

# *European Policies and Arts Management seen from Aristotle's Theatrical Culture Perspective*

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## ABSTRACT

Cultural policies and arts management in modern Europe prove that solely politics can substantiate attempts to defuse power through Aristotle's idea of theatrical culture. Aristotle, a forerunner of an industrial cultural policy in Europe states that theatrical art ceases to be merely an incantatory procedure aiming to console us for the evils of our time and becomes a cognitive process. Aristotle's idea of staged myths used in this way stresses how little can be done as regards the realisation of some such policies and management, if we ignore the importance of theatre as a political institution.

## WEYWORDS

Key Terms: Aristotle; Digital Culture; Politics

## *Introduction*

Cultural policies and arts management in modern Europe prove that solely politics can substantiate attempts to defuse power. Specific politics as regards the European Union *Creative Europe 2020* programme, that favour the support to the theatre sector with the tools of "digital theatre" should be further developed in modern Europe (De Caro 2020c). This specific programme is aesthetically and theoretically rooted in Aristotle (*Poet.* 1448b5-23), so far as Man, the most imitative creature in the world, learns initially by imitation. It is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation. Without the help of art, we are unable to grasp what reality is, despite objective efforts to capture the features we seek in it (Charles 2000, p. 74, 260). The deeper meaning of objects is gathered solely from poetics and art.

Aristotle believes (Nussbaum 1986, p. 97), that principles that can be taught and explanations of how desired results are produced can only be found in theatrical communication and teaching. However, all who have dramatised the fall of Ilium in its entirety, and not part by part, like Euripides, or the whole of the Niobe story, instead

of a portion, like Aeschylus, either fail utterly or have little success on the stage (*Poet.* 1456a10-15). Still, all the parts of an epic are included in tragedy, he avers; whereas those of tragedy are not all to be found in the epic (*Poet.* 1449b18-20). For example, the way we experience time in a tragic plot is parallel with the ordinary experience of time. Fragmentation of time pertains to historical narration; whereas continuity qualifies common public experience of time.

This failure and lack of interest is shown in people who are not used to participating for reasons of style, lack of opportunities or financial resources.<sup>1</sup> This also concerns people hard to reach/indifferent/hostile, who do not participate in any cultural activity for a complex range of reasons, related to social exclusion factors, education and accessibility. To engage them an international, long-term and targeted approach is often needed with Aristotle's time making and time remodelling tools. It is only poetry that refers to the universal; not any historical narration (De Caro 2013). The historical is determined by the particular.

### 1. *The case of Plato: Cybernetics and Artistic networks*

In the *Laws*, Plato coined the term "cybernetics" as applicable to a study of self-governance. Plato clearly states that the role of governor can be reduced to the idea of the person steering, i.e. the sea captain, who is the almighty commander in power over anything under his captancy. This has bearings on an interdisciplinary modern inquiry about control theory and communication procedures. Following Plato (*Leg.* 641a ff.), cybernetics is applicable to language-based systems, which constitute artistic networks.

Unlike Plato's authoritarian control as regards centralised administration, in modern Europe practitioners in theatre, dance, opera and music have been co-operating across frontiers for many years.<sup>2</sup> Networks that bring together artistic directors, choreographers, festival directors, presenters and venue managers, such as the Informal European Theatre Meeting have operated since the early 1990s. The International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM) is now transmitted via satellite. This example further clarifies how operations management as regards artistic networks functions in modern Europe, totally different from Plato's ideas concerning totalitarian control of art and artistic products.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., "Engaging the World: Towards Global Cultural Citizenship", p. 92.

