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Introduction

Two brothers combat each other at the gates of Theben. Eteokles and Polyneikes, the sons of Oedipus, former king of Theben, murder each other in the struggle for the sole reign of the city. Kreon, consequently the new ruler of Theben, orders to leave Polyneikes, the attacker, unburied to be torn apart by wild animals. Polyneikes' sister Antigone disobeys Kreon's verdict and buries the corpse. Kreon sentences her to death, even though she is his niece and his son's fiancé. Antigone is buried alive, Kreon ultimately regrets his cruelty, but comes too late to reverse his decisions. Antigone dies, Kreon's son dies, Kreon's wife dies, the tyrant is left behind with almost nothing and the tragedy is perfect. This is a short summary of the incidents reported in the tragedy *Antigone* of Sophocles.

The incident of Antigone's death is one of the paramount moments of Greek tragedy. In the course of centuries, scholars have paid tribute to the *beauty* of the play *Antigone*, G. W. F. Hegel has even referred to it as the most beautiful of all (see Hegel 1986). I myself have studied and most of all received the play over and over again. But when we meticulously think about the reception of such drama, particularly of the emotional aspect of it, the experience must appear somehow odd to us. How does it come that we feel so empathically towards Antigone and the other characters in spite of the awareness that these are fictional characters? Why do we deliberately ignore the fact that these incidents, occurring in front of our eyes, are untrue? Why are the emotions elicited in the course of the tragedy so life-like and intense, moving us to tears? And why do we choose to view just such horrible incidents over and over again? How does it come that we even relish the downfall of noble Antigone? And in regard of Hegel's claim, what kind of beauty do we perceive in *Antigone*? The content of the present work is determined by these questions.

This thesis is about the emotional impact of the arts. It is dedicated to the investigation of two notions which both approach the phenomenon from entirely different perspectives. These notions are Katharsis and aesthetic emotion.

About four centuries BC, Aristotle has proposed the application of Katharsis to the arts, he has characterised the notion in connection to the emotions elicited by the reception of tragedy and a certain musical play. Indeed, I consider Katharsis as a phenomenon constituting the core of aesthetic emotion.

Aesthetic emotions can be described as emotions elicited in the context of the reception of the arts. The emotion researcher Richard S. Lazarus (1991) describes them as „emotions [that] occur when we react emotionally to movies or drama, a painting, sculpture, music, a natural scene, or a religious experience.“ (see 292) The investigation of this particular kind of emotions can be considered as a current „hot topic“ in the field of the disciplines which empirically investigate the (human) mind; these are the cognitive sciences. However, these short definitions of aesthetic emotion pointed out above are actually too simplistic; it is ultimately the task of this thesis to elaborate the complexity of aesthetic emotions and to provide a detailed definition and exact explanation of the nature of the phenomenon, regarding both ancient philosophical and current scientific insights.

This thesis is driven by the conviction that the experience of the arts is on a cognitive and particularly on an emotional basis fundamentally *different* from the „mundane life“ experience. I suppose that current investigations of the cognitive sciences do not pay sufficient attention to this crucial *difference*. In the beginning of the 20th century, the philosopher Moritz Geiger (1976) wrote that contemporary psychologists ignore and neglect the fact that emotions felt in the course of a tragedy or the arts in general possess particular unique features (see 191). Geiger’s objection is still valid today and this thesis is particularly concerned with the investigation of this class of aesthetic emotions. Particularly psychological and neuroscientific approaches fail to account properly for the emotional response to the arts.

As this is one of my scientific foci, I will illustrate my claims in reference to Greek tragedies; but not exclusively. This work addresses *the arts* in general, including, for

instance, film, music and fine arts. Thus, emotions towards Antigone, but also towards the *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, towards the android Roy Batty in *Blade Runner* or towards Gregor Samsa in *Die Verwandlung* are subject of this thesis. I consider the ancient notion of Katharsis as an ancient insight that generally indicates the *difference* of this unique class of emotions and the methodological attempt of this work is to fruitfully combine the notion of Katharsis with current conceptions of aesthetic emotions. It is an attempt to bridge the old with the new, so to say, and to enrich insights of philosophy, theatre studies and philology with contemporary approaches of the cognitive sciences and vice versa. Plainly spoken, this thesis will elaborate what the ancient notion of Katharsis tells us about aesthetic emotion, and also examine what current research on aesthetic emotion tells us about Katharsis, in order to ultimately approach and explain the complexity of our emotional responses to the arts.

I have structured this thesis in two parts. The first will be fully dedicated to Katharsis, the second to current conceptions of aesthetic emotion and to the combination of these conceptions with the Aristotelian notion. Two separate introductions shall provide a further overview on the particular contents of these two parts.

Introduction to Part I

In 1857 the philologist and famous Katharsis-interpreter Jacob Bernays (1970) noted:

[...] so fragt man noch immer mit Recht, worin besteht denn aber die Katharsis? Aristoteles hat sich – diese Voraussetzung ist sicher nicht zu kühn – gewiss unter Katharsis etwas Bestimmtes, nicht Eines oder das Andere gedacht; und wenn in neuerer Zeit ‘tragische Reinigung der Leidenschaften’ in die zahlreiche Klasse ästhetischer Prachtausdrücke übergegangen ist, die jedem Gebildeten geläufig und keinem Denkenden deutlich sind, so ist dies wahrlich nicht des Stagiriten Schuld. (138)

Katharsis is indeed a complex, ambiguous notion. Already in ancient Greece the term found diverse applications, embracing meanings of plain physical cleansing of objects,

medical “purging” and “cure”, bodily “discharge”, religious “purifications” and metaphorical uses ranging from “psychological” to “spiritual” phenomena (see Halliwell 1986, 185). It was around 330 BC in Athens that Aristotle decided to apply the notion on poetry by naming the certain effect and ultimate function of Greek tragedy Katharsis (see Fuhrmann 1992, 13f & 101) . Katharsis as an aesthetic category signifies “the nature (or the result) of the emotional experience of tragedy” (see Halliwell 1986, 188), and only as aesthetic category the notion will be of relevance for this thesis.

Aristotle did not bother to exemplify the structure of Katharsis in detail. Philologist Fuhrmann most likely refers to the sole controversial paragraph in Aristotle’s *Poetics* that defines the aesthetic category of Katharsis - insufficiently - when speaking of “Stellen, deren orakelhaftem Dunkel die hartnäckigsten Auslegungskünste keinen befriedigenden Sinn haben abgewinnen können” (see 1992, 3), others claim the Katharsis-clause to be incomplete (see Girshausen 2005, 163). As a matter of fact, never before and never again in the history of poetry such meagre evidence triggered a comparable broad and heated discussion (see Mittenzwei 2001, 245); a discussion that reaches from ancient Greece to the dawn of the twenty-first century, with no conclusion in sight, tempting scholars to declare that a “confident interpretation” and “ultimate judgements” on Katharsis ought to be principally “suspended” (see Halliwell 1986, 184 & 170). Nineteenth century scholar John Morley even judges the “immense controversy” carried out in “mostly German” as a “disgrace of human intelligence, a monument of sterility” (see Lucas 1961, 35). However, this first aesthetic category of western civilisation (see Mittenzwei 2001, 245) deserves its discussions and controversies and it is one goal of this thesis to emphasise that. Concerning Katharsis, the attempt can only consist of finding a valid, but not an ultimate interpretation; furthermore, to accept that uncertainties will remain and that no interpretation will be sufficiently coherent and convincing in order to silent discordant voices. Thank you very much, Aristotle.

Katharsis has been the object of reflexion, discussion, adaptation and even transformation throughout the course of centuries. The first two chapters will provide an overview on the history and discussion of the notion of Katharsis. However, in this thesis I advocate the viewpoint that Aristotle has conceptualised Katharsis as a notion that describes the nature and structure of aesthetic emotions, signifying a difference between this special kind of emotions and their mundane counterparts. Thus, the first part of this thesis will consist of reinterpreting and establishing Katharsis as ancient insight that elucidates the nature of aesthetic emotions.

Scholars and artists have referred to Katharsis in order to describe virtually all facets of aesthetic experience. The notion has been applied and expanded to all genres of the arts and performances. Indeed, Katharsis has often been transformed, which has led to a certain arbitrariness of the concept (see Mittenzwei 2001, 245 and Girshausen 2005, 169). I interpret Katharsis as general model of aesthetic emotion. However, I do not intend to transform the notion or apply it arbitrarily in order to illustrate and support my opinions and convictions on aesthetic emotion. On the contrary, I attempt to show that by meticulously investigating and regarding ancient sources - namely the writings of Aristotle - and valid interpretations of these sources, we will come to the result that the philosopher most likely conceptualised Katharsis as universally applicable model of aesthetic emotion. The first part of this thesis is a detailed contemporary reinterpretation of the notion of Katharsis without violating its genuine sources. This reinterpretation will be solely based on evidence provided by philosophy, theatre studies and philology.

As emphasised above, an ultimate interpretation of Katharsis is out of sight. The approach of this thesis rather consists of providing a contemporary perspective that does not neglect or dismiss ancient insights, but conceives of them as being crucially relevant for current research on aesthetic emotion. Although it would be too optimistic to think of my interpretation of Katharsis as a clarification of the profound discordances on Katharsis, I am confident that the contemporary approach presented here excels at

pacifying theories that seemed to oppose each other; and that in fact can be reconciled. The first part of this thesis pursues the goal of providing an original and relevant contribution within the field of Katharsis research and to elucidate the fruitfulness of Katharsis in order to understand and investigate aesthetic emotions.

I have my scientific background in the fields of theatre- and filmstudies, the cognitive sciences and philosophy; however, I am not a philologist. I have thus to rely on translations and investigations made by philologists. One of the most influential interpretations of the notion of Katharsis has been formulated by the German philologist Wolfgang Schadewaldt. The approach to Katharsis presented here is mainly influenced by his treatise on Katharsis named *Furcht und Mitleid?* (1991). The second chapter of this thesis will consist of a review of his reading of Katharsis.

Schadewaldt's article and many other philological writings did not find English translators, as classical philology is anyway mainly conducted in German language. I will proceed as follows: quotes in German will not be translated, I will rather assume a certain knowledge of the German tongue. However, even without understanding some of the quoted paragraphs, it will be possible to follow the argumentation.

The final chapter of the first part of this thesis will be dedicated to the Greek god Dionysos. Dionysos is not only the "giver of wine", but also the god of tragedy. I consider it fruitful and even necessary to refer to his deity in order to fully comprehend the conception of Katharsis in the context of tragedy. This approach however seems to be novel.

Keeping up current trends in science, I will lay out specific research questions for the first part of this thesis:

What is Katharsis? Which interpretations are to be dismissed and respectively approved?

What has Katharsis to do with Dionysos?

What is the meaning of Katharsis in relation to aesthetic emotion?

Introduction to Part II

The second part of this thesis is dedicated to the investigation of the notion of aesthetic emotion from the perspective of current cognitive sciences. Aesthetic emotions are approached from various perspectives of science. The first two chapters of this second part present an overview on the two research fields that are crucial to investigate this particular class of emotions, namely Aesthetics and emotion research. The first will be introduced as an interdisciplinary research project, bringing together contributions of philosophy, psychology and recently also neuroscience and evolutionary biology. For the second, we will take a closer look at a cutting-edge approach of psychology: Appraisal Theory of Emotion can be considered as child of the cognitive turn in science and appears to be the most reasonable and adequate approach to the investigation of emotions. The presumptions of Appraisal Theory moreover facilitate an integration of the notion of Katharsis, as will be shown in the last chapter. Besides the focus on psychological approaches, also neuro-scientific evidence shall be regarded throughout this second part when speaking of emotions.

The last and quite extensive chapter of this second part will review what contemporary cognitive sciences in particular have to say about aesthetic emotions and aesthetic experience in general. I will argue that the diverse and sometimes contradictory approaches to aesthetic emotions conducted particularly by appraisal theorists lack clear conceptions and that Katharsis might provide a fruitful and crucial complementation in this regard. Moreover, Katharsis itself shall be further investigated, this time by means of the cognitive sciences. We will see if the philosophical complexity of the aesthetic notion can be matched in paradigms of contemporary empirical sciences. So far I described aesthetic emotions simply as emotions aroused in the recipient of a piece of art. I will illustrate the shortfalls of such definition in order to account for the entire range of

emotional responses to the arts. Ultimately, a *model of emotional responses to the arts* shall be proposed here, including a detailed explanation of aesthetic emotion, which essentially regards what Aristotle has understood and pointed out in regard of Katharsis. This model is thus both constituted by the insights of current cognitive sciences and the ancient insight of Aristotle.

The research questions addressed in the second part of this thesis can be put as follows:

What is the meaning of aesthetic emotion? Where are the weaknesses of current conceptions?

How can Katharsis complement current conceptions of aesthetic emotion?

How can we conceive Katharsis in the context of the cognitive sciences?

How can we sufficiently account for the emotional responses to the arts?

It is a current viewpoint that any adequate study of aesthetic experience can only be conducted in an interdisciplinary manner (see Allesch 2006, 140). I consider this thesis as an ardent attempt to pay tribute to this opinion. I close this introduction with an accurate quote of the literary scholar Lisa Zunshine (2006), who writes:

I do not share the feelings (be they hopes or fears) of those literary critics who believe that cognitive approaches necessarily invalidate insights of more traditional schools of thought. I think that it is a sign of *strength* in a cognitive approach when it turns out to be highly compatible with well-thought-through literary criticism, and I eagerly seize on the instances of such compatibility. (see 5)

PART I

1. Aristotle's Katharsis

1.1. The *Poetics*

In the sixth chapter of the *Poetics* Aristotle abruptly names Katharsis as the proper emotional effect on the recipient of Greek tragedy, primarily in theatre, and - under the condition that the play is composed well - also when reading such a play. Aristotle does not again refer to Katharsis in the course of the 26 chapters of his treatise on poetry. The *Poetics* is mainly devoted to Greek tragedy and partially to the epic; the latter also described as potentially having a kathartic effect. A sole, short entry in the *Poetics* and some remarks in another work of Aristotle, the *Politics*, are the only ancient references for the notion of Katharsis as aesthetic category.

The *Politics* is a collection of Aristotelian remarks concerning matters of political philosophy or political science. Its main subject is the organisation of the Polis, the city-state, and its Greek society. In the eighth book of the *Politics* Aristotle mentions Katharsis in connection to the play of the Aulos (a two piped flute), elaborating the purpose of music for society. This remark in the *Politics* serves as fundamental argument for a main stream of interpretation on the aesthetic concept, including the specific interpretation advocated in this thesis, which will be discussed in detail further down.

It is important to note that not only the Katharsis-clause, but the whole *Poetics* seems to be full of “Unzulänglichkeiten und Unstimmigkeiten”, as philologist Manfred Fuhrmann (1992) puts it (see 1). Fuhrmann further explains that these weaknesses are most likely rooted in the fact that the treatise is an “esoteric” text, a script that was meant for a small audience. The *Poetics* was probably written and amended in the course of several years, approximately around 330 BC (see Fuhrmann 1992, 13f). Aristotle is the author of several other works of literary criticism which are unfortunately lost. Most importantly

to mention is the supposed “second book” of the *Poetics*, a monograph on comedy. Its loss makes Aristotle’s treatise on drama profoundly incomplete and most likely also his theory of Katharsis. This asymmetry of transmission shifts our general view of Greek drama on tragic darkness and Olympic pessimism, as a comparable philological and philosophical substantiated investigation appears impossible in the context of Greek comedy.

According to Fuhrmann (1992), the *Poetics* is - despite its weaknesses - a germane description of tragedy, a comprehensible system of sufficient completeness. There is no reason to doubt that it is in fact Aristotelian. (see 4) The treatise elaborates meticulously structure and quality of the proper tragedy. It describes the nature of actions shown and how these actions are supposed to be put together; it says that the actions presented are an imitation (Mimesis); further, of what kind the depicted characters are: better than we are, but still committing a guiltful mistake that leads to their downfall (Hamartia); it defines tragedy and moreover invents dramaturgical notions such as Peripeteia and Anagnorisis, which describe the collapse of fortune to misfortune or vice versa; and finally it sets out Katharsis as the ultimate function and goal of tragedy. The *Poetics* has to be considered as a fundamental treatise on dramaturgy that did not forfeit its validity; the basic structure elaborated by Aristotle still finds application in many contemporary works of theatre and film.

However, the treatise does not regard cultic, religious and political dimensions of Greek tragedy, nor the fact that theatre those days was a matter of competition in the context of feasts to the honor of the god Dionysos (see Flashar 2004, 57 and Flashar 2000, 188f) and it consequently ignores matters of theatre practice. The *Poetics* is a work devoted purely to aesthetics. This instance is crucial for the theory of Katharsis too.

The *Poetics*’ purpose was not to provide a handbook for poets. In fact, it is a descriptive work that refers to the tragedies of the fifth century BC, especially those of the three

great tragic poets Aischylos, Sophocles and Euripides. These tragedies already had the status of classics in the fourth century and were frequently performed in the Theatre of Dionysos at the foot of the Acropolis. Philologist Flashar (2004) outlines that Aristotle's work of literary criticism holds an outstanding position in the investigation of tragedy: not only it was written in an age when Greek tragedies had been written and performed, it also had as its concrete reference the whole corpus of tragedies of the fifth century, whereas today only eight percent of this corpus are left. Moreover, there is no intervention of modern thought, no danger of misinterpreting Greek tragedy by misinterpreting the context of theatre then. (see 43) The *Poetics* holds a unique, paramount position when investigating Greek tragedy and its aesthetic conceptions. It is hence a pity that Aristotle did not write more on other aspects of theatre too, but retreated solely to aesthetic matters.

Despite its validity and importance, the *Poetics* fails. It fails, as it seems that every work of literary criticism, every attempt to systematise a certain genre of the arts, is doomed to fail. Indeed, only one transmitted tragedy sufficiently fulfills all the Aristotelian criteria that constitute the proper tragedy. This tragedy is *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles. All other tragedies - also the then classics of the heydays of Greek tragedy - "violate" rules set up by Aristotle. However, as mentioned above, the treatise is not normative but descriptive. It appears that tragedy is somehow indefinite in variety and shape and that the *Poetics* as an attempt to describe and systematise this genre of poetry has its fundamental shortcomings. I principally consider it to be an overexertion to put Greek tragedy or any genre of the arts into an exact scheme. It is somehow *tragic* with such approaches in a Hegelian sense: rightfully advocating the one, they simultaneously violate the other work. Anyhow, I suppose that we can define the constitutive essentials of particular genres of the arts and it seems that the *Poetics* succeeds in doing so. Flashar (2004) declares the proper policy to deal with the *Poetics* as then again indisputable essential source for the examination of Greek poetry:

Das Zeugnis des Aristoteles sollte man weder verwerfen noch sich ihm unterwerfen. (57)

1.2. Interpretations of a Controversial Notion

Die Tragödie ist Nachahmung einer guten und in sich geschlossenen Handlung von bestimmter Größe, in anziehend geformter Sprache, wobei diese formenden Mittel in den einzelnen Abschnitten je verschieden angewandt werden - Nachahmung von Handelnden und nicht durch Bericht, *die Jammer und Schaudern hervorruft und hierdurch eine Reinigung von derartigen Erregungszuständen bewirkt.* [italic mine] (Aristotle 1982, 19)

The last part of the quote above consists of the famous Katharsis clause: “[Nachahmung], die Jammer und Schaudern hervorruft und hierdurch eine Reinigung von derartigen Erregungszuständen bewirkt” ; in english: “[imitation] through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions.” (see Aristotle 1997, 10) It is the short last part of this clause that entailed a history of the notion of Katharsis that is one of continuous discordance and conflict and of refutation and advocacy of different approaches to the notion of Katharsis. Moreover, the countless viewpoints do not appear in chronological order; rather, the continuous published treatises and remarks on Aristotle’s Katharsis do oscillate between a set of perspectives on the aesthetic category that generally seems to expand. To make matters worse, aspects of interpretations that seemed to exclude each other are combined and reconciled, so that new interpretations emerge. Predominant views on Katharsis are rotatory and at the current moment scholars respectively refute fundamentally discordant interpretations.

When examined accurately, it appears that the German and English translations of the original ancient Greek clause show crucial differences. This difference in translation is another consequence of the fundamental controversy on Katharsis; not only are the translations of Katharsis itself, namely “Reinigung” and “purgation”, semantically different, but also the emotions intertwined with the aesthetic concept are interpreted differently: “Jammer” is not “pity” and “Schauder” is not “fear”, although both pairs of terms show certain affinities and are at least not contradictory. The original Greek term

for the first is “Eleos” and for the latter “Phobos”. I please to keep in mind the German and English translations as mediations for a rough but sufficient understanding of the notions, until I shall bring clarity into the matter of translating Katharsis and its emotions further down.

As mentioned above, the main streams of interpretations on Katharsis do not occur in chronological order. Moreover, they are often intertwined and overlapping each other. It appears to be a complicated matter to depict a history of the aesthetic category. A chronology seems to be an inappropriate approach; rather, a categorisation of the main streams of thought will do better to comprehend the challenging discussion on Katharsis.

Two basic approaches to the notion of Katharsis can be identified in principal (see Singal 1977, 50 and Fuhrmann 1992, 101f): the first emphasises the ethical aspect of the notion, sometimes connected to religious ideas. Katharsis in this context mainly refers to “purification”. Its emotions Eleos and Phobos are somehow converted towards virtuous ends in the course of the aesthetic experience. The second approach emphasises the medical aspect. Katharsis is thus more likely associated with the healthy “outlet” and cure of its emotions. Hence, Katharsis becomes a category of pathology. However, this outline of principle movements is too rough, though communicating basic approaches to the notion of Katharsis.

According to Fuhrmann, the ethical approach dominated until the 19th century and was then detached by the medical (see 1992, 101f). However, I do not have the impression that medical theories predominate the field at the current time. To illustrate this claim, we will have to look at more elaborate categorisations of the different interpretations of Katharsis. Philologist Halliwell offers a comprehensible overview on the different streams of interpretation as an appendix to his book *Aristotle’s Poetics* (1992, 350-356). He initially remarks that he cannot “deal with all the nuances of individual treatments” and states that interpreters of Katharsis tend to “mix elements”. Anyhow, his categorisation

is sufficient to draw a picture of the immense amount of interpretations that Aristotle's Katharsis clause entailed continuously until the 21st century. I will mainly refer Halliwell's categorisation in the following overview, but consider it only as a scaffolding that will demand further adaptation and complementation. I will list the different streams by the relevance and likeliness I ascribe to them, starting with the most distant and unlikely (in contrast to the approach advocated here). All of these interpretations have their foundation and eligibility within the ancient source of Aristotle - some more, some less arguable.

The first school of thought to mention is what Halliwell calls the DRAMATIC or STRUCTURAL, sometimes also referred to as an "aesthetic" approach to Katharsis (see Gründer 1970, VI). Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was one of its most famous proponents, claiming that Katharsis does not refer to an effect on the audience, but describes the dramaturgical conciliation ("aussöhnende Abrundung") of events steeped in Eleos and Phobos (see Goethe 1833, 17). Katharsis is the proper end of the tragedy *in respect of the content* or, in another structural interpretation, the purification of the plot itself (see Golden 1991, 391). "Aristoteles, der das Vollkommenste vor sich hatte, soll an den Effect gedacht haben! welch ein Jammer!" wrote Goethe regarding the notion of Katharsis as effect on the recipient of tragedy (see Mittenzwei 2001, 256). According to this and related perspectives, Katharsis becomes a structural element of the diegesis, an instruction of how a tragedy's end is ought to look like. By diegesis I mean "the (fictional) world in which the situations and events narrated occur" (see Prince 2003).

Advocates of INTELLECTUAL interpretations maintain that Katharsis is basically a process of reasoning and of intellectual insight. In his 1976 text Leon Golden translates Katharsis as "intellectual clarification" and argues that it is the mimetic nature of theatre that triggers an "intellectually pleasant learning process". In terms of Greek tragedy, this learning process is Katharsis (see Golden 1991). As Halliwell (1986) describes it, Golden uses Katharsis synonymously with "the cognitive experience of mimesis" (see 355). In

this context the aesthetic notion is not understood as emotional experience, but as insight that instructs the audience in terms of truth.

The MORALISTIC or DIDACTIC view on Katharsis claims the notion's purpose to be a "curb" of "passions" that in mundane life would lead to "suffering and tragedy". Providing examples and counter-examples, the audience is taught which emotions are appropriate and which are not. Mainly curbed are not Eleos and Phobos, as especially "fear" is supposed to be the principal virtuous teacher for the audience, but other emotions such as "anger, hate, envy, ambition." These and related perspectives on Katharsis were mainly advocated in the period of neo-classicism, advocates, for instance, were Pierre Corneille and John Dryden. (see Halliwell 1986, 351)

The theory of EMOTIONAL FORTITUDE regards the aesthetic category as a "preparation for life", as it confronts the recipients of a tragedy with intensive feelings of suffering in a harmless, playful environment. Therefore, our fearful and pitiful reactions to events of mundane life that resemble the catastrophies presented in a tragedy will be diminished; Greek tragedy makes us tougher. The Greek comic poet Timocles, Marcus Aurelius and several others, especially in the Renaissance, advocated this opinion. (see Halliwell 1986, 351f)

In the height of the eighteenth century Gotthold Ephraim Lessing not only wrote and staged plays of theatre, he also theorised on the ethical purpose of theatre in the age of bourgeoisie. In his treatise the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* he clearly lines out his opinion on the purpose of poetry:

Bessern sollen uns alle Gattungen der Poesie; es ist kläglich, wenn man dieses erst beweisen muß; noch kläglich ist es, wenn es Dichter gibt, die selbst daran zweifeln. Aber alle Gattungen können nicht bessern; wenigstens nicht jedes so vollkommen, wie das andere; was aber jede am vollkommensten bessern kann, worin es ihr keine andere Gattung gleich tun vermag, das allein ist ihre eigentliche Bestimmung. (Lessing 1981, 397)

In fact, Lessing viewed theatre as a place to train and shape our sentiments towards what he calls “virtuous dispositions”. Lessing localised the core function of theatre in its moral message. The quotation above points out this opinion. Thus, Katharsis had to be interpreted in terms of these assumptions. Lessing is the principal advocator of the translation of Eleos and Phobos as “Furcht” and “Mitleid” or “pity” and “fear”. His motive for choosing this pair of terms is not self-evident at all, as, for instance, in the age of Renaissance scholars rather used “terror”, “horror” or “pavor” to refer to Phobos (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 246). It has been elaborated that Lessing’s translation of the emotions of Katharsis had motives rooted in the Christian attitude of the poet: Phobos as “Furcht” fulfills the purpose of under accentuating its role; in fact, Lessing considered “Furcht” only as supportive means to communicate the principal emotion that was supposed to be attuned into a virtuous disposition: “Mitleid”. In the context of Lessing’s use of the notion, it indicates nothing less than the Christian virtue of universal philanthropy. “Mitleid” refers to an “Universalsinn der Menschenliebe”; (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 247-253) “Der mitleidigste Mensch”, Lessing once wrote, “ist der beste Mensch” (see Mittenzwei 2001, 251).

In such view Katharsis is the means to cultivate the particular virtue of “Mitleid” or pity, it is “an education and training of our sensibilities” (see Singal 1977, 54). The notion is therefore shifted entirely into the sphere of ethics. According to Lessing, Katharsis means “Reinigung”, a process of cleansing; or I would rather say a *polishing* of emotions that would wither or sprawl otherwise.

The interpretation of Lessing has to be considered as one of the most influential until the current today. Halliwell refers to it as a MODERATION theory of Katharsis. He and his colleague Manfred Fuhrmann, both famous and highly influential philologists of the twentieth century, advocate related ideas. (Thence I do not see a predominance of “medical” to “ethical” approaches.) Halliwell (1986) describes Katharsis as a type of psychological homoeopathy, indicating the principle of “the arousal of the emotions to

change the emotions”, so that these become balanced, “better attuned to reality” and ultimately shaped “towards virtue” (see 194 and 197). Halliwell (1986) writes:

I have therefore concluded with a minority of modern interpreters, that tragic *katharsis* in some way conduces to an ethical alignment between the emotions and the reason: because tragedy arouses pity and fear by appropriate means, it [...] tends to harmonise them with our perceptions and judgements of the world. (200f)

Fuhrmann, on the other hand, even attempts to interpret Katharsis in accord with cognitive, ethical and emotional aspects of tragedy, as he states that the reception of a Greek tragedy demands intellectual, emotional and ethical reactions. Katharsis hence embraces the entire scope of meaningful reactions to tragedy. In consent with Halliwell Fuhrmann (1992) views the aesthetic category as emotional attunement, however, he also shows affinities to INTELLECTUAL perspectives, when writing:

Die tragische Katharsis ist [...] an bestimmte geistige Voraussetzungen gebunden, und man darf annehmen, daß sie eben diese Voraussetzungen bekräftigen soll: sie ‘reinigt’ den Zuschauer, indem sie ihm die Grenzen und die Gefährdung menschlicher Existenz vor Augen führt und indem sie ihn auf diese Weise zur Selbsterkenntnis nötigt. (110)

MODERATION theories of Katharsis particularly take the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle as further evidence into account, where Eleos and Phobos are described in the context of achieving moral virtue by aiming at a mean between excess and deficiency. The basis of MODERATION theories is this principle of virtue through balance. The strong focus on this moral aspect led nineteenth century philologist Jacob Bernays, the main advocator of the next school of thought, to the devaluing conclusion that Lessing’s and related perspectives attempt to establish theatre as a “moralisches Correctionshaus” (see Bernays 1970, 4). About a century later Halliwell (1986) would reply to this statement that on the other hand Bernay’s attempt was to turn the “moral house of correction” into a “psychiatric clinic” (see 197f).

In the 1857 article *Grundzüge der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über Wirkung der Tragödie* Bernays (1970) presents a fundamentally new interpretation of Katharsis and hence lays the foundation for a stream of interpretations that is labelled as OUTLET theories. In Bernays' words, the Katharsis-clause sounds as follows:

[...] die Tragödie bewirkt durch [Erregung von] Mitleid und ‚Furcht die erleichternde Entladung solcher [mitleidigen und furchtsamen] ‘Gemüthsaffectionen.’ (Bernays 1970, 16)

Polemising against moral interpretations of Katharsis, such as Lessing's, Bernays shifts back Katharsis to its medical and ecstatic roots when claiming that Aristotle referred to a simple outlet of an excessive amount of emotions. Bernays' position can be described as follows: an overdose of emotions derives in the course of mundane life as consequence of the suppression of appropriate responses to particular unsatisfying incidents. In theatre, these “Verklemmtheiten” are brought to a lustful relieve and thus undergo a therapy.

The foundation of Bernays' theory is on one hand to be found in the medical roots of the notion of Katharsis. The philologist argues that Aristotle as son of a medic (Nicomachus) must have had associated the term metaphorically with the medical principle of the outlet of harmful substances. On the other hand, Bernays strongly refers to the *Politics* of Aristotle. There the philosopher subscribes the effect of Katharsis to the play of the aulos. According to Aristotle, the music of this instrument excites solely the emotions of the audience and is thus not valuable as means of education. The audience hence experiences a “bacchische Verzückung” (see Aristotle 2005, 60), which clearly refers to an orgiastic state of mind. In Aristotle's view, the orgiastic emotion of ecstasy appears to be sufficient to evoke Katharsis too.

The OUTLET theory in the version of Bernays totally rejects any intellectual or moral aspect of Katharsis. The aesthetic category becomes an uncontrollable and lustful

experience which is not connected to ethical virtues. „Sollte man es glauben,” a contemporary philologist commented indignant on Bernays’ treatise, “daß eine solche Erklärung in dem Jahrhunderte Hegel’s möglich sei?” (see Mittenzwei 2001, 258). The indignation of Bernays’ contemporaries indicates the philologist’s paramount position in the interpretation of Greek culture. Indeed, he was the first to consequently oppose classical-humanistic interpretations of Greek culture in order to emphasise what is referred to as “Nachtseite des Griechentums”. Nietzsche’s *Geburt der Tragödie* is clearly set in this tradition (see Gründer 1970, XII-IX).

Halliwell states that the OUTLET theories are the “dominant modern trend” in Katharsis research. I mentioned already that I do not agree with him in this regard; many discordant interpretations stand undecided aside and particularly aspects of MODERATION theories appear to be advocated at the current time. The proposal of Bernays was anyhow of profound influence. Friedrich Nietzsche’s interpretation of Greek culture, initially presented in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, is strongly inspired by Bernays’ emphasis of the “Nachtseite des Griechentums” (see Gründer 1970, XII f and Mittenzwei 2001, 259); Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer after all named the foundation of their psychoanalysis “kathartische Methode”, describing the abreactive coping with a traumatic event by re-experiencing its affects in the course of hypnosis (see Mittenzwei 2001, 261). But most importantly the German philologist Wolfgang Schadewaldt exposes himself as heir of Bernays, as advocator of an OUTLET theory of Katharsis. I consider Schadewaldt’s approach in respect to several fundamental elements as unique and extremely important. It will thus be discussed further down in a separate chapter, following a critical discussion of the so far introduced approaches to Katharsis.

1.3. A Discussion of the Various Interpretations of Katharsis

In this section I shall first list particular objections on the respective schools of interpretations of Katharsis and then proceed with general arguments that struck or support these interpretations. Particularly the role of the *Politics* and the relevance of the consideration of Aristotle's relation to Platon will be elucidated here.

1.3.1. Particular Objections

The DRAMATIC or STRUCTURAL interpretation faces the problem that its most famous advocate, Goethe, obviously misunderstood the Katharsis clause. In his article on Katharsis, Werner Mittenzwei emphasises that the poet's knowledge of ancient Greek was sparse (see Mittenzwei 2001, 255f). Moreover, Goethe had dogmatic aesthetic ideas on theatre and his interpretation is clearly determined by these ideas. Golden (1991) objects that Katharsis becomes a minor matter in DRAMATIC interpretation, ignoring the fact that Aristotle defined the aesthetic category as a core function, as *Telos* of tragedy (see 392). Followers of such approaches do more so in obedience to Goethe than in respect of the actual evidence.

Against Golden's INTELLECTUAL interpretation of Katharsis, Halliwell (1986) brings forth that it is not adequate to set the specific pleasure of tragedy synonymous to the intellectual pleasure that derives from the perception of *mimetic* (imitated) action (see 355). However, I see larger problems and inconsistencies in Golden's argumentation. First, for any INTELLECTUAL approach, the obvious fact that Katharsis is clearly intertwined with Eleos and Phobos, with two *emotions*, has to be effectively ignored. Second and more importantly, Golden is inconsistent when on one hand raising the claim that only INTELLECTUAL interpretations can be advocated solely in reference to internal evidence of the *Poetics* and that any moral or medical approach demands to be

respectively complemented either by the *Nicomachean Ethics* or the *Politics*. Golden declares that especially the second complementation is unjustifiable (see Golden 1991, 388). It is dubious then that Golden on the other hand declares remarks on the notion of Katharsis by Epicurus, Philodemus and - last but not least - Plato as crucial support for his interpretation of the aesthetic notion as intellectual clarification (see Golden 1991, 393f). Hence, Golden exclaims as highest criteria for the validity of an interpretation of Katharsis the adherence to the *Poetics*, only to complement his argumentation with “nuances” of Plato’s interpretation of Katharsis, whose philosophical outlines were in fact frequently and intentionally opposed by Aristotle.

There are many arguments that can be brought forth against Lessing’s MODERATE interpretation of Katharsis. The main problem of the theory is its clear contamination with moral-Christian ideology. Eleos does not refer to universal philanthropy as high virtue, it has rather to be conceived of as an emotion particularly derived from Greek culture. Regarding such matters, it can be supposed that Greek thought is alien to us. Schadewaldt (1991a) lines out that the Greeks actually had notions that corresponded with the Christian notion of pity, but Eleos was none of these (see 251). It is thus hard to understand why “pity” and “fear” are still raised as adequate translations. Lessing claimed to be faithful to Aristotle, he exposed himself as scholar of the Greek philosopher. Mittenzwei (2001) states that Lessing’s purpose was only to support his personal perspectives on theatre with the high authority of Aristotle. In fact, the poet and theatre practitioner marked the beginning of what Mittenzwei calls the “nichtaristotelische Traditionslinie” of the interpretation of Katharsis (see 251).

As advocate of a MODERATE interpretation, Halliwell (1986) formulates several objections on OUTLET theories. He argues, for example, that Aristotle saw Eleos and Phobos as “natural, appropriate reactions” to certain incidents (such as depicted in tragedy) and that he would hardly have conceived of an outlet of these as desirable (see 197). Since Bernays speaks solely of an “overdose”, an extreme amount of these

emotions, the argument can be virtually invalidated. A further charge consists of the claim that ancient Greek medicine was not capable of providing the homoeopathic metaphor formulated in the Katharsis-clause. The homoeopathic principle, again, describes the process of eliciting a particular symptom to diminish or remove the very same symptom: “sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours” (see Golden 1986, 387). This notion cannot be found in the context of Greek medicine. Even though son to Nicomachus, Aristotle must thus have rather referred to ritual processes when speaking of Katharsis in such manners (see Halliwell 1986, 354).

1.3.2. General Arguments

The first two general arguments that have to be considered when interpreting Katharsis are relatively basic. Both refer to the notions of Eleos and Phobos. The first is pointed out by Schadewaldt (1991a) and simply states that Aristotle mentions the two emotions consequently on a par with each other. Fidelity to the Aristotelian sources of Katharsis hence means to account for this fact (see 266). The objection strikes MORALISTIC or DIDACTIC views, as they put more emphasis on “fear”, and Lessing’s MODERATE interpretation, as he over emphasises on the contrary “pity”. The second argument is based on the observation that the *Poetics* clearly describes Eleos and Phobos as effects on the audience. Aristotle (1982), for example, writes:

Nun kann das Schauerhafte und Jammervolle durch die Inszenierung, es kann aber auch durch die Zusammenfügung der Geschehnisse selbst bedingt sein, was das Bessere ist und den besseren Dichter zeigt. Denn die Handlung muß so zusammengefügt sein, daß jemand, der nur hört und nicht auch sieht, wie die Geschehnisse sich vollziehen, bei den Vorfällen Schauern [Phobos] und Jammer [Eleos] empfindet. (see 42f)

I consider this paragraph as sufficient to completely refute DRAMATIC or STRUCTURAL approaches to the aesthetic category; but also my first objection on Golden's INTELLECTUAL approach mentioned above finds support here, as the connection of Eleos and Phobos to Katharsis within the Katharsis-clause gives the notion at the least a strong emotional aspect; a fact, that Golden consequently neglects.

There is a number of explicitly philological arguments on the Katharsis-clause that concern questions such as: How likely is a particular translation of the paragraph on the aesthetic notion? Every translation of ancient Greek is already steeped in philological interpretation; the Katharsis-clause is an excellent example for that, as almost every interpretation brings forth an appropriate translation that suggests and supports the respective approach. It is a hermeneutic vicious circle. The Katharsis-clause is indeed ambiguous. For instance, the grammatical relation between the terms Katharsis, Eleos and Phobos can be read as *genetivus objectivus*, which would approximately mean: "Katharsis of Eleos and Phobos", supporting the notion of "polishing" these emotions. However, the relation can also be interpreted as *genetivus separativus*, which would most likely mean: "Katharsis from Eleos and Phobos", hence rather indicating an outlet or discharge of the emotions. Finally, particular translations can be rejected from a current point of view. Halliwell (1986), for instance, points out that translations necessary to argue DRAMATICAL or STRUCTURAL and INTELLECTUAL interpretations are "unjustified" (see 355f).

Even though there are certain discordances in the translation of the Katharsis-clause, it has to be regarded that Aristotle clearly describes the effect of Katharsis in reference to the homoeopathic principle. The paragraph says, in any case, that *through Eleos and Phobos effecting the proper Katharsis of/from these emotions*. Thus, an appropriate interpretation needs to consider this principle and it seems that only MORALISTIC or DIDACTIC interpretations fail to do so. (see Halliwell 1986, 351 and Fuhrmann 1992, 101f)

1.3.3. Katharsis as Intrinsic Meaning

I pointed out above that two elementary discordant traditions of interpreting Katharsis could be identified: The first claims that the notion refers to matters of ethics, the second associates it with its medical roots. It is the opposition of theatre as *school* versus theatre as *cure*, of learning processes versus deeply affective, relieving processes; or, in other words, of *day* and *night* in Greek culture. Both traditions raise charges against each other.

