

## Contents

	Note to Readers	iii
Part 1	<b>Preliminaries</b>	1
Part 2	<b>Aristotle: Music as the Mimesis of Character</b>	6
Part 3	<b>Relevant Literature: On Aristotle</b>	8
Part 4	<b>Synthesis: Aristotle and the Relevant Literature</b>	10
	Selected Bibliography	14
	Consulted Sources	16

## A Note to Readers

I would, first of all, like to thank Dr. Cynthia Nielsen, my fellow philosophy majors, as well as my close friends for the help and encouragement they have offered me with respect to this thesis. I have benefited much from their comments and, of course, their critiques; this thesis is written for them as much as it is written for my own personal growth. I hope that all who read this thesis enjoy what follows; and, if the reader take nothing else away, he (or she) will at least be taken and spurred on by questions I pose to him (or her) about music's influence upon him (or her). In the words of my main interlocutor, Aristotle: "may [music]... not have also some influence over the character and the soul?"<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340a6 (for Aristotle's work all citations come from: Richard McKeon, ed., *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House Inc., 1941).

To desire to know, this is natural to man. It is natural, therefore, for man to desire to know about music—to know why persons enjoy listening to it, why it is attractive to the ear, why it is so widespread throughout many cultures. It is natural, then, to ask this question: why does man delight in listening to music? In this thesis, I will posit Aristotle's answer. To do this, I will offer a passage from Aristotle's *Poetics*, and although this answer speaks about man and his delight in images, I will make clear, in this thesis, that Aristotle believes man's enjoyment of images is only a specific occurrence of man's general delight that he takes in apprehending imitation (of which images and music are a part). Aristotle explains: "they enjoy looking at images [or hearing music], since by looking [or hearing] it results that they apprehend and infer what each thing is."<sup>2</sup> Man desires to listen to music because he apprehends what the music is: an imitation. We will discover that an aspect of what music imitates, is the character of the soul. By the end of this thesis, we will hopefully come to a better understanding of this position. Why does man delight in listening to music? Man delights in listening to music because he recognizes it as an imitation of the character of the soul.

So, let us begin.

Four parts constitute this thesis. In the first part, a preliminary discussions is made about the definitions of music, imitation, and state of character or *ethos*. In the second, examination is made upon Aristotle's claim about music and its relation to the states of character. In the third, presentation and analysis is made upon the relevant literature concerning Aristotle's understanding of music's relation to the states of character. And in the fourth, synthesis is made among the relevant literature concerning Aristotle's claims and Aristotle's claims themselves. The synthesis will draw out the rhyme that exists between Aristotle's claims and the relevant literature concerning them.

## Part 1

In order to understand the notion that *music imitates states of character*, it is necessary to be familiar with the meaning of these terms, and specifically, Aristotle's meaning. So, we will proceed, to the best of our ability, to understand what Aristotle means by music, by imitation, and by 'states of character' or *ethos*.

---

2. Aristotle, *Poetics* 4.1448b4–19.

To say that Aristotle believes music to be one thing and one thing only seems to miss the mark. Why? Because music, or Aristotle, could be a variety of different things. Music could be epic poetry, it could be lyric poetry, or it could be the sounds produced by instruments among other things. The important thing is not “music is this” or “music is that” but rather that there are specific imitative entities within the general category of poetry which possess what we call “musical” qualities. Let me try to explain this (which Aristotle himself explains much better in Chapter 1 of the *Poetics*). The thing that we modern interpreters usually call music is organized sound. This, however, for Aristotle, could be present in many different things. It is present, for example, in Epic poetry, in lyric poetry, as well as in instrumental music such as that of the aulos or lyre. For Aristotle, though, the key is not organized sound. The key, for him, is *does this imitate?* Epic poetry possesses organized sound, but the key is that it imitates an object by means of a medium (in this case, it imitates the story of the Trojan war by means of rhythm and language). Lyric poetry possesses organized sound, but they key is that it imitates some action or some person in the world by means of language. The instruments aulos and lyre possess organized sound, but the key is that they imitate action or the character of a certain person by means of rhythm and melody. Each of these three examples, epic poetry, lyric poetry, and, dare I say, instrumental poetry, possess organized sound, they possess musical qualities (so all of them could be called music) but the key for Aristotle is that they imitate something. So, what do we have? At least for this thesis, we will stick to *instrumental* music, instrumental imitation. A passage from the *Poetics* helps elucidate this point. In the *Poetics*, translated by Stephen Halliwell, Aristotle explains that “melody and rhythm...are used by music for aulos and lyre, and by any other types with this capacity, for example music for panpipes.”<sup>3</sup> Aristotle does not exclude things like epic poetry, lyric poetry, dancing or comic theater from using rhythm and melody as well, but that which uses rhythm and melody alone, that which uses rhythm and melody alone to imitate, is the aulos and the lyre—instrumental music. For the modern interpreter and reader, instrumental music is the one most in line with our conception of music. It should be kept in mind that the key for Aristotle is *does this entity, does this media, imitate?*

