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Theories of Acting: Aristotle to Lucian.

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THEORIES OF ACTING: ARISTOTLE TO LUCIAN

A COLLECTION OF ANCIENT WRITINGS WHICH EXIST IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND WHICH GIVE SOME APPARENTLY TRUST-WORTHY INDICATIONS AS TO THE TECHNIQUE OF THE ACTORS OF GREECE AND ROME

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Department of Speech

by Jennie Louise Hindman M.A., Texas State College for Women, 1937 August, 1950
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART I. ANCIENT GREECE: INTIMATIONS OF ACTORS' METHODS TO 146 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. SOME PRELIMINARIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings in Epic and Lyric Poetry from the Ninth to the Fourth Century B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Survey of Dramatic Conditions of the Sixth, Fifth, and Fourth Centuries and an Investigation of the Dramatic Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Examination of the Prose Writers -- Exclusive of Plato -- through the Fourth Century B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Platonic Ideology of Imitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. ARISTOTLE'S PRESENTATION OF MIMESIS IN ITS RELATION TO ACTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aristotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nichomachean Ethics of Aristotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Politics of Aristotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problemata of Aristotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rhetoric of Aristotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aristotle on the Art of Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Satires of Horace ........................................ 254
The Epistles of Horace ........................................ 256
The Ars Poetica of Horace ...................................... 259
Summary ........................................................... 265

CHAPTER VIII. VITRUVIUS ON THE VOICE ....................... 266
Vitruvius, the Roman Architect .................................. 267
Vitruvius on Architecture ......................................... 272
Summary ........................................................... 276

CHAPTER IX. THE STATE OF THE ROMAN THEATER IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA .................. 277
The Moralists on Mime and Pantomime ......................... 279
The Dancing of the Pantomimic Actors ......................... 284
The Dramatic Readings ........................................... 290

CHAPTER X. TWO COMMENTS BY SENECA UPON THE ROMAN ACTORS ..................................................... 296
Seneca and His Significance ...................................... 297
Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius .................................... 304
Summary ........................................................... 307

CHAPTER XI. QUINTILIAN'S INSTITUTES AS THEY DRAW FROM THE ART OF THE ACTOR ................................. 308
Quintilian, the Roman Teacher .................................... 309
The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian ............................ 313
Summary ........................................................... 345

CHAPTER XII. PLUTARCH'S INDICATIONS AS TO THEORIES OF ACTING .................................................... 348
Theatrical Production in the Second Century ................. 349
Plutarch, the Biographer and Essayist .......................... 353
Plutarch's Moralia ................................................. 359
Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men .............................. 374
ABSTRACT

Here is presented a compilation of opinions, surviving
in English translation, which were stated by significant
men of ancient times upon the subject of how the dramatic
mimesis was accomplished by the actors. Research has begun
with Homer's Iliad of about the ninth century B.C. and has
extended through fourth century writings of the Christian
era. Examination has been made of all available English
translations of Greek and Roman authors, whether or not the
subject matter pertained to the theater. The excerpts repre­
sent the statements upon theories of acting which are now
extant from the ancient period.

Findings give considerable information. A Homeric
poet of about the eighth century B.C. apparently sensed
that listeners received a certain satisfaction from identi­
fying themselves with the singing of the girls of Delos.
Plato, in spite of his denial of the presence of any art in
acting or interpretation, knew that somehow spectator and
actor were linked together with a magnetism that he called
Divine.

Aristotle's analysis of dramatic poetry implies that
actors, in playing "agents," need to show how a certain
kind of person "must speak or act" in "a given situation"
as a result "of his inward nature." From the statement
that the poet can create more lifelike men if he experiences their feelings with them, it would seem to follow that the actor might do likewise. The chorus, Aristotle says, should be as one of the actors. Among individual players Aristotle hated overacting and interpolating. He admired the quality of seeming naturalness. Other observations reveal that actors followed definite programs of voice training. One player believed that he gained advantage by entering the stage before any other actor. Aristotle's statements constitute the assertions upon methods of acting that are to be found before the Roman period.

Among Romans of the third and second centuries B.C., Plautus's requisite of "worth" in his actors is the first approach to histrionic theories. In the next century Cicero, like Aristotle, thought that the actor whom he most admired sounded, when acting, like the character he played. Cicero thought that reality was not sufficient in representation, though he did not relate the principle to acting as Aristotle had done. Cicero's use of the term "good taste" as a standard for acting is new in ancient literature. New also is the relation to the actor of the idea that a person must feel emotion in order to stimulate it. And Cicero is first to talk of variations in acting so as to bring greater impact with climax. Horace recorded a convention in typical body position of the actors, such as a servant's standing with head bowed "like one overawed"; and Seneca, in the first century A.D., told of other clichés which he evidently
considered worn out and empty. Vitruvius, writing on acoustics, commented on the need for audiences to hear the actors and to understand word endings.

That actors were supposed to have mastered problems of distinct enunciation is evidenced in Quintilian's choice of the comic actor to teach the orator such skill, as well as to give instruction in facial expression and delivery. Of greater significance is Quintilian's description of the "delivery" of comic actors as being not exactly that of everyday talk "but not far removed." The thinking is like that of Cicero and Aristotle; and like that of Aristotle it uses the actors to illustrate the principle. With Cicero, and perhaps with Aristotle, Quintilian believed that actors felt the emotions of their roles. But Quintilian added a plan for the use of visual memory of scenes and incidents to stir emotion within oneself, and the plan is Quintilian's important contribution to ancient principles of characterization.

A Plutarchian anecdote, told in the second century about Aesop, indicates Plutarch's acceptance of the idea that actors became obsessed with the living of their roles. A story by Fronto, however, contributes the only ancient record of an actor's studying a character before he played it; and the lines suggest that behind Aesop's apparent loss of himself in a character, which Cicero also had noted, there was careful preparation and adaptation. Gellius tells a tale about the fourth century actor Holus, which supplies the only instance that has been found of the recalling of
past emotions in order to arouse one's own feelings. Quintilian had written of the employment of visual memory for this purpose. Gellius, whether he intended to do so or not, was writing of emotion memory. The end of the device was to follow the old principle of feeling emotion in order to stimulate it.

The full statement of the principle of empathy, which is given by Lucian, brings to a close the research into ancient methods of acting. Hinted at in the lines of a Homeric hymn, inherent in Aristotle's words on the tragic 'Fear,' the idea of audience identification of self with the actor as he imitates is written clearly by Lucian.

The study has shown, thus, a progression in completeness and discernment of statement as the assertions upon ways of acting have continued. Basic principles of acting appear to have remained the same. According to these writers, the actors needed basic requisites: to seem natural, to use 'good taste' and not to overact or to interpolate or to use worn-out clichés, to use art in order to give the impression of reality. Among the Romans it involved handling of both voice and body. Ancient writers who speak of emotion agree that in order to arouse feeling in others a person must experience the feeling himself. Quintilian contributes a plan for generating emotion within oneself by visual memory. Gellius tells a story which involves employment of emotion memory for the same purpose. Lucian states the principle of empathic response from audience
These findings represent the opinions, found in ancient writings which now exist in English translation, upon ancient methods of acting.
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

"Thus," said Aristotle, "we see the necessity of disguising the means we employ, so that we may seem to be speaking not with artifice, but naturally. . . . The difference is illustrated by the effect of Theodorus' voice as against the voices of all other actors; his seems to be the actual voice of the person he represents, and the other voices sound like voices assumed."\(^1\) Aristotle was commenting upon the quality of acting in ancient Greece in the fourth century B.C. It was an era just after the nascence of world drama, an era when emphasis had shifted from playwriting to acting, when the acting profession was developing for the first time, so far as we know, in the history of the world. The words from the opposite pole of history have a strikingly modern ring in the middle of the twentieth century, A.D. "... so that we may seem to be speaking not with artifice, but naturally. . . ."

It has been said that appeals for "modern" acting began with Shakespeare at the beginning of the "modern" period, with his famous admonition to the players of his day that the "end" of playing "both at the first and now, was and is,

to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure . . . ."2 Through the centuries, from the Renaissance to the present, much ink has been spilled by folk of the theater and others upon the matter of exactly how "to hold . . . the mirror." Perhaps the culmination of such analyses came in 1936 with publication of Constantin Stanislavski's detailed account of his own work in An Actor Prepares. Yet in spite of the words that can be uncovered upon the subject, it is sometimes taken for granted that Stanislavski's work is virtually the only important analysis which has been written upon the art of acting.

It was an interest in the body of material that lay between the instructions of Shakespeare and the explanations of Stanislavski that led the writer, some time ago, to begin compilation of bibliography for an anthology of significant writings upon theories of acting from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. Some three hundred entries for primary sources were discovered, and the anthology appeared to be all but in the making. But a curiosity developed as to whether there had been recorded any important contributions to methods of acting before the time of Shakespeare.

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To investigate in this direction meant to go back to the beginning. There was obviously the work of Aristotle to be examined. There was, first of all, the *Poetics*. One met, with renewed impact, the whole Aristotelian theory of *mimesis* -- written entirely for the poet-playwright, but bearing a message, it appears to this writer, for actors who will receive it. The several specific references to the actors and their acting arrested attention, too, and indicated need for additional study. There was also the *Rhetoric*. The concept, found in the third book, of *seeming* to be speaking naturally, of the actor's seeming to speak with the actual voice of the person represented, sounded modern as today. One thought of Stanislavski's "feelings that seem true in given circumstances." Continued reading from the Aristotelian heritage gave further reason for pause. Even in such a far-removed field as *Politics* there was to be found a definite statement about the aforementioned Theodorus's opinion as to his advantage upon the stage. Such a sentence in such a source is actually not surprising, for the Greek dramatic ceremonial formed such an integral part of the life of the people that any reference to them would have been taken as a


xvi
matter of course wherever it was found. As the investigation progressed among other Greek writers, and among the Romans too, it became apparent that allusions to the theater might occur in writing upon any subject and that hints about ancient theories of acting, though relatively scarce, might be discovered in any ancient manuscript. If one would know, then, what information is now available in translation as to the theories of the ancients upon acting, one would have to examine all available translations of Greek and Roman writings. The inquiry would include the poets and the playwrights, the philosophers and rhetoricians, the historians and biographers, the scientists, the satirists, the generals, and the kings. And the supply of accessible material in translation was large. There was the Loeb Classical Library of some four hundred volumes. There was the Bohn Classical Library. There was the Oxford Library of Translations. There was the scholarly work of such men as Cooper, Bywater, Butcher, Buckley, Twining, and many others. The yield from such a study promised to be an uncovering and a bringing together of whatever trustworthy indications might exist concerning the theories of acting in ancient Greece and Rome.

And so the writer undertook the study. The earlier plan for an anthology of the modern period has been put aside for future development. The medieval period, too, has been left for separate investigation. The search has stretched back to the Homeric poems of about the ninth century B.C., and in one of the so-called Homeric hymns there has been found a
statement that sounds very close to an opinion upon acting. The actual recording of a theory of acting, however, appears to begin — surprisingly enough — with Plato. Though he finally rejected all artists including the actors, as imitators of imitation, he posited a theory of imitation and of acting which should not be overlooked.

The purpose of this thesis is to present a study of theories of acting from Aristotle to Lucian. It is in the form of a collection of ancient writings which exist in English translation and which give some apparently trustworthy indications as to the technique of the actors of Greece and Rome. This material, so far as can be ascertained, has not been brought together before. The publication in December, 1949, of Actors on Acting, by Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy, gave the writer some temporary misgivings; but a reading of the book revealed that the authors have omitted a great deal of material in the Greek and Roman periods which the writer considers of especial importance. For example, they have completely ignored the passage from the Rhetoric which was quoted above at the beginning of this introduction; they make no mention as to what Aristotle thought about the skill of the actor, Theodorus. The only reason that one can see for such omission is that the source used for the Aristotelian writings was McKeon's compilation, which gives a cut version of the Rhetoric and omits Book III, Chapter 2, in which the passage
occurs. There are notable omissions, also, from Plutarch and Cicero. Perhaps the most unaccountable one, however, is the leaving out of Quintilian's analysis of the stirring up of emotion within oneself, which antedates Stanislavski's similar theory by 1900 years. Clearly the Cole-Chinoy work among ancient theories of acting does not cover adequately the material available upon the subject. No other such research, so far as the writer can discover, has been attempted.

Here, then, are the significant ancient writings upon methods of acting which investigation has brought to light. Here are presented observations upon mimesis by Plato, Aristotle, Plautus, Cicero, Horace, Vitruvius, Seneca, Quintilian, Plutarch, Fronto, Gellius, and Lucian. All of these works were written with purposes other than the clarification of the actor's approach to his role, but from each of them can be discovered something of one, or more than one actor's manner of playing; and sometimes there may be caught an idea as to his method of going about his business of impersonation. Only one of the authors had professional connection with the theater; but each of them has been of


7 Stanislavski, op. cit., pp. 154-181.
permanent influence in his own field, influence which has spilled over into other realms of thought and activity. For various reasons these men have spoken, in their writings, of acting and the actors of their times. This thesis presents their statements as the recorded matter which survives, and now exists in English translation, upon theories of acting of the ancient Greeks and Romans.
PART I

ANCIENT GREECE:
INTIMATIONS OF ACTORS' METHODS TO 146 B.C.
CHAPTER I
SOME PRELIMINARIES

Findings in Epic and Lyric Poetry from the Ninth to the Fourth Century B.C.

A Survey of Dramatic Conditions of the Sixth, Fifth, and Fourth Centuries and an Investigation of the Dramatic Writing

An Examination of the Prose Writers -- Exclusive of Plato -- Through the Fourth Century

The Platonic Ideology of Imitation
CHAPTER I
SOME PRELIMINARIES

Inquiry into ancient theories of acting begins, as does Aristotle's analysis of the existing art of poetry, "with what is fundamental, the principle of artistic imitation."\(^1\) The investigator examines this mimetic principle as Aristotle examined it and goes behind Aristotle to Plato, who tossed all artists -- including the tragic and comic poets and the "pantomimic gentlemen" -- out of his Republic.\(^2\) So far as this study has revealed, it is here that actual writing upon mimesis begins.

Findings in Epic and Lyric Poetry from the Ninth to the Fourth Century B.C.

A look into earlier Greek writings and on to the first syllable of recorded Greek language adds no former word to a collection of actual opinions upon the subject of acting. Since, however, such a survey reveals some material of


related interest and serves to clarify the nature of the present research, a brief sketch of the field of inspection seems appropriate at this point. The search goes back to Homer, bard of about the ninth century B.C., who sang of an age then three hundred years past.\(^3\) The two Homeric epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, "stand at the very threshold of Hellenic history and literature as the oldest . . . surviving Greek literary works."\(^4\) They reflect the civilization of the Mycenaean age, then long dead; and twentieth century excavations have proved the picture startlingly true to fact.\(^5\)

The poems are believed to present also the ideals, culture, and social conditions of the poet's own day, as literature inevitably reflects contemporary life. So historians use the epics as sources for life and civilization of Homeric Greece in the ninth century B.C., as well as for conditions of the Mycenaean age of the twelfth century which saw the

\(^3\) Scholars today "increasingly believe that the Iliad and the Odyssey have an original unity, and that they are both the creation of a master poet, Homer, who probably lived either in Chios or in Smyrna during the ninth century B.C."


"... reaction against destructive methods of criticism has led to careful re-examination of the internal evidence of the poems. While much remains unsettled in connection with the Homeric Question, it is no longer unscholarly to believe that a Greek poet, Homer, living in Asiatic Greece not later than the ninth century B.C., composed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*." Eva Matthews Sanford, *The Mediterranean World in Ancient Times* ("Ronald Series in History"; New York: The Ronald Press Company, n.d.), p. 88.

\(^4\) Trever, *op. cit.*, I, 151.

\(^5\) Ibid.
sixth city of Troy. And hence the investigator of old histrionic techniques scrutinizes both the poems for any glimmer they may provide upon the subject of acting.

But the two epics show no theater and no actors, though they tell of minstrels and dancers and song. Upon the shield of Achilles, the god Hephaistos wrought, as reported in the Iliad,

... two fair cities of mortal men. In the one were espousals and marriage feasts, and beneath the blaze of torches they were leading the brides from their chambers through the city, and loud arose the bridal song. And young men were whirling in the dance, and among them flutes and viols sounded high; and the women standing each at her door were marveling. ...

Also he set therein upon the shield a vineyard teeming plenteously with clusters, wrought fair in gold; black were the grapes, but the vines hung throughout on silver poles. ... And maidens and striplings in childish glee bare the sweet fruit in plaited baskets. And in the midst of them a boy made pleasant music on a clear-toned viol, and sang thereto a sweet Linos-song with delicate voice; while the rest with feet falling together kept time with the music and song. ...

Also the glorious lame god wrought therein a pasture in a fair glen. ...

Also did the... god devise a dancing-place like unto that which once in wide Knosos Daidalos wrought for Ariadne of the lovely tresses. There were youths dancing and maidens of costly wooing, their hands upon one another's wrists. ... And now would they run round with deft feet exceeding lightly, ... and now anon they would run in lines to meet each other. And a great company stood round the lovely dance in joy; (and among them a divine minstrel was making music on his lyre,) and through the midst of them, leading the measure, two tumblers whirled. 8

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8 Homer, The Iliad of Homer, pp. 381-384 (XVIII, 490-607).
The dancing place and the tumblers and the minstrel singing separately from the dancers -- even the Linos song in the vineyard -- surely these were roots of theater and mime and pantomime which were to come to fruition much later. The Odyssey, too, recounts similar merrymaking; but it sets the picture usually indoors in the great halls rather than in street or vineyard or glen. Within Odysseus's "lofty house" in Ithaca, when the wooers of Penelope

... had put from them the desire of meat and drink, they minded them of other things, even of the song and dance. ... And a henchman placed a beauteous lyre in the hands of Phemius, who was minstrel to the wooers despite his will. Yea and as he touched the lyre he lifted up his voice in sweet song. ... Now the renowned minstrel was singing to the wooers, and they sat listening in silence; and his song was of the pitiful return of the Achaeans, that Pallas Athene laid on them as they came forth from Troy. And from her upper chamber the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, caught the glorious strain, and she went down the high stairs from her chamber. ... Now when the fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the pillar of the well-built roof holding up her glistening tire before her face; then she fell a weeping, and spake unto the divine minstrel:

Phemius, since thou knowest many other charms for mortals, deeds of men and gods, which bards rehearse, some one of these do thou sing as thou sittest by them, and let them drink their wine in silence; but cease from this pitiful strain, that ever wastes my heart within my breast. ... Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: 'O my mother, why then dost thou grudge the sweet minstrel to gladden us as his spirit moves him? It is not minstrels who are in fault, but Zeus, me-thinks is in fault, who gives to men, that live by bread, to each one as he will. As for him it is no blame if he sings the ill-faring of the Danaans; for men always prize the song the most, which rings newest in their ears. ... Now the wooers turned them to the dance and the delightful song, and
made merry. ... 9

Many miles away in Sparta, as neighbors and kinsmen gathered in the great hall of renowned Menelaus, another "divine minstrel" sang "to the lyre, and as he began the song two tumblers in the company whirled through the midst of them." 10 Honored in the palace of King Alcinous of the Phaeacians, still a third minstrel held sway:

Then the henchman drew near, leading with him the beloved minstrel, whom the muse loved dearly, and she gave him both good and evil; of his sight she reft him, but granted him sweet song. Then Pontonous, the henchman, set for him a high chair inlaid with silver, in the midst of the guests, leaning it against the tall pillar, and he hung the loud lyre on a pin, close above his head, and showed him how to lay his hands on it. And close by him he placed a basket, and a fair table, and a goblet of wine by his side, to drink when his spirit bade him. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. But after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, the Muse stirred the minstrel to sing the songs of famous men, even that lay whereof the fame had then reached the wide heaven, namely, the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, son of Peleus. ... This song it was that the famous minstrel sang; but Odysseus caught his purple cloak with his stalwart hand, and drew it down over his head, and hid his comely face, for he was ashamed to shed tears beneath his brows in presence of the Phaeacians. Yea, and oft as the divine minstrel paused in his song, Odysseus would wipe away the tears, and draw the cloak from off his head, and take the two-handled goblet and pour forth before the gods. But whenssoever he began again, and the chiefs of the Phaeacians stirred him to sing, in delight at the lay, again would Odysseus cover up

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10 Ibid., p. 48 (IV, 17). Cf. Iliad, p. 384 (XVII, 600-607) and supra, p. 5.
his head and make moan. Now none of all the company marked his weeping, but Alcinous alone noted it and was ware thereof as he sat by him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar:

'Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, now have our souls been satisfied with the good feast, and with the lyre, which is the mate of the rich banquet. Let us go forth anon, and make trial of divers games, that the stranger may tell his friends, when home he returneth, how greatly we excel all men in boxing, and wrestling, and leaping, and speed of foot.'

He spake, and led the way, and they went with him. And the henchman hung the loud lyre on the pin, and took the hand of Demodocus, and led him forth from the hall, and guided him by the same way, whereby those others, the chiefs of the Phaeacians, had gone to gaze upon the games. So they went on their way to the place of assembly, and with them a great company innumerable; and many a noble youth stood up to play after the contests Alcinous spoke, saying: Lo, now arise, ye dancers of the Phaeacians, the best in the land, and make sport, so that the stranger may tell his friends, when he returneth home, how far we surpass all men besides in seamanship, and speed of foot, and in the dance and song. And let one go quickly, and fetch for Demodocus the loud lyre which is lying somewhere in our halls.

So spake Alcinous the godlike, and the henchman rose to bear the hollow lyre from the king's palace. Then stood up nine chosen men in all, the judges of the people, who were wont to order all things in the lists ari^t. So they levelled the place for the dance, and they smote the good floor with their feet. And Odysseus gazed at the twinklings of the feet, and marvelled in spirit.

Now as the minstrel touched the lyre, he lifted up his voice in sweet song, and he sang of the love of Ares and Aphrodite.

This was the song the famous minstrel sang; and Odysseus listened and was glad at heart, and likewise did the Phaeacians, of the long oars, those mariners renowned.

Then Alcinous bade Halius and Laodamas dance alone, for none ever contended with them. So when they had taken in their hands the goodly ball of purple hue, the one would bend backwards, and throw it towards the shadowy clouds; and the other would leap upwards from the earth, and catch it lightly in his turn, before his feet touched the ground. Now after they had made trial of throwing the ball straight up, the twain set to dance upon
the bounteous earth, tossing the ball from hand to hand, and the other youths stood by the lists and beat them, and a great din arose.

Then it was that goodly Odysseus spake unto Alcinous: 'My lord Alcinous, most notable among all people, thou didst boast thy dancers to be the best in the world, and lo, thy words are fulfilled; I wonder as I look on them.'

... And now they were serving out the portions and mixing the wine. Then the henchman drew nigh leading the sweet minstrel, Demodocus, that was had in honour of the people. So he set him in the midst of the feasters, and made him lean against a tall column. Then to the henchman spake Odysseus of many counsels, for he had cut off a portion of the chine of a white-toothed boar, whereon yet more was left, with rich fat on either side:

'Lo, henchman, take this mess, and hand it to Demodocus, that he may eat, and I will bid him hail, despite my sorrow. For minstrels from all men on earth get their meed of honour and worship; inasmuch as the Muse teacheth them the paths of song, and loveth the tribe of minstrels.'

... Now after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then Odysseus of many counsels spake to Demodocus, saying:

'Demodocus, I praise thee far above all mortal men, whether it be the Muse, the daughter of Zeus, that taught thee, or even Apollo, for right duly dost thou chant the faring of the Achaeans, even all that they wrought and suffered, and all their travail, as if, me thinks, thou hadst been present or heard the tale from another. Come now, change thy strain, and sing of the fashioning of the horse of wood, which Epeius made by the aid of Athene, even the guileful thing, that goodly Odysseus led up into the citadel, when he had laden it with the men who wasted Ilios. If thou wilt indeed rehearse me this aright, so will I be thy witness among all men, how the god of his grace hath given thee the gift of wondrous song.'

So spake he, and the minstrel, being stirred by the god, began and showed forth his minstrelsy. He took up the tale where it tells how the Argives of the one part set fire to their huts and went aboard their decked ships and sailed away.

This was the song that the famous minstrel sang. But the heart of Odysseus melted, and the tear wet his cheeks beneath the eyelids. Now none of all the company marked him weeping; but Alcinous alone noted

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11 Cf. infra, p. 67, for Plato's similar statement.
it, and was ware thereof, as he sat nigh him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar:

'Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, and now let Demodocus hold his hand from the loud lyre, for this song of his is nowise pleasing alike to all. From the time that he began to sup, and that the divine minstrel was moved to sing, ever since hath yonder stranger never ceased woeful lamentation: sore grief, methinks, hath encompassed his heart. Nay, but let the minstrel cease, that we may all alike make merry, hosts and guest, since it is far meeter so. . . .

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: 'King Alcinous, most notable of all the people, verily it is a good thing to list to a minstrel such as this one, like to the gods in voice. Nay, as for me, I say that there is no more gracious or perfect delight than when a whole people makes merry, and the men sit orderly at feast in the halls and listen to the singer. . . . '12

Such was the power of the blind Demodocus. Such was the reverence accorded him at the court of the Phaeacians. And when Odysseus had completed his long wanderings, when he had returned home to Ithaca and destroyed the wooers of the fair Penelope, he recognized the blamelessness of the old minstrel Phemius and spared his life. He ordered the "divine minstrel, with his loud lyre in hand," to lead off "the measure of the mirthful dance" so as to avert suspicion about the killing of the wooers. And soon "the great hall rang round them with the sound of the feet of dancing men and of fair-girdled women."13 One feels in all these lines the close relation of the minstrel to the life about him in the great halls of

12 Homer, The Odyssey of Homer, pp. 117-134 (VIII, 60-545; IX, 1-10).

13 Ibid., p. 380 (XXIII, 130-148).
1200 to 800 B.C. It is evident that the minstrel was honored and esteemed and that he sometimes had great effect upon his audience. One notes the dancers with the purple balls, also; and one prepares to find such people later as jugglers and mountebanks and as "pantomimic gentlemen" such as Plato sends away from his Republic. Yet from all the Homeric tribe of entertainers there is not one word upon the how of their art. Not one of Homer's ball-players or tumblers or singers or players of the lyre or dancers is as yet an actor. Nor do any of the poets for the next four hundred years provide guidance in a quest for hints on acting. Yet they show, from time to time, that song and dance continued to hold an honored place in the thinking of the people; and one of them, indeed, is to come close to a sound, critical statement about the art of impersonation.

The investigator turns from Homer to Hesiod, whom tradition regards consistently with Homer as "prehistoric." Herodotus puts both poets four hundred years before his own

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14 Greek prose did not develop as a literary medium until the latter part of the sixth century B.C. Cf. Sanford, loc. cit., and Trever, op. cit., I, 316.

time; that would be about 830-820 B.C. Though some scholarship places Hesiod a little later, the fact is known that he was a Boeotian farmer and that he and his followers wrote epic poetry of a type different from that of the Homeric school. In Ionia and the islands the epic poets stayed with the Homeric pattern, singing of romantic subjects in what became a stereotyped, romantic style. In continental Greece, however, and especially in Boeotia, there sprang up a form of epic which substituted practical and matter-of-fact material for the romance of the Ionian school. Boeotian subject matter dealt with moral and practical maxims and with information on technical subjects such as agriculture, astronomy, and genealogy. The Boeotian poems were assigned unanimously to Hesiod down to the age of Alexandrine criticism, but they are evidently not the work of one man or even of one period. Yet there is no doubt as to the actual existence of Hesiod. He was a peasant, speaking for the common man. He lived in a backward section


17 Evelyn-White (op. cit., pp. xxv-xxvi) thinks that internal evidence, also, points to the ninth century. Trever (I, 170) places Hesiod in the early seventh century. Sanford (p. 129) says that he was "before 700 B.C."


19 Evelyn-White, op. cit., p. x.

of the mainland of Greece, off the main highways of trade and largely out of touch with the contemporary current of economic and cultural life. But the Hesiodic poems reflect the economic and social transition which was going on at the time. The point of interest for this study is that in one of these poems by a backwoods farmer we find reference to the singing and dancing and the dancing places of the gods. The *Theogony* of Hesiod traces from the beginning of things, the descent of the families of the gods and their vicissitudes. The genealogy begins thus:

> From the Heliconian Muses let us begin to sing, who hold the great and holy mount of Helicon, and dance on soft feet about the deep-blue spring and the altar of the almighty son of Cronos, and . . . make their fair, lovely dances upon highest Helicon and move with vigorous feet. Thence they arise and go abroad by night, veiled in thick mist, and utter their song with lovely voice, praising Zeus the aegis-holder and queenly Hera of Argos who walks on golden sandals. . . . And one day they taught Hesiod song while he was shepherding his lambs under holy Helicon, and this word first the goddesses said to me -- the Muses of Olympus, daughters of Zeus who holds the aegis:

> "Shepherds of the wilderness, wretched things of shame, mere bellies, we know how to speak many false things as though they were true; but we know, when we will, to utter true things."

> So said the ready-voiced daughters of great Zeus, and they plucked and gave me a rod, a shoot of sturdy olive, a marvellous thing, and breathed into me a divine voice to celebrate things that shall be and things that were aforetime; and they bade me sing of the race of the blessed gods that are eternally, but ever to sing of themselves both first and last. . . .

> Come thou, let us begin with the Muses who gladden the great spirit of their father Zeus in Olympus with their songs, telling of things that are and that shall be and that were aforetime with

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consenting voice. Unwearying flows the sweet sound
from their lips, and the house of their father Zeus
the loud-thunderer is glad at the lily-like voice
of the goddesses as it spreads abroad, and the
peaks of snowy Olympus respond, and the homes of the
immortals. And they uttering their immortal voice,
celebrate in song . . . the reverend race of the
gods from the beginning. . . .

Them in Pieria did Mnemosyne (Memory). . . .
bear of union with the father, the son of Cronos,
a forgetting of ills and a rest from sorrow. . . .
And . . . she bare nine daughters, all of one mind,
whose hearts are set upon song and their spirit
free from care, a little way from the topmost peak
of snowy Olympus. There are their bright dancing-
places and beautiful homes. . . . And they, utter-
ing through their lips a lovely voice, sing the
laws of all and the goodly ways of the immortals
uttering their lovely voice. Then went they to
Olympus, delighting in their sweet voice, with
heavenly song, and the dark earth resounded about
them as they chanted and a lovely sound rose up be-
neath their feet as they went to their father. . . .

These things, then, the Muses sang who dwell on
Olympus, nine daughters begotten by great Zeus,
Cleio and Euterpe, Thaleia, Melpomene and Terp-
sichore, and Erato and Polyhymnia and Urania and
Calliope, who is the chiefest of them all, for
she attends on worshipful princes: whomsoever of
heaven-nourished princes the daughters of great
Zeus honour, and behold him at his birth, they
pour sweet dew upon his tongue, and from his lips
flow gracious words. . . . For it is through the
Muses and far-shooting Apollo that there are sing-
ers and harpers upon the earth; but princes are
of Zeus, and happy is he whom the Muses love;
sweet flows speech from his mouth. For though a
man have sorrow and grief in his newly-troubled
soul and live in dread because his heart is dis-
tressed, yet, when a singer, the servant of the
Muses, chants the glorious deeds of men of old and
the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus, at once
he forgets his heaviness and remembers not his
sorrows at all; but the gifts of the goddesses soon
turn him away from these.

Hail, children of Zeus! Grant lovely song and
celebrate the holy race of the deathless gods who
are for ever. . . .

22 Hesiod, op. cit., pp. 79-87 (1-105).
Cf. supra, p. 9, and infra, p. 67, for Homer’s and
Plato’s statements about Divine Inspiration.
Thus, says Hesiod, among the gods themselves there was love of song and dance; and even the Muses had their own "bright dancing-places." One sees in Hesiod, the peasant farmer, a reverence for the singing voices and the dancing feet of the heavenly Muses of Mount Olympus. His picture of the goddesses shows plainly that he had seen and heard such maiden choruses even in the countryside of Boeotia, for man is prone to create his gods in his own image, to give them his own tastes and his own idealized characteristics. Later in the *Theogony* comes the story of the birth of a son of Zeus whose worship, like that of the son of God in another era, was to bring into being the drama of the existent civilized world.

And Semele, daughter of Cadmus was joined with Zeus in love and bare him a splendid son, joyous Dionysus — a mortal woman an immortal son. And now they both are gods.  

So Hesiod records the birth of Dionysus, impersonation of whom was to be the first instance of the art of acting of which there is evidence. The passage is the last of Hesiod's allusions which have bearing upon the present study.

One turns from the Boeotians back to Ionia and the islands. The Ionic poets refrained from writing upon the actual Homeric narrative and chose instead various phases of the tale of Troy which preceded or followed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In this way a body of epic poetry was built up which covered the whole Trojan story. There survive only a

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few scanty fragments of these ten epics of the Trojan "Cycle."  

One of them, The War of the Titans, which is attributed to Eumelus, introduces Zeus as dancing. Eumelus says: "In the midst of them danced the Father of men and gods." So the father of the gods was wont to dance, also. The other fragments of the Cycle do not tell anything of dance and song.

But one of the hymns in the collection of so-called Homeric Hymns to the gods startles the reader considerably by bringing him closer than he has yet come to the subject of the actor's business of imitation. The thirty-three hymns appear to be later than the Cyclic poems, and they show influences both of Hesiod and of Homer. The arresting lines are found in the hymn "To Delian Apollo" when the poet sings directly to the much-loved son of Zeus and Leto:

... Many are your temples and wooded groves. ... Phoebus, yet in Delos do you most delight your heart; for there the long robed Ionians gather in your honour with their children and shy wives: mindful, they delight you with their boxing and dancing and song, so often as they hold their gathering. A man would say that they were deathless and unageing if he should then come upon the Ionians so met together. For he would see the graces

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24 Evelyn-White, op. cit., pp. xxviii-xxix


26 Evelyn-White, op. cit., p. xxiv.
of them all... And there is this great wonder besides — and its renown shall never perish —, the girls of Delos, handmaids of the Far-shooter; for when they have praised Apollo first, and also Leto and Artemis who delights in arrows, they sing a strain telling of men and women of past days, and charm the tribes of men. Also they can imitate the tongues of all men and their clattering speech: each would say that he himself were singing, so close to truth is their sweet song.27

Surely these last words sound very like an opinion about skill in impersonation. . . . they can imitate the tongues of all men and their clattering speech: each would say that he himself were singing, so close to truth is their sweet song." One thinks of Aristotle's observation about the voice of Theodorus,28 and one recalls Stanislavski's demand upon his actors for "faith and a sense of truth."29 One could wish to know more about the girls of Delos and their singing. In a second of the hymns to Apollo, "To Pythian Apollo," another chorus is described; this time, as in Hesiod's Theogony, it is a chorus of the gods themselves. The shining Phoebus leads the dance as he sings and plays.

Leto's all-glorious son goes to rocky Pytho, playing upon his hollow lyre . . . ; and at the touch of the golden key his lyre sings sweet. Thence . . . he speeds from earth to Olympus, to the house of Zeus, to join the gathering of the other gods: then straightway the undying gods think only of the lyre and song, and all the Muses together, voice sweetly answering voice, hymn the unending gifts the gods enjoy and the sufferings of men, all that they endure

27 The Homeric Hymns in Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homerica, pp. 335-337 (145-164).
29 Stanislavski, op. cit., pp. 120-153.
at the hands of the deathless gods, and how they live witless and helpless and cannot find healing for death or defence against old age. Meanwhile the rich-tressed Graces and cheerful Seasons dance with Harmonia and Hebe and Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, holding each other by the wrist. And among them sings one . . . but tall to look upon and enviable in mien, Artemis who delights in arrows, sister of Apollo. Among them sport Ares and the keen-eyed Slayer of Argus, while Apollo plays his lyre stepping high and feathly and a radiance shines around him, the gleaming of his feet and close-woven vest. And they, even gold-tressed Leto and wise Zeus, rejoice in their great hearts as they watch their dear son playing among the undying gods.  

Here is union of song and dance and lyre playing, and here is prominence of the choral element. But there is not to be found for some time so pointed a tribute as that to the Delian maidens who could "imitate" the "speech" of "all men."

Passing into the region of dates and history and of poetry in professional rather than in folk form, one finds elements of song-dance emerging into the art sphere in the latter half of the seventh century B.C. These elements had come all the way from the cult and occupational cry-movement of the wedding and vineyard scenes pictured by Homer as upon the shield of Achilles. The activities of the cult or occupational leader had divided often into functions of the professional minstrel and the professional dance leader, of whom there seem to have been sometimes two, as in the case of the two tumblers in the vineyard and in the

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31 A poem of Archilochus of Paros (cf. Trever, op. cit., I, 198) "on an eclipse at noonday has fixed the first specific date in Greek history as April 6, 648 B.C."
Ritual song-dance can be traced, as has been seen, through Homer, Hesiod, and the Homeric hymns. And it can be followed in the fragments that exist of the poets of the next few centuries.

Greek poetry of "historical" times took many forms, all evolving from earlier "primitive" activities. There was the *elegiac*, originating probably in a lament and accompanied by the flute. There was the *iambic*, which came to have meaning other than metrical as a form of literature for ridicule and invective and finally for improvisation. Iambic poetry "seems to have been sung to the accompaniment of the lyre," but vocal delivery may sometimes have been "halfway between singing and speaking." There were also the purely *Melic* or *lyric* forms: the processional or *prosodion*; the *paean*, which was used to invoke a healing or averting deity, and which has been heard in the Homeric hymns to Apollo; the *encomium* or eulogy for secular use; the *epinicion* or

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33 Edmonds, tr., in *Lyra Graeca*, III, 600-603. Cf. also ibid. in *Elegy and Iambus Being the Remains of All the Greek Elegiac and Iambic Poets from Callinus to Crates Excepting the Choliambic Writers with the Anacreontea* (tr. J. M. Edmonds; 2 vols.; "The Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1944), I, xvii.

victory song; the eroticon or love-song; the scolion or drinking-song; the hyporcheme in which the dance predominated, and which was said to have been the accompaniment proper to the Pyrrhic dance-at-arms or the mimetic dance later associated at Athens with Dionysus; the Adoneion or Adonis-song; the epithalamium or wedding-song; the threnos or dirge; the prayer-song; the oschophoricon, a processional song-dance performed by youths just before the vintage; the daphnephoricon or laurel-bearing song, which was evidently highly mimetic in quality; the parthenion, a processional always sung by maidens; and the dithyramb, the hymn to Dionysus, god of wine and fertility. Of these poetic forms the investigator is especially interested in the several processions and in the hyporcheme, the daphnephoricon (a kindred form), and the dithyramb. Unfortunately, however, there is little that remains of the work of the Greek lyricists.

The poet Eumelus is said to have trained a processional chorus of men and to have composed the epic lines which they sang to Apollo at Delos in the eighth century B.C. The only surviving fragment simply mentions the lyre of the Muse and her sandals of freedom, which could refer to the fact that the chorus was composed not of slaves, but of citizens.

35, in Lyra Graeca, III, 648-672.


37 Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III, 599, n. 1.
The earliest instance of the dithyramb among the Ionians is the fragment of Archilochus from some time in the seventh century, "I know how to lead the dithyramb-song of lord Dionysus with my senses lightning struck with wine." Archilochus is credited as innovator of "the recitative or rhythmical recitation of poetry to music" and of "the device of reciting some of a number of iambic lines to music and singing the others, a device afterwards employed by the tragic poets and introduced by Crexus into the dithyramb." Among the Dorians there is the very ancient invocation sung by the Elean women; "Come, hero Dionysus, to the shrine of the Eleans, to the pure shrine with the Graces, raging higher with foot of ox, goodly Bull, O goodly Bull." Here Dionysus is at once a hero and a bull, and here -- "which marks an older stage than the lines of Archilochus" -- there is as yet no mention of wine.

In the last quarter of the seventh century the poet Alcman of Aparta composed songs for girl-choirs. In one fragment he complains that age has made him weak and unable to whirl in the dance with his maidens:

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38 Lyra Graeca, p. 667. Cf. also Elegy and Iambus II, 137 (77), and Athenaeus, op. cit., II, 343 (V, 180a).
39 Edmonds, tr., in Elegy and Iambus II, 89.
41 Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III, 667.
42 Ibid., I, 69, (18); III, 615-616.
O maidens of honey voice so loud and clear, my limbs can carry me no more. Would O would God I were but a ceryl, such as flies fearless of beast with the halcyons over the bloom of the wave, the Spring's own bird that is purple as the sea.\(^{43}\)

The implication is that in Alcman's day, as in that of Archilochus before him, the poet was the leader of the dance in more than in name.\(^{44}\)

Much of the choral dance of earlier times, the reader may have observed, appears to have occurred in worship of Apollo. Much, also, was in adoration of Dionysus. At Delphi the dithyrambs to Dionysus were performed in the three winter months, the paeans to Apollo during the rest of the year. At Athens the dithyramb belonged traditionally to the early spring. From early times the cult of Dionysus was associated with that of Apollo at Delos.\(^ {45}\) The raising of this old ritual song-dance to the level of art was connected by the ancients with the name of Arion of Lesbos. Herodotus says that Arion spent most of his life at the court of Periander in Corinth, that he "was a lyre player second to none in that age," and that he was "the first man, as far as we know, to compose and name the dithyramb which he afterwards taught at Corinth."\(^ {46}\) The **Lexicon** of Suidas places Arion as flourishing in the thirty-eighth Olympiad, or about

\(^{43}\) *Lyra Graeca*, I, 73 (26).

\(^{44}\) Edmonds, tr., in *Lyra Graeca*, III, 616.


\(^{46}\) *Herodotus*, *op. cit.*, I, 26-27 (I, 23).
628-625 B.C., and says that he may have been a pupil of Alcman. According to Suidas, Arion was "said to have been the inventor of the tragic style, and to have been the first to assemble a chorus, to sing a dithyramb, to give that name to the song of the chorus, and to introduce Satyrs speaking in metre."\(^4\) Scholars agree that earliest authorities list Arion as the first trainer of the cyclic or circular choruses.\(^4\) J. M. Edmonds points out that in these passages "we seem to have the beginnings, that is the raising to art-status and possibly the differentiation, of the Dithyramb, of Tragedy, and of the Satyric Drama."\(^4\) He says that if "this is so, the reference of Archilochus, who lived fifty years before Arion, would seem to be to the folk-ritual." Edmonds warns, however, that one should be careful about drawing a hard and fast line between the "folk" stage of development and the stage of "art."\(^5\) As there are no fragments of the work of Arion, the references to him are important only in that they throw significant light upon the dim origins of the drama and the folk who participated in such origins.

Turning from the dithyrambs, for the present, the inquiry goes to the work of Alcaeus and Sappho, two other

\(^4\) Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, I, 139.
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^4\) Ibid., III, 668.
\(^5\) Ibid., p. 669.
famous Lesbian lyricists of the late seventh century B.C. Their work is chiefly nonodic, rather than choral. One finds in Alcaeus only a reference to the dances of youths round a tripod. Sappho tells of the maids of Mytilene, whom she has "taught to dance and sing on feast days." The elegiac poet Sacadas, of the early sixth century, is credited with having introduced the Dances of Naked Youths in Sparta; and Thaletas, Xenodamus, Xenocritus, Polymnastus are mentioned in the same connection. Just what these dances were is not certain, for there are no fragments upon the subject. Anacreon of Teos, of the sixth and fifth centuries, is said to have taken "delight in the lyrics of Aeschylus." And Athenaeus says that Anacreon's songs will be loved "so long as maiden band does holy night-long service of the dance." Athenaeus quotes Anacreon as singing about the dances of the "fair-haired daughters of Zeus." Simonides of Ceos, of the fifth and fourth centuries, won his

51 Ibid., p. 624.
52 Lyra Graeca, I, 319 (1-12).
53 Ibid., I, 211 (40).
54 Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III, 632.
55 Ibid., II, 7.
56 Ibid., II, 129.
57 Athenaeus, op. cit., VI, 237 (XIII, 600e).
fifty-sixth prize for dithyrambs in Athens at the age of eighty. There are no fragments of these dithyrambs; but what remains of Simonides's other melic poetry shows, according to Edmonds, a similarity in structure to the choruses of Attic drama. The following portion of an elegiac is sometimes attributed to Simonides and sometimes to Bacchylides:

Oft have the Dionysian Seasons shouted with joy for the ivy-dight dithyramb at the dances of the tribe Acamatis, and shaded the shining locks of skilful singers with ribbons and with choice roses; but they who have made this tripod to be witness to their Bacchic prize are the men who were taught by Antigenes; and right well did Ariston of Argos nurse with outpourings of the sweet breath of his pure flute the delightful voice of Athenians, who were led in their ring of melody by Hipponicus son of Struthon from the chariot of Graces, the which have bestowed upon his men name and fame and splendid victory by aid of the God and the violet-crowned Muses.

The ring of melody was evidently a dancing circle. In one of his paeans Simonides says that a dance is ever dear to the Muses, especially when led by Apollo.

A younger and greater contemporary of Simonides, the Theban Pindar wrote also in many kinds of verse; but only his Epiniceon Odes or victory songs have come down complete. In a few of these there are references to the singing and

60 Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III, 641.
61 Lyra Graeca, II, 391 (177).
62 Ibid., II, 277 (8).
dancing of the gods. For this research, however, more interest lies in some fragments of Pindaric dithyrambs and maiden-songs which, though they exist only in parts, are the first of any length which have been found of these forms.

One of Pindar's dithyrambs reads:

Haste to the dance and send your glorious favor, ye Olympian gods, who, in holy Athens, are marching to the densely crowded incense-breathing centre of the city, and to its richly adorned and glorious mart, there to receive garlands bound with violets, and songs culled in the spring-time. And look upon me, who, with joyance of songs, am once more sped by Zeus into the presence of the ivy-crowned god, whom we mortals call Bromius and Eriboas, to celebrate the progeny of sires supreme and of Cadmean mothers.  

Another dithyramb begins:

In olden days, there flowed from the lips of men the lay of the dithyrambs long drawn out, with the sibilant san discarded; but now new portals have been flung open for the sacred circles of the dance. Wise are they that know what manner of festival of Bromius the Celestials hold in their halls, hard by the sceptre of Zeus. In the adorable presence of the mighty Mother of the gods, the prelude is the whirling of timbrels; there is also the ringing of rattles, and the torch that blazeth beneath the glowing pinetrees.

One wonders if the "new portals for the sacred circle of the dance" could mean the dramatic celebrations of Pindar's time; but the chief interest in these bits, for this study, is simply as examples of the dithyramb form. One does not notice in them any especially mimetic possibility. There

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64 Ibid., p. 559-560.
is, however, from Pindar the only extant example of the
daphnephoricon or laurel-bearing song, which was written
for the Daphnephoria, held every eight years in Pindar's
native city of Thebes. Edmonds explains that

The procession, said to be commemorative of an
ancient victory over the Oetaeans, consisted of
a chorus of branch-bearing maidens led by the
priest of the year, a handsome boy of noble birth,
called the Daphnephorus, who, with his unbound
hair crowned with a golden diadem and wearing a
long and richly-embroidered vestment and a special
kind of shoes, followed his nearest kinsman of
either sex, the actual 'bearer' with his hand upon
the laurel. . . . Similar rites were observed at
Athens and elsewhere, notable at Delphi, whither
every eight years a chorus of children, led by a
child Daphnephorus personating Apollo, brought
laurel-branches by a traditional route from Tempe,
in commemoration, it was said, of Apollo's return
from his journey thither to purify himself after
slaying the Serpent. Pindar's extant Daphnephoricon
is written in Triads of fifteen short lines. His
Daphnephorus' father Pagondas, whose own father
Aeoladas is the real inspirer of the poem, commanded
the Thebans when they defeated the Athenians at
Delium long afterwards. The girls of the chorus
sing of the occasion; of themselves and their dress;
of the Daphnephorus and the honours his family has
won in the Games, with some reference to Theban
politics; but the myth, if there was one, is not
extant.65

Pindar's daphnephoric fragment reads:

. . . that I may fulfil my duties as a prophet-
priest. The honours of mortals are diverse, but
on every man falleth the burden of envy for his
merit; while the head of him that hath nought is
hidden in dark silence. In friendly wise would
I pray to the children of Cronus that an unbroken
prosperity may be decreed for Aeoladas and his race.
The days of mortals are deathless, although the
body die. Yet he, whose house is not reft of
children nor utterly overthrown beneath the stroke
of stern necessity, liveth free from toilsome labour;

65 Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III, 665.
for the time before birth I deem equal to death.

The accompanying maiden songs for the daphnephoricon are these:

(Hail! O Pierian maiden robed in gold! I speak, now that I have fitly discharged my duty.)

For Loxias hath gladly come to bring unto Thebes immortal glory.
But quickly girding up my robe, and bearing in my delicate hands a splendid branch of bay, I shall sing the all-glorious home of Aeoladas and of his son Pagondas, with my maidenly head gay with garlands. To the notes of the lotus-pipe shall I mimic in song a siren-sound of praise, such as husheth the swift blasts of Zephyr; and whenever shivering Boreas speedeth on with strength of tempest, and stirreth up the swift rush of the Southwind...

Many are the fair deeds of old that I remember, while I adorn them in song, but the rest are known to Almighty Zeus alone: but for me, maidenly thought and maidenly speech are most meet. Neither for man nor for woman, whose children are dear to me, ought I to forget a fitting strain. As a faithful witness have I come to the dance, in honour of Agasicles and his noble parents, and also by reason of our friendship. For, of old, as well as now, have they been honoured among their neighbours, both in the famous victories of swift-footed steeds, victories which adorned their locks with garlands on the shores of renowned Onchestus, and by Itonia's glorious fame, and at Pisa...

... to seven-gated Thebes.
A jealous anger at their ambition provoked a bitter and unrelenting strife; but, giving loyal satisfaction, it ended in friendship.
Son of Damaena! stepping forth with foot well-omened, lead thou the march for me. First on the road shalt thou be followed by thy happy daughter, while she advanceth with her feet beside the leafy branch of bay, she whom her mother, Andaesistrota, hath trained to all manner of skill, gladly linking her with fair handiwork of many a kind.
Let not the twain, when they have seen the nectar from my spring, stray in their thirst to another stream, -- a stream of brine.

66 Pindar, op. cit., p. 567.
67 Ibid., pp. 569-575.
The possibilities for characterization here are interesting, though it is to be remembered that Pindar was writing in the fifth century, during the time of the great development of the drama. The point is that the daphnephorica of Pindar are probably reminiscent of an older form. The explanation of Edmonds that the chorus of children was led by a child daphnephorous, "personating" Apollo, makes a reader wonder how far back the celebration goes. The fragments of types of hyporcheme which are found in Pindar do not add anything to knowledge of the form. Nor do those of Bacchylides of Ceos, who also wrote processionals and various kinds of dance-songs.

Indeed, this long look that has been taken into Greek lyric poetry and into the earlier epic and other "primitive" poetic writings has not revealed any theories of Greek acting at all. Certainly, however, it has thrown some light upon the dim ground which lies behind the first Greek poet-actors. The evidence is unmistakable that many of the earliest poets actually sang and danced with their choruses. And one of the Homeric hymn-writers has voiced an opinion that sounds

68 Supra, p. 27, and Edmonds, tr., in Lyra Graeca, III. 665.

69 Fragments of other Greek poetry have been examined in Lyra Graeca, in Elegy and Iambus, and in Herodes, Cercidas, and the Greek Choliambic Poets (Except Callimachus and Babrius) (ed. A.D. Knox; "The Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann, 1929).
close to intelligent criticism upon the art of acting. From the vineyard dancers and the minstrels and the tumblers of Homer to the Delian maidens of the Homeridae, from the processional chorus and the Muse of Eumelus to the daphnephoricon and maiden songs of Pindar, may be followed an increasingly mimetic principle. The search has led well into that wonderful fifth century B.C., when Greek poetic writing reached its peak in the form of the tragic drama.

A Survey of Dramatic Conditions of the Sixth, Fifth, and Fourth Centuries and an Investigation of the Dramatic Writing

Before considering the dramatic writing of the fifth and fourth centuries as a possible source for theories of acting, it is probably well to think briefly upon the drama and the theatre and the acting in fifth century Greece so far as scholarship has ascertained them to have been. Tragedy, Aristotle says,

... goes back to the improvising poet-leaders in the dithyrambic chorus of satyrs; and Comedy to the leaders of the Phallic song and dance, the custom in many of the cities. And from this beginning, Tragedy progressed little by little,

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70 Cf. supra, p. 17, and Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homerica, pp. 335-337 (145-164).
71 Cf. supra, pp. 5-17.
72 Cf. supra, pp. 20-29.
73 The present investigation has not revealed any allusions to the phallic celebrations in the Greek writings up to the fifth century B.C.
as the successive authors gradually improved upon what preceded them. Finally the development ceased, when Tragedy, through a long series of changes, had attained to its natural form. The principal changes were three. (1) From the single spokesman of the primitive form, Aeschylus increased the number of actors to two; we must bear in mind that one actor might take several parts in a play; he diminished the part taken by the Chorus -- that is, he reduced the amount of choral chanting; and he made the spoken dialogue the chief element in the play. (2) Sophocles brought about the innovation of three actors, and was the first to make use of painted scenery. (3) Furthermore, there was a change in the magnitude of the action represented; for the little plots of the primitive form were abandoned; and, with its development out of the satyr-dance, Tragedy also discarded the grotesque early diction. Thus, at a late period however, it assumed its characteristic elevation of tone.

Here is a summary of the development of the tragic drama up to the time of the recording of the Poetics. There is further statement that

While the successive changes which Tragedy underwent, and the authors of these changes, have not escaped notice, there is no record of the early development of Comedy, for the reason that this form of drama was not at first seriously regarded as a matter of public concern. Not until late in its progress was the comic poet provided by the magistrate with a chorus; until then the performers were simply unpaid volunteers. And it had already taken definite shape by the time we began to have a record of those who are termed poets in this kind. Who was responsible for the introduction of masks, or prologues, or more than one actor -- concerning these and other like details we are in ignorance. But we know that the framing of the plots was due to Epicharmus and Phormis, and hence originated in Sicily and that, of Athenian poets, Crates was the first to discard personal satire,

74 The bracketed comments in the quotations from the Poetics are Cooper's explanations.

75 Aristotle, Aristotle, on the Art of Poetry, pp. 12-13 (I, 14).
constructing, instead, plots of an impersonal nature and general comic value. 76

Though Ridgeway has proposed tomb ceremonials and funeral dirges as sources for the derivation of tragedy, 77 the majority of scholars agree as to its growth from the poet-leaders of the dithyrambs to Dionysus, god of wine and fertility. 78 They agree, likewise, on the development of comedy from the leaders of the Phallic ceremonies. 79 Early in the Poetics Aristotle had said:

... the Dorians lay claim to the invention of Tragedy as well as Comedy; for Comedy is claimed by the Megarians (=Dorians) -- by those of Greece, who contend that it arose among them at the time when Megara became a democracy, and on the other hand by the Megarians of Sicily, on the ground that the first true comic poet, Epicharmus, was a Sicilian who lived much earlier than the Attic comic poets Chionides and Magnes; and Tragedy likewise is claimed by certain of the Dorians in the Peloponnese. 80

From a study of Corinthian vases and Attic terra cottas, Nicholl concludes that in Sparta, in Megara, and other centers

76 Ibid., p. 14 (I, 4).

77 William Ridgeway, The Origin of Tragedy with Special Reference to the Greek Tragedious (Cambridge; University Press, 1910), pp. 47-55.


80 Aristotle, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, p. 8 (I, 3).
inhabited by the Dorian peoples there "had grown up a type of play which, non-choral and therefore distinguished from Attic Comedy, not only influenced the Athenian theatre, but provided the basis for the further development of the mime." This farcical play introduced grotesquely clad, boisterous "stock figures an old man with pointed beard, an old hag-like woman, a fool, a doctor, slaves, a caricatured Herakles most of them wearing the phallus, who presented scenes from real life alongside mythological burlesque." Most "of the dialogue was improvised, and perhaps the performances had become professional by the fifth century B.C." Concerning the development of tragedy and comedy, Flickinger points out that Aristotle says specifically "poet leaders" of the dithyrambic chorus and phallic song, not merely the dithyramb or the celebration itself. Aristotle does not mention the wine god, but Plato has defined the dithyramb as a song in celebration of the birth of Dionysus. When one of the improvising leaders of such a dithyrambic chorus, at some time in the sixth century B.C., was stirred with the impulse not only to lead his

82 Ibid., pp. 30, 38.
83 Ibid., p. 38.
84 Flickinger, op. cit., p. 16.
chorus, but to pretend to be the god whom they were praising, the germ of the drama had been sown. It was Thespis, according to Diogenes Laertius, who as improvising poet-actor took his first momentous step. Of the acting of Thespis there is no account from his contemporaries. A prose treatise On the Chorus, written by Sophocles in competition "with Thespis and Choerilus," is mentioned in the Lexicon of Suidas; but none of these treatises has been discovered in the present investigation. Plutarch, however, writing in the second century A.D. upon the life of Solon, records as amusing incident:

. . . . Thespis, at this time, beginning to act tragedies, and the thing, because it was new, taking very much with the multitude, though it was not yet made a matter of competition, Solon, being by nature fond of hearing and learning something new, and now, in his old age, living idly, and enjoying himself, indeed, with music and with wine, went to see Thespis himself, as the ancient custom was, act; and after the play was done, he addressed him, and asked him if he was not ashamed to tell so many lies before such a number of people; and Thespis replying that it was no harm to say or do so in play, Solon vehemently struck his staff against the ground: "Ay," said he, "if we honor and commend such play as this, we shall find it some day in our business."


87 Suidas, Lexicon. Quoted in Elegy and Iambus, p. 423.

So, according to Plutarch, Thespis saw "no harm" in what was said or done "in play." The dramas of Thespis were for one actor and his answering chorus. A little later another leader was probably provided for the chorus, and the poet-actor could converse with the new leader.

Aeschylus, in the fifth century, evidently felt the urge, as he acted, to speak not only with the chorus and its leader, but with another person of definite identity in his story. Sophocles sensed the possibility of dramatic impact in the addition of a third character who, like the actors in the plays of Aeschylus, could double in roles if necessary. With the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles and those of Euripides, and with the comedies of Aristophanes and Menander, the drama had come a long way from the satyr-dances and songs of the Dionysiac revels and phallic ceremonials and the various song-dances of kindred genealogy.

The form of the place for celebration changed as the drama changed. From the original dancing circle (orchestra) for the chorus with the spectators gathered round, the theater altered -- first with addition of a tent (skene) as dressing room behind the circle, then with a permanent scene building instead of the tent. This plan gave the amphitheater style. The place for spectators was usually a

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hillside; seats were added later, first of wood, then of stone. The face of the scene building

... was pierced by doors, usually three but sometimes only one, which were conventionally thought of as leading into as many different houses. The scene-building often had two projecting side wings called parascenia. ... The front of the scene-building and of the parascenia came to be decorated with a row of columns, the proscenium. ... The top of this proscenium was used by actors when they had occasion to speak from the housetop or were thought of as standing upon some elevation. In the course of time it was employed also for divinities. ... Since this spot was never invaded by the chorus and was the only place reserved for actors exclusively, it came to be called the logium or "speaking place." Behind the logium was the second story of the scene-building, known as the episcenium. ...; its front wall was pierced by one or more large doorways. Past each parascenium a "side entrance" or parodus ... led into the orchestra. These entrances were used by the audience before and after the play, and during it by the actors (who could use also the doors in the scene-building) and the chorus. ... The remainder of the orchestral circle was surrounded by the auditorium, the "Theater" proper. Chorus and actors stood on the same level in the orchestra or in the space between it and the scene-building. There was no stage in the Greek theaters until about the beginning of the Christian era.90

This is Flickinger's description of the Greek theater of the classical period and is written, as he explains, from the standpoint of one who believes with Dörpfeld that in these theaters "actors and chorus normally moved upon the same level."91 Practically all the masterpieces of the great Greek dramatists were produced originally in the theater of Dionysus at Athens. Flickinger says that the early orchestra

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90 Flickinger, op. cit., pp. 58-60.
91 Ibid., p. 61.
here was about eighty-eight feet in diameter, that it was 
banked up, as it receded from the Acropolis, "to a maximum 
of about six and a half feet, leaving a declivity immediately 
behind it," and that "for about thirty years no background 
of any kind stood in the declivity." He says that theatri-
cal "properties, such as a tomb, might be temporarily built 
at the center or to one side of the orchestra. 92 He dates 
the construction of the first simple wooden scene building, 
probably of only one story and without a columned proscenium, 
at about 465 B.C. In the last quarter of the fifth century 
B.C., he thinks, a two-story scene building was probably 
erected, partly of wood and partly of breccia; at about the 
same time a proscenium of wood was evidently added "before 
the parascenia and the immediate front of the scene build-
ing," and painted panels of scenery may have been fastened 
at times "between its inter-columniations." It is Flick-
ing er's opinion that "such a proscenium stood far enough 
removed from the front of the scene building so that, when 
there was no occasion to fill the inter-columniations with 
panels, a porch or portico was automatically produced (its 
floor probably raised a step or two above the orchestra 
level), in which semi-interior scenes might be enacted... 93 
Such was the Greek theater of the fifth century B.C. at the 
great period of classical Greek playwriting; and so it was

92 Ibid., p. 65.
93 Ibid., p. 68.
in the next century during Aristotle's lifetime, the Ly-
cursean completion between 338 and 326 B.C. being probably
a reproduction in stone of the "main outlines of the earlier
theater." 94

In a gradually changing theater of Dionysus, then, the
actors and the choruses performed the great tragedies of
Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; the comedies of Aris-
tophanes and Menander; and plays no longer extant of other
contemporaries. About the compositions of Thespis or of
his supposed successor, Choerilus, practically nothing is
known. 95 Pratinus of Phlius is said to have written fifty
plays, thirty-two of which were satyric. In a dithyramb
by Pratinus, probably of the fifth century, there is a
protest against the growing importance of flute-playing over
the singing of the choruses and a cry that the poetry is the
first essential in the praises at "the patter-circled altar
Dionysiac." 96 Phrynicus, pupil of Thespis, introduced the
dramatization of contemporaneous history in addition to the
customary religious themes, and he is said to have been "the
first to bring a female character upon the stage." 97 But
the Greek drama is known from the plays of Aeschylus,

94 Ibid., p. 70.
95 Cf. supra, p. 34.
96 Lyra Graeca, III, 51.
97 Suidas, Lexicon, quoted in Elegy and Iambus,
p. 415.
Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, and the fragments of Menander; and from these plays hints may be gleaned about the manner of their interpretation. The drama, it should be remembered, retained its function as a religious celebration. It had been recognized by the state as early as 534 B.C. with the inauguration of the first tragic contest in the city Dionysia. Contests for comedy had been established in 486 and contests for tragic actors in 449.