In his elaboration of the notion of Katharsis Fuhrmann (1992) notes that his interpretation of the aesthetic category regards cognitive, ethical and emotional aspects of the aesthetic category (see 103). Also Halliwell (1986) connects Katharsis with “emotional and ethical habituation through mimetic art” and intertwines these two aspects (see 195). The emphasis of the two ethical approaches to Katharsis implicitly charges OUTLET and medical theories to reduce the effect of tragedy on the audience to a merely affective process, ignoring the complex content of Greek tragedy. Halliwell says that Katharsis must include aspects of “conscious cognition [...] essential for the appreciation of a dramatic plot-structure” and that it can’t be “coldly cerebral” (see 1986, 194). Kurt von Fritz writes:

[...] die *katharsis* hat nicht nur eine emotionale Seite. Die Tragödie ist nach Meinung des Aristoteles auch ‘philosophischer’, d.h. zu tieferer Einsicht führend, als die Geschichte [for an explanation of the relation between “Tragödie” and “Geschichte” see the quote of Aristotle below]. Ihre Erkenntnisfunktion ist also ebenso wichtig wie ihre emotionale Wirkung. Beide sind in Wirklichkeit voneinander untrennbar. (von Fritz 1962, XXVI)

The general claim is that Katharsis as the core function of tragedy has to contain political, religious or at least ethical dimensions of theatre. Accordingly, we could set up a spectrum on which INTELLECTUAL interpretations form one end, as they completely *neglect* emotional aspects of the aesthetic category, and OUTLET theories form the other, as they *emphasise* the affective-bodily effect of tragedy on the audience.

In response to the charge that medical or specifically OUTLET theories of Katharsis reduce the aesthetic notion to a mere emotional process, I consider it as profoundly useful to introduce the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic meanings. David Lewis (1983) comprehensively describes what is indicated by the distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic meanings:

Some properties of things are entirely intrinsic, or internal, to the things that have them: shape, charge, internal structure. Other properties are not entirely intrinsic: being a brother, being in debt, being within three miles of Carfax, thinking of Vienna. These properties are at least partly extrinsic, or relational. Properties may be more or less extrinsic; being a brother has more of an admixture of intrinsic structure than being a sibling does, yet both are extrinsic. [...] If something has an intrinsic property, then so does any perfect duplicate of that thing; whereas duplicates situated in different surroundings will differ in their extrinsic properties. (197)

Although the notions of intrinsic and extrinsic are controversially discussed in the context of philosophy (see *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Properties*), the paragraph above sufficiently communicates what is principally meant by such distinction. In his comparative study on Katharsis and Rasa, an ancient Indian aesthetic concept, Edwin Gerow (2002) applies the notions to poetry, describing intrinsic meanings as “emotional responses” and extrinsic meanings as “social and ethical messages” reflecting “life outside the theatre”. Gerow (2002) further says:

But the status of literature as a social artifact makes inevitable that its sense will in a complex of structured ways relate to the social environment in which it arose or in which it is experienced. (265)

It is an undeniable fact that the Greek audience perceived of tragedy as having particular political, religious, etc. messages. *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles, probably staged in the year 427 BC (see Flashar 2000,104), describes the revelation of Oedipus’ severe mistake (murdering the father and marrying the mother) and the consequent commotion and hazard of Theben. Two years before Perikles fell victim to the plague, an event that

marked the dawn of Athen's glory. The *Bacchae* of Euripides has strong cultic-religious connotations, describing the downfall of Kadmos and his family as a consequence of their refusal and disobedience to the god Dionysos (mother and sister in frantic blindness ultimately tear the son into pieces and are therefore banished from the city). Though not an Olympic, Dionysos was an important god and his presence in the *Bacchae* must have had religious significance.

The extrinsic meanings of theatre can hardly be neglected, especially not those of tragedy, as its content is so complex and earnest. Even though all dimensions of theatre - intrinsic and extrinsic - are intertwined, as they must interact with each other, it is important for me to draw a conceptual line and raise the crucial question if Katharsis is concerned with extrinsic (emphasised by INTELLECTUAL approaches), intrinsic (emphasised by OUTLET approaches) or both meanings (claimed by most other interpretations). In support of MEDICAL or OUTLET theories, I will argue that Katharsis is to be considered as a concept that relates to the intrinsic, thus, the emotional meaning of a play. This does not imply a reduction of tragedy or other art forms to their aesthetic, emotional aspect, ignoring undeniable social and political implications; it only says that the notion of Katharsis is not essentially concerned with such.

Bertolt Brecht, the famous 20th century theatre practitioner, holds a unique position in the Katharsis-discourse. In his attempt to establish a political and educational theatre of intellectual clarity, he rejects the Aristotelian *Poetics* with its central notion of Katharsis. Brecht (1977) writes:

Eine völlig freie, kritische, auf rein irdische Lösungen von Schwierigkeiten bedachte Haltung des Zuschauers ist keine Basis für eine Katharsis. (69)

The second part of this thesis will elucidate what further relevant implications Brecht's claim has in the context of this thesis. In any case it seems that Brecht intended his *epic theatre* to be focused on extrinsic meanings, on concrete social and political messages.

He conceptualised a theatre that does not *affect* and hence controls the emotions of the audience, but that rather explains and thus facilitates a sober, critical perspective on the presented events. That Brecht consequently adopts an “anti-kathartic” attitude elucidates the fine understanding that he had about the notion of Katharsis. Implicitely he strongly intertwines Katharsis with the intrinsic meanings of the play. The affective impact of Katharsis, in Brecht’s opinion, obscures clear thought.

There are more crucial arguments to relate Katharsis to intrinsic meanings of tragedy. I stated above that the *Poetics* is a treatise on poetry purely devoted to aesthetic concerns, ignoring ethical, religious and political dimensions; it does not regard extrinsic properties. In Aristotle’s study Katharsis is described as the basic function of tragedy, thus, the notion has to be considered as *the core of an aesthetic description of tragedy*. This is strong evidence for relating Katharsis to intrinsic meanings. However, the most important objection on the charge formulated above and simultaneously the main argument against *any* ethical understanding of Katharsis derives from the evidence found in the *Politics*.

1.3.4. The Charge of the *Politics*

In the eighth book of the *Politics* Aristotle elaborates the role of music for education. He distinguishes between ethical, practical and ecstatic melodies and claims respective “nützliche Zwecke” for recipients. Aristotle says that ethical melodies have an educational purpose, but that practical and ecstatic melodies do not influence the attitude of character and can therefore not be used as means of learning and education. The philosopher literally calls the purpose of this second and third class “Reinigung” [Katharsis!] and “sinnerfüllte Lebensgestaltung und Entspannung und Erholung”. He further points out that the orgiastic play of the Aulos - the ancient flute, that allows no lyrical backing - is not of benefit for the intellect or mind, but solely kathartic. Katharsis in the *Politics* solely refers to the principle of exciting emotions and eliciting a “von Lust

begleitete Erleichterung”. Katharsis is the effect of orgiastic music that cannot fulfill an educational purpose, but however can serve as means of relaxation and recovery. (see Aristotle 2005, 57-60)

This is what Aristotle explicitly states in the *Politics*, which is besides the *Poetics* the only further Aristotelian source that names Katharsis. The conclusion that Bernays and his heirs formulated is as follows:

Daß Katharsis klar von dem ἡθιχόν geschieden, ergibt zunächst die schon von WEIL und dann auch von BERNAYS herangezogene Stelle [in the *Politics*] über die Verwendung der Flöte. Hier steht es klipp und klar, daß “die Flöte nicht für die Erziehung zu verwenden sei..., die Flöte ist nicht ‘ethisch’, sie ist vielmehr ‘orgiastisch’, so daß man sie bei solchen Gelegenheiten gebrauchen muß, bei denen das Zuschauen (θεωρία, im Theater nämlich) vielmehr κάθαρσις bewirkt als μάθησις.” Bereits diese Trennung der κάθαρσις von παιδεία und μάθησις ist so zwingend klar, daß man schwer begreift, wie man hundert Jahre, nachdem klar denkende Männer darauf hingewiesen haben, fortfahren kann, die musikalisch-dichterische κάθαρσις bei Aristoteles mit Ethik in Verbindung zu bringen. [italic mine] (Schadewaldt 1991a, 270)

Indeed, the question arises why the unambiguous evidence of the *Politics* did not entail a certain consensus in the interpretation of Katharsis? Why do “clear-thinking” scholars still insist on ethical perspectives of the aesthetic notion? The response to these questions is: because there are various argueable policies in dealing with the *Politics* as complementation of the Katharsis-clause in the *Poetics*. In fact, three fundamental approaches can be identified:

The first policy consists of the *complete rejection* of the *Politics* as evidence for the aesthetic notion described in the *Poetics*. Especially exponents of INTELLECTUAL approaches advocate this policy. Golden (1991) warns of “unhesitatingly” identifying the Katharsis of the *Politics* with the Katharsis of the *Poetics* as this “ represents a grave

methodological error because it fails to take into account the individuality of the works concerned and the specific contexts in which the term appears.” The author further claims “different first principles” of the *Politics* and the *Poetics* and he says that the Katharsis of the *Poetics* goes beyond the respective concept of the *Politics*. (see 388ff) This objection is basically the only one to support such policy; it is hardly sufficient to consequently justify the ignorance of this genuine Aristotelian source. Finally, I want to remind the reader again that it is Golden - he of all people - who then references “nuances” of Plato - he of all people - as valid source for an interpretation of the Aristotelian Katharsis.

The second policy consists of a partial rejection by stating a kinship, but as well a difference between the *tragic* Katharsis (*Poetics*) and the *orgiastic* Katharsis (*Politics*). The main advocate of this approach is Halliwell, Fuhrmann is to be considered as a follower in this regard. The latter outlines that indeed *tragic* and *orgiastic* Katharsis show only two similarities: they both affect specific emotions (Eleos and Phobos for the first, Enthusiasmos or ecstasy for the second) and this experience excites Hedone (pleasure) (see Fuhrmann 1992, 109). Halliwell (1986) states that their commonness consists solely of both of them being “homoeopathic psychological processes” (see 194). Consequently, the philologists adduce three main arguments for maintaining a fundamental difference.

First, the respective artistic references of *tragic* and *orgiastic* Katharsis are evaluated by Aristotle as being totally diverse: “von der Tragödie [...] heißt es,” notes Fuhrmann (1992), “daß sie die höchste Gattung der Poesie sei und daß ihre Handlungen in sittlicher Hinsicht ernstgenommen zu werden verdiene [...]” (see 109); whereas the play of the Aulos appears to have no more value than providing “unschädliche Freude” (see Aristotle 2005, 60). The play of the flute cannot match the dignity of tragedy.

Second, the *orgiastic* Katharsis’ targets are people with “excessive propensity to the emotion [...] enthusiasmos [ecstasy]”, which is a pathological extreme case. *Tragic* Katharsis, on the other hand, refers to the common emotions and virtues of Eleos and

Phobos. *Orgiastic* Katharsis refers to “abnormal emotional propensities”, *tragic* Katharsis, as essence of theatre, is for the whole audience. (see Halliwell 1986, 190 and 195)

Third, *orgiastic* Katharsis describes a “possession”, “frenzy or delirium” and is thus “incompatible with the conscious cognition which is essential for the appreciation of a dramatic plot-structure”; this conscious cognition “forms the ground of the strong affective response evoked by tragedy.” (see Halliwell 1986, 194) The underlying cognitive processes of *tragic* and *orgiastic* Katharsis are different, thus the concepts must be of different quality.

I will formulate one crucial argument in response to these three - in my opinion misleading - arguments for distinguishing between *tragic* and *orgiastic* Katharsis. Above I quoted Golden who says that the diverse contexts of the *Poetics* and the *Politics* have to be regarded. I agree with him, although I strongly doubt that Aristotle had “different first principles” in mind. However, the main concern of the *Politics* is a very practical one, namely the adequate organisation of the Polis. The arts are thus treated from a political perspective; Aristotle elaborates the question of how the arts and in particular music can be of benefit for the state. Not so in the *Poetics*, which is concerned with aesthetic matters. Again it appears to be useful to apply the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic meanings, showing that Aristotle in the *Politics* was concerned with extrinsic, whereas in the *Poetics* he focused on intrinsic matters. Schadewaldt (1991a) implicitly supports this view by writing:

Anders der Staatstheoretiker [Aristotle as author of the *Politics*]. Auch er hat über die Wirkung der Tragödie ein Wort zu sagen, doch bezieht sich dieses nicht auf jene, für die Poetik entscheidende wesenseigentümliche Wirkung der Tragödie, sondern auf ihre weitergehenden Auswirkungen im Leben des Staates, ihren Gebrauch, ihre Verwendungsmöglichkeiten. (279)

I already claimed that Katharsis relates to intrinsic meanings. However, it has to be admitted that Aristotle brought forth the aesthetic notion as relevant concept in a treatise on politics. Why has he been doing so if Katharsis is constituted by aesthetic sterility? We have to face the question that if Aristotle viewed Katharsis as an intrinsic, solely aesthetic notion, why then is he concerned about it in the *Politics*?

What seems to be, at first sight, an argument for the proposed distinction of *orgiastic* and *tragic* Katharsis, is, on the contrary, an argument against it. I claim that the remarks on Katharsis in the *Politics* have been widely misinterpreted. The aesthetic notion *itself* has been wrongly considered as meaningful to extrinsic properties when it comes to the question of the societal benefit of the arts. The remarks in the work of political philosophy can indeed serve as basis for an interpretation of Katharsis as a function of social benefit. ETHICAL interpretations of Katharsis essentially reject the relevance of the remarks in the *Politics* for a *tragic* Katharsis, however, contradictory they appear to (unconsciously) benefit crucially from these remarks by emphasising a societal, extrinsic purpose of Katharsis. Halliwell (1986), for example, intertwines the notion of education as brought up in the *Politics* with the “emotional and ethical habituation through mimetic art” (see 195). Through a back door he provides *tragic* Katharsis with an ethical purpose of the arts (which is explicitly stated as being opposed to the aesthetic category in the *Politics*!).

However, it can be argued that Aristotle did not regard Katharsis *itself* as a relevant function of social benefit, but only the consequence of an implicit quality of the kathartic experience. The philosopher says in the *Politics*:

Denn die Gemütsregung, die in einigen Seelen stark auftritt, findet sich bei allen, der Unterschied liegt (nur) in dem geringeren oder stärkeren Grad der Erregung wie (bei) jammerndem Mitleiden [Eleos] und Furcht [Phobos], außerdem (bei) Ekstase [Enthusiasmos] - denn manche sind auch von dieser Erregung leicht überwältigt und wir beobachten, dass sie unter dem Einfluss religiöser Melodien, wenn sie die die

Seele in Rausch versetzende Melodien in sich aufnehmen, zur Ruhe kommen, da sie gleichsam eine medizinische Behandlung und eine Reinigung [Katharsis] erhalten haben. Das gleiche muss auch denen widerfahren, die für jammerndes Mitleiden [Eleos], für Furcht [Phobos] oder allgemein für irgendwelche emotionale Regungen anfällig sind, und allen anderen in dem Ausmaß, in dem jeder dafür empfänglich ist: sie alle müssen eine Form von Reinigung [Katharsis] und eine von Lust begleitete Erleichterung erfahren. (Aristotle 2005, 60)

This passage serves as further clarification for several points. First, it again connects Katharsis metaphorically to its medical roots, although not identifying it with them. Second, it discharges the argument that *orgiastic* Katharsis concerns abnormal cases, as it states equal effects on recipients with susceptibilities to Enthusiasmos and to Eleos and Phobos, the latter two clearly referring to *tragic* Katharsis. Thus, either the *tragic* form of Katharsis has to be considered as pathological too, or we - as Katharsis is an essential part of a general definition of tragedy - skip the thought of pathology completely, thence for the *orgiastic* form as well.

Last but not least, the paragraph emphasises what Fuhrmann himself outlined (see above), namely that Katharsis excites Hedone, that the experience of Katharsis is a lustful experience. If we now scrutinise the *Politics* properly, we will find that Aristotle does not talk about Katharsis as an experience that is a certain beneficial effect *itself*; he only says that kathartic music serves as nothing more than “unschädliche Freude” and that this lust can indeed be beneficial to the organisation of the Polis by being entertaining and harmless. Katharsis is a relevant concept in the *Politics* because it serves as entertainment. It will be elaborated in a later section that Schadewaldt rightfully emphasises the lustful quality of Katharsis. It is solely this lustful quality of Katharsis that is relevant to the *Politics*, as it is this the consequent effect that outlasts the artistic performance in form of relaxation and recovery. Schadewaldt (1991a) writes:

Der Begriff der tragischen Wirkung ist vielschichtiger, und es ist notwendig, hier zu differenzieren. Wir haben in ihm zunächst die engere, wesensmäßige,

wesenseigentümliche, notwendige, mit dem Wesen selbst gesetzte Wirkung im eigentliche Sinne [...] festzuhalten. Diese ist zugleich wesensbestimmend und gehört so notwendig in die Definition. Sie gehört darum auch in die Poetik. Von diesem engeren Begriff der Wirkung ist aber die weitergehende Auswirkung zu scheiden und streng getrennt zu halten. Nicht in der τέχνη ποιητική ist der Ort, wo nach ihr zu fragen ist, sondern in der Politik, denn die Frage nach dieser weiteren Auswirkung konkretisiert sich in der Frage nach Gebrauch und Verwendungsmöglichkeit im Leben. Während bei jener eigentlichen Wirkung im engeren Sinne für Aristoteles Erziehung und Charakterbildung überhaupt nicht in den Blick fällt, wäre im zweiten Fall das Feld der Erziehung als Feld der Auswirkung der Tragödie denkbar. (280f)

Consequently, the *Politics* has to indicate how to respectively entertain the diverse population of the Polis and it does so by saying:

Nun besuchen aber zwei Arten von Zuschauern die Theater: die einen sind frei und gebildet, die anderen sind vulgär und bestehen aus Handwerkern, Tagelöhnern und anderen dieser Art; auch dieser Gruppe muss man zu ihrer Erholung musische Wettkämpfe und Aufführungen anbieten. Wie aber ihre Seelen von der naturgemäßen Haltung gleichsam verrenkt abweichen, so gibt es auch bei den Tonarten Abweichungsformen und es gibt Melodien voller Spannung und chromatischer Verzerrung. Allen bereitet aber das Vergnügen, was zu ihnen ihrer Natur nach passt; deswegen soll man den Künstlern, die um (die Gunst) solcher Theaterbesucher wetteifern, erlauben, Musik dieser Art zu spielen. (Aristotle 2005, 60)

The passage throws light on several matters. It formulates what Schadewaldt mentioned above, that is to say that music was performed in theatre, too. The spatial unity weakens a conceptual separation, philologist Hellmut Flashar references to his colleague Dirlmeier who says: “ ‘die Katharsis der *Politik* [ist] mit der der *Poetik* wesensmäßig identisch [...]’, da in der *Politik* der musikalischen Katharsis als Ort das Theater angewiesen ist.” (see 1991, 290) Moreover, the paragraph of Aristotle shows no attempt of establishing Katharsis or the arts in general as medical cure or ethical school. Aristotle did not seem to have a problem with the abnormalities of people “dieser Art”, he did not express the urge to change and better them. Following this line of argumentation, there is no evidence and no need left to draw a conceptual line between *orgiastic* and *tragic* Katharsis. Aristotle

clearly saw that not every citizen was entertained equally by the earnest contents of Greek tragedy or by the orgiastic play of the Aulos and he appeals to a variety of artistic entertainment; but the principle, the aesthetic experience is one, namely Katharsis.

I consider the evidence overwhelming in favour of the third and last policy of dealing with the remarks in the *Politics*, this is to identify the notion as *one unique* Katharsis; “es sei ausgeschlossen, daß ‘eine zweite, wesensmäßig anders geartete ‘tragische’ Katharsis stattgefunden habe’ “, writes Flashar (1991), referencing Dirlmeier again (see 290). Indeed, coherence within the writings of Aristotle can be presumed. Moreover, the philosopher himself refers in the *Politics* to the *Poetics* when saying:

[...] was wir unter Reinigung [Katharsis] verstehen, wollen wir jetzt ohne weitere Erklärungen, aber später in den Erörterungen über die Dichtkunst genauer darlegen [...] (Aristotle 2005, 69)

Aristotle himself explicitly states the identity of the notion of Katharsis; the initial OUTLET theory of Bernays and theories in his tradition are essentially based on this insight. I conclude that these approaches to Katharsis are the most faithful and adequate to Aristotle’s remarks. The remarks in the *Politics* read as above do strengthen the interpretation of Katharsis as a notion purely concerned with emotions and located entirely within the sphere of aesthetics.

1.3.5. Plato and the Benefit of the Arts

The relation of Aristotle to his teacher Plato and the remarks the latter made on poetry are a further factor that has to be taken into account when reading the remarks of Aristotle on Katharsis. Plato states that poetry’s only purpose is its contribution to ethical and political matters. He strictly rejects aesthetical matters, neglecting any value of the arts besides their social benefit.

Moreover, the platonic philosophy has dubious consequences on the comprehension of poetry and the arts in general: as every entity that appears to us is already a (deficient) *image* (Eidola) of a platonic idea (Eidos), poetry and the arts generally are *images* of *images* and therefore even more deficient to their original, perfected idea. The arts, in Plato's view, are principally inferior and virtually a lie. Moreover, they have a harmful effect: the lament and horror excited by poetry is intensified, the recipients rendering effeminate and becoming cowardly in war. Poetry *infects* the audience with the undesirable affects of Eleos and Phobos. (For an excellent outline of the relation between Aristotle's and Plato's view on poetry see Fuhrmann 1992, 71-76).

Aristotle's philosophical outlines oppose Plato's. His concept of Entelechias, for example, fundamentally refutes the concept of Eidola. Poetry thus cannot be perceived as deficient *image* of already deficient *images*, hence, as Mimesis of Mimesis. Aristotle considers the arts as "Nachahmung [Mimesis] erster und einziger Stufe" (see Fuhrmann 1992, 75), as reality itself and therefore provides it with a certain autonomy. The Greek philosopher even attributes poetry with unique dignity when writing:

Daher ist Dichtung etwas Philosophischeres und Ernsthafteres als Geschichtsschreibung; denn die Dichtung teilt mehr das Allgemeine, die Geschichtsschreibung hingegen das Besondere mit. (Aristotle 1982, 29)

A poet is more truthful than a historian. This is a total rejection of Plato's objection on poetry as lie. The Katharsis-clause has to be read in the context of Plato's charge on poetry. INTELLECTUAL and MORALISTIC or DIDACTIC views, for instance, do not regard this context, as related interpretations of Katharsis do not provide a response to Plato's charge. The principle of Katharsis can and is supposed to be read as concept that invalidates the charge of the arts as a medium of emotional infection (on this matter see Halliwell 1992, particularly 350-356).

Most interpretations of Katharsis consider this matter and implicate a response to Plato. Particularly ETHICAL approaches to the aesthetic category read Aristotle's remarks as complete converse of Plato's charge: Katharsis is not weakening or harming the recipients and thus the society, on the contrary, it is for the sake of both. Fuhrmann (1992) describes Aristotle's position concisely: "Dichtung, so lautet seine [Aristotle's] Lehre, steckt nicht an, sondern impft." (see 91). R. L. Singal (1977) explains in his study of Katharsis:

Aristotle's theory of catharsis is, in reply to, and a refutation of Plato's charge. Aristotle argues that emotions as such are not bad and it is not conducive to man's mental or moral health to starve and stifle the emotions. Emotions have a proper and significant role to play in life and a periodic indulgence is, in fact, desirable in order to maintain mental equilibrium. Emotions accumulated in us under the pressure of social restraints, and liable to sudden issue in unsocial and destructive action, are touched off and sluiced away in the harmless form of theatrical excitement. (52)

As "refutation of Plato's charge" the position of EMOTIONAL FORTITUDE would be the most consequent. Plato obviously considers Eleos and Phobos as negative emotions, the theory of FORTITUDE describes Katharsis simply as the effect of diminution of these sentiments. MODERATION theories, on the other hand, imply the possibility of reinforcement of Eleos and Phobos for those recipients who are emotionally deficient, aiming towards a mean. Anyhow, interpretations of MODERATION are superior to those of FORTITUDE, as they consider the fact that Aristotle did not conceive of Eleos and Phobos as essentially negative emotions.

The crucial point however is that all ETHICAL approaches see the rejection of Plato's charge in the presumption that Aristotle invented Katharsis as notion to describe a more or less lasting positive effect of theatre on its audience; Katharsis is announced as an experience that lets us leave theatre as ethically *bettered* persons. MEDICAL approaches raise a corresponding claim when stating that the lustful relieve serves as a psychological therapy. Either theatre serves as a "moral house of correction" or a "psychiatric clinic"

(see Halliwell 1986, 197f; also quoted above). The mutual polemic charges of Bernays and Halliwell clearly indicate a kinship of *all* so far presented interpretations of Katharsis: all interpretations do provide Katharsis with certain extrinsic meanings, and although OUTLET theories emphasise the emotional, intrinsic aspect the most, they are not fully consequent here.

Aristotle never explicitly provides Katharsis with such lasting effects on the human psyche. Indeed, he claims a positive effect of the arts, as he speaks in the *Politics* of the educational purpose of ethical music (in contrast to the kathartic play of the Aulos!). Also tragedy with its dignified and truthful contents is definitely conceived as such a noble art form. But the notion of Katharsis, the effect itself, is not explicitly connected to these psychological purposes; neither in the *Poetics*, nor in the *Politics*. Referencing the *Poetics*, Golden (1991) emphasises this point, however for the wrong reason and drawing wrong conclusions, attempting to establish Katharsis as an INTELLECTUAL clarification. Aristotle *never* describes Katharsis as a lasting effect and, as has been shown in the previous section, also the remarks in the *Politics* do neither serve as support for contrary claims.

Every single interpretation reviewed so far takes the bait of providing Katharsis with ethical, therapeutic or intellectual, ultimately, with extrinsic purposes. Only one interpretation persists this last temptation and introduces the notion as purely aesthetic concept, as a sole matter of aesthetic perception and experience. It is this the elaboration presented in a treatise by Wolfgang Schadewaldt named *Furcht und Mitleid?*. I claim that - in respect to all arguments lined out so far - an appropriate reinterpretation has to be built up on this particular perspective on Katharsis. As “aussöhnende Abrundung” of the present section and accommodation to the following argumentation shall serve an admittedly exaggerated quotation of Goethe (1833):

Hat nun der Dichter an seiner Stelle seine Pflicht erfüllt, einen Knoten bedeutend geknüpft und würdig gelöst, so wird dann dasselbe in dem Geiste des Zuschauers

vorgehen; die Verwicklung wird ihn verwirren, die Auflösung aufklären, er aber um nichts gebessert nach Hause gehen: er würde vielmehr, wenn er asketisch aufmerksam genug wäre, sich über sich selbst verwundern, daß er ebenso leichtsinnig als hartnäckig, ebenso heftig als schwach, ebenso liebevoll als lieblos sich wieder in seiner Wohnung findet, wie er hinausgegangen. Und so glauben wir alles, was diesen Punkt betrifft, gesagt zu haben, wenn sich schon dieses Thema durch weitere Ausführung noch mehr ins klare setzen ließe. (20)

2. The Interpretation of Katharsis in Schadewaldt's *Furcht und Mitleid?*

Das ist das Entscheidende an dieser neuen Deutung: das Durchstoßen zum Erfassen dieses tief Elementaren, das mit dem Bereich der Kunst für die Griechen gegeben war. (Schadewaldt 1991b, 22)

Wolfgang Schadewaldt (1900-1974) is to be considered as one of the most influential philologists of the twentieth century. At the age of 28, he became full professor at the University of Königsberg. In 1933 an advancement as dean of the philosophical faculty in Freiburg followed, appointed by Martin Heidegger, who had shortly before become rector of the university. First supporting the university policy of the National Socialists, Schadewaldt stepped back from the position as dean in 1934, only one year after his announcement. He was followed by several colleagues, which ultimately led to the resignation of Heidegger himself. (see Flashar 2004b) Schadewaldt then taught and conducted research at the universities of Leipzig, Berlin and Tübingen. His research focused on Greek tragedy and Homer; but he also bequeathed a remarkable collection of translations of several Greek tragedies and the homeric epics.

In 1955 Schadewaldt published *Furcht und Mitleid? Zur Deutung des aristotelischen Tragödiensatzes*, a study on the aristotelian notion of Katharsis. The study has frequently been declared as a work in the tradition of Bernays, as an additional OUTLET theory of Katharsis. However, this is only partially appropriate; crucial elements of Schadewaldt's interpretation are unique and discordant to Bernays' approach, as the philologist points out himself (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 284). Even though keeping the analogy of medical purgation, the most important difference consists of the fact that Schadewaldt shifts Katharsis into the sphere of pure aesthetics, not considering it as therapeutic "cure". Moreover, he provides a new interpretation of the tragic emotions of Eleos and Phobos.

2.1. Elementary: Eleos and Phobos

Eleos and Phobos have been central to tragic drama already before Aristotle mentioned them in his *Poetics* (see Halliwell 1986, 170). The first who spoke of this particular pair of emotions as effects of poetry and speech was the sophist Gorgias. In the fifth century BC Gorgias was known as excellent rhetorician. Gorgias stated that the power of speech would evoke affects in the audience as if listeners experienced the depicted incidents themselves and we will see in the second part of this thesis that this anticipation is from a current viewpoint absolutely striking. Plato referred to Gorgias when speaking of Eleos and Phobos as affects of poetry. But on the contrary to Gorgias, the emotions in the platonic use have a clear negative connotation. Aristotle opposed his teacher and named Eleos and Phobos as the particular emotions of Katharsis in the *Poetics*, again providing them with a positive connotation.

Several translations of Eleos and Phobos have been mentioned so far: “Mitleid und Furcht” as Lessing suggests, “pity and fear” as its valid English counterpart, “Jammer und Schauder” as a further possibility. Indeed, analogous to the notion of Katharsis, there is no consensus currently in which translation can be considered most adequate to the pair of the Greek emotions.

Schadewaldt elaborates a distinctive translation and his interpretation of the two emotions entails strong effects on the interpretation of Katharsis. The philologist also notes that any contemporary language will fail to depict an adequate translation of these alien ancient emotions (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 258). Moreover, he clearly indicates that Lessing’s highly influential translation of Eleos and Phobos as “Mitleid und Furcht” contains severe errors: it is contaminated by Christian thought and simplifies the notions; moreover, it unbalances Eleos and Phobos in favour of the first. Others, like Fuhrmann (1992) and Halliwell (1986), do not consider Lessing’s translation as inadequate, although the first explicitly prefers Schadewaldt’s translation (see 93). However, Schadewaldt suggests a translation that is completely diverse from Lessing’s “traditional” perspective.

Schadewaldt first explains the notion of Phobos. He notes that the term was used in the *Ilias* indicating a “Gescheuchtwerden”, hence referring to the movement of escape. Fuhrmann complements that the Greeks never disposed the notion of its bodily dimension, although the focus shifted to a so to speak *inner movement* (see Fuhrmann 1992, 94). However, Schadewaldt explains Phobos as a wince in face of upcoming mischief or annihilation and he decides to use a pair of German terms to approach the meaning of the Greek notion. “Schrecken und Schauder” echo, according to Schadewaldt, Phobos most adequately. “Furcht”, he says, does not regard the bodily aspect and is as translation for Phobos too broad; “Schrecken” alone would be too narrow. I suggest *horror* and *shiver* as an appropriate English translation for “Schrecken und Schauder”.

Explaining Eleos appears to be a more complicated task, although Aristotle bequeathed an exact and tidily definition of the emotion. Anyhow, it seems that the nature of Eleos is somehow of higher complexity than the nature of Phobos. In reference to the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle Schadewaldt (1991) comprehensibly describes Eleos being constituted by three elements:

1. The present threat of upcoming mischief or annihilation of a fellow man.
2. Awareness of potentially being jeopardised by the same threat.
3. The mischief or annihilation has to be „anaxios“, wich means unworthy. (see 257f)

There are positions declining the transference of the *Rhetoric* to the *Poetics*, but Halliwell “emphatically” promotes the policy of regarding the Aristotelian work as “we cannot afford to neglect the help which the latter [the *Rhetoric*] provides in the interpretation of tragic pity and fear [...]”. Anything else, Halliwell writes, would mean to “drive an unnecessary wedge into the Aristotle’s thinking.” (see 1986, 175). This remark, by the way, also holds for the matter of taking the *Politics* as valid source into account. Translating Eleos, Schadewaldt indeed takes the explanation of the *Rhetoric* into account; furthermore, he regards the broad application of the notion in ancient Greece.

In the epics of Homer Eleos is felt and conducted by heroes who witness their fellows dying. Priamos, king of Troy, begs Achill for Eleos, when the latter refuses to dispose of Hector's corpse. In the mundane practice of Greek court, not only by reason a judgement was supposed to be rendered, but also by Eleos towards the accused. When Socrates was charged, he forbade that his wife and daughter would perform embarrassing scenes of Eleos; he ultimately forbade Eleos when he was executed. Plato consequently wanted to banish poetry that elicited and reinforced Eleos. Also Aristotle considered an overexaggerated amount of Eleos as an embarrassment, but recognised the value of the emotion as well. (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 256f)

What is Eleos then? It is hardly a universal sense of philanthropy as Lessing's "Mitleid" indicates. Eleos is supposed to be felt solely for those whose agony is *undeserved*. Eleos, too, has a bodily aspect. Schadewaldt describes the notion with the terms "Rührung und Jammer", which I suggest to translate as *emotion* and *lament*. This lamentation is targeted at someone who shares a certain likeness with us, so that we can relate the undeserved agony to ourselves, or someone akin to us. Eleos, according to Schadewaldt, further means to lament about a fundamental inadequacy of the world, as it tantalises the innocent with mischief.

The interpretation of Eleos and Phobos as *emotion and lament* and *horror and shiver* has widely been recognised in German speaking regions, displacing the traditional translation of *pity* and *fear*. Two very influential philologists, Flashar (1991) and Fuhrmann (1992), approve Schadewaldt's reading of the pair of emotions, although maintaining discordant interpretations of Katharsis itself. However, Schadewaldt's translation of the two emotions of Katharsis is motivated by a certain perspective on the aesthetic notion. *Lament* and *shiver* emphasises the bodily dimension of the formerly pure mental affects; an indication, that is particularly interesting in the context of modern emotion theory. The philologist even provides Eleos and Phobos with an animalistic connotation and he says that exactly this connotation is the reason why Plato and also Socrates rejected any value

of the emotions (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 256). Schadewaldt identifies Eleos and Phobos as “seelisch-leibliche Elementaraffekte”, as mental-bodily elementary emotions. These emotions are natural and involuntary and not a matter of noble humanitarian cultivation. (see 258) The philologist further claims that this fact makes any ETHICAL reading of Katharsis implausible. He consequently highlights the medical and orgiastic roots of Katharsis.

2.2. The *Anagnorisis* of Oedipus

According to Schadewaldt (1991a), Eleos and Phobos are evoked in a sequence, which means that a particular episode of tragic might arouse Eleos, while the following arouses Phobos, aso.; only sometimes the emotions would be evoked simultaneously. Referring to *Oedipus Rex*, he writes:

Der oft genug als Hauptmuster des Aristoteles herangezogene ‘König Ödipus’ etwa erregt mit besonders klarer Linienführung nach der ‘rührenden’ Eingangs-Hikesie in seinem ersten Hauptteil zunächst steigend den φόβος, bis dann die große Pathos-Partie des Schlusses ganz auf den tiefsten Jammer gestellt ist. (262)

In consequence, Schadewaldt suggests the sequential arousal of the two emotions as a means to analyse Greek tragedies. To clarify this approach, I will attempt to analyse the complex ending of *Oedipus Rex* applying Schadewaldt’s model of Eleos and Phobos. The Sophocleic tragedy is remarkable in many regards. It tells the incident of Oedipus, king of Theben, who, unknowingly, had murdered his father Laios and married his mother Iocasta. The ending of the play reveals this commonly known constellation. The moment of Anagnorisis, the realisation, in this particular case the recognition of Oedipus’ true origin, is the moment of Peripeteia, the “change of fortune”, in this particular case the “collapse from greatness to disaster” (Halliwell describes Peripeteia in these terms, see 1986, 171).

In the third act of *Oedipus Rex* a messenger from Korinth arrives in Theben and reports the death of its king Polybos. He informs Oedipus that he, as son and heir to Polybos, is demanded to return as king to Korinth. Iocasta is delighted when she hears the news; not because Oedipus is appointed to be king of Korinth, but because her husband's father died of a natural death. Iocasta sees the dictum of the oracle, that had informed Oedipus that he would murder his father and marry his mother and that had made him ultimately flee from Korinth already as young man, as an invalid argument.

We know that Iocasta is mistaken. Years ago the oracle told her and her husband Laios that their only son would slay the father. After childbirth, Iocasta instructs a herder to murder the infant. But the herder is good-hearted and gives the infant to the very messenger of Korinth. He brings the kingly child to Polybos and his wife Merope, who raise him as a son. When Oedipus receives the dictum of the oracle, he tries to get away of those that he considers as parents. He heads towards Theben, kills Laios in the course of a coincidental conflict, defeats the Sphinx, which is threatening Theben, is rewarded with the reign of Theben and gets the queen - who is his mother.

Even without knowing the detailed background (which the Greek audience was certainly aware of), we have the uneasy sense that an awkward revelation will follow. Indeed, Oedipus is relieved by the news, but declines to return to Korinth, as his mother Merope is still alive. At this moment, the messenger, informed about the dictum of the oracle, intends to do good and informs Oedipus about his true origin: that he was given to him by a herder of Theben; that he is actually not son to Merope and Polybos and that he can therefore without any worries return to Korinth. Oedipus, still unaware of the true circumstances, commands the presence of the herder who had given him away. Iocasta, already recognising the disaster, tries to hinder the king to call for the herder. She says to her husband:

Ach! Wen er immer meinte! kehre dich
Nicht daran! An das Gerede wolle
Auch nicht einen Gedanken wenden nutzlos!

And then:

O Unglückseliger! Daß niemals du erkennst, wer du bist!

The chorus appears on stage when we are already shakened by Phobos. Schadewaldt describes Phobos as the uneasy sense, the suspicion of upcoming mischief. We foresee, that the disaster will follow. Indeed, in the fourth act the herder appears on stage and, forced by his king, speaks out what he was supposed to do to the child given to him by Iocasta many years ago; that he was supposed to murder the infant which he did not and - most importantly - reveals the origin of the infant:

Ein Sprößling also war es aus des Laios Haus!

And finally:

Sein Sohn denn also, hieß es! doch die drinnen,
Dein Weib, sagt dir am besten, wie sich das verhält!

These very lines can be identified as the moment of Peripetia and Anagnorisis. Oedipus finally realises who he really is; his downfall is sealed. And at this very moment the play fulfills its horrific expectations and we are released into barefaced lamentation. Phobos converts into Eleos, when Oedipus cries:

Iuh! Iuh! Das Ganze wäre klar heraus!-
O Licht! zum letzten Mal hätt ich dich jetzt gesehn,
Der ich zu Tage trat: entstammt, von wem
Ich nicht gesollt - mit wem ich nicht gesollt,
Zusammenlebe - und wen ich nicht gedurft, erschlug! -

And the chorus augments:

[...]
Entdeckt hat gegen deinen Willen dich
Die alles sehende Zeit: sie richtet
Den in unehlicher Ehe lang
Zeugenden und Gezeugten! -
Ioh, des Laios o Kind!
Hätt ich dich, hätte ich dich
Nie gesehn!
Denn klagen muß ich, über alle Maßen
Jammernd mit meinem Munde! Doch, was recht ist
Zu sagen: aufgeatmet hab ich
Durch dich
Und zur Ruhe gebracht mein Auge.

Eleos is the response to passed and to present mischief: the disaster is carried out, it is finally irreversible. Halliwell (1986) notes that Eleos and Phobos “belong in close association” with the peripeteia (see 172). The example of *Oedipus Rex* illustrates Schadewaldt’s linear conception of Eleos and Phobos. According to the philologist, it is ultimately Katharsis that dissolves these sequences of *horror* and *lamentation*.

2.3. Pure: Katharsis

As explained above, Bernays identifies Katharsis with a therapeutical OUTLET and Schadewaldt is commonly considered as advocate of a related MEDICAL approach (Mittenzwei, for instance, clearly points that out; see 2001, 102). Indeed, Schadewaldt (1991a) explicitly mentions that any further investigation of Katharsis shall be based on Bernays’ elaboration (see 270). However, it would be a crucial mistake to ignore the fundamental diversities of Bernays’ and Schadewaldt’s interpretations. Both of them indeed reject moral perspectives on Katharsis. Schadewaldt’s most important argument is

the conception of Eleos and Phobos as elementary, involuntary affects. He declines any relevance of Katharsis for ethical virtues and highlights its cultic and ecstatic nature. Thus, Schadewaldt strengthens the bond to the remarks of the *Politics* which accentuate the orgiastic and emotional dimension of the aesthetic concept.

There is a further crucial discordance between the positions of Schadewaldt and Bernays. To refresh our memory: the OUTLET theory of Bernays asserts Katharsis as a discharge of an overdose of unsatisfying emotions. The overdose is evoked in the course of mundane life, Bernays speaks of “Verklemmtheiten”. Hence, Katharsis describes a psychic therapy, which is central to Bernays’ approach. Schadewaldt declines this therapeutic role of the aesthetic concept. On the contrary, he claims Katharsis as concept of pure aesthetics, solely describing the emotional effect that enables us to relish the arts, to perceive tragedy in its appropriate manner, providing no indication for *any* lasting moral or therapeutical effect. This is central to Schadewaldt’s approach as formulated in *Furcht und Mitleid?* and it has massive consequences on the interpretation of Katharsis.