---

3. Aristotle, *Poetics* 1.1447a22–24.

Speaking of imitation, we can proceed to the next preliminary discussion: imitation. In the words of Anna Schiaparelli and Paolo Crivelli, taken from the *Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, we can say this:

Although it is now customary to render ‘*mimesis*’ with ‘imitation,’ this choice is not uncontroversial and has been differently challenged. For example, some think that ‘*mimesis*’ would be best translated as ‘representation,’ and ‘indication’ or ‘expression’ would also be suitable in certain contexts. We shall follow the tradition and accept ‘imitation’ since a different translation would lose the immediate reference to Plato’s use of the same word to discuss analogous topics. However, it must be said that by ‘imitation’ Aristotle probably means something different from what Plato is traditionally taken to associate with that word. Whereas in the Platonic understanding ‘imitation’ seems to stand for a mental capacity or activity deprived of any cognitive power, in Aristotle’s *Poetics*, in particular in its account of tragedy, it appears to be linked with a more positive function that contributes to the acquisition of certain truths about people’s actions and character.<sup>4</sup> The concept of imitation, thus has not been without controversy. However, as Professors Anna Schiaparelli and Paolo Crivelli explain, *mimesis* should in fact be rendered as ‘imitation.’ (Schiaparelli and Crivelli, “Aristotle on Poetry,” 615)

The fact that the medium, the entity imitating, has the ability to convey certain truths about people’s actions and characters, shows that in some sense the medium, the entity imitating, is mimicking, is in some sense parallel to, the action or character it is imitating. We will discuss this fact more a little later on. It should be noted, though, that the entity imitating has the power to convey certain truths about a person’s character; because the entity imitating has this power, it must have some intrinsic relation to the character. If it did not, it would not have the power to imitate the person’s character.

Having spoken about music and imitation, albeit briefly, we can proceed to a discussion of the meaning of *ethos* or ‘character.’ What is *ethos*, according to Aristotle? The best place to look for a definition of *ethos* is in Aristotle’s esteemed book *Rhetoric*. Although Aristotle does not define *ethos* in that work, that is, explain that “*ethos* is such-and-such,” the work, nonetheless, provides a rich uncovering and clear view as to what Aristotle means by *ethos*. The passage explains:

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character [*ethos*] of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself. Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character [*ethos*] when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We

---

4. Schiaparelli and Crivelli, “Aristotle on Poetry,” 615.

believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided.” (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.2.1356a1–8)

From this passage we can deduce that Aristotle conceives of *ethos* as a certain state, a certain way of being of a person.<sup>5</sup> The person, for example, could possess the *ethos* of being gentle, of self-control, or, less favorably, of being rash or irritable. In a sort of modern way of putting this, it is the way that people see a person carry himself or himself. If we see a person who holds their head high, possesses self-control, is kind and gentle, we are more likely to believe that person. We are more likely to talk to that person. We enjoy being around that person and are more likely to want to be that person. On the other hand, though, if we perceive someone as easily angered, or rash, or they carry themselves in not so a favorable way, we are a little less likely to talk to that person, to want to emulate that person, etc. *Ethos* is the way of being of a person.