From the noble grandeur of Aeschylean tragedy with its early choral emphasis and its later fully developed dramaturgy, through the fine craftsmanship of Sophocles with his more human but still lofty tone, to the psychological delineations of Euripides -- tragedy centered more and more upon character, finally reducing the importance of the chorus until it served only for lyric interludes. Always, however, the chorus appears to have been acting, to have had definite identity as a group of people. Old, Middle, and New Comedy likewise placed increasing stress upon the characters in the plays and the lines they spoke rather than upon choric words and action. In the comedies of Aristophanes the choruses may be of farmers, of rustics, of charcoal burners, of husbandmen, of old men, of women, of knights, of clouds, of frogs, of wasps, or of birds -- always with the chorus retaining its identity, but having less and less importance. The fragments of Menander show no choruses at all. There has been varied comment, pro and con, about the three-actor rule in Greek drama. Current opinion is now
fairly well agreed that tragedy of the fifth century B.C. used no more than three speaking actors, though mutes and dummies were sometimes employed and the leader of the chorus (the coryphaeus) frequently engaged in the dialogue. Doubling in roles, it is to be remembered, was customary. It is thought that Old Comedy (fifth century B.C.) occasionally had four actors speaking at once, as certain scenes from Aristophanes clearly show and that Middle Comedy (early fourth century B.C.) and New Comedy (later fourth century) apparently required at times a fourth actor.

There has been much discussion also about the "style" of fifth and fourth century acting. Haigh speaks of the ringing intonation, the sonorous utterance, the rhythmic declamation of the tragic stage and of a less formal tone for comedy. Gesticulation in old comedy, he says, was "of a free and unconstrained character"; and examination of the comedies of Aristophanes supports the concept of exaggerated movement. Dicaepolis is stoned by the chorus of charcoal burners and uses his pot for a shield; he pleads


100 Flickinger, op. cit., pp. 53, 171.

101 A. E. Haigh, op. cit., p. 275.
his case before them with his head in a block; he seizes Nicharchus, the informer, packs him in hay, and has him carried off on the shoulders of a slave.102 The sausage-seller dances a lively round.103 The wily old Philocreon, in trying to escape from his son's house, climbs almost out of the chimney, clings to the belly of an ass (in the manner of Odysseus), gnaws through a net which holds him, slides down a rope, struggles vehemently with his son, and is finally carried off by main force.104 The old man reels in drunkenness and kicks his heels in dance.105

There are beatings,106 and there is pushing of a god down and pulling of a goddess out of a pit.108 As for tragedy, however, though Haigh admits that in some instances there was unquestionably a certain amount of action, he thinks that tragic acting was generally "dignified and self-restrained," with a statuesque simplicity and gracefulness

103 Ibid., The Knights, p. 505.
105 Ibid., pp. 653, 658-659.
107 Ibid., The Frogs, p. 932.
108 Ibid., Peace, p. 691.
of pose" in gestures. \(^{109}\) Cambell, \(^{110}\) Mantzius, \(^{111}\) Watt, \(^{112}\) Rees, \(^{113}\) and Schlegel, \(^{114}\) all picture the Greek actor as resembling a slowly moving statue, uttering the "beautiful grave words" of Greek tragedy in deep and solemn voice. Some later scholarship has tended toward the belief that there was possibly more action on the Greek stage than has commonly been supposed. Allen holds that the assumption of the "statuesque" style for tragedy "is open to serious question." He points out that while a powerful voice, clear enunciation, and an ear for rhythm were no doubt essential, still the plays of the fifth century abound in situations that demand "emotional expression," "emotional acting," and sometimes "violent action." He feels that the "statuesque" idea implies a coldness, "whereas in reality Greek tragedy pulsated with life and was frequently even passionate." "Statuesque the acting no doubt was at times," he says, "but in general probably little more so than

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109 Haigh, _op. cit._, pp. 276-277.


... when Burbage trod the stage."115 Shisler has made a detailed analysis of "business" in the Greek tragedies, and she concludes with Allen that there was a considerable amount of real action on the Greek stage.116 It appears to this writer that the two views are not essentially at variance. Haigh lists numbers of "action" situations in Greek tragedy, and Allen admits the acting to have been statuesque "at times." Perhaps there is a mean between the two positions. Certainly the tragedies are replete with instances of "action." There is falling to the ground,117 lying prone upon the ground,118 rising,119 falling upon the sword,120 sinking to the knees, clapping the knees of

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117 Euripides, Hecuba in The Complete Greek Drama, I, 817.

118 ________, The Trojan Women in The Complete Greek Drama, I, 977.

119 ________, Hecuba, p. 818.


121 Euripides, Andromache in The Complete Greek Drama, I, 860.
another person in entreaty, embracing, wresting a sword from another person, rending the hair and the garments; there is seizing of a character and taking him off stage. Iolaus is even knocked down by the Argive herald. Evadne leaps from a rock to the funeral pyre below. The illustrations could continue. Yet these actions would not be termed "violent" in the sense that hand-to-hand combat would be violent. One could imagine their being performed in a somewhat formal manner, though one would agree with Allen that such situations would seem to require an "emotional" type of acting. It would seem as Haigh says, on the other hand, that the very clothing which the actors wore -- the elevated boots (cothurni), the elongated mask, the flowing garments in tragedy and additional padding in comedy -- must have made violent and impetuous movement a matter of great difficulty. When one considers, further, that the old orchestra in the theater

122 Ibid.
123, Electra in The Complete Greek Drama, II, 83.
124, Andromache, I, 866.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid., pp. 857-858.
127 Heracleidae in The Complete Greek Drama, I, 857-858.
of Dionysus measured over seventy-eight feet in diameter,\textsuperscript{129} that the new Lycurgean orchestra was sixty-four feet and four inches across,\textsuperscript{130} and that the new theater seated between 14,000 and 17,000 spectators,\textsuperscript{131} one gets something of an idea of the carrying quality which voice and gesture simply must have had even if acoustics and sight lines were perfect. Bieber observes, pointedly, that

The religious, impersonal costume enveloping the entire figure was a hindrance to the unfolding of the personality in tragedy even more than in comedy. Facial expression, especially, was hidden by the mask. Since the representational art of the fifth century, however, with few exceptions . . . did not express feeling and passion by the play of the features, but rather through the posture and movement of the whole body, we may conclude that the art of acting in the fifth, as in the following centuries, also laid its greatest emphasis on these methods. In addition, the actor had not only to master the art of speaking, but he had to be able to sing and declaim to music. Usually he had to play more than one part, especially if he was a second or third actor, since all the plays had a larger number of dramatis personae than the number of actors available. The actor, therefore, to adapt and change, not only his movements, but also his voice, to suit the different roles. Occasionally he even had to dance, as well as to rave in ecstasy or madness. . . . Voice and gesture had to fit the size of the theater. One can, therefore, expect strong and simple motions in tragedy. . . . , and lively, exaggerated motions in \textit{Old} comedy. . . . \textquote{Numerous statuettes of actors of the period are pictured to illustrate.} The mask facilitated the

\textsuperscript{129} Flickinger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p. 69.
\textsuperscript{131} Flickinger (p. 121) and Haigh (p. 100) says 17,000. Pickard-Cambridge thinks 14,000 is a better figure. A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, \textit{The Theatre of Dionysus at Athens} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946) p. 141.
submergence of the individual personality of the actor in that of the character represented. The onlooker of the fifth century B.C. certainly saw only the images created by the dramatists, the personalities of the heroes, and not the tragic actors presenting their roles.\textsuperscript{132}

Such are the pictures that have been drawn of the fifth century actors as they trod the stages and the orchestras of the fifth century B.C.

Further examination of the seven extant tragedies of Aeschylus, the seven of Sophocles, and the nineteen of Euripides adds little more to an understanding of the acting in Greek tragedy. The actor needed, somehow, to project from the stage the poetic depth and intensity of the Aeschylean images; to portray somehow the inherent dignity of man which Sophocles asserts with simple eloquence; and to recreate the human characters of Euripides with their psychological conflicts, their varying strength and pathetic weaknesses. Yet the Greek tragedies do not set forth any opinions of their authors as to how the actors should act the plays. In other words, there is no "Speak the speech" for Attic tragedy.

A study of the eleven surviving comedies of Aristophanes, however, though it uncovers no "Pyramus and Thisbe" burlesque, no Knight of the Burning Pestle, reveals nevertheless a few jibes that are aimed directly at actors and choruses.

In *The Frogs* there is ridicule for the actor Hegelochus, who, in a performance of Euripides's *Orestes*, had made a fatal slip of the tongue -- saying, "After the storm I perceived the cat," instead of "after the storm I perceived the calm." In the same play there is banter at the chorus of Aeschylus's *The Persians*.

Aeschylus

... Then next I taught you for glory to long, and against all odds stand fast; That was "The Persians," which bodied in song the noblest deeds of the past.

Dionysus

Yes, Yes! When Darius arose from the grave it gave me genuine joy, And the Chorus stood with its arms a-wave, and observed, "Yow-oy, Yow-oy!" There is also in *The Frogs* a thrust from Aeschylus directly at Euripides:

Aeschylus

Then next you have trained in the speechmaking arts nigh every infant that crawls. Th, this is the thing that such havoc has wrought in the wrestling-school, narrowed the hips Of the poor pale chattering children, and taught the crews of the *pick of the ships* To answer back pat to their officer's nose! How unlike my old sailor of yore, With no thought in his head but to guzzle his brose and sing as he bent at the oar!

*The Frogs*, then, tells three things: That Aristophanes and perhaps the general audience were sensitive to errors and

134 Ibid., p. 972.
135 Ibid., pp. 974-975.
slips in the diction of the actors, that the choruses made at least some use of gesture, and that men of Athens were not uninfluenced by the lines of the plays as they were delivered by the actors in the theaters. In The Wasps Aristophanes tells of the sons of Automenes, one of whom was an actor whose talent was "beyond all praise." 136

The line sounds sincere, though it is followed by a bawdy and ironic reference to still another son. The play closes with a poke at the "modern tragedians";

Xanthias (coming out of the house)

By Bacchus! Some Evil Genius has brought this unbearable disorder into our house. The old man, full up with wine and excited by the sound of the flute, is so delighted, so enraptured, that he is spending the night executing the old dances that Thespis first produced on the stage, and just now he offered to prove to the modern tragedians, by disputing with them for the dancing prize, that they are nothing but a lot of old dotards. (Bdelycleon comes out of the house with his father who is costumed as Polyphemus in Euripides’ Cyclops.)

Philocleon

"Who loiters at the door of the vestibule?"

Xanthias

Here comes our pest, our plague!

Philocleon

Let down the barriers. The dance is now to begin. (He begins to dance in a manner grotesquely parodying that of Euripides.)

Xanthias

Or rather the madness.

136 The Wasps, p. 652. One of the sons, a lyre player, was named Arignotus. Another was Ariphrodes. The name of the talented actor-son is not known. Ibid., “Glossary,” p. 1208.
Philocleon
Impetuous movement already twists and racks my sides. How my nostrils wheeze! how my back cracks!

Xanthias
Go and fill yourself with hellebore.

Philocleon
Phrynichus is as bold as a cock and terrifies His rivals.

Xanthias
He'll be stoned.

Philocleon
His legs kick out sky-high... Look how easily my leg-joints move. Isn't that good?

Xanthias
God, no, it's merely insane!

Philocleon
And now I summon and challenge my rivals. If there be a tragic poet who pretends to be a skillful dancer, let him come and contest the matter with me. Is there one? Is there not one?

Xanthias
Here comes one, and one only. (A very small dancer, costumed as a crab, enters.)

Philocleon
Who is the wretch?

Xanthias
The younger son of Carcinus.

Philocleon
I will crush him to nothing; in point of keeping time, I will knock him out, for he knows nothing of rhythm.

Xanthias
Ah! ah! here comes his brother too, another tragedian, and another son of Carcinus. (Another dancer, hardly larger than the first, and similarly costumed, enters.)

Philocleon
Him I will devour for my dinner.

Xanthias
Oh! ye gods! I see nothing but crabs. Here is yet another son of Carcinus. (A Third dancer enters, likewise resembling a crab, but smaller than either of the others.)
Philocleon

What's this? A shrimp or a spider?

Xanthias

It's a crab, a hermit-crab, the smallest of its kind; it writes tragedies.

Philocleon

Oh! Carcinus, how proud you should be of your brood! What a crowd of kinglets have come swooping down here! But we shall have to measure ourselves against them. Have marinade prepared for seasoning them, in case I prove the victor.

Leader of the Chorus

Let us stand out of the way a little, so that they may twirl at their ease.

Chorus

(It divides in two and accompanies with its song the wild dancing of Philocleon and the sons of Carcinus in the centre of the Orchestra.)

Come, illustrious children of this inhabitant of the brine, brothers of the shrimps, skip on the sand and the shore of the barren sea; show us the lightning whirls and twirls of your nimble limbs. Glorious off-spring of Phrynichus, let fly your kicks, so that the spectators may be overjoyed at seeing your legs so high in air. Twist, twirl, tap your bellies, kick your legs to the sky. Here comes your famous father, the ruler of the sea, delighted to see his three lecherous kinglets. Go on with your dancing, if it pleases you, but as for us, we shall not join you. Lead us promptly off the stage, for never a comedy yet was seen where the Chorus finished off with a dance. 137

Carcinus was a tragic poet, as was each of his diminutive sons. 138 The sons introduced an inordinate amount of new-fangled dancing into their productions. The passage indicates that some of the poets were still dancing in their

137 ________, The Wasps, pp. 658-661.

138 One of Carcinus's sons was named Xenocles. The names of the others are not known. Ibid., "Glossary", p. 1209.
own plays, and it reveals Aristophanes' scorn for the overdone style of dancing in tragedies. In the _Plutus_ Aristophanes laughs a little, still again, at the tragic poets and perhaps at the manner of the tragic acting with the introduction of the old woman, Poverty.

    Chremylus
    And who are you? Oh! what a ghastly pallor!

    Blepsidemus
    Perhaps it's some _Erinys_, some _Fury_, from the theatre; there's a kind of wild tragic look in her eyes.  

The "wild tragic look" may have reference to the painting of the masks. The fact that the aforesaid wild tragic look was "in her eyes," however, may indicate that the allusion is to the eyes of the actor behind the mask.  

At any rate the old comic poet is having sport at the expense of the tragic actors as well as of the tragic poets. These comments in _The Frogs_, _The Wasps_, and the _Plutus_ constitute the observations of Aristophanes upon the actors of his day. The lines do not give an over-all picture of the acting of the fifth and fourth centuries; nor do they give a thorough-going statement of Aristophanes' opinion upon the acting. But what they show is of some interest. They reveal an active chorus -- sometimes too active, according to Aristophanes. They show that the lines of the plays as presented

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139, Plutus, in _The Complete Greek Drama_, II, 1082.

by the actors were effective enough to be remembered and quoted by the audiences. They show that Aristophanes evidently had genuine admiration for some of the actors and utter contempt for some others.

One does not find so much in the dramatic composition of the next century. Playwriting in the fourth century B.C. was relatively unimportant. Some new tragedies continued to be produced, but from all accounts they were of inferior quality. During this time the presentation of old plays, especially the tragedies of Euripides, became an increasingly prominent feature of the dramatic festivals. Aristophanes was still writing in the early quarter of the century; and the development of New Comedy came in the later years, the fragments from Menander being the only representations we have of this form. Bieber explains that in the fourth century, with the lowering of the level of dramatic composition, the acting came to be somewhat more individualized. She is talking, here, principally of tragedy; but she shows later how that in New Comedy, with its representation of everyday men and women of the rich bourgeoisie, a similar condition developed. The change was due, she says, "to the development of interest in the individual which characterized the fourth century, in contrast to the fifth."

Now "for the first time," she says, "the personality of the dramatists and their actors appeared even through the mask." Opportunity for somewhat more personalized acting

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is revealed in the three fragments which have survived from Menander's plays. The centering, in each case, is upon the love story of a young man and a young woman; and though the characters are types, still they seem more flesh and blood than the folk of Aristophanes. Menander's plays come, properly, in the Hellenistic period of Greek culture. His first comedy was presented in Athens about 321 B.C., two years after the death of Alexander. But the New Comedy had been developing for some years previously. As there are no other representatives of the form, his work and the Plautine imitations in the Roman period may be taken as indicative of general characteristics of New Comedy. The use of strongly delineated type characters -- the courtesan, the scheming slave, the mercenary captain, the wayward son, the stern or kindly parent -- implies emphasis upon the actor's exaggeration of personality in his role.

As the preceding century had been an era of the playwright, so the fourth century B.C. was the first age of the actor. As tragedy had centered more and more upon character with gradual diminishing of the relation of the chorus, the actor had risen in importance. With the trend toward reproduction of old plays, his work became still more vital for the effectiveness of the presentations. This was the century of the formation of actors' guilds. The strongest and earliest "union" was called the "Dionysiac artists." It centered at Athens; and other such groups were situated at Thebes, Argos, Teos, Ptolemais, Cyprus,
and in all parts of the Greek-speaking world. Already "in the fifth century traveling troupes had presented at the country festivals plays which had won popular acclaim at Athens." With the organization of guilds, these groups took over the presentation of dramas "in the provinces" and even at important festivals. It is believed that a normal troupe in the time of the technitae consisted of three actors and that an "extra" (a parachoregema) was occasionally employed if necessary. The actors were still, as they had been from the first, honored people, held in high esteem as participants in religious ceremonies. By the time of Aristotle different actors had developed proficiency in different types of characters. Nicostratus was most successful as a messenger; Theodorus played female roles; Apollogenes, a pugilist, took parts requiring physical strength. That some of the players, according to tradition, were highly effective in moving their audiences is attested later by Plutarch. That one of them, at least, believed in actual emotion as the basis for stirring his hearers is unmistakably implied by Aulus Gellius. Certain ones of the actors, it appears, were

142 Flickinger, op. cit., p. 185.
144 Flickinger, op. cit. p. 191.
145 Cf. infra, pp. 363, 375.
146 Cf. infra, pp. 393-394.
accused of overdoing in an effort to achieve realism; and Aristotle duly recorded the fact. 147

An Examination of the Prose Writers
-- Exclusive of Plato --
Through the Fourth Century

As the search for ancient theories of acting progresses toward an examination of the Aristotelian writings, the investigator looks into other prose writing to see what it offers upon the subject. Greek prose did not develop as a literary medium until the latter half of the sixth century B.C. 148 There are only scattered references and quotations from the earliest of the philosophers and scientists, 149 and there is no indication that any of these men had anything to say about the theaters or the actors. The supposed writings of Hippocrates, the great physician of the fifth century B.C., have survived; but there is

147 Cf. infra, pp. 142-143.


149 Sir Thomas Heath, Aristarchus of Samos the Ancient Copernicus a History of Greek Astronomy to Aristarchus Together with Aristarchus's Treatise on the Sizes and Distances of the Sun and the Moon (ed. Sir Thomas Heath; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913). Heath quotes, directly or indirectly from the calculations and opinions of the following men: Thales of Miletus (p. 12), Anaximander of Miletus (pp. 42-43, 45), Pythagoras of Samos (pp. 48-49), Xenophanes of Colophon (pp. 54-56), Heraclitus of Ephesus (p. 60), Parmenides (pp. 66-68). Anaxagoras of Smyrna (pp. 78-81), Empedocles (pp. 89-92), Leucippus (p. 122), and Democritus of Abdera (p. 124).
no matter relevant to the theater in them.

For a consideration of the historians of the fifth and fourth centuries, a look may be taken first at the work of Herodotus of the fifth century. Herodotus, also is silent about the dramatic celebrations; and so is his younger contemporary, Thucydides, though Thucydides mentions once the "poetical contests" and "choirs of dancers" of earlier days upon the island of Delos and quotes two Homeric hymns concerning them. Thucydides gives in his own words, as he explains, the speeches of many great men of his time, including some orations of Pericles; but in none of these is there any light upon the drama or, indeed, upon any of the literature, art, thought, or social life of the great creative


151 *op. cit.*


154 *Ibid.* The following speakers are among those quoted: Archidamus (pp. 46-49, 89-91, 125-126), Sthenelaidas (p. 49), Themistocles (p. 77), Cleon (pp. 164-167), Diodotus (pp. 168-172), Hippocrates (p. 259), Nicias (pp. 343-346, 350-352, 376-377, 405-408, 436-438), Alcibiades (pp. 347-350, 389-392), Hermocrates (pp. 357-360, 381-384), Athenagoras (pp. 360-363), Euphemus (pp. 384-387), and Pericles (pp. 79-83, 102-109, 116-119).
age of Athens. Xenophon, in the fourth century, does not talk about the actual theater; but he tells a story in the *Anabasis* of some early pantomimic dramatization. The Greeks, he says, when entertaining the Paphlagonian ambassadors, presented several mimetic dances.

... two Thracians rose up first and began a dance in full armour to the music of a flute, leaping high and lightly and using their sabres: finally, one struck the other, as everybody thought, and the second man fell, in a rather skillful way. And the Paphlagonians set up a cry. Then the first man despoiled the other of his arms and marched out singing the Sitalcas, while other Thracians carried off the fallen dancer, as though he were dead; in fact, he had not been hurt at all. After this some Athenians and Magnesians arose and danced under arms the so-called carpaea. The manner of the dance was this: a man is sowing and driving a yoke of oxen, his arms laid at one side, and he turns about frequently as one in fear; a robber approaches; as soon as the sower sees him coming, he snatches up his arms, goes to meet him, and fights with him to save his oxen. The two men do all this in rhythm to the music of a flute. Finally, the robber binds the man and drives off the oxen; or sometimes the master of the oxen binds the robber, and then he yokes him alongside the oxen, his hands tied behind him, and drives off. After this a Mysian came in carrying a light shield in each hand, and at one moment in his dance he would go through a pantomime as though two men were arrayed against him, again he would use his shields as though against one antagonist, and again he would whirl and throw somersaults while holding the shields in his hands, so that the spectacle was a fine one. Lastly, he danced the Persian dance, clashing his shields together and crouching down and then rising up again; and all this he did, keeping time to the music of the flute. After him the Mantineans and some of the other Arcadians arose, arrayed in the

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155 The historical writing of Aeneas Tacticus, the general of the fourth century, has been examined, also, Aeneas Tacticus, *Aeneas Tacticus*, Asclepiodotus, Onasander (tr. members of the Illinois Greek Club; *The Loeb Classical Library*; London: William Heinemann, 1923).
finest arms and accoutrements they could command, and marched in time to the accompaniment of a flute playing the martial rhythm and sang the paean and danced, just as the Arcadians do in their festal processions in honour of the gods. And the Paphlagonians, as they looked on, thought it most strange that all the dances were under arms. Thereupon the Mysian, seeing how astounded they were, persuaded one of the Arcadians who had a dancing girl to let him bring her in, after dressing her in the finest way he could and giving her a light shield. And she danced the Pyrrhic with grace. .. .156 All these dances seem really to have been of the Pyrrhic variety, in imitation of war or combat. The form was to become more and more elaborate in the days of the Roman Empire.

In the Symposium Xenophon gives a highly diverting account of some other entertainment, this time at "the banquet" of Callias for Socrates, Hermogenes, and others. Philip, the buffoon, provides laughter through the early part of the dinner. Then a wandering troupe from Syracuse is brought in. There are a boy and girl who dance, and there is a flute player. At the close of the evening the group presents a kind of ballet.

. . . a chair of state, first of all was set down in the room, and then the Syracusan came in with the announcement: "Gentlemen, Ariadne will now enter the chamber set apart for her and Dionysus; after that, Dionysus, a little flushed with wine drunk at a banquet of the gods, will come to join her; and then they will disport themselves together."

Then, to start proceedings, came Ariadne, apparelled as a bride, and took her seat in the chair. Dionysus being still invisible, there was heard the Bacchic music played on a flute. Then it was that the assemblage was filled with admiration of the dancing master. For as soon as

Ariadne heard the strain, her action was such that every one might have perceived her joy at the sound; and although she did not go to meet Dionysus, nor even rise, yet it was clear that she kept her composure with difficulty. But when Dionysus caught sight of her, he came dancing toward her and in a most loving manner sat himself on her lap, and putting his arms around her gave her a kiss. Her demeanour was all modesty, and yet she returned his embrace with affection. As the banqueters beheld it, they kept clapping and crying "encore"! Then when Dionysus arose and gave his hand to Ariadne to rise also, there was presented the impersonation of lovers kissing and caressing each other. The onlookers viewed a Dionysus truly handsome, an Ariadne truly fair, not presenting a burlesque but offering genuine kisses with their lips; and they were all raised to a high pitch of enthusiasm as they looked on. For they overheard Dionysus asking her if she loved him, and heard her vowing that she did, so earnestly that not only Dionysus but all the bystanders as well would have taken their oaths in confirmation that the youth and the maid surely felt a mutual affection. For theirs was the appearance not of actors who had been taught their poses but of persons now permitted to satisfy their long-cherished desires. At last, the banqueters, seeing them in each other's embrace and obviously leaving for the bridal couch, those who were unwedded swore that they would take to themselves wives, and those who were already married mounted horses and rode off to their wives.

As for Socrates and the others who had lingered behind, they went out with Callias to join Lycon and his son in their walk.

Here was surely another one of the roots of the mime, which developed in Hellenistic and Roman times. The ballet was played, we observe, without masks; but we note, too, that there was some speaking. And in the opinion of Xenophon, at any rate, the players were convincing enough for their audience. We may add that here was also a germ of a manner of acting, entirely removed from that which was current

157 Symposium in Anabasis, Books IV-VII, Symposium, and Apology, pp. 479-481 (I x, 2-7).
in the theater of the fifth and the fourth centuries B.C.

The earlier antics of the buffoon and the acrobatic stunts of the dancers bring to mind the fact that there was evidently an unbroken line or tradition of such professional entertainers from the time of Homer's tumblers and ball players on through later Greek and Roman civilization. Athenaeus, of the second and third centuries A.D., has recorded that "Aristonicus of Carystus, Alexander's ball player, was made a citizen by the Athenians because of his skill, and a statue was erected to him." Statues were also erected, he tells, to the juggler Theodorus, the lyre-player Archelaus, and the singer Cleon. He says that "Herodotus, the reciter of mimes," and "Archelaus the dancer," were "held in greater esteem than any others at the court of King Antiochus." He mentions Xenophon the juggler and his pupil Cratisthenes who could make fire burn spontaneously. He tells of another juggler Nymphodorus and of Diopeithes the Locrian, who "tied some bladders full of wine and milk under his belt and then squeezed them, pretending that he drew the liquids from his mouth." He

158 Cf. supra, pp. 5-11.
159 Athenaeus, op. cit., I, 83 (I, 19 b).
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid., 85 (I, 19 c-d).
162 Ibid., (19 e).
163 Ibid., 87 (I, 20 a).
says that Noemon the impersonator was famous for similar feats and that "Eudicus the clown enjoyed a great reputation for his imitation of wrestlers and boxers."\(^{164}\) He lists celebrated jugglers at Alexander's court as Scymnus of Tarentum, Philistides of Syracuse, and Heracleitus of Mitylene; and he mentions as other famous clowns one Cephisodorus, one Pantaleon \(^1\) who lends his name to the "Pantaloon" of medieval and modern times \(^2\), and Xenophon's Philip.\(^{165}\) Though Athenaeus was writing about a period then 600 years past, still his record may be taken as accurate enough to assert that the tribe of "showmen" were very really present in Greece of the fourth century B.C.

Among the philosophers of the fifth and fourth centuries, are found only a few extant quotations or fragments from the early Ionian Sophists -- Protagoras, Prodicus, Thrasymachus, and Hippias -- and from the Sicilian rhetors Corax, Tisias, and Gorgias. And references to them show no indication that they made statements about the drama.\(^{166}\)


\(^{165}\) *Ibid.*, (20 a-b).

From two of the ten Attic orators, however, may be discovered a few allusions to the theatrical presentations, though there is no assertion of acting theory. Isocrates had served as choregus on the island of Siphnos;\textsuperscript{167} and his father had once been choregus at Athens.\textsuperscript{168} As the choregus bore the expense of the dramatic production for which he served, it is not surprising to hear Isocrates deprecating the extravagance of his day in the fitting out of the choruses. Like many another man before and after him, he looked back with admiration upon wiser and happier days gone by:

\begin{quote}
In our forefathers' time \ldots even the public festivals, which might otherwise have drawn many to the city, were not conducted with extravagance or ostentation, but with sane moderation, since our people then measured their well-being not by their processions or by their efforts to outdo each other in fitting out the choruses, but by the sobriety of the government. \ldots

\ldots as things now are \ldots who can fail to be chagrined at what goes on, when we see many of our fellow citizens drawing lots in front of the law courts to determine whether they themselves shall have the necessaries of life. \ldots; appearing in the public choruses in garments spangled with gold, yet living through the winter in clothing which I refuse to describe.\textsuperscript{169}
\end{quote}

And again upon the subject of finances Isocrates comments that "we must not \ldots think that the earnings of the


\textsuperscript{168} \textit{The Team of Horses} in \textit{Isocrates}, III, 197 (35).

\textsuperscript{169} \textit{Areopagiticus} in \textit{Isocrates}, II, 127-129 (52-54).
Isocrates' concern in regard to the theater would seem to have been about the expense of the production, both from the standpoint of the choregus in fitting out the chorus and from that of the state in paying the actors.

The orator, Demosthenes, refers to the theater with another purpose, namely of deriding his arch-enemy Aeschines who had formerly been an actor. In his oration On the Crown he speaks a number of times of Aeschines as a "third rate actor";\(^{171}\) that is to say, only a tritagonist. He scorns Aeschines as having hired himself to a pair of ranting players.\(^{172}\) He accuses him of having "murdered" certain verses and of having broken down completely on one occasion.\(^{173}\) These opinions of Demosthenes upon the acting of Aeschines are not worth a great deal in research upon acting, because they spring obviously from Demosthenes' hatred for Aeschines and his politics. The very fact of the criticism, however, implies that Demosthenes felt a certain assurance in his own criterion of judgment. Plutarch says that Demosthenes at one time received instruction from the actor Satyrus, that he learned from Satyrus how much

\(^{170}\) Antidosis in Isocrates, II, 275 (157).


\(^{172}\) Ibid., p. 97.

\(^{173}\) Ibid., p. 98.
significance lay in the proper mien and gesture," that he became "convinced how much grace and ornament language acquires from action," and that he came to realize the importance of practicing "enunciation and delivery."174 From the Lives of the Ten Orators comes a story that Demosthenes gave Neoptolemus, an actor, "ten thousand drachmas to teach him to speak whole paragraphs without taking breath."175 The story goes, also, that he received assistance from the player Andronicus and that he considered delivery as the first, second, and the third parts of oratory.176 Once, it is said, he was hissed off the stage because his voice failed him; and he cried out to the assembly, "It is actors who should be judged by their voices, but statesmen by their opinions."177 From traditions about Demosthenes, then, comes the information that he recognized the value of body and voice training as well for the orator as for the actor, but that he resented -- on one occasion at least -- any criticism of his own voice. From Demosthenes' own words concerning the theater there are only his vitriolic comments upon the third-rate actor Aeschines, murderer of verses.

In the speeches of Aeschines, strangely enough, there is no reference to theaters or acting. Adams explains that

174 Cf. infra, p. 372.
175 Cf. ibid.
176 Cf. ibid., pp. 372-373.
177 Cf. ibid., p. 373.
... Aeschines became the third member of a company of which the two most famous actors of the time, Theodorus and Athenodorus, were the chiefs. We conclude that as an actor he fell just short of the highest attainments. The sneers with which Demosthenes in his speech On the Crown refers to his efforts on the stage are in flat contradiction to Demosthenes' own testimony in the earlier speech On the Embassy that he was associated with actors of such rank. It appears... that by 343 Aeschines had left the stage.  

The author of the Lives of the Ten Orators says of Aeschines that "he worked hard in the gymnasia; and afterwards, since he had a clear voice, he practised tragedy; and... he... regularly played as a third-rate actor with Aristodemus at the Dionysiac festivals, repeating the old tragedies in his spare time." So it would seem that Aeschines used exercises to keep his body supple and that he was gifted by nature with a good voice. Perhaps when he went into his political career he wanted to forget his connection with a profession in which he had not attained the highest success. At any rate, he does not mention the acting profession in his speeches which have survived. Nor do the remaining Attic orators whose works are

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178 The Speeches of Aeschines (tr. Charles Darwin Adams; "The Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1919), pp. ix-x. Jebb (op. cit., pp. 395-396) says that Aeschines had stumbled and fallen in making an exit and that such a disaster, before many thousand of his countrymen, could well have caused him to leave the Attic stage.

179 Cf. infra, p. 371.
Greek prose, thus far, has told of roots of the mime form which were present in fourth century Athens and which were, so early, nourishing a kind of acting which was to flourish much later. This information is given by the historian Xenophon. Reading from and about the ten Attic orators has shown that three of the orators had connection with the theaters: Isocrates as choregus who was disturbed about expenses; Aeschines as tritagonist or third actor who, though he exercised his body and had already a good voice, found less advantage for himself in acting than in politics; and Demosthenes as adapter of the art of the players to the art of oratory.

The Platonic Ideology of Imitation

One comes, then, to Plato. There has been some question as to whether to include Plato in this chapter on preliminaries or to place his writings at the beginning of the excerpts of actual theorizing upon the technique of acting. Perhaps the decision not to put him in the latter group has come

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partly because of his ultimate repudiation of the actors and of all artists. Perhaps for this reason he somehow did not seem quite to "belong" in the anthology proper. There is, however, a better reason for placing him at the close of this long discussion of preliminaries. The fact is that Plato's analysis of the whole principle of artistic imitation and his variations upon the theme fit logically not into the foundation which supports, but rather into the background that lies behind the evaluations of Aristotle.

The earliest of the Platonic dialogues which concerns this study is the Ion, in which Socrates talks with the famous rhapsode, Ion, about the art of interpretation, finally including the art of the actor.

Socrates.

. . . . . The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heracles. This stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other iron rings; and sometimes you may see a number of pieces of iron and rings suspended from one another so as to form quite a long chain: and all of them derive their power of suspension from the original stone. In like manner the Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspiration. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the Corybantian revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains; but when falling under the power of music and metre they are inspired and possessed; like Bacchic maidens who draw milk and honey from the rivers when they are under the influence of Mônysus but not when they are in their right mind. And the soul of the lyric poet does the same, as they themselves say; for they tell us that they bring songs from honeyed
fountains, culling them out of the gardens and
dells of the Muses; they, like the bees, winging
their way from flower to flower, and this is true.
For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing,
and there is no invention in him until he has been
inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind
is no longer in him: when he has not attained to
this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter
his oracles. Many are the noble words in which
poets speak concerning the actions of men; but
like yourself when speaking about Homer, they do
not speak of them by any rules of art: they are
simply inspired to utter that to which the Muse
impels them, and that only; and when inspired, one
of them will make dithyrambs, another hymns of
praise, another choral strains, another epic or
iambic verses — and he who is good at one is not
good at any other kind of verse: for not by art
does the poet sing, but by power divine. Had he
learned by rules of art, he would have known how
to speak not of one theme only, but of all; and
therefore God takes away the minds of poets, and
uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners
and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them
may know them to be speaking not of themselves who
utter these priceless words in a state of uncon­
sciousness, but that God himself is the speaker,
and that through them he is conversing with us. ... 
For in this way the God would seem to indicate to
us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful
poems are not human, or the work of man, but divine
and the work of God; and that the poets are only
the interpreters of the Gods by whom they are sev­
erally possessed. ... Am I not right, Ion?

Ion.

Yes, indeed, Socrates, I feel that you are; ... and I am persuaded that good poets by a divine in­spiration interpret the things of the Gods to us.

Socrates.

And you rhapsodists are the interpreters of the
poets?

Ion.

Precisely.

181 Cf. Aristotle's opinion that the poet should
have a "natural plasticity" rather than a "touch of madness"
(infra, p. 140).
Socrates.

I wish you would frankly tell me, Ion, what I am going to ask you: When you produce the greatest effect upon the audience in the recitation of some striking passage, such as the apparition of Odysseus leaping forth on the floor... are you in your right mind? Are you not carried out of yourself, and does not your soul in an ecstasy seem to be among the persons or places of which you are speaking... .

Ion.

That proof strikes home to me, Socrates. For I must frankly confess that at the tale of pity my eyes are filled with tears, and when I speak of horrors, my hair stands on end and my heart throbs.

Socrates.

Well, Ion, and what are we to say of a man who at a sacrifice or festival, when he is dressed in holiday attire, and has golden crowns upon his head, of which nobody has robbed him, appears weeping or panic-stricken in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly faces, when there is no one despoothing or wronging him; -- is he in his right mind or is he not?

Ion.

No indeed, Socrates, I must say that, strictly speaking, he is not in his right mind.

Socrates.

And are you aware that you produce similar effects on most spectators?

Ion.

Only too well; for I look down upon them from the stage, and behold the various emotions of pity, wonder, sternness, stamped upon their countenances when I am speaking... .

Socrates.

Do you know that the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the original magnet from one another? The rhapsode like yourself and the actor are intermediate links and the poet himself is the first of them. Through all these the God sways the souls of men in any direction which he pleases, and makes one man hang down from another. Thus there is a vast chain of dancers and masters and undermasters of choruses, who are suspended, as if from the stone, at the side of the rings which hang down from the Muse. And every poet has some Muse from whom he is suspended, and by whom he is said to be possessed, which is
nearly the same thing; for he is taken hold of. And from these first rings, which are the poets, depend others, some deriving their inspiration from Orpheus, others from Musaeus; but the greater number are possessed and held by Homer. Of whom, Ion, you are one, and are possessed by Homer; and when any one repeats the words of another poet you go to sleep, and know not what to say; but when any one recites a strain of Homer you wake up in a moment, and your soul leaps within you, and you have plenty to say; for not by art or knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession.

So the actor and the rhapsode and the poet "hang down" from the god. So there would be no method in the greatest acting or in the greatest reciting or composing of poetry; there would be only divine inspiration and possession by the Muse. The idea is not unlike some opinion of recent date.

Yet for all their being light and winged and holy things, Plato had no use for the poets or the actors in his ideal Republic. The conversation between Socrates and Adeimantus leaves no question as to what to do about the actors. The two men have been talking about the requirements of citizens and leaders in the state, and they have turned to discussion of the style of poetry. Socrates has explained that narration may be either "simple narration," in which the poet speaks always in his own person and never uses direct quotation; or it may be "imitation," in which the poet speaks in the person of another, whose character he assumes -- as in tragedy and comedy; or narration may be a combination of these two styles, in which

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the poet tells his story in his own person but sometimes
breaks off into the exact words of the character in the
story — as in epic poetry.183 Socrates continues:

... we must come to an understanding about the
mimetic art, -- whether the poets, in narrating
their stories, are to be allowed by us to imitate,
and if so, whether in whole or in part, and if
the latter, in what parts; or should all imitation
be prohibited?

You mean, I suspect, to ask whether tragedy and
comedy shall be admitted into our State?

Yes, I said; but there may be more than this
in question: I really do not know as yet, but
whither the argument may blow, thither we go.

And go we will, he said.

Then, Adeimantus, let me ask you whether our
guardians ought to be imitators; or rather, has
not this question been decided by the rule already
laid down that one man can only do one thing well,
and not many; and that if he attempt many, he will
altogether fail of gaining much reputation in any?

Certainly.

And this is equally true of imitation; no one
man can imitate many things as well as he would
imitate a single one?

He cannot.

Then the same person will hardly be able to
play a serious part in life, and at the same time
to be an imitator and imitate many other parts as
well; for even when two species of imitation are
nearly allied, the same persons cannot succeed in
both, as, for example, the writers of tragedy and
comedy -- did you not just now call them imitations?

Yes, I did; and you are right in thinking that
the same person cannot succeed in both.

Any more than they can be rhapsodists and actors
at once?

True.

Neither are comic and tragic actors the same;
yet all these things are but imitations.

They are so.

And human nature, Adeimantus, appears to have
been coined into yet smaller pieces, and to be as
incapable of imitating many things well, as of
performing well the actions of which the imitations

183 The Republic in The Dialogues of
Plato, I, 656-657 (III, 392-394).
Quite true, he replied.

If then we adhere to our original notion and bear in mind that our guardians, setting aside every other business, are to dedicate themselves wholly to the maintenance of freedom in the State, making this their craft, and engaging in no work which does not bear on their end, they ought not to practice or imitate anything else; if they imitate at all, they should imitate from youth upward only those characters which are suitable to their profession — the courageous, temperate, holy, free, and the like; but they should not depict or be skilful at imitating any kind of illiberality or baseness, lest from imitation they should come to be what they imitate. Did you never observe how imitations, beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature, affecting body, voice, and mind?

Yes, certainly, he said.

Then, I said, we will not allow those for whom we profess a care and of whom we say that they ought to be good men, to imitate a woman, whether young or old, quarrelling with her husband, or striving and vaunting against the gods in conceit of her happiness, or when she is in affliction, or sorrow, or weeping; and certainly not one who is in sickness, love, or labour.

Very right, he said.

Neither must they represent slaves, male or female, performing the offices of slaves?

They must not.

And surely not bad men, whether cowards or any others, who do the reverse of what we have just been prescribing, who scold or mock or revile one another in drink or out of drink, or who in any other manner sin against themselves and their neighbors in word or deed, as the manner of such is. Neither should they be trained to imitate the action or speech of men or women who are mad or bad; for madness, like vice, is to be known but not to be practised or imitated.

Very true, he replied.

Neither may they imitate smiths or other artificers, or oarsmen, or boatswains, or the like?

How can they, he said, when they are not allowed to apply their minds to the callings of any of these?

Nor may they imitate the neighing of horses.

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184 Cf. Aristotle's advice to the poet to feel within himself the emotions which he is showing his agent as feeling (infra, p. 139).
the bellowing of bulls, the murmur of rivers, and the roll of the ocean, thunder, and all that sort of thing? 185

Nay, he said, if madness be forbidden, neither may they copy the behavior of madmen.

You mean, I said, if I understand you aright, that there is one sort of narrative style which may be employed by a truly good man. . . . Suppose that a just and good man in the course of a narration comes on some saying or action of another good man, -- I should imagine that he will like to personate him, and will not be ashamed of this sort of imitation: he will be most ready to play the part of the good man when he is acting firmly and wisely; in a less degree when he is overtaken by illness or love or drink, or has met with any other disaster. But when he comes to a character which is unworthy of him, he will not make a study of that; he will disdain such a person, and will assume his likeness, if at all, for a moment only when he is performing some good action; at other times he will be ashamed to play a part which he has never practiced, nor will he like to fashion and frame himself after the baser models; he feels the employment of such an art, unless in jest, to be beneath him, and his mind revolts at it.

So I should expect, he replied.

Then he will adopt a mode of narration such as we have illustrated out of Homer, that is to say, his style will be both imitative and narrative; but there will be very little of the former, and a great deal of the latter. Do you agree?

Certainly, he said; that is the model which such a speaker must necessarily take.

But there is another sort of character who will narrate anything, and the worse he is, the more unscrupulous he will be; nothing will be too bad for him: and he will be ready to imitate anything, not as a joke, but in right good earnest, and before a large company. As I was just now saying, he will attempt to represent the roll of thunder, the noise of wind and hail, or the creaking of wheels, and pulleys, and the various sounds of flutes, pipes, trumpets, and all sorts of instruments: he will bark like a dog, bleat like a sheep, or crow like a cock; 186 his entire art will consist in imitation of voice and gesture, and there will be very little narration.

185 Cf. Aristotle's Problemata (infra, p. 103).

186 Cf. Ibid.
That, he said, will be his mode of speaking. These, then, are the two kinds of style?
Yes.
... And do not the two styles, or the mixture of the two, comprehend all poetry, and every form of expression in words? No one can say anything except in one or other of them or in both together.

They include all, he said.
And shall we receive into our State all the three styles, or one only of the two unmixed styles? or would you include the mixed?
I should prefer only to admit the pure imitator of virtue.
Yes, I said, Adeimantus; but the mixed style is also very charming: and indeed the pantomimic, which is the opposite of the one chosen by you, is the most popular style with children and their attendants, and with the world in general.
I do not deny it.
But I suppose you would argue that such a style is unsuitable to our State, in which human nature is not twofold or manifold, for one man plays one part only?
Yes; quite unsuitable.
And this is the reason why in our State, and in our State only, we shall find a shoemaker to be a shoemaker and not a pilot also, and a husbandman to be a husbandman and not a dicast also, and a soldier a soldier and not a trader also, and the same throughout?
True, he said.
And therefore when any one of these pantomimic gentlemen, who are so clever that they can imitate anything comes to us, and makes a proposal to exhibit himself and his poetry, we will fall down and worship him as a sweet and holy and wonderful being; but we must also inform him that in our State such as he are not permitted to exist; the law will not allow them. And so when we have anointed him with myrrh, and set a garland of wool upon his head, we shall send him away to another city.
For we mean to employ for our souls' health the rougher and severer poet or storyteller who will imitate the style of the virtuous only...187

Thus Plato would dispense with the actors. In a later discourse with Glaucon, the argument takes a deeper tone:

Of the many excellences which I perceive in the order of our State, there is none which upon reflection pleases me better than the rule about poetry.

To what do you refer?

To the rejection of imitative poetry, which certainly ought not to be received; as I see far more clearly now that the parts of the soul have been distinguished.

What do you mean?

Speaking in confidence, for I should not like to have my words repeated to the tragedians and the rest of the imitative tribe -- but I do not mind saying to you, that all poetical imitations are ruinous to the understanding of the hearers, and that the knowledge of their true nature is the only antidote to them.

Explain the purport of your remark.

Well, I will tell you, although I have always from my earliest youth had an awe and love of Homer, which even now makes the words falter on my lips, for he is the great captain and teacher of the whole of that charming tragic company; but a man is not to be reverenced more than the truth, and therefore I will speak out.

Very good, he said.

Listen to me then, or rather, answer me.

Put your question.

Can you tell me what imitation is? for I really do not know.

. . . . Will you enquire yourself?

Well then, shall we begin the inquiry in our usual manner: Whenever a number of individuals have a common name, we assume them to have also a corresponding idea or form: -- do you understand me?

I do.

Let us take any common instance; there are beds and tables in the world -- plenty of them, are there not?

Yes.

But there are only two ideas or forms of them -- one the idea of a bed, the other of a table.

True.

And the maker of either of them makes a bed or he makes a table for our use, in accordance with the idea -- that is our way of speaking in this and similar instances -- but no artificer makes the ideas themselves: how could he?

Impossible.

And there is another artist, -- I should like to know what you would say of him.

Who is he?

One who is the maker of all the works of all other workmen.
What an extraordinary man!
Wait a little, and there will be more reason for your saying so. For this is he who is able to make not only vessels of every kind, but plants and animals, himself and all other things -- the earth and heaven, and the things which are in heaven or under the earth; he makes the gods also.
He must be a wizard and no mistake.
Oh! you are incredulous, are you? Do you mean that there is no such maker or creator, or that in one sense there might be a maker of all these things but in another not? Do you see that there is a way in which you could make them all yourself?
What way?
An easy way enough; or rather, there are many ways in which the feat might be quickly and easily accomplished, none quicker than that of turning a mirror round and round -- you would soon enough make the sun and the heavens, and the earth and yourself, and other animals and plants, and all the other things of which we were just now speaking, in the mirror.
Yes, he said; but they would be appearances only.
Very good, I said, you are coming to the point now. And the painter too is, as I conceive, just such another -- a creator of appearances, is he not?
Of course.
But then I suppose you will say that what he creates is untrue. And yet there is a sense in which the painter also creates a bed?
Yes, he said, but not a real bed.
And what of the maker of the bed? were you not saying that he too makes, not the idea which, according to our view, is the essence of the bed, but only a particular bed?
Yes, I did.
Then, if he does not make that which exists he cannot make true existence, but only some semblance of existence; and if any one were to say that the work of the maker of the bed, or of any other workman, has real existence, he could hardly be supposed to be speaking the truth.
At any rate, he replied, philosophers would say that he was not speaking the truth.
No wonder, then, that his work too is an indistinct expression of truth.
No wonder.
Suppose now that by the light of the examples just offered we enquire who this imitator is?
If you please.
Well then, here are three beds: one existing in nature, which is made by God, as I think that we may say -- for no one else can be the maker? No.
There is another which is the work of the carpenter?
Yes.
And the work of the painter is a third?
Yes.
Beds, then, are of three kinds, and there are three artists who superintend them: God, the maker of the bed, and the painter?
Yes, there are three of them.
God, whether from choice or from necessity, made one bed in nature and one only; two or more such ideal beds neither ever have been nor ever will be made by God.

. . . . So we believe.
Shall we, then, speak of Him as the natural author or maker of the bed?
Yes, he replied; inasmuch as by the natural process of creation He is the author of this and of all other things.
And what shall we say of the carpenter -- is not he also the maker of the bed?
Yes.
But would you call the painter a creator and maker?
Certainly not.
Yet if he is not the maker, what is he in relation to the bed?
I think, he said, that we may fairly designate him as the imitator of that which the others make. 188
Good, I said; then you call him who is third in the descent from nature an imitator?
Certainly, he said.
And the tragic poet is an imitator, and therefore, like all other imitators, he is thrice removed from the king and from the truth?189
That appears to be so.

. . . . Then must we not infer that all these poetical individuals, beginning with Homer, are only imitators; they copy images of virtue and the like, but the truth they never reach? The poet is like a painter who will make a likeness of a cobbler though he understands nothing of cobbling; and his picture is good enough for those who know no more than he does, and judge only by

188 Cf. Aristotle's definition of art in the Nichomachean Ethics (infra, p. 98), and also his discussion of the poet as a "maker" (infra, pp. 132-133).

189 Cf. Aristotle's statement that poetry expresses universals rather than particulars (infra, pp. 131-132).
colours and figures.

Quite so.

... Thus far then we are pretty well agreed that the imitator has no knowledge worth mentioning of what he imitates. Imitation is only a kind of play or sport, and the tragic poets, whether they write in Iambic or in Herioc verse, are imitators in the highest degree?

Very true.

And now tell me, I conjure you, has not imitation been shown by us to be concerned with that which is thrice removed from the truth?

Certainly.

... Were we not saying that a good man, who has the misfortune to lose his son or anything else which is most dear to him, will bear the loss with more equanimity than another?

Yes.

But will he have no sorrow, or shall we say that although he cannot help sorrowing, he will moderate his sorrow?

The latter, he said, is the truer statement.

Tell me: will he be more likely to struggle and hold out against his sorrow when he is seen by his equals, or when he is alone?

It will make a great difference whether he is seen or not.

When he is by himself he will not mind saying or doing many things which he would be ashamed of any one hearing or seeing him do?

True.

There is a principle of law and reason in him which bids him resist, as well as a feeling of his misfortune which is forcing him to indulge his sorrow?

True.

But when a man is drawn in two opposite directions, to and from the same object, this, as we affirm, necessarily implies two distinct principles in him?

Certainly.

One of them is ready to follow the guidance of the law?

How do you mean?

The law would say that to be patient under suffering is best, and that we should not give way to impatience, as there is no knowing whether such things are good or evil; and nothing is gained by impatience; also, because no human thing is of serious importance, and grief stands in the way of that which at the moment is most required.

That is most required? he asked.

That we should take counsel about what has happened, and when the dice have been thrown order
our affairs in the way which reason deems best; not, like children who have had a fall, keeping hold of the part struck and wasting time in setting up a howl, but always accustoming the soul forthwith to apply a remedy, raising up that which is sickly and fallen, banishing the cry of sorrow by the healing art.

Yes, he said, that is the true way of meeting the attacks of fortune.

Yes, I said; and the higher principle is ready to follow this suggestion of reason?

Clearly.

And the other principle, which inclines us to recollection of our troubles and to lamentation, and can never have enough of them, we may call irrational, useless, and cowardly?

Indeed, we may.

And does not the latter -- I mean the rebellious principle -- furnish a great variety of materials for imitation? Whereas the wise and calm temperament, being always nearly equable, is not easy to imitate or to appreciate when imitated, especially at a public festival when a promiscuous crowd is assembled in a theatre. For the feeling represented is one to which they are strangers.

Certainly.

Then the imitative poet who aims at being popular is not by nature made, nor is his art intended, to please or to affect the rational principle in the soul; but he will prefer the passionate and fitful temper, which is easily imitated?

Clearly.

And now we may fairly take him and place him by the side of the painter, for he is like him in two ways: first, inasmuch as his creations have an inferior degree of truth -- in this, I say, he is like him; and he is also like him in being concerned with an inferior part of the soul; and therefore we shall be right in refusing to admit him into a well-ordered State, because he awakens and nourishes and strengthens the feelings and impairs the reason. As in a city when the evil are permitted to have authority and the good are put out of the way, so in the soul of man, as we maintain, the imitative poet implants an evil constitution, for he indulges the irrational nature which has no discernment of greater and less, but thinks the same thing at one time great and at another small -- he is a manufacturer of images and is very far removed from the truth.

Exactly.

But we have not yet brought forward the heaviest count in our accusation: -- the power which poetry has of harming even the good (and there
are very few who are not harmed), is surely an awful thing?

Yes, certainly, if the effect is what you say.

Hear and judge: The best of us, as I conceive, when we listen to a passage of Homer, or one of the tragedians, in which he represents some pitiful hero who is drawling out his sorrows in a long oration, or weeping, and smiting his breast -- the best of us, you know, delight in giving way to sympathy, and are in raptures at the excellence of the poet who stirs our feelings most.

Yes, of course I know.

But when any sorrow of our own happens to us, then you may observe that we pride ourselves on the opposite quality -- we would fain be quiet and patient; this is the manly part, and the other which delighted us in the recitation is now deemed to be the part of a woman.

Very true, he said.

Now can we be right in praising and admiring another who is doing that which any one of us would abominate and be ashamed of in his own person?

No, he said, that is certainly not reasonable.

Nay, I said, quite reasonable from one point of view.

What point of view?

If you consider, I said, that when in misfortune we feel a natural hunger and desire to relieve our sorrow by weeping and lamentation, and that this feeling which is kept under control in our own calamities is satisfied and delighted by the poets;190 -- the better nature in each of us, not having been sufficiently trained by reason or habit, allows the sympathetic element to break loose because the sorrow is another's; and the spectator fancies that there can be no disgrace to himself in praising and pitying any one who comes telling him what a good man he is, and making a fuss about his troubles; he thinks that the pleasure is a gain, and why should he be supercilious and lose this and the poem too? Few persons ever reflect, as I should imagine, that from the evil of other men something of evil is communicated to themselves. And so the feeling of sorrow which has gathered strength at the sight of the misfortunes of others is with difficulty repressed in our own.

How very true!

190 Cf. Aristotle's explanation of the catharsis, infra, p. 122.
And does not the same hold also of the ridiculous? There are jests which you would be ashamed to make yourself, and yet on the comic stage, or indeed in private, when you hear them, you are greatly amused by them, and are not at all disgusted at their unseemliness; -- the case of pity is repeated; -- there is a principle in human nature which is disposed to raise a laugh, and this which you once restrained by reason, because you were afraid of being thought a buffoon, is now let out again; and having stimulated the risible faculty at the theatre, you are betrayed unconsciously to yourself into playing the comic poet at home.

Quite true, he said.

And the same may be said of lust and anger and all the other affections, of desire and pain and pleasure which are held to be inseparable from every action -- in all of them poetry feeds and waters the passions instead of drying them up; she lets them rule, although they ought to be controlled, if mankind are ever to increase in happiness and virtue.

I cannot deny it.

Therefore, Glaucon, I said, whenever you meet with any of the eulogists of Homer declaring that he has been the educator of Hellas, and that he is profitable for the education and for the ordering of human things, and that you should take him up again and again and get to know him and regulate your whole life according to him, we may love and honor those who say these things -- they are excellent people, as far as their lights extend; and we are ready to acknowledge that Homer is the greatest of poets and first of tragedy writers; but we must remain firm in our conviction that hymns to the gods and praises of famous men are the only poetry which ought to be admitted into our State. For if you go beyond this and allow the honeyed muse to enter, either in epic or lyric verse, not law and the reason of mankind, which by common consent have ever been deemed best, but pleasure and pain will be the rulers in our State.

That is most true, he said.

And now since we have reverted to the subject of poetry, let this our defence serve to show the reasonableness of our former judgment in sending away out of our State an art having the tendencies which we have described; for reason constrained us. But that she may not impute to us any harshness or want of politeness, let us tell her that there is an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry. . . . Notwithstanding this, let us assure our sweet friend and the sister arts of imitation, that, if she will only prove her title to exist in a well-ordered State we shall be delighted to receive her -- we are very conscious
of her charms; but we may not on that account betray the truth. I dare say, Glaucun, that you are as much charmed by her as I am, especially when she appears in Homer?

Yes, indeed, I am greatly charmed.

Shall I propose, then, that she be allowed to return from exile, but upon this condition only—that she make a defence of herself in lyrical or some other metre?

Certainly.

And we may further grant to those of her defenders who are lovers of poetry and yet not poets the permission to speak in prose on her behalf: let them show not only that she is pleasant but also useful to States and to human life, and we listen in a kindly spirit; for if this can be proved we shall surely be the gainer— I mean, if there is a use in poetry as well as a delight?

Certainly, he said, we shall be the gainer.

If her defence fails, then my dear friend, like other persons who are enamoured of something, but put a restraint upon themselves when they think their desires are opposed to their interests, so too must we after the manner of lovers give her up, though not without a struggle. We too are inspired by that love of poetry which the education of noble States has implanted in us, and therefore we would have her appear at her best and truest; but so long as she is unable to make good her defence, this argument of ours shall be a charm to us, which we will repeat to ourselves while we listen to her strains; that we may not fall away into the childish love of her which captivates the many. At all events we are well aware that poetry being such as we have described is not to be regarded seriously as attaining to the truth; and he who listens to her, fearing for the safety of the city which is within him, should be on his guard against her seductions and make our words his law.

Yes, he said, I quite agree with you.

Yes, I said, my dear Glaucun, for great is the issue at stake, greater than appears, whether a man is to be good or bad. And what will any one be profited if under the influence of honour or money or power, aye, or under the excitement of poetry, he neglect justice and virtue? 191

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The discussion of the principle of imitation has been given here at length because it is necessary to a full understanding of Plato's concept. Plato rejected the artists, and with them the actors, because in his opinion they were "thrice removed" from the world of Divine law; they copied only "images of virtue and the like"; the "truth" they never reached. For him the imitative art was "an inferior who marries an inferior and has inferior offspring." It fed and watered the passions "instead of drying them up." It let "them rule, although they ought to be controlled." It made strong men weak. The "only poetry which ought to be admitted" into the state was to be in "hymns to the gods and praises of famous men."

In the Laws the subject of imitation is treated in relation to the dance, and a similar conclusion is reached. Art adapts itself to the characters of men. "Choric movements are imitations of manners occurring in various actions, fortunes, dispositions -- each particular is imitated, and those to whom the words, or songs, or dances are suited, either by nature or habit or both, cannot help feeling pleasure in them and applauding them, and calling them beautiful." But the poetic compositions, it will be remembered, are to be only as "hymns to the gods and praises of

192 Ibid., p. 861 (II, 603).
famous men"; and the poet is not to be allowed to train his choruses as he pleases without reference to virtue or vice. His work is to be adjudged by legislators; and when the best form for the dances is determined, the pattern is to be set and is not to change. Classifications for the dance, as for poetry, are two:

... dancing ... is of two kinds: one of nobler figures, imitating the honourable, the other of the more ignoble figures, imitating the mean; and of both these there are two further subdivisions. Of the serious, one kind is of those engaged in war and vehement action, and is the exercise of a noble person and a manly heart; the other exhibits a temperate soul in the enjoyment of prosperity and modest pleasures, and may be truly called and is the dance of peace. The warrior dance is different from the peaceful one, and may be rightly termed Pyrrhic; this imitates the modes of avoiding blows and missiles by dropping or giving way, or springing aside, or rising up or falling down; also the opposite postures which are those of action, as, for example, the imitation of archery and the hurling of javelins, and all sorts of blows. And when the imitation is of brave bodies and souls, and the action is direct and muscular, giving for the most part a straight movement to the limbs of the body — that, I say, is the true sort; but the opposite is not right. In the dance of peace what we have to consider is whether a man bears himself naturally and gracefully, and after the manner of men who duly conform to the law. But before proceeding I must distinguish the dancing about which there is any doubt, from that about which there is no doubt. Which is the doubtful kind, and how are the two to be distinguished? There are dances of the Bacchic sort, both those in which, as they say, they imitate drunken men, and which are named after the Nymphs, and Pan, and Silenus, and Satyrs; and also those in which purifications are made of mysteries celebrated, -- all this sort of

194 Cf. supra, p. 81.

dancing cannot be rightly defined as having either a peaceful or a warlike character, or indeed as having any meaning whatever, and may, I think, be most truly described as distinct from the warlike dance, and distinct from the peaceful, and not suited for a city at all. There let it lie; and so leaving it to lie, we will proceed to the dances of war and peace for with these we are undoubtedly concerned. 

Now the unwarlike muse, which honours in dance the Gods and the sons of the Gods, is entirely associated with the consciousness of prosperity; this class may be subdivided into two lesser classes, of which one is expressive of an escape from some labour or danger into good, and has greater pleasures, the other expressive of preservation and increase of former good, in which the pleasure is less exciting; — in all these cases, every man when the pleasure is greater, moves his body more, and less when the pleasure is less; and, again, if he be more orderly and has learned courage from discipline he moves less, but if he be a coward, and has no training or self-control, he makes greater and more violent movements, and in general when he is speaking or singing he is not altogether able to keep his body still; and so out of the imitation of words in gestures the whole art of dancing has arisen.

And in these various kinds of imitation one man moves in an orderly, another in a disorderly manner; and as the ancients may be observed to have given names which are according to nature and deserving of praise, so there is an excellent one which they have given to the dances of men who in their times of prosperity are moderate in their pleasures — the giver of names, whoever he was, assigned to them a very true, and poetical, and rational name, when he called them Emmeleiai, or dances of order, thus establishing two kinds of dances of the nobler sort, the dance of war which he called the Pyrrhic, and the dance of peace.

196 Plato's requirements concerning melodies are similar to those for the dance and for poetry. The only kinds of "harmonies" to be permitted in the Republic are two: "one warlike, to sound the note or accent which a brave man utters in the hour of danger and firm resolve," and the other "to be used by him in times of peace . . . when . . . he is seeking to persuade God by prayer or man by instruction . . . or . . . when he is expressing his willingness to yield to persuasion or entreaty or admonition. . . . " The Republic in The Dialogues of Plato, I, 662 (III, 399).
which he called Emmeleia, or the dance of order, giving to each their appropriate and becoming name. These things the legislator should indicate in general outline, and the guardian of the law should enquire into them and search them out, combining dancing with music, and assigning to the several sacrificial feasts that which is suitable to them; and when he has consecrated all of them in due order, he shall for the future change nothing, whether of dance or song. Thenceforward the city and the citizens shall continue to have the same pleasures, themselves being as far as possible alike, and shall live well and happily.197

But even though the citizen is to have the same pleasures continuing over and over again and never changing, there is still to be a provision for comedy — since "serious things cannot be understood without laughable things."