On the other hand, Schadewaldt indeed applies the OUTLET-metaphor elaborated by Bernays. He maintains the concept of an overdose of Eleos and Phobos that seeks for a kathartic relief. But he locates the trigger or the starting point of the overdose entirely within the process of the reception of the arts. The undue amount of emotions is not brought into theatre, but it is consequence of the emotional impact of the plot-structure of tragedy. There are no “Verklemmtheiten” of mundane life that are somehow transformed and absorbed by the emotions evoked in theatre and then relieved altogether. Rather, the curve of arousal ascends with the course of the tragedy and descends back to normality at the end of the play. Tragedy excites and discharges the overdose. Katharsis is the alleviation, therefore the “Endeffekt” of the play. As Goethe has said, we leave theatre neither bettered, nor worsened. This claim holds at least true when referring to the experience of Katharsis. The principles of Bernays are present, but the consequences are essentially different.

At this point, it seems to be reasonable to pose the question why then one should expose oneself voluntarily to a play that causes horror and lamentation only to be released shortly afterwards? Why excessively arousing unsatisfying or “unhealthy”, as Nietzsche calls them (see Mittenzwei 2001, 259), emotions only to discharge them, if this procedure bears no therapeutic effect? Why do we want to victimise agony? Schadewaldt’s response to these questions is simple: in theatre it evokes Katharsis, and Katharsis is ultimately experienced as pleasure. The aesthetic concept describes a process that consists of the alleviation of Eleos and Phobos, a removal of these negative emotions. The descent on the emotional curve that emerged in the course of tragedy - the peak of the curve consisting of a massive overload of deeply unsatisfying emotions - is a pleasureable experience. The play continuously builds up a potential, that suddenly drops in the process of Katharsis. This is the proper pleasure (oikeia Hedone) of Greek tragedy. Schadewaldt (1991a) concludes:

[...] die tragische Lust [...] gehört [...] in den Bereich der kathartischen Lüste, sie ist die Lust der Erleichterung und der Befreiung von den zuvor erregten und wieder weggeschafften Affekten des Schreckens und der Rührung. (275)

Schadewaldt’s interpretation has multiple advantages. It regards the notion of pleasure in the context of the arts, a point that Aristotle frequently emphasises throughout the *Poetics*. Approaches that seek for mundane purposes, that provide tragedy essentially with ETHICAL or MEDICAL purposes, tend to ignore this emphasis. Moreover, the theory explains the general validity of Katharsis: every individual can potentially receive the pleasure of Katharsis. Schadewaldt (1991a) notes:

Eine Definition verlangt die Angabe wesensnotwendiger Merkmale. Das in der Definition bezweckte ἔργον der Tragödie muß ein notwendiges, im Wesen liegendes sein, eine Wirkung, die unter allen Umständen in gleicher Weise und bei allen Hörern von jeder echten Tragödie erreicht wird. Dieses aber ist, wie das ἔργον von Kunst und Dichtung überhaupt nach Aristoteles, die Freude, und zwar, bei der Tragödie, die für diese spezifische. (274)

The interpretation also provides a genteel response to Plato's charge of poetry as emotional *infection*, as it does not claim tragedy contrarywise as emotional *immunisation* or benefit, as something that betters, but as harmless pleasure. Schadewaldt focuses Katharsis on tragedy's intrinsic meanings, on its emotional aspects. He writes:

Nicht an irgendeine läuternde, bessernde, moralisch-erzieherische, nähere oder entferntere, zeitweilige oder dauernde Wirkung der *κάθαρσις* denkt Aristoteles bei der Deutung der Tragödie, und zwar weder im engeren oder weiteren und weitesten Sinne, und auch keine Auswirkung der Katharsis auf die *ἄρεταί*, das Ethos oder den Habitus der Seele zieht er irgend in Betracht. Worauf er hinaus will, das ist einzig und allein die nähere Charakterisierung der für die Tragödie spezifischen Lust und Freude. (Schadewaldt 1991a, 273)

At this point, another objection has to be raised: Is Katharsis then in a critical way harmless, or ineffective? Is Katharsis not more than a child's play for adults, a concept that reduces the complex plot-structure and societal potential of tragedy and the arts to a harmless matter of relaxation and recovery? Are the arts an *empty trojan horse*, so to say? Well, these objections can be diffused by the remarks I made above on the separation of intrinsic and extrinsic meanings of the arts. We must not reduce tragedy to its emotional effect; thus, we must not reduce the effect of tragedy to Katharsis. However, Schadewaldt (1991a) decides to provide a different response to these charges. He comments on Aristotle:

Es scheint, jede weitere Umschau führt von neuem darauf, daß Aristoteles die Dichtung als eine umfassende natürliche Lebenserscheinung, als elementare, natürlich-geistige Vitalpotenz betrachtet hat, und wieder geht mit ihm hier Goethe gleich, der in seiner während seines ganzen Lebens vielfach bezeugten Auffassung des 'Schönen', ganz anders als der Klassizismus um ihn her, in der 'Schönheit' die höchste Potenz der sich ständig potenzierenden Natur erkannt hat. Und so weist nach allem Aristoteles [...] in weiterer Entfernung auf eine Kunstauffassung hin, nach der Kunst und Dichtung weder einen 'Zweck' noch eine 'Aufgabe' außerhalb ihrer selbst besitzen. (285)

Schadewaldt provides Aristotle's perspective on the arts with an extensive autonomy; a claim, that found its rightful critics (see for example Fuhrmann 1992). It appears that Schadewaldt tends to reduce the effect of tragedy and the arts to its emotional impact solely deriving from their intrinsic meanings, a matter, that has to be critically regarded. Flashar (2004c) comments:

Es hängt das damit zusammen, daß Schadewaldt dazu neigt, die Bestimmungen des Aristoteles über die griechische Tragödie nicht nur als richtig, sondern zugleich als erschöpfend anzusehen. Doch Aristoteles reduziert die vielfältige Wirkung der Tragödie auf das Feld der Emotionen, was aber nicht ausschließt, daß die Tragödie in ihrer Bindung an ihre ursprünglichen Aufführungsbedingungen nicht noch ganz andere Wirkungen ausgeübt hat, [...] (300)

I consider Schadewaldt's interpretation as the most striking and adequate approach to Katharsis. It is in any case a fallacy to assume that any single interpretation of Katharsis will be generally accepted and established. The notion is too complex and too important to be uncontroversial. Flashar and Fuhrmann decline Schadewaldt's interpretation, although they do support his particular translations of Eleos and Phobos. Mittenzwei (2001) is thus mistaken when writing that Fuhrman canonised Schadewaldt's interpretation of Katharsis (see 246). However, Schadewaldt's interpretation has paramount strengths. I particularly support the view of Katharsis as a concept purely regarding aesthetic perception, with the provisos formulated in the paragraph above, namely that we ought not reduce tragedy to its Katharsis. The thought that poetry and the arts need no proximate ethical, political or therapeutical justification, is highly considerable. The contribution of Schadewaldt to the discussion of Katharsis is remarkable. Anyhow, I see the urge to discuss and adapt particular points of his theory, which I will undertake as part of the following reinterpretation of Katharsis.

3. Katharsis Reinterpreted

The previous chapters meticulously explained the Aristotelian notion of Katharsis. The explanation consisted of an abstract and a discussion of the dispute of the aesthetic concept; a dispute, that is marked by fundamental discordances. The discussion of the diverse interpretations implicitly and explicitly provided evidence to support a particular approach to Katharsis, which has been reviewed in appropriate detail. It is the approach formulated by Schadewaldt. He describes the notion of Katharsis as a purely aesthetic phenomenon that is exclusively concerned with emotion. I mentioned that Schadewaldt ran the risk of falling into an aestheticism; I avoid this risk by claiming that indeed Katharsis is concerned purely with aesthetics, but that tragedy is not only concerned with Katharsis, albeit it is to be considered as its core function.

There are germane objections brought forth on the approach of Schadewaldt. Its proponents are influential, respectable researchers in the field of Katharsis. To mention are Flashar, Fuhrmann and Halliwell, and there are various more. It appears that not a single interpretation comes without rightful opposition. Despite this fact, I will attempt to reinterpret the notion of Katharsis. This reinterpretation is set in Schadewaldt's tradition and will maintain the philologist's essential presumptions. However, I will also bring forth critique and decline crucial aspects of his theory. I attempt a novel approach to Katharsis and I assume that this attempt does not solely increase discordances, but enriches the discourse on the aesthetic category and even reconciles particular perspectives. I will base the present interpretation solely on the evidence presented so far. In the second part I then revise and explain this reinterpretation of Katharsis from the perspective of contemporary research on aesthetic emotion.

3.1. Some Implications of Eleos and Phobos

One of the main objections on Schadewaldt's model of Katharsis targets his claim of Eleos and Phobos as elementary affects. The argument appears to be especially germane when referring to the emotion of Eleos, as it presupposes a particular awareness, understanding and even ethical judging of the incidents represented in Greek tragedy. I have already pointed out the tidy definition of Eleos in the *Rhetoric*. Remind, for instance, the necessity of affinity between oneself and the one suffering; however, even more relevant is the notion of Anaxios, the undeserved suffering. Evaluating a character on stage as being struck by undeserved mischief, hence as "innocent", demands a profound comprehension of the plot-structure of tragedy. Halliwell (1986) notes on the two tragic emotions, with emphasis on Eleos:

Pity and fear (though, of course, not these alone) are to be regarded not as uncontrollable instincts or forces, but as responses to reality which are possible for a mind in which thought and emotion are integrated and interdependent. [...] Aristotle conceives of the tragic emotions not as overwhelming waves of feeling, but as part of an integrated response to the structured material of poetic drama: the framework for the experience of these emotions is nothing other than the cognitive understanding of the mimetic representation of human action and character. [...] The pity to be evoked by the complex tragedy is not an emotion felt without qualification for sheer human vulnerability, but, on Aristotle's theory, a precise response to a structure of action in which innocence can be identified with a clear context of human motive and agency. (173f)

Fuhrmann (1992) complements that Eleos and Phobos have to be represented and evoked in the course of the plot of tragedy and that the comprehension of the spectator is necessary for the emotional anticipation. On Eleos he writes:

Eleos zeigt sich [...] als von einem vorgängigen Urteil (daß der Leidende unschuldig sei) und von einer Schlußfolgerung abhängig; Aristoteles ist weit davon entfernt, ihn für einen spontan und unkontrolliert eintretenden Impuls zu halten. Seine *Poetik* bekundet dieselbe Auffassung: Die Unverdienstlichkeit und der Rückbezug des Betrachters auf sich selbst kehren dort - als Voraussetzung des tragischen Affekts - wieder. (94)

Interestingly, Fuhrmann supports Schadewaldt's particular translation of Eleos and Phobos as *lament* and *horror*, but consequently declines the conclusions his colleague draws from this translation. Also Flashar (2004a) finally agrees with the critics of Schadewaldt and complements that the notion of undeserved misfortune implies an ethical component (see 55). He and his colleagues Fuhrmann and Halliwell decline to perceive of Eleos and Phobos as "uncontrollable instincts or forces" in favour of claiming them to be in "close relation to the perception and judgements of the conscious, cognizant mind." (see Halliwell 1986, 173)

In fact, Schadewaldt does not provide a sufficient explanation of Eleos and Phobos as "elementary affects". It remains a matter of interpretation what he actually indicates by the name elementary affects. It could still be supposed that Schadewaldt considers the strong affects as being entailed by the intellectual processing of the plot-structure of tragedy; however, it appears more plausible that Schadewaldt shifts Eleos and Phobos into the cultic and concussive dimension of tragedy, into the sphere of the god Dionysos. A discrepancy between the exact and tidy description of the emotions in the *Rhetoric* and Schadewaldt's claim of the tragic emotions as "Grundorgane der Menschheit", as he calls them in a lecture (see Schadewaldt 1991b, 33), emerging as involuntary impulses, however remains.

3.2. Eleos for Antigone

The critics of Schadewaldt refer to the complexity of Greek tragedy. Indeed, we have to account for this complexity as it is essential to elicit the certain effect that Aristotle has proposed. The present section will illustrate the necessity of understanding and appropriately appraising the complex structure and the inexhaustible implications that a single tragic scene reflects. The example pointed out here will also be the first attempt to describe the general experience of an aesthetic performance; an attempt, that will be

frequently conducted from certain perspectives in the course of this thesis. We will thus take a closer look at the tragedy *Antigone* of Sophocles.

In the Exodos, the end of the drama, a messenger appears on stage and tells us of the disastrous incidents that just occurred. For reasons of illustration, we will first assume the presence of the incident that is reported to us by the messenger. We will, secondly, at this point assume that we have no particular knowledge of the play *Antigone*; we do not know who she is, who Kreon is, who Haimon is. We only know of the messenger, describing the following image of cruelty to Iocasta and us: a young woman that strangled herself in a cave; a young man on his knees, embracing the dead body, and an older man witnessing the scene. Without any knowledge of the Greek drama, the report of the messenger would evoke an inner image of such informational content.

With more detailed knowledge of the tragedy, we would perceive the societal constellation behind the incident: A princess has strangled herself, a prince is on his knees, and a king stands aside. However, there is more to know in order to heighten our lamentation: the woman hanging is the bride of the young man and niece to the elder; the groom is the son to the elder; therefore, the elder is the uncle of the dead and the father of the desperate groom. We come to sense the agony of the Exodos of *Antigone*.

Complete knowledge reveals the full magnitude of the catastrophe culminating in this single image: We see a young woman that had decided to commit suicide; she was a princess that had buried her brother and had thus violated the order of the king, her uncle, who had forbidden to bury the traitor. We see a son who had failed to convince his father to spare his father's niece; he is the groom who had failed to save his bride from being buried alive as a punishment for the disobedience; a groom who had come too late, who witnessed the desperate suicide of his beloved bride. We see a king who in a state of *hybris* had claimed his authority too rigorously and had sentenced his niece to death by burying her alive; he, the uncle, had realised his severe mistake too late; a mistake that

consists of the refusal to bury the dead and the command to bury the living. We see Antigone, Haimon and Kreon. Recognising and knowing them, we are overwhelmed by lamentation, by Eleos. We come to understand the *tragic* of the drama.

It is undisputable that only a certain complexity of the plot-structure can afford to arouse a *noble* emotion such as Eleos; an emotion, that after all refers to an inadequacy of the world. We need a certain degree of intellectual capacity to grasp the meaning of *Antigone* and to relish its full emotional impact; and the more knowledge and insight we have, the clearer, the richer this picture will appear in front of us and the more reason we will have to lament. Eleos is heightened. It seems that the dignity of the emotional impact of tragedy lies primarily within the emotion of Eleos. However, Phobos is as essential for tragedy as is Eleos. It is the pairwise arousal of the tragic emotions that is pointed out as a specification of tragedy. The impact of tragedy demands both emotions. Thus, their relation needs further elucidation.

3.3. Eleos and Phobos Interlocked

As explained above, Schadewaldt describes a linear arousal of the tragic emotions: while one scene of *Oedipus Rex* evokes Phobos, the next evokes Eleos, also., and only sometimes the two emotions will be evoked simultaneously. The arousal of the emotions correlates with the plot-structure of tragedy: Phobos targets upcoming, future mischief, Eleos regards occurred mischief. Considering the fact that tragedies actually never perform the cruelties, but communicate them epically (usually described by a messenger, as in the case of *Antigone*), the explanation of Schadewaldt seems to be corresponding, as there is always a before and an after, but never a present of the ultimate tragic disaster. Tragedy is concerned with motives and consequences of action, Phobos regards the before, Eleos the after. Schadewaldt's model furthermore corresponds with the explanation of mundane forms of Eleos and Phobos in the *Rhetoric*. However, regarding the fact that Phobos

describes the suspicion of mischief, fear as translation does not sound that false; horror, on the other side, in its intensity, rather seems to implicate a certain presence of the mischief. We have to ask the rightful question if then the presence of tragic mischief, as assumed in the example in the section above, could imply the simultaneous arousal of the two tragic emotions.

Frankly, I consider the linear separation of Eleos and Phobos as suggested by Schadewaldt as problematic. Even when remaining in the context of his elaboration, we will see that the separation does not hold. Incidents of lamentation, for instance, as in *Oedipus Rex* the anagnorisis of Oedipus, or in *Antigone* Antigone's suicide, are most likely also reason for the suspicion of further mischief. Indeed, in *Oedipus Rex* we will be informed that as a consequence of the Anagnorisis, Iocasta strangles herself and Oedipus blinds himself and is banished from Theben; moreover, we know that his children are cursed. One of them is Antigone. After her death, her groom, Haimon, attempts to murder his father Kreon and takes his own life after failure. Kreon's wife Euridyke also commits suicide after she hears of the death of her son. The greatest disasters in tragedy are commonly entailed by further disasters; incidents of Eleos are reasons for Phobos too. And the same holds vice versa: the spectator of tragedy, who usually has some expertise in the genre, knows that the disaster is determined. When Iocasta attempts to hinder Oedipus to interrogate the herder, when Haimon begs Kreon for mercy for Antigone, we already know that these characters will not suddenly emerge intelligent and agree. We can thus already lament before things have happened; the mischief is irreversible and present in the determination of the tragic action. The ball starts rolling with the Parodos of the play.

It is a matter of fact that since Gorgias the emotions of Eleos and Phobos in reference to speech and poetry are consequently mentioned pairwise. There is strong evidence to consider an intertwined structure of the two emotions, which determines their relation not as linear and causal, but as different aspects of one experience. Bernays (1970) describes

them as “innerlich verschlungen” (see 49), Halliwell (1986) speaks of “the interlocking nature of pity and fear (for the fear in this case is implicitly mediated through pity)” and claims that “each of them is also at least partial condition for the other emotion too.” (see 176f and 178) Most interestingly, Flashar (1991) references in his text *Die medizinischen Grundlagen der Lehre von der Wirkung der Dichtung in der griechischen Poetik* (1956) to the *Hippocratic Corpus*, a collection of ancient treatises on medicine. He elaborates the connection of the bodily aspects of Eleos (lament) and Phobos (shiver) and a particular correlating pathological state of the body, indicated by wetness (lament) and coldness (shiver). This state is a fever. Flashar sees a clear motive for Aristotle to pick Eleos and Phobos as appropriate emotions of tragedy: the philosopher witnessed the audience deeply moved by the performance, trembling and tear-filled, behaving as being affected by a fever. Flashar finds medical equivalents for Eleos and Phobos and advocates an OUTLET theory of Katharsis, maintaining the conception of Bernays of theatre as cure. Flashar’s elaboration is, most importantly in this context, further evidence for the assumption that Eleos and Phobos emerge simultaneously; the emotions describe *two sides of one experience*.

I referred above to the report of the messenger in the Exodos of *Antigone*, describing the image of strangled Antigone, desperate Haimon and baffled Kreon as an image of Eleos. I will now attempt to explain the very same image as one that communicates Phobos. As noted above, Aristotle describes this particular emotion as an urge to escape from upcoming mischief. Indeed, it is far less effort to describe this emotion as “elementary” in accord with Schadewaldt. Schadewaldt (1991a) quotes his popular colleague Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf who says something very relevant on Phobos:

Schrecken entspricht trotz Lessing dem Wortsinne besser, denn der Phobos ist ein Dämon, dem Gorgonenhaupt entsprechend, den man auf den Schild malt, damit er den Feind durch den Schauer lähme [...]. (260)

I conceive of Phobos as a relative basic form of human fear or horror that is indeed evoked in the presence of agony. The second part of this thesis will elucidate how pictures of cruelty literally fill us with horror. In the presence of mischief, this emotion needs no intellectual mediation, no process of reasoning. We immediately *grasp* the horror of the picture of strangled Antigone, perceiving a strangled body with a dead-pale face, a horrified screamer embracing the lifeless body and a shivering observer. We see tantalised bodies. We immediately grasp a screaming face as one that is in agony. The presence or suspicion of pure cruelty of the picture, without any regard to the complex plot-structure of tragedy, evokes Phobos. Tragedy affords the complexity of structure, evoking Eleos, the lamentation on the inadequacy of the world. But it also affords the evocation of images of bloodshed that immediately evoke horripilation in the recipient, pictures, that involuntarily elicit Phobos. They are equally important, as both emotions are consequence of diverse dimensions of perceiving and understanding the tragic disaster. Eleos and Phobos are the emotions evoked by tragedies and appropriate to the reception of tragedies; tragedies, which culminate in paramount images such as Antigone's suicide. Unfortunately, we find related incidents in mundane life, and there is hardly any solace when being struck by such. The experience of Eleos and Phobos *in theatre*, in the context of aesthetic experience, however, provides the emergence of a further quality of these emotions: Katharsis.

3.4. The Contrariness of Katharsis

In the *Poetics* Aristotle regularly emphasises the fact that poetry essentially evokes pleasure (Hedone) (see Aristotle 1982, 43, 77 and 97). Moreover, as has already been pointed out, the philosopher specifies the aesthetic concept in the *Politics* as “von Lust begleitete Erleichterung” (see Aristotle 2005, 57-60). Schadewaldt seems to be the only interpreter who adequately regards the crucial aspect of pleasure provided by the arts in his conception of Katharsis. Finally, the pleasure we experience when receiving a tragedy

like *Antigone* or *Bacchae* does not resemble the experience of teaching lessons or therapies.

Although appearing contrary, it is an undeniable fact that tragic incidents *on stage* provide a certain pleasure. We *enjoy* and *seek* for tragedy, it is delightful to see the cruelties and the downfall of characters who are “like us”; and this particular *contrariness* solely occurs in theatre, or more generally in the context of the arts. The particular emotions that evoke Katharsis in the context of tragedy are Eleos and Phobos. By themselves, lament and horror are hardly pleasurable. In mundane life these emotions are experiences of pure negative value, emotions that we would try to avoid. But as recipients of tragedy, we seek for them. Eleos and Phobos can suddenly be enjoyed under the condition that these emotions are aroused in the recipient of a piece of art. The emotions will ultimately merge into the pleasurable experience of Katharsis. Eleos and Phobos are to be experienced as *aesthetic emotions*.

Accordingly, an indian scholar explains that “[...] the world may be a wheel of pleasure and pain, yet its representation on stage [...] is always pleasurable.” (see Gupt 2006, 273). Singal (1977) considers tragic pleasure a “contradiction in terms, a baffling paradox that has led to endless debates among scholars and critics” and he brings to the point that it would be a “fallacy” to consider that “the function of art is to awaken real life emotions in the spectator and to affect him likewise.” (see 77). Moritz Geiger (1976) accounts of emotions in the context of the arts as “ästhetische Scheingefühle” (see 191), F. L. Lucas (1961) writes in his book *Tragedy*:

Confronted with such a performance [of tragedy] an impartial stranger from another planet might well exclaim: ‘You groan perpetually about the ills and woes in your life on earth. You have reason. But why, in the moments when you are not actually suffering, do you choose to go and suffer in imagination.’ (36)

I noted above that Schadewaldt provides a particular explanation for the contrariness of kathartic experience in the context of tragedy. He claims the experience as descent on an emotional curve that describes exaggerated negative emotions. This descent is experienced as a pleasurable relief of the negative emotions. Kathartic pleasure, according to Schadewaldt, consists of the pleasure felt when returning to emotional normality. The relief occurs at the end of the play, Katharsis is the “Endeffekt” of tragedy.

Two rightful questions can be posed here: is the descent on the emotional curve constitutive for Katharsis? Hence: does Schadewaldt’s description provide a general structural model of the Aristotelian Katharsis? The simple answer to both of these questions is: No. In the course of the first chapter of the present thesis I elaborated that a second legitimate source to approach the aesthetic notion of Katharsis consists of the evidence found in the *Politics* of Aristotle. I comprehensibly argued for one identity of Katharsis, assuming that Aristotle spoke of one unique, particular notion. However, in the *Politics* Katharsis not only refers to Eleos and Phobos, but also to the emotion of ecstasy, aroused by the orgiastic play of the Aulos. Indeed, Schadewaldt also supposes one Katharsis, his interpretation crucially references the *Politics*. Yet his model cannot explain how the experience of aesthetic ecstasy is pleasurable in an analogous way to Eleos and Phobos. In the particular case of the orgiastic musical play, not the descent, but the ascent on the emotional curve would have to be experienced as pleasure, as the peak of the curve consists of exaggerated ecstasy; an emotion, that is, on the contrary to Eleos and Phobos, by itself pleasureable. According to the linear or sequential conception of Schadewaldt, the pleasure of Katharsis would hence occur at the beginning of the reception of the play, while the end of the performance would be experienced as awkward decrease of the positive emotion of ecstasy. Aristotle never indicated such a structural distinction. Consequently, I would rather argue to assume a general structure of Katharsis that embraces both the negative and the positive emotions, respectively Eleos, Phobos and ecstasy. I also view this example as evidence to consider the complete abandonment of the linear model of Schadewaldt; this point will be further elaborated in detail in a following section.

The reference to the *Politics* elucidates that the contrariness of Katharsis solely occurs when regarding tragic emotions. It is thus not an essential part of the aesthetic concept, but one of its modes. Considering these modes, I suggest to forbear from any definite translation of Katharsis. Fuhrmann (1992) notes that already in ancient Greece the use of the notion was disparate (see 103) and Halliwell (1986) even emphasises the inscrutability of the concept (see 184). Hence, both of them suggest not to seek for an appropriate contemporary term to replace “Katharsis”. Any translation already strains the notion towards certain interpretations; “purgation” indicates the ethical, “outlet” the therapeutical, “clarification” the intellectual; and “alleviation” is only compatible with Eleos and Phobos, but not with ecstasy. In respect to the unique nature of the notion, I plead for calling it by its original Greek term: Katharsis. However, it is useful to know certain thesauric variations of the term to comprehend its meaning.

3.5. The Difference Indicated by Katharsis

Katharsis describes a phenomenon of pure aesthetics. The kathartic experience is intertwined with the emotional reception of the arts; Aristotle claimed neither more, nor less. Schadewaldt’s main contribution is the elaboration of this crucial insight: that Katharsis is not effected by the *before* and does not effect the *after the tragedy*. The aesthetic concept is solely concerned with the experience of aesthetic emotion in the context of the arts.

Plato objects that poetry *infects* the audience with the undesirable emotions of Eleos and Phobos. In fact, Aristotle’s response to Plato’s charge consists of claiming them as being “harmless” when aroused in the course of tragedy. The philosopher recognised that Eleos, Phobos and also ecstasy, in comparison to their mundane equivalents, entail different consequences when experienced as aesthetic emotions of the arts. Phobos, for instance,

did not remain as horror, not even as fear in the recipient of tragedy after returning to mundane life. In reference to Goethe one could say: the spectator leaves the theatre as anxious or dauntless as he came. Yet he or she solely appears to be affected by the pleasure of the kathartic experience. Aristotle noticed that aesthetic emotions, as shaking or delightful as they were, did not have the consequences of their respective mundane counterparts. Before these emotions come to *infect* the audience, they are dissolved in the experience of Katharsis.

Katharsis is the only explicit remark, the only criteria Aristotle makes on the difference of emotions of the arts and mundane emotions. Solely in the context of the arts, Aristotle provides Eleos, Phobos and ecstasy with the quality of Katharsis. The philosopher meticulously explains the set of mundane human emotions in his *Rhetoric*. However, there is no mention of Katharsis in the *Rhetoric*. Katharsis is specific to the arts and specific to emotions. Emotions, then, experienced aesthetically, in the course of a play of theatre, for instance, are somehow different. In fact, they do not entail comparable psychological consequences as if experienced in the context of mundane matters. Katharsis indicates the crucial difference of aesthetic and mundane emotions; it constitutes a profound difference of meaning, that is apparent even today and remains largely undefined.

I claim that Katharsis describes a particular quality of emotions that belongs to the class of aesthetic emotions. These kathartic emotions, as they shall be named, correspond with what Geiger calls “ästhetische Scheingefühle”. Nowadays, empirical science refers to them as virtual emotions (see Scherer 2005, 245) or generally aesthetic emotions; however, most often they are not regarded at all.

I want to emphasise again that I do not attempt to reduce the manifold properties of tragedy and the arts to the dimension of aesthetic emotion. The elicitation of emotions and Katharsis is neither the sole purpose of the arts in general, nor of Greek tragedy in particular. And even in the context of emotions and the arts the matter is somehow more

complicated, as the arts are often not primarily concerned with *aesthetic* emotions, but with very *mundane* emotions as well. This point shall be elaborated extensively in the second part of this thesis.

3.6. Opening Katharsis

Aristotle mentioned Katharsis in connection to three distinct emotions: Phobos, Eleos and ecstasy. In the course of the last centuries, the aesthetic notion underwent comprehensive elaboration, adaptation and transformation. Katharsis did not remain untouched and unchanged, rather we are dealing with a concept that served as a framework for a profound and elaborated discussion on the effect of the arts. At the current today, Katharsis is usually considered as universally valid, as category that is relevant for many different forms of artistic expression or even beyond as notion relevant for mundane phenomena as well. In connection to MEDICAL interpretations of Katharsis, Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud claimed their Psychoanalysis as continuation of the “kathartic method” (see Mittenzwei 2001, 261). Theorists and artists go willfully beyond the specifications of the ancient sources to adopt Katharsis for their demands, even though Aristotle’s dictum might be violated. Most importantly, also in the context of the arts Katharsis is not considered to be solely concerned with Phobos, Eleos and ecstasy.

Halliwell (1986) states that Katharsis derived from an “area of Greek thought which is alien to prevailing modern views of art” (see 184). I am however convinced that Katharsis is still a relevant and conceivable concept. Particular aspects of perception might be “alien” to us, but in its essence the experience is not necessarily unknown to us. A transformation of Katharsis can afford the crucial merit to update and mediate the aesthetic concept to recipients of the twenty-first century. However, especially philologists hesitate to deliberately transform the ancient concept; they rather exclaim fidelity. Lucas (1961) points out three relevant questions that define the discussion of

Katharsis: “first - ‘what was really Aristotle’s view?’; secondly - ‘how far is it true?’; thirdly - ‘what led him to adopt it?’ “ (see 37). While practitioners of the arts will particularly care about the second question, philologists appear to be mainly concerned about what Aristotle has actually said and meant, silently assuming that Aristotle was right. Most interestingly, many of these “faithful” philologists do consider the Aristotelian Katharsis as not being solely concerned with the emotions that Aristotle explicitly pointed out, namely Eleos, Phobos and ecstasy.

I interpret Katharsis as a concept that is exclusively concerned with aesthetic emotions, but with a broad spectrum of these emotions. The relevant issue will be to investigate the validity of Katharsis for other, respectively for all potential aesthetic emotions. The arts definitely evoke manifold emotions. I will not willfully violate the dictum of Aristotle, but attempt to remain faithful to the maxim of philology and investigate if Aristotle himself might not have considered Katharsis relevant for other emotions as well. Aristotle notes in the *Poetics* that our response to artistic representations crucially corresponds with the responses to incidents of mundane life, indicating a vast range of potential responses to the arts. Two millennia later, Mittenzwei (2001) states that people undergo a Katharsis when attending a rock concert (see 245). Apparently Aristotle did not explicitly consider this case, however, his objections on the Aulos might correspond to certain contemporary attitudes towards rock music. It seems to be an appropriate question to pose if the Aristotelian Katharsis in its ancient conception could account for the *orgiastic play of the electrical guitar*, respectively if the ancient conception already regards the whole range of aesthetic emotions. In accord with several theorists, I advocate this claim.

One argument for such claim derives from the fact that Aristotle references two entirely different forms when speaking of Katharsis: tragedy and the play of the Aulos (even though both might have been performed in theatre). The first appears to have a complex plot-structure, a clear semantic content that excites its particular appropriate emotions;

the second is purely instrumental and also evokes its appropriate emotion. The first is a representative performance, the second is music. These two genres and their respective aesthetic emotions display hardly any qualitative analogy. The arousal of ecstasy is clearly distinct from the emotion of *noble* Eleos, however, both of them ultimately dissolve in kathartic pleasure. This suggests the potentially broad (or even complete) application that Aristotle already indicated, as there remains no reasonable argument why, for example, the emotion of aesthetic anger should not evoke Katharsis as well. It furthermore seems that if Katharsis is narrowly applied to the emotions indicated literally by Aristotle, a scholar's objection on the controversy around Katharsis as "monument of sterility" holds true (see Lucas 1961, 35).

I already pointed out in a previous chapter that the *Poetics* is the only bequeathed part of the whole corpus of works that Aristotle had dedicated to poetry. Particularly the loss of the "second book" of the *Poetics*, which concerns comedy, is a dolorous loss. Consequently, it can be assumed that Aristotle's bequeathed explication of Katharsis is also incomplete. There are indeed several philologists who assume that Aristotle himself pleaded for a broad application of Katharsis to the arts. Schadewaldt (1991a) explains that tragic pleasure is a subtype of kathartic pleasure and indicates that Aristotle provided the whole range of different art forms with their respective kathartic pleasure (see 276). Halliwell (1986) is also on the right track when identifying different subtypes of Katharsis (tragic and orgiastic), as it indicates the assumption of further subtypes. However, he goes too far when claiming substantial differences between these subtypes. I suppose that the nature of Katharsis and its structure remain throughout the manifold emotions that it is applicable to. Variety lies solely within the emotions, not in the process of Katharsis itself. I will further elaborate this claim in a later section.

In this context it is most relevant to introduce speculations on the issue of the *comic* Katharsis. Aristotle's treatise on comedy is lost, hence we will never acquire certainty if the philosopher conceived of comedy as being kathartic or not. Anyhow, there are

reasons to suppose that Aristotle indeed provided comedy with such effect. Halliwell (1986) points out “believers”, “unbelievers” and “agnostics” of a comic Katharsis. He furthermore says that we indeed know that Aristotle provided comedy with its proper pleasure, but that we have no evidence regarding its appropriate emotions. Halliwell’s particular argument for a comic Katharsis targets Plato’s charge on poetry: a valid response of Aristotle “calls for comic just as much as for tragic *katharsis*” (see 275f).

Regarding the appropriate emotions of comedy, Fuhrmann (1992) says that we would certainly find no pendants for Eleos and Phobos in Aristotle’s treatise on comedy, as there would appear hardly any structural analogies between Aristotle’s elaborations of tragedy and comedy (see 69). Golden (1992) disagrees here. In the text *Aristotle on the Pleasure of Comedy* he initially rejects sources that point out “pleasure and laughter” as appropriate emotions of the “ridiculous” action of comedy. He argues that it is the “ridiculous” itself that demands an emotional analogous and that “pleasure and laughter” do not correspond to such. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle formulates the emotion of Nemesian as the opposite of Eleos. Golden references his colleague E. M. Cope who comprehensibly describes Nemesian as “rightful indignation” and “a feeling of pain at undeserved good fortune”. This, Golden says, must be the appropriate emotional response to comedy and Nemesian opposes Eleos just as comedy opposes tragedy. (see 379-385)

However, important for our purpose is not to elaborate the appropriate emotion(s) of comedy, but to illustrate and emphasise that the assumption of an *Aristotelian* comic Katharsis is plausible. The obstacle to claim a generally applicable Katharsis that concerns *all* potential aesthetic emotions consequently becomes remarkably lower, as then an even larger variety of different emotions is furnished with the kathartic effect. How could we plausibly exclude any particular aesthetic emotion if already lament, horror, ecstasy *and* the pleasure and laughter or indignation of comedy is stated as being addressed by Katharsis?

The “opening” of Katharsis to all emotions entails several crucial consequences. First, Katharsis ultimately loses the dignity that has been ascribed to it by solely associating it with tragedy. Already the remarks of the *Politics* are actually sufficient for this “liberation” of Katharsis. As explained above, several scholars still refuse to regard this other Aristotelian treatise as being relevant. According to them, Katharsis has something to do with the particular nature of tragedy, indicating more than a modification of its proper emotions. However, taking comedy and other genres into account provides strong evidence to finally unbound Katharsis from tragedy and particularly from Eleos and Phobos. This brings most ETHICAL interpretations into trouble. Lessing’s claim of theatre as school of virtues, for instance, becomes increasingly unlikely if Eleos, or in this case pity, is not anymore considered as paramount emotion of Katharsis.

The second consequence of opening Katharsis concerns the particular structural or temporal place of Katharsis. Several approaches, particularly CLARIFICATION theories and most ETHICAL approaches, must claim Katharsis as an effect that is bound to the specific plot-structure of tragedy. Halliwell (1986) writes:

[...] Aristotle’s argument presupposes that the audience of tragedy will respond emotionally as part of their apprehension of the facts of the play’s action: its sequence of causation, the moral status of the agents, the discrepancy between intention and result in human action, the magnitude of the change in fortune shaped by the plot. It is with an experience of this order that tragic *katharsis* must somehow be reconcilable [...]. (197)

Aristotle describes tragedy as a piece of poetry that is complete. Fuhrmann (1992) points out that the structure of tragedy is commonly divided into Desis, Peripetia and Lysis. The first describes the entanglement, the second the (un)fortunate change, the third the dissolution of action (see 36). The Lysis consists of the appropriate resolution of dramatic action. Commonly it depicts the final disaster and it puts this disaster in a concrete tragic context. Antigone is not just anybody who committed suicide, but a

woman who was determined to die for her rightful convictions; convictions, that collided with contrary convictions and thus entailed a severe tragic conflict. As sister, Antigone's decision to bury her brother is right; as societal member of Theben it is wrong. Hegel (1986) even concludes at this point that Antigone and Kreon are equally right, as both of them respectively carry equally important "sittliche Mächte", Antigone advocating the Oikos (the house or family) and Kreon the Polis (the state). The philosopher indeed gives a clear example of how much overexertion is needed to put Greek Tragedy into a scheme. However, elaborations and systematisations of the complexity of tragedy had a strong influence on the interpretation of Katharsis as well. The implications of almost any interpretation of the aesthetic concept consist of the claim that a tragic scene, such as the incident of Antigone's suicide, must be particularly perceived in its tragic context not only to elicit Eleos and Phobos, but also in order to evoke Katharsis. Such claim further implies the presumption that we have to perceive and understand a complete and well composed tragedy entirely. Katharsis must then be bound to the intellectual comprehension of the entire plot-structure of tragedy. Consequently, if we left the theatre at a random point before the complexity of tragedy had unfolded and revealed itself and we consequently had comprehended this tragic complexity, we would not experience a Katharsis.

However, the evidence of the *Politics* tells us that the play of the Aulos also evokes a Katharsis. This musical play has no narrative structure, it demands no intellectual insight into the complex dimensions of a tragic scene. There is no ending, no "Abrundung", no Lysis. Furthermore, not all tragedies are alike; even the few that survived show profound differences. Not all of them end in a disaster, Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and *Oedipus at Colonus* appear to have "happy endings". And within the group of those which describe disasters, I don't see how these disasters shall provide any relief that can be associated with the notion of Katharsis. Antigone's death is entailed by Haimon's and Euridyke's suicide, Kreon is left with nothing but his crown; even for a villain like him this is quite tough. Even worse it is in the *Bacchae*, where Dionysos eventually admits that his divine

punishment is far too draconic. I do not find a dramaturgical point or a certain composition and constellation of incidents in these tragedies that could be appraised as kathartic. Hence, I assume and claim that Katharsis cannot be internal to the play of tragedy, it rather occurs - metaphorically spoken - *when the curtains fall*. Katharsis is neither essentially manifested in any complex narrative structure, nor to the cognisant understanding of such.

To complicate matters, I have to emphasise here that I do not attempt to reduce or neglect the crucial importance of the particular tragic plot-structure for the emotional effect on the recipient. Above I illustrated that Eleos will increase with our insight into the complex implications of the play. The better we know the myth, the better we grasp how terrible the incidents of the Exodos of *Antigone* are. It is not only a horrific picture of a dead woman and two terrified men, but also the culmination point of high tragic complexity. However, *Antigone* provides reason for lamentation and horrification much earlier in the course of the plot-structure. In the very first scene of the play we are informed that two brothers murdered each other at the gates of Theben and that one sister intends to violate the strict verdict of the king to leave one of them unburied so that the corpse will be torn apart by wild animals. Fair enough to feel Eleos and Phobos. When Antigone finally dies in the cave, Eleos and Phobos will reach an emotional peak; however, they are definitely present before. *Antigone* is a tragedy from the very beginning on, evoking the particular emotions of Eleos and Phobos throughout the whole action. The tragic plot-structure directly serves the appropriate tragic emotions; it is necessary to experience a Katharsis of these particular emotions to appropriately receive the play.