A very interesting passage that can be juxtaposed to this, which will grant us a better understanding of *ethos*, and hence a better understanding of what music imitates, is that of a passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In this passage, Aristotle is explaining what can be found in the soul. It would make sense, then, that *ethos* would be one of those things that Aristotle speaks about. However, he actually uses a different word, except, the translator renders this different word as ‘state of character!’ For example, the English translation of the relevant text reads: “Next we must consider what virtue is. Since things that are found in the soul are of three kinds—passions, faculties, states of character, virtue must be one of these.”<sup>6</sup> Now, without going to the Greek text, we would assume that by ‘state of character’ Aristotle means *ethos*. However, if one looks at the Greek text, this is not what he says. Instead of using the word *ethos*, Aristotle uses the word *hexeis*. *Ethos* and *hexeis* are not the same word. Yet, we can understand a little more about this word *hexeis*, and thus be able to better juxtapose it with the word *ethos* if we keep reading a few lines further. Aristotle offers a further explanation: “by states of character [I mean] the things in virtue of which we stand well or badly with reference to the passions, e.g. with reference to anger we stand badly if we feel it violently or too weakly, and well if we feel it moderately; and similarly, with reference to the other passions... [i]f, then, the virtues are neither

---

5. Help with this deduction goes to Dr. Jonathan Sanford, email message to author, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

6. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.4.1105b19–21.

passions nor faculties, all that remains is that they should be *states of character*<sup>7</sup> (emphasis mine). In this passage as well, Aristotle uses the term *hexeis*. What are we to make of this, and how does this enhance our understanding of *ethos*, and thus enhance our understanding of what music imitates? One way to understand this is in the way in which I have already highlighted, namely, that *ethos* is a way of being of the soul, while *hexeis* is more of a *habit*, a *less fluid* state of the soul. One helpful explanation of this is as follows: “the difference is this: When using *hexeis* (the single curved breathing mark produces an “h”), Aristotle is concerned to stress the anthropological category: a *state* of character. When using *ethos* he just means a “way of being” or “mode,” equivalent to the Latin “*mores*”, but without stressing the manner in which the way of being, the character, is instantiated in the person. That is, he is being less anthropologically precise.”<sup>8</sup> *Ethos* is a way of being, a fluid state of the soul, while *hexeis* is a habit, a habit of soul, that a person possesses for long periods of time. In other words, one can be *moved to* a certain *ethos*, while it is less difficult to quickly move someone to a certain *hexeis*. Thus, music, in its capacity, can move the soul to a certain way of being, a certain state of the soul, while it is less likely for music to quickly move someone to a certain *hexeis* (*hexeis*, it seems, must be acquired over a long period of time). It is sensible, here, to think of *ethos* as a sort of emotional state, as opposed to a habit of the soul (which is *hexeis*), however, this should be distinguished as well.

In the secondary literature, as well as in the translations of Aristotle’s texts, there exists a tension between the phrases “states of character” and “emotion.” Are they the same, or are they different? Do they mean the same thing, or do they mean different things? In Aristotle, but also in the relevant literature concerning Aristotle between the terms “states of character” or *ethos* and “emotion,” do they have different nuances or do they try to convey different things? In translations and in commentaries, the line between *ethos* (states of character) and emotion seems to blur. For example, in Professor Stephen Halliwell’s *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, he speaks about music’s ability to imitate aspects of character, and in the same sentence, he explains that patterns of music have properties like the emotional states that they are imitating. In his own words, which we will come back to a little later but for a different reason, he states: “Musical

---

7. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.5.1105b25–26, 2.5.1106a10–11.

8. Dr. Jonathan Sanford, email message to author, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

mimesis is conceived of as an intrinsic capacity... to present and convey... aspects of character.”<sup>9</sup> So, here he speaks about music’s intrinsic capacity to present and convey aspects of character, of *ethos*. And yet, in the following part of the sentence, he explains that “the patterns of music have properties ‘like’ the emotional states.”<sup>10</sup> Also, confusion may arise from reading Aristotle’s works themselves. It must be stated, though, that this is not due to an ambiguity in Aristotle’s writing. No, it is due to the modern understanding of emotion that we bring to Aristotle’s writing. For example, when Aristotle states that rhythm and melody supply imitations of the states of character, he cites states of character like anger, gentleness, and courage. These, in the modern understanding, are emotions. So, does Aristotle believe that music imitates states of the soul insofar as music imitates *emotions* of the soul? Or, does Aristotle have something a little different in mind? To resolve this problem, and make clear the distinction between emotion and *ethos*, let me say this: with regard to this thesis, we will stick to what Aristotle himself says, that is, that music imitates *ethos*; for convenience, we may use ‘state of character’ or ‘character of the soul’ or even ‘state of the soul’ when referring to *ethos*. Instead of placing the modern conception of emotion upon Aristotle’s writings, we will stick to deducing facts and positions from Aristotle’s writings themselves. Aristotle does not say, in his writings, that music imitates *pathos* (the Greek word that is normally translated as emotion). Anger and gentleness might be emotion for us, but it might not be for Aristotle. So, the caveat is that, music imitates *ethos*, and anger or gentleness might be part of *ethos*, but we must deduce that claim, the claim that the modern emotion of anger or gentleness, is contained within *ethos* from Aristotle’s writings themselves.