But why does Plato deport artists and poets from his Ideal Society? A brief comment on this (Moutsopoulos 1977) suggests that his decision refers solely to contemporaries of his who do not fulfil his postulates for authenticity and values, especially in the realm of theatrical education. This refers, according to Rancière (2014, pp. 30, 36, 39, 64), to the division of labour in Plato's Society – not to the essence of the labourers. Plato, he adds, considers the political ideal of historical truth to be an ideal which degenerates when handled simplistically: it only concerns a select group that is superior in terms of power to the rest of society. This example, Rancière continues, illustrates the subversive power (Rancière 2017 and 2004, pp. xviii, 6. Giouli 2019a) of the democratic ideal, the aim of which can be realisable *in concreto* – not *ab extra*, in Plato's City. We here see, however, his authoritarian idea of centralised administration as relates to artistic networks. Plato, nevertheless, stresses the need for equal distribution of power. But would he have been in favour of the current power of the huge global industry<sup>3</sup> of publishing? We do not wish to take him as our contemporaries. But we must stress the authoritarian quality of his Work.

We can see a parallel with the idea of Plato's "closed society", in Popper's sense, if we examine police intervention related with artistic practices and theories. The police, according to UNESCO,<sup>4</sup> have been caught between ensuring law and order while protecting artists' right to freedom of expression, often advising or enforcing the cancellation of performances or removal of artworks when groups taking offence against controversial works of art and performances have staged protests outside, or threatened, venues, targeting performers, theatre workers and audiences. Index on Censorship, based in the United Kingdom, has addressed this fraught area through a series of guides on "Art and the Law", giving advice to arts institutions on legal rights and responsibilities when staging events on contentious issues, including counter-terrorism, obscenity and public order. Importantly, the guidelines have also been provided for the police, along with a training programme for senior police officers.

Returning to our example of publishing, which links with artistic networks and their management, Plato would most probably have regarded it as a primarily private sector domain, with its principal form of state assistance functioning through copyright legislation. However, modern direct government assistance has enabled pub-

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Cf., *Reshaping Cultural Policies* (2018), *2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, p. 222.

lishers to exhibit at, or authors to attend, international book fairs. Cultural diplomacy was certainly not the way Plato envisaged proceeding. However, these modern trade events are especially associated to cases focusing on a specific country, e.g., Arts Council Korea promoted a Korean focus at the meeting organised by London in Asia.

Federica Mogherini (2016), besides, contributes to European modern policies as regards the phenomenon of Cultural Diplomacy.

It must also be noted<sup>5</sup> that Cultural activities that seek to support the integration of refugees in Europe by giving the opportunity to EU citizens and refugees to work together, discover, learn from and understand the values and cultures of both populations, and this in collaboration with social structures already working with refugee populations. Delivering social and economic benefits relates to the depiction of facts and reality using the language of myth and attempting to defuse authoritarianism and authoritarian political control.

Again, this specific European policy is aesthetically and theoretically rooted in Aristotle. Aristotle together with Plato, cherishes the nature of myth which is not restricted to a particular date or time. Myth takes hold of us with a sort of authority, so that we cannot see things 'otherwise'. In a very interesting passage in his *Poetics* (1454b31-34) Aristotle makes a point regarding this. It is the poet who realises the values a myth contains in order to discover order as expressed through mythological language. As we lack the notion of the ideal, we cannot perceive order at the outset of the plot of the myth. Old poets, Aristotle argues (1453b25-30), devise the right way of treating myths. This is the only thing left, not only for poetry but also for humanity, despite the fact that it may not change tradition and customs in the course of time and history. The deed of horror, he avers, is done by the doer *knowingly* and *consciously*. This is elucidated by Euripides' *Medea* murdering her children.

## 2. *The case of Aristotle: cultural access and participation strategies*

Aristotle's idea of the importance of theatrical culture refers to the production of truth and values in the realm of art and politics. The plot being an imaginary body is 'invented' in the Aristotelian sense of the term *mimesis* (De Caro 2013, p. 111). Thus, it is the body (not the mind) that activates the social imagery; but this undermines the ability to interpret the world (Giouli 2019b, p.

<sup>5</sup> Cf., *Call for Proposals EACEA 32/2019 Guidelines*, pp. 8-9.

134). Can we thus gain access to the real essences (Giouli 2022) of aesthetic and political things?