The point is the following: the plot-structure of tragedy directly elicits Eleos and Phobos, indeed, these emotions are represented on stage. In the *Poetics* Aristotle (1982) writes:

Nun kann das Schauderhafte und Jammervolle durch die Inszenierung, es kann aber auch durch die Zusammenführung der Geschehnisse selbst bedingt sein, was das

Bessere ist und den besseren Dichter zeigt. [...] Da nun der Dichter das Vergnügen bewirken soll, das durch Nachahmung Jammer und Schaudern hervorruft, ist offensichtlich, daß diese Wirkungen in den Geschehnissen selbst enthalten sein müssen. (42f)

However, the plot-structure only indirectly elicits Katharsis, namely through the two tragic emotions as aesthetic emotions, experienced in the context of the arts. Katharsis is bound to and emerges from the emotional response to the arts. It signifies the unique difference that constitutes aesthetic emotions. The particular kind of the emotion - be it Eleos, Phobos, ecstasy, anger or pity - is negligible; essential is the appraisal of the emotion as response to the (semantic) content of the arts. Thus, tragedy does not provide a specific quality of *tragic* Katharsis, but indeed a unique path to acquire Katharsis; in tragedy, this path is flanked by Eleos and Phobos.

The lamentation for Antigone is kathartic from the very beginning on. Leaving theatre prior to the Exodos will not neglect the experience of Katharsis. If Antigone's foreseeable misfortune becomes unbearable and we leave theatre even before she ultimately violates the verdict of Kreon, we will have undergone a kathartic effect; only less so, because the emotions did not acquire the intended height. A friend of ours who would stay and witness the whole excess of misfortune until its disastrous end would experience the tragic emotions in the higher, full intensity and would thus experience a higher Katharsis of the emotions. However, we would have received at least a taste of the particular pleasure of tragedy. Katharsis and aesthetic emotions are essentially intertwined. I thus plead that any linear conception of Katharsis that sets it besides Eleos and Phobos has to be dissolved and I will provide this plead with further arguments in a following section.

3.7. A Last Remark to the Interpretation of Schadewaldt

The two quotations in the previous section - one of Halliwell, the other of Aristotle - undeniably support that the two tragic emotions cannot be distangled from the specific

plot-structure of tragedy. A further undeniable fact consists of the conclusion that tragedy evokes Katharsis and that this experience has something to do with the specific emotions aroused by tragedy. We have seen that other art forms arousing other emotions still evoke Katharsis. I indicated that Katharsis is crucially interlocked with aesthetic emotion, but not with the specific plot-structure of tragedy. This claim shall be argued further.

In *Furcht und Mitleid*? Schadewaldt describes Katharsis as ultimate relieve of an excessive amount of Eleos and Phobos, as “Endeffekt”. Halliwell (1986) references this specific notion of Katharsis as “Endeffekt” to criticise his colleague’s theory. He says:

And it is especially difficult to see why *katharsis* should be mentioned in the definition at all, if it is merely the ‘Endeffekt’, the return to normality after the turbulence of the tragic emotions, which Schadewaldt calls it. (354)

Indeed, it is somehow unclear what Schadewaldt exactly has indicated by calling Katharsis an “Endeffekt”. According to my opinion, despite the strengths and originalities, *Furcht und Mitleid*? provides an insufficiently clear picture of the specific *point in time* of Katharsis to occur. Is the “Endeffekt” implicit to the play? If so, when or where at the play does it occur? Is it connected to a specific dramaturgical element? It occurs at the end of tragedy; but what is the end? The Lysis? The Exodos? When do we return to normality after the emotional “turbulence” aroused by the play? After all, it is the moment of silencing that constitutes Katharsis, according to Schadewaldt. But when are the specific tragic emotions ultimately silenced? Definitely not when Antigone strangles herself; not yet when Haimon threatens to murder his father and then commits suicide; not before Euridyke has heard of these incidents and also commits suicide. Not before Kreon has lost everything. Finally, *Antigone*’s last scene displays the excessive lamentation of Kreon; hardly the moment to be relieved as the scene is still steeped in tragic emotion. The last song of the chorus, at the very end of the play, might provide a certain pacification:

Das weitaus Erste an höchstem Glück
Ist Besonnensein. Und not auch ist,
Vor den Göttern nie zu verletzen die Scheu.
Doch große Worte Großprahlender,
Wenn unter großen Schlägen sie gebüßt,
Haben im Alter gelehrt die Besinnung.

The chorus appraises the actions of Kreon and provides them with a certain meaning. However, can this short saying be considered as the demanded silencing of the tragic emotions? Can these words afford the kathartic end of turbulence? These final, lamented words by the chorus that are part of the diegesis and are thus strongly emotionally affected? They hardly can; not in a tragedy that displays such a disastrous ending. The silencing of the turbulence, the final dissolving of aesthetic emotion is not internal to the plot-structure of tragedy. It is *when the curtains fall*, when the illusion finally breaks, when the play is over and we are sent back to our profane, normal lives again. This is how I initially understood Schadewaldt's interpretation and this is essential for the interpretation advocated here. And I conceive of this being the only way Katharsis is generally applicable to tragedy and other forms of the arts. However, I fear that I was wrong ascribing such notion to Schadewaldt; rather, it seems that he ultimately advocated a diverse opinion. A sole remark in *Furcht und Mitleid?* indicates what Schadewaldt (1991a) indeed conceived of as the proper alleviation of the tragic emotions:

Rein auf das Phänomen der erst im bewegten Spiel ihre volle Wirklichkeit gewinnenden Tragödie blickt Aristoteles: auf die durch die drei einheitlich ganz an der Wurzel angefaßten Elementarbegriffe φόβος, ἔλεος und κάθαρσις bezeichnete, einheitliche Erregungskurve: wie sie zunächst mit φόβος und ἔλεος, im einzelnen vielfach variiert, ansteigt und schließlich durch Schauer und Jammer hindurch in der rein mit den Mitteln der Handlungsführung herbeigeführten lustvollen Erleichterung von Schauer und Jammer endet. (278)

The remark is not more than a hint, the text is at some point ambiguous. *Furcht und Mitleid?* leaves room for interpretation. However, Schadewaldt's book *Die griechische*

Tragödie, a posthumous published transcript of several lectures held in Tübingen during the late sixties, either elucidates Schadewaldt's conception of Katharsis, or it marks a retreat from his previous, controversial claims. In the course of one of his lectures Schadewaldt (1991b) unambiguously explains and specifies the point of time and the dramaturgical correspondence of Katharsis:

Der Erleichterung [Katharsis] des Zuhörers liegt eine entsprechende *lysis* der Handlung zugrunde, der subjektiven Stimmungskurve in der Seele des Hörers entspricht eine objektiv bestimmte Handlungsführung, beruhend auf diesen beiden Elementen [Desis and Lysis]. [...]

Und der Befreiung in der Seele des Zuhörers entspricht die objektive Lösung am Ende, die bewirkt, daß man trotz allem Schrecklichen doch das Bewußtsein eines vielleicht fernen, aber unterschütterbaren Sinnhorizonts hat, des Horizonts des Göttlichen. [...] Dieser Wiederherstellung eines bleibenden, großen, göttlichen Sinnzusammenhangs ist die Katharsis zugeordnet, und das ist doch wohl etwas Positives. (29 and 32)

Especially the second part of these clear assertions of Schadewaldt are surprising when considering the emphasis on Katharsis as an involuntary and pleasurable outlet of elementary, uncontrollable affects in his 1955 treatise. The “positive” that Schadewaldt speaks of consists now of nothing less than the connection of Katharsis to a divine sphere, an immovable order. We are reminded here on Hegel's (1986) explanation of tragedy as depiction of an order of being, referring to his concept of “sittliche Mächte”. Katharsis suddenly implies the comprehension of a divine and eternal ontology; an aspect, that was disregarded in *Furcht und Mitleid*?

Interestingly, advocating his CLARIFICATION theory, Golden (1991) quotes the historian of medicine Pedro Laín Entralgo, who writes:

... The impulse unshackling the cathartic process did not come to the spectator ‘from below’ - from his viscera and his humors I mean to say, even though the tragic state of mind might affect both - but ‘from above’, from the dianoetic enlightenment elicited by the *logos* of the poem. [...] (400f)

Furcht und Mitleid? describes Katharsis as an experience “from below”, particularly by claiming Eleos and Phobos as elementary affects. However, when complemented with *Die griechische Tragödie*, Schadewaldt’s interpretation gets a clear “from above” connotation, an aspect of “enlightenment”. No wonder then that Schadewaldt’s conception of the tragic emotions as involuntary elementary affects will be commonly rejected if even he himself is not consequent here. It is remarkable that even Schadewaldt does not dare to disburden Katharsis from extrinsic meanings and to concentrate the aesthetic concept to the sphere of aesthetic emotion. His interpretation in *Die griechische Tragödie* actually declares nothing less than an involuntary, affective comprehension of a divine insight. However, I claim that only the *reduction*, or rather *liberation* of Katharsis from extrinsic meanings - be they ethical, intellectual or cultic - can reconcile the aesthetic concept with Eleos and Phobos as elementary affects. We hence see a first discrepancy in Schadewaldt’s interpretation of Katharsis.

A second discrepancy derives from the claim that Katharsis corresponds with the Lysis of tragedy. As can be seen in the quote above, Schadewaldt conceives of Eleos and Phobos being elicited by the Desis, the entanglement of action, and Katharsis by the Lysis, the dissolution of action. I already pointed out that, for instance, the Exodos of *Antigone* until the very last replica is steeped in tragic emotions. However, another main objection against this direct interweaving of Katharsis with the “sequence of causation, the moral status of the agents, the discrepancy between intention and result in human action, the magnitude of the change in fortune”, as Halliwell (1986) describes the complex plot-structure of tragedy (see 197, already quoted above), derives from the *Poetics* itself, from an evidence that is widely recognised, but hardly understood.

3.8. The sole Mention of Katharsis in the *Poetics*

The intertwining of Katharsis with the plot of tragedy implicitly demands that tragedy must afford the evocation of Katharsis in correspondence to the evocation of Eleos and

Phobos. The comprehension of the Desis arouses the tragic emotions; the comprehension of the Lysis brings the alleviation, the Katharsis of the emotions. Particular incidents on stage correspond with these appropriate responses. Katharsis - as Eleos and Phobos - is allocated by a corresponding structural element. This is the implicit claim of all interpretations that substantially connect Katharsis with the narrative plot-structure of tragedy. Katharsis is thus juxtaposed to the tragic emotions, having a comparable structural correspondence.

This particular conception misinterprets or ignores the crucial fact that there is solely one Katharsis-clause in the *Poetics*. The aesthetic concept is mentioned only once and not again. I have already pointed that out in a different context. “[Imitation] through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation [Katharsis] of these emotions” (see Aristotle 1997, 10); the *Poetics* says not more about Katharsis. Hence, Katharsis is in the context of tragedy fundamentally connected to Eleos and Phobos, its proper aesthetic emotions; whereas Katharsis as notion valid for a whole variety of art forms (for example the play of the Aulos, the comedy or the rock concert), is fundamentally connected to aesthetic emotions in general.

The more important conclusion that derives from the adequate consideration of the fact that Aristotle did not bother to exclaim Katharsis more than once in the *Poetics* sufficiently pays tribute to the fact that the philosopher on the contrary mentions Eleos and Phobos frequently throughout the course of its 26 chapters. As illustration, see the quotation of Aristotle at the end of section 3.6. There the philosopher clearly demands the action to be lamentful and horrible, he points out in detail what incidents elicit the proper emotions and how these incidents have to be presented. In fact, Schadewaldt references the very quotation of Aristotle displayed above when claiming that tragedy “schließlich durch Schauder und Jammer hindurch in der rein mit den Mitteln der Handlungsführung herbeigeführten lustvollen Erleichterung von Schauder und Jammer endet.” (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 278; also quoted above) Scrutinising the quotation of

Aristotle and the *Poetics* as a whole, we will - to our surprise - conclude that Schadewaldt's claim is wrong. Aristotle *never* interweaves Katharsis with "Handlungsführung", the plot-structure of tragedy. Schadewaldt puts his words into the mouth of Aristotle, as has been done by so many before.

In Schadewaldt's conception, Katharsis is somehow manifested in the plot-structure of tragedy. It needs a corresponding structural element - the Lysis - as Eleos and Phobos need their corresponding structural element - the Desis. These elements need to be of particular quality to evoke the proper effects on the audience. However, Aristotle never points out a particular structural element to elicit Katharsis. He does indeed so concerning Eleos and Phobos, he explains what kind of action has to be represented to elicit these particular emotions. If Aristotle juxtaposed Katharsis structurally to Eleos and Phobos, he would have provided a comparable elaboration in the *Poetics*. We do not find this comparable elaboration. We do not find a single remark that indicates that tragedy must represent a form of action that elicits Katharsis. We only find the sole self-evident remark that Katharsis occurs through Eleos and Phobos.

Schadewaldt's concept requires the dramaturgical alleviation of Eleos and Phobos. It even requires a reduction, a silencing of the emotional turbulence. Well, Aristotle does not indicate such alleviation, neither do we commonly find it within the Lysis of tragedy. On the contrary, tragedies mostly end with an excess of lamentation and horror. There is no "versöhnliche Abrundung". If Schadewaldt was right, Aristotle would have pointed out what kind of action is adequate to elicit the Katharsis of Eleos and Phobos. But the philosopher does not bother even once to do so.

According to the *Poetics*, a tragedy might fail to evoke its proper emotions; incidents might be gruesome, but not horrible and lamentful. There is no remark that directly or even indirectly concerns the potential failure of the effect of Katharsis. I claim two reasons for this fact. First, Katharsis is in a sense much more "profane" than virtually all

schools of interpretation dare to accept. Even the orgiastic Aulos evokes it; certainly its melodic play does not provide the audience with an anticipation of a comparable “göttlichen Horizont”. Hence and secondly, for the evocation of Katharsis the arousal of specific emotions is necessary and sufficient. With “specific emotions” I do not indicate particular emotions, such as Eleos, Phobos or ecstasy, but I indicate a particular class of aesthetic emotions. Again, this class of emotions consists of those that are aroused in the recipient of a piece of art. This class of emotions potentially includes all emotions we know from mundane life. Aesthetic emotions evoke Katharsis; Katharsis indicates the unique quality of aesthetic emotions and hence the difference to mundane emotions.

The *Poetics* never considers the case that a tragedy might fail to evoke Katharsis. How can this be explained if the very function of tragedy consists of the aesthetic concept? How can it be explained if Katharsis needs particular structural specifications? The reasonable answer to these questions is: a tragedy will evoke Katharsis if it succeeds to elicit emotions; it will evoke *tragic* Katharsis if it elicits its *proper* emotions; and only then we will speak of a *proper* tragedy. Aristotle elaborates the structural conditions of the specific emotional arousal. He then associates Eleos and Phobos with Katharsis, self-evidently, indicating a different quality of these emotions in the context of tragedy compared to mundane experience. He does not indicate any internal structural condition for Katharsis. Because there is none.

3.9. Katharsis as Purely Emotional

It appears that scholars are constantly tempted to interpret Katharsis as notion that embraces the entire effects and meanings of tragedy. Kurt von Fritz, for example, writes:

[...] Die *katharsis* hat nicht nur eine emotionale Seite. Die Tragödie ist nach Meinung des Aristoteles auch ‘philosophischer’, d. h. zu tieferer Einsicht führend, als die Geschichte. Ihre

Erkenntnisfunktion ist ebenso wichtig wie ihre emotionale Wirkung. Beide sind in Wirklichkeit voneinander untrennbar. (von Fritz 1962, XXVI)

It is undeniable that tragedy will provide philosophical insights if comprehended correctly. Well, it could be doubted that Aristotle considered the aspect of insight as being as important as the aspect of emotional impact, but this is not important here. Also von Fritz's last claim, that these aspects effect each other, probably holds true, which does not necessarily mean that Aristotle did not draw a conceptual line. But the preceded claim that Katharsis is not only of emotional nature is a wrong conclusion, it misleadingly expands Katharsis to all meaningful dimensions and effects of tragedy. Katharsis is indeed only concerned with emotions as has been argued extensively above. I want to emphasise again that this does not imply a reduction of the manifold effects of tragedy. Of course the proper reception of tragedy demands a cognisant and intellectual process. To comprehend the political dimension of *Antigone*, we need to understand, appraise and appreciate the actions of its hero. Even the tragic emotions and particularly Eleos demand a certain cognisant understanding, as has been shown above. This is the reason why Schadewaldt's conception of Eleos and Phobos as elementary, involuntary affects found almost no resonance, as this approach seems to undermine the intellectual nuances of the tragic emotions and tragedy generally. Anyhow, considering that a rather profane emotion as ecstasy evokes Katharsis too, we cannot propose that Katharsis itself demands these reasoning processes that are specific to tragedy. Katharsis comes with the emotion, affectively and involuntarily, "from below". It is not a process of further evaluation of the contents of the tragic events. The particularity of the Katharsis of tragedy is solely located within the emotions of Eleos and Phobos. These emotions are specific to tragedy, but Katharsis itself is not. A Katharsis evoked by tragedy indeed demands higher cognitive capacities than a Katharsis of the play of the flute. But this higher demand only addresses the emotions, not the Katharsis of them. Especially Eleos needs the appropriate evaluation of narrative events to be excited, whereas the sensual attendance of the orgiastic melodies seems to be enough to excite ecstasy. But the Katharsis, the

consequent pleasure of all of these aesthetic emotions, is somehow similar. It demands no further particular effort. Indeed, the evocation of Katharsis demands solely one general precondition: the appraisal of the experienced emotions as being of aesthetic nature, which implies *the recognition and appreciation of the particular source and cause of the emotion as a piece of art*. As soon as these emotions are *cognisantly* experienced *in the course of tragedy*, they are on an affective level kathartic.

3.10. A First Conclusion

Regarding the evidence that has been put forth in the previous sections and chapters, I conclude that Katharsis is not connected to any structural specific of any particular piece of art. It is solely and essentially interwoven with the principle of the arousal of emotions in the recipient of the arts. Katharsis resonates with aesthetic emotion, providing it with an inherent quality that distinguishes it from mundane emotion. The refutation of Plato's charge consists of this Aristotelian insight: that tragedies evoke a somehow *different* form of Eleos and Phobos, corresponding to its mundane forms as lined out in the *Rhetoric*, but associated with a further feature: Katharsis. Katharsis marks the *difference*. Aristotle realised and formulated within the framework of Katharsis that certain aspects of aesthetic experience are fundamentally different from mundane experience. The arts are not a "lie", they are not a plain, inferior imitation or representation; they are somehow autonomous, indeed, an "umfassende natürliche Lebenserscheinung" (see Schadewaldt 1991a, 285; already quoted above), as it provides a unique form of aesthetic pleasure, a pleasure that emerges from the proper experience of aesthetic emotions. The respective conditions of such particular aesthetic emotions are no concern of Katharsis itself, but of the structural specifics of a particular piece of art.

The disentanglement of Katharsis from any specific tragic structure is the only consequent reconciliation of all Aristotelian remarks on the aesthetic concept. It is a

fallacy that Aristotle in his *Poetics* would mention Katharsis only once if it demanded eliciting structural elements. Thus, a sequential model of tragic emotions and Katharsis, such as Schadewaldt's, becomes increasingly unlikely.

Fuhrmann (1992) points out that the Katharsis of tragedy and the Katharsis of the orgiastic musical play show only two similarities, namely that both evoke certain emotions and that this emotional experience excites pleasure (see 109). The philologist did not realise that he almost captured the very nature of the aesthetic concept by indicating these similarities, which are the common ground of Katharsis. However, Fuhrmann did not dare to reduce the notion of Katharsis to this common ground. The never-ending controversy around Katharsis has loaded the notion with countless connotations and demands. Katharsis potentially embraces all conceivable effects of the arts, virtually every aspect of tragedy has been discussed and shifted into the framework of the aesthetic concept. Katharsis has been claimed as a training ground for virtuous dispositions (Lessing), as therapeutic treatment (Bernays), as clarification, as intellectual insight into truth (Golden), as anticipation of a divine order of being (Schadewaldt and perhaps Hegel), as ethical alignment that shapes our judgements of the world in a proper way (Halliwell) or as combination of these elements (Fuhrmann). But Katharsis does not embrace such totalities, it is not the culmination point or sudden impact of all conceivable effects that we provide the arts with. It is entirely implausible that Aristotle would mention Katharsis only once in his *Poetics* if he provided the aesthetic concept with such broad, manifold effects that equally regard insight, emotion and intellect. The notion of Katharsis cannot afford the manifold effects that have been ascribed to it. We see that such claims cause too many inconsistencies and discordances. Katharsis, in fact, is not even essentially matching the complexity of Eleos and Phobos, as it also emerges out of the (irritating) play of the Aulos. This particular melodic play does not even come close to the Olympic dignity of tragedy; how can we then load Katharsis with such earnest dignity? Katharsis has to be alleviated from the manifold claims listed above, only then we will find consistency and ultimately a concept to work with.

Indeed, tragedies do afford manifold intrinsic and extrinsic meanings and dimensions. The tragedies of Aischylos, Sophocles and Euripides still entertain us, Katharsis is still present. More importantly, these pieces of art belong to the cultural heritage of occidental civilisation. Flashar (2000) identifies the first stasimon of *Antigone* which starts with the famous phrase “Viel Ungeheures ist, doch nichts so Ungeheures wie der Mensch” as “Grundtext europäischen Denkens und Dichtens” (see 68). But the manifold meanings and messages of tragedy do not culminate in the single experience of Katharsis. Katharsis does not embrace *the entire* effect of tragedy, but one particular effect.

It appears that Katharsis needs to be *purgated*. The common ground of Katharsis indicates what no theorist wants to accept: that Katharsis only describes particular aspects of aesthetic experience. In the shadow of the manifold effects that Katharsis has been provided with throughout the last centuries, my approach may be confronted with the objection that it is profane. However, I do not conceive of this alleviation of Katharsis as being profane. Katharsis describes the fascinating paradox of aesthetic emotion and the unique quality of aesthetic delight. It concerns the paradox that we are able to have emotions towards Antigone corresponding (but not identical!) to those as if she was one of us. The issue remains that these emotions undergo a crucial, fundamental modification when felt for such fictitious character of theatre. Katharsis concerns the unique significance of aesthetic emotion. Furthermore, it indicates the contrariness of this emotional contagion and its necessary mode of aesthetic perception. The Greeks were aware of this contrariness and they manifested it in the nature of a god. This god is Dionysos.

4. Dionysos: God of Tragedy

So ist Dionysos zu seiner Zeit auch in der geistigen Welt des Griechentums erschienen, und sein Kommen war so gewaltig, daß es uns heute noch erschüttert.
(Otto 1996, 190)

Dionysos is a Greek god, but not a real Olympian. He is commonly known as the giver of wine and he is also the god of vegetation. He is the god of tragedy, the god of the mask and ecstasy. He is known as a great hunter and persuader. He is the one who is shaking and annihilating regularities, he dissolves boundaries. Dionysos, Bacchus or Bromios is the noisy, the wrathful, the tearing, the frantic and ultimately insane god.

With Bernays the cultic dimensions finally reentered conceptions of Katharsis. Also Schadewaldt emphasises the ecstatic and involuntary nature of the aesthetic experience. Dionysos was subject to many important thinkers, most commonly the god will be linked to his famous interpreter Friedrich Nietzsche. In *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, initially published in 1872, Nietzsche formulates the dionysiac artistic impulse, the ecstatic counterpart of the dreamlike apollonian (see Nietzsche 2007). It has since become a fundamental principle of aesthetics. However, Nietzsche's interpretation of Dionysos is neither authoritative, nor sufficient, though remarkable and important. The philologist, poet and philosopher apparently clearly comprehended and elaborated the nature of Dionysos and put it, as the master of German language he was, into one beautiful line:

– oh Nacht, oh Schweigen, oh totenstillen Lärm! ...
(Nietzsche 2004, 404)

In 1933 Walter F. Otto (1996) published a monography called *Dionysos*. Through nineteen chapters the author describes the ambiguous nature of Dionysos with all its manifold aspects. The book shall serve as main reference for the present section.

Philologist Anton Bierl states in 1989 that Otto's interpretation of the Greek god still gets broad affirmation and he furthermore outlines the most fundamental element of the nature of Dionysos in reference to Otto: Dionysos is the god who bridges the opposite, he is the god of united contrariness (see Bierl 1989). Ambiguity of course remains and Dionysos cannot be reduced to a single formula. He rightfully carries many names and it needs books to describe his entire shape and realm. The principle of contrariness appears to be a fundamental element, perhaps the most important of all, definitely more important than his affection to wine and rush.

Although the divinity carries many names and has many shapes, there appears to be one particular image that represents his nature most adequately: the mask is Dionysos' strongest symbol. It embodies the god's double nature and the principle of uniting contrarinesses. If I would be asked to explain Dionysos in only one sentence, I would choose to point out this very principle by saying: *Dionysos' face is a mask*. In a remarkable chapter on the symbol of the mask, Otto (1996) writes:

Das erschütternde Hereintreten des Gottes [Dionysos] und seine unausweichliche Gegenwart hat ein Symbol gefunden, das noch mehr sagt, als die bisher besprochenen Kultformen; ein Bild, aus dem das verwirrende Rätsel seiner Doppelheit hervorblickt und mit ihm der Wahnsinn. Das ist die Maske. (80)

And:

Das Gesicht mit den anblickenden Augen ist von jeher als die eigentlichste Erscheinung menschen- und tiergestaltiger Wesen empfunden worden. Diese Erscheinung wird von der Maske festgehalten, und zwar um so wirkungsvoller, als sie bloße Oberfläche ist. Daher ist sie das stärkste Sinnbild für Gegenwärtigkeit. [...]

Und doch ist das Phänomen der Maske damit erst zur Hälfte gedeutet. Die Maske ist ganz Begegnung - und nur Begegnung, nichts als Gegenüber. Sie hat keine Rückseite - Geister haben keine Rückseite, sagt das Volk. Sie hat nichts, was über das machtvolle Entgegentreten hinausginge - also auch kein volles Dasein. Sie ist Symbol und Erscheinung dessen, was da ist und zugleich nicht da ist; unmittelbarste

Gegenwart und absolute Abwesenheit in Einem. [...]

Sie stellt ihn [Dionysos] gewaltsam, unausweichlich in die Gegenwart hinein, und entzieht ihn zu gleicher Zeit in das unsagbare Ferne. (84)

Aristotle literally connects the play of the Aulos to Dionysos. But also theatre, particularly tragedy, is substantially located in his realm. In ancient Greece tragedies were performed in the Theatre of Dionysos as a competitive part of religious feasts for Dionysos. The Greeks remarkably clearly understood that theatre depended and represented the dionysiac double-nature symbolised by the mask, as the aesthetic experience of drama is steeped in a contrariness of perception.

The dramatic form itself implies contrariness: it mimics *action*, it depicts presence. Tragedy originated in the Dithyrambos, the epical song of a chorus to the honour of Dionysos. Thespis is considered as the first who opposed the chorus, he is the first actor. Aischylos invented the second, Sophocles the third. Dramatic presence was born, a cultural achievement that appears self-evident today. What does this novel form of presence, this “acting-as-if”, on a philosophical level mean? It certainly implies a new way of perceiving narration, it demands different cognitive abilities than the epical mediation of the myth. Regarding drama, Otto (1996) even speaks of a rebirth of myth. About the actor he writes:

Er ist er selbst und doch ein anderer. Der Wahnsinn hat ihn angerührt, etwas von dem Geheimnis des rasenden Gottes, von dem Geiste des Doppelseins, der in der Maske lebt, und dessen letzter Abkömmling der Schauspieler ist. (190)

Tragedy is contrary as it evokes incidents which are past as present; it depicts horrible incidents that occur directly in front of us, but are equally in unreachable distance. The action of tragedy is implicitly determined, but even more it strikes us that *we* cannot intervene, that *we* are helpless and impotent, but witnesses of the so lively action occurring seemingly tangible in front of us. What holds for the mask holds for theatre as well: “Unmittelbarste Gegenwart und absolute Abwesenheit in Einem”.

Our responses to such theatrical performances seem irrational: we witness Antigone being buried alive by her uncle, the brothers Eteocles and Polyneikes murdering each other at the gates of Theben, Aias throwing himself into the sword and Iocasta strangling herself. We witness Agaue tearing her son into parts and Orest assassinating his mother, while his sister Electra watches in ecstatic delight. We see the delusion and insanity of wrathful Dionysos appearing in coercive presence. But we sit in our chairs and watch silently. Yes, we lament and shiver, but all to little: the emotion too settled, the terror too dull in face of the mischief and agony presented. It is apathy, numbness in front of the contrariness of the dionysiac spectacle: the agony appearing present and changeable, but at the same moment understood as past and inevitable.

Our emotions in theatre are a paradox. Flashar (1991) references an ancient source and writes: “[...] der Rhapsode Ion weint und empfindet Schrecken, obwohl er sich unter vielen Freunden befindet und ihm keiner Unrecht tut.” (see 297) We feel empathically for Antigone, we are horrified and lament when she is strangled. Perceiving what we experience in theatre as *incidents*, we are too silent; considering them as *scenes*, we are too emotional. Finally, all these feelings give us a dark and deep delight; a delight, that particularly in the context of tragedy appears irrational.

These emotions of lament, horror and delight are emotions towards a mask; we are aware of its emptiness. Theatre depicts a contrariness that has to be *known* and *accepted*. We perceive and feel the events of the play as truth, but we understand and modify the experience of them as illusion. We see a face, but we know the mask. Contrary to his contemporaries, Gorgias already elaborated the delusive nature of speech and poetry. He stated that poetry appeared somehow absurd: the delusion legitimate, the smart recipient not refusing to be deluded (see Fuhrmann 1992, 100). Fuhrmann (1992) further comments on the work of the sophist:

Die Folgezeit machte sich lediglich einige Elemente seiner [Gorgias'] Wirkungsästhetik zu eigen; sie verschmähte indes sein Bestes, den Griff nach der Kategorie der Täuschung, der Fiktion, nach einer Kategorie also, die den Wirklichkeitsbezug der Dichtung angemessener erfaßt hätte als die der Nachahmung. (100f)

The comment is also to be understood as objection on Aristotle's treatise on poetry and it has to be considered as particularly relevant for a conception of the arts and aesthetic emotion in general. In theatre we knowingly and successfully seek for delusion and thus acquire the strongest contrariness that the arts can provide: incidents that would cause us agony in mundane life become delightful in the realm of Dionysos, under the condition that we are aware of the artistic nature of the event. This is the highest contrariness of Dionysos as god of theatre, as god of illusion.

The insight into the non-existence and the simultaneous truthful perception of the non-existing appearing lively in front of us, this is the fundamental precondition for Katharsis. We feel delight at the horrible in the context of the arts. Katharsis means pleasure, pleasure at everything that occurs, be it horrible or ecstatic. Katharsis hence demands the insight into the illusionary nature, the artistic nature has to be revealed as such. The most insistent moment in tragedy is thus the moment *the curtains fall*; and I of course know that the theatre of Dionysos was not furnished with such. It is a metaphor for the sudden collapse of the diegetic world, the ultimate break of illusion. Katharsis demands this break of illusion; the burst of the diegetic world evokes Katharsis.

However, it would be a fallacy to conceive of Katharsis as an "Endeffekt", an experience that literally demands the play to end, the curtains to be falling, unambiguously indicating the illusionary character of theatre by ending it. The illusion potentially breaks any moment; for instance, when we leave theatre after the first episode of the tragedy; or when we shift our gaze from the stage to the friends around us; even when we realise that the epiphany of Hercules is a Deus Ex Machina (*Philoctetes*). It ultimately breaks at

every single moment we become aware of the fact that those people on stage are wearing masks, every moment we come to realise that those incidents are *not real*. Therefore, Katharsis potentially happens at any moment of experiencing aesthetic emotion, any moment, we cognitively - voluntarily or involuntarily - break the illusion. It is an inherent, intertwined quality that distinguishes these emotions as particular, unique class. Katharsis, this basic category of the experience of the arts, has no distinct moment or structural place. It marks the fundamental *difference* that makes the experience of aesthetic emotions so unique.

As illustration I will again refer to the incident of the strangled Antigone. So far I described the scene as a sole picture of Phobos and Eleos. This was the picture evoked for the messenger who reported the incident. For him, these were real events occurring in front of his eyes; events so shaking and horrible that he may be haunted by them for the rest of his fictitious life. He empathically explains this picture to Iocasta and us, the silent watchers. We like it. What terrifies him and Iocasta to the bones gives us delight: this picture of pure violence, of a corpse and its agonised witnesses, this picture of pain and death - Phobos; this picture of undeserved collapse of fortune into misfortune, of a fallen sister and princess, this picture of an essential inadequacy of the world - Eleos. This picture gives us pleasure as we see that Antigone, Haimon and Kreon are wearing masks and that in the middle of them someone else is present, hollow to them. Dionysos is there and stares at us - we experience Katharsis.

PART II

5. A Note on Aesthetics

Supposing every one of us has certain ideas of the notion of the aesthetic. These ideas range from sensual references to the arts to the factual equation of “aesthetic” with “beautiful”, such as when we speak of an “aesthetic picture”. The research field of Aesthetics is dedicated to the investigation of the notion of the aesthetic and to the matter of (subjective) aesthetic experience. It accounts for the aesthetic as a vast and manifold notion. In his book *Einführung in die psychologische Ästhetik* Christian Allesch (2006) points out the difficulties of Aesthetics (the research field indicated by a capital letter):

Sich dem Versuch von Normierungen und Kategorisierungen immer wieder zu entziehen, ist ein spezifisches Merkmal ästhetischer Phänomene. (185)

Acknowledging this thesis is dedicated to the *aesthetic* concept of Katharsis and to *aesthetic* emotion, it seems reasonable to elaborate the manifold meanings of the notion of the aesthetic and thus elucidate what is meant by calling Katharsis and emotions *aesthetic*. Allesch (2006) gives an excellent and comprehensible introductory overview on the topic and the respective research field of Psychological Aesthetics. He points out three major issues that determine and constitute discussions and discordances in the field of Aesthetics. I will structure the following overview in reference to these major issues.

5.1. Issue # 1

The first issue revolves around the question if Aesthetics is to be considered as investigation concerning solely the *beautiful and the arts* or generally “sinnliche Erfahrung”, which can be translated as *sensory* or *sensual experience*. Alexander Baumgarten, who lived in the 18th century, was the first to attempt an establishment of a

scientific field that he baptised Aesthetics. In fact he pleaded for the latter approach, connecting the term aesthetics to its ancient Greek root *aísthesis*, which refers to sensory perception. Baumgarten's research addressed a general mode of cognition that was commonly disregarded those days. Soon after Baumgarten, however, a more narrow conception of Aesthetics gained popularity. This narrow conception exclusively referred to Aesthetics as the systematic reflexion on the *beauty and the arts*.

Allesch (2006) states that the broad "*aísthetic*" view that connects the notion of the aesthetic to the "*gesamte menschliche Wahrnehmung*" is commonly accepted at the current today (see 17). He complements:

Im Unterschied zur psychologischen Wahrnehmungslehre verweist der Begriff "Ästhetik" [...] stets auf eine besondere Weise des Wahrnehmens; auf etwas, das durch die gängigen psychologischen Wahrnehmungstheorien wohl nicht ausreichend thematisiert wird.

Was mit diesem "Besonderen" des ästhetischen Wahrnehmens angesprochen sein könnte, ist besser mit dem Begriff der "sinnlichen Erfahrung" auszudrücken als mit dem Begriff "Wahrnehmung". *Aísthesis* wird zwar gelegentlich auch mit "Wahrnehmung" übersetzt, "Wahrnehmung" ist aber nicht zuletzt durch den psychologischen Wahrnehmungsbegriff und seine Theoriegeschichte geprägt und löst daher andere Konnotationen aus als der Begriff der "sinnlichen Erfahrung". [...]
(18)

The paragraph suggests that "*sinnliche Erfahrung*" as central component of aesthetic experience cannot plainly be translated as *sensory experience*. Allesch provides it with a clear *sensual* component; thus, we will rather speak of *sensual experience*. Indeed, a general theory of *sensual experience* cannot reasonably be limited to the arts or the beautiful. In this view, "aesthetic" describes a certain perspective on the world.

When I refer to Katharsis as *aesthetic* concept and to *aesthetic* emotion, I particularly connect it to the arts. In fact, I do not conceive it as reasonable to loosen the bond between the aesthetic and the arts too vigorously. Regarding aesthetic experience, I

suggest the following: aesthetic experience will most likely and most purely, but not exclusively, occur in the context of the reception of the arts. This does neither mean that every recipient of a particular piece of art will have an aesthetic experience, nor that we need the declared context of the arts to experience the aesthetic. The authors of a paper that will be discussed in detail later write:

There is no doubt that art is the prototypical domain for questions of aesthetic research but other objects may also be treated as aesthetically relevant. (Leder et al. 2004, 490)

Particularly in the twentieth century, artistic and mundane dimensions fused. Pieces of art cannot always be easily identified as such; mundane incidents are not always “real” in a conventional sense. Notions such as “aesthetisation” and “medialisation” hit the point; researchers even attest an “increasing ‘aesthetisation of the world’ “ (see Leder 2004, 490). These developments shall not be disregarded. The aesthetic is potentially ubiquitous. It seems antiquated to reduce aesthetic experience to the *artistic*, to suppose an isolated sphere that is addressed by the notion, indicating that it has to occur within the explicit framework of the arts, for instance, in an exhibition or a theatre performance. But it would be a misleading overexertion to disentangle aesthetics entirely from the arts and thus equate it with its etymological root of *aísthesis*. Allesch’s conception of the aesthetic as “sinnliche Erfahrung” or *sensual experience* is a rightful attempt to bridge the two extremes.

5.2. Issue # 2

The second issue concerns the question whether we conceive of the aesthetic as an *objective feature* of the artistic expression or a *subjective impression* in the recipient. The first approach is traditionally aligned to the *artistic* perspective on Aesthetics and often

culminates in normative and conservative perspectives on the arts. Hegel's (1986) *Vorlesungen zur Ästhetik* are an illustrative example of such approach. The purpose of a treatise on aesthetics in this regard mainly consisted of pointing out the proper quality and structure of a piece of art, paying rather low attention to the receiver. Goethe put that notion to an extreme (and subsequently failed to gain popularity as theatre director; for a magnificent review on this case see Schwind 1996). Indeed, concerning (rightful!) conceptions of Katharsis, he exclaimed: "Aristoteles, der das Vollkommenste vor sich hatte soll an den Effect gedacht haben! welch ein Jammer!" (see Mittenzwei 2001, 256; already quoted above) This statement is directly opposing psychological, subjective approaches of Aesthetics. Traditionally, the approach to Aesthetics as an *objective feature* and *artistics* tends to ennoble the arts. This tendency is clearly determinable in the history of the notion of Katharsis. In fact, the historical discordances on Katharsis seem to correspond with those in the larger framework of discussions in Aesthetics. Lessing, Goethe, Hegel, but also Bernays and Schadewaldt interpreted the notion of Katharsis and Greek tragedy in accord with a particular Zeitgeist.

Aesthetic theories that emphasise the aesthetic as *subjective impression* and thus focus mainly on the receiver are commonly linked to empirical approaches. In the middle of the nineteenth century Gustav Theodor Fechner initially started to conduct experimental research in the field of Aesthetics. He heralded the "empirical turn" in Aesthetics (see Allesch 2006, 33). His colleague Theodor Lipps would later unambiguously assert the aesthetic as a psychological experience and the field of Aesthetics as psychological discipline (see Allesch 2006, 37). Fechner claimed that the speculative philosophical approaches to Aesthetics were "Riesen mit thönernen Füßen" and that such an "Ästhetik von oben" is to be opposed by an "Ästhetik von unten" (see Allesch 2006, 33). This phrase clearly reminds us on the Katharsis-discourse, where particularly CLARIFICATION theories postulate Katharsis "from above", whereas OUTLET theories propose Katharsis "from below". It seems that only a "from below" approach to Aesthetics makes it suitable for empirical research. Bernays' "from below" conception of

Katharsis as therapy was the first concrete conception of the notion that could potentially have been proven empirically. It becomes a matter of unconfirmable complexity if Katharsis is associated with all these highly philosophical meanings and insights that have been subscribed to it. The “reduction” of Katharsis to the matter of aesthetic emotion fulfills this purpose to make it potentially empirically investigable as well. I consider such approach to Katharsis as an attempt to reconcile approaches to Aesthetics that are traditionally disparate; a point that will be discussed further down in greater detail.