I have described the dances which are appropriate to noble bodies and generous souls. But it is necessary to consider and know uncomely persons and thoughts, and those which are intended to produce laughter in comedy, and have a comic character in respect of style, song, and dance, and of the imitations which these afford. For serious things cannot be understood without laughable things nor opposites at all without opposites, if a man is really to have intelligence of either; but he cannot carry out both in action, if he is to have any degree of virtue. And for this very reason he should learn them both, in order that he may not in ignorance do or say anything which is ridiculous and out of place — he should command slaves and hired strangers to imitate such things, but he should never take any serious interest in them himself, nor should any freeman or freewoman be discovered taking pains to learn them; and there should always be some element of novelty in the imitation. Let these then be laid down, both in law and in our discourse, as the regulations of laughable amusements which are generally called comedy.198

198 Ibid., p. 570 (VII, 816-817).
And a final word is said about the tragic poets.

... And, if any of the serious poets, as they are termed, who write tragedy, come to us and say -- 'O strangers, may we go to your city and country or may we not, and shall we bring with us our poetry -- what is your will about these matters? -- how shall we answer the divine men? I think that our answer should be as follows; -- Best of strangers, we will say to them, we also according to our ability are tragic poets, and our tragedy is the best and noblest; for our whole state is an imitation of the best and noblest life, which we affirm to be indeed the very truth of tragedy. You are poets and we are poets, both makers of the same strains, rivals and antagonists in the noblest of dramas, which true law can alone perfect, as our hope is. Do not then suppose that we shall all in a moment allow you to erect your stage in the agora, or introduce the fair voices of your actors, speaking above our own, and permit you to harangue our women and children, and the common people, about our institutions, in language other than our own, and very often the opposite of our own. For a state would be mad which gave you this licence, until the magistrates had determined whether your poetry might be recited, and was fit for publication or not. Wherefore, O ye sons and scions of the softer Muses, first of all show your songs to the magistrates, and let them compare them with our own, and if they are the same or better we will give you a chorus; but, if not, then, my friends, we cannot, let these, then, be the customs ordained by law about all dances and the teaching of them. . . .

In the Laws as in the Republic one gets a feeling that Plato, before he leaves the subject in each case, is almost apologizing for his stand against the poets -- that he almost wants to be convinced he is wrong. Surely it is a tragic fact that he could not carry his really magnificent concept a step further, that he came to so barren a conclusion.

The investigation is about to turn to Aristotle. The search to find theories of acting before Aristotle has led

199 Ibid., pp. 570-571 (VII, 817).
back to the epic poems of Homer. It has shown early dancing circles, and poet-singers, and dancers who were poets and dancers who were not poets. It has shown minstrels and tumblers and ballplayers and choruses of youths and of maidens. It has shown the gods themselves singing and dancing to the music of the lyre. The story has been heard of the girls of Delos, handmaidens of Apollo, who sing a strain in which "they can imitate the tongues of all men and their clattering speech" so that "each would say that he himself were singing, so close to truth is their sweet song." There have been early dithyrambs to Dionysus and a daphnephoricon of Pindar with accompanying maiden-songs of certain mimetic possibilities.

The investigation of the surviving Attic dramas has supported the opinion that Greek drama of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. used no more than three speaking actors in tragedy and occasionally four in comedy, supplemented by mutes and dummies and accompanied and reinforced by an acting chorus which gradually diminished in importance. Examination has corroborated the idea of exaggerated movement in comedy and has indicated simple but strong and sometimes vigorous, emotional action in tragedy. The study has shown increasing emphasis upon characterization both in tragic and comic forms. Among the tragic dramatists there has been discovered no statement of opinion upon the art of acting. But some of Aristophanes's devil-may-care banter has a few points to note: sensitivity of the playwright and perhaps of audiences to mistakes in
pronunciation, the use of gesture by the choruses, the
memorization of the lines of the actors by members of the
audiences, the continuation of the practice of poets to
dance in their own drama, the "wild tragic look" in the
eyes" of the players, the passing of judgement -- one
way or another -- by Aristophanes upon the actors in the
plays.

A reading of the Symposium and the Anabasis of Xenophon
has evidenced the fact that there existed in the late fifth
and early fourth centuries B.C. a type of dramatic perfor-
mane far different from that in the regular theaters,
a form which was to develop into the mime and pantomime
of a later period; and according to Xenophon, the manner
of acting in this form was convincing and effective. Stud-
of the extant writings of Isocrates has shown him to have
served as choregus at the dramatic festivals and to have
felt concern about the expense of providing a chorus. Demos-
thenes' references to the theater have been found always to
relate to his old enemy, the former actor Aeschines -- the
scorn which he heaps upon the "third-rate actor" coming
principally from political causes but implying that Demo-
thenes felt himself capable of evaluating an actor's worth.
It has been learned that Demonsthenes studied under several
of the actors of his day and that he worked upon his own
body and his own voice in order to become an effective
speaker. There is further information that Aeschines took
physical exercises to prepare himself for the profession of
acting and that he was equipped by nature with a good voice.

In the Dialogues of Plato one is presented with a concept of the art principle which has inherently a certain grandeur, yet which falls tragically low as it becomes finally devoid of prescience. The actor and the interpreter are "rings" in the chain which "hangs down" from the Muse. There is a Divinity which moves them, for they are "inspired" and "possessed" of God. So the gift "of speaking excellently" "is not an art" but "an inspiration." Yet Plato cannot use such ones as have the gift in his Republic. He will honor them as "sweet and holy and wonderful" beings, but he will inform them that in the perfect State they "are not permitted to exist," and he will send them "away to another city." For the artists are imitators thrice removed from Divine "truth." At best they can only imitate the "images" of Divine realities. And so he rejects them -- with a word of apology, a word of embarrassment one might say. And he assures "our sweet friend," Poetry, "and the sister arts of imitation" that if they can but prove their right to exist in the State, he yet will receive them. With this, Plato's grand -- and pitiable and terrible -- concept of imitation, the investigator leaves the preliminaries of a study in ancient theories of acting.
CHAPTER II

ARISTOTLE'S PRESENTATION OF MIMESIS
IN ITS RELATION TO ACTING

Aristotle

The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle

The Politics of Aristotle

The Problemata of Aristotle

The Rhetoric of Aristotle

Aristotle on the Art of Poetry

Summary
Aristotle could look back upon a noble period of dramatic composition and oratorical achievement and philosophical thinking. He was a great descriptive analyst, and he had much to classify and analyze. It is typical of his method, as contrasted with that of Plato, that when he wrote of politics he based his opinions upon existing or proposed constitutions, rather than upon an abstract principle of the Good, and that he withheld his treatment of mimesis from the Politics and placed it under the classification of Poetics. When he came to talk of the mimesis, he followed "the natural order" and began with what was "fundamental, the principle of artistic imitation";\(^1\) he observed simply that "to imitate . . . is natural in us as men";\(^2\) and upon this foundation he built his analysis of tragic poetry.

Before he advanced to this discussion, however, he had

\(^1\) Cf. infra, p. 113.

\(^2\) Cf. infra, p. 119.
posed in the **Nichomachean Ethics** a definition of art which was at complete variance with that of Plato, though he did not develop the subject further at this point. The few lines about actors here are perhaps more entertaining than informative. The **Nichomachean Ethics** was actually an introduction to the **Politics** and a political inquiry into the way toward the supreme good. In the **Politics** there is only one sentence that has to do with the players, but that sentence constitutes a specific statement about the actor Theodorus's opinion as to his advantage upon the stage. This treatise, as stated above, was an evaluation of existing and proposed municipal constitutions and a formulation therefrom of plans for an ideal state. The lengthy cataloguing of questions and answers known as the **Problemata**, though not believed to be the genuine Aristotelian work, is accepted nevertheless as containing an element derived from such a work. One sees here, as in the other essays, the evidence of the scientific attitude — the attempt, in this case, to observe the facts of nature and to draw conclusions from them. Various sections of the **Problemata** discuss problems of the voice, of music, of literary study, or prudence, etc.; and the discussion relates these problems to "mimics," "actors," and "chorusmen."

The opinions on methods of acting in the **Rhetoric** are likewise incidental, in this case incidental to the teaching of the art of speaking in public. Here, too, Aristotle's purpose was to explain and analyze. In the years before him
had been the oratory of Pericles, Themistocles, Gorgias, Antiphon, Andocides, Lysias; and there had been the teaching of Corax, Tisias, Protagoras, Prodicus, Hippias, Thrasy-machus. Contemporary with him were Demosthenes, Aeschines, Isaeus, Lycurgus, Hyperides, Deinarchus, and the great teacher Isocrates. The result of Aristotle's analysis was one of the great books of the world. Here again the actors are brought occasionally into the discussion, and the analogy between style of speaking and manner of acting have significance.

When Aristotle came to talk of Poetics, he was turning his hand, finally, to the subject of dramatic composition. His comments on actors and acting are, as usual, related to the principal topic. Aristotle had before him the great tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides and the comedies of Aristophanes. He was living in the time of Menander and the writers of New Comedy. It was a time of repeat performances of the old tragedies. Evidently contemporary tragic writing of the fourth century, though such composition continued to be produced, was not as satisfying as that of the fifth century that had passed. This fourth century was a time of emphasis upon theatrical production and the acting profession rather than upon dramatic composition. Perhaps the lack of a high quality of current

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3 Cf. supra, p. 52.
4 Cf. supra, pp. 53-54.
tragic writing was one reason that Aristotle set himself to examine the finest specimens of tragic poetry and to find out just what were their distinguishing characteristics. Though Renaissance critics and others distorted his teachings and interpreted him as prescribing how drama of all periods should be written, later scholars have come to understand that his work was descriptive and not prescriptive, that he was explaining how the great dramas of the Greek stage had been constructed. But the Aristotelian theory of *mimesis* has meaning as well for the actor as for the playwright, and at times it brings the actors forward into the focus of attention.

The remarks on acting in these five treaties — *the Nichomachean Ethics*, *the Politics*, *the Problemata*, *the Rhetoric*, and *the Poetics* — constitute our first-hand information about the theory of acting in ancient Greece of the so-called "classical" period, up to the time of the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. It is not surprising that this should be so, for Aristotle contributed, in his sixty-two years of living, to practically all branches of existing knowledge. He organized his findings better than any before him had done.

The facts of his very full life may be summed up briefly. He was born in 382 B.C. in Stagira, a small Greek colonial

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5 This is generally taken as the order of the writing of the treatises.
town close to the borders of Macedonia. His father was a physician, practiced in the art of dissection. In 367 at the age of seventeen, Aristotle came to Athens and entered the Academy of Plato where he studied and worked for twenty years. At Plato's death in 347 he went across the Aegean to settle in the town of Assus. Here some fellow students from the Platonic school joined him in forming something of a new "colonial" Academy. While at Assus he married the niece and adopted daughter of the tyrant Hermias. In 344 he moved to Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, where he turned to the study of marine biology.

In 342 Philip of Macedon summoned him to Pella, the capital of Macedonia, to act as tutor for the young Alexander, then a boy of thirteen. This association lasted for something like six years. In about 335 Aristotle returned to Athens and founded his own school, the Lyceum, side by side with the Platonic Academy. By this time Greece had become a Macedonian protectorate; and Aristotle was a close friend of Antipater, the Macedonian governor in charge of Greek affairs. When news came in 323 that Alexander was dead, Athens declared war. Aristotle fled to Chalcis and lived the rest of his life in voluntary exile. In 322 he died and was buried at Chalcis. 6

Aristotle was one of the great minds of the world. His

6 The biographical material has been taken chiefly from Barker's "Introduction" to his translation of the Politics, pp. xi-xlvi.
work of classification and evaluation extended to the fields of logic, physics, metaphysics, biology, the human soul (or psychology), ethics, politics, and finally rhetoric and "poetics." He has left a permanent impress upon subsequent thinking. The *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* are perhaps the most influential books of all time in their respective fields. It is no doubt unfortunate that the great descriptive analyst made his observations upon acting always in a manner subsidiary to some other subject of discussion, that he did not consider in more detail the acting of the actors as it was done on the stages or in the orchestras of the fourth century B.C.
Chapter 4

... art is identical with a state of capacity to make, involving a true course of reasoning. All art is concerned with coming into being, i.e. with contriving and considering how something may come into being which is capable of either being or not being, and whose origin is in the maker and not in the thing made; for art is concerned neither with things that are, or come into being, by necessity, nor with things that do so in accordance with nature (since these have their origin in themselves.). . . And in a sense chance and art are concerned with the same objects; as Agathon says, 'art loves chance and chance loves art.' Art, then, as has been said, is a state concerned with making, involving a true course of reasoning, and lack of art on the contrary is a state concerned with making, involving a false course of reasoning; both are concerned with the variable.9

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8 Plato had said that the artists only "imitate what the others make" and thus are thrice removed from the truth. Cf. supra, p. 77. Cf. Also Aristotle's discussion of the poet as a "maker" (infra, pp. 132-133).

9 The definition of art is not pursued further here. It is interesting to keep in mind during a reading of the Poetics. Cf. infra, pp. 113-145.
BOOK VII

Chapter 6

Aristotle is speaking of excesses...

Still the similarity of the emotional condition leads us to use the term "incontinence" in these cases, although we do not use it without qualification, as when we speak of a person as "a bad doctor" or "a bad actor," although we should not call him "bad" in an absolute sense. As in that instance then we do not use the term "bad" without qualification, because bad doctoring or bad acting is not badness or vice, but only analogous to a vice...

BOOK X

Chapter 5

...the pleasures which spring from one activity are impediments to the exercise of another. Thus people who are fond of the flute are incapable of attending to an argument, if they hear somebody playing the flute, as they take a greater pleasure in flute-playing than in the activity which they are called to exercise at the moment; hence the pleasure of the flute-playing destroys their argumentative activity...

Accordingly, if we take intense delight in anything, we cannot do anything else at all. It is only when we do not care

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10 This reference to "bad acting" and the one which follows have been used merely to show that Aristotle used the term much as we use it today.
much for a thing that we do something else as well, just as people who eat sweetmeats in the theatres do so most when the actors are bad.
Chapter 17

13. Perhaps there is point in the remark of Theodorus, the tragic actor, that he had never yet allowed any other actor, however poor he might be, to make his entrance before he did, because (as he put it) 'spectators get fond of those they hear first.' This is a fate which is apt to befall us not only in our associations with persons but also in our contacts with things: we always prefer what we come across first. . . .12

11 The translation is by Ernest Barker, op. cit., p. 330.

12 Flickinger says "This anecdote may mean merely that Theodorus assumed the role of the first character, however insignificant, in order to appear first upon the scene. But some have thought that he actually had the plays modified so that the character which he was to enact might appear first. Even upon the first hypothesis, however, slight alterations might sometimes have been necessary. For example, if he wished to impersonate Antigone [cf. supra, p. 54], in such a play as Euripides' Phoenician Maid and if no passage were provided like vss. 88-102 to enable the actor to shift from Jocaste, who opens the tragedy, to Antigone. . . ., then perhaps the simplest solution would have been to interpolate a few such lines for their purpose. But, however this may have been in Theodorus' case, there can be little doubt that the actors did sometimes take such liberties with their dramatic vehicles. To correct this abuse Lycurgus, who was finance minister of Athens in the last third of the fourth century B.C. and 'completed' the theater, . . . is said to have had state copies of old plays provided from which the actors were not allowed to deviate [cf. infra, p. 371]; and Lycon was fined ten talents, which Alexander paid, for having interpolated one line in a comedy." Cf. infra, pp. 364, 377.
The subject of interpolations of the actors is treated in Denys L. Page's *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy Studied with Special Reference to Euripides' Iphigenia in Aulis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934). Page examines specific Greek plays for evidences of emendations by actors. In addition to his consideration of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, he discusses the *Phoenissae*, the *Heracleidae*, and the *Orestes* of Euripides and the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus.
Chapter 6

Why do voices sound shriller at a distance? For example, those who try to imitate persons shouting from a very great distance utter shrill noises, like those of an echo; and the sound of an echo is distinctly shriller, and it is a distant sound, being the result of refraction. Since then in sound the swift is shrill and the slow is deep, one would have expected voices to seem deeper from a distance, for all moving bodies move more slowly the farther they progress from their starting-point, and at last fall. May not the explanation be that these mimics use a feeble and thin voice when they imitate a distant sound? Now a thin voice is not deep, but such a sound is necessarily shrill. Or is it true that not only do the mimics imitate for this reason, but also the sounds themselves become shriller? The reason is that the air which travels makes the sound; and just as that which first sets the air in motion causes the sound, so the

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14 Evidently certain mimics used their voices for various effects. Cf. supra, p. 73.
air in its turn must do likewise and be partly a motive power and partly itself set in motion. That is why sound is continuous, motive power continually succeeding to motive power, until the force is spent, which results in falling in the case of bodies, when the air can no longer impel the missile, while in the case of sound the air can no longer impel other air. . . .

Why do those who shout after meals spoil their voices? Indeed, we can see how those who are training their voices, such as actors and chorus-men and all such persons, practice early in the morning and on an empty stomach. Is it because the spoiling of the voice is simply the spoiling of the region through which the voice passes out? So too those who have sore throats have their voices spoilt, not because the breath which causes the voice is any worse, but because the windpipe is roughened. This region by its nature is especially liable to be roughened by violent heat; and so neither can those who are in a fever sing, nor can those who have been suffering from a violent fever sing immediately after it leaves them; for their larynx is roughened by the heat. The consumption of food naturally increases and heats the breath, and it is reasonable to suppose that the breath being in this state makes the windpipe sore and rough as it

15 There are a number of indications from later writers that Greek actors of this period followed definite routines of voice training. Cf. supra, pp. 64-65 and infra, pp. 109-110.
passes through; and when this happens the voice is naturally spoilt. 16

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BOOK XVIII

PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH LITERARY STUDY

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Chapter 4

Why do we talk of an orator, or a general, or a business man as being shrewd, but not use the term of a musician or of an actor? Is it because the powers of the two last are exercised apart from any desire of gaining an advantage (for their aim is pleasure), whereas the three first aim at some advantage? 17 For a good orator or general or business man is one who can gain some advantage, and shrewdness consists mainly in getting the better of someone else.

Chapter 6

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Why is it that some men spend their time in pursuits which they have chosen, though these are sometimes mean, rather than in more honourable professions? Why, for example, should a man who chooses to be a conjurer or an actor or a piper prefer these callings to that of an astronomer

16 It is a little surprising that Aristotle does not give any consideration, here, to control of the breath as it would be influenced by fullness of the stomach.

17 Aristotle evidently means that the purpose of the actor is to give pleasure to the audience. The pleasure may be that which is stimulated by tragedy. Cf. infra, pp. 119, 122.
or an orator? Is it because some men would prefer to undertake the more honourable professions but do not do so because they do not feel confident that they would succeed in them? Or is it because each man chooses the calling in which he thinks he can excel and devotes himself to that which he chooses, giving up the greater part of each day to it, in order that he may improve his own proficiency in it? Now when men have chosen a calling from the first and have become accustomed to it, they lose the power of discriminating between the higher and the lower; for their mind is warped by their bad choice. 18

BOOK XIX

PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH MUSIC

Chapter 6

Why does recitation with a musical accompaniment have a tragic effect when introduced into singing? Is it owing to the resulting contrast? For the contrast gives an expression of feeling and implies extremity of calamity or grief, whereas uniformity is less mournful. 19

18 The listing of acting as one of the less honorable professions is confusing. Cf. infra, p. 108. The dramatic performances were still religious ceremonies and the actors were generally held in esteem as participants. Cf. supra, pp. 53-54. It is possible that this "problem" was included by a later writer. Cf. supra, p. 93. It is possible, also, that as traveling companies were formed there was a decline in status.

19 There was some recitative in the Greek Dramas.
Chapter 15

Why were 'nomes' not composed in antistrophes like all other songs, that is, choric songs? Is it because the 'nomes' were assigned to virtuosi, and as these were already able to imitate different characters and sustain their parts, the songs composed for them became long and elaborate? Like the words, therefore, the music conformed to the imitation, becoming constantly different; for it was more essential for the music to be imitative than the words. 20 (For this reason too dithyrambs, since they have become imitative, no longer have antistrophes, as they had formerly.) The reason is that in the old days free citizens themselves formed the choruses; it was difficult, therefore, for a large number to sing together like virtuosi, so they sang in one mode. For it is easier for a single person to make many changes than for a large chorus, and for a professional than for those who are preserving the character of the music. And so they made the music more simple for them. Now the antistrophic song is simple; for there is one rhythm and one unit of metre. For the same reason songs executed from the stage are not antistrophic, but those sung by the chorus are so; for the

20 Forster (op. cit., n. 6, p. 918b) explains: "This is certainly true of the only 'nome' of which the words have come down to us, the Persae of Timotheus, which resembles the meaningless libretto of an inferior opera and must have depended for its effect on the music and the mimetic powers of the performer."
actor is a virtuoso and an imitator, but the chorus is less
imitative. 21

BOOK XXX

PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH PRUDENCE
INTELLIGENCE, AND WISDOM

Chapter 5

Why are theatrical artists generally persons of bad
caracter? 22 Is it because they partake but little of reason
and wisdom, because most of their life is spent in the pur­
suit of the arts which provide their daily needs, and because
the greater part of their life is passed in incontinence
and often in want, and both these things prepare the way to
villainy?

21 In other word the strophes and antistrophes, or
songs as the choruses turned and as they answered, were
simple because the members of the choruses were not profes­
sionals. The "nomes," or solos, for the actors were more
complicated because the professional actor was more skill­
ful in holding his character as he sang. One should note
that the actors are described as "able to imitate different
characters and sustain their parts." Classification of the
actor as a "virtuoso and an imitator" indicated that tech­
nical skill in the art of acting was recognized and appreci­
ciated.

22 Cf. supra, pp. 105-106.
Chapter 1

... success in delivery is of the utmost importance to the effect of a speech. In Rhetoric, however, the subject hitherto has been neglected; nor is this surprising for not until late did the art of delivery make its way into the arts of tragedy and epic recitation, since at first the poets themselves delivered their own tragedies. And the epic poets recited their own poems; so that the technique of professional actors and rhapsodists necessarily was a later development. Now, plainly, for the art of rhetoric delivery is of as much concern as it is for the art of poetry, in connection with which it has been treated by various persons, including Glaucon of Teos. The art of delivery has to do with the voice: with the right management of it to express each several emotion -- as when to use a loud voice, when a soft, and when the intermediate; with the mode of pitch -- high, low, and intermediate; and with the rhythms to be used in each particular case. These are, in fact, the three things that receive attention: volume

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23 The translation is Lane Cooper's Aristotle on the Art of Rhetoric. Cooper's bracketed explanations have been retained.

24 Cf. supra, pp. 33-35.

25 No other reference to this treatise has been found.
modulation of pitch, and rhythm. And it is contestants who look after these points that commonly win the prizes in the poetical competitions; further, just as there the performers now count for more than authors, so it is with the delivery of speeches in the contests of public life — because of our corrupt institutions.

Well, then, when rhetorical delivery comes to be studied, it will have the same effect as the art of acting has had on the drama; hitherto, only slight progress has been made, by some few, towards dealing with it, as by Thrasymachus in his *Rules of Pathos* /Eleoi/. The capacity for acting is, indeed a natural gift, and hardly within the province of art, save in respect to the diction. To diction artistic principles may be applied; and hence, again, we find able writers who win prizes (that is, through artistic management of the diction), just as prizes are won by declaimers who excel in delivery; for the written compositions owe more of their effect to their diction than to their thought.

It was the poets, naturally, who gave the first impulse toward the cultivation of style; for words represent things, and the poets had also the human voice, which of all our organs can best imitate. Thus the arts

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26 The voice, then, was of much importance to the actor. Cf. supra, pp. 64-65, 104 and infra, p. 111.
27 Cf. supra, pp. 52-53.
28 Other mention of these rules has not been found.
29 One should note, again, the importance of the voice. Cf. supra, pp. 64-65, 104 and infra, p. 111.
of epic recitation and acting were fashioned, and more besides.

Chapter 2

. . . . Thus we see the necessity of disguising the means we employ, so that we may seem to be speaking, not with artifice, but naturally.\textsuperscript{30} Naturalness is persuasive, artifice just the reverse. People grow suspicious of an artificial speaker, and think he has designs upon them -- as if some one were mixing drinks for them. The difference is illustrated by the effect of Theodorus' voice as against the voices of all other actors; his seems to be the actual voice of the person he represents, and the other voices sound like voices assumed.\textsuperscript{31}

. . . .

Metaphor is of the utmost value in both poetry and prose . . . . And if you aim to adorn a thing, you must take your metaphor from something better in its class; if to disparage, then from something worse. . . some one calls actors 'parasites of Bacchus'; they call themselves 'artists.' Each of these terms is a metaphor -- the one abusive, the other ennobling. . . .

Chapter 12

\textsuperscript{30} Cf. \textit{infra}, pp. 313-314 for Quintilian's similar statement.

\textsuperscript{31} The two uses of the verb to seem are noteworthy: "... so that we may seem to be speaking not with artifice but naturally," "... his seems to be the actual voice of the person he represents. . . ."
We must not fail to notice that each kind of rhetoric has its own appropriate style.

The written (literary) style is the more finished; the controversial is far better adapted to dramatic delivery, whether for the kind of speaking that reflects character, or the emotional kind. We see why actors try to find plays in the oratorical style, and poets seek for actors who can deliver such plays. Such devices as *asyndeta* [parallel expressions without connectives] and repetition of the same word, which are rightly enough censured in the literary style, have their place in the controversial style when a speaker uses them for their dramatic effect. But, if you repeat, you must also vary the repetition, in order to pave the way, as it were, to dramatic delivery; for example: 'There is the villain who duped you; there is he who quite beguiled you; there is he who had in hand utterly to betray you.' In the *Old Men's Passion* of Anaxandrides, the actor Philemon used to do the like when he spoke the lines containing 'Rhadamanthus and Palamedes', and similarly in the prologue to the *Pious Ones* when he repeated the 'I'. Anaxandrides in composing the repetition had so varied the wording that the actor could vary the tone and emphasis. Compare the repetition of 'Et Tartuffe?' and its variation 'Le pauvre homme!' -- each phrase occurring four times -- in Moliere's *Le Tartuffe* 1. 5

32 That is, to vary the repetition.
ARISTOTLE ON THE ART OF POETRY

BOOK I

Chapter 1

... ... 

Turning first to the conception of poetry in general we may follow the natural order, and begin with what is fundamental, the principle of artistic imitation. Epic Poetry and Tragedy, as well as Comedy and Dithyrambic Poetry,

33 The translation is Lane Cooper's Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, op. cit. Cooper's explanations in brackets have been omitted as part of the text. They have frequently been placed in footnotes.

34 It is not the editor's purpose to read into any of these statements thoughts upon acting which are not present. Certainly Aristotle was not talking here about acting or actors. Yet it would appear that in the discussion of imitation, as well as in analyses of the agents, the catharsis, and the tragic flaw which are to follow, there is a message for the actor if he wishes to receive it.

Cooper in his "Introduction", pp. xxiv-xxv, says that the word mimesis implies the existence of the poetic or artistic imagination, "but does not directly stand for such a power. It signifies the copying by the poet or artist of the thing he has imagined, the representing of his image in a medium -- language or pigments or musical notes -- which may be perceived by the senses. This is its primary meaning. The poet has his conception of a story, ... and he puts his conception into rhythmical language. ... He does not copy the words of another; he imitates or embodies the inner form or soul of his own making in an outer medium for the senses of his audience. Nor does he copy any work of nature. ... So much for the inner meaning of the word. Outwardly, mimesis means the result of the poet's effort, the imitation as it at length appears to the senses, the finished work of art. ..."

35 Aristotle must have treated upon Comedy "at length in a section of the present work that is lost." Cooper, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, p. 2.

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and for the most part the music of the flute and lyre, in their general nature are forms of imitation; that is, they represent, or imitate, something through an arrangement of words or notes. But, having, this in common, that they are all forms of imitation, at the same time they differ from one another in three respects; there are differences in:

1. The Means by which they imitate — the 'medium,' as for example, language or melody.\(^{36}\)

2. The Objects (or agents) as these are represented — one art may represent the same object as better, and another worse, than the object ordinarily is.\(^{37}\)

3. The Manner in which these objects are imitated — Tragedy, for example, directly presents the actions of men, whereas Epic Poetry relates such actions.

As for the Means,\(^{38}\) we may instance those who by conscious art, or mere habitual practice, represent the likenesses of many objects through the medium of line and color; or those who for their medium of imitation employ the voice. Similarly in the arts that have been mentioned above, taken as a group, the imitation of the objects is produced in the medium of rhythm and language and melody, these three media being used either singly or in certain combinations. . . .

\(^{36}\) That is to say, speech or various types of musical representation. Cf. infra, p. 115.

\(^{37}\) That is to say, as they are represented in tragedy and as they are represented in comedy. Cf. infra, pp. 116-117, 122, 124-125, 127-128, 132, 135, 136-138, 139.

\(^{38}\) Cf. supra.
In the art of dancing, the medium is rhythm alone, without melody; for the dancers also represent human character, and what men do and undergo; 39 and the medium of this imitation is rhythm in bodily movement.

Now there is an art, the subject of this general discussion, in which the medium of imitation is language alone, without melody, and that, too, whether the language be non-metrical or metrical; . . . People have a way, it is true, of connecting the word Poet, that is, 'maker,' 40 with the name of one or another kind of verse, so that they talk of 'elegiac poets,' and 'epic' or hexameter 'poets,' as if it were not the principle of imitation that characterized the artist — as if one might term them all poets indiscriminately because of the metre. . . . But the Iliad of Homer and the versified natural science of Empedocles really have nothing in common save the metre; and hence, if it is proper to style Homer a poet, Empedocles must be classed as a natural scientist rather than a poet. . . .

39 This statement indicates the imitative nature of most of the dancing. Cf. supra, pp. 5-30. It would seem to imply, also, the active participation of the dancing choruses in the drama, for the dancers, like the other "agents" in the dramas, "also represent human character, and what men do and undergo." Cf. infra, p. 116.

40 Aristotle's use of the term 'maker' for poet is interesting in comparison with Plato's statement that artists merely "imitate what the others make" and thus are thrice removed from the truth. Cf., supra, p. 77. Cf. also Aristotle's definition of art as "a state of capacity to make, involving a true course of reasoning." Nicomachean Ethics, supra, p. 98.
We may turn . . . from these distinctions in the arts which employ their several media either singly or in combinations. . . to consider, lastly, certain other arts which combine all the media enumerated, namely, rhythm, melody, and verse. Such are the arts of Dithyrambic and Nomic Poetry, and Tragedy and Comedy. But in these, again, there is a difference; for in Dithyrambic and Nomic Poetry all three of the media are employed together, whereas in Tragedy and Comedy they are brought in separately, one after another.

These, then, may be regarded as the differences in the arts so far as concerns the media through which the imitation is accomplished.

Chapter 2

Accordingly, we may proceed to the Objects which the imitator presents.41 The primary objects of artistic imitation are human beings in action, men performing or undergoing something.42 And the agents must be either of a higher or a lower type; for virtually all the distinctions of human

41 Cf. supra, p. 114, and infra, pp. 116-117, 122, 139.

42 "... Everything that expresses the mental life, that reveals a rational personality, will fall within this larger sense of 'action'. Such actions are not necessarily processes extending over a period of time: they may realize themselves in a single moment; they may be summed up in a particular mood, a given situation. . . . 

"The common original, then, from which all the arts draw is life, -- its mental processes, its spiritual movements, its outward acts issuing from deeper sources; in a word, all that constitutes the inward and essential activity of the soul. . . ." S. H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art with a Critical Text and a Translation of the Poetics (London: Macmillan and Co., 1895) pp. 117-118. Cf. supra, p. 115.
character are derived from the primary distinction between goodness and badness which divides the human race. It follows that, in the imitation, the agents must be represented by better than we ourselves, or worse, or some such men as we... 43

It is clear that each of the modes of imitation we have noted will admit of these differences of elevation in the Object as imitated, and that each will become a separate art through this difference in representing the object as higher, or lower, or midway between the two extremes. Such diversities are possible even in dancing and flute-playing and lyre-playing... Now, so far as the objects of the imitation are concerned, the nobility of the agents is what distinguishes Tragedy from Comedy. Comedy tends to represent the agents as worse, and Tragedy as better than the men of the present day. 44

Chapter 3

There is yet a third difference in these several arts, touching the Manner in which each kind of Object is imitated; 45 for the Manner may vary in three ways. Let us suppose three cases in which the object of the imitation

43 Cf. supra, p. 134. By agents above our own level Aristotle evidently means men who are more ethically significant. By men worse than we he means men who are more stupid.

44 As the "agents" are portrayed by the actors, it would follow that the actors, as well as the poets, should understand these distinctions.

45 Cf. supra, p. 114.
remains the same (say, heroic men in action), and the medium also (say, metrical language). Under these conditions, (1) the poet may produce his imitation by speaking now in narrative, and now in an assumed role, as Homer does; or (2) he may continue speaking throughout in the same person, without change; or (3) the whole story may be represented in the form of an action carried on by several persons as in real life.46

There are, then, as was said at the beginning, these three differences by which the several kinds of artistic imitation; are distinguished; a difference in the medium of imitation; a difference in the objects; and a difference in the manner. The distinction enables us to point out corresponding lines of similarity in certain kinds of art. Thus, in respect to the objects represented, the dramatist Sophocles are akin to the comedies of Aristophanes, since both poets present the agents directly as experiencing and doing in person. Indeed, according to the Dorians -- who base their opinion on linguistic grounds -- herein lies the reason why comedies and tragedies are called 'dramas,' namely, because in both kinds of poetry men are represented as acting. . . .47

Chapter 4

As to its general origin, we may say that Poetry has sprung from two causes, each of them a thing inherent in

46 Cf. Plato's similar statements, supra, pp. 70-71.
47 And it is the actors who show them acting.
human nature. The first is the habit of imitation; for to imitate is instinctive with mankind; and man is superior to the other animals, for one thing, in that he is the most imitative of creatures, and learns at first by imitation. Secondly, all men take a natural pleasure in the products of imitation -- a pleasure to which the facts of experience bear witness; for even when the original objects are repulsive, as the most objectionable of the lower animals, or dead bodies, we still delight to contemplate their forms as represented in a picture with the utmost fidelity. . . .

To imitate, then, is natural in us as men. . . . In the beginning, therefore, being possessed of these natural endowments, men originated poetry, the process of generation coming about by gradual and, in the main, slight advances upon the first naive improvisations. So much for the origin of the art in general.

More particularly, now, Poetry broke up into two varieties, corresponding to a difference of personal character in the authors; for the graver spirits would represent noble actions, while the meaner would represent the doings of the ignoble. And whereas others composed hymns and panegyrics, the latter sort at first produced lampoons. . . .

When Tragedy and Comedy came into existence, however, those poets whose natural bent was toward lower subjects no longer took up lampooning, but became writers of comedy;

and the graver spirits no longer became epic poets, but producers of tragedy.

Whether in respect to its formative elements Tragedy has developed as far as need be, would constitute a separate inquiry; the question would have to be decided in and for itself, and and also in relation to the theatres. 49

Tragedy at all events originated in improvisations, as did Comedy also; for Tragedy goes back to the improvising poet-leaders 50 in the dithyrambic chorus of satyrs; and Comedy to the leaders of the Phallic song and dance, the performance of which is still to be found as a custom in many of the cities. And from this beginning, Tragedy progressed little by little, as the successive authors gradually improved upon what preceded them. Finally the development ceased, when Tragedy, through a long series of changes, had attained to its natural form. The principal changes were three. (1) From the single spokesman of the primitive form Aeschylus increased the number of actors to two; he diminished the part taken by the Chorus — that is, he reduced the amount of choral acting; and he made the spoken dialogue the chief element in the play. (2) Sophocles brought about the innovation of three actors, and was the first to make use of painted scenery. (3) Furthermore, there was a change in the

49 This statement in itself should refute any idea that Aristotle intended to lay down hard and fast rules about the drama.

50 These improvising poet-leaders, it will be remembered, were the first actors. Cf. supra, pp. 30-35.
magnitude of the action represented; for the little plots of the primitive form were abandoned; and, with its development out of the satyr-dance, Tragedy also discarded the grotesque early diction. Thus, at a late period, however, it assumed its characteristic elevation of tone.

As for Comedy, this, as we have said, is an artistic imitation of men of an inferior moral bent; faulty, however not in any or every way, but only in so far as their shortcomings are ludicrous; for the Ludicrous is a species or part, not all, of the Ugly. It may be described as that kind of shortcoming and deformity which does not strike us as painful, and causes no harm to others; a ready example is afforded by the comic mask, which is ludicrous, being ugly and distorted, without any suggestion of pain.51

While the successive changes which Tragedy underwent, and the authors of these changes, have not escaped notice, there is no record of the early development of Comedy, for the reason that this form of drama was not at first seriously regarded as a matter of public concern. Not until late in its progress was the comic poet provided by the magistrate with a chorus; until then the performers were simply unpaid volunteers. And it had already taken definite shape by the time we begin to have a record of those who are termed poets in this kind. Who was responsible for the introduction

51 Cf. supra, p. 118, n. 47. This too, it may be said is a point for the actors.
of masks, or prologues, or more than one actor — concerning these and others like details we are in ignorance . . . .

BOOK II

Chapter 6

We . . . are to deal first with Tragedy, the main topic of the present treatise . . . .

A Tragedy, then, is an artistic imitation of an action that is serious, complete in itself, and of an adequate magnitude; so much for the object which is imitated. As for the medium, the imitation is produced in language embellished in more than one way, one kind of embellishment being introduced separately in one part, and another kind in another part of the whole. As for the manner, the imitation is itself in the form of an action directly presented, not narrated. And as for the proper function resulting from the imitation of such an object in such a medium and manner, it is to arouse the emotions of pity and fear in the audience; and to arouse this pity and fear in such a way as to effect that special purging off and relief (catharsis) of these two emotions which is the characteristic of Tragedy. 52


The idea of the catharsis has challenged much attention. Theodore Buckley, in his Aristotle's Treatise on Rhetoric, Also the Poetic of Aristotle (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1851) p. 417, interprets the definition to mean that
tragedy effects through pity and fear a purification from "such like" passions. Ingram Bywater's rendition, in Aristotle on the Art of Poetry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 17, is similar: the catharsis is "of such emotions." Cooper's translation is in agreement with Butcher's (op. cit., p. 23) that tragedy brings, through pity and fear, the purgation "of these emotions." Butcher (op. cit., p. 223, n. 2) explains that the phrase should not read "all such emotions," or "these and suchlike emotions," but that because of frequent and idiomatic use it would be "the aforesaid emotions, namely pity and fear." He maintains that it is with these, and these only, that tragedy is concerned throughout the Poetics.

The word for "fear" is sometimes translated "terror." Pity and terror are contrasting. If both feelings have been aroused in a person, he has been stirred emotionally. One pities the hero; one feels terror for oneself. Pity without terror brings sentiment; terror without pity causes horror. The combination of the two produces tragedy.

Tragedy is still popular with mankind. In this form of drama human beings live courageously. They go down in defeat, but they are great. The spectators satisfy the emotions of pity and fear within themselves, and they are purged and relieved.

Surely the tragic actor needs to understand this principle.
By 'language embellished in more than one way' is meant language which is simply rhythmical or metrical, language which is delivered in recitative, and language which is uttered in song. And by the separate introduction of one kind of embellished language in one part, and of another kind in another part, is meant that some portions of the tragedy (e.g., prologue and episode) are rendered in verse alone, without being sung or chanted, and other portions again (e.g., parode and stasimon) in the form of singing or chanting.

Advancing now from the synthetic definition of Tragedy, we proceed to analyse the elements that separately demand the attention of the tragic poet. Since there are dramatis personae who produce the author's imitation of an action, it necessarily follows that (1) everything pertaining to the appearance of the actors on the stage -- including the costume, scenery, and the like -- will constitute an element in the technique of tragedy; and that (2) the composition of the music ('Melody'), and (3) the composition in words ('Diction'), will constitute two further elements.

But furthermore, the original object of the imitation is an action of men. In the performance, then, the

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53 Cooper (p. 18) explains that "A Tragedy being wholly in metrical language, the actors as well as the Chorus in delivering it employed, by turns, songs, speech, and an intermediate mode of utterance -- 'recitative' -- like chanting or intoning. The lyrical passages were nearly always sung. Passages of iambic trimeter were spoken. Other passages were given in recitative to the accompaniment of the flute."
imitation, which is also an action, must be carried on by agents, the *dramatis personae*. And these agents must necessarily be endowed by the poet with certain distinctive qualities both of (4) Moral Character (*ethos*) and (5) Intellect (*dianoia*) -- one might say, of heart and head; for it is from a man's moral bent, and from the way in which he reasons, that we are led to ascribe goodness or badness, success or failure to his acts. Thus, as there are two natural causes, moral bent and thought, of the particular deeds of men, so there are the same two natural causes of their success or failure in life. And the tragic poet must take cognizance of this.\(^5^4\)

Finally, the action which the poet imitates is represented in the tragedy by (6) the Fable or Plot. And

\(^5^4\) And so may the tragic actor. Cooper (p. 23) says: "That element of a drama which is here called moral bent or disposition (*ethos*) is often rendered into English by the word 'character.' There is a danger, which Aristotle himself does not always avoid, of confusing character in this narrower sense with personality, and hence of identifying character with agent. From this confusion there often results a misunderstanding of Aristotle's subsequent remarks upon the relative importance of plot and moral bent (character in the narrower sense). In dealing with this point it is undesirable to refer to the *dramatis personae* as 'characters'; one would do well to use the word 'agents' instead, and to bear in mind that the personality of the agents is divided by Aristotle into two separate elements, corresponding to qualities of heart and head respectively. If at first we make the most of this distinction, we shall not go far astray in later passages where it is not so carefully preserved."

according to our present distinction, Plot means that synthesis of the particular incidents which gives form or being to the tragedy as a whole; whereas Moral Bent is that which leads us to characterize the agents as morally right or wrong in what they do; and Intellect (or "Thought") is that which shows itself whenever they prove a particular point, or, it may be, avouch some general truth.

In every tragedy, therefore, there are six constitutive elements, according to the quality of which we judge the excellence of the work as a whole: Plot (6); Moral Disposition (4); Diction (3); Intellect (5); Spectacle (1); Melody (2). Two of them, Melody and Diction, concern the medium of imitation; one, Spectacle the manner; and three, Plot, Moral Disposition, and Intellect, the objects. There can be no other elements. . . .

The most important of the constitutive elements is the Plot, that is, the organization of the incidents of the story; for Tragedy in its essence is an imitation, not of men as such, but of action and life, of happiness and misery. And happiness and misery are not states of being, but forms of activity; the end for which we live is some form of activity, not the realization of a moral quality. Men are better or worse, according to their moral

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55 Aristotle is saying that plot is the fundamental, or basic element.
bent; but they become happy or miserable in their actual deeds. In a play, consequently, the agents do not perform for the sake of representing their individual dispositions; rather, the display of moral character is included as subsidiary to the things that are done. So that the incidents of the action, and the structural ordering of these incidents, constitute the end and purpose of the tragedy. . . .

(1) The Plot, then is the First Principle, and as it were the very Soul of Tragedy.

(2) And the element of Character is second in importance. -- There is a parallel in the art of painting: the most beautiful colors, laid on with no order, will not give as much pleasure as the simplest figure done in outline. -- Tragedy is an imitation of an action: mainly on account of this does it become, in the second place, an imitation of personal agents.

(3) Third in importance comes the Intellectual element. This corresponds to the power of the agent to say what can be said, or what is fitting to be said, in a given situation. . . . This Intellectual element must be clearly distinguished from the Ethical element in the drama, for the latter includes only such things as reveal the moral bias of the agents --

56 The explanation of character as revealing moral purpose puts character in terms of choice. When a person shows what he chooses or avoids, he shows what he is.

For other analysis of the agents, or objects, Cf. supra, pp. 114, 116-117, 122, 124-125, and infra, pp. 132, 135, 136-138, 139.
their tendency to choose or to avoid a certain line of action, in cases where the motive is not otherwise evident. And hence the poet has no call to employ the ethical element in speeches where the agent is neither choosing nor avoiding a line of action. The Intellectual element, on the other hand, is manifested in everything the agents say to prove or disprove a special point, and in every utterance they make by the way of generalization.57

(4) Next in importance among the four essential constituents comes the Diction. This, as has been explained, means the interpretation of the sentiments of the agents in the form of language, and is essentially the same thing whether the language is metrical or not.58

(5) Of the two elements remaining, Melody is the more important, since it occupies the chief place among the accessory pleasures of Tragedy.

(6) The element of Spectacle, though it arouses the interest of the audience, is last in importance, since it demands the lowest order of artistic skill, and is least connected with the art of poetry as such. A tragedy can produce its effect independently of a stage-performance and

57 In this placing of plot, moral character (ethos) and intellect (dianoia) as the three most important elements, Aristotle asserts that the story and the agents are the primary essentials of drama.

58 Aristotle is adding another essential: that the agents have language to speak.
actors — that is, when it is read; and besides, the business of preparing the stage and the actors is the affair of the costumer rather than the poets.59

59 Butcher's translation of this passage (op. cit., pp. 27-29) reads: "The Scenery has, indeed, an emotional attraction of its own, but, of all the parts, it is the least artistic, and connected least with poetic theory. For the power of Tragedy, we may be sure, is felt even apart from representation and actors. Besides, the production of scenic effects depends more on the art of the stage manager than on that of the poet."

Bywater (op. cit., p. 23) gives: "The Spectacle, though an attraction, is the least artistic of all the parts, and has least to do with the poetry. The tragic effect is quite possible without a public performance and actors; and besides the getting up of the Spectacle is more a matter for the costumer than the poet.

Flickinger (op. cit., pp. xi-xii) says of Aristotle: "... he believed the spectacle to be one of the indispensable elements of drama, /Cf. infra, p. 144/ but that it ought to be a comparatively subordinate element. This was an eminently sane position to take, and it would have been well if his successors had been equally judicious."

"Dr. Spingarn has tried to break down the force of Aristotle's recognition of spectacular effects by saying that he could not 'help thinking of plays in connection with their theatrical representation, any more than most of us can think of men and women without clothes. They belong together by long habit and use; they help each other to be what we commonly think them. But he does not make them identical or mutually inclusive.' In other words, Aristotle had no acquaintance with the 'closet-drama,' and so did not take it into account. But there is an allowance to be made also on the other side. There is some doubt as to just what Aristotle meant by 'spectacle,' whether merely 'the visible appearance of the actors when got up in character by the costumer' or 'scenery, cresses, -- the whole visible apparatus of the theater.' Even if he had the larger meaning in mind he could not have realized its full significance. He knew but a single type of theatrical building, which must therefore have seemed to him as integral a part of dramatic performances as the Greek climate. He could not look down the ages and contrast the simple arrangements of the Greek theater with the varying lighting effects and scenic splendor of modern and intervening types. He could not avoid, then, underestimating the importance of this factor. Furthermore, when he states that of the six parts the spectacle has least to do with the art of poetry and is more closely related to the art of the costumer than to that of the poet, he means
what he says and no more. As its title indicates, his treatise was concerned with the art of poetry, not with that of dramaturgy. Hence he stressed the factors that dealt with the essence of tragedy rather than those which influenced only its accidental features and external form. Even so, he conceded to the latter elements no negligible value. Considered from the dramaturgical standpoint as well, he must have allowed them a much greater importance."
Chapter 7
Having thus distinguished the six constitutive elements, we are now to discuss, as the first and most important consideration in the art of Tragedy, the proper organization of the incidents into a plot that will have the ideal tragic effect.

Chapter 8
... the plot, which is an imitation of an action, must represent an action that is organically unified, the structural order of the incidents being such that transposing or removing any one of them will dislocate and disorganize the whole. Every part must be necessary, and in its place; for a thing whose presence or absence makes no perceptible difference is not an organic part of the whole.

Chapter 9
From what has been said, it is clear that the office of the Poet consists of displaying, not what actually has happened, but what in a given situation might well happen -- a sequence of events that is possible in the sense of being either credible or inevitable. In other words, the Poet is not a Historian... The essential distinction lies in this, that the Historian relates what has happened, and the Poet represents what might happen -- what is typical. Poetry, therefore, is something more philosophic and of a higher seriousness than History; for Poetry tends rather
to express what is universal, whereas History relates particular events as such. By an exhibition of what is universal or typical is meant the representation of what a certain type of person is likely to say or do in a given situation. This is the aim of the Poet, though at the same time he attaches the names of specific persons to the types. As distinguished from the universal, the particular, which is the subject-matter of history, consists of what an actual person, Alcibiades or the like, actually did or underwent. That Poetry represents the universal has become clear enough in the present stage of Comedy [the 'New Comedy']; for the comic poets first combine plots out of probable incidents, and then supply such names for the agents as chance to fit the types -- in contrast to the old iambic lampooners, whose method was to begin with particular individuals.

In Tragedy, however, the poets still keep to the names of persons [Orestes, Agamemnon, and the like] who are said to have existed. The reason is that what we accept as true we regard as possible.

From all this it is evident that the Poet [the Greek word signifies 'Maker'] is a maker of plots more than a

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60 The concept of poetry as imitating universals rather than particulars is again at variance with Plato's idea that the poets, like the other artists, imitate "what the others make" and thus are thrice removed from truth. Aristotle would say, according to his reasoning here, that the poets imitate actual Divine realities.

61 And this is what the actor portrays.
maker of verses, inasmuch as he is a poet by virtue of imitating some object, and the objects he imitates are actions. . . .

Plots and actions, as we shall see, are either Involved or Uninvolved. Of the uninvolved, the purely episodic plots are the worst, a plot being called 'episodic' when there is neither probability nor necessity in the sequence of incident. A bad poet will construct this kind of plot through his own want of insight; a good poet, in order to meet the requirements of the actors. Since his work must be presented on the stage, and occupy a certain length of time, a good poet often stretches out the plot beyond its inherent capacity. . . .

Chapter 13

Following what has been said up to this point, we must next discuss that ideal structure of the plot which will bring about the fullest measure of tragic effect. (1) What is the poet to aim at, and what is he to avoid, in the construction of his plots? In other words, (2) what are the specific sources of the tragic catharsis?

62 Cf. supra, pp. 77, 98.

63 Butcher (op. cit., 35-37) translates: "Of all plots and actions the episodic are the worst. I call a plot 'episodic' in which the episodes or acts succeed one another without probable or necessary sequence. Bad poets compose such pieces by their own fault, good poets, to please the players; for as they write for competing rivals, they draw out the plot beyond its capacity, and are often forced to break the natural continuity."
In the most perfect tragedy, as we have seen, the synthesis of the incidents must be, not uninvolved, but involved, and this synthesis must be imitative of events that arouse pity and fear -- for therein lies the distinctive function of this kind of imitation. When we take this function as a standard, it is clear that there are three forms of the plot to be avoided. (1) Good and just men are not to be represented as falling from happiness into misery; for such a spectacle does not arouse fear or pity in us -- it is simply revolting. (2) Nor must evil men be represented as rising from ill fortune to prosperity; for this is the most untragic situation of all. It does not stir our general human sympathy, nor arouse tragic fear. (3) Nor, again, may an excessively wicked man be represented as falling from prosperity into misfortune. Such a course of events, may arouse in us some measure of human sympathy, but not the emotions of pity and fear. For, to define: Pity is what we feel at a misfortune that is out of proportion to the faults of a man; and Fear is what we feel when misfortune comes upon one like ourselves. Now the excessively wicked man deserves misery in proportion; and since his wickedness exceeds the average, he is not like one of ourselves. Accordingly, in this third situation there is nothing to arouse

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64 That is, the change of fortune should be accompanied by a "Reversal of Situation" or a "Discovery" (identification) of "some person or fact at first unrecognized" or by both the "Reversal" and the "Discovery." (p. 34).
either pity or fear. There remains, then, (4) the case of
the man intermediate between these extremes: a man not
superlatively good and just, nor yet one whose misfortune
comes about through vice and depravity; but a man who is
brought low through some error of judgment or shortcoming,
one from the number of the highly renowned and prosperous
-- such a person as Oedipus of the line of Thebes, Thyestes
of Pelops' line, and the eminent men of other noted families.65

... ... 

65 Cf. supra, p. 113, n. 34. About the status of
the tragic hero, Butcher (op. cit., p. 295) says: "... this character, while it has its basis in reality, transcends
it by a certain moral elevation. We could wish that Aristotle
had gone further and said explicitly, that in power, even more
than in virtue, the tragic hero must be raised above the
ordinary level; that he must possess a deeper view of feeling,
or heightened powers of intellect or will; that the morally
trivial, rather than the morally bad, is fatal to tragic effect.
As it is, we arrive at the result that the tragic hero is a
man of noble nature, like ourselves in elemental feelings
and emotions; idealized, indeed, but with so large a share
of our common humanity as to enlist our eager interest and
sympathy. He falls from a position of lofty eminence; and
the disaster that wrecks his life may be traced not to delib-
erate weakness, but to some great error or frailty."

About the tragic flaw Cooper (op. cit., p. 40)
says: "The single Greek word, hamartia, lays the emphasis
upon the want of insight within the man, but is elastic
enough to mean also the outward fault resulting from it. ... In
general we have primarily to do with a certain moral bent
in an agent, toward goodness in the main, but undisciplined;
hence a shortcoming which tends to show itself in faulty
action at critical points in his career. If right action
is the result of sympathetic insight, as in the poet himself,
faulty action in an agent may be described as the result of
the opposite quality; and this quality will have a dual
nature, compounded of something in the 'head' and something
in the 'heart' of the agent -- in other words, the quality
will be 'blindness of heart' ... ."

For Aristotle's other treatment of agents, Cf.
supra, pp. 114, 116-117, 122, 124-125, 132,
and infra, pp. 136-138, 139.
Chapter 14

The effect of fear and pity may be produced by means that pertain simply to stage-presentation; but it may also arise from the structure and incidents of the tragedy, which is the preferable way, and is the mark of a better poet. For the Plot should be so constructed that, even without help from the eye, one who simply hears the play recited must feel the chill of fear, and be stirred with pity, at what occurs. In fact, these are just the emotions one would feel in listening to the story of Oedipus the King off the stage. To bring about this emotional effect by spectacular means is less a matter of poetic art, and depends upon adventitious assistance. But those who employ the means of the stage to produce what strikes us as being merely monstrous, without being terrible, are absolute strangers to the art of Tragedy; for not every kind of pleasure is to be sought from a tragedy, but only that specific pleasure which is characteristic of this art.

Chapter 15

We turn, then, to the moral dispositions of the agents. In respect to these, there are four things for the poet to

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66 In Aristotle's time the dramas were often recited by the rhapsodes. Cf. also the discussion of "Spectacle," supra, pp. 128-129.

67 The requisites for the "agents" have been included in this cutting because they are also requisites for the actors in representing the agents. Aristotle is talking, here, only
about the characters as they were created by the poets. Later, however, (Cf. infra, p. 139) he speaks of "certain actors of today, who in assuming the role of women are said to lack the bearing of ladies." This criticism ties in exactly with the requirement (2) that the agents "must be true to type." One feels that if Aristotle had discussed the acting at greater length, he might have stated other requirements for actors which would have been similar to the other requirements for the "agents." The fact is, of course, that Aristotle, actually said only what he actually said -- and no more.

For other reference to the agents, Cf. supra, pp. 114, 116-117, 122, 124-125, 132, 135, and infra, p. 139.
aim at. First and foremost, the agents must be (1) good. The ethical element will be present in a tragedy if, as was said, by speech or act the agents manifest a certain moral bent in what they choose to do or avoid; and the ethos will be good if the habit of choice is good. \[ 'Good' \text{ means naturally kind and generous, as well as good for something.} \]

Such goodness is possible in all types of humanity — even in a woman or a slave, though woman is perhaps an inferior type, and the slave quite worthless. (2) They must be true to type. There is, for example, a type of manly valor and eloquence; but it would be inappropriate for the poet to represent a woman as valorous in this way, or as masterly in argument. (3) Thirdly, they must be true to life, which is something different from making them good or true to type, as these terms have just been defined. (4) Fourthly, they must be consistent, true to their own nature throughout the play. Even if the original person whom the poet is representing (as Achilles) should happen to be inconsistent, and should be taken as an example of that type, still the representation should be consistently inconsistent. It must have unity.

\[ \ldots \]

As in combining the incidents of the plot, so also in representing the character of the agents, the poet must seek after a necessary or probable relation between one thing and another. That is, a certain kind of person must speak or act in a certain fashion as the necessary or probable outcome of his inward nature; and thus, one thing will follow another in a necessary or probable sequence . . . .
Chapter 17

When actually constructing his Plots and elaborating them in the Diction, the poet should endeavor as far as he can to visualize what he is representing. In this way, seeing everything with the utmost vividness, just as if he were an actual spectator of the events he is portraying, he will devise what is suitable, and run the least danger of overlooking inconsistencies.

So far as he is able, the poet should also assume the very attitudes and gestures appropriate to the emotions of the agents; for among authors with the same natural ability, they will be most convincing who themselves experience the feelings they represent. The poet who himself feels distress or anger will represent distress or anger with the most lifelike reality. Hence the art of poetry requires rather a certain natural plasticity in the poet, than a touch of madness. Poets of the first sort readily assume one personality after another; those of the second involuntarily pass into

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68 As Butcher observed concerning the tragic character (note 65, supra, p. 135), it could be desired that Aristotle had gone further here. It could be desired that he had said whether or not he related these principles to the actor. One tends to assume that he would have done so. If the creator of the "agents" can form more life-like men and women for experiencing their feelings with them, it would seem to follow that the actors who recreate these agents could bring them to more convincing life upon the stage for doing or having done likewise.


Cf. also Plato's warning (supra, p. 72) that from imitation a person may become what he imitates.
various states of emotional excitement. 69

Chapter 18

The Chorus should be regarded as one of the actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and take its share in the action. . . . 70

Chapter 19

The other formative elements of Tragedy have not been discussed, 71 and it remains to speak of Fiction and Intellect. As for the Intellectual element, 72 we may assume what is said of the treatise on Rhetoric, to which inquiry the topic more properly belongs. 73 The Intellectual element includes everything that is to be effected by the language of the agents -- in their efforts to prove and to refute; to arouse one another's emotions, such as pity, or fear, or anger, or the like; and to exaggerate or to discount the importance of things.

69 Cf. Plato's theory that the poet is not in his right mind (supra, p. 68).

70 It would follow that this should be a message for the members of the chorus and for the trainer of the chorus as well as for the tragic poet, Cf. supra, pp. 39-40.

71 Especially plot and ethos.

72 The reader will recall that the agents are endowed with two kinds of qualities: qualities of moral purpose (ethos) and of intellect (dianoia) -- "one might say of heart and head." Cf. supra, p. 125, n. 54.

73 In the Rhetoric (op. cit., p. 7), Aristotle says that rhetoric may be defined as a faculty of discovering all the possible means of persuasion in any subject.
It is evident, too, that the same underlying forms of thought must be in operation whenever the poet makes the agents try by their acts to arouse pity or alarm in one another, or to give these acts an air of importance or naturalness. The only difference is that the act must produce its effect on the other personages without verbal explanation; whereas if a speech be employed, the author must see to it that the effect is produced by the agent's speaking, and that it comes from the particular language the agent uses; for what point would there be in having A make a speech if B already saw things in the desired light, quite apart from anything that might be said?

Among the subjects of inquiry bearing on Diction, one is the Modes of Spoken Utterance, including such matters as the difference between a command and a prayer, a simple statement and a threat, a question and an answer, and so forth. A knowledge of such distinctions, however, falls within the province of the interpreter, not of the poet, and is the concern of the general theorist on some art like Elocution.

Herewith we close the discussion of Tragedy, or the art of imitation in the form of action.

74 Here, again, could be a lesson for actors as well as for poets.

75 Book III is a discussion of the construction of epic poetry.
BOOK IV

Chapter 26

The question finally suggests itself: What is the higher form of art, Epic Poetry or Tragedy? Those who favor the Epic Poem may argue thus: The less vulgar form is the higher; and that which addresses the better audience is always the less vulgar. If this be so, it is obvious that a pantomimic art like Tragedy is exceedingly vulgar; for the performers suppose that unless they throw in something of their own, the audience will not understand what is meant, and hence they indulge in all sorts of bodily motions. An inferior flute-player, for instance, when throwing the discus is to be represented, will twist and twirl like the athlete himself; for if he is playing the Scylla, he will clutch at the leader of the Chorus. Tragedy, then, is said to be an art of this kind, and to lie under the same condemnation as the earlier actors passed upon the next generation. Thus Mynniscus used to call Callippides

76 Shakespeare, some 2,000 years later, was irritated by similar goings-on: "Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand thus, but use all gently . . . . 0, reform it altogether; and let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered." William Shakespeare, Hamlet in Shakespeare Twenty-three Plays and the Sonnets (ed. Thomas Marc Parrott, Edward Hubler, and Robert Stockdale Telfer; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d.), p. 698 (III, ii, 4-47).

The subject of the actors' interpolations in Greek tragedy is covered thoroughly by Denis L. Page in Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy.
'the Ape,' for overacting his parts; and the actor Pindarus, too, got a similar reputation. And as the later generation is held to be worse than the earlier among the actors, so the whole art of Tragedy, which is later than the Epic, is considered inferior to it. So we are told that the Epic is addressed to a cultivated audience, which does not need gestures and postures, and Tragedy to an audience that is inferior and does. Accordingly, if Tragedy is a vulgar art, it evidently is the lower form.

The reply to this argument is twofold. (1) First, then, as to gesture and movement. (a) The censure attaches, not to the art of the poet as such, but to the art of his interpreter. And it touches the interpreter of Epic as well as Tragic poetry; for the epic reciter may likewise overdo the gesticulation — as did Sosistratus; and it may be overdone in a singing contest — as by Mnasitheus the Opuntian.

(b) In artistic representation, we are not to condemn all bodily movement; otherwise we should have to condemn

77 Just what the criticism may mean is not certain. It could be that Callipides and Pindarus tried to use more "realism" than the older actors had done, or it could be that they were using more vigorous body movement. At any rate, Aristotle condemned the idea of "over-acting." Plutarch (Cf. infra, p. 376) tells a story about Callipides which scorns him for apparently the same reason.

78 Thus Aristotle places the quality of the acting as a determining element in the stage productions. That he is talking again of "overdoing" is evident from the statement in the next line about the epic reciter who overdoes the gesticulation. So, if the acting is overdone the production will be inferior.
outright the art of Dancing. What we must object to is the attitudes and gestures of the ignoble\textsuperscript{79} -- the very objection that was brought against Callippides.\textsuperscript{80} The same criticism is passed on certain actors of to-day, who is assuming the role of women are said to lack the bearing of ladies.\textsuperscript{81}

(c) It is quite possible for Tragedy to produce its characteristic effect without any movement or gestures, in just the same way as Epic Poetry; for if we merely read a play, its quality becomes evident. Accordingly, if it be true that Tragedy is superior in all respects, this alleged weakness need not be present.