Aristotle's idea of possible access and strategies as regards culture is clearly manifested in a European Theatre Convention document.<sup>6</sup> He presents a revolutionary approach as regards this access being solely possible with the tools of mimesis (De Caro 2013, p. 112). What mimesis offers may be analogous to the real; however, it is an alternative to the real (*Ibid.*). An important step for the European theatre sector, the dialogue between the ETC and the European Commission has led to efforts in the past years for a strong theatre sector in Europe. The European Theatre Forum is to be a place for debates, visionary thinking, exchange of artistic development and information resource for the theatre sector in Europe, and aims to strengthen its role as a vital art form in Europe. An important Aristotelian question here to envisage such matters; what point of view we should adopt in order to achieve the best possible results as regards the above mentioned policies. If we approach (Giouli 2012b, pp. 32-33 and n. 24) our subject-matter with an entirely open mind, with no preconceptions about its elements or structure, there is nothing to tell us what to focus on, what to look for, or what questions to ask. Aristotle emphasises the specific socio-political conditions within which truth values are meaningfully realised in myth and its language on stage. This means that he would certainly have approved of the metrics and scope provided by the modern European practices of conducting surveys and asking people's opinions on political and aesthetic matters. Aristotle, a moderate as regards political convictions and ideas, would certainly have made use of the information provided by these surveys.<sup>7</sup>

With Aristotle's tools these surveys<sup>8</sup> link with equal access and equal participation to artistic procedures and artistic productivity. Here the joining of the Aristotle part with the modern seems to be very strange. We are speaking of equality of sexes, while Aristotle is surely not thinking of this. However, our only chance for expanding ourselves towards the unknown suggests a "feminine" angle of vision; the angle of human vulnerability. This "feminine" aspect of the vulnerability of humankind, we understand from the work of Aristotle (Giouli 2012c), lies beyond an artificial division of genders. Hence, Aristotle's strategies concern a theatrical culture perspective defined as follows.

<sup>6</sup> Cf., *Sectorial Support for Theatre Included in the EU Creative Europe Work Programme 2020*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf., *Cultural Access and Participation*, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., *Cultural Access and Participation*, p. 59.

On the question, Aristotle states (*Poet.* 1461a5-8) of whether something said or done in a poem is morally acceptable or not, one must consider plainly the intrinsic quality of the actual word or deed. Euripides postulates in *Medea* (*Poet.* 1454a37-b6), what the present writer would call an invisible, soundless ghost, a *Deus ex Machina*. This stage-artifice has no manifestations beyond the puzzling phenomenon of the manipulation of time thus leading to worthless tautological explanations of Medea's behaviour and acceptance that time's tragedy accounts for features of the world and our experience (Burke 2000, pp. 87-88). That is why, Aristotle states, this artifice must be reserved for matters outside the play: for past events beyond human knowledge, or events yet to come.

Aristotle wishes to prove myth to be the indispensable tool to defuse authoritarian power. That we have here an involuntary aberration (Moutsopoulos 1975, pp. 104-105) from the formulation of syllogistic thought is evident. What we note is, according to Aristotle, a use of paralogism (*Poet.* 1460a20) in myth. Commenting on the Bath-Story in the *Odyssey*, as referred to by Aristotle (*Poet.* 1460a26), Sykoutris (Aristotle 1936, p. 224 and n. 3) avers that Odysseus appears to Penelope as Aethon, the son of Deucalion, king of Crete and as the brother of Idomeneus. He tells her that Aethon offered hospitality to Odysseus in Knossos. She asks for evidence and he describes to her in detail the garments he wore when starting out on the expedition towards Troy. As she, herself, had prepared them, she has no difficulty in finding his claim about the said hospitality true. The paralogism, Sykoutris states, consists here in the fact that if one who offers hospitality to another is in a position to produce evidence regarding the clothes of the latter, the truth regarding these clothes does not prove that the former had, indeed, offered the latter hospitality. Aristotle, himself, comments on this as follows (*Poet.* 1460a20-26): whenever one thing is true or happens, another is true or happens. People believe that if the latter is true, so is the former. But this is a false conclusion. If, then, he states, the first thing is untrue, but there is something else that follows on from the assumption of its truth, normally the right thing is to consider the latter, too, as true. Sykoutris explains this, stating that granted that A exists, B also is; or, when A occurs, then B also happens. Then if B is true, A also happens. However, just because we know the truth of the following statement, Aristotle maintains, we are in our minds led on to the erroneous inference of the truth of the antecedent. We again see here how deduction (from the general