5.3. Biological Aesthetics

The controversy of *objective feature* and *subjective impression* in Aesthetics shall not ignore empirical evidence of various emerging disciplines that elaborate biologically based Aesthetics. Human Ethology (which is the European equivalent to Evolutionary Psychology), for instance, provides the appraisal of beauty (and also ugliness) with an evolutionary relevant behavioral purpose. Aesthetics are indeed still concerned with the conditions and perception of beauty, even though we see “a marked tendency to abandon the old concepts of beauty as the sole criterion of good art” (see Leder et al. 2004, 190). However, at its very basis, the theories of Human Ethology claim that “beauty” poses as mirror of “good” biological constitution and that our preference for beauty serves a clear evolutionary purpose (see Buss 2001, Grammer 1996 and Miller & Todd 1998). Thus, beauty is constituted by particular, non-arbitrary bodily features that clearly oppose David Hume’s famous verdict of “Beauty in things exists merely in the mind which contemplates them.” (see Allesch 2006, 13) The symmetry of a face, for instance, indicating a healthy development during infancy and childhood, the “typical” bodily features of females and males indicating a good hormonal balance: these features are perceived as being beautiful for reasons of reasonable selection. It is a matter of (though interesting) speculation how influential these features of attractiveness are on our general

perception of beauty. However, Human Ethology somehow bridges the two positions in Aesthetics as it merely subscribes meaning to these objective features of beauty in the evolutionary determined cognitive architecture of the beholder.

Another striking, very young field in Aesthetics is contributed by Neuroscience and has been baptised Neuroaesthetics. A decade ago neuroscientist Semir Zeki announces in his important book *Inner Vision* (1999) that “no theory of aesthetics that is not substantially based on the activity of the brain is ever likely to be complete.” (see 1) Thus, Zeki elaborates an aesthetic theory that accords to his expertise in the field of Neuroscience, namely the visual cortices, or shortly the visual brain. Vision, he explains, has for a long time been considered as a passive undertaking, as the mere reception of visual stimuli manifested on the retina. However, in recent decades neuro-scientific investigation elucidated that it demanded far more to constitute a meaningful picture of what had been received by the retina. Vision, rather, is an active, highly complex neural process that involves various areas of the brain which are respectively specialised on distinct features of the visual impression. What is received by the retina can be considered as disordered and meagre stimuli; it is the visual brain that then searches for and constructs “constancies and essentials” within these stimuli, giving them meaning and transforming them into pictures that provide information. The purpose of art, says Zeki, and in his book he refers to paintings of fine arts, consists of nothing else than this search and exposition of “essentials and constancies”. This approach reminds us on the verdict of Aristotle that the arts show not the specific, but the universal, hence the *truth*. Zeki explicitly refers to the notions of the Platonic *ideal* and what Hegel has called *concepts*. Both refer to constancies; the neuroscientist explains these constancies in terms of Neurobiology.

Zeki’s approach is remarkable. However, his aesthetic theory appears to have certain weaknesses. For instance, the neuroscientist declares that artists are, in accord to his Aesthetics, “in a sense” neurologists. I whole-heartedly disagree here. A neurologist has a clear purpose, namely to treat neurological diseases and to explore the brain for this

purpose; I would not exclaim such a definite assignment to artists or even to the arts. Such assumption seems to derive from Zeki's equation of people with their brains, which is made explicit in *Inner Vision* on several occasions. Such equation leads to amusing argumentations, such as when Zeki responds to the opinion that the impressionist Monet "painted with his eye but, Great God, what an eye", with: "This is of course nonsense: Monet, like all other artists, painted with his brain, [...]" (see 13). I am not sure who to agree with in this argument, as I so far neither saw an eye, nor a brain holding the brush. Furthermore, if we consider artists as neurologists because they understood "something about the mind, and therefore the brain" (see 2) that others didn't, then also a politician is, in another sense, a neurologist, because he also succeeds in "moving" other people's minds.

I suppose that the general role of Neuroaesthetics has to be seen in the empirical assessment of the response to the arts, which makes the discipline particularly interesting for the present thesis. The emerging field of Neurocinematics, for instance, is doing so with increasing success, showing that film is surprisingly good in inter-subjectively orchestrating cognitive and emotional states (see Hasson et al. 2008). Neuroaesthetics is definitely to be considered as highly promising field and I strongly suggest to regard its evidence. However, we still have to consider what Zeki (1999) wrote a decade ago, namely, that it is virtually impossible to say anything particular "about the relationship between brain physiology and the perception of some of the more complex, narrative and representational works" of art (see 2), and:

It is quite true that we know almost too little about the brain, and certainly not enough to account in neurological terms for aesthetic experience. (17)

5.4. Issue # 3

Zeki's equation of artists with neurologists illustrates the remaining necessity of involving philosophers and artists into discussions of Aesthetics. However, it is the gap between empirical and philosophical traditions of Aesthetics that display the third and last main discordance in the field. Allesch (2006) points out two major approaches to the investigation of aesthetic phenomena: the *philosophical* and the *psychological*. The first is rather associated with *objective* and consequently with *artistic*, "from above" Aesthetics, whereas the second corresponds with *subjective*, *aísthetic*, "from below" perspectives. The first focuses on the piece of art, the second on the recipient, so to say in an oversimplified manner. Such categorisation does indeed not indicate a clear factual distinction, rather it displays tendencies. These two "schools" have a long tradition of conflict and quarrel. Allesch (2006) interestingly comments on this matter:

Dass sich die psychologische Ästhetik als empirisches "Gegenkonzept" zu einer wertwissenschaftlich verstandenen philosophischen Ästhetik entwickelt hat, ist eher ein historisches Missverständnis als eine zwangsläufige Folge unterschiedlicher Fragestellungen. (141)

Hence, Allesch opposes any "Disziplinenpurismus", arguments for a complementation of the two approaches and even claims that research in Aesthetics can only be successfully conducted in an interdisciplinary manner. He labels this approach with the notion of Psychological Aesthetics. (see 140-145) I consider the present thesis as such an approach. The concrete subject of empirical Aesthetics investigated here, namely aesthetic emotion, is crucially constituted and defined by the concept of Katharsis that derives almost exclusively from Philosophy. I suppose that empirical disciplines usually dissociate themselves from such complex notions and I consider this as a severe mistake. Regarding that, the attempt of this thesis is considered to be a theoretical experiment. Not only do I want to point out that the two approaches are reconcilable, but, as Allesch has proposed, that they necessarily complement each other. Thus, I agree with calls for

empirically and biologically based theories of Aesthetics, though I would complete that no empirical approach to aesthetics will ever be sufficient without the accomplishments of philosophy.

The next chapter is dedicated to current emotion theories and will thus approach the second constituting term of the notion of aesthetic emotion. Many studies on aesthetic experience emphasise the importance of emotional processes for the reception of the arts (see, for instance, Leder et al. 2004 and Cupchik et al. 2009); a point which will be discussed in further detail in the last chapter of this thesis. Indicative in this regard, as emphasising the crucial role of emotions in aesthetic experience, is another note of Allesch (2006) on the matter of *sensual experience*, which moreover complements the quotation at the beginning of the first subsection of this chapter:

Während "Wahrnehmen" zumeist im Sinne des Registrierens und Identifizierens von sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Tatbeständen verstanden wird, verweist der Begriff der "sinnlichen Erfahrung" nicht nur auf die "Feststellungs- und Identifizierungsfunktion" des Wahrnehmens, also auf dessen kognitiven Aspekt im engeren Sinne, sondern deutlicher und direkter als der Wahrnehmungsbegriff auch auf das Widerfahren von Wirklichkeiten, die uns verstört und beunruhigt oder beglückt und birgt. (19)

6. Emotion Theories

In fact, emotions are an inconvenient subject for empirical studies and the history of the scientific investigation of emotions is rather short. The principal reason for the reluctance of empirical sciences seems apparent: particularly folk psychology considers emotions primarily as (*conscious*) *feelings* or *conscious states*. *Feelings* and concepts such as *consciousness* are notions that tend to be reduced or ignored by the cognitive sciences because they are so hard to assess. Jerome Bruner (1990) criticises current empirical disciplines investigating the human mind by pointing out that these solely treat the mind as an information-processing device. In accord with this, there appears to be a hesitation to provide emotions with an independent conceptual status. About twenty years ago, the researchers Howard Leventhal and Andrew Tomarken pointed out several reasons for this hesitation. Angela Schorr (2001) sums up the three major reasons:

- (1) the legacy of behaviorism and the behaviorists' suspicion of subjective concepts;
- (2) the habit of analyzing emotions as a combination of arousal and cognition [...];
- and (3) the reluctance of cognitively oriented scientists [...] to view an emotion "as anything more complex than a 'stop' or interrupt rule in a simulation of mental operations" [...]. (20)

Indeed, in the behaviorists' paradigm emotions held an unappreciative position. Burrhus Frederick Skinner, one of the movement's protagonists, once stated that "the 'private' events of emotion are outside the realm of objective assessment" (see Purves et al. 2008, 433). Emotions were not considered as appropriate subjects to scientific investigation. In the tradition of William James, behaviorist approaches even regarded emotions as epiphenomena of physiological arousal. Anyhow, Behaviorism was soon detached by the paradigm of Cognitivism. But even after the *cognitive turn* emotions held a subordinated position in the investigation of mind and behavior. It was no longer *behavior*, but *cognition* with its predominant paradigm of computation and information-processing that

emotions fell victim to. In his remarkable book *Acts of Meaning* Bruner (1990) expresses his disappointment about the “cognitive revolution” that ultimately led to the fragmentation of human mind in the metaphor of computation (see 1-33).

It seems that the *cognitive turn* finally took effect. Today, the investigation of emotion is considered highly relevant and the cognitive sciences become increasingly successful in understanding this feature of the mind. Emotions are now considered as multi-modal phenomena eliciting clearly measurable physiological and behavioral changes. Emotions, indeed, do not solely consist of their qualitative, conscious component, namely *feelings*. This misconception goes back to William James (see Scherer 2005, 699) and deprived emotions particularly from neurobiological assessment. The cognitive sciences provide a variety of explanations of human emotion. This chapter shall review the status of current research and introduce relevant models of emotion research, particularly regarding the psychological approach of Appraisal Theory of emotion.

6.1. Approaching a Definition of Emotion

Common sense tells us that emotions are an irreducible feature of the human mind. Science still conceives of the human mind as being divisible into three distinct faculties: cognition, emotion and motivation. The conception goes back to Immanuel Kant who in the eighteenth century called it “*knowledge, feeling and desire*” (see Purvers et al. 2008, 434). I consider such fragmentation as a stopgap that does not match the holistic *gestalt* of our mind, not regarding how intertwined and inseparable these faculties of mind are. However, as a conceptual fragmentation the trichotomy of cognition, emotion and motivation finds rightful pragmatic and practical application. Finally, we have to raise the question what emotions actually are in terms of contemporary science. What means Eleos and Phobos in the paradigm of the Cognitive sciences? In the 1980s, researchers counted more than a hundred valid scientific definitions of emotion (see Scherer 2005, 696). It seems that once more we will have to deal with a rather ambiguous notion.

Magda Arnold, the founding “mother” of Appraisal Theory, describes emotion as “a felt tendency toward anything appraised as good, and away from anything appraised as bad,” (see Schorr 2001, 22), Silvan S. Tomkins calls emotions “as among the most powerful of human experiences and [...] often sought or avoided with great energy and effort” (see Roseman 2001, 81), and Carroll E. Izard writes that “emotion is about motivation - positive and negative feelings, readiness or tendency to cope, and cues for cognition and action.” (see Izard 1993, 73). It is remarkable that all these definitions emphasise the interlocked structure of emotion, cognition and motivation and that all of them emphasise the (admittedly apparent) importance of *feeling*. It seems that it is still this subjective, solely introspectively accessible component that constitutes our conception of emotion.

Another important commonness of current theories consists of the fact that the adaptative value of emotions play a crucial, constituting role. Roseman and Smith (2001) write that emotions “have adaptive value in the situations that elicit them” and that emotions are “organized and organizing responses that [...] tend to be adaptive.” (see 5 & 8) Klaus Scherer (2001), currently one of the leading researchers of emotion, defines the notion as follows:

[...] I have described emotion as an evolved, phylogenetically continuous mechanism that allows increasingly flexible adaptation to environmental contingencies by decoupling stimulus and response and thus creating a latency for response optimization [...]. (92)

From the perspective of Affective Neuroscience, emotion is defined as “neurally based dispositions that facilitate appropriate reactions [...], thus achieving better outcomes that ultimately influence evolutionary success.” (see Purves et al. 2008, 434) It seems that more than ever the *ultimate* question of adaptation value is dominating emotion research. Emotion research indeed appears to be highly influenced by basic assumptions of evolutionary Biology.

A conception of emotion as multi-modal process claims emotions to consist of various components. The textbook *Principles of Cognitive Neuroscience* states that emotions are currently understood as “a composite of *feelings*, *expressive behavior*, and *physiological reaction* [...]” (see Purves et al. 2008) The first component of *feeling* has already been explained above; the second, *behavior*, refers to behavioral consequences, such as retreat in the case of fear; and the third, *physiology*, describes physiological changes, such as the release of stress hormones, again in the case of fear.

Even though the textbook claims that psychologists tend to equalise emotions with its component of *feeling* (see Purves et al. 2008, 433), it appears that it is particularly psychologists who elaborate sophisticated multi-modal models of emotional responses. Ira J. Roseman (2001), for instance, lists:

- (1) *phenomenology* (corresponds with *feeling*);
 - (2) *physiology* (corresponds with physiological reaction);
 - (3) *expressions* (describing typical facial and postural expressions, aso.);
 - (4) *behaviors* (corresponds with behavioral reaction); and finally
 - (5) *emotivations* (referring to motivational patterns evoked by particular emotions).
- (see 75)

Scherer (2001) only adds the components of *appraisal* and *motivation* to the basic model of *feeling-behavior-physiology* when describing emotion as “psychological construct consisting of several aspects or components, these being cognitive appraisal, physiological activation, motor expression, motivational tendencies, and subjective feeling state.” (see 30)

The multi-modal scheme however addresses more phenomena than emotions; phenomena, that need to be further distinguished from emotions. Scherer (2005) refers to them as *affective states*. Again, the textbook *Cognitive Neuroscience* provides a simple and

comprehensible approach to this matter. It provides a distinction between *emotion*, *mood* and *temperament*. The first, emotion, is typically elicited by certain stimuli and lasts *for seconds or minutes* (which is to be considered as an important feature of emotions). If the affective state remains, we will rather speak of *moods*, respectively lasting for longer periods and being not necessarily elicited by particular stimuli. *Temperament* finally describes the characteristic affective predisposition of an individual. (see Purves et al. 2008, 435)

It is again Scherer (2005) who provides a sufficiently elaborated model to distinguish emotions from other affective states. He undertakes the differentiation by conceptualising so called *design features*. Every affective state is constituted by these *design features*, the intensity of their respective occurrence varies. The *design features* consist of:

- (1) *event focus* (describing to what extent an affective phenomena is elicited by a particular internal or external event);
- (2) *appraisal driven* (emphasising the assumption that a stimulus or an event will elicit an emotional reaction if considered as “*relevant to the major concerns of the organism*” and has thus to be appraised as such, describing why and to what extent an event will be appraised as crucially relevant);
- (3) *response synchronisation* (the extent of “mobilization of resources”);
- (4) *rapidity of change* (how rapidly the state occurs and diminishes;
- (5) *behavioral impact* (the extent of behavioral consequences of the affective state);
- (6) *intensity* (the intensity of the “response patterns” and its respective experience); and
- (7) *duration* (the typical time period of the affective state). (see 699-704)

In respect to these *design features*, Scherer distinguishes between six affective phenomena:

- (1) *preferences* (“stable evaluative judgements”, typically plainly positive or negative);
- (2) *attitudes* (“beliefs and predispositions towards specific objects or persons”);
- (3) *mood* (enduring “predominance of subjective feelings”);
- (4) *affect dispositions* (a “tendency [...] to experience certain moods” and emotions);
- (5) *interpersonal stances* (“affective styles” towards persons or groups); and finally
- (6) *emotions*.

Scherer further distinguishes in his model between *utilitarian* and *aesthetic emotions*; a distinction, that will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. At this point I shall only explain *utilitarian emotions*, which Scherer identifies as the “common-garden-variety of emotions” such as anger, fear and joy. Generally, such emotions score high on every respective scale of the *design features*, only the *duration* is considered as being relatively short. Emotions are typically elicited by a particular stimulus or event, they occur rapidly and intensively, and within a short time frame; in accord with Scherer’s *design features*, these are the most important descriptions of emotions as affective states. (see 703-707)

6.2. The Neuroscience of Emotions

Before I proceed to the explanation of Appraisal Theory of Emotion, I will briefly review what Affective Neuroscience has to say about the neural representations of emotions. The evidence will be of further importance; moreover, findings in the respective discipline increasingly influence psychological conceptions of emotion.

Emotions appear to be an inconvenient subject for Affective Neuroscience. Purves et al. (2008) list three reasons for this instance:

- (1) the representation of emotion is hard to measure because it involves subcortical activity deep within the human brain.
- (2) This subcortical activity influences cortical processes via two distinct pathways: the

direct neural connections and the indirect change by hormonal activity.

(3) The last point consists of the difficulty already explained above: emotions are crucially constituted by feelings, which are, due to their subjective nature, hard to assess. (see 436f)

A typical question concerning the representation of emotions in the human brain would be to ask which part or area in the brain is responsible for emotion-elicitation. Indeed, there are anatomical structures that are strongly associated with emotional activity, most of all the amygdala, particularly being associated with fear. I once explained the concept of Katharsis and its tragic emotions to a neurologist; he casually concluded that “Phobos is amygdala”.

The amygdala is considered as a key forebrain structure. Indeed, this complex of nuclei is the “most densely interconnected structure in the primate forebrain” (see Purves et al. 2008, 456), having direct connections to subcortical areas such as the thalamus, but also to many cortical areas such as the cingulate cortex, the insula and the orbitofrontal cortex. “The amygdala”, write Purves et al., “can thus be thought of as a center that shuttles information back and forth from subcortical and cortical pathways to initiate and coordinate emotional reactions [...]” (see 457). Activation of the amygdala bypasses, for instance, activation of sensory cortices by more rapid, subcortical activation. This means that relatively slow interpretive, conscious and evaluative reactions to certain stimuli are overtaken and modulated by fast automatic and unconscious reactions, eliciting instantaneous emotional reactions. This feature appears crucial for the survival of the human species, for instance, when being seriously threatened. Lesions of the amygdala are associated with deficits concerning particularly the emotions of fear, anger, sadness and disgust. However, particularly fear, but also aggression seem to be represented predominantly in the forebrain structure. A person with a complete bilateral destruction of the amygdala will hardly be able to recognise and express aggression, and even less capable of doing so in regard of the emotion of fear. (see Bear et al. 2007, 574) This is why amygdala is commonly associated with fear and related negative emotions.

However, it cannot be simply conceived of the organic structure of amygdala as the seat of fear or negative emotions in general. Besides profound philosophical arguments against equating neural structures and activations with states that crucially consist of a qualitative experiences, anatomical evidence can be raised against such conceptions of the human brain. Indeed, there appear to be organic structures in the brain that are predominantly active when emotional responses occur. The anterior part of the insula (a lobe of the cerebral cortex), for instance, takes a related predominant role for the emotion of disgust that amygdala takes for fear (see Wicker et al. 2003). It is an interesting question whether dimensional theories of emotions, which claim the entire set of human emotions to be represented as values on a scale, are shattered by the fact that different organic structures seem to be focused on distinct emotions; I will assess this question in the next section in detail. The distribution of neural activation related to emotional responses strongly suggests that we cannot divide the brain into functional properties in a, so to say, *phrenological* manner of clearly identifying certain regions with certain tasks, but that we should rather conceive of the organisation of the brain in a structure of neural *systems*. A neural system can be spread throughout the different organic structures of the central nervous system and it appears that the complexity and variety of emotion demands the supposition of such a neural system.

In the middle of the twentieth century, the medical clinician Paul MacLean presented the theory that emotions were represented by processes of the limbic system. An anatomical limbic lobe has initially been proposed at the end of the nineteenth century by Paul Broca, although he was unaware of its role for emotion processing. In the 1930s, James Papez bridged the limbic lobe and related structures to emotion, an idea, that has ultimately led to the supposition of the limbic system. Although MacLean's conception was partially wrong (for example providing the hippocampus with a central role in emotion processing), the main ideas are held up until the current today. The graphic below depicts a current conception of the limbic system.

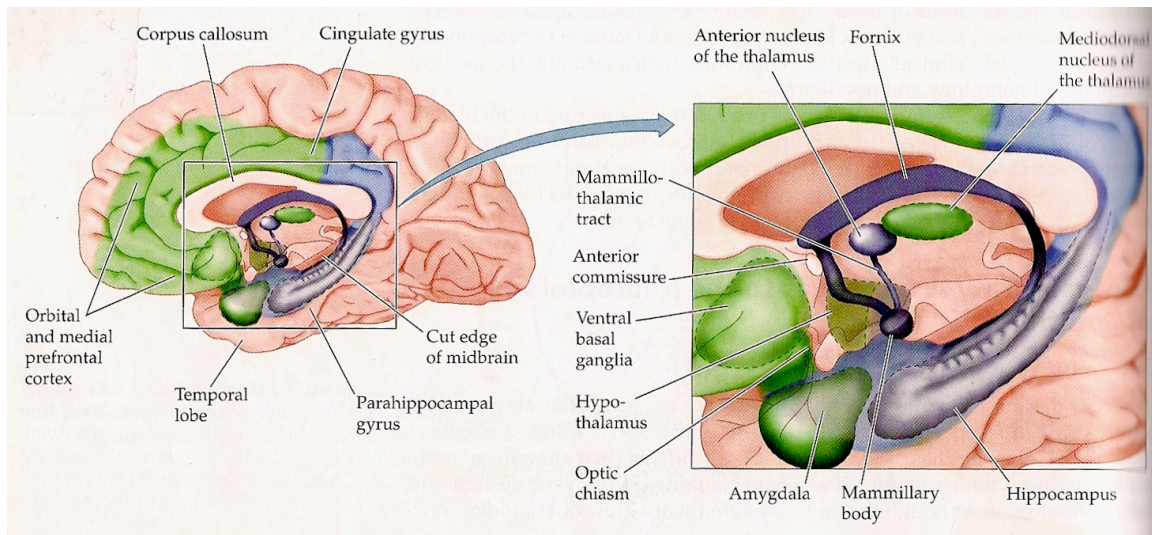


Figure 1. A current conception of the limbic system. (Source: Bear et al. 2007, 450)

The blue dorsal belt of the limbic system is supposed to be involved rather in cognitive and executive functions. The limbic system undergoes continuous revision, however, it seems hard to define a system that is solely dedicated to the processing of emotions. Currently several researchers advocate the idea of rejecting the limbic system theory of emotion and suggest to conceptualise several specific emotion systems in the brain (see Purvers et al. 2008, 450). Recent evidence, for instance, increasingly emphasises the importance of neocortical structures for the elicitation of emotion; a fact, that is not sufficiently regarded by the limbic system theory. Neuroscientists increasingly emphasise the interaction of several neural systems, describing emotions as the consequence of an interaction of *bottom-up* processes (Brainstem Nuclei, Thalamus, Amygdala, Insula, Orbitofrontal Cortex, aso.) with *top-down* processes (Prefrontal Cortices, Hippocampus) (see Philips et al. 2003).

Particularly interesting as an alternative to the limbic system theory is the hypothesis that the frontal regions of the hemispheres are respectively specialised on the experience and expression of either negative or positive emotions. According to the *valence*

hypothesis, the left hemisphere generally processes positive, and the right negative emotions. Interestingly, the hypothesis seems to rubberstamp the still controversial distinction between positive and negative emotions, which in this context, however, solely relates to approaching and avoiding behavior. (see Purvers et al. 2008, 451ff)

Let us finally consider the possible consequences of the idea of various specific emotion systems. Again, such an assumption can have severe influence on our folk psychological conceptions of emotion. If there is not one, but several systems that process discrete emotions, should we then not only abandon dimensional models of emotion, but a holistic conception of and even the notion of emotion entirely? Is the supposition of a holistic conception of emotion a folk psychological fallacy, deriving from the “meagre” evidence that all of these states have a clear phenomenological-qualitative component, the component of *feeling* these states? Is it a mistake to group anger, fear, disgust, happiness, sadness, surprise and all other emotions under the umbrella of one notion? Such questions are of high interest and they do not only demand neuro-scientific, but also philosophical and psychological contributions.

6.3. Appraisal Theory of Emotion

In the introduction to the second part of this thesis I announced that I will particularly focus on Appraisal Theory of Emotion to ultimately approach the phenomenon of Aesthetic Emotion. The decision in favour of Appraisal Theory is based on three reasons.

(1) The first reason consists of the fact that Appraisal Theory can be considered as a cutting-edge perspective of emotion research (see Silvia 2005a, 345). Indeed, from the 1980s on the field virtually “exploded” (see Schorr 2001, 28). It marks the clear abundance of the behaviorists’ ignorance towards emotion and can be considered as child of the cognitive turn in science, emphasising particularly the role of cognition for emotion.

Magda Arnold is considered as the first scientist who came up with a “cognitive theory” of emotion that initially provided emotional responses with an essential role within the agency of man. It thus opposed epiphenomenological models of Behaviorism that viewed emotion only as a by-product of physiological arousal. Arnold’s ideas, formulated in the 1960s, still determine the paradigm of psychological investigation of emotion.

(2) The second reason refers to the fact that Appraisal Theory is eventually set in the tradition of Aristotle’s theory of emotion as formulated in the *Rhetoric* (see Lazarus 2001, 60 and Roseman 2001, 82). If we compare the Aristotelian description of Eleos, reviewed in the first part of this thesis, with current descriptions of, for instance, anger, as provided by Appraisal Theory, we will find crucial structural analogies:

[...] anger, for example, consists of (a) appraising an event as incongruent with a goal or motive, (b) appraising an agent (typically another person) as blameworthy for the event, and (c) appraising one’s potential to cope with the event as high, such as through self-assertion or aggression [...]. (Silvia 2005a, 346)

Aristotle already intertwined emotions with their cognitive causation, which is an essential feature of Appraisal Theory as well. Moreover, the Aristotelian notion of Katharsis is based on the Aristotelian conception of emotions. It hence seems most promising to intertwine Katharsis with a leading contemporary position in emotion research that is anyway set in the tradition of Aristotle.

(3) The third reason consists of the conviction that Appraisal Theory provides adequate means to investigate and describe aesthetic emotions. As mentioned before, inspired by the conception of Katharsis, I raise the claim that aesthetic emotions somehow differ from (corresponding) mundane emotions. This supposed difference appears to be subtle and sinister and thus commonly ignored; a point that will be discussed in detail in the sections directly concerned with aesthetic emotions. However, an emotion theory capable of explaining a phenomenon of the depth of Katharsis has to provide means for subtle

modulations and categorisations; it has to provide a conception of emotion that potentially accounts for differences of emotions which seem to be identical on the surface - for instance, mundane and aesthetic anger - but are in fact not. Roseman and Smith (2001) write that “it is to be expected that people from different cultures will systematically appraise seemingly similar events quite differently and thus will systematically experience different emotions in response to those events.” (see 18) Appraisal Theory can account for subtle cultural variabilities of emotion. Thus, if Appraisal Theory can account for intercultural differences of emotion, it can potentially do so for subtle intracultural, context-dependent differences. It can potentially provide virtually any emotion with further qualities. The notion of Katharsis might validly be described in terms of Appraisal Theory.

6.3.1. The Common Ground of Appraisal Theory

Within the paradigm of Appraisal Theory, there are in fact various distinct and partially discordant appraisal theories. A first useful step of approaching these will consist of elucidating the common assumptions of these distinct appraisal theories.

In their excellent introductory paper *Appraisal Theory: Overview, Assumptions, Varieties, Controversies*, Ira J. Roseman and Craig A. Smith (2001) write:

What is appraisal theory? In simplest form, its essence is the claim that emotions are elicited by evaluations (appraisals) of events and situations. (3)

It is the interlude of appraisal that crucially decouples emotions from external stimuli, distancing the theory from the behaviorist's stimulus-response paradigm. Appraisal Theory provides means to categorise a virtually infinite variety of events according to their emotional effect on the recipient. Furthermore, it crucially regards individual

differences of emotional responses by emphasising the moment of appraisal. In accord with that Allesch (2006) writes that the cognitive turn entailed a different conception of perception: not “Reizgegebenheiten”, but “Wahrnehmungserwartungen und -bereitschaften” evoke perception (see 93).

Appraisal Theory addresses and provides responses to traditional problems of emotion theories, such as the differentiated nature of emotions (response: distinct patterns of appraisal evoke distinct emotions); individual and temporal differences (response: events are appraised differently); the start of emotional responses (response: emotions are caused by appraisals); or appropriateness of emotions (response: appraisals are likely to be adequate coping-oriented responses to events) (see Roseman & Smith 2001 for a detailed review).

Appraisal Theory claims appraisals as (cognitive) causations of emotion. However, it would be a fallacy to raise the objection that Appraisal Theory disregards the variety of potential causations of emotions, being incapable of explaining “unreasonable, involuntary, or maladaptive emotional responses” (see Roseman & Smith 2001, 8). The following section will illustrate that contemporary appraisal theories indeed account for emotion-elicitors such as cognitive-independent neural processes (for instance, via circadian hormonal change) or motivational processes (for instance, such as hunger and thirst) (see Izard 1993 for a detailed report on emotion elicitors). However, Appraisal Theory in fact supposes that “in the majority of cases, emotions are not arbitrary responses unrelated to the situations in which they occur; rather, most emotions are reactions to [evaluated] events [...]” (see Roseman & Smith 2001, 16). Roseman and Smith (2001) furthermore announce that critics of Appraisal Theory commonly make the mistake of equating “cognition with its prototypic form (conscious and deliberative reasoning) [...]”, disregarding the wide range of meaning that is associated with the notion (see 8). It is in fact the wide range of the notion of cognition as elicitor of emotion that is crucially relevant for the investigation of Aesthetic Emotion.

Another objection raised against Appraisal Theory might consist of the claim that it constitutes a clear hierarchical and sequential order of cognition and emotion. Cognition necessarily precedes emotion; this would be a sloppy conclusion in accord with Appraisal Theory. Richard S. Lazarus (2001), one of the most important advocates of Appraisal Theory, distinguished *cold* from *hot* cognition, only the second being accompanied by emotion (see 57). It indicates that emotion demands cognition, but not vice versa. In fact, there is conceptual confusion about the sequential and causal structure of cognitive appraisal and emotion. Even though appraisal theories commonly presume appraisals as causations of emotions, Roseman and Smith (2001) write:

Do appraisals really cause emotions, or are they components or consequences of emotional responses? Appraisal theories claim that appraisals cause emotions. For example, [...] blaming another person for a motive-incongruent event elicits anger [...]. But could it not also be true that other-blame is part of the experience of anger? or that people who get angry are then likely to blame others for negative events - that other-blame is caused by anger [...].

In our view, the answers to these questions are yes, yes, and yes. Appraisals may be causes of emotions, components of emotions, and consequences of emotions. (14f)

Although researchers maintain that appraisal is not a “one-shot affair” and introduce conceptions of continuous “reappraisal” (see Scherer 2001, 99), I subscribe at this point certain weaknesses to the theory. In my opinion, it does not sufficiently account for the recursive, intertwined nature of cognition and emotion; it focuses too strictly on cognition as causation of emotion. Hence, it frequently loses sight of a very essential component of appraisal: emotion itself. It seems that Behaviorism still throws shadows of epiphenomenological opinions on current, “cognitive” approaches. In Behaviorism it was physiological arousal, now it is cognition which not only elicits, but orchestrates emotional responses. Both approaches subordinate emotion and seem to neglect its causal strength. I am convinced that emotion is a constitutive faculty of human cognition as well. However, there is a hesitation in science to entirely fuse cognition with emotion.

Related objections are raised by Michael McEachrane's (2009) recent extensive critique of Appraisal Theory. He claims that appraisals might not be viewed as antecedents of emotions, but as conceptual part of the meaning of what we commonly describe as, for example, fear; a point that has already been brought forth by Frijda and Zeelenberg (2001). McEachrane claims that empirical investigations that proof cognitive appraisals as causations of emotions are tautological and useless; they are "pseudoempirical".

McEachrane indirectly points out the shortcomings that come with the supposed trichotomy of cognition-emotion-motivation. His and related critiques have to be taken seriously. However, the author goes too far when ultimately neglecting any validity of Appraisal Theory. Appraisal Theory, this child of the cognitive revolution, indeed has profound theoretical and empirical value as means to investigate human emotion; the achievements tell their own tale. The weaknesses, but also the strengths of Appraisal Theory have furthermore to be seen in the context of the history of emotion theory.

6.3.2. Appraisal Theories

The various proponents of Appraisal Theory suggest different appraisal theories. As pointed out in the section above, these theories and their respective models do have common, connecting assumptions; but they also differ in concern to crucial elements. Roseman and Smith (2001) list four major differences:

- (1) appraisal theories are either structural- or process-oriented. Indeed, most are concerned with the structure rather than with the process of appraisal.
- (2) The appraisal order is either conceived of as being fixed or flexible. Scherer (2001), for instance, suggests a fixed processing order of appraisal; a detailed explanation of his assumptions will follow further down.
- (3) Emotions are conceived of as being either continuous, located on a dimensional scale,

or categorical, as qualitatively distinct.

(4) Finally, emotions are either explained on a molecular or a molar level, the first constituting emotion by describing structural appraisal components, the second focusing on meaningful *Gestalts* of emotion, which are also referred to as *core relational themes*.

The present section will introduce the models of Richard S. Lazarus and Klaus Scherer, furthermore of Ira J. Roseman and Craig A. and Leslie D. Kirby. All of these researchers present their respective theories in the book *Appraisal Processes in Emotion* (Scherer et al. 2001). I consider those four as a representative selection.

Every appraisal model assumes a variety of appraisal components which form the respective appraisal structures that constitute distinct emotions. This has been illustrated above already by pointing out the appraisal structure of anger. Appraisal components describe the criteria or the patterns of how people appraise events in concern to emotional relevance. The end of such appraisal is the elicitation of emotion. Roseman (2001) suggests a rather simple model of appraisal components by pointing out seven appraisals. Furthermore, he gives an illustrative example of these appraisals referring to *the end of a romantic relationship*, which makes his model particularly comprehensible:

(1) *unexpectedness*: whether an event occurs unexpected or expected (*Did I expect/suspect her to break up with me?*);

(2) *situational state*: whether the event is motive-inconsistent or motive-consistent (*Did I actually want to continue with the relationship?*);

(3) *motivational state*: whether the event is related to get less or more of something punishing or more or less of something rewarding (*What does the end of the relationship mean to me? Do I conceive of it eg. as a repetition of the mistakes of my parents or as the interruption of growing personally in a relationship?*);

(4) *probability*: whether the outcome of the event is certain or uncertain and to what extent it is so (*How definite is her decision?*)

(5) *agency*: whether circumstances, other agents or I am responsible for the occurrence of the event (*Whose fault was the failure of our relationship? Mine? Hers?*)

(6) *control potential*: to what extent the outcome of the event can be influenced (*Can I do anything about it? Can I convince her to stay?*)

(7) *problem type*: whether the problem is instrumental, thus blocking or facilitating certain demands, or intrinsic, thus implying certain characteristics that I dislike or like (*What is the main problem for me? That my needs will not be met anymore or that I have a problem with the type of person?*) (see 68f)

Roseman's suggestion might not be the most elaborate of the four, but it provides a clear example of the particular style of appraisal conceptions. Lazarus (2001) and Smith and Kirby (2001) suggest similar models that only differ in detail. Lazarus suggests, for instance, only six components. Interestingly, Smith and Kirby further distinct between *problem-focused* and *emotion-focused coping potential*, the first referring to the "individual's ability to act on the situation to increase or maintain desirability", the second to the extent of psychological adjustment to the event and its consequences (see 123). Most importantly, the appraisal models divide its components into *primary* and *secondary appraisal*. *Primary appraisals* are mainly concerned with the relevance of an event, commonly addressing questions such as: What does the event do to me? Does it affect me? *Secondary appraisals* usually concern further appraisals of the event and address questions such as: What can I do about the situation? What are the consequences of the event?

The most elaborated and complex model is presented by Scherer (2001). In his *component process model* he speaks of *stimulus evaluation checks* (SECs) that serve as criteria for assessing events. He distinguishes between four types of SECs and provides them with several sub-categories. These can be summarised as follows:

(1) *relevance*: whether the event affects me or a reference group; relevance is constantly checked by organisms;

- *novelty check*: sudden stimuli are appraised as novel, which may vary to a great extent among individuals and species;
- *intrinsic pleasantness check*: this very basic feature of the stimulus concerns the fundamental question whether an event is associated with pleasure or pain;
- *goal relevance check*: whether the event affects individual future goals;

(2) *implications*: concerning implications and consequences of the event

- *causal attribution check*: who or what is responsible?
- *outcome probability check*: how likely are certain consequences?
- *discrepancy from expectation check*: consistent or discrepant with my expectations?
- *goal/need conduciveness check*: constructive or obstructive?
- *urgency check*: how urgent is the event or a reaction to the event?

(3) *coping potential*: concerns the availability of options to cope with the event;

- *control check*: to what extent can the outcome be influenced?
- *power check*: how can the event be influenced? What is needed?
- *adjustment check*: is adjustment or adaptation to the consequences of the event possible and likely?

(4) *normative significance*: concerning “the significance of the event with respect to self-concepts and to social norms and values”;

- *internal standards check*: does the action collide with my “self-ideal”? To what extent?
- *external standards check*: concerning social consequences; are consequences compatible with norms or demands of the reference group? (see 94-97)

Scherer’s *component process model* particularly differs from the other models in regard that it claims a fixed appraisal order. The SECs are processed in the sequence suggested

above. However, the sequential order does not undermine parallel processing, which is considered necessary for the rapidity of emotional responses. On the contrary, Scherer's model suggests the parallel initiation of all four SECs. But he maintains that the "preliminary closure" happens in a fixed sequence: only after the *relevance* of an event is appraised we can evaluate its *implications*, and so on. "Preliminary" indicates that SECs might be opened again for re-appraisal.

The appraisal models presented above claim causations of emotion to be patterns that Roseman (2001) calls "cognitive analyses" (see 77). A crucial question that addresses all appraisal theories is how and to what extent these models take into account potential other elicitors of emotion. Above I mentioned neural and motivational processes independent from external stimuli as emotion elicitors and I described Appraisal Theory's regard of them. But what about fast automatic, involuntary, instantaneous emotional reactions, which *are* elicited by the perception of external stimuli? What about the dead corpse of Antigone and the screaming face of Haimon that immediately *penetrate* us with horror? Do we need an "analysis" of such impressions? Roseman (2001) writes that cognitive analyses as presented above are too complex to explain such fast automatic responses. The process is simply too slow (see 77). Lazarus (2001) writes:

Considerable agreement can be found about two main ways in which process of appraising might operate. First, it could be deliberate and largely conscious. Second, it could be intuitive, automatic, and unconscious. (51)

In response to that, Roseman (2001) assumes "*primitive* (simple, rudimentary) versions of each appraisal" that can already be triggered by "minimal information" (see 77). Smith and Kirby (2001) provide a more elaborated answer: their model adequately regards and integrates "automatic" elicitors of emotion. *Associative processes* occur below focal awareness, but access all reasoning processes. Through priming "full-blown appraisal meanings" can be activated instantaneously. These include *concrete stimuli*, such as

sounds, sensations, or even pictures of screaming people; but also *conceptual stimuli*, such as “abstract ideas”. *Reasoning processes*, on the other hand, are “actively operated” and demand the eliciting information to be “semantically encoded”. Not all *associative processes* can be accessed by *reasoning processes*, but - and this will be of further importance - “initial associatively elicited appraisals that might not fully fit the current circumstances can be modified to provide a more appropriate evaluation and emotional response.” (see 132) Thus, also *associative processes* are plastic and “learn” from the intervention of *reasoning*. Smith and Kirby provide a model that particularly intertwines processes of *association* and *reasoning* and thus emphasises their mutual dependence. They coherently identify all these processes as cognitive appraisals of emotions.