(2) Secondly, one must argue in favor of Tragedy (a) that it contains every element found in Epic Poetry -- since it may have a use even for the epic metre; and that in addition it has no inconsiderable elements of its own in Spectacular effects and in Music -- and through the music the characteristic pleasure is distinctly

\textsuperscript{79} Butcher's translation (\textit{op. cit.}, p. 103) reads: "... Next, all action is not to be condemned -- any more than all dancing -- only that of bad performers ..." \textsuperscript{80} Cf. \textit{supra}, pp. 54-55, 142-143. What Aristotle despised in acting, then, was the overacted, the overdone, "the attitudes and gestures of the ignoble," the "action ... of bad performers." What he admired in acting he had stated in the \textit{Rhetoric} (Cf. \textit{supra}, p. 111) in commendation of the actor Theodoras, whose voice seemed to be the actual voice of the person he represented. \textsuperscript{81} Cf. \textit{supra}, p. 136-138, and n. 67.
heightened.82

Next, (b) the greater vividness of Tragedy is felt when we read the play as well as when we see it acted.83

Furthermore, (c) the tragic imitation attains its end in less space. And this may be deemed an advantage, since the concentrated effect is more delightful than one which is long-drawn-out, and so diluted. . . .

And again, (d) the unity of action is less strict in the epic poets, as is shown by the number of subjects for tragedies derived from any one of their works. . . .

If, then, Tragedy is superior to the Epic in all these respects, and particularly in fulfilling its special function as a form of poetry; and if we recall, as we must, that the two forms of serious poetry are to give us, not any chance pleasure, but the definite pleasure we have mentioned of arousing pity and fear -- it is clear that Tragedy, since it attains the poetic end more effectively than the Epic, is the higher form of the two.

82 Butcher (op. cit., p. 103) translates: "... and superior it is because it has all the epic elements--it may even use the epic meter--with the music and scenic effects as important accessories; and these afford the most vivid combination of pleasures." Cf. also supra, p. 128, and n. 59. Whatever may have been Aristotle's meaning as to the term "Spectacle," he is calling it here "no inconsiderable element."

83 Butcher's rendition (op. cit., p. 103) is: "... Further it has vividness of impression in reading as well as in representation. . . ."
Summary

Aristotle gives the first plan for a way of accomplishing the dramatic imitation, and his plan is one for the poet-dramatist rather than for the actor. Yet Aristotle refers a number of times in the Poetics and elsewhere to certain ones of the actors in such a way as to reveal some definite attitudes and opinions that he held about acting. And from his analysis of the art of writing dramatic poetry, can be gathered analogies which apply to the art of acting and which appear, at times, to be analogies that Aristotle would have drawn if he had turned his discussion in that direction.

Art, he says in the Ethics, "is identical with a state of capacity to make, involving a true course of reasoning"; the origin of the art product is in the maker and not in the thing made. Plato had said that the artists only "imitate what the others make" and so are thrice removed from truth. Thus in his very statement of a definition of art, Aristotle is at direct variance with Plato.

"Turning . . . to the conception of poetry in general," Aristotle begins "with what is fundamental, the principle of artistic imitation." The very fact of the analysis presupposes the existence and the need of a technique in composition which Plato had denied on the ground that when the poet wrote his verses he was in a state of unconsciousness brought on by God. "To imitate," says Aristotle, "is instinctive with mankind; and . . . all men take a natural pleasure in the products of imitation. . . ." Comedies and
tragedies are called "dramas" because "in both kinds of poetry men are represented as acting." Tragedy is "an artistic imitation of an action that is serious, complete in itself, and of an adequate magnitude." The "proper function resulting from the imitation of such an object" in the dramatic medium and manner "is to arouse the emotions of pity and fear in the audience . . . in such a way as to effect" a "special purging off and relief (catharsis) of these two emotions." Pity "is what we feel at a misfortune that is out of proportion to the faults of a man; and Fear is what we feel when misfortune comes upon one like ourselves." The tragic hero is "a man not superlatively good and just, nor yet one whose misfortune comes about through vice and depravity; but a man who is brought low through some error of judgement or shortcoming," a man who is important enough to be of ethical significance. For the poet displays "not what actually has happened, but what in a given situation might well happen . . ." He exhibits what is "typical" or "universal." He shows "what a certain type of person is likely to say or do in a given situation." The "agents" for such an imitation are "human beings in action, men performing or undergoing something." And because tragedy is an imitation of an action, it becomes, "in the second place, an imitation of personal agents." Such agents are endowed by the poet with qualities of "Moral Character" and "Intellect." In respect to moral disposition, the agents must be "good"; that is, their habits of choice must be good. In this respect Aristotle
is evidently talking of the agents who are the heroes of tragedy. These agents must also be "true to type"; they must be "true to life"; and they must be "consistent," or "true to their own nature throughout the play." In representing the character of the agents, "the poet must seek after a necessary or probable relation between one thing and another. That is, a certain kind of person must speak or act in a certain fashion as the necessary or probable outcome of his inward nature; and thus one thing will follow another in a necessary or probable sequence. . . ." The poet, in creating the characters, should "assume the very attitudes and gestures appropriate to the emotions of the agents," for the writers "will be most convincing who themselves experience the feelings they represent." The art of poetry "requires rather a certain natural plasticity in the poet, than a touch of madness."

Since it is the agents in a drama that the actors imitate, it would seem to follow that analogies could be drawn from agents to actors. This drawing of parallels is not to be considered as an effort to prove that Aristotle made the statements, which are quoted in this connection, as comments directly about actors. But since Aristotle's work is the only writing that can be found from this period upon the how of the whole dramatic mimesis, such analogies, together with his several comments directly about the actors, form the only means of conjecture on the subject of theories of acting in Greece of the fifth and fourth centuries. Aristotle says
in the *Problems* that the aim of the actor is pleasure. In the *Poetics* he explains that the pleasure which audiences receive from tragedy is the *catharsis* of pity and fear. Thus the pleasure which the tragic actor seeks to give must be the purgation of the emotions of pity and fear in the spectators. And the actors, in playing the tragedies, would be playing "human beings in action, men performing or undergoing something." They would have to show how a certain kind of person is likely to react "in a given situation," how he "must speak or act . . . as the necessary or probable outcome of his inward nature." They would have to represent the agents as possessing qualities of moral purpose and of intellect. Tragic heroes would be played as being basically good in their habits of choice. The actors would have to make the agents "true to type," "true to life," and "true to their own nature throughout the play." When Aristotle, later in the *Poetics* mentions the overacting of certain players, he uses the same illustration that he gives in explaining that poets must make their agents "true to type." Of the poets he says: "... it would be inappropriate for the poet to represent a woman as valorous . . . or as manly in argument." About the actors, he observes that "certain actors of today . . . in assuming the role of women are said to lack the bearing of ladies." The similarity of illustration indicates similarity in thinking about the creation of "agents" by poets and the recreation of them by actors. Another instance of such likeness in thinking is found in the *Problems*. Aristotle had commented there upon the ability
of the principal actors to "imitate different characters and sustain their parts" through the singing of difficult "nones." The idea of the actor as sustaining his part is surely akin to the conception of the poet as making his agents "true to their own nature throughout the play." And if the poet could create more lifelike men and women for experiencing their feelings with them, surely the actors could bring these agents to more convincing life upon the stage for doing or having done likewise. So the art of acting, like the art of poetry, would seem to require "rather a natural plasticity . . . than a touch of madness."

About the actors themselves Aristotle makes a number of statements that leave no doubt as to certain of his opinions. "The Chorus," he says, "should be regarded as one of the actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and take its share in the action." In the individual actors, Aristotle dispised overacting. He singled out Callippides and Pindarus as offending in that respect; and he spoke his disgust for performers who supposed, from time to time, that they had to "throw in something of their own." The censure for tragedy, Aristotle says, applies "not to the art of the poet as such, but to the art of his interpreter." Thus Aristotle places the quality of the acting as a determining element in the stage productions. But any interpretative artist may overdo, the epic reciter as well as the tragic actor. "In artistic representation, we are not to condemn all bodily movement . . . . What we object to is the attitudes and gestures of
the ignoble." What Aristotle admired in acting was seeming naturalness. "Thus we see the necessity," he says in the Rhetoric, "of disguising the means we employ so that we may seem to be speaking, not with artifice, but naturally . . . . The difference is illustrated by the effect of Theodorus' voice as against the voices of all other actors; his seems to be the actual voice of the person he represents, and the other voices sound like voices assumed."

Aristotle mentions the voice in a few other connections. He says that contestants who look after matters of volume, pitch, and rhythm "commonly win the prizes in the poetical competitions." He speaks of actors and chorus men as training their voices and practicing in the early morning on an empty stomach.

There is another mention of Theodorus, also, in the Politics. He is said to have wanted always to make his entrance on the stage before any other actor because, he thought, "spectators get fond of those they hear first."

For research into theories of acting among the ancients, however, Aristotle's most significant contributions are as follows: his analysis of the subject of imitation in the drama, especially as it applies to the agents; his statements of dislike for overacting and interpolating; and his expression of appreciation for seeming naturalness in the actor.
CHAPTER III

AN INQUIRY INTO HELLENISTIC LITERATURE --
WITH THE ACTORS IN MIND
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The years following the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. to the defeat of Corinth by the Romans in 146 B.C. are generally termed the Hellenistic period of Greek culture. A look into the available literary output of the era reveals no information as to what Greek actors and their contemporaries of these days may have thought about preferable techniques of acting. The fact is that of the lush production of writing in this time, only little has survived. Manuscripts of over a thousand authors were housed in the Alexandrian library, but very few of them ever reached the copying rooms of Byzantium. Yet, as was the case in the investigation of the earlier period, there are a few comments that are worth noting in a study of acting — not so many, however, nor so telling, as were found in the previous era.

Theophrastus, pupil of Plato and Aristotle, followed his later teacher as head of the Peripatetic School and became, in turn, the teacher of Menander. ¹ Like Aristotle,


Theophrastus wrote upon many subjects: rhetoric, politics, psychology, ethics, love, science. Our concern with him at present is in his authorship of some character sketches, which he called the **Characters**. These are short, realistic and satyric descriptions of character types — examples in humorous portraiture of meanness, penuriousness, avarice, garrulosity, loquacity, unpleasantness, offensiveness, boorishness, recklessness, buffoonery, shamelessness, flattery, grossness, etc. The description of a buffoon is amusing in a reference to audiences: "... at the theatre [the buffoon] will applaud when others cease, hiss actors whom the rest of the audience approves, and raise his head and hiccup when the house is silent, so that he may make the spectators look round." The sketches may have been written and used for after-dinner recitation at the Peripatetic School. At any rate, Menander was surely familiar with them, and it is possible that he was influenced by them in drawing some of the types in his plays.

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3 Theophrastus, *Characters*, p. 69 (XI, 2-4).

4 Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

5 Other writings from Hellenistic philosophers and scientists which have been examined are as follows: Epicurus, *Epicurus, the Extant Remains with Short Critical apparatus, Translation, and Notes* (tr. Cyril Bailey; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926). Zeno and Cleanteles, *The Fragments of Zeno and Cleanteles* (tr. A. C. Pearson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891).

Aristarchus, Aristarchus of Samos the Ancient


The comedies of Menander show the trend in Hellenistic popular literature toward realism and individualism, and they appear to call for a more highly individualized and realistic approach to acting than was demanded by Old Comedy. These tendencies were discussed in "Chapter I" as distinguishing the New Comedy which had begun to develop before the death of Aristotle, and they should be kept in mind as significant marks of New Comedy in Hellenistic times. The people in Menander's plays were clearly drawn types of everyday men and women of the Athenian bourgeoisie. Menander's dialogue has an actuality; his drawing of character has a subtlety, even in its exaggeration. The actors, then, who played the parts, played these everyday men and women of Athens; they spoke an everyday kind of dialogue. They needed to exaggerate, but they needed also to use somewhat more discretion than the players in Old Comedy had needed to use. There are no extant comedies from Menander's contemporaries: Philemon, Diphilus, Poseidippus, and Apollodorus; nor are there tragedies from Lycophron and his fellows. The continued high popularity of the tragedies of Euripides, however, indicates further the need for a more personal approach to acting.

6 Cf. supra, pp. 52-53.
8 Cf. supra, p. 52.
The plays of these men were presented in theaters located over the Hellenistic world. During this period the logium\(^9\) came to be used more and more for the actors with the front wall of the episcenium\(^10\) as background.\(^11\) As New Comedy consisted only of dialogue and emphasized its type characters of every-day people, there could well have been needed a place to accentuate them, a raised stage to make them better able to be seen and heard. The orchestra, as time went on, continually decreased in size with the lessened need for choruses; and the stage building gradually advanced in the direction of the auditorium, thus giving the auditorium a "horseshoe" shape. These three parts -- stage house, orchestra, and auditorium -- did not fuse in the Hellenistic period, but remained loosely held together by the laws of rhythm and harmony. Just when the various modifications took place is a matter of some uncertainty and difference of opinion; but remains of theaters in Priene, Oropos, Assos, Ephesos, Delos, Eretria, Piraeus, Sicyon, New Pleuron, Oinaidae, Syracuse, Atheus, Segasta, Magnesia, and Epidaurus show that such alterations went on. It was in these theaters and others like them that the actors played the New Comedies and the old and new tragedies.

In addition to the regular plays, the mime also was developing as a dramatic form in these years -- usually as a group of short, realistic scenes from every-day life.

\(^9\) Cf. supra, p. 36.

\(^10\) Cf. ibid.

The only surviving examples are the literary mimes of Theocritus and Herodes, which may have been written to be read rather than acted; but there is, according to Nicoll, a connection between the third-century mimes of Herodes of Kos and the primitive farces and ceremonials of sixth-century Doria. If acted, the Herodian mimes would seem to have required, like the comedies of Menander, a realistic approach, but with more of abandon and caricature. There are many women characters: young wives, a young mother, girl slaves, a bawd. Nicoll comments that the total impression in these little scenes is one of femininity. Among the men characters, may be noted that of the schoolmaster who is probably akin to the burlesque doctor of the Doric farces and to the later boasting soldier of Latin comedy. The pandar, also, is a character who may be found both in mime and in comedy. Theocritus of Syracuse is usually more sophisticate than Herodes; but one of his poems, *The Women at the Adonis Festival*, is a little mimic drama on realistic lines, the idle prattle of the women giving a lifelike quality to the


whole. Whether the playlet was intended for production is not known. The more romantic mime-idylls of Theocritus were in all probability for reading purposes only, as the mimic pieces of Herodes may have been also.

The Phlyakes farces, on the other hand, were essentially the actor's; and most of them were probably made up entirely of improvisation. The Phlyax developed in the fourth century B.C. among the Greek colonies on the mainland of southern Italy, which, like the shores of Sicily, had been settled by the Dorian. Both Nicoll and Bieber think there is some connection between these mimic farces and the early Doric mimes. They point out that examination of vases and statuettes shows a similarity of characters and costumes; of subject matter; and of free, exaggerated movement. Scenes on many vases indicate that the Phlyax was played on a simple, evidently temporary stage, with a wooden floor supported by three or four rectangular posts which were covered sometimes by drapery or tablets and which were replaced at times by little columns. Some of the vase paintings show a sort of background for the actors, sometimes framed by two Ionic columns and sometimes having a door (always at stage right) and a window. Occasionally there is shown a sloping roof to

15 Ibid., p. 50.
16 Ibid., pp. 50-65.
cover the actual playing space. Requisites were simple so that stages could be set up wherever necessary. In the large cities the Phlyakes sometimes played in the theaters, where they could erect their little platforms in the large orchestras. The remains of the theater in Syracuse shows provision in the rocky ground of the orchestra for the footings of such a temporary stage and backwall. These Italian mimes, like the old Doric ones, introduced freely various scenes of common daily life as well as burlesques \( \text{(hilarotragodiae)} \) on themes of tragedy. The mimes used stock comic masks alongside persons treated in a more or less serious way. Athenaeus, writing in the second and third centuries A.D. concerning this period, refers to Kleon of the third century B.C. as "the best actor of Italian mimes without making up his face." In the next line Athenaeus speaks also of the actor Nymphodoros, who excelled in "the kind of mime just mentioned." The name of one author of "joyous tragedy" has been remembered, a certain Rhinthohn of Tarentum; but his work has not survived. Thus, since neither Herodes nor Theocritus makes any observation upon actors of Tragedy or comedy or mime, and since there are no surviving representations of the Phlyax form, it is not known what the Hellenistic mime writers or mimic actors may

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18 Bieber, op. cit., p. 300.
19 Athenaeus, op. cit., IV, 553 (X, 452 f).
20 Ibid.,
21 Nicoll, Masks, Mimes, and Miracles, pp. 50-51.
have believed about methods of acting.

Among the other Hellenistic poets the only mention of
the actors has been found in epitaphs and inscriptions.
For Lycon, the comic actor of the late fourth century B.C.,
an "epigram" by Phalaecus reads:

This admirable portrait of the comedian, crowned
for a triumph with ivy and garlands, I set up that
it might stand as a monument on Lycon's grave. For
this memorial of him who was so charming in famil-
iar talk and over the wine, this presentment of
his features, is offered by me to preserve the
memory among posterity also of how the glorious
man entertained us.22

Of Pylades, the famous actor of the third century, Alcaeus
of Messene writes:

Pylades, now thou art gone, all Hellas wails
shearing her loosened hair, and Phoebus himself
took off the laurels from his flowing locks, hon-
ouring his singer as is meet. The Muses wept and
Asopus stayed his stream when he heard the voice
of mourning. The dance of Dionysus ceased in the
halls, when thou didst go down the iron road of
Hades.23

Such inscriptions show something of the acclaim which
prominent actors received and indicate that some of the
acting, at least, entertained and stirred the audiences.
An early reference to the pantomimes, of whom much was to
be heard in later years, is made by the poet Dioscorides,
of the second century B.C., as he writes an epigram supposed-
ly in the person of a dancer whose name he does not give.

22 The Greek Anthology, V, 5 (XIII, 6).
23 Ibid., II, 233 (VII, 412).
Aristagoras danced the part of a Gallus, while I, with great labour, went through the story of the warlike Temenidae. He was dismissed with honour, but one unceasing storm of rattles sent poor Hyrnosto off the boards. Into the fire with you, ye exploits of the heroes! for among the illiterate even a lark sings more musically than a swan.

So there is heard more of acclaim, and also of disapproval, for the entertainers — for dancers as well as for actors.

In commenoration of Thespis, then four hundred years dead, Dioscorides says:

I am Thespis, who first modelled tragic song, inventing a new diversion for the villagers, at the season when Bacchus led in the triennial chorus whose prize was still a goat and a basket of Attic figs. Now my juniors remodel all this; countless ages will beget many new inventions, but my own is mine.

The tone sounds prophetic. That the poet approved of the "new inventions" which were already in effect is attested by his later epigram to Aeschylus:

This invention of Thespis and the Greenwood games and revels were raised to greater perfection by Aeschylus who carved letters not neatly chiselled, but as if waterworn by a torrent. In matters of the stage he was also an innovator. O mouth in every respect accomplished, thou wast one of the demi-gods of old!

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24 A eunuch priest of Rhea.
25 The Temenidae of Euripides dealt with the jealousy of their sister on the part of King Temenos' sons. The complainant here had been dancing in the pantomime the part of Hyrnosto.
26 The Greek Anthology, IV, 165 (XI, 195).
27 Ibid., p. 221 (VII, 410).
28 Ibid., p. 223 (VII, 411).
Another tribute to another one who had wrought great changes in the drama is given by the same poet to Sophocles in the following epigram in dialogue form:

(A statue of a Satyr is supposed to speak)

A. "This is the tomb of Sophocles which I, his holy servant, received from the Muses as a holy trust to guard. It was he who, taking me from Phlius where I was carved of holly-oak and still trod the tribulum, wrought me into a creature of gold and clothed me in fine purple. On his death I ceased from the dance and rested my light foot here."

B. "Blessed art thou, how excellent thy post! And the mask of a girl in thy hand with shaven hair as of a mourner, from what play is she?"

A. "Say Antigone if thou wilt, or say Flectra; in either case thou art not wrong, for both are supreme." 29

Dioscorides is saying here that from the rude Satyric drama Sophocles had evolved Attic Tragedy, a statement which, as Paton observes, is quite exaggerated.30 There are other epigrams on the playwrights, but in them the poets do not talk of the actors.31 Indeed a reading of elegy, epic, pastoral, mime, and choliambic verse that has come down from the Hellenistic world does not yield any tangible return for research upon theories of acting.32

29 Ibid., p. 25 (VII, 37).
30 Ibid., p. 25, n. 2.
32 Reading from Hellenistic poetry, besides that already mentioned, includes the poems of Bion and Moschus and minor writers of pastorals in The Greek Bucolic Poets op. cit., pp. 385-511; of Cercidas and nineteen other choliambic poets in Herodes: Cercidas: Choliambic Poets, op. cit., pp. 95-497; of the 320 poets in The Greek Anthology, op. cit.; and also the following works:


The historians are hardly more helpful, though Polybius, in the second century, records an incident which is reminiscent of Aristotle's criticism about flute players and of that of Pratinus, also. Polybius's story shows that such goings on still occurred:

And Lucius Anicius, another general of the Romans, after defeating the Illyrians and taking their king Genthius prisoner with his children, celebrated his triumph at Rome with contests in which he brought on acts evoking all manner of mirth, as Polybius records in the thirtieth book: "Having summoned the most distinguished artists of Greece and constructed a very large stage in the Circus, he first brought on the flute-players; these were Theodorus of Boeotia, Theopompus, Hermippus, Lysimachus, all of them the most distinguished. Posting them, then, at the front of the stage with the chorus, he directed them to play all together. As they started to perform their music to accompany the dance-motions which corresponded to it, he sent word to them that they were not playing in the right way and ordered them to whoop up the contest against one another. Since they were puzzled at this, one of the lictors indicated that they should turn and advance upon one another and act as if they were fighting. Quickly the players caught the idea, and taking on motions in keeping with their own licentious characters they caused great confusion. For flute-players by a concerted movement turned the middle choruses against those at the ends, while they blew on their flutes unintelligible notes, and all differing, and then they drew away in turn upon each other; and at the same time the members of the choruses clashed noisily against the players as they shook their gear at them and rushed upon their antagonists, to turn again and retreat. And so in one case a member of the chorus girded himself, and stepping out of the ranks he turned and raised his fists as if to box against the flute-player who plunged against him; and then, if not before, the applause and shouts that arose from the spectators knew no bounds. Furthermore, while these were contending in a pitched battle, two dancers entered the orchestra with castanets, and four boxers mounted upon the stage accompanied by

33 Cf. supra, pp. 38, 142.
trumpeters and horn-players. All of these contests went on together, and the result was indescribable. But when it comes to the performers of tragedy, says Polybius, whatever I might undertake to add would seem to some to be pure mockery." 34

So Polybius liked the kind of thing which Aristotle and Pratinus before him had condemned -- the participation of musicians in the action of the chorus. The performance, obviously, was not of a truly dramatic nature, as may be noted with the entrance of the two dancers and the four boxers. But Polybius gave his unlimited approval to the "performers of tragedy" with the explanation that whatever he would "undertake to add would seem to some to be pure mockery." 35

It could be that other writers over the Hellenistic world felt in a similar way. At any rate, so far as surviving material reveals, they spared their words about actors and acting. Plays and players and mimes and mimics were popular. There was a strong upward shoot of realism


and individualism in these years; and it seems that the acting and the miming, in many cases, went along with the trend. But not until the Romans had conquered the Greeks and in turn had been conquered by Greek civilization, is there to be found any further theorizing upon the art of acting in the ancient world.
PART II

THE ROMAN WORLD:
TRACES OF HISTRIONIC TECHNIQUES TO 337 A.D.
CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMAN DRAMA
TO THE TIME OF PLAUTUS
For no other crime than for eating the leaves of the grape vines is it that a goat is slain to Bacchus at every altar, and the olden plays enter on the stage; for this the sons of Theseus set up prizes for wit in their villages and at the cross-ways, and gaily danced in the soft meadows on oiled goat-skins. Even so Ausonia's swains, a race sent from Troy, disport with rude verses and laughter unrestrained, and put on hideous masks of hollow cork, and call on thee, 0 Bacchus, in joyous songs, and to thee hang waving amulets from the tall pine. Hence every vineyard ripens in generous increase; fullness comes to hollow valleys and deep glades, and every spot towards which the god has turned his comely face. Duly, then, in our country's songs we will chant for Bacchus the praise he claims, bringing him cakes and dishes; the doomed he-goat, led by the horn, shall stand at the altar, and the rich flesh we will roast on spits of hazel.

So Virgil tells of early drama forms in his native Italy. Tibullus gives much the same account, but substitutes red dye on the mummers' faces for the masks. Horace says that the verses which were sung on such occasions were called Fescinine.

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1 The Italians.


and that they comprised countryside lampoons. The whole tradition, according to H. J. Rose, savors "more than a little of the Greek accounts which, from Aristotle onwards, are given of the origin of comedy." Rose thinks that this fact may be interpreted in either of two ways. "First, the Roman writers may be describing what really happened, and we must then conclude that the development of rustic merrymakings into at least the beginnings of a regular artistic performance" was similar in the two cultures, a thing not impossible and not without parallel. "Or, we may suppose that the Romans had no real idea of how Italian... drama began, and therefore put forward a theory in the guise of a fact, viz. that its origins were much the same as those of Greece. In either case, the fact that no account is given of the origin of Roman Tragedy is understandable enough, for it was patent... that this was a foreign art never really popular in Rome." Rose believes that the former view is the correct one, namely, that mimic activities which were connected with harvesting of fruit and grain in both Greek and Latin cultures evolved into comic, dramatic forms.

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6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.
Nicoll and Bieber stress the similarity in subject matter and in characters between the Phlyakes farces of the Greek colonies in southern Italy of the fourth century B.C. and the *fabulae Atellanae* which developed among the Oscans of the north in the following centuries. They think that physical elements of Atellan stages, too, were common to physical elements of Phlyax stages as background for the character types and themes which had such apparent kinship with Phlyax forms. Nicoll calls the Atellana "a child of the Greek mime," which "came to mould the mime of Rome." From an examination of titles of plays by L. Pomponius Boniensus and Novius, who are known to have been famous authors of *Atellanae*, Nicoll concludes that these farces -- like the Phlyakes and Doric mimes before them -- took their themes from the everyday lives of the people and from mythological burlesque. From the titles; from masks, terra cottas, and vases; and from various references it is believed that the principally recurring figures in these plays were four. There was Bucco, a dolt with puffed out cheeks and large

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8 Cf. *supra*, pp. 32-33.


10 Nicoll, *Masks, Mimes and Miracles*, p. 78.


mouth who talked foolishly\textsuperscript{13} and was fond of eating. There was Dos森us-Manducus,\textsuperscript{14} who was probably a rather terrifying hump-backed creature with a hooked nose, an exaggerated jaw, and large, irregular teeth;\textsuperscript{15} he seems to have been something of a wit\textsuperscript{16} and to have been at times a parasite\textsuperscript{17} and at times a schoolmaster. There was Maccus, a stupid, awkward fool and a glutton, who may have had a bald head. And there was Pappus, the old "Papa"\textsuperscript{18} stupid and wandering in mind, who was gulled by his youthful companions; he was often bald headed with a squarish beard. As in the Phlyakes, there could be maskless actors, but the main comic characters wore masks on their faces.\textsuperscript{19} Nicoll and Bieber see, in these types, descendents


\textsuperscript{14} Both names were used.


\textsuperscript{16} Cf. also Plautus, Rudens in Plautus, (II, vi, 51).


\textsuperscript{18} Cf. Horace, Epistles, p. 374 (II, 1, 170-173).

\textsuperscript{19} Cf. Varro, On the Latin Language, I, 297 (VII, 29).

\textsuperscript{19} Nicoll, Maks, Mimes and Miracles, p. 75.
of the earlier forms and the beginnings of elements that were to come both in Roman mime and in Roman comedy.

The fullest account which we have from the ancients as to the beginnings of Roman drama comes from Livy, in his *From the Founding of the City*. He begins with the rustic origins in Etruscan and Saturnian verses, and he goes on to the appearance of actual plays in the translations from the Greeks. It was in the year 364 B.C., while a pestilence was raging in the city of Rome, that

... when neither human wisdom nor the help of Heaven was found to mitigate the scourge, men gave way to superstitious fears, and, amongst other efforts to disarm the wrath of the gods, are said also to have instituted scenic entertainments. This was a new departure for a warlike people, whose only exhibitions had been those of the circus; but indeed it began in a small way, as most things do, and even so was imported from abroad. Without any singing, without imitating the acting of singers, players who had been brought in from Etruria danced to the strains of the flautist and performed not ungraceful evolutions in the Tuscan fashion. Next the young Romans began to imitate them, at the same time exchanging jests in uncouth verses, and bringing their movements into a certain harmony with the words. And so the amusement was adopted, and frequent use kept it alive. The native professional actors were called *histriones*, from *ister*, the Tuscan word for player; they no longer -- as before -- alternately threw off rude lines hastily improvised, like the Fescennines, but performed medleys, full of musical measures, to melodies which were now written out to go with the flute, and with appropriate gesticulation.

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20 Plutarch (cf. *infra*, p. 362) reasons that *histriones* may have come from *Hister*, the name of the most popular of the Etruscan players.
Livius was the first, some years later, to abandon *saturae* and compose a play with a plot. Like everyone else in those days, he acted his own pieces; and the story goes that when his voice, owing to the frequent demands made upon it, had lost its freshness, he asked and obtained the indulgence to let a boy stand before the flautist to sing the monody, while he acted it himself, with a vivacity of gesture that gained considerably from his not having to use his voice. From that time on actors began to use singers to accompany their gesticulation, reserving only the dialogue parts for their own delivery. When this type of performance had begun to wean the drama from laughter and informal jest, and the play had gradually developed into art, the young men abandoned the acting of comedies to professionals and revived the ancient practice of fashioning their nonsense into verses and letting fly with them at one another; this was the source of the after-plays which came later to be called *exodia,* and were usually combined with Atellan farces. The Atellan was a species of comedy acquired from the Oscans, and the young men kept it for themselves and would not allow it to be polluted by the professional actors; that is why it is a fixed tradition that performers of Atellan plays are not disfranchised, but serve in the army as though they had no connexion with the stage. Amongst the humble origins of other institutions it has seemed worth while to set down the early history of the play, that it might be seen how sober were the beginnings of an art that has nowadays reached a point where opulent kingdoms could hardly support its mad extravagance.21

Thus Livy seeks to explain the development of dramatic entertainment in a professional nature and its separation from amateur forms. Livius Andronicus, of Livy's story, was a Greek of Tarentum who, after the surrender of that city to the Romans in 272 B.C., was brought as a young slave to

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Rome. He came into the possession of a certain Lucius Livius, and as a reward for instruction to Livius's sons, was set free. He continued to teach; and he made, possibly for his pupils' benefit, a rough Latin translation in Saturnian verse of Homer's *Odyssey*. This work has been regarded as the oldest real poem in the Latin language. But Andronicus did other things too. He became, as Livy says, an actor and stage manager and an author of stage plays. And in addition to having written the first Latin epic, the first Latin tragedy, and the first Latin comedy (all translations from the Greek), he composed what is believed to be the first Latin lyric poem (probably original with him in the Latin). Of his stage career, according to the Livy story, he was known at first only for his *Saturae*, or plotless medleys produced on the stage to the accompaniment of a flute. When he took the opportunity to make the change, then he, like Thespis and Aeschylus before him, actually performed in his own compositions. As an actor he began, in this third century B.C., the separation of song and recitation from the mimetic art which was to prepare the way for the pantomimes of the Augustan period.

There are fragments from some of Andronicus's tragedies, from some of his comedies, and from his *Odyssey*.23 From none

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of them may be found any statement of opinion about methods
of acting. It may be supposed, since he made the separation
of song from miming, that he had a gift for mimicry, that
his was an art of physical response and expressiveness.
Bieber points out that, along with the Greek plays, the
Romans inherited the Greek art of acting which had developed
for centuries. She observes that the Italians have always
had a special flair for mimicry, that they are born improvisors,
and that they habitually use lively and meaningful ges-
tures. Such characteristics were evidently typical of Roman
acting from the first.

In the early times the actors were chosen from among
the slaves, who might be whipped if they failed to win
approval from the audiences. Actors in Rome were never,
as in ancient Greece, honored celebrants in religious observ-
ances. Livy's statement about the Atellan players' not being
removed from the roll of their tribe, as were the profession-
al actors, refers to a provision of Roman Law. A profession-
al stage player was infamis, incapable of the full rights of
a citizen. The reason could have been "that the first actors
were foreigners, and it was not for a Roman to engage in their
occupation"; or it could have been that there was a "strong
prejudice against making money by display of one's physical

25 Cf. Plautus, Cistellaria or The Casket Comedy
in Plautus, II, 183 (783-389).
capacities... as being too like the conduct of a harlot." Amateurs, among them the Atellans, were exempt from this ban because they made nothing by their antics. But the professional actors in the third and second centuries came under the law.

Of the professional dramatists of these times, besides Andronicus, there are a few who should be mentioned before Plautus. Gnaeus Naevius, a Roman citizen, wrote tragedies and comedies modelled on Greek sources (fabulae palliatae) and also plays based on Roman subject matter (fabulae togatae). He invented a new kind of play, the fabula praetexta or Roman history play. And he wrote an epic poem on the first Punic war, which was the first national or purely Roman epic. Quintus Ennius, who was brought by Cato from Calabria to Rome and became a teacher of Greek there, adapted some of the best tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides to Latin, following rather closely his Greek models. His great contribution to Latin literature was his famous Annales, an epic poem in musical hexameters on the story of Rome from the migration of the Trojan Aeneas to Italy. Caecilius Statius, an Insubrian Gaul and a contemporary of Ennius, wrote comedies in the manner of Menander and somewhat prophetic of the style of Terence. Marcus Pacuvius of Calabria lived

28 Ibid., I, xvii-xxvi
29 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
most of his life in Rome and became famous there both as a painter and as a writer of tragedies. Lucius Accius of Umbria wrote tragedies on Greek models as well as on Roman subjects; and he wrote *didascalia* on stage history and *pragmatica* on stage practice. There are surviving fragments from the work of all these men, and these fragments have been examined in this investigation of ancient theories of acting. Among them, the only one of especial interest in this study is a bit from Accius's *Records of the Stage*. About "messengers" in tragic plays Accius says that

... while they wish to attain terseness of words, they render a response That differs from the message given them.

These lines would seem to refer to the actors' interpolations or omissions or changes of the script in some way. And Accius, the playwright, quite naturally disapproved of such a practice. But the Roman playwrights were not of exceeding importance to the people of Rome. Certainly they are not of great importance in the history of the drama. It was in a type of acting, which came to its fullest

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32 *Ibid.*, I, II.
development during the time of Augustus, and in an adaptation of the theater building proper that the Romans had their greatest influence upon the things of the stage.

It was not, however, until the first century B.C. that the Romans had a permanent theater building. Through the second century B.C. the plays of Rome were given in public places -- in the Forum, before temples, or in the circus. Here were probably erected temporary stages like the Phlyakes or *fabulae Atellanae* stages; and the spectators probably sat on temporary wooden benches. In 195 B.C. special seats near the stage were assigned to the senators. It was on such stages that the plays of Plautus were performed.

By the time of Plautus, then, the Romans were fairly well under way in the business of taking over and adapting the components of the Greek drama to their own uses. The Atellan farces and mimes were playing to popular audiences. The translations of Greek comedies and tragedies, as well as some plays on purely Roman themes, were being presented, usually perhaps to more select groups. The actors were slaves, who might receive beatings if they did not please. All the productions, so far as can be ascertained, were on temporary stages, set up wherever convenient -- often in public places such as Forum or circus. In the last few

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35 *Livy, op. cit.*, (XXXIV, xlv, 5).

years of the third century B.C. and in the early part of the second, upon the Phlyax-type stages, the comedies of Plautus were produced for the first time.
CHAPTER V

THE PLAUTINE REQUIREMENT FOR ACTORS

Plautus

The Amphitryon of Plautus: Prologue

Summary
CHAPTER V
THE PLAUTINE REQUIREMENT FOR ACTORS

Plautus

Plautus wrote his plays in the late third and early second centuries B.C. It is thought that most of his extant works were written between about 204 and 184, the year of his death.¹

His comedy shows the influence of the native farces in its coarse humor and effective wit. But the Attic New Comedies of Menander and his contemporaries supply the chief models as Plautus builds his plays, usually around the love of a youth for a girl and the tricks of his slave to help him. The girl is often an unrecognized daughter of a citizen, and her identity is finally discovered. Sometimes she is a courtesan and as clever as the lying schemer of a slave. There are stern fathers, lenient fathers, worthy mothers, scolding wives, money lenders, bragging soldiers, parasites, and cooks. Gesticulation which would be required would be free and spontaneous and sharply differentiated for the various character types. In a scene in the Miles Gloriosus (The Braggart Warrior) the old man Periplectomenus describes

¹ Plautus, I, vi.
the gestures of the slave Palaestrio, who is planning a strategem:

Think it out. I'll step over here in the meantime. (moves away and amusedly watches Palaestrio at his gesticulations) Just look at him, how he stands there with bent brow, considering and conjecturing. He's tapping his chest with his fingers. Intends to summon forth his intelligence, I suppose. Aha! Turns away! Rests his left hand on his left thigh, and reckons on the fingers of his right hand. Gives his right thigh a smack! A lusty whack -- his plan of action is having a hard birth. Snaps his fingers! He's in distress. Constantly changes his position! Look there, though; he's shaking his head -- that idea won't do! He won't take it out half baked, whatever it is, but give it to us done to a turn. Look, though! (as Palaestrio rests his chin on his hand) He's building -- supporting his chin with a pillar. None of that! I don't fancy that sort of building, not for a minute. For I happen to have heard that a foreign poet has a pillared face and a couple of custodians, always lying on him hour after hour. (as Palaestrio takes a new attitude) Glorious! A graceful pose, indeed! Just like the slaves in the comedies! Never will he rest this day till what he wants is all worked out. (Palaestrio suddenly seems illumined) He's got it, I do believe! (aloud impatiently, as Palaestrio's light seems to fail) If you are going to do anything, do it! Wake up, don't settle down to snooze -- that is, unless you prefer to stand watch here pummeled to a piece of patchwork. I say, you! You didn't get drunk yesterday, did you? Hey! I'm talking to you Palaestrio! Wake up, I tell you! Stir yourself, I tell you! It's morning, I tell you!

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2 The parenthetical directions are probably interpolations by an editor. The action, however, is obvious from the lines which Plautus gives to Periplectomenus.

3 "An allusion to the Roman (barbaro) poet Naevius imprisoned for lampooning the aristocracy." Plautus, III, 142, n. 1.

4 "His chains." Ibid., n. 2.

5 Plautus, The Braggart Warrior in Plautus, III, 143 (200-218).
Other gestures, from evidence in the texts of the plays, appear to have been equally expressive. The slaves may sweat and shiver, may be hardly able to stand for fear, may puff and pant after running, may be beaten or jerked or tied up. The young men and women, and sometimes the old men, do considerable lovemaking -- even to the extent of "naughty, naughty" kisses. And an irate wife once drags an erring husband directly from the couch of sin. There are grins and winks and angry glares and blazing eyes. Bieber shows that the "attitudes described in the plays

6 Ibid., The Comedy of Asses in Plautus, I, 153 (289).
7 Ibid., The Captives in Plautus, I, 525 (638).
8 Ibid., The Comedy of Asses in Plautus, I, 157 (326).
9 Ibid., The Captives in Plautus, I, 521 (610).
10 Ibid., I, 527-535 (657-750).
12 Ibid., The Comedy of Asses in Plautus, I, 221 (892).
14 Ibid., The Haunted House in Plautus, III, 349 (567).
15 Ibid., The Two Menæchmuses in Plautus, II, 425 (611-614).
16 Ibid., The Captives in Plautus, I, 515 (557).
17 Ibid., p. 519 (595).
correspond with the Hellenistic and Roman marble and terracotta statuettes of comic actors. These gestures, she thinks "must have been adopted with the comedies and developed further by the Romans."\(^{18}\)

The art of acting did not reach its height in Rome until about a century after the time of Plautus, after the peak of Roman playwriting with Plautus and Terence. The six preserved comedies of Terence\(^{19}\) belong to the period between 166 and 160 B.C. They are imitations of Menander and the other writers of Attic New Comedy. They use the stock character types, but they are milder in their humor than the plays of Plautus. There is sometimes shown real psychological understanding of character development. But Terence makes no statement as to how the acting in his plays should be done. Plautus and Terence knew nothing of the skill of Roscius and Aesop. Theirs were slave actors.\(^{20}\) All of Plautus's epilogues ask for applause from audiences and two of them mention possible thrashings for the players if applause is denied.\(^{21}\) In the early days of Roman playwriting, it was customary for the poets to act frequently in their own plays.\(^{22}\) Although it is not


\(^{20}\) *Supra.*, p. 177.


\(^{22}\) Livy, *op. cit.*, (vol. III, p. 363 (VII, ii, 8-9)).
known that Plautus did so, it is generally agreed that he worked in a theater in some capacity before he began to write plays.\textsuperscript{23} Certainly he had learned, somehow, to write for theatrically comic effect, and he gave his players opportunity to act for the same end. He comments only once upon a particular actor's playing. In the Bacchises the slave Chrysalus, bored with a story of his young master Pistoclerus, says to him:

\begin{quote}
It is not the situations that make me sick unto death; it's your confounded acting. Even the Epidicus\textsuperscript{24} -- a comedy I love as well as my own self -- well, there's not a one I so object to seeing, if Pellio's playing in it.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

Plautus does not explain his aversion to Pellio. And he does not go into detail elsewhere about methods of acting.

There is one time, however, that he sums up into a single word the qualities which he expects from his actors. Though the word is a generalization, though it is not

\textsuperscript{23} Nixon (in \textit{Plautus}, I, ix) says: "Little is known of the life of Titus Maccius Plautus. He was born about 255 B.C. at Sarsina, in Umbria; it is said that he went to Rome at an early age, worked at a theater, saved some money, lost it in a mercantile venture, returned to Rome penniless, got employment in a mill and wrote, during his leisure hours, three plays. These three plays were followed by many more than the twenty extant, most of them written, it would seem, in the latter half of his life. . . ." Freedley and Reeves (op. cit., p. 40) say that Plautus is believed to have begun his association with the theater as a stage carpenter or scene shifter."

\textsuperscript{24} Plautus's play.

defined or explained or enlarged upon, it seems to merit inclusion in such an anthology as this, as well as to deserve its chronological place at the beginning of the Roman writings upon acting.
Scene: -- Thebes. A Street before Amphitryon's house.

PROLOGUE

Spoken by the God Mercury

According as ye here assembled would have me prosper you and bring you luck in your buyings and in your sellings of goods, yea, and forward you in all things; . . . then in such degree will ye (suddenly dropping his pomposity) keep still while we are acting this play and all be fair and square judges of the performances.

Now I will tell you who bade me come, and why I came, and likewise myself state my own name. Jupiter bade me come: my name is Mercury (pauses, evidently hoping he has made an impression). My father has sent me here to you to make a plea, yea, albeit he knew that whatever was told you in way of command you would do, inasmuch as he realized that you revere and dread him as men should Jupiter. But the fact remains that he has bidden me make this request in suppliant wise, with gentle, kindly words . . . .

Now here is the favour Jove bade me ask of you: (with great solemnity) let inspectors go from seat to seat throughout the house, and should they discover claqueurs planted for the benefit of any party, let them take as security from all such in the house -- their togas. Or if there be those who have solicited the palm for actors, or for any artist --

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26 The translation is Paul Nixon's in Plautus.

189
whether by letter, or by personal solicitation, or through an intermediary -- or further, if the aediles do bestow the said palm upon anyone unfairly, Jove doth decree that the selfsame law obtain as should the said party solicit guiltily, for himself or for another, public office. 'Tis worth has won your wars for you, saith he, not solicitation or unfairness: why should not the same law hold for player as for noblest patriot? Worth, not hired support, should solicit victory. He who plays his part aright ever has support enough, if it so be that honour dwells in those whose concern it is to judge his acts.
Summary

Thus Plautus epitomizes into a single word the excellence that he wishes in his actors. "'Tis worth has won your wars for you . . .: why should not the same law hold for player as for noblest patriot. Worth, not hired support, should solicit victory." And he goes on with another statement, which, though it is a generalization, still holds a certain universality: "He who plays his part aright ever has support enough, if it so be that honour dwells in those whose concern it is to judge his acts."
CHAPTER VI

THE TECHNIQUE OF THE IDEAL ACTOR OF CICERO:
QUINTUS ROSCIUS

Conditions in the Theaters of Cicero's Time

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Cicero in Defence of Publius Quintius

Cicero in Defence of Quintus Roscius the Comedian

Cicero's Letters to His Friends

The De Oratore of Cicero

Cicero's Letters to Atticus

The Paradoxa Stoicorum of Cicero

Cicero's Orator

Cicero's Brutus

The De Natura Deorum of Cicero

The De Divinatione of Cicero

Summary
CHAPTER VI

THE TECHNIQUE OF THE "IDEAL ACTOR" OF CICERO:
QUINTUS ROSCIUS

Conditions in the Theaters of Cicero's Time

The art of Roman acting and the art of Roman oratory came to their fullest fruition at about the same time. Cicero and Roscius were contemporaries.

By the first century B.C. the Romans had developed the star system, emphasizing the principal actors and placing high value on brilliant individual accomplishment. Though the majority of the actors were still slaves, the superior ones could gain freedom, fortune, and wide popularity.

Roscius and Aesop were two who won their freedom because of their superb skill. Roscius was knighted by Sulla. Pliny, in his Natural History (first century A.D.), estimates

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1 Bieber, op. cit., p. 317.

Roscius's annual earnings at a half million sesterces;\(^3\) and he speaks of the immense fortune of Aesop, though he adds criticism for Aesop's fabulous extravagance.

\[ \ldots \ldots \text{But more remarkable than anything in this respect is the story of the dish of Clodius Aesopus, the tragic actor, which was valued at one hundred thousand sesterces,}^4 \text{ and in which were served up nothing but birds that had been remarkable for their song, or their imitation of the human voice, and purchased, each of them, at the price of six thousand sesterces;}^5 \text{ he being induced to this folly by no other pleasure than that in these he might eat the closest imitators of man; never for a moment reflecting that his own immense fortune had been acquired by the advantages of his voice; a parent indeed worthy of the son of whom we have already made mention as swallowing pearls.}^6 \]

Here is evidence of the feeling of the great importance to the actor of his own voice, an importance which appears to be always assumed by Roman writers whenever the voice is mentioned.\(^7\) But gesture and mimicry were of great importance, also. The early separation of song and recitation from the mimetic art\(^8\) and the natural Italian flair for mimicry had

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\(^3\) Pliny, The Natural History of Pliny (tr. John Bostock and H. T. Riley; 10 vols.; London: George Bell and Sons, 1890), II, 185 (VI, xl).

\(^4\) The amount would be about $25,000.00. (cf. infra, p. 214, n. 64). But when one considers that the average wage of a day laborer was a denarius, or about twenty cents (cf. ibid.), it is apparent what a large income Pliny was estimating Roscius's to have been.

\(^5\) About $5,000.00 (cf. infra, p. 214, n. 64).

\(^6\) About $300.00 (cf. infra, p. 214, n. 64).

\(^7\) Cf. supra, pp. 219, 226, 272-275.

\(^8\) Cf. infra, pp. 219, 226, 272-275.
from the first stimulated highly sensitive physical response to thought and mood. The fact that the mask did not appear permanently on the Roman stage till Roscius's introduction of it led to the development of facial expression also.

This first century B.C. followed the peak of Roman playwriting, which had come in the third and second centuries with the comedies of Plautus, Terence, Naevius, and Caecilius and with the tragedies of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius. These plays were being presented in the theaters of Cicero's time. There were contemporary dramas by Strabo, the orator; Julius Caesar; Lucius Cornelius Balbus; and Quintus Tullius Cicero, brother of Marcus Tullius. The Roman plays do not in any way rival the great Greek dramas of which they are translations and adaptations. But it was in these that Roscius

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9 Bieber, op. cit., pp. 315-316.
Mantzius, op. cit., 232-233.

10 Bieber, op. cit., p. 316.
A very thorough discussion of the introduction of masks on the Roman stage is given by Catharine Saunders in her article, "Masks on the Roman Stage," American Journal of Philology XXXII (1911), 58-73. She summarizes her findings by saying that there "are several Roman traditions pointing to the introduction of masks between the time of Terence and that of Cicero," but that "on the other hand there are no ancient traditions for the rise of masks from the beginning of Roman comedy, nor do the extant comedies themselves demand masked players." She adds that 91 B.C. (the dramatic date of De Oratore / cf. infra, p. 208/ ) is the latest possible date for the introduction and that 130 B.C. (if Minucius Prothymus and not Roscius was the innovator) is the earliest.

None of Miss Saunders' findings disputes the generally accepted idea that Roscius's adoption of the mask brought it into general use on the Roman stage.

11 Freedley and Reeves, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

and Aesop and Antiphon and Catienus and Fufius and Statilius and their fellows played their parts. It is interesting to note that the high point of Roman acting followed the high point of Roman dramatic composition, as it had done in Greece. The mark of contrast is that in Greece the dramas achieved qualities of greatness and timelessness which the Romans never equalled, whereas in Rome the acting, so far as we can tell, evidently surpassed anything which the Greeks had attempted. Costuming in the Roman plays was in the Greek tradition; and with the adoption of the mask the actor's appearance became completely Hellenized, the cothurnus with its raised sole becoming the symbol of tragedy and the soccus, a low closed shoe without a raised sole, becoming the symbol for comedy.

A permanent theater building had not existed in Rome in the second century B.C. The Senate was hostile to the drama, as it was to other achievements of Greek culture. In 154 B.C. it had forbidden sitting in the theater within the city of Rome; the public, in other words, had been

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13 Cf. ibid., pp. 219, 226, 242, 379.
14 Cf. ibid., p. 237.
15 Cf. ibid., p. 254.
16 Cf. ibid.
17 Cf. ibid., p. 216.
19 Ibid., p. 327.
allowed only to stand. From 145 B.C. on, however, benches were again used. Foundations for new theaters were continually being demolished, but others were erected. During the first century B.C. the temporary stages, which had been on the order of the Phlyakes platforms, began to have more and more decoration on the rear wall behind the stage, which became the front wall (scaena frons) of the temporary stage house. The stage wall which was erected by Claudius Pulcher in 99 B.C. is said to have been painted so realistically that birds came and tried to perch on the painted tile roof. Some of the smaller temporary theaters had wooden roofs, and the larger ones were covered with awnings. Some of the houses had a curtain (aulaeum) which rose from a recess in front of the stage. There was an architectural unity, even in the early Roman theaters, which the Greeks had never attained. The walls rose above the


21 Livy, op. cit., XII, 157, 279 (XL, 51, 3; XLI, 27,5).

22 Bieber, op. cit., p. 327.


24 Remains of Old Latin, IV, 189 (IV, 56).


26 Nicoll, Masks, Mimes and Miracles, p. 106, n. 4.
ground. Instead of open *parodi*, there were covered passages, *(vomitoria)* above which were seats of honor. Stage house and auditorium were related parts of the theater as a whole. The first permanent theater building in Rome was erected by Pompey in 55 B.C. below the temple of Venus Victrix, the central wedge of the auditorium forming a flight of steps leading up to the temple. The orchestra and auditorium were semi-circular, and the stage house had integral connection with the auditorium. The *scaenae frons* was decorated, though probably not so richly nor so plastically at this time as in the later modifications. A late map shows the stage with a very large rectangular central niche, having three openings in the *scaenae frons*, and with two semicircular side niches, each having an opening; all this area is shown as decorated by fifty columns. It was the fusion of parts in the Roman playhouse that was typically Roman. From elements of the Phlyakes stage, the Greek stage house and auditorium, and the Roman ornamental façade there developed the Roman theater which Cicero knew and in which Roscius played.

The mimes were coming into more and more prominence at this time, gradually taking the place of the Atellan farces

as interludes (*intermezzi*) and after-pieces (*exodia*) for the serious dramas and sometimes being presented as the principal attractions. Cicero talks of the mime in various ways. "We had heard of old of Alexandria," he says; "now we know it. It is the home of every sharp practice, every deceit; it is from its inhabitants that writers of farces draw all their plots. And indeed there is nothing of which I am more desirous than to see the faces of these men." He mentions the habit of Laberius, the writer of mimes, of putting current happenings into his plays. He refers to Sannio the mimic fool, who "arouses laughter by his face, his grimaces, his mimicry of mannerisms, his intonation, and in fact his general bearing." He seems to have like The Guardian, "an ancient and exceedingly droll farce." He praises the

Nicoll, *Masks, Mimes and Miracles*, p. 106.


32 __________, *The Letters to His Friends*, II, 36, (VII, xi, 2).


acting of Arbuscula, the mima;\textsuperscript{35} and he computes the annual earnings of Dionysia, the actress and dancer, as 200,000 sesterces.\textsuperscript{36} But he has only scorn for the immorality of Cytheris, the mimic actress, mistress of Anthony;\textsuperscript{37} and he says that the wives of officers in Verres's camp "resented the addition to their society" by Verres of Tertia, "daughter of Isidorus the ballet-dancer."\textsuperscript{38}

Certainly the mimic plays were a vital part of the entertainment which Rome provided for her citizens. They were evidently presented at first on a temporary platform similar to that of the Phlyax, set up in the orchestra with a curtain (siparium) at the rear to make a background and to screen the tragic or comic scenery of the principal play.\textsuperscript{39} Gradually they drove out the fabulae Atellanae and, in later years, even the tragedies and comedies themselves.\textsuperscript{40} In the later times they ascended from the platforms to the stages of the theaters and they came, also, to have "houses" of their own.

\textsuperscript{35} Cf. infra, p. 237.
\textsuperscript{36} Cf. infra, p. 214.
\textsuperscript{39} A full discussion of methods of staging of the mime is given by Nicoll, op. cit., pp. 99-109.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 106.
Nicoll says that the mime "is the pure example in
dramatic art of Aristotle's theory of mimesis, or imitation,"
that it "takes the whole of life for its province, and, like
nature itself, has nought to do with either morality or
religion." He says that "its mission is to imitate life,"
and that "life, good or bad, virtuous or vicious, it puts
upon the stage, having no thoughts of moral distinctions,
having no outer control beyond the force of nature itself."
He quotes Aristotle's definition of tragedy as imitation of
"men as better than they are," as a selection from life of
"some worthy or illustrious and perfect action, for the
purpose of arousing certain high emotions in the minds of
an audience." He recalls the Aristotelian definition of
comedy as imitation of "men as worse than they are for the
purpose of making ridiculous certain errors or vices."
"The mime," he says, "stands apart from both in its complete­
ly unmoral and undidactic attitude toward life." Many of
these plays were improvised. Many were the work of indi­
vidual authors. But always, for their imitation of the
whole of life, the mimic dramas depended more upon the
activities and skill of the actors than upon anything else.
Not a great many of the characters in the mimes are known.
There was the mimic fool, or sannio, or stupidus.

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41 Ibid., p. 81.
42 Ibid., p. 110.
43 Cf. Cicero, De Oratore, I, 385 (II, 1x1, 251).
was the arch-mime, or head of the company, who sometimes played chief roles and who sometimes played "secondary" parts, imitating the action or repeating the words of the first clown. There must have been a parasite and flatterer and a rather maliciously clever glutton. There were also serious characters. And there were women. Nicoll sees in many of these folk descendents of the Atellan and Phlyax characters. He believes that at times the mask was not used, but that at times it surely must have been worn. He thinks that costumes varied with characters and plays, from the pointed cap and parti-colored cloak of the fool to the more conservative attire for players of "straight" roles. Much more is to be heard of the mime in the Augustan Age, when it reached the height of its popularity and drove out not only the fabulae Atellanae but the tragedies and comedies as well. In the time of Cicero, however, the mime was still used chiefly as interlude or after-piece for the regular dramas. Its chief importance for this investigation is in its emphasis upon the actors.

Pantomimes, also, may have been having their beginnings in this period, though the references show that the real de-
development came in the time of the Empire. The pantomime was the art of interpretative dancing and acting in dumb show. It was an outgrowth of the separation of declamation, recitation, or song from the art of gesture which Livius Andronicus had begun before the time of Plautus. It was an art entirely of the actor, or dancer.

The feverish interest, also, of this era in gladiatorial combats, circus races, athletic contests, sham sea fights, and animal shows and fights and battles should not go without mention. But regular tragedy and comedy and mime and pantomime of the first century B.C. evidence the spotlight which Rome consistently threw upon the histriones, a spotlight which steadily increased in brilliance till the end of the period. Cicero's principal interest in the theaters was certainly in the comedies and tragedies, or rather in the acting in them of his friend, the actor, Quintus Roscius.

49 Nicoll, Masks, Mimes and Miracles, pp. 131-134. Cf. infra, pp. 248-250, 278-289.

Cicero, then, like Aristotle before him, lived in the years of the highest development of acting which his civilization was to produce. But just as the Greek genius of dramatic composition had excelled the abilities of the Roman imitators, so the inborn Latin bent for mimicry carried the art of individual impersonation in Rome beyond anything that it had become in ancient Greece. Thus Cicero, the most eminent orator of the Roman world, when he came to write upon the subject of rhetoric, could compare that art with the kindred one of acting and could use the technique of the most illustrious actor of the day as a guide for his perfect orator.

Unlike Aristotle, Cicero was a practical orator writing upon his own art. The guiding principle of his life was the preservation of the Republic, in the old oligarchial form, and the use of his eloquence toward that end. He was born in 106 B.C. in the village of Arpinum. At an early age, probably at about eight years, he was sent to Rome; and there he began studies which from the first were intended to fit him for public life. Among his early tutors was Archias, the Greek scholar then living in Rome.51 At

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Cf. also, John Dunlop, History of Roman Literature from its Earliest Period to the Augustan Age (2 vols.; London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Browne, 1823), II, 274.
eighteen he joined the army and served under Sulla in the first civil war. Upon his return to Rome he took up the pursuit of his education again. He tells of devoting himself to work under certain Greek philosophers and teachers -- among them "Philo, then head of the Academy," who "had fled from Athens because of the Mithridatic war"; "Molo of Rhodes, famous as a pleader and teacher"; and Diodotus the Stoic. He learned civil law under Scaevola, the Roman; and he listened to the oratory of Crassus and Antonius, of Cotta, Sulpicius, Hortensius, and Philippus. When he was about twenty-five or twenty-six, he began his work as an advocate in the courts of Rome. This was during the dictatorship of Sulla, whom Cicero supported as representing the best chance for the old Roman traditions and laws. After two years' active practice, he traveled to Asia Minor for purposes of health and for further training in the art of speaking. Stopping at Athens he spent some time with Antiochus, the philosopher of the Old Academy, and with Demetrius the Syrian, "an experienced teacher of eloquence." In Asia Minor also he was with distinguished orators: Menippus of Stratonicea, Aeschylus of Cnidus, and Xenocles of Adramyttium. At Rhodes he attached himself again to


53 Ibid., p. 267 (LXXXIX, 306).

Molo, his old teacher of earlier days. Upon his return to Rome he was elected Quaestor for Sicily. This was in 76 B.C., and Cicero was then thirty years old. There followed a long period of public life. He became Aedile at thirty-six, Praetor at forty, and Consul at forty-three. In other words he achieved, in the earliest succession allowed by law, all the great offices of trust and power in the government. After the Consulship came decline, so far as Cicero's political life was concerned. In 58 B.C. Pompey and Caesar allowed him to be exiled because of a technicality in his handling of the Catiline conspiracy. Within a year, however, Pompey needed his assistance again and called him back; and Cicero took his place in the Senate once more. In 51 he went for a year as Proconsul to Cilicia. He opposed the principles of Caesar's dictatorship, which began in 49. With Caesar's death in 44 he threw himself into a bitter attack upon Anthony; but after the joining of Antony and Octavian in the second triumvirate the next year, Cicero was doomed. His name was placed upon the proscribed list, and he was beheaded by Antony's emissaries.

In the great purpose of his life, the preservation or restoration of the old Republic, Cicero failed. But something of the eloquence with which he pursued that purpose has been

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55 Ibid., pp. 271-275 (XC, 313-316).

56 Biographical material has been taken principally from Anthony Trollope, The Life of Cicero (2 vols.; London: Chapman and Hall, 1880).
preserved in copies of many speeches. And a careful expla-
nation of his belief as to the method of achieving such
elocution has survived in the De Oratore and the Orator.
Numerous letters to various friends add to a knowledge
of the man, and they enrich the background of the Roman
period.

A number of these works reveal much that is to the
point in a study of principles of acting. The speeches In
Defence of Publius Quinctius and In Defence of Quintus
Roscius the Comedian were made during the years of Cicero's
advocacy in the courts of Rome. The letters to Marius and
Atticus were written in later years after Cicero had with-
drawn temporarily from public life. The Paradoxa Stoicorum
can be dated at some time earlier than 46 B.C., consisting
in its complete form of six short essays setting out the
most striking ethical doctrines of the Stoic school of
philosophy. The Brutus, of about 46 B.C., is a dialogue
with Cicero, Brutus, and Atticus as speakers; the three
fall into a discussion of oratory and its development in
Greece and Rome, Cicero coming finally to an analysis of
how he had achieved his success as a speaker. De Natura
Deorum, composed probably in 45 and 44 B.C., is a dialogue
also, written in three books on Epicurean theology, the
Stoic philosophy, and academic doubts concerning theism.
As a supplement to this treatise, Cicero completed De
Divinatione at some time after the death of Caesar in March
of 44 B.C. In these works there are references to Roscius
and Aesop and Antiphon and Arbuscula and Dionysia and actors in general and even to the Oscan plays. They throw considerable light upon Cicero’s opinions about actors and acting.

But in the De Oratore (55 B.C.), with repetition in the Orator (46 B.C.), Cicero takes principles of acting, which he has learned from Roscius, and applies them to rhetorical delivery. The De Oratore is in dialogue form—supposedly recording a discussion, in 91 B.C., held by Licinius Crassus (the most illustrious Roman orator before Cicero, and one of Cicero’s early tutors), Marcus Antonius (grandfather of the triumvir), Publius Sulpicius Rufus, Caius Aurelius Cotta, and a few other speakers. Crassus is the Ciceronian mouthpiece. Other matters which are discussed besides the subject of rhetorical delivery are the necessity of higher education for an orator and the remaining four of the classic requisites: inventio (selection of material), dispositio (arrangement), elocutio (style), and memoria (memory). There has been some comment, pro and con, about the advisability of basing any conclusions as to methods of acting on the Ciceronian precepts. It has been said, and correctly, that Cicero was writing upon the business of oratory; that he had no intention of formulating rules for actors; and that he spoke, a number of times, of differences in the technique of rhetorical delivery and the technique of acting. Certainly one should keep these facts in mind. Certainly it should not be assumed that every suggestion which Cicero made for his perfect orator should be interpreted as a suggestion for an ideal actor.
This thesis, it will be noted, does not take Cicero's principles of oratory and apply them to acting, except as Cicero so applied them. Yet if one reads, one must surely see that even in the statements of differences in the two arts there is something to be learned of Cicero's opinion about the one as well as about the other, about the other as well as about the one. Cicero says specifically, more than once, that many of his principles are based on the consummate art of Quintus Roscius.

He refers over and over again to Roscius's skill and to some tenets and practices both of Roscius and of other actors. Indeed the De Oratore is rich in information as to what Cicero believed about the technique of acting, a belief which he based upon the art of his friend, whom he considered the greatest actor of his time.