to the particular) is proved useless: we do not prove; we can only assume what is true by means of myths. Myths, being the tools of generalisations, can open up the way towards the taming of arbitrary political power. The framework of myth takes us in the right direction, according to Aristotle (*Poet.* 1460a19-20). Myth affords an opening for the improbable which is the chief factor in the marvellous, which is a cause of pleasure (*Poet.* 1460a12-13; 17-18). The unknown, the logically impossible, is thus opened up to us through the commonplace: as Aristotle states, a likely impossibility is always preferable to an unconvincing possibility (*Poet.* 1460a27).

Let us now continue to examine cultural access and strategies in modern Europe as they undoubtedly link to Aristotle's *enthymeme*. It is those rules dictated by Aristotle's idea of tragedy that express the universality of human condition (De Caro 2013, pp. 130-131). Two modes of thought, examples and enthymemes, i.e., correspond to induction and deduction. The real objects of truth can be grasped solely poetically in these two ways. An *enthymeme*, Aristotle states (*An. pr.* 70 a10-11), is a deduction starting from probabilities and signs – a probability is a reputable proposition (*An. pr.* 70 a4) and a sign is meant to be a demonstrative proposition either necessary or reputable (*An. pr.* 70 a6-7). Hence, this absurd use of deduction only shows that in fact we are assuming what we are trying to prove following Aristotle's logic; *Cogito*, in fact is an example of *enthymeme* (Moutsopoulos 2009, pp. 23-24 and n. 31). So long as one is thinking, one must exist, Descartes states (Cottingham 1993, pp. 34-35). However, there is nothing necessary about one's existence (Cottingham 1993, pp. 34). And the same is certainly true as regards probabilities and signs in Aristotle's sense of these terms.

The *sui generis* use of deduction in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1394a20-b15) has also been commented on: a deduction known as *enthymeme* concerns practical questions of conduct, i.e., courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided. All premises or conclusions of enthymemes are maxims that deal with the same practical subjects. Maxims are generalised statements; nor are they about any and every subject, though they are of a general kind. Aristotle offers Euripides' *Medea* (294-7) to show his idea of what a maxim is: A man with sound wits should never have his sons taught more wisdom than their fellows. Euripides adds here the explanation of this warning: this teaching will make them idle; and therewith they earn ill-will and jealousy throughout the city. This explanation here serves to create an enthymeme from the maxim. The same is true

of *Hecuba's* maxim (864-865) that there is no free man among us all. The reason provided by Euripides (that "for all are slaves of money or of chance") turns this maxim into an enthymeme. Another example of a maxim can be found in *Troades* (1051): No love is true save that which loves for ever. This defines enthymeme as an argument in which one premise is not explicitly stated.

What we have here is a genus contained in a species (i.e. the whole is contained in the part) because in fact predicates are contained in the logical subject. Aristotle's objectivity, however, is the common ground for all these differences between, on the one hand, facts which are provided with an explanation and, on the other, facts which are provided without an explanation. They share the same "supervenience" physicalism (Caston 1993, pp. 122-126). as a basis beyond mere facts. However, there is no need to advance beyond these facts in Aristotle.

This materialist understanding further stresses the basis of "supervenience" physicalism, which can be found in Aristotle, which abolishes all differences between maxims and enthymemes. Indeed there is no "supervenience" of the mental over the physical. He, himself, admits that we should restate our enthymemes in the form of maxims: wise men will come to terms in the hour of success; for they will gain most if they do. Expressed, however, as an enthymeme, this would be weaker in sense: if we ought to come to terms when doing so would enable us to gain the greatest advantage, then we ought to come to terms in the hour of success. This restatement, however, pursues success in knowledge rather than truth in it.