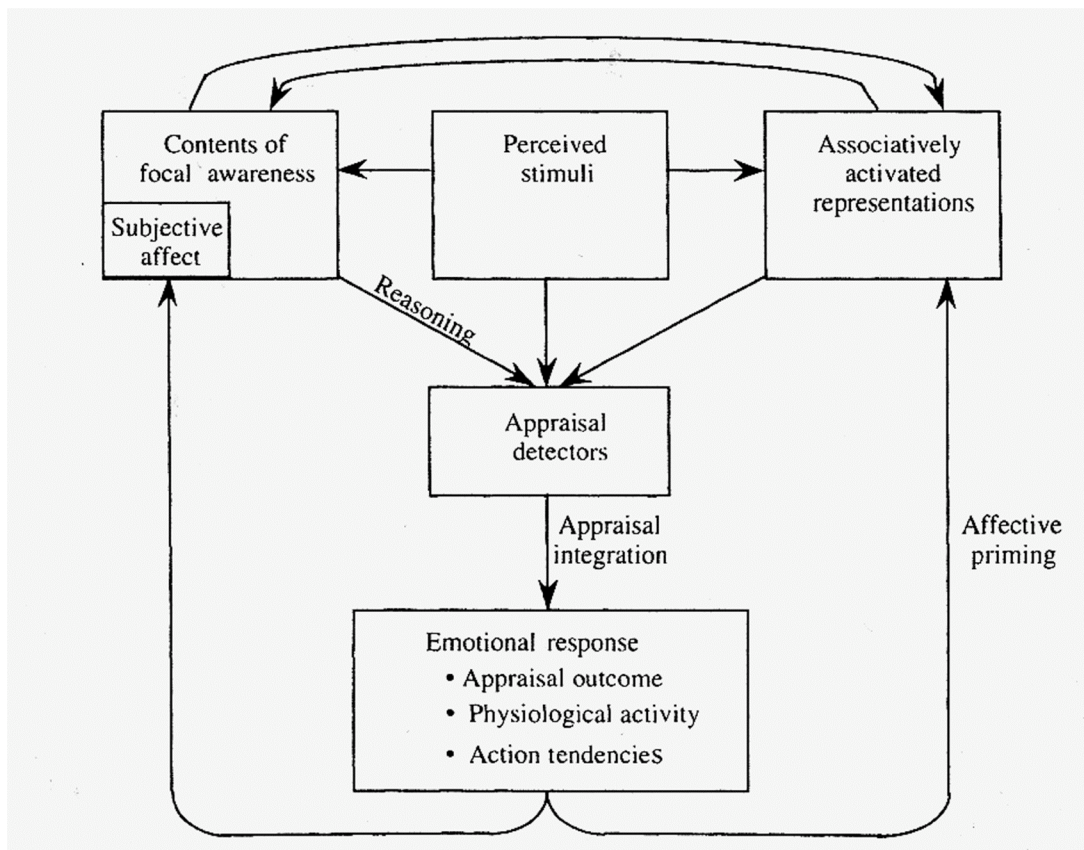


Figure 2. The model of Smith and Kirby explains emotional responses as interaction of associative and reasoning processes. (Source: Smith & Kirby 2001, 130)

Another account comes from Leventhal and Scherer (1987), proposing three levels on which SECs are being processed: the first *sensory-motor level* describes “sudden, intense stimulations” via evolutionary coordinated “innate preferences or aversions”; the second *schematic level* refers to “familiarity”, thus to individually “learned preferences or aversions”; and the third *conceptual level*, finally, regards “expectations”, describing “recalled, anticipated, or derived positive-negative estimates” (see 17). Interestingly, the researchers propose a hierarchical order, indicating that higher levels will only be activated in case that lower levels cannot cope with the problem.

The last matter I want to discuss here is the question whether we should conceive of emotions as being continuous or categorical. A study conducted in the 1970s by Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen (1976) empirically evaluated six prototypical facial expressions that corresponded with emotional states. These emotional states - anger, sadness, happiness, fear, disgust and surprise - are hence claimed as fundamental, pancultural human emotions and commonly form the basis of categorical models of emotion. However, most models that propose categorical emotions indeed suggest more than six fundamental emotions. Roseman (2001) claims seventeen distinct emotions (see 69), Lazarus (2001) supposes sixteen (see 64). Lazarus particularly emphasises *core relational themes* as constitutive for emotions. *Core relational themes* describe the molar *Gestalt* of emotions. Fundamental to the emotion of *fright*, for instance, is “an immediate, concrete, and overwhelming physical danger”, to the emotion of *compassion* “being moved by another’s suffering and wanting to help”. (see 64) By the way, Lazarus explains fast, automatic emotional responses referencing these *core relational themes*, being evoked instantaneously and not in the step-by-step manner of full appraisal processes.

Continuous or dimensional models of emotions usually refer to the molecular level of emotions. Scherer’s (2001) assumption of *modal emotions* is an example for such approach. He writes:

Contrary to discrete emotion theories [...], the component process model does not share the assumption of a limited number of innate, hard-wired affect programs that mix or blend with each other in order to produce the enormous variety of different emotional states. Rather, the emotional process is considered as a continuously fluctuating pattern of change in several organismic subsystems, yielding an extraordinarily large number of different emotions. (108)

Scherer does not suppose discrete emotions. He claims as many emotions as there are potential outcomes of appraisal processes. However, he maintains that there are “frequently recurring patterns of environmental evaluation results” (see 108) which entail common emotional reactions such as anger and fear. *Modal emotions*, states Scherer, are “predominant SEC outcomes” (see 114). I consider this approach as most appropriate explanation of the vast cultural and temporal varieties of emotion. A set of discrete emotions can hardly account for the manifold nature of human emotion. Eleos and Phobos, the tragic emotions, can hold individual positions in a dimensional scale and do not have to be dissolved in explanations of current discrete emotions. And also Lessing’s pity, this product of Christian thought, this emotional shading unknown to the Greeks, holds its position within such scale. But most importantly, a dimensional model leaves room for the distinct classes of aesthetic and kathartic emotions.

7. Katharsis and Aesthetic Emotion

The final chapter fulfills the task of bringing together the two notions that form the topic of this thesis: Katharsis and aesthetic emotion. Several steps appear to be necessary for this undertaking. First, I will introduce existing models of aesthetic emotion in the paradigm of Appraisal Theory. Most importantly, I will challenge assumptions and explanations of these approaches. Secondly, I will review contemporary psychological and neuroscientific explanations of aesthetic perception and aesthetic experience. The *mirror neuron system hypothesis* will be particularly regarded in this context, as it appears to provide essential explanatory strengths for our case. These explanations shall - thirdly - provide a further basis to approach Katharsis from the perspective of the cognitive sciences. Fourthly, I will go beyond the review and critique of appraisal theorist's accounts for aesthetic emotion and indicate some perspectives how particularly kathartic emotions could be regarded in the paradigm. Ultimately, based on the elaborations of the present thesis, I will present *a model of emotional responses to the arts*, which shall further elucidate what I conceive of aesthetic emotions in relation to their mundane counterparts, how Katharsis anticipates and participates in aesthetic emotion, and lastly how complex the emotional impact of the arts appears to be.

7.1. Appraisal Theories of Aesthetic Emotion

Allesch (2006) points out that after the second world war psychologists mainly focused on common topics of natural sciences and hence neglected the importance of aesthetic matters (see 73). Lazarus (1991) mentions that the phenomenon of aesthetic emotion has never been in the “mainstream of psychology” and that it “is remarkable how little interest psychologists have shown in this capacity of humans to experience emotions

vicariously through drama and film [...].” (see 292f) In this regard, the *new experimental aesthetics* has to be seen as fruitful exception and credit has to be given to its inventor Daniel Berlyne. The psychologist presented his aesthetic theory in 1971 in the book *Aesthetics and Psychobiology*, based on research conducted in a controlled laboratory environment. Paul Silvia (2005) calls the approach a “landmark in the study of emotional responses” (see 342) and states that Berlyne “brought aesthetic problems into the mainstream of psychology” (see 345).

Berlyne’s work is still of high influence to current psychological approaches to aesthetic experience. However, even though the cognitive turn had already taken place in the seventies, Berlyne’s approach has to be considered as neo-behavioristic (see Allesch 2006, 74). The *new experimental aesthetics* view the aesthetic as stimulus feature of the object and explain emotion simply within the conception of general arousal. Berlyne’s theory is not up to date. Silvia (2005) states that “the psychobiological assumptions of Berlyne’s arousal model are known to be wrong” today (see 345) and he explicitly claims Berlyne’s theory to be “anachronistic”. However, Silvia also writes that Berlyne’s approach is still of high influence and that his own approach is set in his tradition. Silvia suggests a “*new new experimental aesthetics*”, that is served by a fully matured emotion psychology; an essential advantage over Berlyne. The fully matured emotion psychology suggested by Silvia consists of the Appraisal Theory of emotion (see 342f) and he concludes that “Modern emotion theories could be a fertile source of ideas for the next generation of research on experimental aesthetics. (see Silvia 2005b, 129)

So far I described aesthetic emotion only superficially as emotions aroused in the context of the arts. This short and simple definition is indeed insufficient. Lazarus (1991) provides a more detailed, though still too generally formulated explanation:

Aesthetic emotions occur when we react emotionally to movies or drama, a painting, sculpture, music, a natural scene, or a religious experience. (292)

The present section will elucidate what is conceived of aesthetic emotion in the context of Appraisal Theory. I decided to particularly reference two different conceptions which moreover show remarkable correspondences to the principal issues of Aesthetics pointed out in the fifth chapter. The first approach is formulated by Scherer, the second by Silvia in the context of his programme of a “new” *new experimental aesthetics*.

Scherer (2004, 2005) attempts to describe the entire range of human emotions by setting up the dichotomy between *utilitarian* and *aesthetic* emotions. The term “utilitarian” refers to the straight goal relevance and adaptive value of this particular class of emotions. For instance, *utilitarian emotions* elicit action tendencies such as fight or flight; their importance for the survival of the organism is directly comprehensible and manifested. Scherer’s conception of *aesthetic emotion*, on the other hand, refers to Kant’s suggestions to regard the phenomenon as “*interesseloses Wohlgefallen*” or “disinterested pleasure”. “Disinterested” in this regard is related to the “complete absence of utilitarian considerations” (see 2005, 706). Thus, adaptive functions of the emotional reaction are hardly or not pronounced. Scherer defines *aesthetic emotions* as “evaluations of auditory or visual stimuli in terms of intrinsic qualities of form or relationship of events” (2004, 242) and he claims them as being “produced by the appreciation of the intrinsic qualities of the beauty of nature, or the qualities of a work of art.” (see 2005, 706) The scope of these emotions is narrow; Scherer lists “being moved or awed, being full of wonder, admiration, bliss, ecstasy, fascination, harmony, rapture, solemnity” (see 2004, 242 and 2005, 706). Even though *aesthetic emotions* do not articulate adaptive action readiness, there is a physiological response, like shivering or goose pimples. Bodily reactions and behavioral consequences, however, are far less pronounced than in *utilitarian emotions*, which makes the assessment of *aesthetic emotions* particularly difficult (see 2004, 244). Scherer (2004) summarises his conception as follows:

In other words, an aesthetic experience is one that is not triggered by concerns with the relevance of a perception to my bodily needs, my social values, or my current

goals or plans, nor with how well I can cope with the situation, but one where the appreciation of the intrinsic qualities of a piece of visual art or a piece of music is of paramount importance. (244)

Silvia (2005a, 2005b) chooses a completely different approach. A fundamental aspect of his model is the attempt to account for a vast number of *aesthetic emotions*. He claims that the usual narrow conception of *aesthetic emotions* is a legacy of Berlyne. Berlyne particularly focused on interest and enjoyment, deriving from a principal inability of his arousal-model to account for the manifold nature of emotions. Silvia eventually applies Appraisal Theory for the purpose of expanding the scope of *aesthetic emotions* to potentially all emotions, a thought that has been expressed before by Lazarus (1991, 293f). Thus, Silvia accounts for all emotions experienced in the context of the arts as *aesthetic emotions*. Silvia and his colleague Elizabeth Brown (2006) state:

People can experience the full range of human feelings in response to art, so modern researchers should not restrict themselves to the handful of feelings that have been popular with past theories. (16)

Consequently, an attempt of Silvia is to adequately account for *negative aesthetic emotions*. He claims that major theories in the field “easily explain positive emotions but struggle to explain negative emotions” (see 2006, 2). Silvia and Brown (2007) write:

In an era where ignorance about the arts is high, negative emotions like anger, disgust, and contempt are common responses to provocative and challenging works. (3)

Silvia seeks to develop a model of *aesthetic emotion* that explains how negative emotions are evoked and how they differ from each other. To account for *negative aesthetic emotions* and to differentiate between them is particularly in the context of the first part of the present thesis of high importance. Eleos and Phobos, the tragic emotions, indeed have to be categorised as particular *negative aesthetic emotions*.

However, I see crucial unclarities in Silvia's conception of *aesthetic emotion*. Silvia declares every emotion that is elicited in the context of an artwork as *aesthetic emotion*. As soon as an emotion is somehow directed towards the arts, it counts as aesthetic. Regarding the controversial issues in the field of Aesthetics, Silvia thus clearly relates the aesthetic to the *artistic*, as aesthetic emotion then appears to be restricted to the artistic context only. But not all emotions evoked in the context of the arts can be called *aesthetic*, even though I entirely agree with Silvia's and Lazarus' important assumption that potentially all human emotions have aesthetic equivalents. However, Silvia accidentally blends aesthetic with mundane emotions. Silvia and Brown (2006) give an illustrative example of what they conceive of a typical example of aesthetic emotion:

Some art historians, for instance, become angry and contemptuous in response to the tranquil landscape paintings of Thomas Kinkade because they appraise features of Kinkade's work—mass-production, naive sentimentality, and pandering to an anti-art audience—as contrary to their values. (15)

The anger of the art historian is not an aesthetic emotion; this is one of my basic claims. I will elucidate this claim in reference to another, more salient example. Silvia and Brown (2006) explain their conception of *negative aesthetic emotion* by referring to an incident that occurred in 1997 at the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia. The photographer Andres Serrano exhibited the following picture there:



Figure 3. Serrano's *Piss Christ* (Source: http://www.uniurb.it/Filosofia/bibliografie/Bataille_GiuliaFrattini/citazioni.htm, 20.08.09)

The title of this photograph is *Piss Christ*, motivated by the fact that it depicts the model of Jesus in the urine of the artist. Serrano's photograph won several awards, but it was also attempted to be defaced and destroyed by wrathful visitors. Finally, a teenage-boy with a hammer succeeded to do so and the picture had to be removed. I do claim that the anger of the teenager was not aesthetic, but a very concrete, mundane emotion. Referring to the first part of this thesis, I could simply claim that according to Aristotle it could not have been aesthetic anger, as aesthetic anger provides kathartic delight and will thus never

lead to any offensive behavior. But that would be too simple and at some point tautological.

Crucial is the fact that aesthetic anger indeed entails different consequences than its corresponding, mundane counterpart; most importantly it can never lead to experience the urge to destroy the artwork that elicited the specific emotion. Any aesthetic emotion demands the acceptance of the work as being a piece of art and the appreciation of its content. At the latest when the boy read the descriptive title of *Piss Christ*, he could not conceive of it as an artwork anymore, but as an outrageous *artifact* that had to be removed. He certainly subscribed no aesthetic value to it anymore, neither could he accept its mundane existence as *artifact*. The boy was probably angry at the artist, who dared to literally piss on Jesus, and on the National Gallery of Victoria, who brought this insult to public. His emotion targeted extrinsic meanings of the artwork. His anger was related to the actions of real persons, the consequences of his anger were real actions. It is an oversimplification to announce any emotion as aesthetic that occurs, for instance, in a gallery in front of a picture. *Piss Christ* is the perfect example for that. It is also a perfect example for the fact that *not every piece of art primarily attempts to evoke aesthetic emotions*.

Scherer's model of aesthetic emotion entirely differs from Silvia's; however, I do neither agree with him. In the context of Aesthetics, his approach is rather related to the notion of *aisthesis*, describing sensual perceptions not restricted to the artistic context (for instance, he also accounts for "natural beauty" as elicitor of aesthetic emotion). On the other hand, Scherer strongly connects aesthetic experience to the *beautiful* (which is commonly related to *artistic* conceptions of Aesthetics), when pointing out emotions such as "bliss" and "ecstasy". His model shows some affinity to the conception of Katharsis as aesthetic delight. However, Scherer fails to account for *negative aesthetic emotions*. His proposed dichotomy makes it impossible to view Eleos and Phobos as aesthetic emotions, as these certainly belong to "the common-garden-variety of emotions usually studied in emotion

research such as anger, fear, joy, disgust, sadness, shame, guilt.” (see Scherer 2005, 706) In short, they must belong to the group of *utilitarian emotions*. The narrow scope of aesthetic emotions provides no possibility to account for those emotions as being aesthetic, as being of different quality when experienced in the context of the arts. Anger remains anger, regardless of the context.

Interestingly, Scherer (2004) consequently calls emotions induced by “identification with the performer seen as living through an emotional experience” *virtual emotions*, but he considers this process as evocation of “real emotions in the viewer” (see 245). Thence, the lament and horror that we experience when witnessing the suicide of Antigone is not only corresponding, but substantially of the same quality as the assumable emotional experience of the messenger, who is part of the diegetic reality of the play. But how does it come then that we voluntarily choose to be exposed to such emotional experiences in the context of the arts, whereas in the position of the messenger we would do anything to avoid witnessing such incident? Scherer’s concept of *utilitarian* and *aesthetic emotions* offers no tool to account for the fundamental *difference* that Katharsis, according to my interpretation, constitutes.

Finally, I consider it as general weakness of both approaches that they are not able to account for *kathartic emotions*. Either they neglect their existence (Scherer), or they expand them by grouping them together with corresponding mundane emotions (Silvia). Both models do not account for the unique relish that *kathartic emotions* evoke; a relish, that is familiar to all of us. This relish appears contradictory under certain circumstances and I have described the contrariness of it in reference to the Greek god Dionysos. The philosopher Moritz Geiger (1976) investigated this fundamental feature of aesthetic emotion in the beginning of the twentieth century under the label of “ästhetische Scheingefühle” and he states that most psychologists tend to ignore the notion (see 191). His objection appears to be still valid. Geiger explains:

Fernerhin haben die Scheingefühle eine weit geringere psychomotorische Wirksamkeit als wirkliche Gefühle: die Furcht [Phobos!] im Theater veranlaßt uns keineswegs, aufzuspringen und davonzulaufen, das Mitleid [Eleos!] treibt uns nicht, dem Helden eines Dramas zu helfen. Und endlich existiert die merkwürdige Tatsache, daß die heftigsten Unlustgefühle, wie Furcht und Angst, den ästhetischen Genuß nicht stören - ja sogar ihn noch erhöhen. (Dubossches Problem.) (192)

Both models presented above do not account for the claims raised in this remarkable paragraph. Scherer's perspective on aesthetic emotion is too narrow, Silvia's is too broad and undifferentiated. I therefore consider Katharsis as a valid concept to complement existing conceptions and moreover to elaborate a new model of aesthetic emotion that reconciles different claims concerning aesthetic emotions. Accordingly, Lazarus (1991) writes:

I must conclude that no special concepts are needed for aesthetic emotions that are not found in cognitive-motivational-relational formulations [Lazarus' specific appraisal theory] about emotion in general and about the individual emotions in particular, *except those having to do with the principles that allow us to identify vicariously with what is being portrayed* [emphasis mine]. This may be one reason why the aesthetic emotions have remained outside the pale of psychological study and, in a sense, *sui generis*, in the eyes of those philosophers and psychologists willing to consider them. (295f)

By coincidence, due to his wrong conception of emotion as arousal, it is just Berlyne's approach that somehow considers the contrariness of this particular group of aesthetic emotions. Silvia and Brown (2006) comment on his approach:

Berlyne's model doesn't make predictions about specific negative states. Second, the model presumes that positive aesthetic experience always appears simultaneously with negative experience. [...] This assumption leads to the awkward prediction that someone who intensely dislikes a painting also enjoys it, only less so. (Silvia/Brown 2006)

7.2. Aesthetic Attitudes

It is puzzling that just appraisal theories do not account for a *difference* of what has so far been described as “virtual emotions”, “ästhetische Scheingefühle” or, as I call them in reference to the first part of this thesis, “kathartic emotions”. To wrap it up once more: as kathartic emotions I described the “common garden” of emotions aroused in the context of artistic content. I conceive of such emotions as a corresponding, but distinctive class of emotions in relation to their mundane counterparts, as they dissolve in what has been described as Katharsis. This particular class of emotions has commonly been referred to as aesthetic emotions. Particularly appraisal theorists do not account of them as being profoundly *different*. Anger remains anger, be it in the context of a concrete, mundane incident, or in the context of a theatrical drama or film. Appraisal Theory bears a great potential to account for a *difference*, theorists of the paradigm simply do not use this potential. It will be one of the tasks of the further sections to explain and illustrate this potential.

In the first part of this thesis I raised the claim that a necessary condition for aesthetic emotion is *the recognition and appreciation of the particular source and cause of the emotion as a piece of art*; in short, we have to be aware of the fact that what we are witnessing and experiencing is art or fiction. Aesthetic emotions demand a clear, cognisant attitude that could be verbalised with the words: “Ah! This is a piece of art!” There is strong empirical support for the assumption that such an *aesthetic attitude* has to be adopted, entailing a different, unique form of stimulus processing. Contemporary (cognitive) sciences investigate such different attitudes of perception. The present section will thus proceed with a review of different psychological and neuroscientific studies which stress *differences* between “normal” and aesthetic processing, hence indicating a particular aesthetic attitude.

7.2.1. Differences

From a neuroscientific perspective, Anna Abraham and her colleagues (2008) contribute to the supposition of an aesthetic attitude by investigating the question of how the distinction between fictional and “real world” events can be made so clearly and easily, stating that “neural correlates underlying our abilities to distinguish between” these different worlds is “yet unknown” (see 965). Thus, in an fMRI-study the researchers confronted probands with scenarios dealing either with real or fictional characters. Indeed, results suggest that supposingly “real” scenarios rather employed activation of the anterior prefrontal cortex and the posterior cingulate cortex, commonly associated with episodic memory, whereas fictional events rather elicited activation of areas along the left lateral frontal gyrus, associated with semantic memory. Episodic memory is conceived of a form of declarative memory that concerns events, indicating “the [automatic] integration and coordination of many kinds of information” and reflecting social relevance of the event. Semantic memory, on the other hand, is another form of declarative memory of facts, playing a “key role in semantic aspects of language processing” and, interestingly, being associated with responses to “semantic violations and world knowledge violations”.

It seems that Abraham and her colleagues were above all successful in showing that supposingly “real” events are considered simply as being of higher personal relevance, whereas fictional events are less so. “It appears then that the more self-relevant and familiar the information, the higher the activation in the anterior medial PFC as well as the precuneus and posterior cingulate cortices.”, Abraham et al. (2008) state (see 973). Hence, the researchers propose not to account for reality/fiction in dichotomical terms, but on the basis of a continuum in accord to the “degree of personal relevance”. Indeed, a further study (Abraham & Craymon 2009) reveals that scenarios involving relatives and friends would point higher on this continuum. The problem I see here is that if we then assumed the continuum as corresponding to the notions of real and unreal, incidents involving family members or friends would hence be appraised as *more real* than others involving

other existing, but more distant persons. The findings of Abraham are anyhow relevant to the present approach, as I suppose that the indicated principle of being not personally involved or of having a particular *disinterest* is a necessary condition for aesthetic emotion.

In another recent study Gerald Cupchik and his colleagues (2009) explicitly describe “aesthetic experience as a special kind of experience in which pleasure is produced by the disinterested contemplation of objects”, relating to principles of focusing attention on the object and “the suppression of everyday concerns” (see 84). The study emphasises the necessity of voluntarily and consciously adopting an aesthetic attitude to facilitate aesthetic perception of objects and it ascribes a crucial role in doing so to the emotion system of the brain. Aesthetic perception is opposed by pragmatic perception or object recognition, which is dedicated to “identification of meaningful objects” and is associated with higher activation in the fusiform gyrus. On the contrary, aesthetic perception elicits activation of neural systems that is not limited to those of object recognition. Cupchik et al. (2009) write:

Given that artists seek to evoke subjective reactions to their works in the viewer, we predicted that aesthetic perception would be more likely to engage the brain’s emotional circuitry, especially in structures related to the experience of emotion such as insula [...]. (86)

In the experimental setup probands were asked to view paintings of representative content either under aspects of object-identification or in a subjective, aesthetically contemplating manner, “experiencing the mood of the work and the feelings it evokes”. Results clearly showed higher activation of bilateral insula in the aesthetic task, indicating that attention can consciously be shifted towards aesthetic perception and that the resulting aesthetic experience is underpinned by different neural processes.

However, I consider the formulation quoted in this paragraph of asking the probands to focus attention on the “mood” and “feelings” of the paintings in the aesthetic task as problematic, as it from the outset equalises “aesthetic” with “emotional”. Probands could have equally been asked to view the paintings “emotionally”, probably with the same outcome. Thus, the interpretation of the results as valid proof for the strong bond between aesthetic and emotional processes seems to be partly self-fulfilling and rather based on philosophical presumptions. Striking remains the fact that we can intentionally shift our attention from one mode of perception to the other in demand to adopt an appropriate perspective on the object or incident. An artwork has to be viewed *as artwork* and Cupchik et al. (2009) moreover explicitly point out that we can fail to do so (see 85).

Helmut Leder and his colleagues (2004) raise corresponding claims. Their research resulted in a psychological *information-processing stage model of aesthetic processing*. “A work of art”, Leder et al. (2004) write, “is the input for the model. Aesthetic experiences often require a pre-classification of an object as art [...]” (see 493), entailing a distinct form of cognitive processing. The model of Leder and his colleagues views aesthetic experience as a “somehow art-specific [...] cognitive process accompanied by continuously upgrading affective states that vice versa are appraised, resulting in an (aesthetic) emotion” (see 493). The model explicitly regards aesthetic emotion as essential component of aesthetic experience. Interestingly, Leder et al. (2004) set the focus on modern (fine) art and hence claim the *challenge* of understanding the meaning of an artwork as essential part of the aesthetic experience: “aesthetic experience”, the authors write, “can be understood as challenging perceptual problem-solving process”, which is moreover self-rewarding and self-reinforcing (see 499). The researchers also propose the universal applicability of the model.

Even though sharing basic assumptions, it seems that Leder et al. (2004) and Cupchik et al. (2009) are however discordant in their opinion of what fundamentally constitutes

aesthetic experience. The latter strongly emphasise the sensual, the former the “problem-solving” aspect. Furthermore, the model of Leder et al. (2004) with its emphasise on the challenging novelty in art, opposes, for instance, Zeki’s (1999) verdict of claiming (somehow familiar) essentials as constitutive element of art. This profound opposition indeed suggests that Leder and his colleagues do not only provide a descriptive model of aesthetic processing, but a very theory of aesthetics itself.

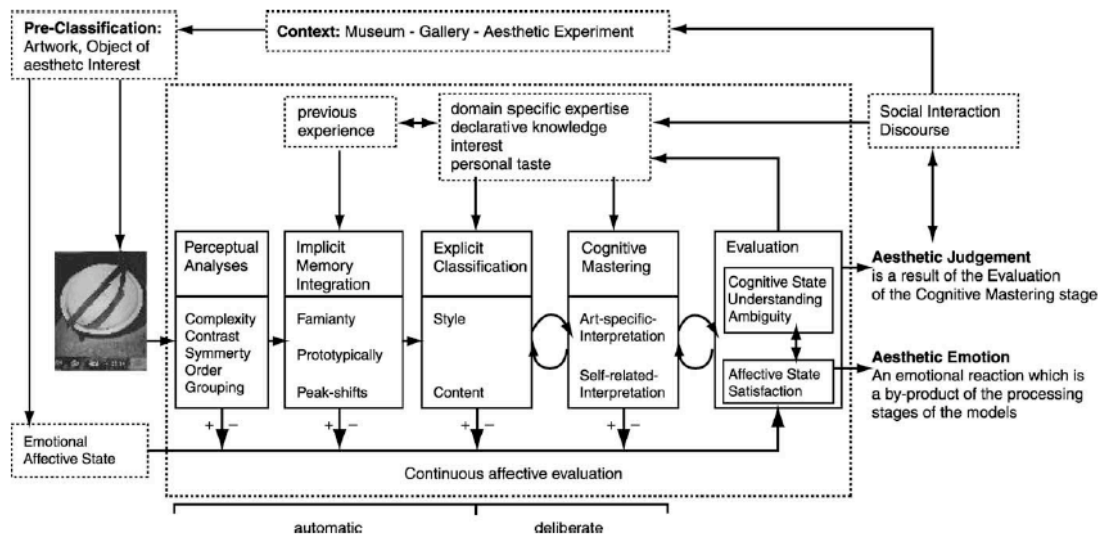


Figure 4. A model of aesthetic experience. (Source: Leder et al. 2004, 492)

The *information-processing stage model* shows a remarkably systematised approach to the cognitive process of aesthetic experience. It lists five stages that are set in an hierarchical order, but do not necessarily occur in a strict sequence, indicating loops and back-propagation. The five stages are: *perceptual analysis* (basic occipital visual processes); *implicit (automatic) memory integration*; *explicit classification* (influence of expertise and knowledge); and finally *cognitive mastering and evaluation* (the concluding classification of the artwork). The output of the model consists of aesthetic judgements and aesthetic emotions, which are seen as “relatively independent” from each other. In the process itself, the researchers attempt to emphasise the role of the parallel emotional

processes and state that they “assume cognitive and affective experiences to be linked reciprocally” (see Leder et al. 2004, 493).

However, the focus on the challenging “mastery” of art, on cognitively grasping the meaning and the conception of the artwork constitutes aesthetic experience mainly as cognitive task and the structure of the model seems to suggest that emotions do not play a determining role in the aesthetic process. Moreover, the conception of aesthetic emotion according to Leder and his colleagues is quite narrow and resembles Scherer’s view. The researchers view “positive” emotions, such as satisfaction and pleasure, as “typical affective state when entering an art-related situation, such as an exhibition” (see 501), determined by the self-rewarding nature of the aesthetic process. Thus, the cognitive stages either “increase or decrease the ‘affective state’ ” (see 501), leading to the already announced states of pleasure or, when failing, even to dissatisfaction. Regarding the references in this paragraph, the claim of reciprocity can hardly be maintained. Aesthetic emotions seem to be a by-product of the particular aesthetic judgement; an implication, that is in accord with the emphasise on cognition as antecedent of emotion of Appraisal Theory. However, the originality, importance and potential of this highly systematised approach is undeniable, as it meticulously elaborates and illustrates a uniqueness of aesthetic experience.

7.2.2. Similarities

The studies presented above (Abraham et al. 2008, Cupchik et al. 2009 and Leder et al. 2004) focus on the particularity of aesthetic processing and hence state a *difference*. However, they do also stress the surprising degree of *similarity* of processes conducted in the context and towards the arts with those we conduct towards real life objects and events. Abraham et al. (2008) explicitly state that “The largely overlapping activation patterns between the areas implicated when processing scenarios containing real or

fictional characters is indicative of the similarity of the underlying processes involved when engaging in these scenarios [...]", and that we solely have to look for "finer distinctions" (see 972). Thus, on a neural level, the difference between "real" and "fiction" only manifests in a rather small shift of activation; a shift, however, with profound consequences.

Most interestingly, Leder et al. (2004) and Cupchik et al. (2009) describe aesthetic experience as an interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes. Bottom-up is in this context associated with basic "constructive", "perceptual facilitation" processes (see Cupchik et al. 2009), corresponding with the first, but also the second stage of the model of Leder et al. (2004) (Cupchik et al. 2009 suggest only the first stage to be taken as bottom-up processing, see 85). These first two stages describe automatic processes that are not influenced by context-dependent adopted attitudes. Whereas the first, *perceptual analysis*, is dedicated to the basic recognition of *colour*, *complexity*, *symmetry*, and so on, the second, *implicit memory integration*, is concerned with the recognition of these objects in terms of our individual histories. *Prototypicality*, for instance, depends on our personal experience with the objects or shapes displayed; a point, that is also stressed by Zeki (1999). The processes of the first two stages are elicited automatically, instantaneously and, most crucially, they are not yet art-specific. Anyhow, we need art-specific processes in order to identify and treat art as such and these processes are referred to as top-down in the conceptions of Leder, Cupchik and their colleagues. Top-down is described as further cognitive evaluation of what is being *seen* after those initial stages occurred, indicating an "orienting of attention", an "intentional shift" or a process of extended "cognitive control". In the study of Cupchik and his colleagues, this means shifting away from object recognition; and this shift is of such conscious nature, that "untrained" subjects can even fail to execute it. However, it is object recognition that initially and automatically occurs when we are confronted with certain stimuli and which is described as the first and the second step in the model proposed by Leder and his colleagues. These basic perceptual processes are crucial for the survival of our species,

they belong to the set of evolutionary essentials that facilitated our survival on a very basic level. Most importantly, these basic processes cannot be entirely controlled or shut down intentionally; evolutionary necessity won't let us do so.

Aesthetic perception involves both bottom-up and top-down processes and the increased activation of the lateral prefrontal cortex in the aesthetic task assessed in Cupchik et al.'s (2009) study, being strongly associated with "top-down control of cognition", gives recent evidence for this assumption. The researchers write in regard of their particular study that "adopting an aesthetic viewing orientation may require an intentional shift to overcome the automatic cuing of semantic categories and to reinvest attention in sensory experience elicited by the stylistic properties of artworks" (see 85) and they conclude:

[...] our results suggest that aesthetic experience is a function of the interaction between top-down orienting of attention and bottom-up perceptual input. (89)

What I want to stress at this point, in accord with these recent assumptions, is that there is a profound equivalence and even isomorphy in the way we perceive the arts in relation to mundane, "real" objects and events; and simultaneously, there is not. On the level of bottom-up constructive processes we perceive the *presented as if real* and we have to do so in order to eventually *see* and comprehend an object or event as such. And on the level of top-down we intentionally shift what is seen into another sphere, we experience an *interlude of cognition to perception*, so to say, that ultimately leads to the verbally expressible conclusion of "Ah! This is a piece of art!" Thus, we need an appropriate concept of the artistic to perceive of it, to understand it and finally to relish it.

In accord with this conception comes the interpretation of Katharsis in the first part of this thesis and in this manner I understand the particular formulation of the clause in the *Poetics*, indicating that Eleos and Phobos are followed by the Katharsis of this emotion. What is suggested as sequential process, however, has to be conceived of as occurring in an

extremely fast manner; our faculties to distinct the artistic or the fictional from the real are extremely effective. To the subject, the process, I assume, appears to be simultaneous, as *one* way of perceiving. Eleos and Phobos never really strike us as such in theatre. The interpretation of Katharsis (and also the notes on the contrariness of Dionysos) presented in the first part of this thesis account for that.

7.2.3. The Mirror Neuron System

A further relevant study recently conducted by Nicole Speer and her colleagues (2009) assesses neural correlates of reading fiction. In accord with previous studies, it buttresses the claim that “brain regions involved in reading action words are some of the same regions involved in performing analogous actions in the real world. For example, reading verbs such as ‘run’ or ‘kick’ activates brain regions that are selectively activated when moving one’s foot [...]” (see 989). This means that our brain literally simulates what is being read. The basis for this and related studies is a theory that is commonly referred to as the *mirror neuron system hypothesis*. I shall shortly review the most important claims and implications of this theory and how it altered our understanding of the human brain.

In the beginning of the 1990, Giacomo Rizzolatti, Corrado Singaglia and several other researchers coincidentally discovered a particular group of neurons in the motor cortex of the brain of macaques. They were named *mirror neurons*, indicating their unique functionality. The motor cortex of the monkey brain consists of several functional areas (F1-F7); of particular relevance here is area F5, which shows some crucial functional properties. F5 is commonly associated with movements of mouth and hands and particularly with the movement of *grasping*. It is a remarkable fact that single neurons of that area do not code for individual movements, but for particular *motor acts*. Bending the index finger, for instance, to *grasp* will trigger a discharge of the neuron, bending the index finger to scratch will not have an effect on the same neuron. The brain of the macaque

categorises acts in accord to their *meaning* rather than their motoric significance. Furthermore, a group of neurons shows bimodal visual-motor property. They fire when a monkey grasps a nut; but they will also fire when a monkey *sees* a nut in the peripersonal space. The peripersonal space includes objects which are potentially reachable. Crucial here is that these bimodal neurons communicate the meaning of the nut by mediating potential motor acts; recognising an object within the peripersonal (or near) space means to metaphorically grasp it. We could say that the near space around us is comprehended as potentials of interaction. (for a detailed review see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, chapter 1-3)

The mirror neuron system shows an even more striking property of the brain of the macaque. Neurons in this particular system would not only fire while the monkey was grasping a fruit, but also when the monkey was witnessing a researcher doing so. The mirror neurons of the F5 region of the motor cortex code transitive acts, they respond to particular meaningful movements. Indeed, there are distinct *grasping-mirror-neurons*, *holding-mirror-neurons*, *interacting-with-hands-mirror-neurons*, and so on. They do also fire when a movement is partly hidden behind an opaque screen, mediating what is supposed to be going on behind, or simply when a familiar sound occurs: the sound of the cracking nut will elicit the same areas that would be involved in active nut-cracking (see Rizzolatti et al. 2006).

The mirror neurons do not fire at such occasions because the monkey brain somehow comprehended the meaning of the act; at the contrary, the mirror system's primary function is "*understanding the meaning of the actions of others.*" (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, 124) Mirror neurons evoke a „true representation in the brain of the act itself“ and without this “direct simulation” the monkey would not be able to understand goal-oriented behavior of others, and particularly not in such rapid manner. Before these insights, neuroscientists were assuming a „rapid reasoning process not unlike that used to solve a logical problem“, a complex and „sophisticated cognitive apparatus“ by which

transitive actions of others are understood. What is seen, is, to a degree, happening in the observer's heads; and this is already a misleading formulation, as *seeing* already implicates *understanding*. Thus, in order to see a researcher grasping (and stealing away) the fruit, the monkey brain has to simulate the action. Concepts of "reasoning" step back behind the idea of "penetration"; the brain *mirrors* in order to understand (and actually *see*). (see Rizzolatti et al. 2006 and Gallese et al. 2004)

A related and even more elaborated and effective mirror neuron system has been found in human brains; it virtually spreads out throughout all cerebral lobes (see Rizzolatti et al. 2006, Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, Gallese et al. 2004). Most striking in the context of this thesis is the fact that the human mirror neuron system not only codes transitive motor acts, such as grasping, but also facial expression and hence emotions. This suggests that we automatically share the emotions expressed by others.

In terms of neuroscience, there are two basic approaches to explain our outstanding ability of comprehending each others emotional states. *Cold hypotheses* conceive of the process as being "reflexive" and "purely cognitive" in the narrow sense of the word (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, 189f); these hypotheses can be further divided into such which claim the emotion of the other to be manifested as a *propositional representation*, or such which claim the process to be one of *sensory motor resonance*, describing the process of simulating the motor pattern of the emotion and interpreting it (see Wicker et al. 2003). *Hot hypotheses*, on the other hand, are associated with "emotional warmth" (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, 190) and an experience of the emotion of the other. Rizzolatti et al. (2006) emphasise the main difference between the approaches:

These two means of recognizing emotions are profoundly different: with the first, the observer deduces the emotion but does not feel it; via the second, recognition is firsthand because the mirror mechanism elicits the same emotional state in the observer. (60)

Empirical evidence for *hot hypotheses* comes in accord with the mirror neuron system hypothesis. Particularly, studies on the emotion of disgust have been providing strong support for such assumptions. Bruno Wicker and his colleagues (2003) confronted probands with recordings of disgusted people and found significant overlap of activation in the left anterior insula and the right anterior cingulate cortex; both which are crucial for the representation of the emotion itself. Interestingly, lesions of the anterior insula not only lead to a reduced experience or even absence of disgust, but they do also cause patients to be unable to recognise related emotional expressions of others and stimuli normally associated with disgust.

Cold hypotheses are anyhow not rejected; the human capability of emotion understanding is rather conceived of as a complementary combination of *hot* and *cold* processes (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008 and Wicker et al. 2003). There is the possibility and importance of *deducing* emotional states in others, of “colourless perception” of emotions (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008, 189f). However, automatic emotion sharing seems to be a fundamental precondition of human social cognition, the “hot” activation is claimed as “evolutionary oldest form of emotion understanding” (see Wicker et al. 2003). The basis of this process appears to be formed by the mirror neuron system, creating „a bridge [...] between others and ourselves“ (see Gallese et al. 2004, 400).

