29] are created that induce a rather detached stance (see also the unresolved "for-me-ness" aspect). In this case, we "witness" others' emotions, feeling for someone—carrying for him—feeling

[29] These are actual, not shared emotions. In fact, given the fact that the self is implicitly involved in a world focus experience, it is also implicitly claimed that the embodiment of negative emotion experiences in a world-focused fashion, given the experiential mode, will end up as a reflection on self who embodies—thus as "witnessing" the emotions of others. At the same time, given the relational structure of the emotion perceptual experience, where the self is the one pole—psychological—we can never exactly simulate the emotions of the others as the others experience them—there is a blank meaning space there, that has to filled by productive imagination (see also Lambie & Marcel, 2002).

pity for, while realizing the unbearable consequences of their action. Meanwhile a progressive dialogic sequence of identifications is created that implicates the self and calls for ordering, especially when further negativity is implicated and the self is faced with conflicting perspectives; thus, self-modifying feelings are induced. That is, given the embodied nature of negative thoughts the possibility of induced affectivity due to arousal increases and frustration of conflicting perspectives emerges, generating "hot" feelings in us that need to be regulated (e.g., imagined "as if" fear for our "I-relational" embodied position of imaginatively "being" in the situated condition that Oedipus or Kreon were). If such a possibility emerges, imaginative restorations are induced in the forms of abstractions or unresolved "hot" questions remain hovering around awaiting realization.

Thus, depending on the well-knitted aspect of the plot, a complicated progressive dialogical sequence of transitory identifications is created that points to the deeply lying implicit forms in the organization of human interactive experience, by stretching the emotional structures/schema of fear and pity to their limits, revealing and resolving conflicts of perspectives, setting discrepancies between reality and possibility, setting discrepancies between the social (i.e., status, assertiveness) and the human in order to come to terms with something else — the universal statements (abstractions) or possibly the Truth for Aristotle (this function can be revealed more clearly when we realize how highly symbolic art is formed in order to invite us to wonder the "sublime"; i.e. the function of Byzantine Icons). This act is further induced by the kommos — lyric intervals that set the ethical quality (the moral tone in an impersonal abstract manner) — performed by the chorus.

In this sense it could be said then, that by means of affectivity/expressivity in the communicative/experiential mode, the imagination of events and other people's mental or emotional states can result in embodied self-implicating real emotion (imagined fear is ours and hot, and needs motivational control). Meanwhile, the intensity of any R-emotions (emotional responses to the represented elements of the artifact) in the tragedy's experience, is a function of the imagined possibility that it opens up to the beholder (Tan, 2000) as he becomes an integrated part of the system; where the unfolding of action structures the experience and treats the mind attentionally and intentionally so as to enable the perspectival self and the directionality of experience to come to the fore. Within this unfolding, imaginative acts needs not only be conceived as "as if" conscious symbolic transformations of objects performed at the course of "analytic" stage; we also need to take into account the protometaphorical abilities ("anticipatory action patterns" and "as if loops" of co-ordinated action that emerge in the course of pre-analytic level grounded in the ability to perceive likeness across domains, integrate sensory and affective experiences and form relational concepts; see before on mimesis). This requirement, in our view is set by Aristotle when realizing that he embarks to speak about the genesis of Tragedies, offering an evolved account of mimesis so as to constitute praxis—a complete-in-itself-action—that rolls back to the genesis of the dramatic arts—to the emergence of self-consciousness. For such a possibility to be fulfilled, as already said, any imitative act needs to be embodied. Meanwhile, this backward exegesis of the emergence of Tragedies implicates that the negative emotions, of fear and pity, are used by Aristotle as generic terms for conscious experience (subjective reality) of the type of the affordances they entail. Thus, we can say that in Poetics, mimesis as an embodied imaginative act—expressive enactment could be seen then as a condition for empathy. Feelings and emotional experiences according to this approach can be the "formative vehicle", being a mode of the spectator's ability to achieve "affective tuning" which is modulated by kinaesthetic feedback between him/her and the other/aesthetic object. This corresponds to a mode of "feeling into" the (aesthetic) object/other, so that engaging in the world of tragedy puts the depth of a spectator's sense of self into question (from the ground to the figure).