Proper nouns (Charles 2000, pp. 107 and n. 53) applied to the characters in the text of the play do not guarantee meaningfully fixed predicates for these characters. The following statement is certainly true; however, it is indetermined, i.e. unnecessary. *Hecuba* (*Rb.* 1400b22-23) says of Aphrodite that her name and Folly's begin with the same letter. This might have been otherwise. The contingent then and the necessary share the same "supervenience" physicalism as a basis.

What is of importance here is to determine necessary truth as unconditional truth (with the sole exception of the truth conceived under compulsion). Hence, he declares that these arbitrarily forceful conditions to qualify the good, on the one hand, and life linked to being, on the other, are possible. To attempt to arrive at the logically impossible, i.e., the eternal and unmovable, to which nothing compulsory is attached (1015b11-15), is completely out of the question; hence we need not attempt to do so.



To sum up, Aristotle states (*Mund.* 400b6-26), that as is the person steering the ship, the charioteer in the chariot, the leader in the chorus, the lawgiver in the city, the general in the army, even so is God in the Universe. This is a parallel drawn between God and any man in charge in any city of Aristotle's time and place and leads to his "craftsmanship" model of the world from which the ideal is lacking.

The mystery of the human being, which this model serves, has been alluded to, besides, in relation with audience development and cultural participation in modern European policies.<sup>9</sup> It is stated that the essence of a theatre's relationship with its audience is a mystery that excites both sides, bringing a special chemistry to this relationship. Therefore, the tools explored are primarily management and communication tools, not so much data collection. There is a need to search for solutions with Aristotle's tools that have a direct impact on the audience: reaching out to new audiences and trying to speak a language understood not only by élites.<sup>10</sup> Theatre audiences, thus, must reflect the variety of the local inhabitants.<sup>11</sup> Through creative residencies and artist scheme, these policies support artists to develop new work and reach new audiences.<sup>12</sup> The Opgang Theatre (Aarhus, Denmark), e.g., wants to develop drama productions and related productions and platforms (digital and other) that meet the demands, hopes and dreams of the audience through the engagement of local talents and the building up of long lasting, trustful relationships with young people locally and nationally.<sup>13</sup> These procedures also showcase collaborating with different art forms<sup>14</sup> such as theatre and dance.

To better achieve this, Aristotle warns us (*Poet.* 1458b1-25) not to render the diction on stage unclear and prose-like. Whether (*Rb.* 404b25-30) using epithets or diminutives, we should be wary and observe the mean. A sentence is a composite significant sound, Aristotle maintains (*Poet.* 1457a10-30), some parts

<sup>9</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, pp. 63-65.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, p.7.

<sup>13</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., *Study on Audience Development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, p. 20.

of which have a certain significance by themselves. A sentence, however, is not always made up of noun and verb; it may be without a verb. Now what does this statement “without a verb” mean? Some part of it will have a certain significance by itself. The definition of man, for example, is one sentence through its signifying one thing. This definition does not involve the idea of time; i.e., it is not further analysable. This is the core of Aristotle’s philosophy of the world: what it is to be real cannot be expressed in words. We can only define facts, but cannot ascribe any meaning to them. The *Iliad* is one speech by conjunction of several speeches. This is a meaningful sentence. Still, the other way of the logically impossible (being not further analysable in time), also determines a sentence, for example, a text defining man is a sentence (through signifying one thing).

These issues can only be seen through theatrical culture, i.e., through myths, and *a fortiori* through Tragedy and Comedy in ancient Greek classical theatre, in which language and its logic are used in order to depict facts and reality. The complexity of any linguistic phenomenon enters of necessity the domain of biology. Indeed, Aristotle sees the sensible solely representing truth in the intersection of pathos and poetic reason. We can establish his idea *in concreto*, once we carefully analyse his Poetics, his Rhetoric and his Politics (De Caro 2013, p. 125). This idea, related as it is to modern ideas on the shortcomings of coercive steering (Heidegger & Fink 1979, pp. 12-13) through genetically conditioned language functions, can be traced in Aristotle’s philosophy and his ideas on theatrical culture. His idea of staged myths used in this way stresses the realm of the unknown in which the mechanisms of this function of language lie (Chomsky 1986, pp. 10-11).