The mirror neuron system hypothesis had a great impact in the scientific world. It triggered the rightful renunciation and rethinking of “classical” perspectives on the (human) brain as being organised in sharply distinctive functional areas. The motor cortex is not to be conceived of as a mere, “passive executor” that receives commands, and neither are other parts of the brain to be provided with such functional exclusiveness (see Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008). But the impact drew its tracks beyond the boundaries of the neuroscientific community. Particularly artists and art theorists were astonished by the new conception (which is, after all, in the field of philosophy, not new at all and has been accounted for in the terminology of *simulation theory* (hot) and *theory theory* (cold),

however, in the framework of the notion of empathy (see *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Empathy*, 2008)). Rizzolatti and Sinigaglia (2008) write:

In an interview some time ago, the great theatrical director, Peter Brook commented that with the discovery of mirror neurons, neuroscience had finally started to understand what has long been common knowledge in the theatre: the actor's efforts would be in vain if he were not able to surmount all cultural and linguistic barriers and share his bodily sounds and movements with the spectators, who thus actively contribute to the event and become one with the players on the stage. This sharing is the basis on which theatre evolves and revolves, and mirror neurons [...] now provide this sharing with a biological explanation. (ix)

And film theorist Thomas Elsaesser enthusiastically announces in his book *Filmtheorie. Zur Einführung* (2007) in reference to the mirror neuron hypothesis:

Dass eine naturwissenschaftlich fundierte Theorie von Einfühlen und Mitfühlen, die den Unterschied von Selbst und Anderem zumindest teilweise verwischt, unabsehbare Folgen für die Entwicklung der Filmtheorie haben könnte, liegt auf der Hand. (99)

Studies such as the one conducted by Speer and her colleagues particularly intertwine the functionalities of the mirror neuron system hypothesis with the reception of fiction and the arts in general. Reading about a goal kick will activate “the same representations used for *making* or *watching* a goal kick” (emphasise mine) (see 989), it will “use perceptual and motor representations in the process of comprehending narrated activity” (see 996). The spectacular findings of the mirror neuron system hypothesis are already common ground here and Speer and her colleagues even expand the scope by pointing out that receiving something that is knowingly fictional will entail similar activities in the brain as in the “real world”. Referencing findings of Neurocinematics, the researchers mention, for instance, that close-ups of hands and faces increase both activity in somatosensory and motor cortices (see 997). Interpreting the results of the study, they write:

The convergence of these results is consistent with the idea that readers construct simulations of situations as they read a text, and that this process is similar to recalling previous situations or imagining potential ones." (997)

Again, these findings suggest a surprising degree of *similarity* in the processing of artistic and "real world" matters. The study of Speer et al. (2009) particularly elucidates the effect of (representative) art. We are not only *penetrated* by incidents of "real life", of mundane importance, but also by those being told, written, performed or even painted; on a perceptual *bottom-up* level, indeed. Thus, the importance and the ubiquity of *associative processes* is emphasised here, not only in mundane life, but particularly in the context of the arts. In the paradigm of Appraisal Theory, particularly regarding the model of Smith and Kirby (2001) (see the section of Appraisal Theory in this work), we have to account for these mirroring mechanisms as being cognitive appraisals of the kind of *associative processes*: they occur extremely fast and automatic and elicit "full-blown appraisal meanings". These full-blown appraisals occur also in theatre; regarding this Plato was right to claim the audience of theatre being *infected*. Most interestingly, we cannot deprive ourselves from these *associative processes*. At this basic stage, there cannot be *disinterest*, even though we *know* of the artistic nature of the presented. In a sense, Antigone *is* dead; at least for a moment. What is further demanded to recognise the arts as such is the top-down intentional shift, the "Ah! This is a piece of art!". These assumptions are crucial for an explanation of Katharsis in the view of contemporary science. Indeed, the mirror neuron system hypothesis will play an important role in this concern.

The study of Speer et al. (2009) highlights another remarkable fact, namely the *power of language*, so to say, that has already been elaborated by Gorgias, the sophist. Language indeed elicits neural activation related to the experience and execution of similar actions. The Greek dramatists seem to have understood how effective speech was in relation to the limited options of performance those days. Many tragic incidents are mediated

epically, they are described, often by a messenger, as in the case of Antigone's suicide. However, our imagination lets the picture appear lively in front of us, even though never actually performed on stage. This is why in the first part of this thesis I referred to the incident of strangled Antigone in terms of an actual *picture*; and this is why again this *picture* shall be again the content of the next section, now approached from the perspective of the cognitive sciences.

7.3. An Explanation of Katharsis

I consider the evidence on aesthetic experience reviewed above, describing both *similarities* and *differences* and the relation between bottom-up and top-down processing, as extremely relevant for an approach to Katharsis from the perspective of psychology and neuroscience. I view Katharsis in correspondence to the assumption of the interaction of bottom-up and top-down processes. In accord comes the interpretation of the dionysiac contrariness, which is, indeed, a philosophical and very euphonic interpretation of the matter, but however, also a valid and important approach. The Greeks did have their particular means to express such complex phenomena, their insights are remarkable. The mask is still a very strong symbol for the indications made above: we associate presence and reality, but we reason absence and unreality. We willfully accept these violations, this contrariness; and ultimately find pleasure in it.

Ideas that are explicitly or implicitly related to such as claimed in the long lasting discourse of Katharsis have been picked up by psychology. I already mentioned the use that Freud and Breuer made of the concept; but there are also attempts to integrate the concept into modern psychology. Of particular interest here is the notion of the *Katharsis effect* which has been stressed in discussions of mass media and violent behavior, recently particularly in the context of violent computer games. The *Katharsis effect* refers to the idea of the abreaction of violent tendencies via the consumption of

virtual violence in a socially accepted and safe environment. However, these theses have never been successfully verified (see Kunczik/Zipfel 2006,303-305) and due to my comprehension of the notion, I consider them as irrelevant for a theory of Katharsis. Already Nietzsche stated in regard to the tragic emotions:

Denn daß man durch Erregung dieser Affekte sich von ihnen 'purgirt', wie Aristoteles zu glauben scheint, ist einfach nicht wahr[...]. (Mittenzwei 2001, 259)

The notion of the arts as cure has ever since been a guiding idea of those theorising and investigating the arts (less of those producing them), the drive behind it seems to be the question of the purpose of art. Many theories of Katharsis are constituted by the notion of providing the arts with a particular use for our mundane lives. Lazarus (1991), for instance, points out thoughts related to EMOTIONAL FORTITUDE in the context of aesthetic emotion (see 293). However, of higher relevance here is a recent study (Djikic et al. 2008) that assesses emotional effects of reading fiction on avoidantly attached individuals. Due to bad experiences, such individuals avoid being emotionally attached to others and moreover generally avoid “the experience of emotions” (see 16). Art, so the hypothesis, can serve as a “non-threatening” environment eliciting a higher intensity of emotional experience compared to mundane incidents. Two arguments are listed for this assumption: first, people can interrupt the aesthetic and thus the emotional experience any time they want; second, “some aspects of art, such as form or structure, cannot be defended against.” (see 15) Both claims are in accord with the assumptions advocated in this thesis. Remarkably, the results of the study support that the arts can indeed serve the purpose of eliciting emotional experiences in people who consequently avoid them. In the context of Katharsis we are particularly reminded of Lessing’s conception of the notion, claiming a transformation of the tragic emotions towards virtuous dispositions.

Anyhow, the study of Djikic et al. is focused on cases which are classified as being pathological. Aristotle had not conceptualised Katharsis as a cure for pathological cases,

neither is it the topic of this thesis to elaborate the question if the arts can and should serve as cure. The paragraphs above fulfilled the purpose of elucidating how the notion of Katharsis and related conceptions are approached and applied by contemporary science. However, the current subsection shall elucidate how the interpretation of Katharsis presented in this thesis can adequately be approached and explained in the framework of the cognitive sciences.

In the first part of this thesis I illustrated my conception of the notion of Katharsis and its two tragic emotions, particularly by referring to the incident of Antigone's suicide. I consider this picture as tragic culmination point of Phobos, Eleos and Katharsis. In this section I shall refer to the very same picture again, now explaining it from the perspective and in the terminology of psychology and neuroscience. What will follow here is a suggestion, an idea of how to interpret the Aristotelian Katharsis in the context of the cognitive sciences. However, the explanation shall not contradict with the explanation of Katharsis presented in the first part of this thesis; rather, it will appear that the two approaches fruitfully complement each other and establish Katharsis as a valid concept to approach the nature of aesthetic emotion, then and now. The outline will furthermore elucidate how we can perceive of Phobos and Eleos in the context of contemporary emotion theories. In reference to the interlocked structure of the two, they have been described in the first part of this thesis as *two sides of one experience*. This claim will be further elaborated here. Ultimately taking Katharsis into account, the following outline can be described as a *perceptual triptychon of (tragic) aesthetic experience*.

7.3.1. Phobos

In the first part of this thesis, Phobos has been described as mere horror in the presence of strangled Antigone and screaming Haimon. I referred to the picture in terms of its cruelty and bloodshed, not regarding the particular circumstances, the identities of the

characters and their (close) relations. Phobos indicates the pure violent horror of the picture, not yet its specific complexity. Again, Wilamowitz-Moellendorf's claim on Phobos, quoted by Schadewaldt (1991a) is of crucial importance here:

Schrecken entspricht trotz Lessing dem Wortsinne besser, denn der Phobos ist ein Dämon, dem Gorgonenhäupte entsprechend, den man auf den Schild malt, damit er den Feind durch den Schauder lähme [...]. (260)

The gorgon is Medusa, the lady with the snaky hairdo. The philologist was remarkably right to refer to her appearance as strong elicitor of Phobos. Indeed, I suggest to consider the head of the Medusa as a mythical manifestation of Phobos (of course not exclusively, as the meanings of any mythical figure are manifold). The unfortunate who looks at her is turned into stone; he or she is (forever) paralysed, “durch den Schauder gelähmt”, as Wilamowitz-Moellendorf puts it. Her features are of immense cruelty; it was Rubens who marvellously took account and even heightened the horrific features of Medusa's head to an extreme.



Figure 5. Ruben's Head of the Medusa. (Source: Seipel 2009, 71)

Spiders and scorpions crawl upon her face, far too near for man's taste. The painting emphasises the permanent horror of Medusa's existence: the threatening nearness of the snakes, of reptiles, to her nose, her mouth, her eyes. Herpetophobia and arachnophobia are evolutionary arised ancient mechanisms, crucial for survival. Snakes are considered as among the oldest predators of mammals (see Isbell 2006). Medusa, as a human being, must constantly associate the snakes as perilous threat, even though she consciously knows and must accept that the reptiles belong to herself. I consider this as crucial component of her mythical meaning. Her beheading appears to be no relieve, her pale-dead face is still steeped in horror. It seems that the expression of fear has become a permanent feature of her appearance. Her gaze is full of horror; and it is this horror that *penetrates* us, that is *mirrored* instantaneously and automatically, unbearable, paralysing us (forever). Ultimately, her abominable cut-throat is spilled with blood and filled with little snakes; it is a disgusting picture that causes horripilation and shiver.

The nearness of insects and reptiles, the horrified, pale face and the gore of the picture; Ruben's painting is full of bottom-up elicitors of fear which can collectively be explained in terms of the human phylogenesis. Our immediate and appropriate response to such impressions is mainly orchestrated by evolution. For the longest time in human history it made perfect sense to avoid and flee by the sight of such stimuli. Such *associative processes* can hardly ever be oppressed; not by Medusa, whose existence is determined by the constant fear she herself must experience, even though knowing that the snakes are no threat for her; and not by us, who are given that fear, even though we can reflect and reason that Medusa has never existed. On an associative level, we are penetrated and consumed by the horror of Ruben's painting, reacting appropriately in terms of evolution and the survival of our species. The arts play with such mechanisms. The cognitive sciences afford to understand the meaning of Medusa's existence in these terms.

The incident of Antigone's suicide provides corresponding basic fear-eliciting stimuli as well. The dead, tantalised body, the screaming grimaces; we instantaneously and

automatically react to these features in an evolutionary appropriate manner. The elicitation of Phobos in Greek tragedy is to be understood in terms of *associative processes*, evoked by these unconditioned fear-eliciting stimuli. The mirror neuron system hypothesis facilitates our understanding of how the horrified grimace of Haimon in front of his dead bride immediately *infects* us with its emotion. We immediately *mirror* the horror. The mirror neuron system hypothesis of emotion and related conceptions of *associative processing* are thus crucial for the understanding of the effect of tragedy and the arts in general.

Ekman and Friesen (1976), as has been described above already, claim six basic emotions. Scherer (2001), whose perspective is supported here, proposes a potentially infinite number of emotions, however, he admits that there are “frequently recurring patterns of environmental evaluation results”, which result in what he calls modal emotions (see 108). Fear is anyway considered as basic or modal emotion and it seems that Schadewaldt’s (1991b) description of the tragic emotions as “Grundorgane der Menschheit” at least fits the emotion of Phobos (see 33). I consider Phobos to be strongly related to this (basic) modal emotion, be it called fear or horror. Support for such claims comes from the fact that tragedies generally deal with stimuli and incidents as described above. Tragedies deal with the expectation and presence of abominable violence and bloodshed and the consequent agony of the characters. The popular genre of horror, by the way, has reduced itself to the mere effect of such stimuli.

In fact, the mask that has been used by tragic actors in ancient Greece can be considered as further evidence for this claim. Originals are not bequeathed, as they were made of short-living materials, but we have quite detailed images of them. Even though the tragic masks are sometimes described as having a neutral expression (see for instance Kachler/Aebi/Brunner 2003, 32), I clearly appraise them as showing the features of a fearful face (especially in relation to the masks of comedy), and I suppose that Ekman and Friesen would agree at this point.

The use of these masks might also be understood in terms of what has been said about the function of the mirror neuron system hypothesis. The Greek audience of tragedy was constantly exposed to a static, fearful expression. This supports the view that tragedies mediated the emotion of Phobos on a very basic associative or sensory-motor level, particularly making use of our associative coordinations.

In reference to the evocation of the emotion of disgust by the sight of a disgusted face, Wicker et al. (2003) write that “this ‘primitive’ mechanism may protect monkeys and young infants from [for instance] food poisoning [...], even before the evolution/development of sophisticated cognitive skills.” I consider this as being transferable to the conception of Phobos advocated here. Wicker et al. (2003) continue that “In humans, cognitive routes toward the understanding of emotions are then probably added [...]”, indicating the thought of *hot* and *cold* activations complementing each other. This further remark might appear crucial for the second tragic emotion, the emotion of Eleos.



Figure 6. A replication of a tragic mask. (Source: Kachler et al. 2003, 35)

7.3.2. Eleos

Eleos has been described as rather noble emotion that, in relation to Phobos, matches the dignity of tragedy. Eleos indeed demands the full comprehension of the plot-structure of tragedy and it can even be heightened by further knowledge of the myth. Indeed, I don't consider Eleos as equivalent emotion to Phobos. Eleos is not a modal emotion, its complexity suggests it to be a historically and culturally specific experience. Eleos is neither "elementary", nor can it be conceived as "Grundorgan", as it demands the intellectual, cognisant appraisal of the incidents displayed by tragedy. We need explicit knowledge of Antigone's, Haimon's and Kreon's identity, of their (close) relationships and the actions that finally led to the tragic incident of Antigone's suicide. This knowledge is a necessary ingredient to experience the horrific picture of strangled Antigone *as well* as reason to lament, thus, as a picture of Eleos. Moreover, we need a system that provides the framework for these identities, relations and actions and the proper appraisal of them; in short: Eleos demands *culture*. Eleos has to be considered as culturally evolved emotion.

Appraisal theories and particularly dimensional models of emotion adequately account for subtle cultural variability in emotions. I consider Eleos as contingent emotion that was special to Greek society. In the case of *Eleos for Antigone*, it is crucially mediated by her societal status. Eleos is elicited as consequence of the conscious evaluation of Antigone's fate; for instance, we have to judge her death as being *unworthy*, *Anaxios*. However, I am convinced that we can sufficiently elaborate these specialties of the Greek society and that we can at least understand and retrace the emotion of Eleos.

I view Eleos as the result of *reasoning* and top-down processes rather than as consequence of immediate bottom-up *association*. In reference to Leventhal and Scherer's (1987) model, Phobos is located primarily on the first and perhaps on the second, whereas Eleos is to be found mainly on the third and perhaps also on the second level. Of

course, Eleos strikes us as intense as Phobos, perhaps even more so; but the two emotions have to be considered as emotions with different roots: Phobos necessarily emerged early in the course of evolution, whereas Eleos arose later as a consequence of cultural specificities and necessities. The Greeks have given birth to Eleos. I suppose that such conception of the Aristotelian approach to emotions is particularly interesting for contemporary emotion research. It is important to keep in mind that the distinction of *associative* and *reasoning processes*, explicitly suggested by Smith and Kirby (2001), does not draw a clear line between the two emotion elicitors. Rather, the first has access to the second, and the second might alter the first. Boundaries blur and we might not judge Phobos simply as rather “primitive” and Eleos as rather “intelligent” emotion. Indicative for this is, for example, the rather equivalent treatment and explanation of the emotions in the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle.

It is a matter of fact that particularly in the recent history of the Katharsis-discourse Eleos has gained more attention than Phobos and I suppose it is because Eleos is considered as being more complex and adequate to Greek tragedy. Eleos, one could argue, reflects the intelligence and depth of the play; Phobos, appealing to our bloodlust, *great for the eye of man*, brings people to theatre. Philologists rather show the tendency to elevate Phobos, to claim both of them as features of the “conscious, cognizant mind”, rejecting the notion of them as “uncontrollable instincts or forces” (see Halliwell 1986, 173). However, Phobos is, at least in its pure form, an “uncontrollable force” and I suppose that Eleos can indeed become such force as well. It is in the end not a coincidence that in the first part of this thesis, being concerned with approaches of philosophy, there is more to say about Eleos and that in this second part, being dedicated to empirical sciences, there is more to say about Phobos. This fact also serves well as illustration for the fruitfulness of the combination of the diverse scientific disciplines.

There is anyhow no use in giving advantage to any of the two emotions. Aristotle mentioned them pairwise, both of them are essential for tragedy. Phobos and Eleos

complement each other in order to ultimately form a tragic picture. Antigone's suicide is not only a picture steeped in gore displaying such essential threats; it is also a picture of profound human mistake and failure, of blindness in a metaphorical sense (and in a concrete at the end of *Oedipus Rex*). Both aspects elicit their appropriate emotions, one incident elicits two emotions; an interesting thought for Appraisal Theory. Vice versa, two emotions constitute one experience, they form *two sides* of the ultimately emerging tragic picture. However, the third crucial element of tragedy on side of the experiencer must not be forgotten: it is Katharsis that emerges through Eleos and Phobos and finally constitutes Antigone's suicide as *aesthetic experience*.

7.3.3. Katharsis

Even though I referenced a scene of Antigone, the descriptions above are not yet specific to the arts. They would sound the same if we were in the reality of the play, if we were members of the chorus, citizens of Theben, or even the unfortunate messenger himself. In any context, the incident of Antigone's suicide remains to be an event steeped in Phobos and Eleos. What turns the *incident* into a *scene*, into an *aesthetic experience*, is the awareness of its fictional, artistic nature. This insight into the fictional character of the play, then, provides the pleasure of Katharsis as we *recognise and appreciate the particular source and cause of the emotion as a piece of art*. We cognitantly experience Phobos and Eleos in the course of a theatrical play; we thus experience a Katharsis of them. I described Katharsis as sudden collapse of the fictional world, as interrupt or split in the perception of the diegetic reality of the play. Furthermore, I claimed the insight into the non-existence and the simultaneous truthful perception of the non-existing appearing lively in front of us as a necessary precondition for Katharsis. How can these euphonic descriptions be understood in terms of contemporary cognitive science? How are these events represented on a psychological and neural level? Can we account for them? What means Katharsis in terms of modern emotion theory? These are the questions to be raised and hopefully to be answered here.

It has been explained above that researchers conceive of aesthetic experience as a process that is determined by the interaction of bottom-up and top-down processes. Leder et al. (2004) and Cupchik et al. (2009) explicitly elaborate this point. Top-down processing is described as “intentional shift”, as processes of “cognitive control” that influence and alter the outcome of bottom-up processing, which can shortly be described as reference to basic perceptual processes. The researchers emphasise the strong moment of consciousness and volition: we can fail to perceive a piece of art properly, we can fail to adopt an aesthetic attitude towards an object. Top-down processing is necessary to perceive something as being of artistic nature.

The meaning of “bottom-up” and “top-down” strongly depends on the context of its use. Different disciplines refer in different terms to the notions, and so does this thesis. The conception of aesthetic experience as an interaction of bottom-up and top-down processes supports the interpretation of Katharsis in the first part of this thesis. This point can be explained in reference to the tragic emotion of Phobos and its relation to Katharsis: when we see the wounds of Medusa and the reptiles and insects crawling up to her face, or when we witness the bloodshed of tragedy, we unvoluntarily perceive these incidents as unconditioned fear-elicitors. The reaction to them is a manifest part of our evolutionary phylogenetic development. Furthermore, when we see the horrified expression in Medusa’s face, or when we witness the desparation of Haimon in sight of his dead bride, finally, when we see the static fearful expressions of the tragic masks, we immediately and involuntarily mirror and simulate these emotions. What is presented to us metaphorically penetrates us *as if* these things actually happened. We take, in a way, the messenger’s position to comprehend the meaning of Antigone’s suicide and, most importantly, to receive the proper emotions of the tragic incident.

However, we constantly get aware of the fact that these objects and incidents presented to us are of artistic nature. Katharsis comes into play, as a conscious intervention, making the experience, despite its fearful nature, pleasurable. The basic evolutionary coordinated

process of fear is altered and modified to fit the actual circumstances, namely, that we are sitting safely in a theatre. It is a top-down intervention, a correction, presumably elicited by highly cortical areas of the brain. An aesthetic attitude is adopted, consciously and deliberate. Katharsis marks the point of re-evaluation of the meaning of the event or object. But before this re-evaluation occurs, the event or object strikes us as being real, tragedy elicits Eleos and Phobos. Our evolutionary arose bottom-up perceptual features tell us that what happens in front of our eyes has to be considered as real and thus personally relevant. However, we experience a Katharsis of these emotions, which refers to the fact that we reappraise the emotion in the context of the adopted aesthetic attitude towards the play. The immediacy of the impact of Eleos and Phobos as *aesthetic* emotions suggests that this process of appraisal-reappraisal occurs in an extremely fast manner, it is an almost simultaneous modification of the emotional experience. Appraisal theories can account adequately for such conception. It would be a further task of the cognitive sciences to elaborate the exact nature of the processes that underlie Katharsis.

7.3.4. Appraisal Theory and Kathartic Emotions

Particularly Appraisal Theory provides the potential to account for a particular class of aesthetic emotions that corresponds with the “common garden variety” of mundane emotions. Appraisal Theory offers categories for fine modulations of emotions, for subtle differences of emotions that on the surface seem to be identical. Mundane, “real” anger, so to say, can be distinguished from aesthetic anger, which is neither less real, nor simply of the same quality. In the conception of Scherer, for instance, there are as many emotions as possible appraisal outcomes. This entails the conception of a vast variety of emotions, full of nuances and contingencies. The number of emotions is as high as potential constellations and forms of human life; it would rather be the task of philosophy to set a concrete number here. The appraisal theory of Scherer accounts for cultural, but also for contextual variability: the emotion of Eleos did not just emerge as an artifact of ancient

Greek culture, but it also claims a unique quality in the context of ancient theatre that Aristotle has pointed out by his invention of Katharsis. Scherer's dimensional conception can account for a distinct unique position of these aesthetic, kathartic emotions. Appraisal Theory particularly focuses on cognitive appraisals as elicitors of emotions. These appraisals have a complex, variable shape and the shape manifests itself in the quality and intensity of the emotion. Appraisals do occur on various levels, they partly occur on highly conscious, *conceptual* levels. Thus, emotions can and are altered by attitudes, by the conscious, perhaps deliberate attitude we have toward certain incidents.

Tribute has to be paid to the fact that the reality of the 21st century is steeped in unrealities. Be it a child's play, the reading of a novel, the reception of film or drama, the visit of an exhibition or a performance, the amusement of playing parlour or computer games; in this medialised, aestheticised era the relish of strong emotions towards individuals or characters which are fictional and knowingly *inanimate* is integral part of human life. Contemporary emotion theories have to address this phenomenon, particularly in the service of media psychology. I propose that a particular quality of emotions emerged through these cultural achievements and I strongly suggest to recognise it as such. It appears obvious to me that emotions in the contexts listed above are appraised differently. We would appraise Kreon's actions differently than we do in theatre if they were bequeathed to us as historical fact, our lament for Antigone would be different too. And the *difference* I indicate here has hardly anything to do with sole claims of self-relevance; incidents, set so far away in the past, in any case have hardly any self-relevance for our personal lives. The *difference* is indeed not gradual, but of profound nature.

However, as pointed out above, appraisal theorists commonly fail to recognise kathartic emotions (or "virtual emotions" or "ästhetische Scheingefühle") as distinct class of emotions. The models of these researchers are highly sophisticated and elaborated, but they seem to be dedicated solely to mundane matters. There is no spot in the appraisal

component models reviewed above for events being appraised as artistic or fictional as distinguished from real and concrete events. There is hardly any way to account for an aesthetic attitude. Due to the frequency of adopting this attitude, due to the commonness of experiencing kathartic emotions in the course of everyday-life, the invention of such appraisal component sounds more than reasonable. One might solely consider to recall toward how many fictional, inanimate persons he or she experienced emotions during the course of the last week or even this very current day.

Concepts to account for kathartic emotions are either absent (Scherer), or they are too insignificant (Silvia); in both cases the *difference* is neglected. But Appraisal Theory should account for an event of artistic or fictional nature as perceived and appraised differently. There must be an alteration of the appraisal structure of the emotion and this alteration must be somehow essential. Of course we could, for instance, reference the suggestion of Abraham et al. (2008) and claim the difference between “reality” and art or fiction as one that above all refers to the self-significance of an event. Hence, current appraisal theories would be potent to account for kathartic emotions, they could point out a difference on a primary level of *relevance*.

Reducing the difference to the matter of self-significance or generally reducing the *difference* to a gradual difference of a value in one of the appraisal component’s scales, which were designed for mundane incidents, neglects the fact that the arts and fiction are fundamentally distinct from mundane events in terms of *meaning*. The alignment of the arts or fiction to self-relevance can be misleading, as we cannot account for “reality” and the arts or fiction on a dimensional scale. The difference is dichotomical: either an incident is appraised as being of artistic, or of factual nature. The phenomenological method of Edmund Husserl (1980) has shown that the reception of the arts is based on a fundamentally different conception of perception. The cognitive sciences are occupied with the investigation of stimuli processing, consequently, they ignore these crucial dimensions of *meaning* (see also Bruner 1990).

There are indeed pieces of art which have a strong reference to factual events. However, even though a film might, for instance, be exclaimed as *true story*, it is clearly known that the incidents depicted are a directed performance of actors. What is seen at most appears to be corresponding with historical facts. From a certain age on we can clearly distinguish between “reality” and fiction, as has been shown by Abraham et al. as well. We know that a piece of art is moving us, in Aristotle’s terminology, that it is a phenomenon of Mimesis. Sometimes we might even fail to do so. Nevertheless, it is an either-or, not a less-or-more, and this either-or entails a qualitative difference on the level of emotions. I thus assume that the dichotomical difference will need to be represented as a particular appraisal component.

On a processing level, several appraisal theories present models that can adequately account for the proposed alteration of emotions. The model of Smith and Kirby (2001) describes the evocation of emotions either as *associatively activated representations* or as a consequence of *reasoning* processes aligned to *contents of focal awareness*. These two processes interact with each other; particularly, *highly conceptual reasoning* processes potentially alter the structure of *associative* processes (see 131). Leventhal and Scherer (1987) distinguish three levels on which *SECs* are being processed and these levels correspond with Smith and Kirby’s dichotomical model, the second serving as interactional gateway between the first and the third level. Both models have already been explained above. The crucial point is that these models explicitly account for the possibility of cognisant adaptations of emotional responses. The notion of *reappraisal* seems to provide further comprehension here, “serving to correct the evaluation results based on new information or more thorough processing.” (see Scherer 2001, 99). Scherer calls the processes on the last *conceptual level* of the model proposed by him and his colleague Leventhal “highly cortical, propositional-symbolic” (see Scherer 2001, 103). Katharsis demands this “highly-cortical” alteration of appraisal to adequately respond to the tragic events on stage. Aesthetic perception, in the context of theatre clearly a cultural achievement, is partly constituted by these high top-down levels.

Referencing again the painting of Medusa and the emotion of Phobos, the process could be described as follows:

appraisal: “Well, I *see*, I perceive insects and snakes crawling up to Medusa’s horrified face, and this causes me horror;”

reappraisal: “However, I *see*, I understand that this picture is artistic, it is therefore not real and I can relish it, albeit it still causes me horror.”

This mode of perception provides a fruitful contrariness of what is seen and what is understood to be seen. On the level of emotions, the *reappraisal* or alteration of the appraisal structure of the consequent emotion must alter its quality. Phobos, in this particular case, is alleviated and dissolved in Katharsis.

The constitution of kathartic emotions demands the intervention of high-cortical reasoning levels. Culture provides us with new emotions, ultimately with new ways of feeling. Kathartic emotions are an essential part of the proper experience of the arts, a fact, that Aristotle explicitly pointed out regarding Eleos and Phobos in the context of tragedy. However, kathartic emotions are not the only ones which occur in the course of receiving a play of tragic theatre. Far more emotions occurred when the Greek audience witnessed the downfall of Antigone and Kreon. The elaboration of the vast spectrum of potential emotional responses to the arts shall be the topic of the next section. Explaining the relation between the emotions that occur in the context of the arts will also further elaborate the nature of kathartic and aesthetic emotions.

7.4. A Model of Emotional Responses to the Arts

Finally, I want to account for the various emotional responses that the arts potentially evoke in the recipient. I will present a *model of emotional responses to the arts* that regards and implies what so far has been elaborated in the context of Katharsis and aesthetic emotions.

The previous chapters elucidated how complicated the investigation of emotions is. Moreover, I did not solely speak of “emotions” in this thesis, but of aesthetic emotions, kathartic emotions, virtual emotions and “ästhetische Scheingefühle”; of mundane emotions and utilitarian emotions. Thus, I suppose distinguished classes of emotions. This section shall afford the further clarification (or neglect) of these classes and the relation between them. The phenomenon of aesthetic emotion has to be understood in its relation to mundane emotions. Furthermore, mundane emotions play an important role for the arts as well; a claim that will be explained by the proposed model.

In the context of this thesis, I principally distinguish between two kinds of emotions: mundane and aesthetic emotions. My conception of mundane emotions strongly corresponds with Scherer’s conception of utilitarian emotions. These describe the vast set of emotions that occur due to mundane concerns in our everyday lives. However, I am not entirely in accord with Scherer’s description of aesthetic emotions as he considers them too narrowly being “produced by the appreciation of the intrinsic qualities of the beauty of nature, or the qualities of a work of art.” (see 2005, 706) Scherer thus exclusively refers to positive emotions (admiration, bliss, etc.) as aesthetic emotions. His conception is strongly aligned to the conception of the aesthetic as the *beautiful*.

At this point, I shall shortly comment on the connection of the beautiful and the arts in Aesthetics. For long periods, during “classical” eras of the arts, one of the basic concerns of the arts was to produce, reproduce and depict what was supposed to be perceived as beautiful. When we see a beautiful view and we, in a rush of delight, call it “pictorial”, we refer to the proposal that what we currently see would serve as an excellent motive for a painting; we assume that an artist would somehow catch and preserve this very moment; *Verweile doch, du bist so schön!* says Faust in the second part of the tragedy. However, what the arts have first been reproducing, at a certain point became normative: it was the artist’s taste that decided what had to be considered as beautiful, it became his or her creation that manifested beauty. The artist’s eye and judgement was the most qualified to

identify beauty, his hand and mind the most appreciated to create beauty in the arts. Men became used to see the beautiful particularly in the context of the arts. Hence, it was self-evident to focus on the beautiful and the arts in the study of Aesthetics.

In the chapter on Aesthetics I pointed out that beauty is not at all restricted to the sphere of the arts, but on the contrary, according to evolutionary biology, serves as an evolutionary relevant feature. Our very fundamental preferences for symmetry, certain proportions and features are non-arbitrary, the perception of the “beauty of nature” that Scherer indicates above as source of aesthetic emotion is a biological means that serves evolution (see Buss 2001; Grammer 1996 and Miller & Todd 1998). Thus, beauty is a feature that goes far beyond the scope of the arts. Even though aesthetic emotions have so far been described as emotions elicited in the context of the arts, I follow Scherer’s suggestion to account for emotions that are elicited by the appreciation of the “beauty of nature” as aesthetic emotions as well. It would be an overexertion to disentangle the notion of aesthetic emotion and hence the notion of Aesthetics itself from general conceptions of beauty. Folk psychological or common sense associations cannot be completely neglected, the notion of aesthetics does not solely play a crucial role in the context of the arts. We want to avoid the aesthetication of the aesthetic and we want to account for the broad meaning of the term. Aesthetic emotions thus occur not only in connection with the arts. However, as this thesis is dedicated to the investigation of the emotional impact of the arts, the model below will solely concern aesthetic emotions that are indeed elicited in the context of the arts.

Positive connotations of aesthetic emotions mainly derive from the connection of the arts and beauty. Scherer’s conception is a clear example for that. But also the conception of *aisthesis* as *sensual perception* seems to have strong relations to beauty. “Sensual” is most commonly associated with positive experiences. It seems that these contrary approaches of Aesthetics are after all not as unreconcilable as they seem to be. However, the notion of *aisthesis* indicates a broader spectrum of beauty, it seems to refer to the fact

that we can perceive beauty not only by exposition to fundamental features of beauty, but in accord with a vast range of incidents and objects. Indeed, the conception of Katharsis serves as a good bridge here. It elucidates that negative emotions such as Phobos and Eleos can be experienced *kathartically*, thus with delight. The deepest moments of tragedy become a sensual experience. The Indian notion of *Rasa*, which strongly corresponds with Katharsis, suggests that we *taste* emotions in the context of theatre. One could say: we experience something beautiful in the incident of Antigone being strangled. These particular ways of perceiving and relishing beauty are (normally) restricted to the sphere of the arts.

Through the “back door” of Katharsis all aesthetic emotions mentioned so far are provided with a clear positive quality. Even the most horrific and terrifying emotions dissolve in delight in the context of the arts. Such conception accounts on one hand for the full range of aesthetic emotions proposed by Silvia, but on the other hand it somehow also supports the narrow conception of Scherer. However, it is a matter of fact that the arts are not only concerned with beauty and emotions of delight. Especially today, the arts fulfill not solely the purpose of comforting the recipient with ultimately convenient experiences. The example of *Piss Christ* has shown that a piece of art can provoke people to conduct acts of vandalism. The anger of the teenager who defaced the photograph was real and destructive. It is counter-intuitive to call such emotions *aesthetic*; moreover, I claim that it is a mistake to do so. But as such emotions certainly occur in the context of the arts, how can a model of aesthetic emotions that crucially deals with the notion of Katharsis account for such responses? The simple answer is: it cannot. Emotional responses to the arts cannot be reduced to the sphere of aesthetics. What is needed at this point is a model that addresses the entire range of the emotional impact of the arts. Hence, we have to account for the arts at least in two fundamentally different ways.

I want to begin with a short example that indicates the different ways of how to potentially perceive a piece of art. Leder et al. (2004) refer to a picture of Monet called

La Gare St. Lazare which depicts the respective railway station in a quite aesthetic (beautiful) manner (see 499) (Monet indeed exhibited several paintings of the respective railway station). Let us now consider the various motives of visitors of the Musée d'Orsay who come across the painting and appreciate it. Presumably, some will like the atmospheric depiction of the railway station without any particular knowledge about impressionism or fine arts in general. Others particularly like the notion of impressionism or particularly Monet's style. One is an art dealer and knows the market value of the painting and hence likes it, another is a locomotive driver and likes the fact that finally an artist notices the importance and beauty of railway stations. The model I propose in this section will elaborate the question if all of these emotions are considered to be aesthetic emotions.

In the first part of this thesis the contrary realm of the Greek god Dionysos with its strong symbol of the mask served as a first philosophical approach to aesthetic experience. In the second part, the contrariness has been explained in terms of contemporary science as interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes, as combination of *associative* and *reasoning processes*. Particularly the Mirror Neuron System Hypothesis helped to mediate a comprehension of these processes. In the present context, the contrariness of *seeing* what is there and *understanding* what is actually not there, elucidated by these conceptions, plays in a rather different form a crucial role in conceptualising the full scope of emotional responses to the arts. The basic assumption of the model I propose is that we appraise a piece of art simultaneously in two distinct manners. On one hand, we experience it predominantly, so to say, *aesthetically* and *kathartically*. This means, we adopt the mode of perception that has been described extensively in the course of this thesis, the mode that has been referred to by Katharsis. But a model of emotional responses to the arts cannot remain in the realm of aesthetics. There is another essential and constantly present mode of appraising the arts that regards the fact that such piece is a meaningful product in the context of societal conditions. The piece is, on the other hand, perceived as *cultural artifact*.

Particularly phenomenological traditions of Aesthetics seem to provide related and compatible distinctions of perceiving the arts (see, for instance, Husserl 1980). However, before I come to further explanations of these particular ways of perceiving and also appraising an artwork, I shall present a graphical display of the model, which depicts a table of the emotions that are commonly elicited in the context of the arts.

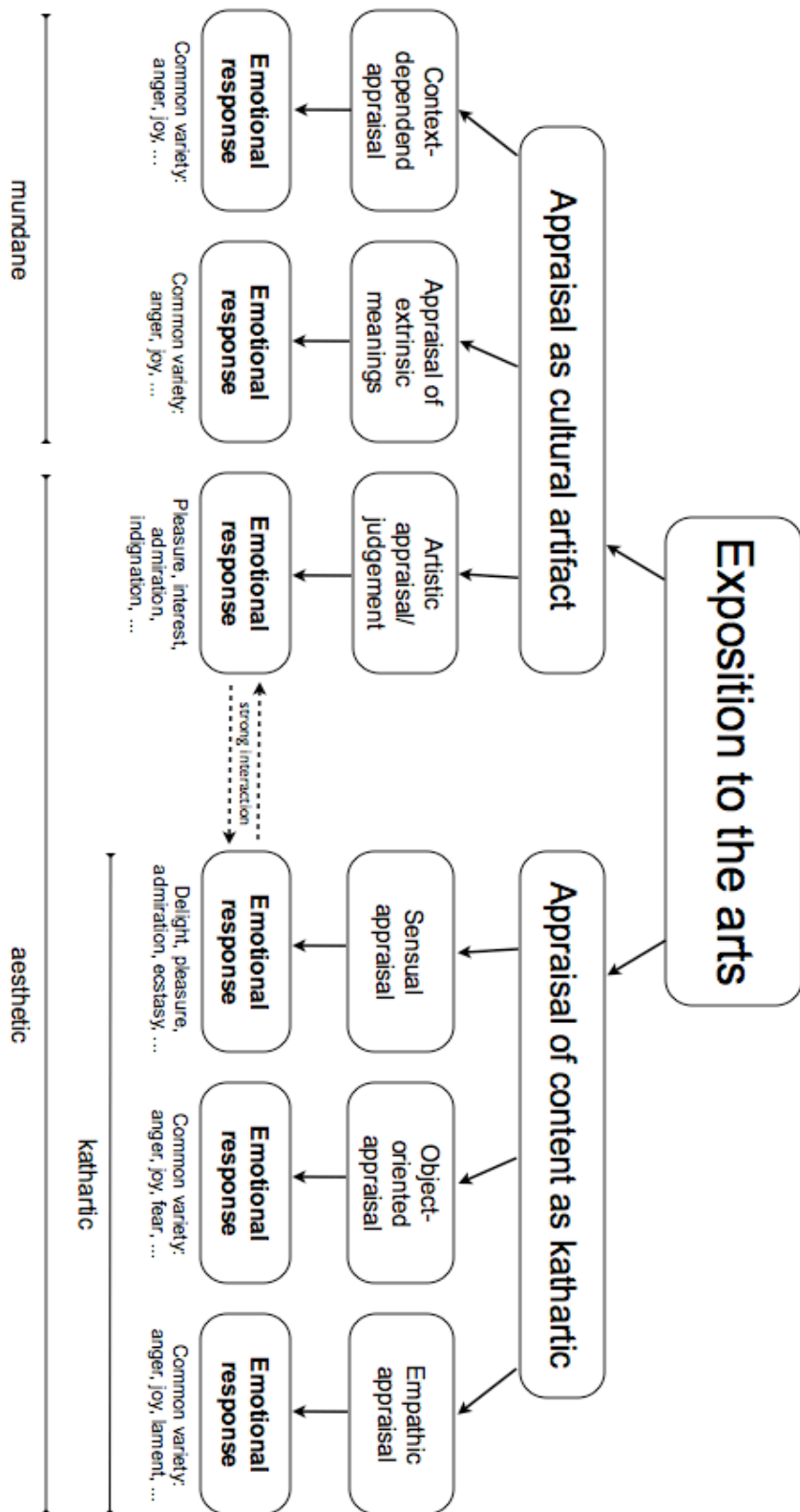


Figure 7. A model of emotional responses to the arts.

7.4.1. The Right Branch

The right branch of the model describes the *appraisal of the artistic content as kathartic*. This means we adopt an aesthetic attitude and take the semantic content *as if real*, but modify this perception with the insight into the artistic nature of the content. We thus accept the piece of art as such and cross the boundaries between our and the diegetic reality. The tragic picture of strangled Antigone is perceived in a way that has been described as *aesthetic triptychon* in a previous section of this chapter. The sub branches particularly account for representational and complex narrative art forms. However, also other art forms are regarded as not every sub branch (or perhaps even none of them) will be “active” in all genres and pieces of art. In reference to narrative literature, theatre and film, for instance, the sub branches of the right branch would have to provide a complete list of factors that are appraised in order to elicit an emotional response. I decided for three distinct factors or groups of factors which are accounted for emotionally; I hope that the account is not only a sufficient, but also an elegant solution.