## Part 2

In order to accomplish this task, and put the above quoted passage (from the introduction) in the larger context of Aristotle’s theory of music and the imitative arts, let us begin with this: what makes me think that Aristotle believes that man delights in listening to music because he recognizes it as a state of character, a state of the soul? Well, this line of reasoning: in the same passage from which I quoted above, the beginning of Chapter 4 of the *Poetics*, Aristotle states

9. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 159. The full citation is this: “Musical mimesis is conceived of as an intrinsic capacity of musically organized sound to present and convey (affective) aspects of character; the patterns of music have properties “like” the emotional states that can, for that reason, be the objects of their mimesis.”

10. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 159.

that man delights in imitation—“it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation.”<sup>11</sup> Also in the *Poetics*, Aristotle states that a certain mode of imitation is instrumental music (“most flute-playing and lyre-playing, are all, viewed as a whole, modes of imitation.”<sup>12</sup>). Hence, flute-playing and lyre-playing—instrumental music—are modes of imitation, and man delights in works of imitation. What should follow, then, is that instrumental music imitates the states of character. Aristotle says such a thing. In the *Politics*, Aristotle explains that “even in mere melodies there is an imitation of character”<sup>13</sup> (*ἐν δὲ τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐτοῖς ἔστι μιμήματα τῶν ήθῶν*)<sup>14</sup> A few lines later, after discussing the different melodies, he states: “The same principles apply to rhythms”<sup>15</sup> (*τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον ἔχει καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς ρύθμούς*).<sup>16</sup> And, to be clear, what does Aristotle mean by character, in the Greek, *ethos*? Aristotle means a *way of being* of the soul, a certain state which the soul can be brought to and moved out of.<sup>17</sup> In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle explains that the *ethos* of the speaker as quality of the speaker which deems whether or not he is believable.<sup>18</sup> It is a trait of the soul which can be perceived, which can be recognized.

The last piece is that, even if melodies and rhythms do imitate states of character, man has to recognize that, he has to recognize that ‘this thing is that,’ that this certain music is that state of character. For this piece, we will go back to the same passage in the *Poetics* from which quoted earlier. One line after stating that it is equally natural that everyone enjoys mimetic object, Aristotle says: “The explanation of this too is that understanding gives great pleasure;” “through contemplating them [the mimetic object] it comes about that they understand and infer what each element means, [what each element is].”<sup>19</sup> So, what do we have here?

We have: in the first quotation, Aristotle’s claim that all, namely, man viewed as a whole, delights in works of imitation; in the second, Aristotle’s claim that flute-playing and lyre-playing, namely instrumental music, are modes of imitation; in the third, Aristotle’s claim that melodies and rhythm, which are produced by instrumental music, imitate states of character. And in the fourth, Aristotle’s claim that through understanding what each element means, what each

11. Aristotle, *Poetics* 4.1448b9–10.

12. Aristotle, *Poetics* 1.1447a15–16.

13. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340a39–40.

14. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340a39.

15. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340b8.

16. Ibid.

17. Dr. Jonathan Sanford, email message to author, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

18. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.2.1356a5–6.

19. Aristotle, *Poetics* 4.1448b9, 4.1448b13–14, 4.1448b16–17.

mimetic object is, great pleasure follows. Hence, we can say that, because man delights in imitation, because instrumental music is a mode of imitation, because instrumental music, in its melody and rhythm, imitate states of character, and because delight follows upon understanding, another way, *recognizing*, what each mimetic object is, we can say that man delights in listening to music, at least to some degree, because he recognizes it as a state of character.

What do others say about this topic? Specifically, what do scholars say about Aristotle's passages from which I have quoted, those in the *Poetics* as well as in the *Politics*?