Towards an understanding of the second case of "philanthropon" mentioned by Aristotle (1456a26): Empathic affects, empathic morality, and abstract principles of justice

Hoffmann's suggestions about the development of empathy, which traces its path from the primitive circular responses of an infant's emotional contagion to principles of relativistic moral judgments (Hoffmann, 1990), illustrates the reciprocal organizing role of empathic processes: a feeling of our own distress and a wish to elevate it (empathic distress) and a feeling of concern that is other-centered and a wish to help. He writes:

> *"If the context indicates that there is a vast discrepancy between the victim's plight and his/her general conduct or character, this may affect one's empathic response; ... if the victim is viewed as basically good, one might view his/her fate as undeserved or unfair. In such cases, empathy is intensified and the quality of the resulting feeling may also have the quality of a sense of injustice, including a motivational disposition to right the wrong — so that it could be said that empathic distress may be transformed by the lack of reciprocity (cognitive processing) between the character and the outcome into a feeling of injustice" (p. 159).*

Within this line of reasoning, empathic affects and feelings of guilt tend to motivate moral behavior. Findings also suggest that empathic affects can be aroused by mental representations of another's sufferings that are mediated by role-taking and by language, and that when abstract moral issues, like killing your father, come to mind they may operate as stimuli that prime the representation of victims, thereby transforming the abstract issue into an empathy-relevant one, so that empathy may make a contribution to moral judgment and moral order (Hoffmann, 1987). This possibility for Hoffmann (1990) looks plausible if the situational cues that constrain empathy are restricted, since empathic morality has limitations. He writes:

> *"Empathy may be subject to a bias that favors victims who are familiar over victims who are strangers; also extremely salient distress cues may become so intolerable that one's empathic concern is transformed into an intense personal feeling of distress and one shifts from empathic concern for the victim (hero in our case) to direct preoccupation with one's own self-implications" (p. 163).*

In this sense, empathy may be too weak to motivate moral action or too intense to move out of the empathic mode entirely. This bias may be minimized when empathic affects are embedded in a context that constrains self-interest, and this happens especially when situations involve conflicting moral claims (Hoffmann, 1990). This context can be that of the communicative/expressive mode where the experiential quality of our engagement enables the embodiment of multiple I-positions (sympathetic or metaphorical identification) that are conflicting with each other. Given that the possibility of personal identification is minimized in tragedies, the conflicting multiplicity of our I-embodied relational positions formed through sympathetic identification constrains self-concerns while being self-implicating. That is, the expressive enactment of multi others that face tragic dilemmas and the unbearable conflicting outcome of the unfolding myth increase the degree of complexity and uncertainty which, in turn, induce an increase in arousal and negativity. In this case, a distancing mechanism is activated enabling the formation of reflective evaluative appraisal related to the consequences of the actions as well as to self-focused emotion thoughts mediated by "as if" role-taking ("as if" we were in one or the other position). Depending on the degree of uncertainty, imagined fear for us, in the "as if" possibility, is generated. That is, given the embodied nature of fear which fosters affectivity and self-focus, self-regulative emotion thoughts forming "as if" corrective transformations of the unfolding action are formed while the pervasive feeling of shared understanding and compassion deepens. So that imaginative emotion reflective thoughts of what should have been done or how we should cope with being in this or in that position are generated. Thus, by means of affectivity, a shift from the local to features (I-relational positions) to their joint meaning is forced—to the possibility of empathic morality—to the deep structure of feeling (interrelatedness) and human intentionality which goes beyond how the world seems. This is a meaning constructive process.

Thus, in this case, the veil of ignorance (no one knows his or her place in a relevant imagined action), although it seems so different in nature, because of the extreme uncertainty and the importance of choice in relations to its serious implications, functions in a complementary manner with empathy. They both constrain self-interest (Hoffmann, 1990). So that we can say that the veil of ignorance may be necessary for deriving abstract moral principles; empathy may be necessary to provide the internal motivational basis for acting in accordance with these principles (Hoffman, 1990, p. 167). It could be said, then, that the act of imagination — role taking, being embodied and resulting in empathy illustrates the process in which the task of choosing abstract justice principles may be transformed into an empathy relevant task — a cognitive-affective-motivational package — by imagining the consequences for others (Hoffman, 1990, p. 168). It follows then, that embodied acts of imagination that induce empathic emotions and thinking of moral principles, as in the case of tragedies, may produce abstract statements of "Katholou" (a principle) having the motivational and stabilizing properties of a "hot cognition".

In our view, these abstract moral principles as related to Aristotle's accounts are not related to revealing what is morally good or bad—they mostly rely on a revealed sense and a deep understanding of human vulnerability and the understanding of the interdependence of human nature where "choice" is always embedded and relational (in such a case the "autonomy" of the self and the option of "free will" are deeply challenged; see also Averill, 2001; Carroll, 1998).