Aristotle’s statements hold good in that he clearly wishes us to attempt to reach what is higher: an impasse, plainly. This impasse is shown in Aristotle’s famous definition of tragedy (*Poet.* 1449 b25-30): through incidents arousing pity and fear, catharsis of these emotions is achieved. Catharsis is clearly a biological procedure. The baseness of characters shows this clearly: for example, when they inflict unnecessary suffering. Here we can see that reason is absent. We cannot fall back on the excuse of the frailty of, or lack of, reasoning-power. What might a rationalist say regarding such cases? Aristotle has no answer, probably except that catharsis is not characterized by otherworldly practices, the way Plato believed. There is not any such occult sense in the term “catharsis” in Aristotle; though an “homeopathic” sense of the term can be certainly stressed (De Caro 2013, p. 119 and n. 22).

Awe provided by the fear of the “other”, the “stranger”, hinders us from attempting to attain knowledge and realise political values in the realm of the unknown. This affects policies and industries in modern Europe: Racism and prejudices constitute a barrier, as they affect practices and theories of theatrical culture, and they should be tackled by steps and policies conducted by modern Europe. A remarkable contribution has been made by recent publications and events (Dragičević Šešić 2017, p. 15), for example, a festival, the 50<sup>th</sup> one realised in 2016, under the slogan “On the back of a raging bull”. This clearly relates with present-day turbulences and conflicts, which are destroying Europe “of hope” and its values. Within Europe, on this enraged bull, theatre artists keep formulating their visions of the world, sharing them among each other and creating new frameworks for cultural dialogues and encounters in spite of new frontiers.

Angles and viewpoints, however, are of little importance, since they are provided empirically by the course of time. At least this is what Aristotle’s *Poetics* teach us. Is it, however, possible to realise an ideal plot on stage? This seems most unlikely, as Aristotle himself would agree. It cannot be partially, even subjectively, realised. Can we penetrate the world of sentience (Moutsopoulos 1998, p. 185, nn. 15 ff.), to extend our intellectual grasp into the ideal on stage? There is no clear answer in Aristotle, unfortunately. This is highlighted (*Metaph.*, 982b17 ff.) in Aristotle’s very words “For the more I love solitude the more fond of stories I become”; even “for the more I love of solitude and with a great deal of philosophical insight, the more fond of stories I become”. This shows Aristotle’s distribution of power in a more democratic way than that of Plato.

### *3. The case of Modern Drama: Enhancing Aristotle’s View of entrepreneurial and innovation potential*

The common, public and institutional character of drama must be stressed from an Aristotelian perspective.<sup>15</sup> The development of its potential can be seen in, say, the Apulia Region of Italy, as regards cultural and creative sections. This network is also composed of universities, public and private institutions active in education, research and vocational training, institutions and public companies, trade associations and regional trade unions. What follows as a

<sup>15</sup> Cf., “The Role of Public Policies in Developing Entrepreneurial and Innovation Potential of the Cultural and Creative Sectors”, p. 57.

mission of this cluster is: to create a network with and for cultural and creative industries; to raise awareness of the economic and social value of the sector; to support associates through exchanges of best practice; to provide and share expertise; to provide services for cultural and creative industries; to keep associates updated with information on dedicated calls for tenders, EU programmes, financing instruments, etc.