The first sub branch on the left side of the right branch is named *sensual appraisal* and corresponds with what has been said above about the relation of the arts and beauty. Beauty is still a relevant factor in the arts. Indeed, this branch refers to the beauty *within* the arts, be it the beauty of a melody, the beauty of the composition of a painting or a photograph, or the beauty of one of Rilke’s poems. Also the representations of “natural beauty” are concerned here, which means that these emotions correspond with the class of aesthetic emotions described above that is not particularly related to the arts. Thus, the physical beauty of the *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Vermeer falls into this category and to a degree also the beauty of Scarlett Johansson playing the girl with the pearl earring in the film *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. Consequent emotions are, for instance, those listed by Scherer: “being moved or awed, being full of wonder, admiration, bliss, ecstasy, fascination, harmony, rapture, solemnity” (see 2004, 242 and 2005, 706); but also the emotion of interest, highlighted by Silvia (2006), plays an important role here. This

interest refers, for example, to pictures rich of shapes, colours, objects or unusual compositions of any kind. However, in this branch emotions are not yet related to consequences of artistic expertise.

I call the sub branch in the middle *object-oriented appraisal*, which refers to emotions that are elicited by the perception of certain objects. Cupchik et al. (2009) referred to object-oriented perception as being not aesthetic; however, here I solely emphasise that the recipient of a piece of art has to identify the objects displayed as such, which of course entails emotional responses, albeit their sensual features. I conceive of such objects as everything that does not entail empathic emotions, which means: everything that is not perceived as person or character. An example for such an object is the spider on Ruben's *Head of Medusa*, as it will in many of us elicit disgust and fear. The representation of a weapon would be another example. The aesthetic emotions elicited in this context correspond with those of mundane life, so the number is potentially unlimited. Eleos, however, is an example that will hardly occur here, as this emotion has a clear social connotation - be it translated as lament or pity.

The last sub branch on right side of the *kathartic* side of the model is named *empathic appraisal*. Initially, I attempted to avoid the use of the notion of empathy for a very simple reason: this thesis already deals with the notions of Katharsis, of Emotion and of Aesthetics. These are three important and big notions, books have been respectively written about them. Frankly, I feared to introduce another big notion. However, it appears that the proposed model would be incomplete without the reference to empathy, hence I will try to explain the concept short and simple.

I am aware of the broad meaning that the notion of empathy has in philosophy and of the importance of the notion particularly for Aesthetics (for an excellent review of empathy see *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Empathy*). In the model proposed here empathy anyhow refers to a relatively narrow conception elaborated by empirical sciences,

particularly by social neuroscience. Jean Decety and Claus Lamm (2006) define empathy as “the ability to experience and understand what others feel without confusion between oneself and others.” The strong bond between emotion and empathy is obvious. In the context of empathy research, the effect of Medusa’s terrified gaze and of the tragic mask, which has been referred to in terms of the mirror neuron system hypothesis, is a form of empathy. Interestingly, Decety and Lamm propose a model that unifies bottom-up and top-down processes within one single model. Bottom-up in this context means „automatic and non-reflexive“ forms of “emotion sharing” (the mirror neuron system takes effect on this plane), top-down refers to „intentional and reflexive“ forms of empathy, also related to theory of mind. Stephanie Preston and Frans Wall (2002) even distinguished between “true empathy” and “cognitive empathy” in this concern. They furthermore provide a useful list of different forms of empathy that should definitely be regarded for further investigation.

I suppose that Eleos and Phobos could be fruitfully approached from the perspective of empathy-research as well; an undertaking that cannot be conducted in the framework of this thesis. Anyhow, the sub branch called *empathic appraisal* thus implies all emotions that are elicited by the empathic perception of characters, representations of persons or beings that we subscribe feelings to and who are hence, in a way, perceived as actual persons. Eleos for Antigone falls solely within this category, but also the anger evoked by Kreon’s behavior is a component of *empathic appraisal*. Geiger (1976) distinguishes between feeling with and feeling for a person, the sub branch *empathic appraisal* includes both. Emotions here again strongly correspond with mundane emotions towards “real” persons.

All emotions that occur as consequences of the three sub branches of the right branch of the model are *kathartic*. The *appraisal of the artistic content as kathartic* evokes - as the description indicates - *kathartic* emotions, or “virtual emotions” or “ästhetische Scheingefühle”; hence, the particular class of emotions that has been elaborated

extensively in the course of this thesis. It means that the beauty and the objects we see are knowingly unreal and that the persons we have emotions for and with are knowingly inanimate. Most importantly, the emotions experienced in this mode of perception are of different quality and entail different behavioral consequences as those described in the left branch of the model.

7.4.2. The Left Branch

An artistic creation is a product or action made by men, it derives from a particular historical and cultural context. Most often it is done for a particular purpose, shaped by concrete intentions of the creator. Most artistic creations are not solely elicitors of aesthetic pleasure, but also a statement that is evaluated in a concrete societal context. A play, a film, a composition or an artwork is appraised as context-dependend *cultural artifact* with extrinsic meanings, going beyond the scope of its aesthetic impact and the relatively narrow scope of effects associated with Katharsis. I again suggest three sub branches that will be described from right to left.

The right sub branch concerns the *artistic appraisal* or *artistic judgement* of the the piece of art. This category indeed describes the only group of art-dependend aesthetic emotions which is not simultaneously *kathartic*. *Artistic appraisal* refers to the particular artistic expertise and artistic taste of the recipient. The perception of an orchestra being perfectly attuned or of a film as being of virtuosic dramaturgical composition are examples for such appraisals. Such forms of *artistic judgement* can be disentangled from the kathartic impact of the piece. For instance, one can appreciate the intrinsic, emotional impact of the semantic content of a film, being moved to tears by it, but decide afterwards that the film is a rather poor example in terms of film art; for instance, because it solely reproduces and applies approved dramaturgical structures of Hollywood mainstream. Even though in the context of such evaluations the piece of art is perceived predominantly as artifact (as

piece and product of a certain genre, for instance), the emotional outcome is still so art-specific, that there is hardly a good argument to disentangle these emotions from the arts by calling them something other than aesthetic emotions.

Being the only sub branch displaying aesthetic emotions within the left branch of the model is not the only reason why this class of emotions holds a special position. Furthermore, I consider *artistic appraisal* being strongly intertwined with *sensual appraisal* in the context of artistic content. The expertise in a genre of the arts is not only deliberately applied to evaluate the value of a piece; it also influences what we perceive of the specifics of this piece on a very basic level of processing. Calvo-Merino et al. (2004) showed that the expertise in dancing has strong influences on the brain activity while watching dance performances. These results highlight once again the importance of the mirror neuron system for action understanding. Moreover, the results can also be interpreted as support for the more or less self-evident fact that expertise influences what is actually *seen*: an expert in film *sees* more, an expert in music *hears* more than a lay person. There is a difference between “expert” and “naïve perception” (see Leder et al. 2004, 498). The boundary between kathartic aesthetic emotions and the class of aesthetic emotions that I consider principally non-kathartic blurs. However, as we sometimes are clearly able to distinguish these emotions, a conceptual line seems necessary. *Artistic appraisal* however serves as a bridge between the left and the right branch of the model. Leder et al. (2004) write:

With an increase in knowledge, other solutions to the question of ‘content’ are more likely. We believe that with expertise, the artwork, its historical importance, or the knowledge about the artist also become the content of the aesthetic object. (497)

I consider Leder et al.’s conception of aesthetic emotions in the *information-processing stage model of aesthetic processing* as corresponding to the emotions indicated here, as the processes the model describes seem to relate to *sensual* and *artistic appraisal*. The

(sparse) emotional aspect of the model of Leder and his colleagues would thus be located in the center of my model. Typical emotional outcomes of *artistic appraisal* are preference and interest, but also the delightful aesthetic emotions of Scherer's conception. We will also find non-kathartic negative emotions here, at least to a certain degree, such as being bored or indignant.

The second, middle sub branch is the first that accounts for mundane emotions in the context of the arts. It concerns the *appraisal of extrinsic meanings* which have already been described in the first part of this thesis. These are, for instance, political or religious meanings, or simply what is called the "moral of the story". The scope of possible meanings is broad here. A piece of art in this context is perceived as a statement on societal and cultural conditions. I claim that most pieces, particularly those which are appreciated most, are intentionally conceptualised as such statements. *Antigone* has certainly been perceived as a statement on the contemporary conditions of ancient Greek society. In 1942, Jean Anouilh recomposed and created his own *Antigone*; in this play Kreon becomes the agent of the Vichy-regime that became infamous for its collaboration with the Nazis. New interpretations of "classic" theatre plays fruitfully adapt the poetic contents to contemporary concerns. What is the statement of changing Macbeth's armour for a suit? On this level of meaning of an artistic expression, there is no profound difference to a plain expression such as: the Vichy regime is inhuman and reckless; or the tyrants have just changed their suits. These clear messages, even though integral to the play, do entail concrete emotional responses as such statements would do if we were affected by their exclams. The consequent emotions are definitely not aesthetic.

The last sub branch that has to be discussed is located on the outer left side of the left branch. It is named *context-dependend appraisal* and refers to the fact that we as individuals appraise a piece of art differently according to our personal condition and stance to the piece as artifact. The scope of possible influences here is incredibly large and can hardly be controlled or intended by the artist. As this appraisal most certainly occurs

when receiving a piece of art, I consider it as necessary to account for it in the model. The emotional outcome is again not set in the sphere of aesthetic emotions. If one, for instance, appreciates the film *Girl with a Pearl Earring* because he or she admires the physical features of the actress Scarlett Johansson and likes all of her films albeit their respective content and quality, the related emotions elicited by the reception of the film can - in my opinion - hardly be called aesthetic emotions.

Emotions here also have a strong relation to the expertise in the arts. If one appraises a new Spielberg film as artistically unsatisfactory and then gets furious because the film made it to the Oscars (and perhaps he or she is a filmmaker him- or herself), I would not identify this as an aesthetic emotion. It does not concern the *artistic judgement*, but rather what this judgement means in the particular individual context of the appraiser. This example also elucidates that such emotions are not always directed towards the piece itself. Brahms once noted on the sheet of music of Strauß' *Donaufwalzer* "Leider nicht von mir!" The composer thus expresses an emotion of (ironic) sadness here, which simultaneously elucidates the immense aesthetic appreciation of the piece of music. Supposingly having had emotions of delight in the kathartic context of the piece, Brahms experienced different feelings in the context of his concrete relation to classical music and his colleague Strauß. The concrete individual context in which a piece of art is appraised can and shall not be eliminated when investigating the emotional impact of the arts.

7.4.3. Further Examples and Application

The model proposed here does not attempt to find a universal account for the emotional effect of the arts, as I suppose that the arts and their effects are too manifold for such undertaking. Aesthetic emotion is not a general and necessary condition of the arts. Rather, the broad and detailed conception explained by the model's sub branches attempts to account for the great variety of emotional effects and responses to different

forms of art. We can only account for the fine differences of emotions towards the arts (and the vast differences in consequent behavior) if we account for various forms of emotional responses.

It is an important question what kind of emotions a particular piece of art attempts to elicit in its receivers; these emotions are not necessarily primarily the consequence of an aesthetic appraisal of the piece. The cultural context can never be ignored, the artistic expression is always as well an artifact and is hence perceived as such as well. Not all pieces of art seek to elicit *kathartic* emotions or even aesthetic emotions. The investigation of aesthetic emotions will not contribute an approach to a definition of art. Not all pieces and genres of the arts attempt to fulfill the same purposes. Some of them indeed predominantly claim their status as artifact, as concrete message or statement; others solely attempt to entertain, to elicit aesthetic delight. The orgiastic play of the Aulos is, according to Aristotle, an example for the second case; Piss Christ, as will be shown further down, is an example for the first. Some artistic expressions attempt to elicit both, such as Greek tragedy.

The emotions of the right *kathartic* branch are more commonly orchestrated and constant. I suppose that the downfall of Antigone on a *kathartic* level remained to elicit certain emotions in the audience throughout the centuries of its existence. The new discipline of Neurocinematics provides strong evidence that the neural responses to films are highly orchestrated, depending on the “quality” of the film. Hitchcock, for instance, was a master in terrifying every single recipient of his works (see Hasson et al. 2008), which is certainly a reason for the popularity of his films. The emotional control that the arts potentially conduct suggests them as a strong instrument of *propaganda*. Further down I will elaborate the claim that *propaganda* only works in collaboration with emotions of the left branch of the model proposed here.

The left branch concerns emotions which are to a certain degree arbitrary, which rely to a great extent on particular contexts, attitudes and preferences. The emotional impact described on the left side of the model cannot be controlled and conducted to the extent of the right side. Different recipients of Kinkade's idyllic landscape paintings are probably struck by the same kathartic emotions; however, emotions deriving from *artistic judgement* and emotions in concern of the (financial) success of the artist can vary extremely. On the other hand, there are pieces which particularly seek to evoke certain mundane emotions of the left branch. I consider *Piss Christ* as an excellent and highly relevant example.

Piss Christ is indeed an artwork that provides intrinsic aesthetic value. The teenage boy who finally defaced the picture might at first sight have been delighted by the aesthetic depiction of Jesus Christ suffering on the cross. Besides his aesthetic emotions, he might have been delighted as well by the fact that the gallery exposes the Christian iconography, which would have been already a context-dependend mundane emotion. The boy might have been shifted into a mood of aesthetic pleasure intertwined with religious feelings. He might have approached the picture to read the artist's name and the title. There he read *Piss Christ* and consequently comprehended what this picture actually meant, or at least, what the picture meant to him. His attitude, his mood completely collapsed at that very moment. In this individual context, *Piss Christ* is a counter-example for Leder et al.'s (2004) presumption that the challenge of solving modern art's meanings is rewarding.

To the teenage boy, the *extrinsic meaning* of Serrano's photograph was not more than a provocation of his very concrete religious convictions. He felt insulted and was ultimately overcome by anger, as he saw nothing more than someone literally pissing on Jesus Christ. His aesthetic emotions were immediately wiped out, he could neither value, nor accept the artistic content anymore; the artwork was no longer perceived as artwork, but only as factual insult. Context-dependent negative emotions took over then as well, aiming at the artist, Serrano, at the National Gallery of Victoria and perhaps at the people

around him who were amused by *Piss Christ*. His emotions were strong, concrete, mundane and definitely not aesthetic, even though experienced in a gallery, elicited in the context of the arts. The boy did not even perceive anything “aesthetic” anymore. *Piss Christ* is one of many contemporary artworks that primarily seek to elicit such mundane emotions. *Piss Christ* is primarily a statement. To reference another, rather blatant example: would anyone claim that the riots of muslims in 2005 in response to the Mohammad-cartoons in a danish newspaper had anything to do with the intrinsic aesthetic qualities of the cartoons? I guess no one.

The idea that the arts can elicit other than aesthetic emotions is not new. Scherer (2004) notes in reference to the upset reactions of the audience to Stravinsky’s *Sacre du Printemps* and related “scandals” in the history of the arts that “the emotions provoked in these cases can be considered as utilitarian, since they are triggered by evaluation criteria that are linked to individual goals and social norms and values, rather than to intrinsic form.” (see 245) However, Scherer only comes to identify such emotions as utilitarian because his narrow conception of aesthetic emotions provides no way to identify, for instance, anger as aesthetic emotion. The model proposed here fails not do so, as it deals with further fine distinction that are ultimately inspired by the notion of Katharsis.

Also Silvia’s approach of calling all emotions that occur in connection to the arts as aesthetic emotions has to be rejected. His objection that research on the topic focuses only and too narrowly on positive emotions is reasonable, but the concluding statement that “Negative aesthetic emotions, such as disgust and anger, are central to understanding why people reject, deface, and censor art [...]” (see Silvia 2007, 2) is entirely misleading. It derives from the ignorance of the fact that the arts elicit mundane emotions, entailing concrete actions; and it derives from the ignorance of kathartic emotions, which dissolve in delight even though being of negative shape. To consider the arts also as meaningful cultural artifacts only pays tribute to their important societal position. Any reduction to the intrinsic meaning or, so to say, to the right branch of the model has to be unmasked as unreasonable aestheticism.

“Negative aesthetic emotions”, as Silvia calls them, occur within the sphere of the diegetic reality of the arts. They are experienced toward contents which are knowingly artistic, fictional or simply “unreal”. In Aristotle’s terminology we could say that the emotions are elicited by Mimesis. Being angry on Kreon cannot entail concrete action as we know that we cannot oppose him and thus support Antigone. Being angry on Kreon also demands that we engage in the play, that we accept it as such; something that the teenager who defaced *Piss Christ* failed to do. Indeed, he attempted to destroy the artifact, the creation as such.

I pointed out a distinguished class of aesthetic emotions that has the potential to be negative and non-kathartic. However, I doubt that *artistic appraisal* could entail anger; rather, it will evoke emotions related to boredom and dissatisfaction, annoyance at the most. Anger might occur in a particular context, for instance, if an artwork that is judged to be average or even bad appears to be critically acclaimed; but then we are already in the sphere of mundane emotions, of concrete *context-dependend* mundane anger.

Especially contemporary art often consists of a challenge for recipients. Applying unfamiliar techniques and using new materials, artistic expressions are frequently rejected or simply not taken seriously. By reason of antiquated habits, meagre knowledge, lack of expertise, or even open ignorance and prejudices, people constantly fail to comprehend artworks as such. Addressing contemporary art, Leder et al. (2004) particularly account for such cases. They write:

For example, a classification of an artwork as ‘abstract’ might prevent further search for meaning. Moreover, judgements of social desirability might also rely on such stereotypic classifications. Importantly, personal taste can also strongly influence the aesthetic judgements of experts who might dislike certain styles. (501)

What Leder et al. do not regard is that actually one process might entirely hinder the other to occur. Of course, basic perceptual analyses are made instantaneously; but classifying an artwork as “abstract” and thus neglecting any meaning in it might hinder the right branch to be activated.

Most people are certainly delighted by Rubens, even by his *Medusa*, and also by Picasso’s cubist paintings. Picasso is commonly accepted as outstanding genius in the history of art, his paintings are hence considered as paramount products of human creativity. Standing in front of Picasso’s *Guernica*, people might whisper “This is beautiful!”, even though the picture displays the violence and gore of war and the cubistic style looks somehow odd. I do not want to neglect the great importance and the undisputable brilliance and perfection of Picasso’s work; I am not qualified to do so. But I frankly say that on a context-independent sensual level I do not perceive this entire brilliance and perfection, as I am neither an artist myself nor an expert of fine arts; however, I still believe in it. What I want to emphasise here is the importance of the role that an artwork plays as cultural artifact and how this role might influence our entire appraisal of it. The same counts for *Antigone*. For many people it is enough to know that it has been written by Sophocles, who was one of the great Greek tragedists, to appraise the play as highly valuable. Thus, recipients will rather engage in the kathartic emotions it attempts to elicit. The left influences the right branch and vice versa.

The difference of the left and the right branch of the model also refers to the matter of “disinterest” or the lack of self-relevance within the aesthetic emotions of the right branch. Abraham et al. (2008) suggested to account for the difference of reality and fiction in terms of the degree of self-relevance; I partly rejected this view as it tends to reduce the distinct meaning of fiction or the arts. However, I agree that we indeed need to be “disinterested” in terms of not being personally affected by the artistic content in order to experience *pure* kathartic emotions. As soon as we conceive of something as being personally relevant, we will conceive of it as artifact. Kathartic emotions are not elicited

in the context of the piece of art as artifact, but in regard of taking the artistic content to a degree *as if* it was an entity of (another) reality that will not directly influence our lives. The anger on Kreon only remains aesthetic if it does not tangise our mundane concerns; but if we understand the character as representation for a concrete regime, our anger will be very concrete.

But then some rightful questions have to be raised: is it possible not to be personally affected by Kreon's actions? Is he not violating our values and norms with his actions in any case, being representative for a concrete mundane counterpart or not? Do we not always find people in our environment that resemble those of tragedy? Thus, can kathartic anger be entirely aesthetic?

Hegel claimed that Kreon and Antigone are equally right; however, there is evidence that Sophocles indeed intended Kreon to be perceived as villain (although not in the sense as mainstream films nowadays depict villains). Like Antigone, Kreon at least has reasonable motives for his actions, but the consequences he draws of them are to a far higher degree wrong. It is remarkable how consistent these judgements and their related emotions towards Antigone and Kreons remained. I consider this as a further proof of the power of Greek tragedy and the arts in general to conduct the elicitation of particular aesthetic emotions in the receiver. In fact, these emotions can be quite independent from our personal norms and values. The way Sophocles depicts the action of *Antigone* cannot reasonably be interpreted as argument for Kreon's rightful position. *Antigone* can never serve a tyrant to propagate draconic policies. If Kreon was preceived to be rightful, *Antigone* would have to be rewritten or staged in a very estranged manner. The structure of the concrete play clearly neglects such approaches. Another play could surely put Kreon in such a light that we would rather feel and hope for him, even without altering the concrete action of the characters of the play. For whom we feel when engaging in the diegetic reality of the play rather depends on the intrinsic structure and on dramaturgical techniques, accents and emphasises, than on our concrete moral and political convictions.

In his book *Emotion and Adaptation* Lazarus (1991) references the painting *Third of May 1808* by Goya (see 295). It depicts an execution during the Napoleonic wars. Without any knowledge of the concrete historical circumstances, the picture emphasises the injustice and abomination of the action; the only faces we see are of those being executed, displaying horror and resignation. Lazarus (1991) quotes an art historian who says about the victim of the execution: “His death is absurd, and he knows it.” (see 294) It will depend on our personal views if we ever conceive of an execution to be conducted rightfully or not. However, the painting of Goya clearly says that such undertaking is principally wrong.

However, the kathartic pity we inevitably experience for the executed will have influence on any further examination of the factual historical incident of the Napoleonic wars, as we once perceived one side as victims, and the other as committers. This is how kathartic emotions finally influence extrinsic meanings and judgements on situations significant for mundane matters as well; exactly this point was addressed by Brecht when he opposed the Aristotelian tradition of theatre. In fact, Brecht did not conceptualise a theatre which was free of emotions, but one which primarily or even solely attempted to elicit mundane emotions in the context of *extrinsic appraisals*; a theatre, which does not force us to emphasise with Grusche because her appearance and caretaking of the abandoned infant evokes pity, but because the play *Der kaukasische Kreidekreis* is a clear political statement on the social and moral authority of her actions. According to the model proposed here, Brecht did not want the right branch to be too active and hence elicit strong aesthetic emotions, as these would circumvent clear analyses of the societal issue presented and ultimately alter the mundane emotions towards such issues.

I principally conceive of the emotional responses and their related appraisals of the respective sub branches as highly interactive. The example of *Piss Christ* has elucidated that mundane emotions might hinder aesthetic emotions to occur, Brecht’s objection has shown how aesthetic emotions can conduct mundane emotions. A further example will

show that we can even fail to experience aesthetic emotions by being not sufficiently able to bring to our minds the fictional nature of the presented.

The film *United 93* tells the story aboard United Airlines Flight 93 which crashed in the course of the 9/11 attacks in 2001. The film was released only five years after the actual incident and tries to reconstruct the largely unknown events on the airplane. Watching this piece of fiction telling the story of the struggling passengers aboard the hijacked airplane, the emotional impact I experienced seemed to be unusually intense and uncanny. I finally realised that I failed to perceive of those passengers as what they actually were, namely fictional characters, and rather had the impression of witnessing factual incidents of September 11th 2001. I felt for actual persons who really died five years before under such terrible circumstances. It is, in a way, unfair to pick such actual events as basis for a fictional film, as the emotions in the recipients, particularly in the American audience, must have been very strong, albeit the aesthetic quality of the film itself. Most of us were somehow affected by the events of this infamous day and thus will fail to see a feature film that deals with the incidents as what it substantially is: a piece of fiction. In this particular case, aesthetic and mundane emotions blur into each other.

A related phenomenon that can be approached and analysed reasonably in the context of the model proposed here is the technique of propaganda. I consider propaganda as excellent example of how the strong interaction between aesthetic and mundane emotions is instrumentalised for particular purposes. Propaganda must address concrete, actual circumstances to influence the attitude of people. Aesthetic “disinterest” is totally out of place in this regard; the receivers must be very interested and concerned about the semantic content of propaganda, however, not in an aesthetic, but in a very concrete, extrinsic manner. In many cases propaganda comes disguised as art, pretending to elicit kathartic emotions, palliating that these emotions immediately blur into their mundane counterparts. I consider this as one reason why propaganda is viewed so negatively: it abuses the techniques of the arts.

Propaganda attempts to affect the attitudes and behavior of people; in the worst cases it nurtures emotions of contempt and hate. Indeed, it seems to be a significant feature of propaganda to aim on the evocation of emotions. Propaganda uses the potency of the arts to conduct emotional responses, however, these responses must not remain in the sphere of aesthetics. When German and Austrian citizens watched Harlan's *Jud Süß* during World War II, they emotionally engaged in a fictitious work that was claimed to be a piece of art. However, the aesthetic experience with its consequent aesthetic emotions - in short: the right branch - served solely the purpose of eliciting mundane emotions of the left branch. The ultimate purpose and factual effect of *Jud Süß* was to nurture antisemitism, which essentially consists of the emotions of hate and contempt. The model proposed here can reasonably account for the structure of the effect of propaganda.

The notion of genre is another phenomenon to be discussed in terms of the model. Particularly in narrative arts, genre provides in advance information about the diegetic reality of a play or film: *splatter* tells us to expect a world of violence and gore; *slapstick* informs us that the action will be unserious and ridiculous; *tragedy*, finally, tells us that we have to expect collisions and catastrophes. Genre provides conventions (we know what to expect) and thus facilitates the processing and understanding of the artistic expression. Anyhow, the arts are hardly ever purely devoted to one particular genre; rather, the break of conventions can be an unexpected and exciting dramaturgical technique. When Eastwood left the hero of his sports drama *Million Dollar Baby* quadriplegic he totally and surprisingly broke with the conventions of the genre and thus with the expectations of the audience. This dramatic turn is on a kathartic level gruesome and pitiful. However, on the level of *artistic expertise*, hence in the context of the film as advocate of a certain genre and film art in general, it is new and unexpected, ultimately eliciting surprise and delight.

Genre tells us in which manner the fictitious incidents are to be appraised. Moreover, genre sets up a mood. In a previous chapter I pointed out that mood is not considered as

emotion, as it is more consistent and of longer duration. The arts are very powerful in shifting us into certain moods and I consider these moods as basis for further emotional responses. Roseman (2001) speaks in terms of Appraisal Theory of *appraisal styles* as predispositions to experience certain emotions (see 87). On the level of emotions, genre might be conceptualised as category to elicit moods or to evoke *appraisal styles* in order to facilitate the experience of certain cathartic emotions. Thus, the tragic mood is the proper ground to lament and shiver. The label of tragedy, but also the artistic conventions of tragedy mediate the proper emotional responses to *Antigone*. If we thus say, for instance, that we don't like tragedies, we might refer to the dramaturgical conventions and the common contents of the genre; but also to the typical emotions of a genre.

Finally I want to illustrate the adequacy and explanatory strength of the model in order to explain the elicitation of emotions in the context of the arts in reference to an example that I picked due to personal preference. *The Wrestler* is an American film of the year 2008 directed by Darren Aronofsky and tells the story of a professional wrestler struggling in poverty and the shadows of a long ago career. I will explain the emotional impact I experienced when watching the film in cinema and I will structure the explanation in reference to the graphical depiction of the model from the outer right side to the outer left side. I do not want to come up with a film analysis here that claims scientific completeness; rather, the outline below shall serve as an example for a "normal" reception of the *The Wrestler* and shall thus elucidate the common emotional impact of the film. The more the explanation will proceed to the left, the more will individual attitudes constitute the appraisals and emotions.

The main character of the film, Randy "The Ram" Robinson, is a poor guy in concern of several matters. His wrestling career had its height twenty years ago, he lives in a van, he is alone, his daughter avoids meeting him and his excessive lifestyle has left deep traces on the man's body. However, he is carried by the pride of still being a wrestler, but when he suffers a heart attack it seems that he is going to lose the last which is left of his then

glorious identity. Randy has wishes and hopes and he is warm-hearted; reckless he is only towards himself. We intensely feel for and with him and we witness him failing. *The Wrestler* moreover provides a particular aesthetic style, depicting the performed athletic performance of the wrestlers as violent action, as kind of self-destruction. The pictures of the film are hazy and wiggly, they somehow correspond with the life of the hero of the film. Thus, even though the film displays hardly any beauty in a classical sense, as it is more concerned with social reality, the film elicits corresponding moods in us. The kathartic experience of *The Wrestler* is intense and breathtaking.

The case gets even more interesting in concern of the appraisals and emotions of the left branch of the model. Rather simple scenes and pictures emerge into a highly complex and intelligent story. Dramaturgically remarkable is the fact that *The Wrestler* deals with a main character who attempts, but ultimately fails to *change*, which is against any canon of mainstream dramaturgy and even appears to have elements of the tragic. However, it works out pretty well. Appraised artistically, *The Wrestler* is a highly remarkable and pleasurable film. Moreover, the film as artifact is not only to be considered as a profound critique of constructions of male heroism, but generally of American and Western society. The extrinsic messages of *The Wrestler* are intelligent, interesting and delightful. Finally, there is the unique context of the production of the film and my personal attitude. I generally appreciate the films of Aronofsky and I like the main actor, Mickey Rourke. His biography somehow corresponds with the main character's circumstances. Rourke used to be a film star, an idol, and he literally had lost most of his reputation. At the age of forty, he struggled to start a professional boxing career. The main character Randy and the actor Rourke merge into each other. In the course of the reception of the film I frequently had the impression that I was watching Rourke and not Randy, actually feeling for him and not for the character of the film. Ironically, the downfall of Randy constituted the rise of Rourke, so to say, as the actor celebrated his comeback to the main stages of Hollywood as consequence of his appearance in *The Wrestler*. The theatrical release poster even titled: "Witness the resurrection of Mickey Rourke [...]".

The knowledge of the concrete circumstances of the production of the film are not an intrinsic part of the piece. People who do not have any background information will - most likely - also relish the reception of the film. However, when I speak of *The Wrestler*, the entire scope of appraisals and subsequent emotions merge into emotions of delight and admiration for the film. All these considerations and appraisals constitute the experience of the arts. The arts, indeed, are a phenomenon of complexity and contrariness. I hope that this model of emotional responses to the arts accounts for and elucidates this complexity and contrariness.

8. Conclusion

I am aware of the fact that the ambition and the topic(s) of this work extend beyond the scope of a master thesis. Certain issues could only be touched upon rather than fully elaborated. However, the crucial points have been explored extensively and sufficiently in order to provide clear answers to the questions that determined this work.

The first part of this thesis provided a reinterpretation of Katharsis based on the evidence of the discourse. I established the notion as an ancient insight into the nature of a particular group of aesthetic emotions. These have been referred to as *kathartic* emotions, which are constituted by a correspondence to “the common garden variety” of mundane emotions, but are however essentially *different* from them. It is this *difference* that has been described in philosophical depth in the first part of this thesis and that forms the ground for what has been investigated and presented in the second part. The exact elaboration of Katharsis intended to rationalise for the meaningful depth and the structural complexity of the emotional impact of the arts.

The reinterpretation of Katharsis on one hand narrows the notion to this *difference* and relieves it from philosophical burdens that have been amassed throughout the course of the last centuries. On the other hand, Katharsis has consequently been broadened, the notion here described as phenomenon that is evoked by a vast range of artistic expressions and that is experienced by virtually anyone who somewhat adequately perceives of these expressions.

It is a pity that another aesthetic concept, namely the Indian notion of Rasa, could not have found adequate consideration in this thesis. From a European perspective, I gave Katharsis the precedence, however, Rasa seems to be a conception of at least equal potency to account for aesthetic emotions. The Indian concept has been invented in ancient India by the mythical author Bharata and initially described the emotional impact of the Sanskrit drama. However, like Katharsis, Rasa is currently referred to as general

concept of aesthetic experience (see Deutsch 1981), describing emotions in the context of the arts strikingly as a “taste” of emotions. Moreover, the Indian notion is fully elaborated, providing a complete model of emotions experienced in the context of Indian theatre. Rasa and Katharsis are of course not identical, however, particularly in the context of the claims of this thesis, a comparison would elucidate that remarkable similarities can be found. It is striking when considering of the fact that the two notions have been elaborated entirely independent from each other, emerging from fundamentally different cultural traditions (see Szirmay 1999). A further elaboration of aesthetic emotions should definitely support its claims by such fruitful intercultural complementation. Within the scope of this thesis and due to the extensive elaboration of Katharsis, I decided to forego this undertaking.

The second part of this thesis was dedicated to current research on aesthetic emotions. The psychological Appraisal Theory of emotion played a predominant role there, the concept was particularly explained from this perspective. I pointed out that current models of aesthetic emotions lack conceptual clarity and I used the notion of Katharsis as means to achieve this clarity. I also attempted to explain Katharsis in the context of current science to further support the validity and relevance of Katharsis for a model of aesthetic emotions, but also to enrich the Katharsis-discourse with new scientific perspectives. Indeed, a further striking issue would consist of investigating Katharsis empirically. This thesis eventually provided a reconsideration of Katharsis and the tragic emotions of Eleos and Phobos both from the perspective of theatrestudies and philosophy on one hand and the cognitive sciences on the other hand.

Finally, I presented a *model of emotional responses to the arts*. This model attempts to account for the broad spectrum and complexity of emotions that the arts potentially elicit, providing a broad, but exact definition of aesthetic emotions. This definition crucially considers what has been said about Katharsis in the first part, treating it as a long-forgotten and commonly misunderstood insight. The proposed model particularly highlighted how we could not conceive of aesthetic emotions as *the* emotions of the arts, but that we had to account for these emotions in a far more differentiated manner, as not

all emotions of the arts can be considered as aesthetic emotions. Thus, we took a very close look at the exact emotion-elicitor within the reception of a piece of art.

Particularly the first part of this thesis focused primarily on Greek tragedy; however, the model was conceptualised to be generally applicable to the arts, be it theatre, film, media arts, fine arts or music. As this is a hypothetical work, the adequacy of the model for empirical investigations has yet to be proven. I rather conceive of my proposal here as a starting point, a suggestions that is open for further discussion and development. At the least, I am confident that the elaboration of the model delineated several essential features of aesthetic emotions and pointed out profound weaknesses of existing approaches.

One attempt of this work was to establish the notion of kathartic emotions as a particular class of aesthetic emotions, corresponding to what Geiger has called “ästhetische Scheingefühle”. These emotions have been described as art-specific, as a consequence of the reception of artistic expressions. However, an interesting question that shall only be raised, but not elaborated here, is if such kathartic emotions can also occur in mundane contexts. The notion of the aesthetic attitude can not only account for the case of failing to view the arts as such, but also for the possibility to view real incidents in a way as aesthetic and even artistic, which is particularly relevant in our medialised 21st century. Just to put forth an illustrating recent example: the *National Enquirer*, an American tabloid, exhibited photographs of Patrick Swayze suffering from cancer and empathically titled “Stay strong” (see issue April 2009). This appears cynical considering that these voyeuristic photographs were taken against the actor’s will and are published for the sake of the magazine’s prestige and sales figures; the moral value of the emotional contagion of the readership of the magazine can be doubted. It is an interesting question what kind of emotions these readers of the *Enquirer* exactly experience. Are these solely constituted by a low self-significance, as if Swayze was, for instance, a little-known person that we did not feel attached to? Or are they already aesthetic, regarding rather a medial construction than a concrete person? A more striking example consists of the recent death and the public funeral of Michael Jackson. The notion of kathartic emotions might adequately account for the experience of such “events” of modern mass media.

These are further questions that could not be investigated in the framework of this thesis, but are to be considered as suggestions for further research. The work presented here was dedicated to the emotional impact of the arts. It did not only regard both philosophical traditions and current results of the cognitive sciences, but also attempted to fruitfully combine them in order to show the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches to such complex topics. With the inspiration from Aristotle's notion of Katharsis and the investigation of aesthetic emotions, I hope to have made a step towards an adequate understanding of the phenomena investigated here, ultimately in order to approach a conception of what we actually experienced and went through when getting up from our seats in theatre with the words: "This was horrific; it was an amazing tragedy."

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Paul Greengrass: *United 93*. USA 2006.

Veit Harlan: *Jud Süß*. D 1940.

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Peter Webber: *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. USA, UK, Luxemburg 2003.

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Monet: *La Gare St. Lazare*.

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Appendix

Abstract (English)

This thesis investigates the emotional impact of the arts. It is divided into two parts, the first investigating the Aristotelian notion of Katharsis, the second the notion of aesthetic emotion as defined by current sciences.

The notion of Katharsis as invented in the *Poetics* can be considered as one of the most controversial and profound aesthetic categories that have ever been invented. For centuries scholars are discordant of the actual meaning of the single phrase that Aristotle has dedicated to the notion in his *Poetics*. Currently, there is a vast number of interpretations and attempts of transformations accessible. The first part of this thesis provides a contemporary perspective on the notion that does, however, not neglect the ancient sources of Aristotle, but tries to treat them as crucial insights that have in fact widely been misunderstood. The present interpretation claims Katharsis as an aesthetic notion indicating the distinct quality of emotions elicited particularly in the course of the reception of Greek tragedy, the play of the flute, but also generally in the arts. In reference to the *Politics* and the *Rhetoric* - both Aristotelian sources - the notion is attempted to be unbound from any specific structure of tragedy, to which it is traditionally connected. In the present conception, Katharsis solely indicates a *difference* between mundane emotions and those elicited in the context of the arts, ultimately defining what in the second part of this thesis is being addressed as aesthetic emotions.

Current cognitive sciences frequently investigate the emotional impact of the arts. The second part of this thesis complements these investigations and results with the elaboration of Katharsis of the first part. Disciplines mainly considered are psychology and neuroscience. Psychology with its appraisal theory of emotion offers a powerful tool for an investigation and theory of (aesthetic) emotions; thus, this theory is particularly regarded in this thesis. The outcome of the second part consists of a comprehensive

critique of current conceptions of aesthetic emotions and a theory of how the notion of Katharsis could be interpreted from the perspective of current cognitive sciences. Ultimately, a *model of emotional responses to the arts*, which unifies the elaborations of the entire thesis and explains the complexity of emotional responses in the context of the arts, is presented.

Abstract (German)

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit der emotionalen Wirkung der Künste. Strukturell ist sie in zwei Teile gegliedert. Der erste beschäftigt sich mit dem aristotelischen Begriff der Katharsis, der zweite mit aktuellen Konzepten ästhetischer Emotion.

Der Begriff der Katharsis kann getrost als eine der wichtigsten und zugleich umstrittensten ästhetischen Kategorien überhaupt bezeichnet werden. Seit Jahrhunderten wird über die Bedeutung der kurzen Erwähnung des Begriffs in der Aristotelischen *Poetik* spekuliert, diskutiert und gestritten. Zum heutigen Zeitpunkt liegt eine beinahe unüberschaubare Menge an einander widersprechenden Interpretationen und Transformationen vor. Der erste Teil der vorliegenden Arbeit entwirft eine zeitgenössische Interpretation von Katharsis, die die Aristotelischen Quellen jedoch nicht ignoriert, sondern diese vielmehr als relevante, doch zumeist mißverstandene Einsichten hochhält. Darauf aufbauend wird Katharsis als ästhetisches Konzept interpretiert, das Emotionen, die im Kontext der Rezeption von griechischen Tragödien, dem Flötenspiel und den Künsten generell mit einer einzigartigen Qualität ausstattet. Unter Bezugnahme auf zwei weitere Aristotelische Quellen, nämlich der *Politik* und der *Rhetorik*, wird der Versuch unternommen, Katharsis von der spezifischen dramatischen Struktur griechischer Tragödien, mit der der Begriff traditionellerweise verknüpft wird, loszulösen und ihn als Konzept, das den *Unterschied* zwischen jenen Emotionen, die im Alltag auftreten und jenen, die im Kontext der Künste erfahren werden, zu etablieren. Diese

spezielle Gruppe von Emotionen wird im zweiten Teil der Arbeit unter dem Begriff „ästhetische Emotionen“ geführt.

Die Kognitionswissenschaften untersuchen auf mehreren Ebenen die emotionale Wirkung der Künste auf ihre Rezipientinnen und Rezipienten. Der zweite Teil dieser Arbeit kombiniert und ergänzt diese Untersuchungen und deren Resultate mit jenem Konzept von Katharsis, das im ersten Teil erarbeitet wurde. Hauptsächlich werden dabei psychologische und neurowissenschaftliche Belege herangezogen, von größter Relevanz ist die kognitive Bewertungstheorie für die Untersuchung und Theorie ästhetischer Emotionen. Der zweite Teil dieser Arbeit mündet schließlich in einer umfassenden Kritik aktueller Theorien ästhetischer Emotionen; einer Interpretation von Katharsis aus Sicht der Kognitionswissenschaften; und schließlich einem *Modell emotionaler Resonanz auf die Künste*. Dieses Modell führt die verschiedenen Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Arbeit zusammen und verweist damit auf die Komplexität emotionaler Vorgänge im Kontext der Künste.

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