Conclusions

In this sense, it could be said that tragedy is a praxial-in-structure synthesis of the interactions of people in their predicaments so that the deep structure of selfhood and social interaction becomes clearer, since we do not only experience the emotions and hence the urgency of the human vicissitudes (incidents) and dilemmas-conflicts that cause them, but we are enabled to reflect on them in such a way as to create deeper level abstractions of ourselves and others.

Aristotle initiates the act of imagination in tragedies through two emotional background layers—positive affect and an attitudinal force to learn, while setting the conditions for the mimesis of praxis as an embodied act of imagination in such a way that it doesn't become an end in itself. This mechanism (seen also as a "proto-functional" motivational mode) provides a scaffolding for the propositional more sophisticated cognitive elaboration that tragedy affords. This type of reasoning can be further extended if we come to see what is "special" about pity and fear. Tragedy, then, is for negative empathic affects that can function, if conditioned as in the case of Aristotle, as motivators for moral action and authenticity, revealing a sort of moral ordering or catharsis (Averill, 2001). Thus, negative affect in the case of art can become a condition of experiential learning and empathy, of productive imagination and creativity wherein we face the novel with sharpness and tolerance of diversity, the uncertain or complex with suspension and exploratory behaviour and meaning search, and the dreadful with a feeling of awe and deep understanding. This, on the one hand, stretches the possibility of being responsive to another person's negative emotional state (empathic involvement); while on the other hand, the active fusion of the self and the other (which is further stressed because we deal with negative emotions), and the shaping of our experience in the pursuit of knowledge by means of affectivity/expressivity creates a shift from the local features to their joint meaning—to the possibility of empathic morality. This is a condition of "hot-embodied cognition" with stabilizing effect properties over time (Hoffman, 1990) which facilitates cultural and emotional innovation and creativity (Averill, 2000).

If such a case holds meaningfulness, in fact instead of simulated emotion experiences in make-believe games (neither option is considered to be the necessary and sufficient condition to explain the range of emotion experiences in tragedy), we experience an intensification of the emotions involved, and a complex variation of other related emotion experiences entailed in the perceptual experience of engaging with fiction (Tragedies are profoundly symbolic, representing abstract concepts). To this extent, in our view, nothing is peculiar or paradox in fictional engagement apart from being very complex—this is akin to, but more complex than, polyphonic music—very fragile and dependant on the way works of art include cues that sustain such optimal experiences.

Tragic pleasure, then, is this sui generis experience of delight, viewed as an intentional state aimed at the emotions of fear and pity as its intentional objects that may explain how negative emotions can be objects of pleasure when they present themselves as objects of the aesthetic encounter, yielding what is often termed "hot embodied cognition". By this analysis, the proper tragic pleasure is a metaemotion — a delightful feeling of a revealed ordering that comes from the clear apprehension of the symbolic forms implicit in ordinary emotional experience (see also Shweder & Haidt, 2000) . Thus, a transcendent form that had previously been hidden from consciousness, it has been organized. This is also suggestive of a parallel type of analysis of empathy. Empathy may be viewed as a metaemotion motivated by its own characteristic source of enjoyment or pleasure which makes it possible to be responsive to another person's negative emotional state such as sorrow or guilt. In this sense, empathic feelings are not the same as the direct experience of guilt or sorrow. Instead, it is a dignifying experience precisely because, as a witness to someone else's emotional experience, one is transported out of oneself. Hence, empathy is also a metaemotion, but of a middle case. It is less detached than the experience of catharsis, yet it is more detached than the experience of the basic emotion itself. Thus, catharsis is a sui generic form of consciousness that comes from witnessing the transcendental or impersonal narrative forms that are imminent in the most deeply rooted modes of human experience—the generic symbolic structure of moral ordering that lends shape and meaning to social interaction.

As a final point, I have to admit however, that nowadays in our rather individualistic society empathic morality may have to be counted, as Hoffmann (1990) says, as a fragile morality. An alternative suggestion stressing the culturally revealing character of our accounts in relation to the emotional nature of human beings could be then that tragedies or art in general refine, amplify, stretch and ultimately transform emotions, challenging the novel, as Averill (2001) claims instead of the authentic. However, for Hoffmann (1990), though fragile, empathic morality remains important in society because there are no more powerful alternatives known yet. These two possibilities then form the ground for the universally appealing, yet culturally revealing character of all accounts about what is basic to our emotional nature. So that, we can still say that the richness of the experience of tragedies itself offers a model for the highest forms of organization in matter and consciousness, which facilitates cultural innovation and restructures society in crucial matters of life.

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