Taken all together and considered as a whole, these excerpts -- the speeches for Quintius and Roscius; the letters to Marius and Atticus; the Paradoxa, the Brutus, the De Natura Deorum; and the De Oratore and Orator -- tell much about Cicero's criteria for judging actors on the stage. And they give more than an indication sometimes as to what may have been a number of the principles upon which Roscius built his art.

57 Cicero, De Oratore, I, 91 (I, xxviii, 130); 187 (I, lx, 254); 189-190 (I, lxi, 258). Cf. infra, pp. 224-225.

58 Other writings of this period which have been examined are as follows:

Caesar, Civil Wars (tr. A.G. Peskett; "The Loeb
Sallust, Sallust (tr. J. C. Rolfe; "The Loeb Classical Library"; 1929).  
Varro, On the Latin Language.  
Catullus, Catullus.  
, Pro Archia, Post Reditum, De Doma, De Haruspicum Responsis.  
24. . . . I kept saying to Quintus Roscius, here present, whose sister is my client's wife, when he most earnestly begged me to undertake the defence of his kinsman, that it was very difficult for me, not only to plead so important a cause to the end, but even to attempt to utter a single word. When he pressed me still more urgently, I said to him, with the familiarity of a friend, that anyone who even attempted a stage gesture in his presence must be most brash-faced, but that those who presumed to pit themselves against him, even if they already enjoyed a certain reputation for grace and correctness, would lose it at once, and that I was afraid that something of the kind might happen to me, when I had to speak against such an artist.60


This is said to be Cicero's first speech as an advocate in the Roman courts. It was a complicated suit, arising out of the business relations of Quinctius's dead brother with a certain Sextus Naevius. The counsel for the other party was Hortensius. The result of the case is not known. (Cf. Rose, op. cit., p. 171).

60 "That is, as Hortensius is." Freese, op. cit., p. 3, n. a.
25. Then Roscius said much to encourage me; and by Hercules! even if he had not said a word, anyone would have been greatly moved merely by the silent expression of his interest and zeal for his kinsman. For as he is such an artist that he alone seems worthy to be seen on the stage, so is he such a man that he alone seems worthy of never appearing upon it.61

61 Here is an evidence of the hang-over of general disrepute of the stage, except in the case of highly skilled actors.
6. ... Quintus Roscius? What say you? If hot coals, when thrown into water, are at once cooled and extinguished, do not the ducry arrows of slander, when brought up against a life of the greatest innocence and purity, immediately fall to the ground and lose their fire? Roscius cheated his partner! Can such an offence be fastened on this man? a man who, so help me the god of truth! (and I say so quite fearlessly) has in him more good faith than art, more truth than learning; a man whom the Roman people respects more highly as a man than as an actor, who by his talent is most worthy of the stage as he is of the senate by his purity of life. But why am I so foolish as to speak of Roscius before Piso? I am praising him at length, as

62 The translation is by Freese, op. cit.
This, also, was a complicated suit. It concerned the slave Panurgus, who had originally been the property of Gaius Fannius Chaerea. But Chaerea had noted the ability of Panurgus and had entered into a partnership with Roscius, agreeing that the slave should be their common property. Roscius was to train him for the stage, and Roscius and Chaerea were to share the profits. The slave achieved rapid success, but his career was soon brought to an end when he was murdered by one Quintus Flavius under circumstances unknown. An action for damages for the value of Panurgus was begun by Roscius against Flavius, with Fannius acting as Roscius's agent. Before the trial, however, Roscius came to a settlement with Flavius to accept a farm, which later on, under his good management, became valuable. Now Fannius claims half the value of the farm on the ground that the settlement was made on behalf of the partnership and not for Roscius only. This is the main issue of the case, but there are other complicated points which have not been entirely cleared. Cf. Freese, op. cit., p. 287.
if forsooth he were an unknown man. Is there any man in
the world of whom you have a better opinion? Is there any-
one whom you think more virtuous, more modest, more refined,
more ready to oblige, or more generous? What? do you,
Saturius, who appear against him, hold a different opinion?
In this cause, as often as you had occasion to mention his
name, did you not each time declare that he was an honour-
able man and that you spoke of him with respect -- a
compliment usually paid only to a most disting­uish­ed person
or a most intimate friend? . . . .

7. . . . . Roscius has constantly portrayed . . .
[ this Fannius Chaerea] brilliantly on the stage -- and
yet he is not adequately rewarded with gratitude in return
for his kindness. For when he plays Ballio,\(^\text{63}\) that most
rascally and perjured pimp, Roscius really represents
Chaerea; that filthy, impure, and detested character is
the image of Chaerea in manners, disposition, and life . . . .

Such is the starting-point of this affair; let us see
what happened afterwards. Quintus Roscius cheated Fannius of
50,000 sesterces.\(^\text{64}\) On what grounds? . . . I should like
to ask why he was so intensely eager to have those sesterces;

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\(^\text{63}\) A pimp in the Pseudolus of Plautus.

\(^\text{64}\) "On the assumption that the sesterce equals about
two pence, large amounts can be roughly reduced to pounds
sterling by dividing by 100. But it should be remembered
that four sesterces make a denarius, which . . . was the
average wage of a day labourer, the 'penny a day' of the
Thus the amount in question would have been about $2500.00.
Why were they worth so much to Roscius, is what I want to know. Was he in want? No, he was wealthy.

Had he any debts? No, he had plenty of money. Was he a miser? No, even before he became rich, he was always most liberal and generous. Good heavens! a man who refused to make a profit of 300,000 sesterces — for certainly he could and ought to have earned that amount if Dionysia can earn 200,000 — did he employ the greatest fraud, wickedness, and perfidy for the sake of obtaining 50,000 sesterces?

The first sum was immense, honourably acquired, agreeable to gain, his own property; the second was paltry, sordid, distressing, depending on an action and a trial. In the last ten years Roscius could have made 6,000,000 sesterces; he would not. The labour that could earn a fortune he undertook; the fortune it might have brought he rejected ...

9. . . . Saturius . . . complained bitterly that Roscius had become joint-possessor for nothing of a slave who had been bought by Fannius and was his private property. Of course Fannius, that generous man, careless about money, overflowing with kindness, made a present of him to Roscius. I suppose so! Since Saturius dwelt some little time on this point, I also must linger a little. You assert, Saturius,

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65 About $15,000.00
Some translators read the figure as 600,000 sesterces. Cf. Freese, op. cit., p. 296, n. a.

66 A famous dancer.
that Panurgus was the private property of Fannius. But I contend that he belonged entirely to Roscius. For what part belonged to Roscius? His training. It was not his personal appearance, but his skill as an actor that was valuable. What belonged to Fannius was not worth more than 4,000 sesterces, the other something worth 100,000 sesterces, unless perhaps you are annoyed at having to draw 4,000 sesterces from your strong box, whereas Roscius brought forth 100,000 as the result of his training and skill. What hopes, what expectations, what enthusiasm, what favour accompanied Panurgus on the stage, because he was the pupil of Roscius! All who were devoted to Roscius and admired him favoured and approved of the pupil; in short, all who had heard the name of Roscius thought the way of the crowd; its judgements are seldom founded on truth, mostly on opinion. Very few appreciated what he knew, everybody wanted to know where he learnt it. They did not think that anything irregular or wrong could come out of Roscius. If he had come from Statilius, although he might have surpassed Roscius in skill no one would have looked at him; for no one would think that a good comedian could be made out of a very bad actor any more than a worthy son be born from an unworthy father. Because Panurgus came from Roscius he seemed to know even more than he did.

67 Though one realizes that Cicero is stating the argument so as to win the case, one sees also that he is putting high value upon the actor's training and developed skill rather than upon his inborn talent.
The same thing also happened recently in the case of the comedian Eros. Driven off the stage, hissed and even insulted, he took refuge as at an altar in the house of Roscius, who gave him instruction, patronage, and his name; and so, in a very short time, he who had not even been considered good enough for the lowest class of actors attained a position among the most distinguished comedians. What was it that raised him so high? Only the recommendation of Roscius, who after this not only took Panurgus to his house that he might be spoken of as one of his pupils, but taught him with the greatest pains, irritability and discomfort. In fact, the cleverer and more talented a man is, the more ill-tempered and worried he is as a teacher; for when he sees that a pupil is slow at grasping what he himself has mastered so rapidly, he is tormented.

68 These tributes, concerning the instruction to Panurgus and the instruction to Eros, seem largely tributes for Roscius's reputation; but it is apparent that the teaching, in both cases, must have been successful.
1. Cicero to M. Marius

Rome, September or October, 55 B.C.

If it was some bodily pain or weakness of health that prevented you coming to the games, I attribute it to chance rather than to your wisdom; but if you held in contempt what the rest of the world admires, and though your health permitted of your doing so, you still had no wish to come, then I am delighted for both reasons — that you were free from bodily pain, and that you showed strength of mind in disdaining what others unjustifiably admire; provided only that you have got some real profit out of your leisure; and indeed you have had a wonderful opportunity of profiting by it to the full, left as you were almost alone, amid all that beautiful scenery of yours. And yet I doubt not that you, looking out of that chamber of yours, from which, by making


70 "A rich Arpinate, and an esteemed friend of Cicero. He was a man of letters, but suffered from ill health, and generally lived on his estate near Cicero's villa at Pompeii. His own villa faced Tabiae and the coast .... This letter was written on the occasion of the dedication of Pompey's theater and the temple of Venus Victrix, where Pompey, now in his second consulship, exhibited shows of unparalleled magnificence." Williams, op. cit., II, 3, n. a.
a gap, you have opened out for yourself a view of the Stabian stage, have spent the morning hours of all those days in taking peeps at the scenery, while they meantime, who left you where you are, were gazing at farces of the public stage, — and could scarcely keep awake. The remaining hours of the day, however, you have been spending in such amusements as you had provided for yourself according to your fancy, while we had to go through with anything that Sp. Maecius71 — just think of it! — had sanctioned.

If you ask me, the games were of course most magnificent; but they would not have been to your taste; that I infer from my own feelings. For in the first place those actors had returned to the stage out of respect for the occasion,72 who had, as I thought, quitted it out of self-respect. Indeed your favourite, our friend Aesop, was such a failure that nobody in the world would have regretted his leaving off. When he began to swear the oath, his voice failed him at the crucial point, If wittingly I deceive.73 Why should I tell you anything more? You know what the rest of the games were like. Why, they were not even as attractive as games on a middling scale often are. For any feeling of cheerfulness

71 "Spurius Maecius Tarpa whom Pompey appointed licenser of plays — a sort of Lord Chamberlain." Ibid., p. 4, n. 2.

72 "To honour Pompey." Ibid., n. d.

73 Aesop was the great tragic actor at Rome as Roscius was the great comedian. One could almost wish that Cicero had omitted this description of Aesop's failure in his old age. The story, however, illustrates the stress which the Romans laid on the importance to the actor of his voice.
was extinguished by the spectacle of such magnificence — a magnificence which, I am sure, it will not disturb you in the least to have missed seeing. For what pleasure can there be in the sight of six hundred mules in the Clytemnestra, or of three thousand bowls in the Trojan Horse, or of the varied accoutrements of foot and horse in some big battle? All of which excited the admiration of the people, but would have given you no pleasure at all.

But as for you, if during those days you listened attentively to your reader Protogenes, always provided that he read out to you anything rather than my speeches, depend upon it, you have had a great deal more pleasure than any single one of us. For I don't think you were sorry to miss the Greek and Oscan plays, especially when you can witness your Oscan plays in your own town-council, while as for the Greeks, you have so little love for them that you do not often go even to your own villa by the Greek road. As to the athletics, why should I suppose that you are sorry to have missed them, — you, who treated the gladiators so contemptuously? And on them Pompey himself admits that he wasted both toil and oil.  

74 "Marius could get as much fun out of the proceedings of his town council at Pompeii as out of the broadest farces on the stage. By Oscan plays he means the Fabulae Atellanae which originated in Atella, an ancient town of the Oscii, in Campania." Williams, op. cit., II, 6, n. a.

75 "The allusion is to 'midnight oil' and not to the oil used in the training schools." Ibid., n. c.
There remain the wild-beast hunts, two a day for five days -- magnificent; there is no denying it. But what pleasure can it possibly be to a man of culture, when either a puny human being is mangled by a most powerful beast, or a splendid beast is transfixed with a hunting spear? And even if all this is something to be seen, you have seen it more than once; and I, who was a spectator, saw nothing new in it. The last day was that of the elephants, and on that day the mob and crowd were greatly impressed, but manifested no pleasure. Indeed the result was a certain compassion and a kind of feeling that that huge beast has a fellowship with the human race.

However, during those days, I mean the performances on the stage, . . . I almost strained myself to death at the trial of your dear friend, Gallus Caninius. But if I found the people as ready to dispense with me as Aesopus found them, I swear I should be glad to retire from practice, and live with you and those of our set.

76 "Tribune of the plebs in 56 B.C. . . . Cicero defended him in 53. He was with Cicero at Athens in 51. He was a friend of Varro and died in 44." Ibid., p. 8, n. d.
Chapter 5

The speaker's delivery needs to be controlled by bodily carriage, gesture, play of features and changing intonation of voice; and how important that is wholly by itself, the actor's trivial art and the stage proclaim; for there, although all are labouring to regulate the expression, the voice, and the movements of the body, everyone knows how few actors there are, or ever have been, whom we could bear to watch! . . . .

Chapter 26

Crassus . . . . In those arts then, in which we are looking, not for any necessary utility, but some method of freely bringing delight to the intellect, how critical -- I had almost said how disdainful -- are our judgements! For there are no lawsuits or contentions to compel mankind to sit through bad acting on the stage, as they would bear with indifferent oratory in Court. . . .

77 The translation is by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, op. cit.

78 Cicero frequently calls the actor's art a trivial one. Since such statements occur usually in connection with a statement about the art of the orator, it is possible to interpret that the term "trivial" is comparative.
Chapter 27

Antonius . . . there is something of which I often have to complain, that, whenever tried and approved exponents of the other arts have done some work with less than their wonted success, their inability to perform what they knew how to perform is explained by their being out of the humour or hindered by indisposition (people say, 'Roscius was not in the mood for acting to-day,' or 'He was a little out of sorts'); whereas, if it is an orator's shortcoming that is being criticized the same is thought due to stupidity . . . .

Chapter 28

. . . in an orator we must demand the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer's memory, a tragedian's voice, and the bearing almost of the consummate actor. Accordingly no rarer thing than a finished orator can be discovered among the sons of men. For attributes which are commended when acquired one apiece, and that in their respective vocations, cannot win approval when embodied in an orator, unless in him they are all assembled in perfection.

Crassus and yet observe, . . . how much care is exercised in an extremely mean and trivial craft than in this art, which is admittedly the greatest. For again and again do I hear Roscius declaring that so far he has never succeeded in finding a single pupil of whom he really approved; not that there were not some who were acceptable, but because, if there was any blemish whatever in them, he
himself could not endure it. (For nothing stands out so conspicuously, or remains so firmly fixed in the memory, as something in which you have blundered.) And so, to take this comparison with this player as our standard of an orator's merit, do you not see how he does nothing otherwise than perfectly, nothing without consummate charm, nothing save in the manner befitting the occasion, and so as to move and enchant everybody? Accordingly he had long ago brought it about that, in whatsoever craft a man excelled, the same was called a Roscius in his own line.

Chapter 29
... lack ... of good taste is above all else to be avoided, and as to this particular failing it is especially difficult to lay down rules, difficult not only for me, who talk of these matters like papa laying down the law, but even for the great Roscius himself; whom I often hear affirming that the chief thing in art is to observe good taste, though how to do this is the one thing that cannot be taught by art.

Chapter 59
[Antonius] Who would deny that in his movements and carriage the orator must have the bearing and elegance of

79 This fact is especially true in regard to the stage, where action is magnified a hundred-fold.
80 Cf. supra, p. 209.
Roscius? Yet no one will urge young devotees of eloquence to toil like actors at the study of gesture. What is so essential to an orator as intonation? Yet no devotee of eloquence will become, by my advice, a slave to his own voice, after the manner of the Greek tragedians, who both for many a year practice declamation from their chairs, and every day, before their performance on the stage, lie down and gradually arise the voice, and later, after playing their parts, take their seats, and bring it back again from the highest treble to the lowest bass, and in a way regain control of it. If we had a fancy to do this, the parties whose cases we had undertaken would lose their cases, before we had recited our hymn or chant the regulation number of times.

Chapter 60

... And yet, as we are taking from a single artist a number of details for our likeness of an orator, that same Roscius is fond of saying, that the older he grows, the slower he will make the flute-player's rhythms and the lighter the music. Now, if he, fettered as he is by a definite system of measures and metres, is none the less thinking out some relief for his old age, how much more easily can we not merely slacken our methods, but change them altogether! ...

Chapter 61

... you would have every man of us be a kind of Roscius in his own line; and you said that the approbation

81 Cf. Ibid.
accorded to the good points of a speech is short-lived in comparison with the enduring aversion inspired by its shortcomings, whereas I hold that the criticism of our oratory is less squeamish than that directed upon actors. This explains why I see that, even when hoarse, we are often listened to with rapt attention, since the very fact of our hoarseness and our case grip the audience: while Aesopus, should he be a little husky, is hissed off the stage.\footnote{Cf. \textit{ibid.}} For, in those arts of which nothing is expected save the gratification of the ear, offence is given directly that gratification is at all weakened. . . .

\section*{BOOK II}

\ldots

\section*{Chapter 45}

\ldots Moreover it is impossible for the listener to feel indignation, hatred or ill-will, to be terrified of anything, or reduced to tears of compassion, unless all those emotions, which the advocate would inspire in the artitrator, are visibly stamped or rather branded on the advocate himself. Now if some feigned indignation had to be depicted, and that same kind of oratory afforded only what was counterfeit and produced by mimicry, some loftier art would perhaps be called for. As things stand, Crassus, I do not know how it may be with yourself or the rest, but
in my own case there is no reason why I should lie to men of consummate experience, who are also my best friends: I give you my word that I never tried, by means of a speech, to arouse either indignation or compassion, either ill will or hatred, in the minds of a tribunal, without being really stirred myself, as I worked upon their minds, by the very feelings to which I was seeking to prompt them. For it is not easy to succeed in making an arbitrator angry with the right party, unless he first sees you on fire with hatred yourself; nor will he be prompted to compassion, unless you have shown him the tokens of your own grief by word, sentiment, tone of voice, look and even by loud lamentation. For just as there is no substance so ready to take fire, as to be capable of generating flame without the application of a spark, so also there is no mind so ready to absorb an orator's influence, as to be inflammable when the assail ing speaker is not himself aglow with passion. 83

Chapter 46

Again, lest haply it should seem a mighty miracle, for a man so often to be roused to wrath, indignation and every inward emotion -- and that too about other people's business -- the power of those reflections and commonplaces, discussed and handled in a speech, is great enough to dispense with all make-believe and trickery: for the very quality of the diction, employed to stir the feelings of others, stirs

83 Cf. Quintilian's statements, infra, pp. 319-320.
the speaker himself even more deeply than any of his hearers. 

... However, as I said, not to have this seem a marvel among us, what can be so unreal as poetry, the theatre, or stage-plays? And yet, in that sort of thing, I myself have often been a spectator when the actor-man's eyes seemed to me to be blazing behind his mask, as he spoke these solemn lines,

Darest thou part from thy brother, or Salamis enter without him, 
Dreading the mien of thy sire not at all?

Never did he utter the word "mien," without my beholding an infuriated Telamon maddened by grief for his son. Whenever too he lowered his voice to a plaintive tone, in the passage,

Aged and childless, 
Didst tear and bereave and didst quench me, forgetting the death of thy brother, 
Forgetting his tiny son, though entrusted to thee as a guardian?

I thought I heard sobs of mourning in his voice. Now if that player, though acting it daily, could never act that scene without emotion, do you really think that Pacuvius, when he wrote it, was in a calm and careless frame of mind? That could never be. For I have often heard that -- as they say Democritus and Plato have left on record -- no man can be a good poet who is not on fire with passion, and inspired

84 Cf. infra, p. 322, for Quintilian's similar statement.

85 These are lines from the Teucer of Pacuvius. Cf. Remains of Old Latin, II, 292-293.
by something very like frenzy. 86

Chapter 47

Do not suppose then that I myself, though not concerned to portray and reproduce in language the bygone misfortunes and legendary griefs of heroes, and though presenting my own personality and not representing another's, did without profound emotion the things I did when closing that famous case, in which my task was to maintain Manius Aquilius in his civic rights. 87 For here was a man who I remembered as having been consul, commander-in-chief, honoured by the Senate, and mounting in procession to the Capitol; on seeing him cast down, crippled, sorrowing and brought to the risk of all he held dear, I was myself overcome by compassion before I tried to excite it in others. . . .

Chapter 54

Jesting too and shafts of wit are agreeable and often highly effective: but these, even if all else can be taught by art, are assuredly the endowment of nature and in no need of art. To my mind, Caesar, you far surpass all others in this field. . . .

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87 Aquilius was consul in 101 B.C. After suppressing the Servile War in Sicily, he was prosecuted in 98 B.C. for extortion, but was successfully defended by Antonius. Sutton and Rackham, op. cit., I, 338, n. a.
Chapter 57

[Crassus] . . . . And so, Caesar, I too beg you, if you think proper, to discuss fully this type of jesting, and to state your views, lest haply one branch of oratory should be thought to have been passed over, with your approval, in such a company as this, and in a conversation so carefully elaborated.

[Caesar] Assuredly, Crassus, seeing that you are collecting a boon companion's 'shot,' I will not run away and so give you any occasion for complaint, although I am generally amazed at the shamelessness of those who strut the stage under the very eye of Roscius; for what man can so much as stir without that artist noticing his weak points? Just so I, with Crassus in my audience, am now going to discuss witticisms. . . .

Chapter 59

[Antonius] . . . A sort of jest depending on facts, is that which is generally derived from what may be called vulgarized mimicry, as when on another occasion, Crassus was adjuring an adversary in the words, 'By your rank, by your lineage!' What else had the assembly to laugh at in this than that mimicry of facial expression and intonation? But when he went on to say, 'By your statuary,' and lent a touch of action to the word by stretching out his arm, we laughed quite consumedly. To this class belongs Roscius's famous representation of an old man, when he quavers out,
"For you, son Antipho, I'm planting these." I think I am listening to testy Eld personified. However this particular kind of laughing matter is all such as to need extreme circumspection in the handling of it. For if the caricature is too extravagant, it becomes the work of buffoons in pantomime, as also does grossness. It behooves the orator to borrow merely a suspicion of mimicry, so that his hearer may imagine more than meets his eye; he must also testify to his own well-bred modesty, by avoiding all unseemly language and offensive gestures.

BOOK III

... .

Chapter 26

[Crassus] ... applause in the middle of a speech and ... unlimited praise had better have some shadow and background, to make the spot of high light appear to stand out more prominently. When Roscius speaks the lines since for the wise, 88

Honour is valour's prize and not its prey, 88 he never uses the action at his command, but just throws them off, so that he can put his whole weight into the next lines --

But what see I? A sword-girt warrior Seated within the sanctuary shrine!

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88 "From a lost play." Ibid., II, 378, n. g.
— which he delivers with a stare of stupefied surprise. Again, how quietly and gently and with what little energy the other great actor 89 gives the line

What succour shall I seek? 90

For he presses on:

O father! O fatherland! O palace of Priam!

— on which he could not work up such an energetic delivery if he had used up his whole supply of energy on the preceding gesture. Nor did the actors see this sooner than the poets themselves did, or indeed sooner than the composers of the musical accompaniments, for both poets and composers employ a definite fall in tone and then a rise, a sinking and a swell, variations, pauses.

Chapter 56

But the effect of all of these oratorical devices depends on how they are delivered. Delivery, I assert, is the dominant factor in oratory; without delivery the best speaker cannot be of any account at all, and a moderate speaker with a trained delivery can often outdo the best of them.

My reason for dwelling on these points is because the whole of this department has been abandoned by the orators, who are the players that act real life, and has been taken over by the actors, who only mimic reality.

89 Evidently Aesop.

Chapter 57

And there can be no doubt that reality beats imitation in everything; and if reality unaided were sufficiently effective in representation, we should have no need at all for art. But because emotion, which mostly has to be displayed or else counterfeited by action, is often so confused as to be obscured and almost smothered out of sight, we have to dispel the things that obscure it and take up its prominent and striking points.\footnote{Cf. Quintilian's similar statement, infra, p. 333.}

For nature has assigned to every emotion a particular look and tone of voice and bearing of its own;\footnote{This line, with the discussion which follows, has been taken as a basis for many "manuals" of acting and elocution and public speaking. It is just here, in the opinion of the editor, that the mistake begins in trying to ascertain theories of acting from Cicero. His suggestions for orators are not to be taken as suggestions for actors. It is from the matter in Books I and II and chiefly down to this point in Book III of De Oratore that Cicero reveals his opinions and some of those of Roscius about the art of acting. It is from Cicero's statements about Roscius and the other actors and from the comparisons between orators and acting which he drew specifically that the investigator may learn of his opinions on methods of acting.} and the whole of a person's frame and every look on his face and utterance of his voice are like the strings of a harp, and sound according as they are struck by each successive emotion. For the tones of the voice are keyed up like the strings of an instrument, so as to answer to every touch, high, low, quick, slow, \textit{forte}, \textit{piano}, while between all of these in their several kinds
there is a medium note; and there are also the various modifications derived from these, smooth, or rough, limited or full in volume, tenuto or staccato, faint or harsh, diminuendo or cresendo. For there are none of these varieties that cannot be regulated by the control of art; they are the colours available for the actor, as for the painter, to secure variety.

Chapter 58

For one kind of tone must be taken by anger — shrill, hasty, with short abrupt clauses . . . . Another tone is proper for compassion and for sorrow, wavering, full, halting, in a mournful key . . . . Another belongs to fear, low and hesitating and despondent . . . . Another denotes energy; this is intense, vehement, eager with a sort of impressive urgency . . . . Another is that of joy, gushing, smooth, tender, cheerful and gay . . . . Another is the tone of dejection, a heavy kind of utterance, not employing appeal to compassion, drawn out in a single articulation and note. . . .

Chapter 59

But all these emotions must be accompanied by gesture -- not this stagy gesture reproducing the words but one conveying the general situation and idea not by

93 The illustration is another evidence of the highly mimetic character of the Roman acting.
mimicry but by hints, with this vigorous manly throwing out
of the chest, borrowed not from the stage and the theatrical profession but from the parade ground or even from wrestling; but the movements of the hand must be less rapid, following the words and not eliciting them with the fingers; the arm thrown out rather forward, like an elocutionary missile; a stamp of the foot in beginning or ending emphatic passages. But everything depends on the countenance, while the countenance itself is entirely dominated by the eyes; hence our older generation were better critics, who used not to applaud even Roscius very much when he wore a mask. For delivery is wholly the concern of the feelings, and these are mirrored by the face and expressed by the eyes; for this is the only part of the body capable of producing as many indications and variations as there are emotions, and there is nobody who can produce the same effect with the eyes shut. Theophrastus indeed declared that a certain Tauriscus used to speak of an actor that recited his lines on the stage with his gaze fixed on something as turning his back on the audience.

Chapter 60

But for effectiveness and distinction in delivery the greatest share undoubtedly belongs to the voice. The gift of a voice is what we should pray for first, but then we should take care of such voice as we may have. As to this, the proper way of caring for the voice is no concern of the kind of instruction that we are considering, although
all the same my own view is that very great care ought to be taken of it. . . .
For Fonteius' sake I returned to Rome on the 9th of July. I went to the theatre and was greeted with loud and unbroken applause — but don't bother about that; I am a fool to mention it. Then I gave my attention to Antiphon. He was granted his freedom before he appeared: and, not to keep you in suspense, he won his laurels. But there never was such a little weakling with so little voice and so. . . . But keep that to yourself. However in the Andromache he was taller than Astyanax: among the rest there was no one of his size. You want to know next about Arbuscula: she pleased me very much. The games were magnificent and much liked. . . .

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95 The break is Cicero's. Here is another criticism of an actor for his lack of voice.

THE PARADOXA STOICORUM OF CICERO\textsuperscript{97}

PARADOX III

\begin{quote}
\ldots If an actor makes a movement that is a little out of time with the music, or recites a verse that is one syllable too short or too long, he is hissed and hooted off the stage. \ldots\textsuperscript{98}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{97} The translation is by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{98} This comment shows the feeling for rhythm, even in members of the Roman audiences, and perhaps, also, their familiarity with the lines of the plays.
Chapter 25

... [The orator's] delivery is not that of tragedy nor of the stage; he will employ only slight movements of the body, but will trust a great deal to his expression. ... 100

Chapter 31

... We have seen actors whose superiors in their own class cannot be found, who not only gained approval in utterly different parts while confining themselves to their own spheres of tragedy and comedy, but we have also seen a comedian highly successful in tragedy and a tragedian in comedy. 101

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99 The translation is by H. M. Hubbell, op. cit.

100 There is further discussion of delivery in the Orator (XVII, 55-60, pp. 347-351), but this material is fully covered in De Oratore.

101 The reference is evidently to Roscius, who was also successful in tragedy, and the tragedian Aesopus, "though there is no evidence except this passage that he ever appeared in comedy." Hubbell, op. cit., p. 386, n. a.
Chapter 84

... This is what I wish for my orator: when it is reported that he is going to speak let every place on the benches be taken, the judges' tribunal full, ... a listening crowd thronging about, the presiding judge erect and attentive; when the speaker rises the whole throng will give a sign for silence, then expressions of assent, frequent applause; laughter when he wills it, or if he wills, tears; so that a mere passer-by observing from a distance, though quite ignorant of the case in question, will recognize that he is succeeding and that a Roscius is on the stage.

102 The translation is by G. L. Hendrickson, op. cit.
Chapter 26

Quintus Catulus, the father of our colleague and friend to-day, was warmly attached to your fellow-townsmen Roscius, and actually wrote the following verses in his honour:

By chance abroad at dawn, I stood to pray
To the uprising deity of day;
When lo, upon my left -- propitious sight --
Suddenly Roscius dawned in radiance bright.
Forgive me, heavenly pow'rs, if I declare,
Meseem'd the mortal than the god more fair.

To Catulus, Roscius was fairer than a god. As a matter of fact he had, as he has to-day, a pronounced squint; but no matter — in the eyes of Catulus this in itself gave him piquancy and charm.

I return to the gods.

Chapter 29

Can we imagine any gods, I do not say as cross-eyed as Roscius, but with a slight cast? . . . .

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Chapter 37

"... poetic inspiration... proves that there is a divine power within the human soul. Democritus says that no one can be a great poet without being in a state of frenzy, and Plato says the same thing. Let Plato call it 'frenzy' if he will, provided he praises it as it was praised in his Phaedrus. And what about your own speeches in law suits? Can the delivery of you lawyers be impassioned, weighty, and fluent unless your soul is deeply stirred? Upon my word, many a time have I seen in you such passion of look and gesture that I thought some power was rendering you unconscious of what you did; and, if I may cite a striking example, I have seen the same in your friend Aesopus."


105 The speaker is Cicero's brother, Quintus Tullius Cicero.

106 Plato, Phaedrus in The Dialogues of Plato, I, 248-249 (244).

107 Plutarch's story about Aesop's acting (cf. infra, p. 379) is compatible with this statement. Cf. also Fronto's statement about Aesop's preparation for a role (cf. infra, p. 387).
When Cicero, the greatest orator of his time, wrote about the subject of rhetoric, he compared the art of delivery with the art of acting; and he used the technique of his friend, the actor Roscius, as a model many times for his principles of public speaking. Cicero pays a number of tributes to the artistry of Roscius's playing, but his discussion of the value of the training which Roscius had given the slave Panurgus is probably more specific. The instruction to Panurgus in acting, according to Cicero, was worth 100,000 sesterces or about $5,000.00. Though Cicero was arguing to win a case in a law court, still it is apparent that he was putting a high estimate on the training of an actor and on the skill, or the reputation for skill, which it brought. Panurgus was not Roscius's only pupil. There was Bros, and there were others. The nature of the training has not been learned. Yet the fact that Roscius was not only an actor but a teacher of acting indicates that, though he never found a perfect pupil, he must nevertheless have believed that at least some of the skill of acting could be taught.

A number of facts about Roscius's acting are brought out in the De Oratore. He did "nothing otherwise than perfectly, nothing without consummate charm." His manner always fitted the occasion, and he moved and enchanted his audiences. He believed that the chief thing in art
was "to observe good taste," though how to accomplish such a goal was the one thing that could not be taught. When Roscius played an old man, on a certain occasion, Cicero felt that he was "listening to testy Eld personified." The characterization must have been within the canon of "good taste," for Cicero cautions that such a caricature, if "too extravagant," becomes like "the work of buffoons in pantomime." Roscius understood, further, how to use the principle of contrast so as to build to climax, how to throw some lines away so as to "put his whole weight" into others. Aesop, also, used this principle. And Roscius planned, as he grew older, to make the flute-player's rhythms slower and the music lighter, thus to make less obvious any decreasing agility of limbs or power of voice.

To the facts about Roscius, may be added some others of Cicero's statements. The actors labored "to regulate the expression, the voice, and the movements of the body." The Greek tragedians "for many a year" practiced declamation from their chairs and would "every day, before their performance on the stage, lie down and gradually arise the voice, and later, after playing their parts, take their seats, and bring it back again from the highest treble to the lowest bass, and in a way regain control of it." If an actor's voice were husky, or if he made a line too long or too short in meter, or if he moved out of time with the music, he was hissed off the stage.
In addition to these items, there should be noted one significant point about Cicero's opinion as to the process of characterization. Cicero believed that the actors who were most convincing felt the actual emotions of the parts they played. He thought that Aesop, when he was playing, was at times by "some power" rendered unconscious of what he said and did. The orators, Cicero says, "are the players who act real life," but the actors "mimic reality." There "can be no doubt that reality beats imitation in everything; and if reality unaided were sufficiently effective in representation, we should have no need at all for art." But it is patent that reality unaided is not sufficient, and Cicero goes on to try to describe the particular look and tone of voice and gesture which nature has assigned to each emotion. These later analyses are made for the orators and are of little value in a study of theories of acting.

The important information that Cicero provides for this research concerns the acting of Roscius and his opinions upon acting, the habits and practice of Roman actors in regard to body and voice, and the thoughts of Cicero regarding portrayal of emotion. The words of Cicero upon these subjects, though written in other connections, are the first statements that have been found on how the Roman actors acted. Some of the ideas recall those of Aristotle; and some are new, so far as recorded principles of acting are concerned. Both Cicero and Aristotle told of the actors' training of their voices. Each thought that the actor whom
he most admired sounded, when acting, like the actual character represented. Cicero's statement that reality is not sufficient without art is reminiscent of Aristotle's advice to disguise "the means we employ." Cicero, however, did not relate this principle to the actors directly, as Aristotle did. But Cicero's criterion of "good taste" in acting is new among ancient writings. The idea involved may be similar to that which is inherent in Aristotle's condemnation of overacting. Still the use of the term "good taste," as a standard for actors, is found recorded first in the writing of Cicero. His work is also the first to be discovered which relates to the art of acting the principle of feeling an emotion in order to stimulate it. Aristotle had said that poets should experience the emotions of their "agents," and it may be inferred that he must have thought the same of the actors. But he did not actually make such a statement. Cicero used the actors as examples to illustrate the principle, and so he left no doubt as to his belief that they felt the emotions of the parts they played. Cicero is the first writer, also, who has been found to record the use of contrast in acting so as to build to climax. He is the first to say that actors were concerned with regulating facial expression and body movement. These are the principles of acting which are discovered in the writings of Cicero. Some of them had been previously set down by Aristotle. Some are new with Cicero so far as surviving material reveals.
CHAPTER VII
THE OPINIONS OF HORACE

Quintus Horatius Flaccus
and His Relation to the Theaters of His Time

The Satires of Horace
The Epistles of Horace
The Ars Poetica of Horace

Summary
CHAPTER VII

THE OPINIONS OF HORACE

Quintus Horatius Flaccus
and His Relation
to the Theaters of His Time

Horace was a younger contemporary of Cicero. Born in the Republican era, he lived well into the Age of Augustus.

For a long time after 55 B.C., the theater of Pompey had remained Rome's only theater. But a number of new playhouses were erected in the early Augustan period. A wooden theater for Latin plays had been built on the Tiber by 17 B.C.¹ In 13 B.C. Balbus built a second stone theater in the Campus Martius.² The theater of Marcellus, begun by Caesar, was completed by Augustus in 11 B.C. and dedicated to his nephew and son-in-law.³ In the theaters the tragedies and comedies were holding their own but were feeling the push into the background by the mime and pantomime and the games and contests in the amphitheater.

¹ Bieber, op. cit., p. 347.
² Ibid.
³ Cf. Pliny, op. cit., VI, 349-351 (XXXVI, 24).
⁴ Bieber, op. cit., p. 347.
⁵ Cf. Suetonius, op. cit., I, 195 (II, xliii, 5).
and circus. One writer of these years comments that the Oscan plays, also, were still showing. 4

Horace mentions the mimes a number of times with some contempt. He lists actresses and buffoons with "drug-quacks" and beggars. 5 He speaks of the mime Origo, mistress of one Marsaeus, who gave to her his paternal home and farm, thus losing more in reputation than in estate. 6 Ovid tells of the indelicacies of the mimes and their obscene entertainments. 7 Yet Horace seems to have some admiration for the mimic actress, Arbuscula, and her scorn for the opinion of the lower classes in the audience. 8 Nicoll says that the mimes, in taking life for their province, undoubtedly introduced unmorally the bad with the good, making no fundamental selection. "We have to admit," he says, "that there must have been mimes and mimes." 9

As to the pantomimic artists, Horace makes one allusion, and that a brief one to the dancer Lepos. 10 Indeed most


6 Ibid., p. 23 (I, 11, 55).


8 Cf. infra, p. 254.

9 Nicoll, Masks, Mimes and Miracles, p. 81.

10 Cf. infra, p. 255.
of the literary references to the pantomimes occur in the next century. Yet such statements are always made in such a way as to imply that pantomimic dancing had been well established in the latter part of the first century B.C.

Concerning the regular tragedies and comedies, Horace has little more commendation. Some of his remarks show unmistakably the sensational quality of the animal shows and contests and other elements of extravaganza with which the plays were often interspersed. His attitude is consistently that of the satirist.

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11 Cf. infra, pp. 257-258.

12 Other writings of the latter half of the first century B.C. which have been examined are as follows:
   Tibullus, Tibullus in Catullus, Tibullus, and Pervigilium Veneris, op. cit.  
   Virgil, op. cit.  
   Livy, op. cit.  
   Asclepiodotus, op. cit.  
   Onosander, op. cit.
Quintus Horatius Flaccus was a man of the world and a man of letters, whose chief interest was the improvement and reform of Latin poetry. He was born in 65 B.C. at Venusia, of parents who stood high neither socially nor economically. But his father took him to Rome and gave him an education, acting for a time as paedagogus to his son and later sending him to Athens for further study. There Horace was caught up by the civil wars. He joined the army of Brutus but abandoned the Republican cause after Philippi.

He returned to Rome with his fortunes at low ebb and got a small post as scriba quaestoribus, a sort of treasury clerk -- a job somewhat like one in Civil Service. He began to write; and at some time before the treaty of Actium (31 B.C.) he had evidently attained a position which made him fairly prosperous.

The first book of the Satires, published about 35 B.C., was addressed to his wealthy patron Maecenas, who later gave him the famous Sabine farm; and the second

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13 Biographical data have been taken principally from Rose, op. cit., pp. 266-282, and from Barrett H. Clark, European Theories of the Drama with a Supplement on the American Drama an Anthology of Dramatic Theory and Criticism from Aristotle to the Present Day, in a Series of Selected Texts, with Commentaries, Biographies, and Bibliographies (New York: Crown Publishers, n. d.), p. 28.

14 Fairclough, tr., in Horace, Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica, p. xi.

book, probably of about 30 B.C., compliments Maecenas also. The Horatian Satires are upon many subjects, from human foibles and follies to a defense of the satiric form itself. The Epistles belong essentially to the same literary class as the Satires. Both are conversational in approach, and they cover similar subject matter. Epistle 2, Book I (the epistle which is given in the excerpts) was written probably about 13 B.C. It was a letter in verse to Augustus, written at his request, upon the state of Roman literature.

The Ars Poetica, of 16-13 B.C., is often classed with the two Epistles of Book II as one of the three Literary Epistles. It is addressed to the Pisos, a father and two sons, the identity of whom is not definitely known. One of the Pisos, so conjecture has run, may have been about to write a play; and his interest may have determined Horace's choice of subject as poetic composition, specifically playwriting. The essay is a rather arbitrary manual, based supposedly on a non-extant treatise by Neoptolemus of Parium. It appears to be, also, Horace's interpretation, partly his misinterpretation, of Aristotle's

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16 Fairclough, op. cit., p. xii.
17 Ibid., p. xiii.
18 Ibid., p. 392.
19 Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.
20 Ibid., pp. 442-443.
21 Clark, loc. cit.
Poetics.

Through Horace's work runs the sense of the setting of a high literary standard for himself and for all who would take his advice. He had close acquaintance with the best Greek models, and he had a narrow idea of what constituted classically perfect expression. He has been compared with Pope in English literature. As to the exact extent of Horace's influence upon his own time it is impossible to be certain, though he must have been an important writer for the emperor to have requested a letter. But of the influence of the Ars Poetica for many years after the Renaissance one may safely say that it was as widespread as that of Aristotle's Poetics.

Horace's relation to the theaters, till the time of his death in 8 B.C., was purely that of an educated and critical spectator, a spectator interested in dramatic structure more than in other aspects of the theatrical art. Yet he was a man whose literary criticism was to wield far-reaching influence for many centuries. His opinions about acting and dramatic poetry in the Augustan age are worth examination.

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22 Fairclough, op. cit., p. 410, n. c.
Rose, op. cit., p. 266.

23 Clark, loc. cit.
Satire 10

On Satire

. . . . "'Tis enough if the knights applaud me." --
. . . / was / dauntless Arbuscula's scornful remark, when
the rest of the house hissed her.25

BOOK II

Satire 2

The Follies of Mankind

/ A certain class of fools / . . . would no more give
ear / to warnings of danger / than once did drunken Fufius
as he overslept the part of Ilione, while twelve hundred
Catieni shouted, "Mother on thee I call!" . . . . 26

24 The translation is by Fairclough, op. cit.

25 Arbuscula was the mimic actress who was admired
also by Cicero and his friend Atticus. Cf. supra, p. 237.

26 "Fufius played the part of the sleeping heroine
in the Ilione of Pacuvius, but when the ghost of her mur­
dered son (a part taken by Catienus) called upon her, he was
so sound asleep that he did not hear, though the audience,
taking up the actor's words, joined in the appeal." Fair­
clough, op. cit., p. 158, n. a.

Though the incident does not show anything about
Fufius's theories of acting, it reveals that once, at any
rate, he went upon the stage in a drunken condition and
that the audience taunted him for it.

254
Satire 5
The Art of Legacy Hunting

. . . .
Be cautious in your approach; neither fail in zeal, nor show zeal beyond measure. A chatterbox will offend the peevish and morose; yet you must not also be silent beyond bounds. Act the Davus of the comedy, and stand with head bowed, much like one overawed. . . .

Satire 6
Town and Country Life

. . . . And so begins a chat, not about other men's homes and estates, nor whether Lepos dances well or ill; but we discuss matters which concern us more. . . .

27 Davus was a servant in two of Terence's comedies, The Woman of Andros and Phormio. In the Phormio he is of little importance, but in The Woman of Andros he is the typical scheming slave whose role is vital in manipulation of the plot.

28 In other words, the dancing of Lepos is classed among the trivialities of conversation.
I am impatient that any work is censured, not because it is thought to be coarse or inelegant in style, but because it is modern, and that what is claimed for the ancients should be, not indulgence, but honour and rewards. If I were to question whether a play of Atta's keeps its legs or not amidst the saffron and flowers, nearly all our elders would cry out that modesty is dead, when I attempt to blame what stately Aesopus and learned Roscius once acted; either because they think nothing can be right save what has pleased themselves, or because they hold it a shame to yield to their juniors, and to confess in their old age that what they learned in beardless youth should be destroyed.

In the latter part of this epistle Horace gives the account of the development of Roman drama which was referred

29 Cf. supra, p. 252.
30 The name Atta is said to have been a nickname meaning "one with a light and tripping step." Fairclough, op. cit., p. 402, n. b.
31 The stage was perfumed with saffron water. Ibid., n. c.
to in Chapter IV.32 There follow some comments on tragedy and comedy, and then Horace talks a little of actors and audiences.

The man whom Glory carries to the stage in her windy car, the listless spectator leaves spiritless, the eager one exultant; so light, so small is what casts down or upbuilds a soul that craves for praise. Farewell the comic stage if denial of the palm sends me home lean, its bestowal plump!

Often even the bold poet is frightened and put to rout, when those who are stronger in number, but weaker in worth and rank, unlearned and stupid and ready to fight it out if the knights dispute with them, call in the middle of the play for a bear or for boxers: 'tis in such things the rabble delights. But nowadays all the pleasure even of the knights has passed from the ear to the vain delights of the wandering eye. For four hours or more the curtains are kept down,33 while troops of horse and files of foot sweep by: anon are dragged in kings, once fortune's favourites, their hands bound behind them: with hurry and scurry come chariots, carriages, wains, and ships; and borne in triumph are spoils of ivory, spoils of Corinthian bronze. Were Democritus34 still on earth, he would

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32 Cf. supra, pp. 170-171.

33 That is to say, the performance continues. The curtain was lowered into the floor. Cf. supra, p. 197.

34 Democritus was known as the laughing philosopher. Fairclough, op. cit., p. 412, n. d.
laugh; whether it were some hybrid monster -- a panther crossed with a camel\textsuperscript{35} -- or a white elephant, that drew the eyes of the crowd -- he would gaze more intently on the people than on the play itself, as giving him more by far worth looking at. But for the authors -- he would suppose that they were telling their tale to a deaf ass.\textsuperscript{36}

For what voices have ever prevailed to drown the din with which our theatres resound? One might think it was the roaring of the Garganian forest or of the Tuscan Sea: amid such clamour is the entertainment viewed, the works of art, and the foreign finery, and when, overlaid with this, the actor steps upon the stage, the right hand clashes with the left. "Has he yet said anything?" Not a word. "Then what takes them so?" 'Tis the woollen robe that vies with the violet in its Tarentine dye. And least, perchance, you may think that I begrudge praise when others are handling well what I decline to try myself, methinks that poet is able to walk a tight rope, who with airy nothings wrings my heart, inflames, soothes, fills it with vain alarms like a magician, and sets me down now at Thebes, now at Athens.

\textsuperscript{35} "The camelopard or giraffe." \textit{Ibid.}, n. d.

\textsuperscript{36} "... Horace varies the old proverbial saying for wasted labour. ... There was a Greek saying. ... 'a man told a story to an ass; the ass only shook his ears.'" \textit{Ibid.}, p. 413, n. e.
... be the work what you will, let it at least be simple and uniform.  

... ...  
As men's faces smile on those who smile, so they respond to those who weep. If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself: then, O Telephus or Peleus, will your misfortunes hurt me: if the words you utter are ill suited, I shall laugh or fall asleep. Sad tones befit the face of sorrow; blustering accents that of anger; jests become the merry, solemn words the grave. For Nature first shapes us within to meet every change of

\[\text{\textsuperscript{37} Cf. supra, p. 252.}\]  
\[\text{\textsuperscript{38} These are opinions on poetic composition. The editor does not intend to imply more. As in the Poetica, however, there appears to be a relation to acting.}\]  
\[\text{\textsuperscript{39} Cf. Aristotle's advice to the poet to feel the emotions of his characters, supra, p. 139.}\]  
\[\text{Cf. also Cicero's assertions that speaker, actor, and poet will, in their greatest effectiveness, be "on fire" with the feelings which they want to arouse in their audiences, supra, pp. 226-229.}\]  
\[\text{Cf. further Quintilian's metaphor, infra, pp. 319-320.}\]  
\[\text{\textsuperscript{40} Telephus was the son of Hercules. He had been the subject of a lost tragedy by Euripides. Fairclough, op cit., p. 506.}\]  
\[\text{\textsuperscript{41} Peleus, son of Acaeus, was driven from Aegina for the murder of his half-brother Phocus. The story had been the plot of a lost play by Sophocles. Ibid., p. 502.}\]  
\[\text{Peleus as an old man, father of Achilles, is an important character in the Andromache of Euripides.}\]
fortune: she brings joy or impels to anger, or bows us to the ground and tortures us under a load of grief; then, with the tongue for interpreter, she proclaims the emotions of the soul. If the speaker's words sound discordant with his fortunes, the Romans, in boxes and pit alike, will raise a loud guffaw. Vast difference will it make, whether a god be speaking or a hero, a ripe old man or one still in the flower and fervour of youth, a dame of rank or a bustling nurse, a roaming trader or the tiller of a verdant field, a Colchian or an Assyrian, one bred at Thebes or at Argos.

Either follow tradition or invent what is self-consistent. If haply ... you bring back to the stage the honouring of Achilles, let him be impatient, passionate, ruthless, fierce; let him claim that laws are not for him, let him ever make appeal to the sword. Let Medea be fierce and unyielding, Ino tearful, Ixion forsworn, Io a wanderer, Orestes sorrowful. If it is an untried theme

42 "Ino, daughter of Cadmus and wife of Athamus, who, after her husband went mad and tore one of her children to pieces, was changed into a sea-goddess." Fairclough, op. cit., p. 498. A play with Ino in the dramatis personae has not been found in this research.

43 Ixion was "called perfidus, because after being kindly treated by Jupiter, he tried to dishonour Juno." Fairclough, op. cit., p. 499. No play with Ixion as a character has been located by the editor.

44 "Io, daughter of Inachus, loved by Jupiter, and changed by Juno into a heifer." Fairclough, op. cit. p. 498. Io tells her story in the Prometheus Bound of Aeschylus. The Complete Greek Drama, 1, 147-152.
you entrust to the stage, and if you boldly fashion a fresh character, have it kept to the end even as it came forth at the first, and have it self-consistent. 45

... Now hear what I, and with me the public, expect. If you want an approving hearer, one who waits for the curtain, and will stay in his seat till the singer 46 cries "Give your applause," you must note the manners of each age, and give a befitting tone to shifting natures and their years. The child, who by now can utter words and set firm step upon the ground, delights to play with his mates, flies into a passion and as lightly puts it aside, and changes every hour. The beardless youth, freed at last from his tutor, finds joy in horses and hounds and the grass of the sunny Campus, soft as wax for moulding to evil, peevish with his counsellors, slow to make needful provision, lavish of money, spirited, of strong desires, but swift to change his fancies. With altered aims, the age and spirit of the man seeks wealth and friends, becomes a slave to ambition, and is fearful of having done what soon it will be eager

45 Cf. Aristotle's requirement for consistent characters, infra, p.

46 The cantor was probably the young slave who stood near the flute player and sang the cantica of the play, while the actor gesticulated." Fairclough, op. cit., pp. 462-463, n. e. Every comedy of Plautus and Terence ends with "your applause" or an equivalent phrase. The Pot of Gold by Plautus, however, has not survived.
to change. Many ills encompass an old man, whether because he seeks gain, and then miserably holds aloof from his store and fears to use it, or because, in all that he does, he lacks fire and courage, is dilatory and slow to form hopes, is sluggish and greedy of a longer life, peevish, surly, given to praising the days he spent as a boy, and to reproving and condemning the young. Many blessings do the advancing years bring with them; many, as they retire, they take away. So, lest haply we assign a youth the part of age, or a boy that of manhood, we shall linger over traits that are joined and fitted to the age.

Either an event is acted on the stage, or the action is narrated. Less vividly is the mind stirred by what finds entrance through the ears than by what is brought before the trusty eyes, and what the spectator can see for himself.

Let the Chorus sustain the part and strenuous duty of an actor, and sing nothing between acts which does not advance and fitly blend into the plot.

When the Fauns are brought from the forest, they should, methinks, beware of behaving as though born at the crossways and almost as dwelling in the Forum, playing at times the young bloods with their mawkish verses, or

47 Cf. Aristotle, "The Chorus should be regarded as one of the actors. . . ." infra, p. 140.

cracking their bawdy and shameless jokes. For some take
offence -- knights, free-born, and men of substance --
nor do they greet with kindly feelings or reward with a
crown everything which the buyers of roasted beans and
chestnuts approve.

... Thespis is said to have discovered the Tragic
Muse, a type unknown before, and to have carried his pieces
in wagons to be sung and acted by players with faces smeared
with wine-lees. After him Aeschylus, inventory of the
mask and comely robe, laid a stage of small planks, and
taught a lofty speech and stately gait on the buskin. To
these succeeded Old Comedy, and won no little credit, but
its freedom sank into excess and a violence deserving to
be checked by law. The law was obeyed, and the chorus to
its shame became mute, its right to injure being withdrawn.

49 Fairclough (op. cit., pp. 472-473, n. d.) comments
that jesting "from wagons, in the processions which formed the
vintage celebration, is associated not with Tragedy but with
Comedy," and that "Horace seems to confuse the two."

Pickard-Cambridge says: "If there is any truth
in Horace's words it may be that Thespis, like travelling
players at fairs down to the present day, took his plays
about on wagons to local Dionysiac festivals, and like them
stood on the end of the wagon to act (with his chorus dancing
round it), and used the covered part of it... to dress up
in. But that is pure speculation, and it is more likely
that Horace is thinking confusedly of the wagons in processi
of a riotous or comic type." A. W. Pickard-Cambridge,
Dithyramb Tragedy and Comedy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927),
p. 114.

Bieber (op. cit., pp. 28-29) is not so skeptical.
She thinks it is "quite possible that Thespis with his
chorus, a wandering troupe, drove the wagons about Attica
until he found in Athens a permanent habitation." She
believes that this "car of Thespis is perhaps the car in
the form of a ship [discussed also by Pickard-Cambridge,
pp. 114-115] on which, according to the testimony of black-
figured vases, Dionysus, represented no doubt by his priest, was driven in company with his flute-playing satyrs into his holy precinct at the festival of the great city Dionysia."
Horace repeats, in the *Ars Poetica*, the idea that a person must feel emotion if he would stimulate it. He is not talking of actors, but he says plainly: "As men's faces smile on those who smile, so they respond to those who weep. If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself." The advice, like the similar injunction of Aristotle, is to the poet in creating his characters; but it corresponds exactly (as does Aristotle's) to the conviction of Cicero that the great actors feel their emotions, too. Horace also, like Aristotle, wants the characters to be made consistent and true to their own natures. The chorus, he says, should sustain the part of an actor.

Horace's references to the actors themselves are slight and not especially complimentary. He shows a drunken player sleeping through his cue on the stage. He shows a typical servant standing "with head bowed, much like one overawed." Such postures were evidently conventions of the acting of the time. Horace expresses scorn of both tragic and comic actors. From the mimic actress Arbuscula, whom Cicero admired, he quotes a haughty remark which was made when a part of the house hissed her. "'Tis enough if the knights applaud me," she had said. In other words, she was content if the upper classes liked her acting.
CHAPTER VIII

VITRUVIUS ON THE VOICE

Vitruvius, the Roman Architect

Vitruvius on Architecture

Summary
CHAPTER VIII
VITRUVIUS ON THE VOICE

Vitruvius, the Roman Architect

At some time during or toward the last quarter of the first century B.C., Vitruvius wrote his famous work on classic architecture; and in his several chapters on the construction of theaters he made some remarks about the voices of the actors as the voices came from the stages and as they were affected acoustically by the buildings.

Nicoll\(^1\) and Bieber\(^2\) agree on 15 B.C. as the probable date of Vitruvius's writing. Granger\(^3\) considers that since Vitruvius never mentions Octavian by his official name Augustus, the treatise belongs to a time before 27 B.C., when the name was conferred. Not a great deal is certain about the life of the man. He became, under Augustus, a sort of military engineer and an official in the rebuilding


\(^2\) Bieber, op. cit., p. 351.

of Rome. 4

The ten books On Architecture are addressed to Octavian, with the statement that the author is furnishing a detailed treatise about the buildings already completed or about to be entered upon, and that he is expounding a complete system of architecture. 5 So Vitruvius sets out to make a comprehensive analysis. He begins with general and specific architectural principles; he goes into the evolution or history of building; he discusses temples, public buildings, town and country houses, interior decoration, water supply, dials and clocks, and mechanical and military engineering.

In the course of Book V, on public buildings, Vitruvius takes up the problem of the building of a Roman theater; and he contrasts the playhouse of the Romans with that of the Greeks of which he gives a less clear description. Concerning the Greek theaters, Vitruvius was evidently talking of the Hellenistic theater buildings, some of which he undoubtedly knew. About the Roman playhouse, he had a decidedly idealistic tendency. His description does not correspond with exactitude to the ruins of the theaters belonging to his time. 6 It is quite possible

4 Vitruvius, op. cit., I, 5 (I, Pref. 2).
5 Ibid., (I, Pref. 3).
6 Nicoll, The Development of the Theatre, pp. 18-19.
that he was not talking of actual theaters which existed but of ideal theaters which he would like to see constructed.

He shows that the Roman theater has a semicircular orchestra and a wide stage, and he accounts for the fact in that all the actors appear on the stage of the Roman playhouse, whereas in the Greek theater only the scenic actors played on the stage while the chorus (thymelic actors) appeared in the orchestra. He gives five feet as the maximum height of the Roman stage, in contrast to the ten or twelve feet of the Greek stage; and he explains that spectators now sit in the orchestra, from which they would not be able to see anything on a high stage.

The two aspects of Vitruvius's writings which have importance in theatrical history concern his statements as to the *scaenae frons* and what lay about and beyond it. He tells of three doors in the front wall of the scene house and of two side entrances from projecting wings. He says that the central door was the *aula regia* or royal door, that the doors to either side of this were for *hospitalia* or guest chambers, and that the openings in the wings were the one for entrances from "the public square" and the other for entrances from "the country."

"Next on either side" of the *hospitalia*, he places

7 Vitruvius, *op. cit.*, I, 283 (V, vi, 2); I, 291 (V, vii, 2).

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 291 (V, vi, 3); 289 (V, vi, 8).
periaktoi, or "three-sided machines which turn having on
their three sides as many kinds of subject," and which,
when there "are to be changes in the play or when the
gods appear with sudden thunders," are "to turn and change
the kind of subject presented to the audience." He lists
three kinds of scenes: "one which is called tragic; a
second, comic; the third, satyric"—with decorations which
"differ severally from one another." The tragic scenes,
he says, "are designed with columns, pediments, and statues
and other royal surroundings; the comic have the appearance
of private buildings and balconies and projections with
windows made to imitate reality, after the fashion of
ordinary buildings; the satyric settings are painted with
trees, caves, mountains and other country features, design­
nated to imitate landscape." It appears that in writing
about these "tragic," "comic," and "satyric" scenes,
Vitruvius was describing the aforementioned periaktoi.

The importance of his writings in theatrical history,
lies in his influence on theaters of later years. But he
had, as stated above, a few things to say also about the
voices of the actors on the stage of the Roman theater
which he planned. He was concerned with how the voices
would be affected by the acoustics of the theater building;

9 Ibid., p. 289 (V, vi, 8)
10 Ibid., (V, vi, 9).
and his discussion of acoustical principles, though of no
great import for the actor, is nevertheless of some interest
for the investigator into histrionic theories of the Romans.
BOOK V

Chapter 3

On the Site of the Theatre

1. When the forum has been settled, a site as healthy as possible is to be chosen for the exhibition of plays on the festivals of the immortal gods, according to the instructions given in the first book for the healthy disposition of the city walls. For at the play citizens with their wives and children remain seated in their enjoyment; their bodies motionless with pleasure have the pores opened. If therefore special care is taken in choosing a site, infection will be avoided.

4. The curved level gangways, it seems, should be made proportionately to the height of the theatre; and each of them not higher at the back, than is the breadth of the passage of the gangway. For if they are taller,

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11 The translation is by Frank Granger, op. cit.

12 Whether Vitruvius intended it so, or not, this surely is an indirect tribute to the actors and their hold upon their audiences.
they will check and throw out the voice into the upper part of the theatre. Neither will they allow the endings of words to come with a clear significance to the ears of the people in their seats above the gangways. In brief the section of the theatre is to be so managed that if a line is drawn touching the lowest and the top rows, it shall also touch the front angles of all the rows. Thus the voice will not be checked. . . .

Great care is also to be taken that the place chosen does not deaden the sound, but that the voice can range in it with the utmost clearness. And this can be brought about if a site is chosen where the passage of sound is not hindered. Now the voice is like a flowing breath of air, and is actual when perceived by the sense of hearing. It is moved along innumerable undulations of circles; as when we throw a stone into standing water. Innumerable circular undulations arise spreading from the centre as wide as possible. And they extend unless the limited space hinders, or some obstruction which does not allow the directions of the waves to reach the outlets. And so when they are interrupted by obstacles, the first waves

13 In other words, the audibility of inflectional endings was important.

14 Here is another instance of the importance which was placed upon the voices of Roman actors.

15 "Actu is an Aristotelian term, = actual." Granger, op. cit., p. 266, n. 1.
flowing back disturb the directions of those which follow.

7. In the same way the voice in like manner moves circle fashion. But while in water the circles move horizontally only, the voice both moves horizontally and rises vertically by stages. Therefore as is the case with the direction of the waves in water, so with the voice when no obstacle interrupts the first wave, this in turn does not disturb the second and later waves, but all reach the ears of the top and bottom rows without echoing. Therefore the ancient architects following nature's footsteps, traced the voice as it rose, and carried out the ascent of the theatre seats. By the rules of mathematics and the method of music, they sought to make the voices from the stage rise more clearly and sweetly to the spectators' ears. For just as organs which have bronze plates or horn sounding boards are brought to the clear sound of string instruments, so by the arrangement of theatres in accordance with the science of harmony, the ancients increased the power of the voice.

Chapter 5
On Sounding Vases in Theatres

Vitruvius now suggests the use of bronze vases as sounding devices.

16 "The Stoics noted that the undulations of sound moved 'spherically' through the air, and not merely horizontally . . . . " Ibid., p. 267, n. 3.

17 "As reverberators." Ibid., p. 268, n. 1.
7. Someone will say, perhaps, that many theatres are built every year at Rome without taking any account of these matters. He will be mistaken in this. All public wooden theatres have several wooden floors which must naturally resound. We can observe this also from those who sing to the zither, who when they wish to sing with a louder tone, turn to the wooden scenery, and, with this help, gain resonance for their voice. . . . 19

Chapter 6 is on the planning of theaters, as to height and width of stage, size of orchestra, placing of seats, etc. Chapter 7 is on Greek theaters.}

Chapter 8

On Acoustics

1. Now that all these matters are set forth with careful skill, diligent consideration must be given. For we must choose a site in which the voice may fall smoothly, and may reach the ear with a definite utterance and without the interference of echoes. . . . Thus if careful observation is exercised in the choice of sites, such skill will be rewarded by the improved effect of the actors' voices. . . .