Let us begin with Professor Stephen Halliwell's comments.<sup>20</sup>

### Part 3

In Stephen Halliwell's book *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, which is a robust review of mimetic understandings mainly having to do with, but not constrained to, the Greek world, Professor Halliwell offers this reflection: "Musical mimesis [in Aristotle] is conceived of as an intrinsic capacity of musically organized sound to present and convey (affective) aspects of character;" he goes on: "the patterns of music have properties "like" the emotional states that can, for that reason, be the objects of their mimesis."<sup>21</sup> Here Professor Halliwell agrees with the third point that I made above, namely, that music, in its melody and rhythm—which is the organization of musical sound—can imitate states of character. One could object to this reading, though, and state that although musically organized sound can present and convey aspects of character, that is not the same thing as saying that 'musically organized sound *imitates*, that is, *takes the form of*, character. However, a few lines earlier, Professor Halliwell counters this objection. He does this by explaining the difference between *mimesis*, imitation, and *semeia*, sign. "In Aristotle, a sign is related to that of which it is (taken to be) a sign by providing a reason for an inference... [while] *mimesis* must involve something more... the experience of music appears, for Aristotle, to be a matter of experiencing emotions that are not just indicated or evoked [like a sign would do] (as they might be, on his view, in a painting) ['figures and colours are not imitations, but signs, of moral habits']<sup>22</sup> but in some sense are *enacted* by the qualities of

---

20. Professor Stephen Halliwell teaches at Oxford and has authored books concerning Aristotle's understanding of *mimesis*, concerning Aristotle's *Poetics*, as well as translated the Loeb version of Aristotle's *Poetics*. See: Halliwell, Stephen. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002; Halliwell, Stephen. *Aristotle's Poetics*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986; and Stephen Halliwell, trans., *Poetics* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

21. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 159.

22. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340a33–34.

the artwork,” (emphasis mine).<sup>23</sup> The qualities of the artwork *enact* emotion, enact a certain ethos or state of the soul, in the listener.

Again in Stephen Halliwell’s work, he explains another significant point “[a]s with metaphor, [in mimesis,] we do not so much consciously observe or make a connection; rather, we see one thing... as another.”<sup>24</sup> We see, we observe, we hear, one thing as another.

This point made by Professor Stephen Halliwell sets up the trajectory for another main argument made by Annamaria Schiaparelli and Paolo Crivelli in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*. They make a very significant claim that rhymes with a few of the claims I made in Part 1, as well as with Professor Stephen Halliwell’s argument above. Their examination is as follows:

The second thesis put forward if T 2 is that the enjoyment of imitation is connatural to human beings. This second thesis is justified by appeal to the enjoyment we get by ‘looking at the most precise images of things which are themselves painful to look at, e.g., the forms of the vilest beasts and of corpses’ (144b10–12). Aristotle goes on to explain why we experience such an enjoyment: it is because ‘apprehension is most pleasant’ (144b13) to all human beings and we apprehend by means of images of the sort just mentioned. What sort of apprehension does Aristotle have in mind? He gives a hint near the end of T 2: the apprehension that gives us enjoyment consists in our recognizing ‘what each thing is’ (144b16–17), i.e., what each element of the image represents and what the represented thing is.” (Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 191)

The enjoyment that springs from the recognition is the recognition of *what each thing is*. The delight that springs from the recognition is delighting in knowing what this thing is. Schiaparelli and Crivelli go on to give an excellent example of this, and we can relate their example to examples relevant to our own, namely, music. “For instance, the enjoyable apprehension Aristotle has in mind is what we experience when in looking at Raphael’s painting of the School of Athens we recognize that this is Plato, this is Aristotle, etc., or (to go back to Aristotle’s own example of images of the vilest things) we see a drawing of a lobster and recognize that these are the antennae, these are the chelae, this is the tail, etc. What we acquire apprehension of is the image itself (insofar as we understand what *it* and *its elements* represent) and the situation or story depicted in the image (insofar as we understand *what* it and its elements represent).”<sup>25</sup> This

---

23. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 159.

24. Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 191.

25. Schiaparelli and Crivelli, “Aristotle on Poetry,” 617.

simple example, recognizing that ‘this is Plato’ or ‘this is Aristotle,’ illustrates the point that I am (as well as, it seems, Aristotle is) trying to make. By apprehending, in the poetry itself, what the poetry imitates, delight follows. By apprehending, that this rhythm, that this melody, imitates a state of character, by recognizing *this music imitates the gentle state of character* or *this music imitates the courageous state of character*, we are brought to a greater state of delight than we were before we recognized the imitation.