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18 "These were wooden erections. . . ." Ibid., p. 280, n. 2.

19 Vitruvius thinks, then, that the singers were conscious of the resonating qualities of the wooden scenery and that they used it for amplification.
Summary

Vitruvius's statements concerning acoustics show that the inflectional endings of words needed to come clearly to the ears of the audience, and his implication is that sometimes the sounds did not do so. The voice, he says, should "range" in the theater "with the utmost clearness." Though Vitruvius's thinking is from the viewpoint of an architect, still it indicates the importance that attached to the voices of the actors in regard both to carrying quality and to enunciation. Both Aristotle and Cicero had spoken of the importance of the actor's voice but neither had talked of word endings in relation to actors in theaters. An especially interesting observation by Vitruvius is on the device of singers to turn toward the wooden scenery on the stage for the purpose of securing amplification of voice.
CHAPTER IX

THE STATE OF THE ROMAN THEATER
IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

The Moralists on Mime and Pantomime

The Dancing of the Pantomimic Actors

The Dramatic Readings
CHAPTER IX
THE STATE OF THE ROMAN THEATER
IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

It is said that on the last day of his life the emperor Augustus called in his friends; and asking whether it seemed to them that he had played the mime of life fitly, he added the tag:

"Since well I've played my part, all clap your hands and from the stage dismiss me with applause."

The incident is indicative of the relation of the stage and the players to the general thought of the time. The dying emperor could think of the theater in his last hours and could liken the course of his life to the role of a mime in a mimic drama.

Throughout the Empire, the first century of which is the concern of this chapter, the actors held a focus of attention in Rome and the provinces. In Rome the interest centered especially upon mime and pantomime. The old Atellan farces revived again and with the mimes finally pushed regular comedy off the boards. Similarly tragedy

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1 Suetonius, op. cit., 1, 281 (II, xcix, 1). Cf. also Dio Cassius, Dio's Roman History, VII, 69 (LVI, xxx, 4).

was forced into the background by pantomime and became practically extinct, except for solo recitations. Each of these drama forms, it will be noted, featured the art of the actor and depended upon his skill for its success.

The Moralists on Mime and Pantomime

Mime and pantomime are mentioned over and again by writers of the century, sometimes in tribute to their artistry -- often in condemnation of their morals, of their themes and interpretations, and of their influence on the citizens of the town. Suetonius tells that Augustus, though he gave public shows and games of all kinds and took great delight in them,

... was so strict in curbing the lawlessness of the actors, that when he learned that Stephanio, an actor of Roman plays, was waited on by a matron with hair cut short to look like a boy, he had him whipped with rods through the three theatres and then banished him. Hylas, a pantomimic actor, was publicly scourged in the atrium of his own house, on complaint of a praetor, and Pylades was expelled from the city and from Italy as well, because by pointing at him with his finger he turned all eyes upon a spectator who was hissing him.3

Martial speaks of the mimic actor Latinus as the "darling pride of the stage" and says that his art, not his moral

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3 Suetonius, op. cit., I, 197 (II, xlv, 4).
character, is that of a mime. He calls Paris, the pantomime, the "delight of the city and the wit of the Nile, incarnate art and grace, frolic and joy, the fame and affliction of Rome's theatre." But Juvenal voices grave concern over the effect of such acting as that of Latinus and Paris and others on the people of the city, especially on the women. "Can our arcades show you," he says, "one woman worthy of your vows?"

Do all the tiers in all our theatres hold one whom you may love without misgiving, and pick out thence? When the soft Bathyllus dances the part of the gesticulating Leda, Tuccia cannot contain herself; your Apulian maiden heaves a sudden and longing cry of ecstasy...; the rustic Thymele is all attention, it is then that she learns her lesson.

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5 Ibid., p. 247 (XI, xiii). There were two pantomimic actors in Rome by the name of Paris. One was a favorite of Nero and was executed by him as a rival in 67 A.D. The other was a favorite of Domitian and was also executed, because of an intrigue with the Empress, in 87. It is thought that Martial's reference is to the later Paris (Ibid., II, 247, n. 6) and that Juvenal's (cf. infra) could be to either.


7 Ibid., p. 29 (VI, 60-66). One is reminded of similar reactions in recent years to the singing of a certain Frank Sinatra.
Other women, says Juvenal, when the stage ornaments are packed away, "handle the mask and thyrsus... of Accius." Aelia, being poor, is in love with Urbicus who "raises a laugh" in an Atellan farce. Some women delight in singers; some, in tragic actors; "but do you suppose that any one will be found to love Quintilian?" And so, says Juvenal to the men of Rome, "If you marry a wife, it will be that the lyrist Achion or Glaphyrus or the flute player Ambrosius, may become a father." Only once does Juvenal voice open praise for an actor, and even then there may be a note of satire. "The nimble Lentulus," he admits, "acted famously" the part of the robber Laureolus, deserving "to be really and truly crucified."

Tacitus is as solemn as Juvenal in his record of the theaters. Writing of the Augustal games inaugurated under Tiberius in 14 A.D., he tells of their being disturbed by

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8 Ibid., (67-80).

The play was a mime in which the robber leader, Laureolus, was captured and crucified.


Cf. also Suetonius, op. cit., I 493 (IV, lvii, 4), for an account of the parodying of the action in an afterpiece.

Cf. also Martial, op. cit., I, 7-9 (On the Spectacles, vii), for account of an occasion when a criminal was chosen for the enactment and was actually crucified.
quarrels arising out of the rivalry between the actors. He explains that Augustus

... had shown indulgence to the entertainment by way of humouring Maecenas's extravagant passion for Bathyllus, nor did he himself dislike such amusements, and he thought it citizenlike to mingle in the pleasures of the populace. Very different was the tendency of Tiberius's character. But a people so many years indulgently treated, he did not yet venture to put under harsher control.10

The next year, Tacitus says, the "unruly tone" of the theater "broke out with worse violence, and some soldiers and a centurion, besides several of the populace, were killed. The disturbance

... was the subject of a debate in the Senate, and opinions were expressed in favour of the praetors having authority to scourge actors. Haterius Agrippa, tribune of the people, interposed his veto, and was sharply censured in a speech from Asinius Gallus, without a word from Tiberius, who liked to allow the Senate such shows of freedom. Till the interposition was successful, because Augustus had once pronounced that actors were exempt from the scourge, and it was not lawful for Tiberius to infringe his decisions. Many enactments were passed to fix the amount of their pay and to check the disorderly behaviour of their partisans. Of these the chief were that no Senator should enter the house of a pantomime player, that Roman knights should not crowd round them in the public streets, that they should exhibit themselves only in the theatre, and that the praetors should be empowered to punish with banishment any riotous conduct in the spectators.11

Annoyances from the actors must have continued, for Tacitus goes on to record that in the year 23,

10 Tacitus, op. cit., p. 36 (I, 54).

11 Ibid., pp. 50-51 (I, 77).
... after various and usually fruitless complaints from the praetors, the emperor finally brought forward a motion about the licentious behaviour of the players. "They had often," he said, "sought to disturb the public peace, and to bring disgrace on private families, and the old Oscan farce, once a wretched amusement for the vulgar, had become at once so indecent and so popular, that it must be checked by the Senate's authority." The players, upon this, were banished from Italy.12

But the actors were recalled in 37 by Caligula,13 and references to them continue. Talking of orators in his Dialogue on Oratory Tacitus regrets the fact that many speakers of his day imitate the art of the actor. Their compositions, he avers, "are given with the tones of the singer, the gestures of the dancer. Hence the exclamation, which, though often heard, is a shame and an absurdity, that our orators speak prettily and our actors dance eloquently."14 Further deploring the current state of affairs Tacitus asserts:

... Really I think that the characteristic and peculiar vices of this city, a liking for actors and a passion for gladiators and horses, are all but conceived in the mother's womb. When these occupy and possess the mind, how little room has it left for worthy attainments! Few indeed are to be found who talk of any other subject in their homes, and whenever we enter a classroom, what else is the conversation of the youths. Even

12 Ibid., p. 152 (IV, 14).
Cf. also Dio Cassius, op. cit., VII, 173 (LVII, xx, 3).
13 Dio Cassius, op. cit., VII, 265 (LIX, i, 4-5).
with the teachers, these are the more frequent topics of talk with their scholars. . . .15

That similar conditions, concerning theatrical matters, existed also in the Roman provinces is attested by Philo, the Jew of Alexandria. Philo writes that "theaters all over the world are filled every day with countless myriads," with those "whom spectacles and musical performances have made their slaves." Such audiences, he says, delight "in dancers and other actors because they put themselves into indelicate positions and make indelicate movements."16

The Dancing of the Pantomimic Actors

Through all these statements, with their continual note of adverse criticism, may be detected a tacit acceptance of the fact that the actors had a very real hold upon their audiences and that the Roman people thronged to see them. The names of Pylades and Bathyllus, mentioned by Suetonius and Juvenal, occur frequently in references to the theater by writers of the late Augustan Age and the Empire. These two actors were pantomimes. They are supposed to have introduced the fuller form of pantomimic

15 Ibid., p. 758 (20).

In classrooms today one still hears such talk, by youths and even by professors -- of movies and football and races and prizefights.

dance in the time of Augustus. The dance was not, by any means, unknown in earlier periods. The Pyrrhic dance, originally an imitation in the dance of combat in battle, had extended to pantomime of all kinds. But the elaborate type of ballet opera appears to have developed in these years. It is probable that the pantomime was usually played by one actor who took a variety of roles in a single play. Masks with closed mouths were worn by the performers and were changed often, as were costumes, to distinguish different characters. Yet even though one performer ordinarily took many parts, it is nevertheless almost certain that on many occasions more than one actor appeared in a kind of pantomimic chorus, and that the pantomime must frequently have assumed the form of an operatic dance show such as is associated in modern minds with the Russian Ballet. In all this dance-acting, the body of the actor told the story; much significance attached especially to the movements of the dancer's hands; and in sensitivity and expressiveness of body and hands both Pylades and Bathyllus

17 Nicoll, Masks Mimes and Miracles, p. 133.
18 Suetonius, op. cit., I, 53 (I, xxxix, 1-2); II, 103 (VI, xii, 2) and n. b. Plato, it will be remembered, had allowed Pyrrhic dancing in his State; he had considered it a "serious" kind of dance, "the exercise of a noble person and a manly heart." Cf. supra, pp. 84-86.
19 Nicoll, Masks Mimes and Miracles, p. 131.
20 Ibid., p. 132.
surely excelled.

"Never fear, Philonides," says the poet Crinagoras; "write a piece composed of four parts or even more; for neither your singing nor the motions of Bathyllus' hands shall be lacking in grace."21 One sees clearly, here, the method of accompaniment by a singer as the dancer went about his interpretative action; and one remembers the beginning of such division by Livius Andronicus in the third century B.C.22 Of Pylades, Antipater of Thessalonica writes:

Pylades put on the divinity of the frenzied god himself, when from Thebes he led the Bacchants to the Italian stage, a delight and a terror to men, so full by his dancing did he fill all the city with the untempered fury of the demon. Thebes knows but the god of the fire; the heavenly one is this whom we see brought into the world by these hands that can utter everything.23

Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Semele. After the child had been conceived, Hera in jealousy persuaded Semele to ask Zeus to appear to her in his thunderbolt. The shock killed Semele; but Zeus snatched the premature babe, sewed him in his own thigh, and carried him to normal birth

21 The Greek Anthology, III, 301 (IX, 542).
22 Cf. supra, pp. 175-176.
23 The Greek Anthology, V, 333-335 (XVI, 290).
time.\textsuperscript{24} Thebes then, Antipater says, knew only the "god of the fire," who is surpassed by the god created in the dancing of Pylades. And Boethus avows of the gods themselves that

If Dionysus had come revelling with the Maenads and Satyrs to holy Olympus, looking just as Pylades the great artist played him, in the ballet according to the true canons of the servants of the tragic Muse, Hera, the consort of Zeus, would have ceased to be jealous, and exclaimed: Semele, thou didst pretend that Bacchus was thy son; 'twas I who bore him.\textsuperscript{25}

The words of Antipater sound near to a statement of a theory of acting: "Pylades put on the divinity of the frenzied god himself . . . ." In other words, it seemed to Antipater that Pylades, while acting the god, was the god. And Pylades must have had the power, which is usually believed to be needed by the actor, of magnification or projection, for he filled all the city "full," by his dancing, "with the untempered fury of the demon." Boethus's avowal that even the goddess queen, Hera, would have claimed this Bacchus for her son is further testimony to the power of Pylades the actor, "who played according to the true canons of the servants of the tragic Muse," at least for some


Cf. also Hesiod, The Theogony of Hesiod in Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns, and Homericá, p. 149 (940).

Cf. also Euripides, The Bacchae in The Complete Greek Drama, II, 227 (1-5); 235 (242-246); 236-237 (286-298).

\textsuperscript{25} The Greek Anthology, III, 131 (IX, 248).
The poet Lucilius sings the praises, also, of one Aristo, adding a word of censure for lack of realism in a final bit of business:

From what oak trees did your father cut you, Aristo, or from what millstone quarry did he hew you? For indeed you are a dancer "made of a venerable tree or of stone," the living original of Niobe; so that I wonder and say: "You, too, must have had some quarrel with Leto, or else you would not have been naturally made of stone."

You played in the ballet everything according to the story, but by overlooking one very important action, you highly displeased us. Dancing the part of Niobe you stood like a stone, and again when you were Capaneus you suddenly fell down. But in the case of Canace you were not clever, for you had a sword, but yet left the stage alive; that was not according to the story.26

Niobe had been turned to stone by Leto because she boasted of her many children;27 and Aristo, in his characterization appeared to be "made . . . of stone." Capaneus had fallen from a scaling ladder struck by lightning at the siege of Thebes;28 and Aristo according to Lucilius, was adequate in interpretation. Canace had killed herself when her incestuous attachment to her brother, Macareus, was discovered.29 One wonders in what kind of theater the Canace story was presented and if the omission of the suicide

26 Ibid., IV, 191 (XI, 253-254).
27 Ibid., n. 3.
28 Ibid., n. 4.
29 Ibid., n. 6.
were from want of a curtain or from a desire to omit the horrible. In the comments of Lucilius, however, as in those of Antipater and Boethus, may be seen the poet's reaction to the semblance of real feeling which he sensed as being present in the dancer's impersonations.

An anonymous writer later in the century pays similar compliment to Xenophon of Smyrna:

We thought we were looking on Bacchus himself when the old man lustily led the Maenads in their furious dance, and played Cadmus tripping it in the fall of his years, and the messenger coming from the forest where he had spied on the rout of the Bacchantes, and frenzied Agave exulting in the blood of her son. Heavens! how divine was the man's acting?

The story of the ballet was from the Bacchae of Euripides. The "old man" was the Theban prophet Teiresias. Agave was daughter of Cadmus, sister of Semele, and mother of Pentheus, now king of Thebes. Because Pentheus had forbidden the worship of Dionysus, the god had brought a madness on Agave and caused her to murder her son, thinking him to be a mountain lion. Xenophon had played the several parts in the ballet, and according to this observer, had played them well. So the poets of the first century gave freely of their praise for the pantomimic actors who had stirred them with the seemingly real thought and emotion that was behind their dancing.

30 Ibid., V, 333 (XVI, 289).
31 Ibid., pp. 332-333, n. 1.
There remain to be mentioned the recitations, which came to be the principal manner of presentation of the regular tragedies and comedies. During the first half of the century single scenes from tragedy and comedy, in full costume, appear to have been more popular than complete performances, for the interest in literature was more and more outweighed by interest in the actors. In the time of Nero tragic solo recitations seem to have superseded even the full single-scene presentations. It is from stories about the Emperor and his passion for giving such recitations that much of the information upon the subject stems. The Emperor Caligula had danced and delighted in dancers. The Emperor Claudius, like Augustus, had sponsored shows of various kinds. But the Emperor Nero trod the stages of Rome and many parts of the Empire as a rhapsode, singing and reciting, competing for prizes and exhibiting almost childish satisfaction at winning them. Suetonius is often extravagant, and his account of Nero is no exception. But as usual the narrative is vivid -- and entertaining. As

32 Bieber, op. cit., 391-393, 401.

33 Suetonius, op. cit., I, 487-489 (IV, liv, 1-2; lv, 1). Cf. also Dio Cassius, op. cit., VII, 265 (LIX, i, 4-5), 273-275 (LIX, v, 2-5), 349 (LIX, xxvii, 1).

"a young, half grown boy," Suetonius says, Nero "took part in the game of Troy at a performance in the Circus with great self-possession and success." The game had been used by both Julius Caesar and Augustus as entertainment, and it was evidently a kind of Pyrrhic dance or imitative representation of war activities. As emperor in Rome, Suetonius continues, Nero went on with his dramatic pursuits. At the Neronian contests which he established, he sang "Niobe"; and he "also put on the mask and sang tragedies representing Gods and heroes and even heroines and Goddesses, having the masks fashioned in the likeness of his own features or those of the women of whom he chanced to be enamored." Among other themes, "he sang 'Canace in Labor,' 'Orestes the Matricide,' 'The Blinding of Oedipus' and 'The Frenzy of Hercules.' " On a tour of Greece, so the story goes, Nero "went the round of all the contests," and

While he was singing no one was allowed to leave the theatre even for the most urgent reasons. And so it is said that some women gave birth to children there, while many who were worn out with listening and applauding, secretly leaped from the wall, since the gates at the entrance were closed, or feigned death and were carried out as if for burial. The trepidation and anxiety with which he took part in the contests, his keen rivalry of his opponents and his awe of the judges, can hardly be credited. . . . Before

35 Suetonius, op. cit., p. 97 (VI, vii, 1).
36 Ibid., I, 53 (I, xxxix, 2); 191 (II, xliii, 2).
37 Ibid., II, 119 (VI, xxi, 2-3).
beginning, he would address the judges in the most deferential terms, saying that he had done all that could be done, but the issue was in the hands of Fortune; they however, being men of wisdom and experience, ought to exclude what was fortuitous. When they bade him take heart, he withdrew with greater confidence, but not even then without anxiety, interpreting the silence and modesty of some as sullenless and ill-nature, and declaring that he had suspicions of them.

In competition he observed the rules the most scrupulously, never daring to clear his throat and even wiping the sweat from his brow by his arm. Once, indeed, during the performance of a tragedy, when he had dropped his sceptre but quickly recovered it, he was terribly afraid that he might be excluded from the competition because of his slip, and his confidence was restored only when his accompanist swore that it had passed unnoticed amid the delight and applause of the people. When the victory was won, he made the announcement himself; and for that reason he always took part in the contests of the heralds. . . .

The accompanist who reassured Nero was a hypocrite, who, according to Rolfe's note, made the gestures and accompanied the actor.39 Here is another instance of the separation of song and recitation from action and mimicry which appears to be ever typical of Roman acting. Another interesting point is the prohibition in the contests of the use of a handkerchief to wipe the face.40 Still another is that the heralds, also, were selected by competition.41

38 Ibid., pp. 123-125 (VI, xxiii, 2-3; xxiv, 1-2).
39 Ibid., p. 124, n. b.
40 Ibid., n. a.
41 Ibid., n. c.
After the tour of the contests, Nero came home. He had participated also in chariot races, on one occasion winning the crown "just the same" even though he had been unable to finish the contest. 42

Returning from Greece, since it was at Naples that he had made his first appearance, he entered that city with white horses. . . . but at home he rode in the chariot which Augustus had used in his triumphs in days gone by, and wore a purple robe and a Greek cloak adorned with stars of gold, bearing on his head the Olympic crown and in his right hand the Pythian, while the rest were carried before him with inscriptions telling where he had won them and against what competitors, and giving the titles of the songs or the subject of the plays. . . . So far from neglecting or relaxing his practice of the art after this, he never addressed the soldiers except by letter or in a speech delivered by another, to save his voice; and he never did anything for amusement or in earnest without an elocutionist by his side to warn him to spare his vocal organs and hold a handkerchief to his mouth. 43

So runs Suetonius's account of Nero. The last sentences show a feeling of need to "spare" the voice in order to preserve it. The presence of the "elocutionist" appears to be an aid in so doing. The whole story serves to reveal something of the nature of the contests and the general plan of the presentation of the dramatic readings.

It was probably for such declamatory presentations, though there is divergence of opinion on the subject, that Lucius Annaeus Seneca wrote his plays. His nine tragedies (and possibly a tenth) are all that have come down from the drama of the period. In any case, it was for

42 Ibid., p. 125 (VI, xxiv, 2).
43 Ibid., pp. 127-129 (VI, xxv, 1-3).
this age that Seneca wrote his dramas. And it was for and of this age that he wrote his epistles and essays. His opinions upon plays and players are upon plays and players of the first century A.D. This was a time when biographers and historians and moralists and satirists shook their fearful heads (as has happened often since) over the morals of the folk of the theaters. It was a time when emperors shared in the mad fixation on spectacular shows of all kinds. It was a time when pantomimes received unstinted praise from some for the wonder of their dancing. It was a time when tragedy and comedy were having relatively little if any full production and when the Emperor, masked and in costume, gave dramatic readings on the stages of Rome and the empire.45

45 Other writings which have been examined are as follows:


Fliny the Elder, The Natural History of Fliny, op. cit.


Seneca and His Significance

Lucius Annaeus Seneca, son of Marcus Annaeus Seneca the Rhetorician, was born in about the year 4 B.C. in Cordoba in Spain. He was brought to Rome in childhood and received his education there. He had a thorough training in rhetoric and for a time had a brilliant career as a lawyer. He was a senator under Caligula and Claudius; but in 41 A.D. through the plotting of Messalina, wife of Claudius, he was charged with intrigue and was ordered by the Emperor into exile at Corsica. In 49 he was recalled by Agrippina, now wife of Claudius, and made tutor to her son, the young Nero. Upon the death of Claudius in 54 Nero became Emperor, and for the first five years of his reign was considerably influenced and restrained by the sane guidance of Seneca and of Burrus, prefect of the guard. In 59, however, Nero contrived the murder of Agrippina, and in 62 he divorced and exiled his wife Octavia. In this year, also, occurred the death of Burrus.

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1 Other Spaniards notable in this period of Roman literature were Columella of Gades, Martial of Bilbilis, and Quintilian of Calagurris.
retired as much as possible from public affairs and devoted himself to study and writing. In 65 Nero accused him of complicity in the conspiracy of Piso, and Seneca committed suicide by imperial order.²

The tragedies of Seneca are assigned by some scholars as belonging to the period of exile between 41 and 49 A.D., by others as having been written after the accession of Nero in 54.³ A more important question is that of their purpose (mentioned in the preceding chapter),⁴ whether it was for dramatic reading or for full staging. There is no external evidence that the plays were ever presented

² Biographical material has been taken principally from the following sources:

Seneca, Ad Lucilium Epistulæ Morales, I, vii-ix.


³ Gummere (op. cit., p. viii) gives the period of exile. Miller (op. cit., I, vii-xii) does not commit himself, Harsh (op. cit., p. 492, n. 12) says scholars are hopeless in their disagreement. Duckworth (op. cit., I, xxxvii) says that many critics favor the period of exile "while others believe they were written after the accession of Nero in 54 A.D."

⁴ Cf. supra, pp. 293-294.
on the stage in the Roman period. Seneca was not a professional dramatist; he was not a practical man of the theater. Modern scholarship agrees that it is entirely possible that the plays were written solely for recitation, most critics taking the view that the probability is in that direction, some believing that the possibility is as real for full production.

It appears that the strongest indications are toward a recitational type of presentation because of the

5 Duckworth, op. cit., p. xxxvii.  
Harsh, op. cit., p. 404.  
Miller, op. cit., I, x.  
Rose, op. cit., p. 371.

6 Miller (op. cit., I, x) says that the plays "were not written for the stage," and that "it is from the standpoint of declamation" that they are to be explained and interpreted.  
Rose (op. cit., p. 371) says, "That they were ever acted or meant to be acted is neither likely nor supported by testimonies . . . ; it is very probable that they were publicly recited."

C. W. Mendell states unquestionably that the plays were designed for recitation. C. W. Mendell, Our Seneca (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1941), pp. 83-90.  
Harsh observes (op. cit., pp. 404-405): "Most critics . . . are convinced that the plays were written for reading or recitation." After analysis, he adds: "The assumption that the plays were not written for production appears attractive . . . ; but it is by no means proved, and the plays should be read without prejudice on the point."

Duckworth (op. cit., I, xxxvii) believes that while there is no evidence that the plays were ever presented on the stage, neither is there any proof that they were written merely to be read or recited. He thinks that "they conformed to the technical requirements of production on a stage."
minuteness with which actions of characters on stage are described, the poor motivation of entrances and exits, the excessively long descriptive speeches and overabundance of rhetoric, and the scenes of acute horror which would make staging in a convincing manner difficult. Most of

7 Seneca, *Phaedra* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 643 (II, iii); 647 (II, iii); 653 (III, ii). 

Ibid., *Thyestes* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 780-781 (V, ii). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 491-494 (IV, i). 

8 Ibid., *Phaedra* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 653 (III, ii). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 613-615 (V, i). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 483-494 (IV, i). 

9 Ibid., *Phaedra* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 639-642 (II, ii); 657-661 (IV, i). 

Ibid., *The Phoenician Women* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 559-565 (I); 571-574 (IV). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 466-469 (II, i); 481-482 (III, i); 484-486 (III, i). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 607-609 (IV, i); 609-612 (IV, ii). 

Ibid., *Oedipus* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 691-694 (III, i); 704-706 (V, i). 

Ibid., *Agamemnon* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 727-732 (III, i); 736-738 (III, ii). 

Ibid., *Thyestes* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 772-774 (IV, i). 

Ibid., *Hercules on Oeta* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 807-808 (II, ii); 815-822 (III, ii); 838-842 (V, i); 842-847 (V, ii). 

10 Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 614-616 (V, i); 616-618 (V, ii). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 490-493 (IV, i). 

Ibid., *Medea* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 791-786 (V, iii). 

Ibid., *Phaedra* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 662-666 (V). 

Ibid., *Oedipus* in *The Complete Roman Drama*, II, 709 (V, iii).
these arguments can be met with statements that similar conditions, though not so extreme in the opinion of the editor, existed in some of the Greek dramas, which were staged, and that Seneca's plays were actually produced in the Renaissance period.\footnote{Duckworth, \textit{op. cit.}, p. xxxviii.} Whatever the method of production may have been in Seneca's own time, there may be inferred from the plays themselves a declamatory manner of acting -- whether by one actor or by a company of actors. One feels, however, in reading such scenes as Hercules's discovery of his own crime of infanticide\footnote{Seneca, \textit{The Mad Hercules} in \textit{The Complete Roman Drama}, II, 496-503 (V).} and Andromache's pleading with Ulysses for the life of her son,\footnote{Ibid., \textit{The Trojan Women} in \textit{The Complete Roman Drama}, II, 528-538 (III, 11).} a certain tragic power which would call for a portrayal of genuine tragic emotion by the actor. Nowhere in the plays does Seneca make allusion to the actors or to their playing of the parts. The great significance of the Senecan plays is in their influence upon the later tragic drama of England, France, and Italy. Perhaps, indirectly, because of subject matter, there was an influence upon Elizabethan acting as well.

Seneca wrote also upon philosophical subjects and natural history. In the last two years of his life he traveled about southern Italy, writing treatises and
essays and carrying on an extended correspondence with his friend Lucilius. The letters to Lucilius are actually a collection of essays, though the informality of the epistolary style is ingeniously used. In structure each letter begins with a concrete fact, usually a recent incident, and goes on to reflections on abstract ideas.

In two of the epistles Seneca voices opinions upon the actors in the theaters. Whether or not he was writing about complete productions, full single-scene presentations, or dramatic recitations in costume we cannot be positive. It would seem that the references are to complete productions or to the full single scenes. It is significant, however, to note that the term "an actor of tragedy" is used by Philostratus, writing in the next century, to describe a man who was "on a strolling tour around the cities of the west" in the time of Nero, giving dramatic readings in the manner of the Emperor. This "actor," it may be observed further, frightened an audience in Spain both by his appearance (with mask and buskins) and his bellowing voice. In both of Seneca's allusions to the players there is a note of contempt, but there is also for the investigator some

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information on mannerisms and conventions of the actors whom Seneca had seen on Roman stages. One observes with interest, in passing, that Seneca the Philosopher, like Augustus the Emperor, likened the span of human life to the course of a drama and the lives of men to parts which, according to Seneca, they do not play well.16

16 Seneca's other extant writings have been examined: Seneca, Moral Essays (tr. J. W. Basore; 3 vols.; The Loeb Classical Library; London: William Heinemann, 1928). 
Ibid., Apocolocyntosis, op. cit.
Epistle 11
On the Blush of Modesty

... Wisdom can never remove this habit of the blush whatever is assigned to us by the terms of our birth and the blend in our constitutions, will stick with us, no matter how hard or how long the soul may have tried to master itself. And we cannot forbid these feelings any more than we can summon them. Actors in the theatre, who imitate the emotions, who portray fear and nervousness, who depict sorrow, imitate bashfulness by hanging their heads, lowering their voices, and keeping their eyes fixed and rooted upon the ground. They cannot, however, muster a blush; for the blush cannot be prevented or acquired. Wisdom will not assure us of a remedy, or give us help against it; it comes or goes unbidden, and is a law unto itself.

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17 The translation is by Gummere, op. cit.

18 Such conventions are still used on stages. Stanislavski (op. cit., p. 23) listed similar ones in 1936 and condemned them: "spreading your hand over your heart to express love, or opening your mouth wide to give the idea of death."
Epistle 80

On Worldly Deceptions

... I often feel called upon to use the following illustration, and it seems to me that none expresses more effectively this drama of human life, wherein we are assigned the parts which we are to play so badly. Yonder is the man who stalks upon the stage with swelling port and head thrown back,¹⁹ and says:

Lo, I am he whom Argos hails as lord,
Whom Pelops left the heir of lands that spread
From Hellespont and from th' Ionian sea
E'en to the Isthmian straits.²⁰

And who is this fellow? He is but a slave; his wage is five measures of grain and five denarii.²¹ Yon other who, proud and wayward and puffed up by confidence in his power, declaims:

Peace, Menelaus, or t.is hand shall slay thee!²² receives a daily pittance and sleeps on rags. You may speak in the same way about all these dandies whom you see riding in litters above the heads of men and above

¹⁹ This sounds like another such convention as Stanislavski brands a cliché (op. cit., p. 24): "There are ways of imitating all kinds of types of people, various classes in society (peasants spit on the floor ... , military men click their spurs, aristocrats play with their lorgnettes)."

²⁰ The author is unknown. Gummere, op. cit., II, 216, n. a.

²¹ About 30¢. Cf. supra, p. 214, n. 64.

²² The author is unknown. Cf. Gummere, op. cit., II, 216, n. a.
the crowd; in every case their happiness is put on like
the actor's mask. Tear it off, and you will scorn them.23

23 One feels that Seneca was not stirred by these
actors. Whatever the type of production, the actors did
not move him or he could not have spoken as he speaks here.
Summary

In these two of the Epistles to Lucilius Seneca speaks of the players with some contempt. He says: "Actors in the theatre, who imitate the emotions, who portray fear and nervousness, who depict sorrow, imitate bashfulness by hanging their heads, lowering their voices, and keeping their eyes fixed and rooted upon the ground." Again he observes: "Yonder is the man who stalks upon the stage with swelling port and head thrown back." Seneca was evidently describing conventions of the actors which were customary on Roman stages, and which had been in use also in the time of Horace. The mannerisms are similar to conventions and clichés which may still be seen in theaters today. From the tone of the comment one gathers that Seneca, writing in the first century A.D., felt such habits to be as empty and futile as one sees that they are at the present time.
CHAPTER XI

QUINTILIAN'S INSTITUTES
AS THEY DRAW FROM THE ART OF THE ACTOR

Quintilian, the Roman Teacher

The *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian

Summary
CHAPTER XI

QUINTILIAN'S INSTITUTES
AS THEY DRAW FROM THE ART OF THE ACTOR

Quintilian, the Roman Teacher

Like Cicero's earlier analysis of the oratory of Roman times, Quintilian's Institutio Oratoria adds materially to the available information on criteria of Roman acting. The Institutes are based in considerable measure upon the De Oratore of Cicero. Quintilian upholds the Ciceronian principles of acting in relation to oratorical delivery as firmly as he supports Cicero's precepts concerning the other parts of rhetoric, and he contributes a new principal to Roman theories of characterization.

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus was born about 35 A.D. in Calagurris in Spain. Like Seneca, he was the son of a rhetorician; and he was sent to Rome for his education. After completing his studies, he returned to Spain, for a time, to teach rhetoric there; but he was brought back to Rome by Galba in 68 A.D. for a professorship of rhetoric, the first to be subsidized by the imperial treasury. Quintilian taught at Rome for twenty years, and he became the greatest of Roman teachers. Domitian raised him to
the consulship and appointed him as tutor to his grand-nephews. He was also a successful pleader in the courts.

Late in life, Quintilian retired to write the Institutes, which were published in about 93 or 95. The date of his death is uncertain, but it is known to be before 100.¹

Quintilian lived in the time of the panegyric oratory of the Empire. After the end of the Republic, deliberative speaking had gone into steady decadence, for the legislative body no longer had anything to decide. Such is the way of dictatorships. Great orators, therefore, had little to discuss. Flattery of those in authority was the important thing, and orators went along with the need to please. In such a time, Quintilian dared to teach the old and simpler Greek forms of rhetoric. Cicero had been the last great Roman orator; he had spoken, generally, in behalf of justice; and in the days of the Empire it had become fashionable to belittle his rhetorical importance. But Quintilian dared to hold up Cicero's eloquence as a model and to say that here was very nearly perfect oratory.

At the time of the writing of the Institutes, Quintilian was a man of great influence. He had achieved the favor of the Emperor; he had taught such men as Pliny the younger;

¹ Biographical information has been taken from the following sources:
Quintilian, op. cit., pp. vii-ix.
Trever, op. cit., II, 605-607.
Rose, op. cit., pp. 399-401.
he had attained consular rank; and he had acquired wealth. In the midst of flattery and speaking which was not real eloquence, Quintilian retired to write his work on the education of an orator. He was a thorough scholar, knowing rhetoric from Corax on down; and he wrote his Institutes of Oratory out of his years of experience as a teacher. The aim of his program of education was to train the perfect orator, the thinker, the citizen -- the man who could guide a state by his counsels.

The significance of the Institutes in a study of methods of acting comes, as with Cicero’s De Oratore, in the analysis of the speaker and his delivery. Among the boy’s teachers is to be the comic actor for instruction in distinct pronunciation and for training, "within certain limits," in gesture and impersonation. From the early discussion of the actor’s teaching and from later comparisons and analogies between acting and speaking, one learns from Quintilian something of his opinion about methods of Roman acting. His treatment of the subject of stirring the emotions of audiences is taken largely from Cicero. But in the discussion Quintilian analyzes the "how" of the speaker’s generating emotions within himself. This is the only such discussion that the present investigator has found in ancient writings; and it is, in the mind of the editor, Quintilian’s great contribution to principles of acting. The eleventh book of the Institutes takes up specifically the matters of voice and gesture for the orator. Though
this section was misused in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a basis for various sets of "rules" for actors, it was never intended for such a purpose. For the theater, Quintilian's significance lies in comparisons and contrasts between the art of Roman acting and the art of Roman speaking, in his handling of the subject of stirring the emotions, and in his explanation of a way of stimulating emotion within oneself. Concerning the work of Quintilian, as in regard to that of Cicero, this thesis has made no attempt to take Quintilian's ideas about oratory and relate them to acting, except as Quintilian actually stated the relation. The point has been to find what Quintilian thought of actors' methods.
Chapter 11

In considering the boy's teachers, the comic actor will also claim a certain amount of our attention, but only in so far as our future orator must be a master of the art of delivery. For I do not of course wish the boy, whom we are training to this end, to talk with the shrillness of a woman or in the tremulous accents of old age. Nor for that matter must he ape the vices of the drunkard, or copy the cringing manners of a slave, or learn to express the emotions of love, avarice or fear. Such accomplishments are not necessary for an orator.

Nor yet again must we adopt all the gestures and movements of the actor. Within certain limits the orator must be a master of both, but he must rigorously avoid staginess and all extravagance of facial expression, gesture and gait. For if an orator does command a certain art in such matters, its highest expression will be in the

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2 The translation is by Butler, op. cit.

3 No reason has been found for Quintilian's choice of the comic, rather than the tragic actor. The probable explanation is that the moods of comedy are more varied than those of tragedy. Roscius, Cicero's "model" for the orator, was a comic actor also.
concealment of its existence.4

What then is the duty of the teacher whom we have borrowed from the stage? In the first place he must correct all faults of pronunciation, and see that the utterance is distinct, and that each letter has its proper sound.5 There is an unfortunate tendency in the case of some letters to pronounce them either too thinly or too fully, while some we find too harsh and fail to pronounce sufficiently, substituting others whose sound is similar but somewhat duller. For instance, lambda is substituted for rho, a letter which was always a stumbling block to Demosthenes; our l and r have of course the same value. Similarly when c and g are not given their full value, they are softened into t and d. Again our teacher must not tolerate the affected pronunciation of g,6 with which we are painfully familiar, nor suffer words to be uttered from the depths of the throat or rolled out hollow-mouthed,

4 The idea that the greatest art conceals itself is reminiscent of Aristotle's observation upon "the necessity of disguising the means we employ, so that we may seem to be speaking not with artifice, but naturally." Cf. supra, p. 111.

5 One would conclude, then, that the actor had corrected his own "faults of pronunciation," that his own utterance was "distinct," and that each of his letters had "its proper sound."

6 "Quintilian perhaps alludes to the habit of prefixing i to initial st, sp, sc found in inscriptions of the later Empire." Butler, tr., op. cit., p. 185, n. 2.
or permit the natural sound of the voice to be over-laid with a fuller sound, a fault fatal to purity of speech. . . . They will also see that final syllables are not clipped, that the quality of speech is continuously maintained, that when the voice is raised, the strain falls upon the lungs and not the mouth and that gesture and voice are mutually appropriate. They will also insist that the speaker faces his audience, that the lips are not distorted nor the jaws parted to a grin, that the face is not thrown back, nor the eyes fixed on the ground, nor the neck slanted to left or right. For there are a variety of faults of facial expression. I have seen many who raised their eyebrows whenever the voice was called upon for an effort, others who wore a perpetual frown, and yet others who could not keep their eyebrows level, but raised one toward the top of the head and depressed the other till it almost closed the eye. . . .

Our actor will also be required to show how a narrative should be delivered and to indicate the authoritative tone that should be given to advice, the excitement which should mark the rise of anger and the change of tone that is characteristic of pathos. The best method of so doing is to

7 Again, if the actor was to teach these skills to his pupils, it would be assumed that he had acquired them himself.

8 Here is Quintilian's first statement that certain tones go with certain feelings or moods. Cf. infra, pp. 333-334, for his later development of the thought. Cf. also Cicero's statements (supra, p. 234).
select special passages from comedy appropriate for the purpose, that is to say, resembling the speeches of a pleader. These are not only most useful in training the delivery, but are admirably adapted to increase a speaker's eloquence. . . .

I will not blame even those who give a certain amount of time to the teacher of gymnastics. I am not speaking of those, who spend part of their life in rubbing themselves with oil and part in wine-bibbing. . . . But we give the same name to those who form gesture and motion so that the arms may be extended in the proper manner, the management of the hands free from all trace of rusticity and inelegance, the attitude becoming, the movements of the feet appropriate and the motions of the head and eyes in keeping with the poise of the body. No one will deny that such details form a part of the art of delivery, nor divorce delivery from oratory; and there can be no justification for disdaining to learn what has got to be done, especially as chironomy, which, as the name shows, is the law of gesture, originated in heroic times and met with the approval of the greatest Greeks, not excepting Socrates himself. . . .
BOOK II

Chapter 10

... if declamation is not a preparation for the actual work of the courts, it can only be compared to the rant of an actor or the raving of a lunatic. ... Declamation therefore should resemble the truth, since it is modeled on deliberative and forensic oratory. On the other hand it also involves the element of display and should in consequence assume a certain air of elegance. In this connexion I may cite the practice of comic actors, whose delivery is not exactly that of common speech, since that would be inartistic, but is on the other hand not far removed from the accents of nature, for if it were, their mimicry would be a failure: what they do therefore is to exalt the simplicity of ordinary speech by a touch of stage decoration.  

BOOK III

Chapter 6

... In the case of declaimers indeed it is of the first importance that they should consider what best suits each character: for they rarely play the role of

9 "Declamation" as discussed by Quintilian means speaking from memory on a hypothetical case.

10 Cf. Cicero's statement (supra, p. 233) that "if reality unaided were sufficiently effective in representation, we should have no need at all for art."
advocates in their declamations. As a rule they impersonate sons, parents, rich men, old men, gentle or harsh of temper, misers, superstitious persons, cowards and mockers, so that hardly even comic actors have to assume more numerous roles in their performances on the stage than these in their declamations. All these roles may be regarded as forming part of impersonation.

BOOK VI

Chapter 1

Impersonation may also be employed with profit in such passages as in Cicero's pleading for the life of Milo, who had killed a man, and by impersonation I mean fictitious speeches supposed to be uttered, such as an advocate puts into the mouth of his client. The bare facts are no doubt moving in themselves; but when we pretend that the persons concerned themselves are speaking, the personal note adds to the emotional effect. For then the judge seems no longer to be listening to a voice bewailing another's ills, but to hear the voice and feelings of the unhappy victims, men whose appearance alone would call forth his tears even though they uttered never a word. And as their plea would awaken yet greater pity if they

Quintilian is probably referring here both to doubling in roles and to parts in many plays.
urged it with their own lips, so it is rendered to some extent all the more effective when it is, as it were, put into their mouth by their advocate: we may draw a parallel from the stage, where the actor's voice and delivery produce greater emotional effect when he is speaking in an assumed role than when he speaks in his own character.

. . . .

Chapter 2

. . . . The prime essential for stirring the emotions of others is, in my opinion, first to feel those emotions ourself. It is sometimes positively ridiculous to counterfeit grief, anger and indignation, if we content ourselves with accommodating our words and looks and make no attempt to adapt our own feelings to the emotions to be expressed. What other reason is there for the eloquence with which mourners express their grief or for the fluency which anger lends even to the uneducated, save the fact that their minds are stirred to power by the depth and sincerity of their feelings? Consequently if we wish to give our words the appearance of sincerity we must assimilate to ourselves the emotions of those who are genuinely so affected, and our eloquence must spring from the same feeling that we desire to produce in the mind of the judge. Will he grieve who

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12 Cicero (cf. supra, pp. 226-229) had firmly believed in this principle concerning oratory and acting and playwriting. Aristotle and Horace (cf. supra, pp. 139-140, 259) had been convinced that it was true of the latter.
can find no trace of grief in the words with which I seek to move him to grief? Will he be angry if the orator who seeks to kindle his anger shows no signs of labouring under the emotion which he demands from his audience? Will he shed tears if the pleader's eyes are dry? It is utterly impossible. Fire alone can kindle, and moisture alone can wet, nor can one thing impart any colour to another save that which it possesses itself. Accordingly, the first essential is that those feelings should prevail with us that we wish to prevail with the judge, and that we should be moved ourselves before we attempt to move others. But how are we to generate these emotions in ourselves, since emotion is not in our own power?\(^{13}\) I will try to explain as best I may. There are certain experiences . . . . whereby things absent are presented to our imagination with such extreme vividness that they seem actually to be before our very eyes. It is the man who is really sensitive to such impressions who will have the greatest power over the emotions . . . . and . . . [this] is a

\(^{13}\) This is precisely the question which Stanislavski (op. cit., p. 13) was to posit in the twentieth century and the answer to which was to be the foundation of his system of acting. Quintilian's analysis is the only such discussion which has been found in the present research. Cicero had believed that actor, orator, and playwright should feel the genuine emotions which they wanted audiences to share. Aristotle and Horace had held the same for the playwright. But no one of these three had told actor, speaker, or poet how "to generate these emotions" within himself. Quintilian was the first, and the only ancient writer so far as this investigation has revealed, to try to explain the process.
power which all may readily acquire if they will. When the mind is unoccupied or is absorbed by fantastic hopes or day dreams, we are haunted by these visions of which I am speaking to such an extent that we imagine that we are traveling abroad, crossing the sea, fighting, addressing the people, or enjoying the use of wealth that we do not actually possess, and seem to ourselves not to be dreaming but acting. Surely, then, it may be possible to turn this form of hallucination to some profit. I am complaining that a man has been murdered. Shall I not bring before my eyes all the circumstances which it is reasonable to imagine must have occurred in such a connection? Shall I not see the assassin burst suddenly from his hiding place, the victim tremble, cry for help, beg for mercy, or turn to run? Shall I not see the fatal blow delivered and the stricken body fall? Will not the blood, the deathly pallor, the groan of agony, the death rattle, be indelibly impressed upon my mind?

From such impressions arises that ... illumination and actuality, which makes us seem not so much to narrate as to exhibit the actual scene, while our emotions will be no less actively stirred than if we were present at the
Again when we desire to awaken pity, we must actually believe that the ills of which we complain have befallen our own selves, and must persuade our minds that this is really the case. We must identify ourselves with the persons of whom we complain that they have suffered grievous, unmerited and bitter misfortune and must plead their case and for a brief space feel their suffering as though it were our own, while our words must be such as we should use if we stood in their shoes. I have often seen actors, both in tragedy and comedy, leave the theatre still drowned in tears after concluding the performance of some moving role. But if the mere delivery of words written by another has the power to set our souls on fire with fictitious emotions, what will the orator do whose duty it is to picture to himself the facts and who has it in his power to feel the same emotions as his client whose interests are at stake? Even in the schools it is desirable that the student should be moved by his theme,

14 Stanislavski (op. cit., p. 38) was to say: "Never seek to be jealous, or to make love, or to suffer, for its own sake. All such feelings are the result of something that has gone before. Of the thing that goes before you should think as hard as you can. As for the result, it will produce itself." Quintilian's statement of this same principle, in the first century of the Christian era, was a magnificent addition to theories of characterization which had been put into writing up to his time.

15 Cicero had said practically the same thing. Cf. supra, p. 228. Evidently both Cicero and Quintilian had a firm conviction on this point that fine actors really felt the genuine emotions of the parts they played.
and should imagine it to be true, indeed; it is all the more desirable then, since, as a rule in scholastic declamations, the speaker more often appears as the actual litigant than as his advocate. Suppose we are impersonating an orphan, a shipwrecked man, or one in grave peril. What profit is there in assuming such a role unless we also assume the emotions which it involves? I have thought it necessary not to conceal these considerations from my reader, since they have contributed to the acquisition of such reputation for talent as I possess or once possessed. I have frequently been so much moved while speaking, that I have not merely been wrought upon to tears, but have turned pale and shown all the symptoms of genuine grief.

BOOK XI

....

Chapter 2

.... All emotional appeals will inevitably fall flat, unless they are given the fire that voice, look, and the whole carriage of the body can give them. .... A proof of this is given by actors in the theatre. For they add so much to the charm even of the greatest poets, that the verse moves us far more when heard than when read, while they succeed in securing a hearing even for the most worthless authors, with the result that they repeatedly win a welcome on the stage that is denied them
in the library. Now if delivery can count for so much in themes which we know to be fictitious and devoid of reality, as to arouse our anger, our tears or our anxiety, how much greater must its effect be when we actually believe what we hear? . . . . It was for this reason that Demosthenes, when asked what was the most important thing in oratory, gave the palm to delivery and assigned it second and third place as well, until his questioner ceased to trouble him. . . . This explains why he studied under the instruction of the actor Andronicus with such diligence. . . .

Those, however, who think it sufficient for men to be born to enable them to become orators, are welcome to their opinion, and I must ask them to be indulgent to the efforts to which I am committed by my belief that we cannot hope to attain perfection unless nature is assisted by study . . . .

All delivery, as I have already said, is concerned with two different things, namely, voice and gesture, of which the one appeals to the eye and the other to the ear, the two senses by which all emotion reaches the soul. But the voice has the first claim on our attention, since even our gesture is adapted to suit it.

The first point which calls for consideration is the nature of the voice, the second the manner in which it is

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16 Aristotle (cf. supra, p. 145) had recognized the same fact.

17 Cf. supra, p. 63-64, and infra, p. 372.
used. The nature of the voice depends on its quantity and quality. The question of quantity is the simpler of the two, since as a rule it is either strong or weak, although there are certain kinds of voice which fall between these extremes, and there are a number of graduations from the highest notes to the lowest and from the lowest to the highest. Quality, on the other hand, presents more variations; for the voice may be clear or husky, full or thin, smooth, or harsh, of wide or narrow compass, rigid or flexible, and sharp or flat, while lung-power may be great or small. It is not necessary for my purpose to enquire into the causes which give rise to these peculiarities. I need not raise the question whether the difference lies in those organs by which the breath is produced, or in those which form the channels for the voice itself; whether the voice has a character of its own or depends on the motions which produce it; whether it be the strength of the lungs, chest or the vocal organs themselves that affords it most assistance, since the co-operation of all these organs is required. For example, it is not the mouth only that produces sweetness of tone; it requires the assistance of the nostrils as well, which carry off what I may describe as the overflow of the voice.\textsuperscript{18} The important fact is that the tone must be agreeable and not harsh. The methods of

\textsuperscript{18} It appears that Quintilian is talking of nasal resonance.
using the voice present great variety. For in addition to
the triple division of accents into sharp, grave and circum-
flex, there are many other forms of intonation which are
required: it may be intense or relaxed, high or low, and
may move in slow or quick time. But here again there are
many intermediate gradations between the two extremes, and
just as the face, although it consists of a limited number
of features, yet possesses infinite variety of expression,
so it is with the voice: for though it possesses but few
varieties to which we can give a name, yet every human being
possesses a distinctive voice of his own, which is as
easily distinguished by the ear as are facial characteris-
tics by the eye.

The good qualities of the voice, like everything
else, are improved by training and impaired by neglect.
But the training required by the orator is not the same
as that which is practised by the singing-master, although
the two methods have many points in common. In both cases
physical robustness is essential to save the voice from
dwindling to the feeble shrillness that characterises
the voices of eunuchs, women and invalids, and the means
of creating such robustness are to be found in walking,
rubbing-down with oil, abstinence from sexual intercourse,
an easy digestion, and, in a word, in the simple life.
Further the throat must be sound, that is to say, soft and
smooth; for if the throat be unsound, the voice is broken
or dulled or becomes harsh or squeaky. For just as the
sound produced in the pipe by the same volume of breath varies according as the stops are closed or open, or the instrument is clogged or cracked, so the voice is strangled if the throat be swollen, and muffled if it is obstructed, while it becomes rasping if the throat is inflamed, and may be compared to an organ with broken pipes in cases where the throat is subject to spasms. Again the presence of some obstacle may divide the breath just as a pebble will divide shallow waters, which although their currents unite again soon after the obstruction is past, still leave a hollow space in rear of the object struck. An excess of moisture also impedes the voice, while a deficiency weakens it. As regards fatigue, its effect is the same as upon the body: it affects the voice not merely at the moment of speaking, but for some time afterwards.\textsuperscript{19} But while exercise, which gives strength in all cases, is equally necessary both for orators and singing-masters, it is a different kind which they require. For the orator is too much occupied by civil affairs to be able to allot fixed times for taking a walk, and he cannot tune his voice through all the notes of the scale nor spare it exertion,\textsuperscript{20} since it is frequently necessary for him to speak in several cases in succession. Nor is the same regime suitable as

\textsuperscript{19} Quintilian is in general, rather accurate in his comments on the voice.

\textsuperscript{20} These must have been practices which the singing-masters recommended.
regards food: for the orator needs a strong and enduring voice rather than one which is soft and sweet, while the singer mellows all sounds, even the highest, by the modulation of his voice, whereas we have often to speak in harsh and agitated tones ... Consequently, we must not attempt to mellow our voice by coddling it ... but rather give it exercise suited to the tasks on which it will be employed, never allowing it to be impaired by silence, but strengthening it by practice, which removes all difficulties. The best method for securing such exercise is to learn passages by heart ... while the passages selected for the purpose should be as varied as possible. ... This will be sufficient. ... There is, however, good reason for the rule prescribed by all authorities, that the voice should not be overstrained in the years of transition between boyhood and manhood, since at that period it is naturally weak, not, I think, on account of heat, as some allege (for there is more heat in the body at other periods), but rather on account of moisture, of which at that age there is a superabundance. ... Again, the delivery may be described as correct if the voice be sound, that is to say ... if it is not dull, coarse, exaggerated, hard, stiff, hoarse or thick, or again, thin, hollow, sharp, feeble, soft or effeminate, and if the breath is neither too short nor difficult to
sustain or recover. 21

The delivery will be clear if, in the first place, the words are uttered in their entirety, instead of being swallowed or clipped, as is so often the case, since too many people fail to complete the final syllables through over-emphasizing the first. 22 But although words must be given their full phonetic value, it is a tiresome and offensive trick to pronounce every letter as if we were entering them in an inventory. For vowels frequently coalesce and some consonants disappear when followed by a vowel. . . . The second essential for clearness of delivery is that our language should be properly punctuated, that is to say, the speaker must begin and end at the proper place. . . .

Delivery will be ornate when it is supported by a voice that is easy, strong, rich, flexible, firm, sweet, enduring, resonant, pure, carrying far and penetrating the ear (for there is a type of voice which impresses the hearing not by its volume, but by its peculiar quality): in addition, the voice must be easily managed and must possess

21 Quintilian is the earliest writer to talk of breath control. Aristotle (cf. supra, pp. 104-105) had said that "the consumption of food naturally increases and heats the breath," that "the breath being in this state makes the windpipe sore and rough as it passes through," and that "when this happens the voice is naturally spoilt." But he had not given consideration to control of the breath. Quintilian mentions it several times.

22 Training in such clear enunciation was to be the duty of the comic actor. Cf. supra, pp. 313-314.
all the necessary inflexions and modulations, in fact it must, as the saying is, be a perfect instrument, equipped with every stop: further, it must have strong lungs to sustain it, and ample breathing power that will be equal to all demands upon it, however fatiguing. The deepest bass and the highest treble notes are unsuited to oratory: for the former lack clearness and, owing to their excessive fullness, have no emotional power, while the latter are too thin and, owing to excess of clearness, give an impression of extravagance and are incompatible with the inflexions demanded by delivery and place too great a strain upon the voice. For the voice is like the strings of a musical instrument; the slacker it is the deeper and fuller the note produced, whereas if it be tightened, the sound becomes thinner and shriller. Consequently, the deepest notes lack force, and the higher run the risk of cracking the voice. The orator will, therefore, employ the intermediate notes, which must be raised when we speak with energy and lowered when we adopt a more subdued tone.

For the first essential of a good delivery is evenness . . . . The second essential is variety of tone. . . . But the most important point (which I shall proceed to discuss a little later) is the necessity of adapting the voice to

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23 The "saying," one might observe, could hardly be better put.

24 Again may be noted Quintilian's sound thinking concerning the voice.
suit the nature of the various subjects on which we are speaking and the moods that they demand: otherwise our voice will be at variance with our language. We must, therefore, avoid that which the Greeks call monotony, that is to say, the unvarying exertion both of lungs and voice.

The voice must not be pressed beyond its powers, for it is liable to be choked and to become less and less clear in proportion to the increase of effort, while at times it will break altogether and produce the sound to which the Greeks have given a name derived from the crowing of cocks before the voice is developed. We must also beware of confusing our utterance by excessive volubility which results in disregard of punctuation, loss of emotional power, and sometimes in the clipping of words. The opposite fault is excessive slowness of speech. Our speech must be ready, but not precipitate, under control, but not slow, while we must not take breath so often as to break up our sentence, nor, on the other hand, sustain it until it fails us from exhaustion. For the sound produced by loss of breath is disagreeable; we gasp like a drowning man and fill our lungs with long-drawn inhalations at inappropriate moments, giving the impression that action is due not to choice, but to compulsion. Therefore, in attacking a period of abnormal length, we should collect our breath, but quickly, noiselessly and imperceptibly. On other occasions we shall be able to take breath at the natural breaks.
in the substance of our speech. But we must exercise our breathing capacity to make it as great as possible. To produce this result Demosthenes used to recite as many successive lines as possible, while he was climbing a hill. He also, with a view to securing fluency free from impediment, used to roll pebbles under his tongue when speaking in the privacy of his study. Sometimes the breath, although capable of sustained effort and sufficiently full and clear, lacks firmness when exerted, and for that reason is liable to become tremulous, like bodies which, although to all appearances sound, receive insufficient support from the sinews. . . . There are some too who, owing to the loss of teeth, do not draw in the breath naturally, others who pant incessantly and so loudly that it is perfectly audible within them: they remind one of heavily-laden beasts of burden straining against the yoke. . . . But any of these faults are tolerable compared with the practice of chanting instead of speaking. . . . For what can be less becoming to an orator than modulations that recall the stage and a sing-song utterance which at times resembles the maudlin utterance of drunken revellers? . . .

But it is now high time for me to explain what I mean by appropriate delivery. Such appropriateness obviously lies in the adaptation of the delivery to the subjects on which we are speaking. This quality is, in the main,

25 The allusion is evidently to the singing or chanting of one actor while another actor or dancer went through the movements.
supplied by the emotions themselves, and the voice will ring as passion strikes its chords. But there is a difference between true emotion on the one hand, and false and fictitious emotion on the other. The former breaks out naturally as in the case of grief, anger or indignation, but lacks art, and therefore requires to be formed by methodical training. The latter, on the other hand, does imply art, but lacks the sincerity of nature: consequently in such cases the main thing is to excite the appropriate feeling in oneself, to form a mental picture of the facts, and to exhibit an emotion that cannot be distinguished from the truth. The voice, which is the intermediary between ourselves and our hearers, will then produce precisely the same emotion in the judge that we have put into it. For it is the index of the mind, and is capable of expressing all its varieties of feeling.

Therefore when we deal with a lively theme, the flow of the voice is characterised by fullness, simplicity and

26 This is a condensed phrasing of Quintilian's earlier explanation of how one may engender emotion within oneself. Cf. supra, pp. 320-322.

27 Again one notes Quintilian's aptness of statement. Yet it is about here that the misinterpreted and misused part of the Institutes begins. The descriptions, which follow, of the various qualities and tones for the various emotions and moods are accurate enough, as they are in Cicero's listing; but to use them as prescribed ends for the actor to achieve is another matter. And that is exactly what certain eighteenth and nineteenth century teachers of elocution and acting tried to do.
cheerfulness; but when it is roused to battle, it puts forth all its strength and strains every nerve. In anger it is fierce, harsh and intense, and calls for frequent filling of the lungs, since the breath cannot be sustained for long when it is poured forth without restraint. When it is desired to throw odium upon our opponents, it will be somewhat slower, since, as a rule, it is none save the weaker party takes refuge in such tactics. On the other hand, in flattery, it will be grave and dignified, modest if we express fear or shame, bold in exhortation, precise in argument, full of modulations, suggestive of tears and designedly muffled in appeals for pity, whereas in digression it will be full and flowing, and will have all the resonance that is characteristic of confidence; even and pitched halfway betwixt high and low. But it will be raised to express violent emotion, and sink when our words are of a calmer nature, rising and falling according to the demands of its theme.

However, for the moment I will defer speaking of the variations in tone required by different topics, and will proceed first to the discussion of gesture which conforms to the voice,28 and like it, obeys the impulse of the mind. Its importance in oratory is sufficiently clear from the

28 It is to be observed that Quintilian feels that gesture should conform to voice rather than vice versa. In regard to gesture, as in regard to voice, the Institutes have been misused by teachers of elocution and acting. In the first place Quintilian was talking of gestures for the orator, not for the actor.
In the second place, though many of his statements are true and his principles sound, Roman gesture by this time had become so exaggerated in its mimicry that attempts to reproduce it, movement for movement, in any years of the modern era would necessarily have been absurd. Cf. Quintilian's implication (infra, p. 340) that actors now adapted gestures to words rather than to thoughts.

In the cutting of this section of the Institutes, the editor has attempted to include ideas that reveal, most significantly, what some of the action may have been like on Roman stages of this period and what Quintilian said that he thought of such action. It is to be remembered that the chief productions were mimes and pantomimes, single-scene presentations, and recitations.
fact that there are many things which it can express without the assistance of words. For we can indicate our will not merely by a gesture of the hands, but also with a nod from the head: signs take the place of language in the dumb, and the movements of the dance are frequently full of meaning, and appeal to the emotions without any aid from words. The temper of the mind can be inferred from the glance and gait, and even speechless animals show anger, joy, or the desire to please by means of the eye and other physical indications. Nor is it wonderful that gesture which depends on various forms of movement should have such power, when pictures, which are silent and motionless, penetrate into our innermost feelings with such power that at times they seem more eloquent than language itself. On the other hand, if gesture and the expression of the face are out of harmony with the speech, if we look cheerful when our words are sad, or shake our heads when making a positive assertion, our words will not only lack weight, but will fail to carry conviction. Gesture and movement are also productive of grace. It was for this reason that Demosthenes used to practice his delivery in front of a large mirror, since, in spite of the fact that its reflections are reversed, he trusted his

The dance, however, was frequently accompanied by song. Cf. the poet Crina oras's epigram addressed to the singer Philonides (supra, p. 286).
eyes to enable him to judge accurately the effect produced. 30

The head, being the chief member of the body, has a corresponding importance in delivery, serving not merely to produce graceful effect, but to illustrate our meaning as well. To secure grace it is essential that the head should be carried naturally and erect. For a droop suggests humility, while if it be thrown back it seems to express arrogance, if inclined to one side it gives an impression of languor, while if it is held too stiffly and rigidly it appears to indicate a rude and savage temper. . . . 31

For methods by which the head may express our meaning are manifold. For in addition to those movements which indicate consent, refusal and affirmation, there are those expressive of modesty, hesitation, wonder or indignation, which are well known and common to all. But to confine

30 Stanislavski (op. cit., p. 19) was to call this kind of practice "dangerous."

31 These comments remind one of Seneca (supra, pp. 304, 305).

"Actors in the theatre . . . imitate bashfulness by hanging their heads, lowering their voices, and keeping their eyes fixed and rooted upon the ground."

"Yonder is the man who stalks upon the stage with swelling port and head thrown back. . . ."

Horace had written in a similar vein (supra, p. 255).

"Act the Joveus of the comedy, and stand with head bowed, much like one overawed."

The kinship of idea among the three men appears to have significance.
the gesture to the movement of the head alone is regarded as a fault by those who teach acting as well as by professors of rhetoric. . . . \(^32\)

By far the greatest influence is exercised by the glance. For it is by this that we express supplication, threats, flattery, sorrow, joy, pride or submission. . . . . It is this . . . that conveys a world of meaning and is often more eloquent than all our words. Consequently in plays destined for the stage, the masters of the art of delivery\(^33\) design even their masks to enhance the emotional effect. Thus, in tragedy, Aerope will be sad, Medea fierce, Ajax bewildered, Hercules truculent. In comedy, on the other hand, over and above the methods adopted to distinguish between slaves, pimps, parasites, rustics, soldiers, harlots, maidservants, old men stern and mild, youths moral or luxurious, married women and girls, we have the important role of the father who, because at times he is excited and at others calm, has one eyebrow raised and the other normal, the custom among actors being to turn that side of the face to the audience which best suits the role.\(^34\)

\(^32\) Here is another indication of similarity in technique between acting and oratory.

\(^33\) One notes the use of this term to mean actors.

\(^34\) Bieber (op. cit., pp. 179-182) says that this peculiarity began in Greek Middle Comedy and was taken over from Greek New Comedy to the Roman stage. Two of her illustrations of masks (fig. 253, p. 184, and fig. 277, p. 196) show the characteristic.
But of the various elements that go to form the expression, the eyes are the most important, since they, more than anything else, reveal the temper of the mind, and without actual movement will twinkle with merriment or be clouded with grief. And further, nature has given them tears to serve as interpreters of our feelings, tears that will break forth for sorrow or stream for very joy.

The neck must be straight, not stiff or bent backward. As regards the throat, contraction and stretching are equally unbecoming, though in different ways. If it be stretched, it causes strain as well, and weakens and fatigues the voice, while if the chin be pressed down into the chest it makes the voice less distinct and coarsens it, owing to the pressure on the windpipe. It is, as a rule, unbecoming to raise or contract the shoulders. For it shortens the neck and produces a mean and servile gesture, which is even suggestive of dishonesty when men assume an attitude of flattery, admiration or fear. As for the hands, without which all action would be crippled and enfeebled, it is scarcely possible to describe the variety of their motions, since they are almost as expressive as words. For other portions of the body merely help the speaker, whereas the hands may almost be said to speak.

35 Here, again, is accuracy of observation.
36 Antipater of Thessalonica, in writing of Pylades, spoke of "these hands that can utter everything." Cf. supra, p. 286.
Do we not use them to demand, promise, summon, dismiss, threaten, supplicate, express aversion or fear, question or deny? Do we not employ them to indicate joy, sorrow, hesitation, confession, penitence, measure, quantity, number and time? Have they not power to excite and prohibit, to express approval, wonder or shame? Do they not take the place of adverbs and pronouns when we point at places and things? In fact, though the peoples and nations of the earth speak a multitude of tongues, they share in common the universal language of the hands.

The gestures of which I have thus far spoken are such as naturally proceed from us simultaneously without words. But there are others which indicate things by means of mimicry. For example, you may suggest a sick man by mimicking the gesture of a doctor feeling the pulse, or a harpist by a movement of the hands as though they were plucking the strings. But this is a type of gesture which should be rigorously avoided in pleading. For the orator should be as unlike a dancer as possible, and his gesture should be adapted rather to his thought than to his actual words, a practice which was indeed once upon a time even adopted by the more dignified performers on the stage.

... 37 For even comic actors seem to me to commit a

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37 The allusion could be to the time of Roscius and Aesop, or it could be to a time which Quintilian remembered. In either case, he is criticizing the exaggeration of actors of his own time and is saying that adaptation of gesture to thought, rather than to words, is the better way.
gross offence against the canons of their art when, if they have in the course of some narrative to quote either the words of an old man (as, for example in the prologue to the Hydria), or of a woman (as in the Georgus), they utter them in a tremulous or a treble voice, notwithstanding the fact that they are playing the part of a young man. So true is it that certain forms of imitation may be a blemish even in those whose whole art consists in imitation.39

... the slower the delivery, the greater its emotional power: thus, Roscius was rapid and Aesopus weighty in his delivery, because the former was a comic and the latter a tragic actor. The same rule applies to the movements. Consequently on the stage young men and old, soldiers and married women all walk sedately, while slaves, maidservants, parasites and fishermen are more lively in their movements. But instructors in the art of gesture will not permit the hand to be raised above the level of the eyes or lowered beneath that of the breast; since it is thought a grave blemish to lift it to the top of the head or lower it to the lower portions of the belly. ...

... it is a purely theatrical trick even to clap the hands or beat the breast. ...

39 In other words, that which is overdone is never artistic.
There is one further remark which I must add, namely, that while what is becoming is the main consideration in delivery, different methods will often suit different speakers. For this is determined by a principle which, though it is obscure and can hardly be expressed in words, none the less exists: and, though it is a true saying that "the main secret of artistic success cannot be attained without art, it is impossible entirely to communicate the secret by the rules of art." There are some persons in whom positive excellences have no charm, while there are others whose very faults give pleasure. We have seen the greatest of comic actors, Demetrius and Stratocles, win their success by entirely different merits. But that is the less surprising owing to the fact that the one was at his best in the roles of gods, young men, good fathers and slaves, matrons and respectable old women, while the other excelled in the portrayal of sharp tempered old men, cunning slaves, parasites, pimps and all the more lively characters of comedy. For their natural gifts differed. For Demetrius' voice, like his other qualities, had greater charm, while that of Stratocles 

40 The reference is to Cicero. Cf. supra, p. 224.

41 Cicero had said that Roscius thought likewise. Cf. ibid. Aristotle had stated that the "capacity for acting is, indeed a natural gift, and hardly within the province of art, save in respect to the diction." Cf. supra, p. 110.
was the more powerful. But yet more noticeable were the incommunicable peculiarities of their action. Demetrius showed unique gifts in the movements of his hands, in his power to charm his audience by the long drawn sweetness of his exclamations, the skill with which he would make his dress seem to puff out with wind as he walked, and the expressive movements of the right side which he sometimes introduced with effect, in all of which things he was helped by his stature and personal beauty. On the other hand, Stratocrates' forte lay in his nimbleness and rapidity of movement, in his laugh (which, though not always in keeping with the character he represented, he deliberately employed to awaken answering laughter in his audience), and finally, even in the way in which he sank his neck into his shoulders. If either of these actors had attempted any of his rival's tricks, he would have produced a most unbecoming effect. Consequently, every man must get to know his own peculiarities and must consult not merely the general rules of technique, but his own nature as well with a view to forming his delivery. But there is no law of heaven which prohibits the possession of all or at any rate the majority of styles by one and the same person. I must conclude this topic with a remark which applies to all my other topics as well, that the prime

42 One could name such individualizing characteristics of certain actors today.
essential is a sense of proportion. For I am not trying to form a comic actor, but an orator. Consequently, we need not study all the details of gesture nor, as regards our speaking, be pedantic in the use we make of the rules governing punctuation, rhythm and appeals to the emotions. For example, if an actor has to speak the following lines on the stage:

"What shall I do then? Not go, even now, Now when she calls me? Or shall I steel my soul No longer to endure a harlot's insults?"

he will hesitate as in doubt, will vary the modulations of his voice, together with the movements of hand and head. . . . But oratory has a different flavour and objects to elaborate condiments, since it consists in serious pleading, not in mimicry. . . . But to-day a rather more violent form of delivery has come into fashion and is demanded of our orators: it is well adapted to certain portions of a speech, but requires to be kept under control. Otherwise, in our attempt to ape the elegances of the stage, we shall lose the authority which should characterize the man of dignity and virtue.

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Summary

Quintilian's *Institutes* of Oratory contributes a new principle to ancient theories of characterization. In his discussion of the education of an orator, Quintilian takes his basic ideas from Cicero. One of the young orator's teachers will be the comic actor to give training in clear pronunciation and proper facial expression and "to show how a narrative should be delivered." It may be assumed that the actor, then, should have mastered his own problems of distinct utterance, should be able to let his face express his feeling without distortion, and should know how to deliver a narrative. In further discussion of the comic actors Quintilian says that their "delivery is not exactly that of common speech, since that would be inartistic, but is on the other hand not far removed from the accents of nature, for if it were, their mimicry would be a failure: What they do therefore is to exalt the simplicity of ordinary speech by a touch of stage decoration." If the comic actors spoke in this way, in a manner "not exactly that of common speech" but "not far removed," they must have known something of the art of playing. Quintilian's observation recalls that of Cicero that reality, unaided, is not sufficiently effective in representation. It is reminiscent also of Aristotle's words on "the necessity of disguising the means we employ, so that we may seem to be speaking not with artifice, but naturally." Both
Aristotle and Quintilian used the speech of the actors to illustrate the principle.

Like Cicero Quintilian believed that in order to stir the emotions of others one must first feel those emotions oneself. Like Cicero he thought that the effective actors felt the emotions of the parts they played. But Quintilian added some significant thinking of his own: "... how are we to generate these emotions in ourselves, since emotion is not in our own power?" And he went on to explain that one can think of the actual experiences which cause the emotion, visioning the actual images (the scenes and the incidents), and that the emotion will come. This analysis of how to stir up emotions within oneself is the only such discussion that has been found among ancient writers. Stanislavski was to reach the same conclusion in the twentieth century and to advise his actors not to try to feel any emotion for its own sake. He was to say that all feelings are the result of something which has gone before, that the actor should think of the thing which has gone before as hard as he can, and that the result will produce itself. This simple principle, stated in the first century of the Christian era by Quintilian, constitutes an important addition to theories of acting which have come down from the ancient world. Quintilian's concept of the comic actor's need to "exalt" only slightly "the simplicity of ordinary speech" is as
significant as the principle of generation of emotions, though it is not so completely new to theories of acting which had been stated up to this time.
CHAPTER XII

PLUTARCH'S INDICATIONS AS TO THEORIES OF ACTING

Theatrical Production in the Second Century

Plutarch, the Biographer and Essayist

Plutarch's Moralia

Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men

Summary
CHAPTER XII

PLUTARCH'S INDICATIONS AS TO THEORIES OF ACTING

Theatrical Production in the Second Century

Plutarch lived in the years approximately from 45 to 125 A.D. It is believed that he did most of his remarkable work in biography and essay during the first quarter of the new century.

Conditions in the theaters of the Roman Empire of the second century A.D. were not much different from conditions of the hundred years preceding. There were spectacles and fights and exhibitions. There were recitational and musical contests. There were mimes. And the love of the dance, or pantomime, was strong. In the provinces there was still some production of tragedy and comedy, but in Rome the other forms of presentations had crowded regular drama out almost entirely.

Dio Chrysostom, talking to the people of Alexandria in the early years of the century, refers to their mad delight in horse and chariot races, to their love of watching the "hired dancers," to their excitement over the songs, and to their general misconduct at all the spectacles.¹ In his

unfinished discourse on music, oratory, and drama, however, he remarks that he personally takes much joy in these forms of pleasure; and he adds "that the performance of those who sing to the harp . . . and of the actors too" seems to him "in no small degree superior" to the speech of orators. "For," he says, the singers' and actors' voices "are louder and undoubtedly better modulated, while their language is not extempore like that of the orators. . . ." He refers to the tragic performances at the Dionysia in Athens, and he mentions the actors while he is speaking at Rhodes. Dio's contemporary, Epictetus the Stoic philosopher, is quoted by Arrian as regretting the decline of tragic acting:

. . . . A time will soon come when the tragic actors will think that their masks and buskins and the long robe are themselves. Man, all these things you have as a subject matter and a task. Say something, so that we may know whether you are a tragic actor or a buffoon; for both of these have everything but their lines in common. Therefore, if one should take away from him both his buskins and his mask, and bring him on the stage as a mere shade of an actor, is the tragic actor lost, or does he abide? If he has a voice, he abides.

Here, as in one of the comments of Dio, there is repetition

of the old recognition of the importance of the actor's voice; and there is evidence, in the several observations, of a certain amount of full performance of tragedy in the provinces.

But though some production of tragedy and comedy still survived in the colonies, as the century progressed the spectacles in Rome and throughout the Empire became more and more spectacular and the ballets more and more elaborate. In the middle part of the century Apuleius describes a ballet in the theater of Corinth in which Mount Ida was erected and reproduced with animals, plants, and springs on it, the whole finally being lowered at last with the aid of a sinking machine.⁶ The gentle Stoic Emperor Marcus Aurelius mentions such extravagant productions;⁷ and the first Christian writer in Latin, Minucius Felix, cries out against obscene practices which he says actually took place on the stages.⁸ By the end of the century the famous Christian, Tertullian, is voicing his denunciation of practically all the characteristics of

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the spectacles, from the immoral themes of the mimes to the bloody and horrible aspect of the public executions which took place under the guise of theatrical performances. 9

"Happy is the man," quotes Tertullian, "who has not gone to the gathering of the impious, who has not stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the chair of pestilences." 10

Yet in spite of the extremes of the spectacles and the lewdness of many of the mimes and dances, this second century

9 Tertullian, Apology in ibid., pp. 77-79 (XV, 1-6); De Spectaculis in ibid., 231-301 (I-XXX).

10 Ibid., p. 239 (III, 91).

The quotation is from Psalms I, i.

Other second century writings which have been examined include the following works:

- Suetonius, op. cit.
- Florus, op. cit.
- Pausanias, op. cit.
- Apollodorus, op. cit.
- Athenaeus, op. cit.
- Dio Cassius, op. cit.
- Philostratus, The Life of Apollonius of Tyana.
A.D. provides comments from a number of important people on various phases of acting -- both of the period and of earlier eras. There are telling items upon the subject from Plutarch, from Fronto the rhetorician, from Gellius the grammarian, and from the satirist Lucian.

Plutarch, the Biographer and Essayist

Plutarch was contemporary with Dio and Epictetus. Tacitus, Martial, and Juvenal were still writing in the first part of the century; but it has been said that "the Latin, the metropolitan writers, less faithfully represent the general spirit and character of the time than what came from the pen of a simple Boeotian provincial, writing in a more universal language."\(^\text{11}\)

Plutarch was born in Chaeroneia, a small town in northern Boeotia, in about 45 or 50 A.D. His family had means and culture and gave him a thorough education. He studied at Athens and returned to his native town, from whence he was soon called as its deputy to the Roman governor of the province of Greece. From his writings it may be gathered that he travelled extensively over Greece, that he visited Asia Minor, Egypt, and Italy, and that he lived for some time at Rome. Here his public business was of such a nature that, as he says, he did not have time to learn well the Latin

language. But as Greek was the language of polite and literary society at Rome, cultivated Greeks were always welcome; and Plutarch read and lectured at Rome, much as he had done in his small but select circle of friends at home. He had acquaintance with many prominent Romans of his time, and he was abreast with affairs which occupied men's minds at the political center of the world.

How long Plutarch remained in Rome is not known. After some years of residence there, however, he returned to Chaeroneia to spend the remainder of his life, to write, and to participate actively in matters of concern to his native village. He held local magistracies; he officiated for many years as a priest of Apollo at Delphi. He was married and had four sons and one daughter, and his family life appears to have been of the happiest. The date of his death is believed to be between the years 120 and 125.12

In this last period of his life Plutarch evidently enlarged the notes of his lectures and sketches into the essays which have been classed under the general title of Moralia. He also composed the work for which he is famous, The Parallel Lives of Greeks and Romans. The two groups of writings have much in common. The Lives show Plutarch not only as a

12 Biographical material has been taken chiefly from the following sources:
Clough, op. cit., pp. ix-xvii.
Babbitt, tr., in Plutarch's Moralia, I, ix-xi.
biographer but also as a moralist interested in the conduct of men, in personal integrity rewarded and in vice corrected. The Morals show the author as concerned with the lives of all people, and in making his points he constantly illustrates with concrete stories (often repeating those in the Lives) about men and women. Archbishop Trench has said with discernment that in the Morals are revealed

... the points of view, moral and religious, from which... Plutarch contemplated not this man's life or the other's, but the whole life of men, Nor is it too much to affirm that of the two halves of Plutarch's writings, of his Lives and his Morals, each constitutes a complement of the other; the one setting forth to us... what the ancient world had accomplished in the world of action, and the other what, in like manner, it had aimed at and accomplished in the world of thought.13

From a study of Plutarch's writings, taken from the two points of view, may be found much that is relevant to an investigation of ancient theories of acting. The stories of action, those in the Lives and those used in the Morals for illustrative purposes, frequently include the actors of earlier times and great men's reactions to them. Occasionally may be caught a significant indication of the actors' own theories or practices. And the philosophizing of the Morals tells, in a few instances, something of Plutarch's general concept of the art principle of imitation.

The Moralia are in the form of dialogues, letters, and

lectures. They deal largely with philosophy, especially with ethics and sometimes metaphysics. There are articles on education, politics, music, aetiology, ethnology, philology, and archaeology; there are literary and historical essays and commentaries on ancient writers; there is treatment of mathematics, physics, astronomy, geography, zoology, and animal psychology. There are also personal letters and stories and anecdotes. Ten of the discussions contain thoughts and incidents that pertain to acting.

The manuscripts of the Moralia include also a section which is called The Lives of the Ten Orators. Babbitt states emphatically, because of stylistic indications, that these biographical sketches "were certainly not written by Plutarch." But whoever the author may have been, he tells stories in three of these Lives that contain unmistakable theories of acting. So the three excerpts have been placed here among the other material from Plutarch.

The Lives of Illustrious Men, or The Parallel Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans were written to prove that the more remote past of Greece could boast of lawgivers, commanders, statesmen, patriots, and orators who would rank with those in the currently impressive past of Rome. With Romulus, Plutarch matched Theseus, the legendary founder of Athens. With Cicero, he matched Demosthenes. With Pompey,
he compared Agesilaus. Twenty-two of the pairs of lives have survived. Eighteen of them close with a formal comparison of the two careers. There are four single lives; and one of the pairs is a doubled comparison. Thus we have fifty Lives in all. They have been translated into many languages, the most famous translations being perhaps Amyot's into French in 1559 and North's translation of Amyot into English in 1579, from which Shakespeare drew considerably.

A great deal has been written of Plutarch's inaccuracy. He is careless about numbers; and he likes anecdotes, some of which are improbable as he admits. Clough has said that Plutarch's lack of interest in political and historical aspects makes his work sometimes unsatisfactory, since politics and history usually affect the ethical conduct of great men. Yet Clough has added that it is, on the other hand,

"agreeable, and surely, also, profitable, to recur to portraits drawn . . . simply upon the broad principles of the ancient moral code of right and wrong. . . . And if we bear in mind, also, that in narratives like that of Theseus, he himself confesses his inability to disengage fact from fable, it may be said that in Plutarch's Lives the readers of all ages will find instructive and faithful biographies of the great men of Greece and Rome. Or, at any rate, if in Plutarch's time it was too late to think of really faithful biographies, we have here the faithful record of the historical tradition of his age. This is what, in the second century of our era, Greeks and Romans loved to believe about their warriors and statesmen of the past. . . ."

In a study of Greek and Roman theories of acting a

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16 Clough, op. cit., p. xviii.
similar view may be taken. If in the *Lives* one cannot be sure that the stories about the actors are always true to fact, one may nevertheless be reasonably certain that "we have here the faithful record of the historical tradition" concerning these actors. Plutarch's stories of the players are surely the tales that, "in the second century of our era, Greeks and Romans loved to believe" about the folk of the theaters of the past.
How the Young Man Should Study Poetry

3. We shall steady the young man still more if, at his first entrance into poetry, we give a general description of the poetic art as an imitative art and faculty analogous to painting. And let him not merely be acquainted with the oft repeated saying that "poetry is articulate painting, and painting is inarticulate poetry," but let us teach him in addition that when we see a lizard or an ape or the face of Thersites in a picture, we are pleased with it and admire it, not as a beautiful thing, but as a likeness. For by its essential nature the ugly cannot become beautiful; but the imitation, be it concerned with what is base or what is good, if only it attain to the likeness, is commended. If, on the other hand, it produces a beautiful picture of an ugly body, it fails to give what propriety and probability require. Some painters even depict unnatural acts, as Timomachus painted a picture of Medea slaying her children.

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17 The translation is by Babbitt, cf. supra, p. 21.

18 In this essay Plutarch considers poetry as a means of training the young in preparation for the study of philosophy. The youth is to be taught to recognize and ignore the false in poetry and not to approve vicious ideas because of their skillful representation. The discussion, in this connection, of the principle of artistic imitation makes the essay of interest in the present study.
and Theon of Orestes slaying his mother, and Parrhasius of the feigned madness of Odysseus, and Chaerephanes of the lewd commerce of women with men. In these matters it is especially necessary that the young man should be trained by being taught that what we commend is not the action which is the subject of the imitation, but the art, in case the subject in hand has been properly imitated. Since, then, poetry also often gives an imitative recital of base deeds, or of wicked experiences and characters, the young man must not accept as true what is admired and successful therein, nor approve it as beautiful, but should simply commend it as fitting and proper to the character in hand. For just as when we hear the squealing of a pig, the creaking of a windlass, the whistling of the winds, and the booming of the sea, we are uneasy and annoyed; but if anybody gives a plausible imitation of these, as Parmeno imitated a pig, and Theodorus a windlass, we are pleased; and just as we avoid a diseased and ulcerous person as an unpleasant sight, but take delight in seeing Aristophon's Philoctetes and Silanion's Jocasta, who are represented on the stage as pining away or dying;

19 Cf. Plato's scorn of such imitations (supra, pp. 72-73).

20 Aristophon was a Greek painter, brother of the more famous Polygnotus, of the fifth century B.C. Philoctetes is the subject of Sophocles's Philoctetes. He was bitten by a snake and left behind by the Greeks.

21 Silanion was an Athenian sculptor of the fourth century B.C.; he worked mainly in bronze. Jocasta was the wife of Oedipus in Sophocles's Oedipus the King.
so too the young man, as he reads what Thersites the buffoon, or Sisyphus the seducer of women, or Batrachus the bawd, is represented as saying or doing, must be taught to commend the faculty and art which imitates these things, but to repudiate and condemn the disposition and the actions which it imitates. For it is not the same thing at all to imitate something beautiful and something beautifully, since "beautifully" means "fittingly and properly" and ugly things are "fitting and proper" for the ugly.

HOW TO TELL A FLATTERER FROM A FRIEND

... such people [as certain kings and wealthy men who are susceptible to flattery], like the tragedians, want to have a chorus of friends singing the same tune or a sympathetic audience to applaud them...

SAYINGS OF KINGS AND COMANDERS

... Being urged to hear a man who gave an imitation of the nightingale's voice, [Agesilaus]... said, "I have

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22 The idea of putting this statement down in so many words appears, from this study, to have been original with Plutarch.

23 Plutarch is recognizing the actor's feeling of need for response from their audiences.

24 Agesilaus II, King of Sparta (c. 400-360 B.C.) and a noted general.
107. Why do the Romans call the Dionysiac artists histriones?

Is it for the reason that Cluvius Rufus has recorded? For he states that in very ancient times, in the consulship of Gaius Sulpicius and Licinius Stolo, a pestilential disease arose in Rome and destroyed to a man all persons appearing on the stage. Accordingly, at the request of the Romans, there came many excellent artists from Etruria, of whom the first in repute and the one who for the longest time enjoyed success in their theatres, was named Hister; and therefore all actors are named histriones from him. . . .

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25 Such imitators must have been common in the fourth century B.C. (cf. supra, pp. 72-73). This is Plutarch's second mention of them. The same story is repeated in another part of the Moralia under Sayings of Spartans, III, 271 (lviii, 213).

26 These "questions" and the answers given are Plutarch's attempt to explain one hundred thirteen Roman customs, most of which deal with religious matters, but a few of which are on other subjects.

27 A Greek anatomist and physician of Ephesus in the second century.

28 In 361 B.C.

29 Livy (cf. supra, p. 174) derives histriones from "ister, the Tuscan word for player."
Alexander, the tyrant of Pherae (this last should be his only appellation; he should not be permitted to disgrace the name of Alexander), as he watched a tragic actor, felt himself much moved to pity through enjoyment of the acting. He jumped up, therefore, and left the theatre at a rapid pace, exclaiming that it would be a dreadful thing, if, when he was slaughtering so many citizens, he should be seen to weep over the sufferings of Hecuba and Polyxena. And he came near visiting punishment upon the actor because the man had softened his heart, as iron in the fire.

2. But Alexander (the Great), knowing well in what matters he should be merely a spectator and listener, and in what he should play the chief role, trained himself always to be formidable in arms, and, in the words of Aeschylus,

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30 Plutarch gave two epideictic orations on Alexander. The circumstances of the delivery are not known. Babbitt, op. cit., IV, 380.

31 This Alexander was "master of Thessaly from 369 to 358 B.C., when he was assassinated." Babbitt, op. cit., I, 459. Plutarch contrasts him with Alexander the Great.

32 Polyxena, daughter of Hecuba and Priam, was sacrificed to appease the ghost of Achilles. Cf. Euripides, Hecuba in The Complete Greek Drama, I, 807-840.

33 The story may be compared with that of Epaminondas (Lives, cf. infra, p. ) who was similarly moved, but who dealt more kindly with the actor.
Sturdy contender in arms, baleful to all that oppose.

This art he inherited from his ancestors, the Aeacidae, and from Heracles; but upon the other arts he freely bestowed honour without jealousy according to their worth and artistic excellence; but he was not so easily carried away by the pleasure they give him as to try to imitate them. The tragic actors of his time were the group that centred about Thet-talus and Athenodorus. At the contest of these two, the kings of Cyprus defrayed the expenses of the performance and Alexander's most celebrated generals served as judges. When Athenodorus won, "I would rather," said Alexander, "have lost half my kingdom than see Thettalus defeated." However, he did not intercede with the judges nor find fault with the judgement, since he felt that, while he must be superior to all men, yet he must submit to Justice.

The comic actors of his time were the group that centred about Lycon of Scarpheia. When Lycon inserted in one of his comedies a begging verse, 34 Alexander laughed and gave him ten talents. . . .

ON THE FAME OF THE ATHENIANS 35

34 The law of Lycurgus (cf. infra, p. ) made it illegal for tragic actors to depart from the authorized text." For a full discussion of the subject of actors' interpelations in Greek tragedy, cf. Denys L. Page, op. cit.

35 The discussion "whether the Athenians were more warlike or learned" is an epideictic oration, like the speeches on Alexander. It was probably delivered at Athens.
Xenophon, to be sure, became his own history by writing of his generalship and his successes and recording that it was Themistogenes the Syracusan who had compiled an account of them, his purpose being to win greater credence for his narrative by referring to himself in the third person, thus favouring another with the glory of the authorship. But all the other historians... have been for the exploits of others what actors are for plays, exhibiting the deeds of the generals and kings, and merging themselves with their characters as tradition records them, in order that they might share in a certain effulgence, so to speak, and splendour. For there is reflected from the men of action upon the men of letters an image of another's glory, which shines again there, since the deed is seen, as in a mirror, through the agency of their words.

... those who write of imaginative exploits lag as far behind historians as persons who tell of deeds come short of those that do them.

5. Athens, to be sure, possessed no famous writer of either epic or melic poetry; for Cinesias seems to have been an infelicitous dithyrambic poet. He was himself without family or fame but, jeered and mocked by the comic poets, he acquired his share in unfortunate notoriety. And for the

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Cinesias was an Attic poet of the fifth century B.C. He was often ridiculed by contemporary poets.
dramatic poets, the Athenians considered the writing of comedy so undignified and vulgar a business that there was a law forbidding any member of the Areopagus\textsuperscript{37} to write comedies. But tragedy blossomed forth and won great acclaim, becoming a wondrous entertainment for the ears and eyes of the men of that age, and, by the mythological character of its plots, and the vicissitudes which its characters undergo, it effected a deception wherein, as Gorgias remarks, "he who deceives is more honest than he who does not deceive, and he who is deceived is wiser than he who is not deceived." For he who deceives is more honest, because he has done what he has promised to do; and he who is deceived is wiser, because the mind which is not insensible to fine perceptions is easily enthralled by the delights of language.

What profit, then, did these fine tragedies bring to Athens to compare with the shrewdness of Themistocles which provided the city with a wall, with the diligence of Pericles which adorned the Acropolis, with the liberty which Miltiades bestowed, with the supremacy to which Cimon advanced her? If in this manner the wisdom of Euripides, the eloquence of Sophocles, and the poetic magnificence of Aeschylus rid the city of any of its difficulties or gained for her any brilliant success, it is but right to compare their tragedies with trophies of victory, to let the theatre rival the War Office, and to compare the records of dramatic performances

\textsuperscript{37} A high court of Athens.
with the memorials of valour.

6. Is it, then, your pleasure that we introduce the men themselves bearing the emblems and badges of their achievements, and assign to each their proper entrance? Then from this entrance let the poets approach, speaking and chanting to the accompaniment of flutes and lyres. . . . Let them bring with them their equipment, their masks and altars, their stage machinery, their revolving changes of scene, and the tripods that commemorate their victories. Let their tragic actors accompany them, men like Nicostratus and Callippides, Mynniscus, Theodorus, and Polus, who robe Tragedy and bear her litter, as though she were some woman of wealth; or rather, let them follow on as though they were painters and gilders and dyers of statues. Let there be provided also a bounteous outlay for stage furnishings, supernumeraries, sea-purple robes, stage machinery, as well as dancing-masters and body-guards, an intractable crowd.

It was in reference to all this that a Spartan not ineptly remarked that the Athenians were making a great mistake in wasting their energies on amusements, that is to say, in lavishing on the theatre what would pay for great fleets and would support armies in the field. For, if we reckon up the

38 Plutarch has chosen some of the most famous actors of the fourth century B.C. Aristotle had praised Theodorus (cf. supra, p. 111) and had said that Mynniscus accused Callipides of overacting (cf. supra, p. 142). Babbitt (op. cit., p. 515, n. a.) explains that the tragedy was the undorned statue, the actors supplying "the decoration: encaustic paint, gold leaf, and dye."
cost of each tragedy, the Athenian people will be seen to have spent more on productions of Bacchae, Phoenissae, Oedipuses, and Antigones, and the woes of Medea and Electra, than they spent in fighting for their supremacy and for their liberty against the barbarians. For the generals often ordered their men to bring along uncooked rations when they led them forth to battle; and the commanders, I can swear, after providing barley-meal and a relish of onions and cheese for the rowers, would embark them on the triremes. But the men who paid for the choruses gave the choristers eels and tender lettuces, roast beef and marrow, and pampered them for a long time while they were training their voices and living in luxury. The result for the defeated choregos was to be held in contumely and ridicule; but to the victors belonged a tripod, which was, as Demetrius says, not a votive offering to commemorate their victory, but a last oblation of their wasted livelihood, an empty memorial of their vanished estates. Such are the returns paid by the poetic art and nothing more splendid ever comes from it. . . .

39 The choregus used his private wealth for the fitting out of the chorus.

40 About the sentiments expressed in this oration, Babbitt (op. cit., IV, 490-491) reasons: "It is strange that this vigour should be devoted to glorifying the men of arms and villifying the men of letters, and yet this is precisely what Plutarch attempts to do in this essay. It is true that he lived in an era of profound peace, when the horrors of war were remote, but it is somewhat surprising to find him arguing for this thesis, especially since he shows by incidental statements that he is thoroughly aware of the contributions that Athens has made to literature. We may then be justified in the inference that the essay is a tour de force,
like other rhetorical discussions which were popular in Plutarch's day; it does not necessarily represent his own belief."
3. . . . Philemon⁴¹ the comic dramatist and Alexis⁴² were overtaken by death while they were on the stage acting and being crowned with garlands. And Polus⁴³ the tragic actor, as Eratosthenes and Philochorus tell us, when he was seventy years old acted in eight tragedies in four days shortly before his death. . . .

PRECEPTS OF STATECRAFT

. . . For it is absurd that in a tragedy the chief actor, even though he is a Theodorus or a Polus, often makes his entrance after a hireling who takes third-class parts and addresses him in humble fashion,⁴⁴ just because the latter wears the diadem and sceptre. . . .

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⁴¹ Philemon (361-262 B.C.) was the chief rival of Menander. Babbitt (op. cit., X, 88, n.s.) says that, according to another story, he died in his sleep at the age of ninety-nine years and, according to still another, he died of excessive laughter when ninety-seven years old.

⁴² Alexis (c 376-270 B.C.) was the foremost poet of middle comedy. It is interesting to note that Plutarch's story shows both these poets as acting in their own plays.

⁴³ For Gellius's story of the acting of Polus in the fourth century B. C., cf. infra, pp. 393-394.

⁴⁴ Cf. Aristotle's recording (supra, p. 101) of Theodorus's statement "that he had never yet allowed any other actor, however poor he might be, to make his entrance before he did, because . . . 'spectators get fond of those they hear first'"
LIVES OF THE TEN ORATORS

Aeschines

... When Aeschines was young and physically strong he worked hard in the gymnasium; and afterwards, since he had a clear voice, he practised tragedy; and according to Demosthenes he was for a long time under-secretary and regularly played as a third-rate actor with Aristodemus at the Dionysiac festivals, repeating the old tragedies in his spare time.

Lycurgus

... also introduced laws: the law relating to comic actors, that a competitive performance be held on the festival of Potis and that the victor's name be inscribed as eligible for the City Dionysia, which had not been permitted before, and thus he revived a contest which had fallen out of use; the law that bronze statues of

45 Cf. supra, p. 356.

46 Aristodemus was a first actor.

47 Cf. supra, pp. 64-65.

48 The third day of the Anthesteria, the thirteenth day of the month Anthesterium." Babbitt, op. cit., X, 399, n. a.

49 Before the passage of this law, only those were eligible as protagonists (or chief actors) who had won at the City Dionysia. The effect of the law of Lycurgus was to increase the number of eligible actors. Ibid., p. 401, n.a.
the poets Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides be erected, that their tragedies be written out and kept in a public depository, and that the clerk of the State read them to the actors who were to perform their plays for comparison of texts and that it be unlawful to depart from the authorized text in acting. . . . 50

Demosthenes

. . . because he was short of breath (Demosthenes) . . . paid Neoptolemus the actor ten thousand drachmas to teach him to speak whole paragraphs without taking breath. . . . 51 Once he was hissed out of the assembly and was walking home feeling discouraged; but Eunomus of the deme Thria, who was already an old man, happened to meet him and encouraged him, and more than anyone else the actor Andronicus, by telling him that his words were excellent but that his delivery was deficient, and then Andronicus declaimed from memory the speech which Demosthenes had delivered in the assembly; whereupon Demosthenes was convinced and put himself in the hands of Andronicus. 52 Therefore, when someone asked him what was the first thing in oratory, he replied, "Delivery," and what the second,

50 This part of the law was an attempt to stop interpolations by the actors. Cf. supra, p. 364, and n. 34.

51 Cf. supra, p. 64.

52 The story in the Lives (cf. infra, pp. 377-378) says that it was the actor Datyrus who helped Demosthenes in this way.
"Delivery," and the third, "Delivery."

... When Antipater had taken Pharsalus and threatened to besiege the Athenians unless they surrendered the orators, Demosthenes left the city and fled first to Aegina to sit as suppliant in the sanctuary of Aeacus, but was frightened and changed over to Calauria; and when the Athenians voted to surrender the orators including himself, he took his seat as suppliant there in the temple of Poseidon. And when Archais, nicknamed "Exile-Hunter," who had been a pupil of the orator Anaximenes, came to fetch him and urged him to leave his sanctuary, indicating that Antipater would receive him as a friend, he said, "Your acting in tragedy was not convincing to me, nor will your advice be convincing now. . . .

... Once when Polus the actor told him that he received a talent as pay for acting two days, he replied, "And I five talents for being silent one day." And when his voice failed in the assembly and the people jeered at him, he said: "It is actors who should be judged by their voices, but statesmen by their opinions. . . .

53 The Macedonian general.

54 The Attic talent, as a denomination of silver money, was equal to about $1,187.00.
PLUTARCH'S LIVES OF ILLUSTRIOUS MEN

SOLON

... Thespis, at this time, beginning to act tragedies, and the thing, because it was new, taking very much with the multitude, though it was not yet made a matter of competition, Solon, being by nature fond of hearing and learning something new, and now, in his old age, living idly, and enjoying himself, indeed, with music and with wine, went to see Thespis himself, as the ancient custom was, act; and after the play was done, he addressed him, and asked him if he was not ashamed to tell so many lies before such a number of people; and Thespis replying that it was no harm to say or do so in play, Solon vehemently struck his staff against the ground: "Ay," said he, "if we honor and commend such play as this, we shall find it some day in our business."

... 

PELOPIDAS

55 The Dryden translation is used, as revised by Clough, op. cit.
56 Solon was elected archon in Athens in about 594 B.C. He initiated economic and constitutional reforms.
57 Cf. supra, pp. 34-35.
58 Pelopidas was a Theban general, friend of the general and statesman Epaminondas, whom he aided in victory over the Spartans at Leuctra (371 B.C.).
once seeing a tragedian act Euripides's Troades, ... Spaminondas] left the theatre; but sending for the actor, bade him not to be concerned at his departure, but act as he had been used to do, as it was not in contempt of him that he departed, but because he was ashamed that his citizens should see him, who never pities any man that he murdered, weep at the sufferings of Hecuba and Andromache. 59

Lysander 60

... just as in tragedies it not uncommonly is the case with the actors, the person who represents a messenger or servant is much taken notice of, and plays the chief part, while he who wears the crown and sceptre is hardly heard to speak, even so was it about the counsellor, ... }Lysander] had all the real honors of the government, and to the king }Agesilaus 61] was left the empty name of power. . . .

Agesilaus

... Callippides, the tragic actor, who had a great

59 Hecuba was wife of Priam, King of Troy. Andromache was wife of Hector, Prince of Troy. Cf. Euripides, The Trojan Women in The Complete Greek Dramas, pp. 956-1010.

60 A Spartan naval and military commander.

61 King of Sparta (c 400-360 B.C.) and noted general.
name in all Greece and was made much of, once met and saluted . . . Agesilaus of which when he found no notice taken, he confidently thrust himself into his train, expecting that Agesilaus would pay him some attention. When all that failed, he boldly accosted him, and asked him, whether he did not remember him? Agesilaus turned and looking him in the face, "Are you not," said he, "Callippides the showman?"

... .

ALEXANDER

... .

At his return out of Egypt into Phoenicia, . . . Alexander sacrificed and made solemn processions, to which were added shows of lyric dances and tragedies, remarkable not merely for the splendor of the equipage and decorations, but for the competition among those who exhibited them. For the kings of Cyprus were here the exhibitors, just in the same manner as at Athens those who are chosen by lot out of the tribes. And, indeed, they showed the

62 The word is one which the Spartans applied to the mimes. Plutarch tells the same story in Sayings of the Spartans in the Moralia, III, 271 (I, 212) and adds the explanation. Of the anecdote, Nicoll (Masks Mimes and Miracles, p. 26, n. 4) says, "The point . . . is . . . that the tragic actors regarded themselves as superior to their mimic brethren." The idea in the story is somewhat in keeping with Callippides's reputation for overacting. Cf. supra, pp. 142-143.

63 These stories, except for the incident about the fine for Athenodorus, are told also in the oration On The Fortune of Alexander. Cf. supra, pp. 363-364.
greatest emulation to outvie each other; especially Nicocreon, King of Salamis, and Pasicrates of Soli, who furnished the chorus, and defrayed the expenses of the two most celebrated actors, Athenodorus and Thessalus, the former performing for Pasicrates, and the latter for Nicocreon. Thessalus was most favored by Alexander, though it did not appear till Athenodorus was declared victor by the plurality of votes. For then at his going away, he said the judges deserved to be commended for what they had done, but that he would willingly have lost part of his kingdom, rather than to have seen Thessalus overcome. However, when he understood Athenodorus was fined by the Athenians for being absent at the festivals of Bacchus, though he refused his request that he would write a letter in his behalf, he gave him a sufficient sum to satisfy the penalty. Another time, when Lycon of Scarphia happened to act with great applause in the theatre, and in a verse which he introduced into the comic part which he was acting, begged for a present of ten talents, he laughed and gave him the money.

..."

DEMOSTHENES

..."

Another time, when the assembly had refused to hear... Demosthenes...", and he was going home with his head muffled up, taking it very heavily, they relate that Satyrus, the actor, followed him, and being his familiar acquaintance entered into conversation with him. To whom, when
Demosthenes bemoaned himself, that having been the most industrious of all the pleaders, and having almost spent the whole strength and vigor of his body in that employment, he could not yet find any acceptance with the people, that drunken sots, mariners, and illiterate fellows were heard, and had the hustings for their own, while he himself was despised, "You say true, Demosthenes," replied Satyrus, "but I will quickly remedy the cause of all this, if you will repeat to me some passage out of Euripides or Sophocles." Which when Demosthenes had pronounced, Satyrus presently taking it up after him, gave the same passage, in his rendering of it, such a new form, by accompanying it with the proper mien and gesture, that to Demosthenes it seemed quite another thing. By this being convinced how much grace and ornament language acquires from action, he began to esteem it a small matter, and as good as nothing for a man to exercise himself in declaiming, if he neglected enunciation and delivery. Hereupon he built himself a place to study in under ground, (which was still remaining in our time,) and hither he would come constantly every day to form his action, and to exercise his voice; and here he would continue, oftentimes without intermission, two or three months together, shaving one half of his head, that so for shame he might not go abroad, though he desired it ever so much.

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64 Cf. the similar story in The Lives of the Ten Orators (supra, p. 372).
... At first, it is said, ... [Cicero], as well as Demosthenes, was defective in his delivery, and on that account paid much attention to the instruction, sometimes of Roscius the comedian, and sometimes of Aesop the tragedian. 65 They tell of this Aesop, that whilst he was representing on the theatre Atreus deliberating the revenge of Thyestes, 66 he was so transported beyond himself in the heat of action, that he struck with his sceptre one of the servants, who was running across the stage, so violently, that he laid him dead upon the place. ... 67

65 This statement of Plutarch's is the only reference the editor has found to Cicero's having received instruction from Aesop.

66 Atreus and Thyestes were sons of Pelops. Thyestes wronged Atreus's wife, and Atreus in revenge slew Thyestes' children and served them to him in a ghastly banquet. Tragedies on the story had been written by Sophocles, Euripides, Ennius, Accius, and Varius; but no one of these is extant (cf. Duckworth, op. cit., p. 751). Seneca's play Thyestes is the only drama on the subject that has survived, but it was written long after the time of Aesop. The play in which Aesop so lost himself was probably one by Ennius or Accius.

67 In other words, the Romans "loved to believe" that their great tragedian Aesop gave himself up so completely to his playing that the life of the drama became more real to him than actuality. Cicero (cf. supra, p. 242) had said that the acting of Aesop seemed at times as if some power were rendering him unconscious of what he did. Cf. also Fronto's description of Aesop's getting ready for a role (infra, p. 387).
Plutarch's contribution to extant theories of ancient acting comes principally in his recording of traditions about actors of earlier periods. It is said that Thespis, the earliest of the poet-actors, believed that there "was no harm" in telling the "lies" of which Solon accused him so long as he was doing so "in play." It is said that both a tyrant and a general of the fourth century B.C. were moved to tears by the playing of actors in tragedy. It is said that a Spartan king once spoke to Callipides (whom Aristotle had accused of overacting) with the epithet of "showman." The law of Lycurgus is recorded as requiring that the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides "be written out and kept in a public depository" and "that it be unlawful to depart from the authorized text in acting." The implication is that the tragic actors sometimes added their own variations, and it is reminiscent of Aristotle's observation upon the subject. That this practice was used by comic actors, also, is attested in the story that "Lycon inserted in one of his comedies a begging verse" and that "Alexander laughed and gave him ten talents." Alexander was fond of the tragedians, too, and was especially interested in the acting of Thessalus (or Thetitalus). The orators, likewise, realized the importance of the actors. Demosthenes came to understand the value of the training that the actors could give him as a speaker. He learned from Satyrus and Andronicus (or from one of them) the "grace and
ornament" that "language acquires from action." He learned from Neoptolemus some principles of breath control. The orator Aeschines had been an actor in his younger days; he had "worked hard in the gymnasia," and he had been gifted with "a clear voice."

Of all the Plutarchian stories perhaps the most noteworthy one, for research in ancient philosophies of acting, is the anecdote about Aesop's playing of the revenge of Atreus upon Thyestes. Plutarch says that Aesop "was so transported beyond himself in the heat of action, that he struck with his sceptre one of the servants, who was running across the stage, so violently, that he laid him dead upon the place." The narrative is in some harmony with the statement of Cicero that the acting of Aesop seemed at times as if some power were making him unconscious of what he did. The story is indicative that the Romans liked to believe, as Cicero and Quintilian believed, that actors lived the parts they played and genuinely felt the emotions.
CHAPTER XIII

LINES FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF FRONTO

Fronto the Rhetorician

The Correspondence of Marcus Cornelius Fronto

Summary
CHAPTER XIII

LINES FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF FRONTO

Fronto The Rhetorician

From the letters of Marcus Cornelius Fronto to the Emperor Antoninus Pius come two lines that are of value in a study of Roman acting. One of the lines throws a little light on the methods of the dancers of Fronto's own time, the second century A.D. The other gives a "tradition" about Aesop's preparation for a role that holds as much import as does the story of his acting which is told by Plutarch.

Fronto was born probably between the years 100 and 113 A.D. in Cirta, a Roman colony in Numidia. He may have studied at Alexandria. Two of his teachers, it is known, were Athenodotus the philosopher and Dionysius the rhetorician. From an inscription in Calamae in Numidia it has been learned that he held various offices of honor before the year 143. In this year he was appointed by Pius as consul suffectus for July and August. At this time he also held the post as tutor to the young princes, Marcus and Lucius.

Fronto's political life came to rather an early end because of ill health, and he devoted his later years to his profession of eloquence and to literature. He was a leader
in intellectual circles, recognized as an authority on linguistics and grammatical questions; and he had great reputation as an orator and pleader.¹

He believed that an orator should please without sacrificing true principles of eloquence.² He understood that noble thoughts were the essential thing in oratory.³ But Fronto's chief interest was in style, in words and how to use them. He wanted to revivify the national speech, to shake it out of the groove into which it had fallen. To accomplish this end, he went back to earlier writers -- such writers as Plautus, Ennius, and Cato -- for old words which had gone out of use. He insisted that such words must be not only old but more suitable to the meaning than modern words before they were to be preferred.⁴ And he chose for his additions only genuine, established words from the old forms of the language.

Opinions as to Fronto's place in Latin literature vary.

¹ Biographical information has been taken from C. R. Haines's discussion in The Correspondence of Marcus Cornelius Fronto with Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Lucius Verus, Antoninus Pius, and Various Friends (tr. C. R. Haines; 2 vols.; "The Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1919), I, xxiii-xxvi.

² Ibid., p. 121 ("To my Lord Aurelius Caesar your consul Fronto," 3).

³ Ibid., p. 17 ("To my Master" Marcus Aurelius to Fronto).

⁴ Ibid., p. 37 ("To my Lord" Fronto to Marcus as Caesar, 1-2).

Ibid., p. 7 ("Fronto to my Lord" Fronto to Marcus as Caesar, 3-4).
Haines believes that

The great service that Fronto did to his countrymen was to leave their language a freer and more plastic instrument of speech than he found it, by reinforcing it with those elements which were in danger of atrophy for want of use, or were being wasted by being left outside the pale of good literature. Moreover by minute accuracy in the use of words and careful definition of their meaning, he gave precision and clarity to the language, which was a work well worth doing, and deserving of credit.5

Rose, on the other hand, states plainly that Fronto "inflicted on his native language the final injury from which it never fully recovered. . . . It was already artificial, . . . he made it archaistic as well."6 Thonssen and Baird say that "in searching for simplicity of style he merely accentuated certain artificialities which were already menacing the language," and that his "contribution to rhetorical theory is minor."7

Fronto's course of study for his royal pupils, to enable them to achieve the "new style," included a study of old farces, comedies, orators, and poets. Verse-making, construction of similes, manufacture of maxims, translations from one language to another were practiced. Declamations were written on both sides of historical or fictitious questions. But Marcus Aurelius, of whom Fronto had hoped to make a consummate orator, gave up his study of rhetoric in his twenty-fourth year because he could no longer bring

5 Ibid., p. xli.
6 Rose, op. cit., p. 518.
7 Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 191.
himself to argue two sides of a case as oratory would have him do.

The letters between Fronto and Marcus Aurelius, often on the young man's rhetorical studies, make up the most of the extant Correspondence. There are a few exchanges, however, between Fronto and the Emperor Pius, a few between Fronto and Lucius Verus (the other royal pupil), and some between Fronto and other friends.

It is from two of the letters to Pius that the two lines which concern the present investigation have been taken.
Fronto to Antoninus Augustus.  ? 162 A.D.

17. The tragedian Aesopus is said never to have put on a tragic mask without setting it in front of him and studying it a long time that he might conform his gestures and adapt his voice to the face of the mask. . . .

Fronto to Antoninus Augustus.  ? 163 A.D.

4. . . . actors, when they dance clad in mantles, with one and the same mantle represent a swan's tail, the tresses of Venus, a Fury's scourge. . . .

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8 The translation is by C. R. Haines, op. cit.

9 Cicero (cf. supra, p. ) had said that there were times when some power seemed to render Aesop unconscious of what he did. Plutarch (cf. supra, p. ) had told an old story of Aesop's being "transported beyond himself in the heat of action." This description by Fronto of his backstage habit suggests that there was serious preparation behind the real or apparent inspiration.

10 The use of the dancer's mantle in this way appears to have been frequent.
Summary

The use of the dancer's mantle, noted in the second excerpt, to represent such accoutrements as "a swan's tail" must have occurred frequently.

Alongside Plutarch's and Cicero's observations about the actor Aesop, there may be considered the story by Fronto, given in the first excerpt. "The tragedian Aesopus is said never to have put on a tragic mask without setting it in front of him and studying it a long time that he might conform his gestures and adapt his voice to the face of the mask." Back of Aesop's apparent obsession with his role, back of his inspiration by "some power," there would seem to have been a period of real preparation and an attempt to understand the character he was playing. Fronto's statement is the first mention of such preparation that has been found in this research.
CHAPTER XIV

A CHAPTER FROM AULUS GELLIUS

Gellius the Grammarian

The Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius

Summary
CHAPTER XIV

A CHAPTER FROM AULUS GELLIUS

Gellius the Grammarian

The Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius is a collection of anecdotes of people Gellius had known — grammarians, rhetoricians, and philosophers — and of the great ones of the past, together with extracts from various scholarly works on literature and antiquities; for Gellius, like his contemporary Fronto, was an enthusiast for the older literature. Among the narratives about great men of earlier days, Gellius tells a significant story of Polus, the Greek actor of the fourth century B.C.

Very little is known about the life of Aulus Gellius. It has been supposed that he was, like Fronto, of African origin; but Rolfe believes that he "is perhaps one of the few Roman writers who were natives of the eternal city."\(^1\) The dates of his birth and death have been variously stated. It "seems probable that he was born about 123, and ... that he died soon after 169."\(^2\) He was in Rome "when he


\(^{2}\) Ibid., p. xiv.

390
assumed the gown of manhood, probably at the age of between fifteen and seventeen.\(^3\) In the schools Gellius pursued the usual course of study, including grammar and rhetoric. One of his instructors in rhetoric may have been Marcus Cornelius Fronto.

After completion of his schooling at Rome, Gellius went to Athens for study of philosophy. It is certain that he spent a year there, though how much longer he may have stayed is a matter of conjecture. His Attic Nights was begun at this time.

Upon returning to Rome, Gellius continued his interest in philosophy and other learning; and he either began at this time or continued his legal career. At some period during his life in Rome, he was made a "judge extraordinary" of one of the courts. He was an intimate friend of many intellectual men of the time.

Gellius shared Fronto's admiration for archaic phraseology; and like Fronto, he resorted to old words and unusual word order in the attempt to rejuvenate literary Latin. In the Attic Nights he discusses various questions of Latin grammar. He gives information, also, in many other fields of knowledge. There are extracts from two hundred seventy-five Greek and Roman writers who are mentioned by name.

For the Polus story, however, no source is given. It is told as if it were an old story, commonly accepted by the

\(^3\) Ibid., p. xii.
Greeks as true. "There was in the land of Greece an actor," the chapter begins. And it continues, "They say that his name was Polus..."
Chapter 5

There was in the land of Greece an actor of wide reputation, who excelled all others in his clear delivery and graceful action. They say that his name was Polus, and he often acted the tragedies of famous poets with intelligence and dignity. This Polus lost by death a son whom he dearly loved. After he felt that he had indulged his grief sufficiently, he returned to the practice of his profession.

At that time he was to act the Electra of Sophocles at Athens, and it was his part to carry an urn which was supposed to contain the ashes of Orestes. The plot of the play requires that Electra, who is represented as carrying her brother's remains, should lament and bewail the fate that she believed had overtaken him. Accordingly Polus, clad in the mourning garb of Electra, took from the tomb the ashes and urn of his son, embraced them as if they were those of

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4 The translation is by Rolfe. Cf. supra, p. 390, n. 1.

5 The praise, it is to be noted, was for both voice and movement.

6 Plutarch (cf. supra, pp. 367, 370, 373) mentions Polus four different times, but he does not evaluate Polus's acting.

7 These words, in themselves, are a beautiful tribute.
Orestes, and filled the whole place, not with the appearance and imitation of sorrow, but with genuine grief and unfeigned lamentation. Therefore, while it seemed that a play was being acted, it was in fact real grief that was enacted.  

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8 Polus felt, according to the story, that genuine emotion was needed.

If the story is true, Polus was using a theory similar to that suggested by Stanislavski (op. cit., pp. 157-158) in his discussion of emotion memory: "If today you had been able to . . . revive all the feelings you experienced that first time and act without effort, involuntarily -- then I would have said that you possess exceptional emotion memories. . . . That type of memory which makes you relive the sensations you once felt when . . . your friend died, is what we call emotion memory. Just as your visual memory can reconstruct an inner image of some forgotten thing, place or person, your emotion memory can bring back feelings you have already experienced. They may seem to be beyond recall, when suddenly a suggestion, a thought, a familiar object will bring them back in full force. Sometimes the emotions are as strong as ever, sometimes weaker, sometimes the same strong feelings will come back but in a different guise."
Summary

The story by Gellius about Solus is the first instance that has been found of the use of the principle of emotion memory to stir up feeling within oneself. Cicero, Quintilian, and Plutarch had believed that actors felt the emotions of their roles. Quintilian had stated the principle of stirring one's own emotion by means of visual memory. Gellius is the first to tell of the employment of emotion memory for this purpose.
CHAPTER XV

LUCIAN ON THE ART OF THE PANTOMIME

Lucian of Samosata

Lucian on the Dance

Summary
CHAPTER XV
LUCIAN ON THE ART OF THE PANTOMIME

Lucian of Samosata

As the various discussions in the introductory sections of these chapters have progressed, and as the excerpts from the several sources have been presented, the reader has probably observed the number of statements to the effect that each of the writings was written for some purpose other than the explanation of a theory of acting. Some of these ancient authors made important contributions to recorded thought upon the subject of acting; but up to this point no one of them, so far as the investigation has shown, made his contribution in a work which he wrote specifically upon the subject.

Among the dialogues of Lucian of Samosata, however, is to be found a treatise upon The Dance, which is a detailed discussion of the art of the pantomime as this form of entertainment was presented in the theaters of the second century A.D. The treatise is not written for the purpose of telling the dancer what his technique should be. It is set in a framework of dialogue, as if to convince Crato, the Cynic philosopher, of the worthwhile
nature of the pantomimic productions. Yet before the
dialogue is finished, Lucian has presented a theory of
mimesis for the pantomimic actor which is not found else­
where in ancient writings and which is timeless in its
truth.

Lucian was born about 125 A.D. at Samosata, in Syria.
From indications in a few of his writings, it may be
gathered that he began his career as sculptor's appren­
tice to his uncle, that he ran away from this occupation
and obtained, somehow, training in rhetoric. He made his
first appearance as an advocate at Antioch in 150 A.D.
But he soon gave up the law courts for the lecturer's
platform; and like many of the sophists he made a world
tour -- travelling and lecturing in Ionia, Greece, Italy,
and Gaul. He won considerable wealth and fame; and he
returned to Antioch, later to migrate to Athens and set
up as a man of letters there. In his old age he was
appointed by Commodus to a well paid legal post in Egypt.
The date of his death is set variously as between 180 and
195 A.D.1

Lucian says that he abandoned rhetoric for dialogue.2
Eighty-two of his works have survived. From his rhetorical

1 Biographical information has been taken from
Wright, op. cit., pp. 235-243, and from A. M. Harmon's
"Introduction" to Lucian (tr. A. M. Harmon; 8 vols.;
"The Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann,
1913), I, vii-ix.

2 Lucian, The Double Indictment in Lucian, III,
143 (30).
period come declamations, essays on abstract themes, descriptions, and appreciations. The bulk of his work, however, consists of the dialogues -- the early ones of a more or less philosophic nature, the later ones entirely satiric. Lucian regarded the fusion of comedy and dialogue as his own original invention; and his fame rests largely on the wit and clever phrasing in such satiric pieces as The Liar, The Dialogues of the Gods, and Zeus Rants. All of Lucian's works, from the early rhetorical compositions to the late satiric dialogues, were written, it is believed, for delivery from a lecture platform for the purpose of entertaining an audience.

In several of the dialogues there is reference to the theater, and there is no mistaking the fact that Lucian despised the tragedians of the tragic drama of the second century.

... when ... [kings] fall, they make no better figure than the actors that you often see, who for a time pretend to be a Cecrops\(^3\) or a Sisyphus\(^4\) or a Telephus\(^5\) with diadems and ivory-hilted swords and waving hair and gold-embroidered tunics; but if (as often happens) one of them misses his footing and falls down in the middle of the stage, it naturally makes fun for the audience when the mask gets broken to pieces, diadem and all, and the actor's own face is covered with blood, and his legs are bared high, so as to show that his inner garments are miserable rags and that the buskins with which he is

\(^3\) Legendary founder and first King of Athens.

\(^4\) Founder and King of Corinth.

\(^5\) Son of Heracles and Auge.
shod are shapeless and do not fit his foot.

...6

... The philosophers -- Stoics, Academics, Epicureans, Peripatetics, and others -- cloaking themselves in the high-sounding name of Virtue, go about hiding loathsome habits under a false garb, very like actors in tragedy; for if you take away from the latter their masks and their gold-embroidered robes, nothing is left but a comical little creature hired for the show at seven drachmas.7

The comments are reminiscent of Seneca's.8 What one must remember is that Lucian's descriptions are of the tragic actors of the second century A.D., as Seneca's descriptions are of the actors of the first century. In both cases the decadence of tragic drama had set in, and even by the time of Seneca it had taken full effect. It is possible in both cases that the descriptions could have been of rhapsodes, reading tragic dramas in full costume.9

The popular form of dramatic entertainment in the first and second centuries was surely the pantomime. Perhaps in the first century and certainly by the second century, this form of dancing had reached the proportions of a full ballet.10 A dramatic plot was enacted by a

6 Lucian, The Dream, or the Cock in Lucian, II, 227 (26).
7 Icaromenippus, or the Sky-man in Lucian, II, 317 (29).
8 Cf. supra, pp. 304, 305.
9 Cf. ibid., pp. 290, 298-301.
masked and costumed dancer, assisted by an actor who spoke or sang the lines and who sometimes assumed supporting roles in the story.\textsuperscript{11} There was also a chorus, and there was accompaniment by flute and syrinx and other percussion instruments, including the "iron shoe."\textsuperscript{12} Themes of the pantomimes were the same as those of tragedy, so Lucian tells.\textsuperscript{13} Athenaeus speaks of the "tragic dancing" of the slave Agrippa, who could in his "silent mimicry" expound "the nature of the Pythagorean system" more clearly than teachers of eloquence.\textsuperscript{14}

It is about this tragic dancing or pantomimic acting that Lucian writes in \textit{The Dance}. The essay, as stated above, is the first and indeed the only ancient writing, which this study shows, written specifically upon the subject of acting. With this treatise by Lucian, the present study of ancient theories of acting closes; for between his time and the end of the ancient period there

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Cf. infra}, p. 419.
\item \textit{Cf. ibid.}, pp. 419, 428, and n. 70.
\item \textit{Cf. ibid.}, p. 412.
\item Athenaeus, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 89 (I, 20c).
\end{enumerate}
has been found no further contribution to the subject. 15
So this compilation of opinions on Greek and Roman

15 Third and fourth century writings which have been examined are as follows:
- Diogenes Laertius, *op. cit.*
- Longus, *op. cit.*
histrionic techniques is brought to completion with the one ancient writing in which such observations were written specifically about the art of acting. And *The Dance* makes an addition to ancient theories of *mimesis* which is as true in the middle of the twentieth century as it was in the year 165 A.D.
LUCIAN ON THE DANCE

Lycinus

Well, Crato, this is a truly forceful indictment that you have brought . . . against dances and the dancer's art itself, and besides against us who like to see that sort of show, accusing us of displaying great interest in something unworthy and effeminate; but now let me tell you how far you have missed the mark and how blind you have been to the fact that you were indicting the greatest of all good things in life. For that I can excuse you if . . . through unacquaintance with it all you have thought that it deserved indicting.

Crato

Who that is a man at all, a life-long friend of letters, moreover, and moderately conversant with philosophy, abandons his interest, Lycinus, in all that is better and his association with the ancients to sit enthralled by the flute, watching a girlish fellow play the wanton with dainty clothing and bawdy songs and imitate love-sick minxes, the most erotic of all antiquity, such as

16 The translation is by Harman, op. cit.

17 "Lycinus" is a nom-de-plume which Lucian uses for himself in this dialogue and in Leziphanes and The Eunuch.
Phaedra\(^{18}\) and Parthenope\(^{19}\) and Rhodope,\(^{20}\) every bit of this moreover, accompanied by strumming and tootling and tapping of feet? — a ridiculous business in all truth, which does not in the least become a freeborn gentleman of your sort. So for my part, when I learned that you give your time to such spectacles, I was not only ashamed on your account but sorely distressed that you should sit there oblivious of Plato and Chrysippus\(^{21}\) and Aristotle, getting treated like people who have themselves tickled in the ear with a feather, and that too when there are countless other things to hear and see that are worth while, if one wants them — flute-players who accompany cyclic choruses, singers of conventional compositions for the lyre, and in especial, grand tragedy and comedy, the gayest of the gay; all these have even been held worthy to figure in competitions.

You will need, therefore, to do a great deal of pleading in your own defence, my fine fellow, when you confront the enlightened, if you wish to avoid being eliminated

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\(^{18}\) Wife of Theseus, in love with his son Hippolytus. The story is told by Euripides in his **Hippolytus** (cf. *The Complete Greek Drama*, pp. 763-800) and by Seneca in his **Phaedra** (cf. *The Complete Roman Drama*, pp. 625-666).


\(^{20}\) Rhodope is probably the Thracian who married her brother Haemus. They likened themselves to mountains and were turned into the mountains known by their names. Cf. *ibid*.

\(^{21}\) A Greek Stoic philosopher of the third century B.C.
absolutely and expelled from the fold of the serious-minded. . . . Anyhow, keep an eye to the future and see to it that you do not surprise us by changing from the man that you were of old to a Lyde or a Bacche. 22 That would be a reproach not only to you but to us, unless, following the example of Odysseus, we can pull you away from your lotus and fetch you back to your wonted pursuits before you unwittingly fall quite under the spell of these Sirens in the theatre. But those other Sirens assailed only the ears, so that wax alone was needed for sailing past them; you, however, seem to have been subjugated from top to toe, through the eyes as well as the ears.