From here we can move to a greater synthesis among Aristotle’s claims and relevant scholarship in order to mine a little more deeply, and understand the greater significance, of Aristotle point about rhythm, melody, and imitation.

#### Part 4

In synthesizing the above scholarship and Aristotle’s claims themselves, we can say this: rhythm and melody imitate the states of character, and man, then, recognizes the rhythm and melody as the states of character. And when man recognizes one thing as another, delight follows. To reiterate the famous words from the *Poetics*: it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation. Why does man delight in listening to music? Because man recognizes music as character, and it is natural for man to delight in that recognition.

A tension with regard to this thesis may in fact still be on the table. Namely, the tension of *how exactly man recognizes the imitation of character*. It is not hard to observe that, when most people listen to music, they do not express ‘I enjoy this piece of music because I recognize it as ‘gentleness’ ’ or “my favorite song is such-and-such because in it I recognize the state of character ‘courage.’ ” I have never heard this. Thus: this tension is rightfully placed. *How* in fact is it that one, that man, recognizes music as an imitation of character? There does not seem to be a solution. One place to look, though, is actually the sentence after Aristotle’s famous lines of ‘rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger, gentleness, courage and the like’ (*Politics* 1340a 19–21). Let’s take the two sentences together: “rhythms and melodies contain representations of anger and mildness, and also of courage and temperance and all their opposites and the other moral qualities, that most closely correspond to the true natures of these qualities (and this is clear from the facts of what occurs—when we listen to such representations we change in our soul.”<sup>26</sup> When we listen to such representations, we *metaballomen* in our soul. When we listen to

---

26. Aristotle, *Politics* 8.5.1340a23–24.

such representations, we *metaballomen* in our *psuchen*. Our soul, not just our mind, recognizes the state of character contained within the music. The complete *psuchen* undergoes a change, a shift, a movement to a new state of character.

Here again, I cite Halliwell, who states the following:

This factor is clearly integral to Aristotle's position in this context, a position that seems to suppose that the hearer of music simultaneously recognizes the emotion "in" the music and is carried through its pattern of feeling in a response of "sympathetic" psychological engagement. The description of "sympathetic" is Aristotle's own (the hearers of musical mimesis, he says, become *sumpatheis*, at 1340a13), albeit in a passage where the text is controversial, and it here fits together with the idea of emotions that are "in" the music but conveyed or transmitted to its audience, which thereby "feels with" the music (the literal meaning of the verb *sumpaschein*). Aristotle's musical aesthetic in *Politics* 8 does not *identify* musical mimesis with its emotive effect; in other words, it is not a sheer "arousal" theory of musical expression. But it is, as I maintain more fully in Chapter 8, a theory of musical expression nonetheless, if "expression" is understood as embracing, and making a causal connection between, the perceived affective content of the musical work and the corresponding pattern of the listener's experience." (Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, 161)

Literally, man *feels with* the music. There exists a corresponding connection between the musical work and the listener's experience.

To better understand this corresponding connection, it is helpful here, before we close, to briefly recall (at least one aspect of) Aristotle's theory of knowledge. At the end of the *Analytica Posteriora*, Aristotle offers this famous passage about his theory of knowledge, of recognition: "We conclude that these states of knowledge are neither innate in a determinate form, nor developed from other higher states of knowledge, but from sense-perception. It is like a rout in battle stopped by first one man making a stand and then another, until the original formation has been restored. The soul is so constituted as to be capable of this process."<sup>27</sup> Like a rout in battle, the rhythm, the melody, the character, moves from the music to the soul, so as to constitute the soul as what the music itself already is, and now what the soul has become, a state of character.

Concluding, let us review: this thesis started with this question: why does man delight in listening to music? In order to answer this question, I posited Aristotle's answer and then brought his answer in to conversation with the relevant literature. We saw that, for Aristotle, music, in its most important aspects—rhythm and melody—imitates states of character. Reflecting upon this

---

27. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.19.100a9–13.

in the light of the relevant literature, we saw that man recognizes rhythm and melody as states of character. Synthesizing these claims of the relevant literature and Aristotle, I explained that, ultimately, man delights in listening to music because he recognizes music as an imitation of characters of the soul.

A suggestion for further research: because man recognizes the characters of soul in music, it may benefit the scholarly community to research the structure of characters of soul that music imitates; in order to conduct this research, one could, first off, take a piece of music that imitates (to most persons), say, gentleness. They could then measure, with modern instruments, the mathematical properties of the music that is recognized as gentleness. Most obviously, they could analyze the wavelengths in their amplitudes, frequencies, and different patterns of oscillation. By doing so, they would have data in number-form on paper. They could compare and contrast this data in number-form to another experiment on a different state of character, and begin to plot the differences in numerical patterns of the states of character. In doing this, the scholarly would have a better understanding of the structure of the states of character that the numerical patterns mimic; maybe even, with regard to states of character that are considered less favorable, we would be able to plot their structure using music, and maybe use that gathered research about those states of character to somehow help the unfavorable states of character that so many people possess, the unfavorable states of soul that so many persons bear.

## Selected Bibliography

This Selected Bibliography does not cite the complete number of sources I consulted for this thesis (for that purpose, see *Consulted Sources* below). It does, however, contain the sources that I cited specifically in the body-text of this thesis.

Halliwell, Stephen. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

———. *Poetics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

McKeon, Richard, ed. *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. New York: Random House Inc., 1941.

Schiaparelli, Anna, and Paolo Crivelli. “Aristotle on Poetry.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, edited by Christopher Shields, 612–625. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

### Consulted Sources

#### *Primary Sources*

- Aristotle. *On the Soul, Parva Naturalia, On Breath*. Translated by W. S. Hett. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957.
- . *Politics*. Translated by H. Rackham. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932.
- . *The Physics*, vol. 1. Translated by Philip H. Wicksteed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957.
- . *The Physics*, vol. 2. Translated by Philip H. Wicksteed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957
- Hardie, R.P., trans. et al. “Physica.” In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, edited by Richard McKeon, 218–394. New York: Random House, Inc., 1941.
- Smith, J.A., trans. “De Anima.” In *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, edited by Richard McKeon, 535–603. New York: Random House, Inc., 1941.
- J.A. Smith, trans. “De Anima,” in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, Inc., 1941), 423b 5.

#### *Secondary Sources*

- Anderson, Warren D. *Ethos and Education in Greek Music: The Evidence of Poetry and Philosophy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966.
- Aquinas, St. Thomas. *Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*. Translated by Kenelm Foster, O.P., and Silvester Humphries, O.P. Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1994.
- . *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Translated by John P. Rowan. Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1995.
- . *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*. Translated by Richard J. Blackwell, Richard J. Spath, and W. Edmund Thirlkel. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

- Barnes, Jonathan. "Rhetoric and Poetics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, edited by Jonathan Barnes, 259–285. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Battezzato, Luigi. "Metre and music." In *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric*, edited by Felix Budelmann, 130–146. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Bowman, Wayne. *Philosophical Perspectives on Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Cohen, Bernard. "Newton's concepts of force and mass, with notes on the Laws of Motion." In *The Cambridge Companion to Newton*, edited by Bernard Cohen and George E. Smith, 57–81. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Depew, David J. "Politics, Music, and Contemplation in Aristotle's Ideal State." In *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, edited by David Keyt and Fred. D. Miller, Jr. 346–380. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1991.
- Else, Gerald. *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Everson, Stephen. "Psychology." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, 168–194. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Halliwell, Stephen. *Aristotle's Poetics*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Juslin, Patrik N. "Emotional Responses to Music." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, edited by Susan Hallam, Ian Cross, and Michael Thaut, 131–139. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- King, Andrew J. "Hearing." In *The Oxford Companion to The Body*, edited by Colin Blakemore and Sheila Jennet, 342–344. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Kosman, L. A. "Being Properly Affected: Virtues and Feelings in Aristotle's Ethics." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, edited by Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, 103–115. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980.

- Marion, Jean-Luc. *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Translated by Jeffrey L. Kosky. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- Rocconi, Eleonora. "Music." In *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, edited by George Boys-Stones, Barbara Graziosi, and Phiroze Vasunia, 569–576. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Scherer, Klaus R., and Marcel R. Zentner. "Emotional Effects of Music: Production Rules." In *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research*, edited by Patrik N. Juslin, and John A. Sloboda, 361–386. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Steinbock, Anthony J. "Evidence in the Phenomenology of Religious Experience." In *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Phenomenology*, edited by Dan Zahavi, 583–603. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- West, Martin Litchfield. *Ancient Greek Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.