Lycinus

Heavens, Crito, what sharp teeth there are in this dog of yours that you have let loose on us! But as for your parallel, the simile of the Lotus-Eaters and the Sirens, it seems to me quite unlike what I have been through, since in the case of those who tasted the lotus and heard the Sirens, death was the penalty for their eating and listening, while in my case not only is the pleasure more exquisite by a great deal but the outcome is happy; I am not altered into forgetfulness of things at home or ignorance of my own concerns, but -- if I may speak my mind without any hesitancy -- I have come back to you from the theatre with far more wisdom and more

22 Typical courtesans of New Comedy.
insight into life. Or rather, I may well put it just as Homer does: he who has seen this spectacle "Goes on his way diverted and knowing more than aforetime."24

**Crato**

Heracles, Lycinus! ... you do not show us any hope of a cure when you dare to praise what is so shameful and abominable.

**Lycinus**

Tell me, Crato, do you pass this censure upon dancing and what goes on in the theatre after having seen it often yourself, or is it that without being acquainted with the spectacle, you nevertheless account it shameful and abominable, as you put it? ... .

**Crato**

Why, is that what was still in store for me -- with beard so long and hair so grey, to sit in the midst of a parcel of hussies and a frantic audience like that, clapping my hands, moreover, and shouting very unbecoming words of praise to a noxious fellow who doubles himself up for no useful purpose?

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23 Cf. *infra*, p. 427, and n. 68.

24 Cf. Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*, p. 188 (XII, 188).
Lycinus

This talk is excusable in your case, Crato. But if you would only take my word for it and just for the experiment's sake submit, with your eyes wide open, I know very well that you could not endure not to get ahead of everyone else in taking an advantageously placed seat from which you could see well and hear everything.

Crato

May I never reach ripeness of years if I ever endure anything of the kind, as long as my legs are hairy and my beard unplucked! At present I quite pity you; to the dismay of the rest of us, you have become infatuated!

Lycinus

Then are you willing to leave off your abuse, my friend, and hear me say something about dancing and about its good points, showing that it brings not only pleasure but benefit to those who see it; how much culture and instruction it gives; how it imports harmony into the souls of its beholders, exercising them in what is fair to see, entertaining them with what is good to hear, and displaying to them joint beauty of soul and body? That it does all this with the aid of music and rhythm would not be reason to blame, but rather to praise it.

Crato

I have little leisure to hear a madman praise his own ailment, but if you want to flood me with nonsense, I am
ready to submit to it as a friendly service and lend my ears. . . .

Lycein

Good, Crato; that is what I wanted most. . . . First of all, you appear to me to be quite unaware that this practice of dancing is not novel, and did not begin yesterday or the day before, in the days of our grandfathers, for instance, or in those of their grandfathers. No, those historians of dancing who are the most veracious can tell you that Dance came into being contemporaneously with the primal origin of the universe, making her appearance together with Love -- the love that is age-old. 25 In fact, the concord of the heavenly spheres, the interlacing of the errant planets with the fixed stars, their rhythmic agreement and timed harmony, are proofs that Dance was primordial. Little by little she has grown in stature and has obtained from time to time added embellishments, until now she would seem to have reached the very height of perfection and to have become a highly diversified, wholly harmonious, richly musical boon to mankind. 26

25 "That is to say, the Hesiodean, cosmogonic Eros, elder brother of the Titans, not Aphrodite's puny boy." Harmony, op. cit., p. 220, n. 1.

26 Lucian goes, here, into a long discussion of the supposed history and development of the dance. He begins by telling of dances performed by the Curetes to save the infant Zeus from his father Cronus. He concludes by explaining that no less a person than Socrates had considered the dance as one of the most important subjects of study.
Again, it seems to me that when you praise comedy and tragedy, you have forgotten that in each of them there is a special form of dance; that is to say, the tragic is the Emmeleia and the comic the Cordax, though sometimes a third form, the Sicinnis, is included also. But since at the outset you gave greater honour to tragedy and comedy and cyclic flute-players and singing with the lyre than to the dance, calling these competitive and therefore grand -- come, let us now compare each one of them with the dance. And yet, suppose we omit the flute, if you do not mind, and the lyre, since they are parts of the dancer's paraphernalia.

As far as tragedy is concerned, let us form our first opinion of its character from its outward semblance. What a repulsive and at the same time frightful spectacle is a man tricked out to disproportionate stature, mounted upon high clogs, wearing a mask that reaches up above his head, with a mouth that is set in a vast yawn as if he meant to swallow up the spectators! I forbear to speak of pads for the breast and pads for the paunch, wherewith, he puts on an adscititious, counterfeit corpulence, so that the disproportion in height may not betray itself.

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27 Cf. also Athenaeus, op. cit., I, 89 (I, 20, d-e).

28 The tragic and comic masks had open mouths. The mouths of the pantomimic masks were closed.
the more conspicuously in a slender figure. Then too, inside all this, you have the man himself bawling out, bending forward and backward, sometimes actually singing his lines, and (what is surely the height of unseemliness) melodising his calamities, holding himself answerable for nothing but his voice, as everything else has been attended to by the poets, who lived at some time in the distant past. To be sure, as long as he is an Andromache or a Hecuba, his singing can be tolerated; but when he enters as Heracles in person and warbles a ditty, forgetting himself and taking no shame either for the lion-skin that he is wearing or for the club, a man in his right mind may properly term the thing a solecism.29 And by the way, the charge you were bringing against the dance, that men imitate women, would be a common charge against both tragedy and comedy. Indeed, in them the female parts outnumber the male! Moreover, comedy accounts the ridiculousness of the masks themselves as part of what is pleasing in her; for example, the masks of Davuses and Tibiuses,30 and of cooks.

On the other hand, that the appearance of the dancer is seemly and becoming needs no assertion on my part,
for it is patent to all who are not blind. His mask itself is most beautiful, and suited to the drama that forms the theme; its mouth is not wide open, as with tragedy and comedy, but closed for he has many people who do the shouting in his stead. In the past, to be sure, they themselves both danced and sang; but afterwards, since the panting that came of their movement disturbed their singing, it seemed better that others should accompany them with song.

The themes of tragedy and the dance are common to both, and there is no difference between those of the one and those of the other, except that the themes of the dance are more varied and more un hackneyed, and they contain countless vicissitudes.

If the dance does not feature in contests, I maintain that it is because the governors of the game thought the thing too important and too grand to be called into competition. I forbear to mention that a city in Italy, the fairest that belongs to the Chalcidian race, has added it, by way of embellishment, to the games that are held there.

At this point I should like to defend the numerous omissions in my account. . . . I want you to understand

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31 Cf. supra, p. 410, and n. 28.

32 "The allusion is to Naples and to the important games instituted there by Augustus in 2 A.D. . . ." Harmon, op. cit., p. 242, n. 1.
that the topic which I have proposed for myself at present is not to give the history of every form of the dance. No, the chief object of my discussion is to praise the dance as it now exists and to show how much that is pleasurable and profitable it comprises in its embrace, although it did not begin to attain such a height of beauty in days of old, but in the time of Augustus, approximately.

Those early forms were roots, so to speak, or initial stages, of the dance; but the flowering of it and the consummate fruition, which precisely at this moment has been brought to the highest point of perfection — that is what our discussion treats of.

What qualifications the dancer on his part ought to have, how he should have been trained, what he should have studied, and by what means he should strengthen his work, I shall now set forth for you, to show you that Dance is not one of the facile arts that can be plied without pains, but reaches to the very summit of all culture, not only in music but in rhythm and metre, and especially in your own favourite, philosophy, both physics and ethics. To be sure, Dance accounts philosophy's inordinate interest in dialectics inappropriate to herself. From rhetoric,

Cf. Athenaeus, I, 89 (I, 20, d-e), who says that Bathyllus and Pylades originated this kind of dancing. Lucian says only that it began to attain its highest form in the age of Augustus.
however, she has not held aloof, but has her part in that too, inasmuch as she is given to depicting character and emotion, of which the orators also are fond. And she has not kept away from painting and sculpture, but manifestly copies above all else the rhythm that is in them, so that neither Phidias nor Apelles seems at all superior to her.

Before all else, however, it behoves her to enjoy the favour of Mnemosyne34 and her daughter Polyhymnia,35 and she endeavours to remember everything. Like Calchas in Homer, the dancer must know "what is, and what shall be, and was of old,"36 so thoroughly that nothing will escape him, but his memory of it all will be prompt. To be sure, it professes in the main to a science of imitation and portrayal, of revealing what is in the mind and making intelligible what is obscure. What Thucydides said of Pericles in praising the man would also be the highest possible commendation of a dancer, "to know what is meet and express it;" and by expressing I mean the intelligibility of his postures. But his whole accoutrement for the work is ancient story, as I have said, and the prompt recollection and graceful presentation of it. Beginning with Chaos and the primal origin of the world, he must know everything down

34 Goddess of Memory and mother of the Muses.
35 Sometimes called Polyhymnia, Muse of the sacred lyric.
36 Cf. Homer, The Iliad of Homer, p. 3 (I, 70).
to the story of Cleopatra the Egyptian.37

. . . .

. . . . To sum it up, he will not be ignorant of anything that is told by Homer and Hesiod and the best poets, and above all by tragedy.

. . . . all . . . must lie ready, provided and stored by the dancer in advance to meet every occasion.

Since he is imitative and undertakes to present by means of movements all that is being sung, it is essential for him, as for the orators, to cultivate clearness, so that everything which he presents will be intelligible, requiring no interpreter. No, in the words of the Delphic oracle,38 whosoever beholds dancing must be able "to understand the mute and hear the silent" dancer.

That is just what happened, they say, in the case of Demetrius the Cynic.39 He too was denouncing the dance just as you do, saying that the dancer was a mere adjunct to the flute and the pipes and the stamping, himself contributing nothing to the presentation but making absolutely meaningless, idle movements with no sense in them at all;

37 There follows a compendium of mythology from the events of the "primal origin" through all subsequent happenings as presented by "the best poets."

38 The maid of Pytho was supposed "to understand the mute and hear the silent." There was no reference to the dance in her oracle. Harmon, op. cit., pp. 264-265, n. 1.

39 A contemporary and friend of Seneca.
but that people were duped by the accessories of the business — the silk vestments, the beautiful mask, the flute and its quavers, and the sweet voices of the singers, by all of which the dancer's business, itself amounting to nothing at all, was embellished. Thereupon the dancer at that time, under Nero in high repute, who was no fool, they say, and excelled, if ever a man did, in remembrance of legends and beauty of movement, made a request of Demetrius that was very reasonable, I think — to see him dancing and then accuse him; he promised, indeed, to perform for him without flute or songs. That is what he did; enjoining silence upon the stampers and flute-players and upon the chorus itself, quite unsupported, he danced the amours of Aphrodite and Ares, Helius tattling, Hephaestus laying his plot and trapping both of them with his entangling bonds, the gods who came in on them portrayed individually, Aphrodite ashamed, Ares seeking cover and begging for mercy, and everything that belongs in this story, in such wise that Demetrius was delighted beyond measure with what was taking place and paid the highest possible tribute to the dance; he raised his voice and shouted at the top of his lungs: "I hear the story that you are acting, man, I do not just see it; you seem to be talking with your hands!"  

40 Probably one of the dancers who took Paris as a stage name. Harmon, p. 267, n. 1.  
41 Cf. supra, p. 286.
Since we are under Nero in fancy, I wish to tell the remark of a barbarian concerning the same dancer, which may be considered a very great tribute to his art. One of the barbarians from Pontus, a man of royal blood, came to Nero on some business or other, and among other entertainments saw the dancer perform so vividly that although he could not follow what was being sung -- he was but half Hellenised, as it happened -- he understood everything. So when it came to be time for him to go back to his own country, Nero, in saying good-bye, urged him to ask for anything that he wanted, and promised to give it to him. "If you give me the dancer," said he, "you will please me mightily!" When Nero asked, "What good would he be to you there?" he replied, "I have barbarian neighbours who do not speak the same language, and it is not easy to keep interpreters for them. If I am in want of one, therefore, this man will interpret everything for me by signs." So deeply had he been impressed by that disclosure of the distinctness and lucidity of the mimicry of the dance.

The chief occupation and the aim of dancing, as I have said, is impersonating, which is cultivated in the same way by the rhetoricians, particularly those who recite these pieces that they call "exercises"; for in

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42 A chief aim, it may be said, for any actor.
43 Cf. Quintilian, supra, pp. 317-318.
their case also there is nothing which we commend more
highly than their accommodating themselves to the roles
which they assume, so that what they say is not inappropri­
ate to the princes or tyrant-slayers or poor people or
farmers whom they introduce, but in each of these what
is individual and distinctive is presented.

In that connection I should like to tell you something
that was said by another barbarian. Noticing that the
dancer had five masks ready -- the drama had that number
of acts -- since he saw but the one dancer, he enquired
who were to dance and act the other roles, and when he
learned that the dancer himself was to act and dance them
all, he said; "I did not realise, my friend, that though
you have only this one body, you have many souls."

Well, that is the way the barbarian viewed it. And
the Greeks of Italy quite appropriately call the dancer
a pantomime, precisely in consequence of what he does.44
That poetical precept "My son, in your converse with all
cities keep the way of the sea-creature that haunts the
rocks,"45 is excellent, and for the dancer essential;
he must cleave close to his matters and conform himself
to each detail of his plots.

44 The name means one who imitates everything.

45 The "reference is to the cuttle, which was
supposed to take protective colouring to match its back­
ground." Harmon, op. cit., p. 271, n. 2.
In general, the dancer undertakes to present and enact characters and emotions, introducing now a lover and now an angry person, one man afflicted with madness, another with grief, and all this within fixed bounds. Indeed, the most surprising part of it is that within the selfsame day at one moment we are shown Athamas in a frenzy, at another Ino in terror: presently the same person is Atreus, and after a little, Thyestes; then Aegisthus, or Aerope; yet they all are but a single man.

Moreover, the other performances that appeal to eye and ear contain, each of them, the display of a single activity; there is either flute or lyre or vocal music or tragedy’s mummery or comedy’s buffoonery. The dancer, however, has everything at once, and that equipment of his, we may see, is varied and comprehensive — the flute, the pipes, the tapping of feet, the clash of cymbals, the melodious voice of the actor, the concord of the singers.46

Then, too, all the rest are activities of one or the other of the two elements in man, some of them activities of the soul, some of the body; but in dancing both are combined. For there is display of mind in the performance as well as expression of bodily development, and the most important part of it is the wisdom that controls the action,

46 Here is a clear statement of the various elements of the pantomimic presentation: the instrumental accompaniment, the tapping of the iron shoe (cf. infra, p. 428, and n. 70), the voice of the actor singing or speaking, and the singing of the chorus. The actor sometimes assisted the dancer by assuming secondary roles (cf. infra, p. 428, and n. 71).
and the fact that nothing is irrational. Indeed, Lesbonax of Mytilene, a man of excellent parts, called dancers "handywise" and used to go to see them with the expectation of returning from the theatre a better man. Timocrates, too, his teacher, one day, for the sole and only time, came in by chance, saw a dancer ply his trade and said: "What a treat for the eyes my reverence for philosophy has deprived me of!"

Then why is not dancing a thing of utter harmony, putting a fine edge upon soul, disciplining the body, delighting the beholders and teaching them much that happened of old, to the accompaniment of flute and cymbals and cadenced song and magic that works its spell through eye and ear alike? I forbear to mention that you will become better in character through familiarity with such a spectacle, when you see the assembly detesting misdeeds, weeping over victims of injustice, and in general schooling the characters of the individual spectators. But let me tell you in conclusion what is

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47 A sophist, somewhat prior to Lucian.
48 Cf. supra, p. 286.
49 Cf. Lucian's earlier statement (supra, pp. 406-407) that he came back from the theatre "with far more wisdom and more insight into life."
50 That is to say, empathy was at work between pantomimic actors and audiences.
particularly to be commended in our dancers: that they cultivate equally both strength and suppleness of limb seems to me amazing as if the might of Heracles and the daintiness of Aphrodite were to be manifested in the same person.

I wish now to depict for you in words what a good dancer should be like in mind and in body. To be sure, I have already mentioned most of his mental qualities. I hold, you know, that he should be retentive of memory, gifted, intelligent, keenly inventive, and above all successful in doing the right thing at the right time; besides, he should be able to judge poetry, to select the best songs and melodies, and to reject worthless compositions. What I propose to unveil now is his body, which will conform to the cannon of Polyclitus. It must be neither very tall and inordinately lanky, nor short and dwarfish in build, but exactly the right measure, without being either fat, which would be fatal to any illusion, or excessively thin; for that would suggest skeletons and corpses.

52 The qualities are not bad requirements, one could say, for actors of any period.

53 "The proportions of the statue of a naked youth carrying a spear (the Doryphorus), made by Polyclitus, were analysed by the sculptor himself in a book called the Canon, and universally accepted as canonical for the male figure." Harmon, op. cit., V, 10-11, n. 1.
To illustrate, I should like to tell you about the cat-calls of a certain populace that is not slow to mark such points. The people of Antioch, a very talented city which especially honours the dance, keep such an eye upon everything that is done and said that nothing ever escapes a man of them. When a diminutive dancer made his entrance and began to play Hector, they all cried out in a single voice, "Ho there, Astyanax!54 where is Hector?" On another occasion, when a man who was extremely tall undertook to dance Capaneus55 and assault the walls of Thebes, "Step over the wall," they said, "you have no need of a ladder!" And in the case of the plump and heavy dancer who tried to make great leaps, they said, "We beg you, spare the stage!" On the other hand, to one who was very thin they called out: "Good health to you," as if he were ill.56 It is not for the joke's sake that I have mentioned these comments, but to let you see that entire peoples have taken a great interest in the art of dancing, so that they could regulate its good and bad points.

In the next place, the dancer must by all means be agile and at once loose-jointed and well-knit, so as to

54 Infant son of Hector.

55 A gigantic hero, one of the seven chieftains who sought to capture Thebes.

56 When one remembers some of the "modern" calls that have been heard in certain "G. I." and other audiences, one tends to think that audiences have not changed materially in eighteen centuries.
bend like a withe as occasion arises and to be stubbornly firm if that should be requisite. That dancing does not differ widely from the use of the hands which figures in the public games -- that it has something in common with the noble sport of Hermes and Pollux and Heracles, you may note by observing each of its mimic portrayals.

... dancing possesses what appeals to ear and eye alike. Its spell, too, is so potent that if a lover enters the theatre, he is restored to his right mind by seeing all the evil consequences of love; and one who is in the clutch of grief leaves the theatre in brighter mood, as if he had taken some potion that brings forgetfulness and ... "surcease from sorrow and anger." An indication that each of those who see it follows closely what is going on and understands what is being presented lies in the fact that the spectators often weep when anything sad and pitiful reveals itself. ...

Now that I have spoken of the strong points of dancers, let me tell you also of their defects. Those of

57 All gymnasiums were under the control of Hermes. He was also the god of oratory.
58 Castor and Pollux were gods of boxing and wrestling.
59 Lucian is referring, evidently, to the great strength and athletic prowess of Heracles.
60 Homer, The Odyssey of Homer, p. 55 (IV, 221).
61 Here is a second reference to the empathic responses of audiences at the pantomimic shows.
the body, to be sure, I have already set forth; those of the mind I think you will be able to note with this explanation. Many of them through ignorance -- for it is impossible that they should all be clever -- exhibit dreadful solecisms, so to speak, in their dancing. Some of them make senseless movements that have nothing to do with the harp-string, as the saying goes; for the foot says one thing and the music another. Others suit their movements to the music, but bring in their themes too late or too soon, as in a case which I remember to have seen one time. A dancer who was presenting the birth of Zeus, with Cronus eating his children, went off into presenting the misfortunes of Thyestes because the similarity led him astray. And another, trying to enact Semele stricken by the thunderbolt, assimilated her to Glauce, who was of a later generation. But we should not condemn the dance itself, I take it, or find fault with the

62 Cronus swallowed his children as soon as they were born in order to keep any of them from slaying him, as he had slain his father Uranus.

63 Cf. supra, p. 379, n. 66.

64 Cf. supra, p. 286.

65 Glauce, daughter of Creon (King of Corinth), married Jason and was burned to death by a poisoned robe which was sent her by Medea.
activity itself on account of such dancers; we should consider them ignorant, as indeed they are, and should praise those who do everything satisfactorily, in accordance with the regulations and the rhythm of the art.

In general, the dancer should be perfect in every point, so as to be wholly rhythmical, graceful, symmetrical, consistent, unexceptionable, impeccable, not wanting in any way, blent of the highest qualities, keen in his ideas, profound in his culture, and above all, human in his sentiments. In fact, the praise that he gets from the spectators will be consummate when each of those who behold him recognises his own traits, or rather sees in the dancer as in a mirror his very self, with his customary feelings and actions. Then people cannot contain themselves for pleasure, and with one accord they burst into applause, each seeing the reflection of his own soul and recognising himself. Really, that Delphic monition "Know thyself"

66 Aristotle (cf. supra, p. 143) had said, about overdoing in presentation of tragedy, "The censure attaches not to the art of the poet as such, but to the art of his interpreter... What we must object to is the attitudes and gestures of the ignoble."

67 Aristotle had said in the Poetics (cf. supra pp. 122, 134-135) that the function of the tragic imitation is to arouse the emotions of pity and fear in the audience so as to achieve a special catharsis. "Pity," he had said, "is what we feel at a misfortune that is out of proportion to the faults of a man; and Fear is what we feel when misfortune comes upon one like ourselves." Aristotle was implying, in his analysis of poetic composition, that the spectators should be made to identify themselves with the characters in the plays. But these words
of Lucian are the first that this investigation has revealed which relate such a theory to the actor. Lucian is the only ancient writer, according to this research, to say that acting achieves its highest excellence when each spectator is led to give such complete empathic response that he sees in the actor "as in a mirror his very self, with his customary feelings and actions" -- that he sees there on the stage before him, "the reflection of his own soul" and recognizes "himself."

Shakespeare, many centuries later, was to state the idea similarly when he said that the "end" of playing was "to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature."
realises itself in them from the spectacle, and when they go away from the theatre they have learned what they should choose and what avoid, and have been taught what they did not know before. 68

As in literature, so too in dancing what is generally called "bad taste" comes in when they exceed the due limit of mimicry and put forth greater effort than they should; 69 if something large requires to be shown, they represent it as enormous; if something dainty, they make it extravagantly effeminate, and they carry masculinity to the point of savagery and bestiality.

Something of that sort, I remember, I once saw done by a dancer who until then had been in high esteem, as he was intelligent in every way and truly worth admiring; but by some ill-luck, I know not what, he wrecked his fortunes upon an ugly bit of acting through exaggerated mimicry. In presenting Ajax going mad immediately after his defeat, he so overleaped himself that it might well

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68 The things that a person chooses and the things that he avoids show what he is. So if, in the theater, a man has learned what he should choose and what avoid, he has learned what he should be. Lucian had said earlier in the dialogue (cf. supra, p. 406) that he came back from the theater with "more wisdom and more insight into life." Now he explains that the wisdom gained in the theater is the wisdom of knowing oneself as one did not know oneself before. These are the first statements which have been discovered about the finding of such wisdom in the theater.

69 Cf. Roscius's statements about good taste (supra, p. 224) and Aristotle's criticism of overdoing (supra, pp. 142-143).
have been thought that instead of feigning madness he was himself insane; for he tore the clothes of one of the men that beat time with the iron shoe,70 and snatching a flute from one of the accompanists, with a vigorous blow he cracked the crown of Odysseus,71 who was standing near and exulting in his victory; indeed, if his watch-cap had not offered resistance and borne the brunt of the blow, poor Odysseus would have lost his life through falling in the way of a crazy dancer. The pit, however, all went mad with Ajax, leaping and shouting and flinging up their garments; for the riffraff, the absolutely unenlightened, took no thought for propriety and could not perceive what was good or what was bad, but thought that sort of thing consummate mimicry of the ailment, while the politer sort understood, to be sure, and were ashamed of what was going on, but instead of censuring the thing by silence, they themselves applauded to cover the absurdity of the dancing, although they perceived clearly that what went on came from the madness of the actor, not that of Ajax. For, not content with all this, our hero did something else that was far more laughable. Coming down among the public, he seated

70 "A shoe with a heavy sole, originally of wood, but by Lucian's time of iron . . . was worn by the flute player or (as here) by a person specially assigned . . . to mark time for the dancer and the singers." Harmon, op. cit., p. 285, n. 2.

71 The actor who sang or spoke the lines often assisted the pantomime by taking secondary roles. Harmon, op. cit., p. 271, n. 3.
himself among the senators, between two ex-consuls, who
were very much afraid that he would seize one of them and
drub him, taking him for a wether!

The thing caused some to marvel, some to laugh, and
some to suspect that perhaps in consequence of his over­
done mimicry he had fallen into the real ailment. More­
over, the man himself, they say, once he had returned to
his sober senses, was so sorry for what he had done that
he really became ill through distress and in all truth
was given up for mad. Indeed, he himself showed his re­
pentance clearly, for when his supporters asked him to
dance Ajax for them once more, begging to be excused, he
said to the audience, "For an actor, it is enough to have
gone mad once!" What irked him most was that his antago­
nist and rival, when cast for Ajax in the same role, en­
acted his madness so discreetly and sanely as to win praise,
since he kept within the bounds of the dance and did not
debauch the histrionic art.

These, my friend, are but a few out of manifold
achievements and activities of the dance, and I have given
you a glimpse of them in order that you may not be highly
displeased with me for viewing them with ardent eyes. If
you should care to join me in looking on, I know very well
that you will be wholly enthralled and will even catch the
dancer-craze. . . . Really, dancing . . . charms the
eyes and makes them wide awake, and it r uses the mind to
respond to every detail of its performances.
Crato

Upon my word, Lycinus, I have come to the point of believing you and am all agog, ear and eye alike. Do remember, my friend, when you go to the theatre, to reserve me a seat at your side, in order that you may not be the only one to come back to us wiser!
Summary

A person leaves the theater, Lucian says in the early part of the dialogue, wiser than he was before. Then the discussion turns to the actor. The dancer must know everything, "what is, and what shall be, and was of old"; and his memory must be prompt for recall. Dancing is "a science of imitation and portrayal, of revealing what is in the mind and making intelligible what is obscure." All that the dancer presents must be clear. "The chief occupation and the aim of dancing . . . is impersonating." The dancer has one body and "many souls." The Greeks of Italy "call the dancer a pantomime" precisely because he imitates everything. For such imitation the actor should be "gifted, intelligent, keenly inventive, and . . . successful in doing the right thing at the right time; . . . he should be able to judge poetry, to select the best songs and melodies, and to reject worthless compositions." His body must be "exactly the right measure, without being either fat . . . or excessively thin"; and he must be both agile and firm. Some dancers are ignorant and confuse one part with another. Some use "bad taste" and "put forth greater effort than they should" and so exceed the "limit of mimicry." One is reminded, in reading, of Roscius's criterion of good taste.

But the dancer ought to be "perfect in every point . . . rhythmical, graceful, symmetrical, consistent,"
unexceptionable, impeccable, . . . blend of the highest qualities, keen in his ideas, profound in his culture, and above all, human in his sentiments." He will have reached the consummation of his art when each spectator who beholds him "sees in the dancer as in a mirror his very self, with his customary feelings and actions." And when men who behold such an actor go away from the theater, they have learned to know themselves. They have learned "what they should choose and what avoid" and thus have come to know what they should be. This is the wisdom which Lucian says is acquired in the theater. His is the first and only such statement that has been found among ancient writings. His are the only assertions by ancient authors that have been revealed on empathic responses of audience to actors.

With Lucian's essay On the Dance the investigator closes the research into ancient theories of acting. Between the time of Lucian and the end of the Roman Empire there has been discovered no further contribution to the subject. The Roman period has been rich in the significance of the material which it has provided. There have been found opinions upon the mimesis of the actor from Plautus, Cicero, Horace, Vitruvius, Seneca, Quintilian, Plutarch, Fronto, Gellius, and Lucian. The statements of these men present an apparently trustworthy impression as to what may have been some important elements in the technique of Roman actors.
Taken with the work of Aristotle, they give considerable information as to what significant men of ancient times believed about the act of acting.
CONCLUSION

Actors' Methods in Ancient Greece to 146 B.C.

Histrionic Techniques in the Roman World to 337 A.D.
CONCLUSION

This compilation of excerpts represents the opinions upon methods of acting which were written down, for one reason or another, by significant men of the ancient period, and which exist today in English translation. The purpose of this investigation has been to present the views of these men, in their own words, on the subject of the mimesis of the drama as it pertains to the actors.

Actors' Methods in Ancient Greece to 146 B.C.

Preliminary investigation has gone back to the epic poetry of Homer and to lyric poems from the Homeridae to Pindar. The poems have revealed elements of mimetic song-dance in early dancing circles, in poet-singers and dancers, in minstrels, in tumblers and ball-players, and in choruses of young men and women. From one of the Homeric Hymn writers has come praise for the singing of the Delian maidens, who "can imitate the tongues of all men and their clattering speech" so that "each would say that he himself were singing, so close to truth is their sweet song." The words have been noted as a poignant observation upon what must have been a kind of impersonation which satisfied the poet as he listened. The few dithyrambs to Dionysus which have been found are of
interest only as examples of the dithyramb form. The extant example of the daphnephorica of Pindar, however, with its accompanying maiden songs, shows definite possibility for characterization.

With Pindar the investigation has passed into the fifth century B.C. and from him has turned to an examination of the surviving Attic dramas. The plays, as well as representations on vases and in statuettes, show that exaggerated movement prevailed in comedy and that simple, but strong and sometimes emotional action dominated tragedy. Through the years, emphasis on characterization increased in both tragic and comic forms. The tragic dramatists made no assertion of opinion on the technique of acting. The satire of Aristophanes, however, struck sometimes in the direction of the actors. Aristophanic comedy indicates from time to time a number of points about the playing in Attic tragedy: that choruses of tragedy were often quite active, that playwright and audiences were scornful of errors by the actors in pronunciation, that audiences remembered lines which the players had spoken and repeated them outside the theaters, that poets of the late fifth century were still sometimes dancing in their own dramas, that there was "a kind of wild tragic look" in the eyes of tragic actors, that Aristophanes honestly admired the work of some of the actors and abhorred the methods of some others. The New Comedy, which was developing, made use of strongly delineated character types and provided increasing opportunity for the actor to play up the personality of each of the various roles.
Study of early Greek prose has revealed some noteworthy items also. The *Symposium* and the *Anabasis* of Xenophon have shown that there existed in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. a form of dramatic imitation which was different from that of the theaters, and which was surely a root of later mime and pantomime. Demosthenes has been found to have criticized his enemy Aeschines for poor acting in his earlier days as a tritagonist.

In a reading of the *Dialogues* of Plato, it has been observed that Plato began with a really magnificent concept of the poet as receiving his messages directly from God, of the rhapsode and the actor as intermediate rings in the chain of Divine inspiration, and of the spectator as the last to receive the Divine power. The interpreter and the actor had no art, no technique. They had only the Divinity which moved them to sing or to speak. But in his Republic Plato could not use the men who were thus inspired. He could only honor them and send them away. For such folk, he decided, were imitators three times removed from Divine truth. The citizens of his State were to imitate realities directly. And so they had no need for interpreters of such realities. These are Plato's theories concerning imitation. One feels the grandeur of the original thought, though one understands that it is not complete. And one regrets the sterility of the conclusion.

Preliminary study has included, thus, the early epic and lyric poetry from the ninth to the fifth century; the dramatic writing of the fifth and fourth centuries; and
the prose writing through the fourth century B.C. of historians, orators, and philosophers. Among these prelimi-
naries there are two contributions which stand out above
the others in importance as findings in a search for the-
eries of acting. The first is the description by the Ho-
meric hymn writer of the Delian maidens who could so truth-
fully imitate the speech of all men that "each would say
that he himself were singing." The second is the Platonic
ideology that poet, actor or rhapsode, and spectator are
rings in the chain of power which comes directly from God.
Though Plato finally rejected the poets and actors and
rhapsodes and artists as imitators of imitation, still
his belief that Divine inspiration constitutes the only
source of the actor's ability is a theory of acting in
itself; and in the theory there is no technique, no method,
no art.

The first findings as to some of the ways in which
actors of ancient Greece went about their business of im-
itation comes from Aristotle. In the Nichomachean Ethics,
the Politics, the Problems, the Rhetoric, and the Poetics,
there are references to the actors which give a certain
amount of definite information about their methods; and
there are statements of Aristotle's opinions and indica-
tions of his thinking concerning the nature of their work.

Art is defined in the Politics as a "state of capacity
to make," and the idea forms a sort of background in the
reader's mind for the consideration of mimesis. The anal-
ysis in the Poetics of the subject of imitation provides
a basis for the drawing of some conclusions as to what Aristotle may have thought about acting; because the actors impersonated the "agents" in the dramas. These conclusions are not to be taken as attempts to prove that Aristotle made such assertions directly about the actors. The analogies from "agents" to actors, however, appear to be valid; and they appear to be such as Aristotle might have drawn if he had turned his attention to a discussion of the art of acting. This investigation has shown that from Aristotle's presentation of the dramatic mimesis certain principles of acting may be stated. Tragic actors of ancient Greece gave the pleasure of the tragic catharsis to their audiences. They showed how a certain kind of person is likely to react "in a given situation," how he "must speak or act . . . as the necessary or probable outcome of his inward nature." They were to play tragic heroes as basically good in their habits of choice but as possessing a certain "tragic flaw" within them. They had to make these people "true to type," "true to life," and "true to their own nature throughout the play." Actors, in recreating the "agents" of the drama, would seem, like the poets in creating them, to need to experience their feelings with them.

In addition to these analogies there may be learned a few other definite points concerning opinions about acting in Aristotle's time. The actor's voice was important to him; and he gave it special training, preferably in the
early morning and on an empty stomach. Theodoras, whom Aristotle admired, believed that he gained an advantage in being the first actor to enter the stage.

But of greater significance than any of these items are some facts about Aristotle's views on methods of playing. The first two of these are found in the Poetics. Aristotle hated overacting; he condemned "the attitudes and gestures of the ignoble," the "action . . . of bad performers." And he despised the actors who interpolated "something of their own" into the plays. The third of these important views is discovered in the Rhetoric. The quality which Aristotle admired in an actor was the ability to seem natural. The voice of Theodoras, he said, "seems to be the actual voice of the person he represents." These three principles, the censure of overacting, the disapproval of interpolating, and the commendation of seeming naturalness, are stated plainly by Aristotle. They are not enlarged upon, for Aristotle did not go into a discussion of methods of acting. But they are opinions which he stated about the actors' ways of playing.

From Aristotle, then, for this study there may be found a definition of art as a capacity to make, certain inferences which may be drawn from "agents" to actors, the opinion of actors that the voice was important and that it needed training, the preference of one actor to enter the stage first. Of more significance are the opinions of Aristotle that the "overdone" was despicable, that "interpolation" was to be abhorred, and that the ability to
seem natural was a desirable quality in an actor.

From examination of Hellenistic literature no information has been found as to what Hellenistic Greeks may have thought about techniques of acting. The comedies of Menander seem to require a more realistic and individualized kind of acting than was needed for Old Comedy. Menander's actors played character types of everyday men and women of the Athenian bourgeoisie. They spoke an everyday kind of dialogue. They had to exaggerate, but they also had to use discretion. No tragedies from the period are extant. The popularity of the tragedies of Euripides suggests that a somewhat personal approach was needed in the interpretation.

Other investigation yields little more about Hellenistic acting. The mimes of Herodes of Kos, if acted, would have called also for a realistic approach, as would those of Theocritus of Syracuse (except for the romantic ones which were almost certainly for reading purposes only). None of the Phlyax farces have survived; but representations on vases and in statuettes show the use of stock comic types alongside more or less "straight" roles and the employment of free, exaggerated movement especially by the comic characters. The lyric poets of the period praise the actors occasionally in epitaphs and inscriptions, but they do not talk of methods. Among the historians is found a story by Polybius of flute players who participated once in some dramatic action. But there is no statement of theory from any of these authors.
The work of Aristotle is the only source from which may be discovered something of theories of acting in ancient Greece up to the time of the Roman period.

Histrionic Techniques in the Roman World

Among the Roman writings the investigation has revealed some repetitions of principles of acting that were stated by Aristotle. And it has shown some significant additions.

Study has begun with Roman writings about early Roman drama forms. The fabulae Atellanae have been found to be probable descendants from the Phlyax farces and to have used character types and exaggerated movements that were similar to those of the Phlyax. Early separation of song from action has been noted in the records concerning Livius Andronicus; and the probability has been observed that his talent was a flair for mimicry and physical expressiveness, such as was from the first typical of Roman acting. Livius was one of the early Roman poet-actors; he had been a Greek slave, as were most of the early Roman players.

The earliest Roman dramas that have survived are the comedies of Plautus of the late third and early second centuries. Modeled chiefly on the comedies of Menander, they usually tell love stories that involve character types similar to those of Greek New Comedy. Required gesticulation would be free and spontaneous and sharply differentiated. The comedies of Terence (from between 166 and 160 B.C.) are also imitations of Menander and Attic New Comedy.
They, also, use the stock comic characters; but they are milder in humor than Plautine plays and sometimes have a certain psychological character development which would call for a somewhat subtle approach by the actor. Plautus and Terence did not say, in their plays, how the acting should be done. But Plautus gave, in his Amphitryon, the first opinion about acting that this investigation has discovered. He made the generalization that "worth" was the quality which was needed in actors. And he added the statement that "He who plays his part aright ever has support enough, if it so be that honour dwells in those whose concern it is to judge his acts."

In the next century Cicero, comparing the art of delivery with the art of acting, used the technique of Roscius and other actors often as examples. From these illustrations and from other remarks about actors in Cicero's writings there may be learned something of his opinions, as well as those of Roscius, upon histrionic methods. Some of these views are much like those of Aristotle. Some are contributions of Cicero to what is known about Roman ways of acting. Cicero, like Aristotle, said that the actors trained their voices. But Cicero said, also, that actors of his day were concerned with facial expression and body movement as well. The mask, it is to be remembered, was not introduced on the Roman stage till the time of Roscius; and Roman acting, it will be recalled, was evidently highly mimetic. Cicero thought, as Aristotle
had thought, that the finest actor he knew sounded like the actual person represented. Cicero understood that reality is not sufficient without art, though he did not relate the idea directly to the actors. Aristotle had believed that there was "necessity of disguising the means we employ," and he had used Theodorus's voice as an example of seeming naturalness. But Roscius's standard of "good taste" in an actor is a new principle in surviving Roman literature. The criterion may be akin to Aristotle's dislike of overacting. But the term in relation to acting is found first in the De Oratore. Cicero was first, also, to mention the use of variations in acting for the purpose of rising to climax. He believed, further, that one must feel an emotion in order to arouse it in others; and he related the principle to the actors as Aristotle had not done. Cicero used the actors as examples to prove his point, and there is no doubt as to his belief that actors felt the emotions of their roles. These are Cicero's opinions about the manner of Roman acting, and they make the first contribution as to what is known of Roman ways of thinking on methods of playing.

Repetition of the idea that a person must feel emotion in order to stimulate it was voiced later in the century by Horace, writing what was perhaps his adaptation of Aristotle on the subject of poetic composition. Horace was not talking of the actors in the Ars Poetica, but he said plainly, "If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself." The advice was to the poet, as was
Aristotle's; but it corresponds, as does Aristotle's, to Cicero's belief that actors feel their emotions, also. Horace, like Aristotle, wanted characters to be consistent and true to their own natures. He wanted the chorus to sustain the part of an actor. He made a few references specifically to the actors. One of these indicates a custom of the players to use typical postures for certain kinds of roles: the typical servant, for instance, stands "with head bowed." Another reference mentions a remark by the mimic actress Arbuscula that the applause of the knights was sufficient for her even though the rest of the house disapproved.

One other Roman writer of the first century B.C. has a few comments of value for a compilation of opinions about acting. The architect Vitruvius, when he planned an ideal Roman theater, was concerned about the problem of acoustics. He stated, in this connection, that inflectional endings of words needed to come clearly to the audience. The implication is that the sounds did not always do so. The voice should "range" in the theater with clearness, Vitruvius said; and though his thinking was from the viewpoint of an architect, still it indicates the importance of the actors' voices in regard both to carrying quality and distinctness. Both Aristotle and Cicero had spoken of the importance of the voice in acting, but neither had mentioned the word endings in relation to the theaters.

When the investigation passes into the first century of the Christian Era, one is met with numerous references
to mimes and pantomimes. Both forms had been developing through the years; and from the Augustan Age to the end of the Empire they crowded out, more and more, the regular comedies and tragedies. The mime imitated the whole of life; and it depended for its success almost entirely upon the activities and skill of the actors. The pantomime was the art of interpretative dancing or acting in dumb show. In such dance-acting the body of the actor told the story, and the movements of his hands carried especial significance. Pylades and Bathyllus were two pantomimes who must have excelled in this kind of acting. When Pylades played Dionysus, he "put on the divinity of the frenzied god himself"; he filled all the city "full by his dancing" with "the untempered fury of the demon"; and he played "according to the true canons of the servants of the tragic Muse." In other words, Pylades must have seemed to the poet Antipater to be the god he was impersonating and to project his characterization so that it was felt by those who watched. The observation is reminiscent of Aristotle's upon Theodorus and of Cicero's upon Roscius. In Boethus's opinion the acting had been according to the best traditions of the tragic actors. Other poets praised other dancers of the period, both for skill in individual characterizations and for the taking of many parts in one story.

An additional element in the crowding out of full tragic and comic productions may be found in the dramatic readings such as Nero gave on stages throughout the Roman Empire. These readings were presentations in full costume
of single scenes from the dramas. The reader was accompanied by music and sometimes by another actor who made the gestures. There were contests for the readings and special rules for the contests, such as the prohibition of the wiping of the face with a handkerchief. These reader-actors, if they can be judged by what is told of Nero, took great care to protect the voice and to save it from undue strain.

The tragedies of Seneca may have been written for such reading purposes, and they may have been intended for full production. Whatever the method of presentation, one may infer from the dramas a declamatory manner of acting, though some of the scenes can be felt to call for the expression of genuine tragic emotion. In the plays Seneca does not allude to the actors or their playing. In two of the Epistles, however, he speaks of actors who "imitate bashfulness by hanging their heads, lowering their voices and keeping their eyes fixed and rooted upon the ground." And he describes a player "who stalks upon the stage with swelling port and head thrown back." Such conventions had evidently been in use since the time of Horace and probably before. They are similar to clichés which are still seen in theaters today.

Later in the same century Quintilian wrote his Institutes of Oratory, and the work brings a new principle to those which survive on ancient methods of characterization. The comic actor is to give the orator training in pronunciation, facial expression, and delivery. The actor, it
appears, has mastered such problems for himself. The delivery of comic actors is "not far removed" from ordinary speech, but is exalted a little "by a touch of stage decoration." The observation is similar to the one of Cicero that reality unaided is not adequate in representation, and it is like Aristotle's opinion on the "necessity of disguising the means we employ." Both Quintilian and Aristotle used the practice of the actors to illustrate the idea, but Cicero did not.

Quintilian believed, with Cicero, that to stir emotions in others a person first must feel the emotion himself. Quintilian thought, with Cicero, that the convincing actors went through the real emotions of the roles they played. But Quintilian contributed also a plan that is new among recorded principles of impersonation. It was a plan for generation of emotions within oneself. He explained that one can think of the experiences which cause the feeling, bringing to mind the actual scenes and incidents, and that the emotion will come. The idea is identical with Stanislavski's conception of visual memory. Immediately following the explanation, Quintilian stated that he had "often seen actors, both in tragedy and comedy, leave the theatre still drowned in tears after concluding the performance of some moving role." Quintilian's analysis of the use of visual memory to stir up feelings within oneself is the only discussion of its kind that has been found in the present research. This plan is the new method
which is added to ancient principles of impersonation by the *Institutes of Oratory*.

In the early years of the second century Plutarch of Chaeroneia wrote his *Lives* and his *Morals*. In both he preserved some traditions about actors of earlier times which serve mainly to point up principles that had been stated by other writers. Thespis, Plutarch says, believed that there "was no harm" in telling the "lies" of his dramatizations so long as he told them "in play." Implications from the law of Lycurgus and from a story about Lycon are that both tragic and comic actors of the fourth century B.C. sometimes added their own improvisations into play scripts, and the implications recall Aristotle's comments upon the same subject. Some of the fourth century actors instructed Demosthenes in "action" and in breath control. One notes, in this connection, that Cicero was not the first to take the actors as examples for the orators and that Quintilian was not first to think of the actor as teacher for the speaker. Plutarch says that the orator Aeschines, who had been an actor in his younger days, had "worked hard in the gymasia," and that he had been gifted with a clear voice. Here is further recognition of importance of actors' voices and of their need for training of their bodies. Perhaps the most important of Plutarch's narratives, for this research, is the one about Aesop's playing of Atreus. Plutarch relates that Aesop was so overcome with the living of this part that he struck one of the servants in the play dead
upon the stage. The story is in accord with the statement of Cicero that Aesop seemed at times as if some power rendered him unconscious of what he did. The tale suggests that Plutarch believed, as Quintilian and Cicero had believed, that the actors lived their parts and actually experienced the feelings of their roles. The Plutarchian anecdotes are significant for this study in their revelation of what the Romans liked to think about the actors. It may be seen that the old traditions held.

As a sort of companion piece to Plutarch's and Cicero's observations about Aesop, might be placed a tradition that is preserved by Marcus Cornelius Fronto later in the second century. Fronto tells that Aesop never put on a tragic mask without first "setting it in front of him and studying it a long time that he might conform his gestures and adapt his voice to the face of the mask." That is to say, Aesop always took time to prepare for his role. Fronto's story is the first instance that has been found of an actor's "studying" a character and seeking to make himself ready before he went onstage.

From a younger contemporary of Fronto, Aulus Gellius, comes a story about the Greek actor Polus of the fourth century B.C. The story shows that Polus, too, was trying to portray genuine emotion and that he was trying to use psychological principles in doing so. Gellius says that Polus had lost his son, and that some time after the death he was to play Electra in the tragedy of Sophocles. "Accordingly Polus, clad in the mourning garb of Electra, took
from the tomb the ashes and urn of his son, embraced them as if they were those of Orestes, and filled the whole place, not with the appearance and imitation of sorrow, but with genuine grief and unfeigned lamentation." Polus (if the story is true) was using a psychology which parallels Stanislavski's theory of emotion memory. Stanislavski defines emotion memory as the reliving of feelings one has already experienced; and he says that "a suggestion, a thought, a familiar object" can bring back such feelings in full force. Polus evidently believed, as Aristotle and Horace and Cicero and Quintilian believed, that genuine emotion was more moving for an audience than feigned emotion; and he was seeking to feel genuine emotion when he played Electra. The story is the first recording, so far as this investigation has revealed, of the use of emotion memory to stir up feelings within oneself.

As the investigation approaches the close of the second century A.D., it approaches also the end of the findings in theories of acting among the Greeks and Romans. The dialogue of Lucian On the Dance is the last of the ancient writings that adds to knowledge of what Greeks and Romans thought of ways of acting. It is also the first ancient work which has been found specifically upon the subject of the art of playing. Lucian's dialogue is on the pleasure and satisfaction which is received from watching the work of the pantomimes; and before he has finished, Lucian has presented a theory of mimesis for the actor which is
not to be found in other literature of the ancient period.

When a spectator leaves the theater, Lucian says, he has "far more wisdom and more insight into life" than when he entered. Then Lucian considers the actors. Dancing is "a science of imitation and portrayal, of revealing what is in the mind and making intelligible what is obscure." The "chief occupation and aim of dancing . . . is impersonating." The dancer has one body and "many souls." He "imitates everything," and for this reason the Greeks of Italy call him a "pantomime." Lucian's listing of qualifications for the pantomimic dancer is the only listing of requirements for an actor which is extant from ancient times. The dancer's education should give him knowledge of "what is, and what shall be, and was of old"; and he must be able to remember. He must be "gifted, intelligent, . . . inventive, and . . . successful in doing the right thing at the right time." He must understand how to judge poetry and song and melody so as to reject what is worthless. His body must be of "the right measure," and it must be both agile and strong. The dancer needs rhythm, grace, symmetry, and impeccability. He is to be "blent of the highest qualities, keen in his ideas, profound in his culture, and . . . human in his sentiments." He should not be ignorant and confuse one part with another. He should not use "bad taste" and put forth too great effort and thus exceed the "limit of mimicry." This principle recalls Roscius's standard of good taste, but the other
ideas are new.

Lucian's greatest contribution to ancient theories of acting, however, comes in his discussion of the empathy which actors stir up in audiences. A germ of such a thought may perhaps have lain in the words of the Homeric poet who said that Delian maidens made the listener think "that he himself were singing"; but this early poet says no more.

The idea is possibly inherent in Aristotle's statement that the "Fear" which is engendered by tragedy "is what we feel when misfortune comes upon one like ourselves." But Aristotle does not go further into the subject, and he does not state its relation to actors. Lucian is the first who has been found to have written down the idea in so many words. He says:

... the praise that ... [the dancer] gets from the spectators will be consummate when each of those who behold him recognizes his own traits, or rather sees in the dancer as in a mirror his very self, with his customary feelings and actions. Then people cannot contain themselves for pleasure, and with one accord they burst into applause, each seeing the reflection of his own soul and recognizing himself. Really, that Delphic monition "Know thyself" realises itself in them from the spectacle, and when they go away from the theatre they have learned what they should choose and what avoid, and have been taught what they did not know before.

What a person chooses and what he avoids will show beyond question the person that he is. And so if the theater gives to a man the understanding of what to choose and what to avoid, it has provided him with understanding of what he should be. This is the wisdom which, according to Lucian, the spectator takes away with him from the theater. It is
a wisdom which has been furnished him by the artistry of
the actor. And this artistry is at its highest point when
the spectator "sees in the dancer as in a mirror his very
self." This is Lucian's statement of the principle of
empathic response from audiences to actors. It is the
only discussion of the idea to be found in ancient writings,
and it brings to a close the study of ancient theories of
acting.

Between the time of Lucian and the end of the Roman
Empire there have been found no further contributions to
the subject of actors' methods. The material which the
Roman period has provided has been significant. Taken
with the work of Aristotle, it has presented an apparently
trustworthy impression as to what was believed in the ancient
period about methods of acting.

In turning from Lucian to a review of the findings of
this investigation, one feels the similarity inherent in
many of the ideas which these ancient writers expressed
about ways of accomplishing the actor's imitation. And
one notes the progression in fullness of statement and in
fullness of understanding. Basic principles of imitation
appear to have remained the same. The actors, according
to these writers, seem to have needed to meet basic require-
ments: the ability to seem natural, to seem to be the person
represented; the ability to use "good taste" in so doing and
not to overact or to interpolate or to use worn-out clichés;
the skill to use art in order to give the desired impression
of reality. This art among the Greeks included especially the management of the voice, and among the Romans it involved the handling of both body and voice. The ancient writers who speak of emotion agree that in order to arouse feeling in an audience a person must experience the feeling himself. Quintilian gives a plan for generating emotion within oneself by means of visual memory. Gellius tells a story which involves the employment of emotion memory for the same purpose. Lucian states the principle of empathic response from audience to actors.

These are the findings which have resulted from the present investigation into ancient theories of acting. They represent the opinions of significant men of Greece and Rome, which have survived and now exist in English translation, upon methods of acting in ancient times.
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APPENDIX

A LIST OF MASKS FROM THE SECOND CENTURY

Julius Pollux, Compiler of Lexicons

The Onomasticon of Julius Pollux
APPENDIX

A LIST OF MASKS FROM THE SECOND CENTURY

Julius Pollux, Compiler of Lexicons

The Onomasticon of Julius Pollux was written as "a short guide to success for budding rhetoricians." It was a lexicon of unusual words, with explanations appended, "warranted to give colour to any speech."

Pollux had come to Rome in about 170 from Egypt to act as tutor to the young Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius. When Commodus became Emperor, he appointed his former teacher as head of the rhetorical school at Athens. From this time Pollux was a man of distinction in the academic world. Lucian disliked him and attacked him in his Lexiphanes and in the Rhetorician's Vade Mecum. Reasons for Lucian's attack probably lie in the fact that Pollux had made his way to recognition quickly and with doubtful qualifications and that he had written his dictionary as a shortcut toward achievement in oratory.

The words in the Onomasticon are arranged, not in

1 Wright, op. cit., p. 234.
2 Ibid., p. 235.
3 Ibid., pp. 233-234.
alphabetical order, but according to their subjects. One portion of the book is on games, and it has a discussion of the ancient theater which is rather confusing in its failure to distinguish descriptions of the second century theater from descriptions of theaters of the past.

But the Onomasticon, among its many word lists, contains also three lists of masks: Concerning Tragic Masks, Concerning Satyric Masks, and Concerning Comic Masks. The tragic and comic lists are long. Miss Bieber thinks that the catalogue goes back to Hellenistic times, and that it is probably based on the usual stock of masks possessed by the actors' guilds. She has found masks and representations on vases, on wall paintings, and in terra cotta that she believes correspond, often, to Pollux's descriptions.

One can actually stage all of the preserved New Comedies,


5 Cf. Julius Pollux, "Concerning the Theatre, Etc." and "Concerning Parts of the Theatre" in Extracts Concerning the Greek Theatre and Masks Translated from the Greek of Julius Pollux, appended to Aristotle's Poetics; or, Discourses Concerning Tragic and Epic Imitation. Translated from the Greek into English. (London: J. Dodsley and Messrs. Richardson and Urquhart, 1775), pp. 3-13. Bieber (op. cit., p. 140), comments on the confusing nature of Pollux's statements.

6 Bieber, op. cit., p. 160.

7 Ibid., p. 173.

8 Ibid., pp. 160, 178, 179, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199.
she says, with this assortment of comic masks. 9

As in his discussion of theaters, Pollux makes no statement as to periods in which the masks were used. But it may safely be assumed that these were the kinds of masks which players, from Hellenistic times on, were wearing. Though the lists tell nothing about actual histrionic techniques, they must reveal with accuracy the kinds of character types that actors, through these years, were playing.

9 Ibid., p. 178
Moreover with respect to masks; the tragic might be a smooth-faced man, a white, grisled, black-haired, flaxen, more flaxen, all of them old: and the smooth faced oldest of these; having very white locks, and hairs lying upon the prominence. By prominence I mean the upper part of the countenance rising above the forehead, in shape of the Greek \( \lambda \). With respect to beard, the smooth-faced should be very closely shaven, and have thin lanthern jaws. -- The white-haired is all hoary with bushy locks about the head, has an ample beard, jutting eyebrows, and the complexion almost white, but the prominence short. The grisled denotes the hoary hairs to be a mixture of black and grey. But the black-haired, deriving his name from the colour, has a curled beard and hair, rough face, and large prominence. The flaxen has yellowish bushy hair, lesser prominence, and is fresh coloured. The more flaxen has a sameness with the other, but is rather more pale to represent sick persons.

The young men's masks are the common, curled, more curled, graceful, horrid, second horrid, pale, less pale.

10 The translation is from Extracts Concerning the Greek Theatre and Masks. Cf. supra, p. _, n. 5. The method of capitalization which is used in this old translation has not been retained here. The plan of italicizing the names of the character types, which is begun and then abandoned in the translation, has been continued throughout.
The **common** is eldest of the young men, beardless, fresh-coloured, swarthy, having locks clustering, and black. The **curled** is yellow, blustering, with bushy hair encompassing a plump face, has arched eye-brows, and a fierce aspect. The **more curled** differs in nothing from the former, but in being a little younger. The **graceful** has Hyacinthian locks, fair skin, is lively, and of a pleasant countenance, fit for a beautiful Apollo. The **horrid** is robust, grim-visaged, sullen, deformed, yellow-hair'd. The yellow hair'd attendant. The **second horrid** is so much more slender than the former, as he is younger; and an attendant. -- The **pale** is meagre, with dishevell'd hair, and of such a sickly countenance as is suitable for a ghost, or wounded person. The **less pale** is entirely like the common in every other respect except that it is made pale on purpose to express a sick man, or a lover.

The **slaves masks** are the **leathern**, peaked beard, flat-nose.

The **leathern** having no prominence, has a fillet, and long white hairs, a pale whitish visage, and rough nostrils, an high crown, stern eyes; the beard a little pale, and looks older than his years. But the peaked-beard is in the vigour of life, has an high and broad prominence dented all round, is yellow hair'd, rough, ruddy, and suited to a messenger. The flat-nose is bluff, yellow headed, the locks hang on each side from the forelock; he is beardless, ruddy, and likewise delivers a message.
The women's masks are an hoary dishevelled, a freed old woman, an old domestic, a middle aged, a leathern, a pale disheveled, a pale middle aged, a shaven virgin, second shaven virgin, girl.

The hoary dishevelled, surpassing the rest, both in years and dignity, has white locks, a moderate prominence, is inclinable to paleness, and was antiently called, the delicate. The freed old woman is of a tawny complexion and hoariness, having a small prominence; the tresses to the shoulders denote misfortune.

The old domestic, instead of prominence has a fillet of lamb's wool, and a wrinkled skin.

But the middle-aged-domestic has a short prominence, and white skin, is grey haired, but not quite hoary.

The leathern, younger than her, and has not any prominence.

The pale dishevelled has black hair, a dejected countenance, and her name from the colour.

But the pale middle aged is like the dishevelled, except where she is shaven out of sight.

But the shaven virgin, instead of prominence wears a smooth-combed tate, is shaven almost quite round, and of a colour inclinable to paleness.

And the other shaven virgin is perfectly like her, but without the tate and curls, as if she had been often in misfortunes.

The girl is a juvenile mask, such as Danae might have
been, or any other virgin.

The attendant masks are an horned Actaeon, a blind Phineus or Thamyris, one having a blue eye, the other a black; a many-eyed Argus, or Tyro with lived cheeks, as in Sophocles, which she suffered from the blows of a cruel step-mother; or Euippe, Chiron's daughter, changed into an horse in Euripides; or Achilles dishevelled for Patroclus, an Amymone, a river, mountain, gorgon, justice, death, a fury, madness, guilt, injury, centaur, titan, giant, Indian, Triton; perhaps also a city, Priam, persuasion, the Muses, hours, Nymphs of Mithaeus, Pleiades, deceit, drunkenness, idleness, envy; which latter might likewise be comic masks.

CONCERNING SATYRIC MASKS

Satyric masks are an hoary satyr, bearded satyr, beardless satyr, Grandfather Silenus. — The other masks are all alike, unless where the names themselves shew a peculiar distinction, as the Father Silenus has a more savage appearance.

CONCERNING COMIC MASKS

The comic masks, those especially of the Old Comedy, were as like as possible to the persons they represented, or made to appear more ridiculous. But those of the new were a first grandfather, a second grandfather, governour, long-bearded, or shaking old man, mormoneus, peaked-beard,
Lycomodeus, procurer, second Ermoneus, all of them old. The first grandfather oldest, close shaven, having very pleasant eye-brows, an ample beard, lantern jaws, dim sight, white skin, comely face, and forehead. The other grandfather is more slender, sharpsighted, morose, of a pale complexion, has an ample beard, red hair, cropped ears. The governour, an old man, with a crown of hairs round his head, stooping, broad-faced, and has his right eye-brow elevated. But the long-bearded, shaking old man, has a crown of hairs round his head, an ample beard, no elevation of eye-brows, dimmer sight. Ermoneus has a bald crown, ample beard, elevated eyebrow, sharp sight. The procurer resembles Lycomodeus in other respects, but has distorted lips, and contracted eye-brows; and either a bald crown or pate. The second Ermoneus is shaven, and peaked beard. — But peaked beard has a bald crown elevated eye-brows, sharp chin, and is morose. Lycomodeus has curled beard, long chin, and extends one eye-brow representing curiosity.

The young mens masks are a common young man, a black young man, a curled young man, a delicate, rustic, threatening, second flatterer, parasite, a fancied mask, Sicilian. — The common is ruddy, athletic, swarthy, having few wrinkles upon his forehead, and a crown of hairs, with elevated eye-brows. The black young man is younger, with depressed eye-brows, like an educated and accomplished youth. The curled young man is handsome, young, ruddy, has his name from his hairs, his eye-brows extended, and one wrinkle on
his forehead. But the delicate young man is haired like the common and youngest of all, fair, educated in the nursery, shewing delicacy. The rustic is weather-beaten, broad-lip'd, flat-nosed, and has a crown of hairs. But the threatening young man, who is a soldier, and braggard, of black complexion, and tresses, his hairs shaking like the other threatner, who is more tender and yellow haired. The flatterer and parasite are black, quite unpolished, cringing, sympathizing. The parasites ears are more bruised, and he is more pleasant; and the flatterers eye-brows are disagreeably extended.

But the fancied mask has cheeks bored, and chin shaven, is superbly dressed, and a foreigner: But the Sicilian is a third parasite.

The slaves comic masks are a grandfather, upper slave, thin haired behind, or bristly slave, a curled slave, a middle slave, foppish slave, shaking upper slave. The grandfather alone of all the slaves is hoary, and shews the freed-man. But the upper slave wears a crown of red hairs, elevates the eye-brows, contracts the forehead, and among slaves is like an aged governour among freed-men. But the thin, or bristly hair'd behind, has a bald crown, red hairs, and elevated eye-brows.

The curled slave has curled hairs, but they are red, as is likewise his colour; he has a bald crown and distorted face, with two or three black curls, and the same on his chin; the shaking upper slave, like the upper, except in the
The women's masks are a thin old woman, or prostitute; a fat old woman, a domestic old woman, either sedentary or active.

The prostitute is tall, with many small wrinkles, fair, palish, and with rolling eyes. The fat old woman has many wrinkles on a plump skin, and a fillet round her hair.

The domestic old woman is flat-faced, and in her upper jaw has two axle teeth, on each side one.

The young women's masks are a talkative, curled virgin, demi-rep, second demi-rep, hoary-talkative, concubine, common whore, beautiful courtezan, golden harlot, lampadion, virgin slave, slattern.

The talkative has full hair smoothed a little, high eye-brows, fair skin.

The curled virgin has a distinction of false hair, high eye-brows, and black; and a pale whiteness in her skin.

The demi-rep has a whiter skin, and her hair tied behind in a knot, would be thought a bride.

The second demi-rep is known by the distinction of her hair only.

The hoary talkative indicates her person by the name, she shews the harlot left of trade.

The concubine resembles her, but is full haired.

The common whore is higher coloured than the demi-rep, and has curls round her ears.

The courtezan has least finery, and her head bound with
a fillet.

The golden harlot has much gold upon her hair.

The mitered harlot, has her head bound with a variegated mitre.

Lampadion has her hair platted in the form of a lamp.

The virgin slave wears only a short white frock.

The slattern is distinguished by her hair, and is both squat and being dressed in a red gown, waits upon the courtesans.
VITA
VITA

Jennie Louise Hindman was born in Kaufman, Texas, and has spent most of her life in Wichita Falls. She is the daughter of Mary Cosnahan Hindman and the late William Alexander Hindman. She holds the bachelor's degree in speech and the master's degree in English from Texas State College for Women. She has been a teacher of English and a director of speech activities in the Wichita Falls Public Schools. She is now chairman of the Department of Speech at Midwestern University.
Candidate: Jennie Louise Hindman
Major Field: Speech
Title of Thesis: Theories of Acting: Aristotle to Lucian

Approved:

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Major Professor and Chairman
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination: August 3, 1950