Governments today also recognise that international engagement related to such networks is often indispensable for the flourishing of small- and medium scale theatre and dance companies. Cultural dialogue is considered to be a decisive factor in good relations between nations.<sup>16</sup> Hence, networking between galleries or theatres in Mexico and Europe could be initiated and coordinated on an EU-wide level in order to strengthen the partnership between institutions and the civil societies in Mexico and Europe.<sup>17</sup>

The Aristotelian “craftsmanship” of time and values must be in the lead here. Certainly, time *in abstracto* cannot be captured purely through the intellect. It is nonetheless the succession of events that substantiates the cause-chain. Angles and viewpoints are not of much importance, since they are provided empirically by the course of time. At least this is what Aristotle’s *Poetics* teach us. This incessant assigning of causes to facts is excellently shown by Michael Marmarinos, a modern neurobiologist, theatre director, founder of the *Theseum Ensemble* theatre company. Marmarinos says that in drama we should not look for one interpretation nor for one central plot. Thus, we see in Faust’s text of Goethe on stage directed by him in Onassis Cultural Centre (15<sup>th</sup> January-9<sup>th</sup> February 2014) an absolutely personal descent into the gloom of human desire. For Marmarinos, the text itself constitutes an attempt, if we understand him correctly. Descent is a feature of the text/attempt, he states, that travels inside ourselves at every crucial moment of human history, i.e., a succession of facts which conditions it. Only when our bodies abandon that attempt will some imperfect answers regarding philosophical anthropology be drawn up in order to smooth our lives. Thus, we are bodies, not minds, and all the above-mentioned baseness concerns not only the mental level but the physical as well.

We do not wish to close this piece on a negative note: Marmarinos adds that our civilization is impure. Bodies are patient. But guilt and bad faith are transferred in eternity through the

<sup>16</sup> Cf., “Engaging the World: Towards Global Cultural Citizenship”, p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> Cf., “Engaging the World: Towards Global Cultural Citizenship”, p. 67.

body. Reason, which is inseparable from body and breath, in the end will obey body, in order to make a better world: still, reason alone, he adds, *can change nothing*. Is this the end of fragility and weakness of the body, as Marmarinos calls it? This is wildly optimistic. Is it, though, possible to make a better world by realising an ideal plot on stage? This question indeed interested Aristotle. Partially, even subjectively, an ideal plot cannot be created. We must always bear in mind that our bodies betray us and our strivings, in a treacherous manner, due to non-identifiable factors. Can we penetrate the world of sentience, as Marmarinos wishes, in the above mentioned text/document, to extend our armament into the ideal on stage? There is no clear answer in Aristotle, unfortunately (*Pol.* 1254 a29-35).

However, Euripides, in Aristotle's eyes, contributes most of all the tragic poets to stressing the fatally unsuccessful (Giouli 2012a, p. 15 and n. 1) attempts towards attaining the good. His plays demonstrate what men are in their purely tragic nature (*Poet.* 1453a17-30): agents or sufferers, Aristotle states, all involved in some deed of horror. Euripides, he adds, taking this line in his tragedies and giving many of them an unhappy ending has been wrongly blamed by his critics. This *is*, Aristotle avers, the right line to take. Certainly, the best proof for this, as demonstrated by Aristotle, regards the concrete fact, i.e., the conditions outside which every attempt for realising the values of tragedy is meaningless. Hence, properly worked out plays are considered the most truly tragic on the stage and in the public performances. Euripides, he adds, however faulty his execution in every other point may be, is to be considered by far the most tragic of the dramatists. Euripides' keen interest in keeping to this line of thought is also demonstrated in his attempt to prevent the Chorus from taking the usual type of share in the action of the drama in the way it does in the works of Sophocles. The Chorus is simply the most important actor or tragic hero in Euripides. Aristotle's discussion of Euripides as a dramatist stresses his dramatic power (*Poet.* 1456a25-27).

Our ways of experiencing the corresponding phenomena involve Aristotle's "craftsmanship" model of the world. And this implies the essential spatial structures of the theatrical art and improvisation with and through our spatial environment with a focus (De Caro 2020a) on new digital technologies. This focal point is stressed as regards the European Council Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture (2019-2022), thus stressing the necessity of digitalisation for audience development.

## *Concluding Remarks: Policies and Cultural Industries*

The examples below showcase the enhancement of Aristotle's view of entrepreneurial and innovational potential as regards modern Europe. Member States are called on to support cooperation between schools, with a view to exchanging the most effective methods and practices as regards stimulating creativity and innovation, suggest thus helping people to value creative industries products and services.<sup>18</sup>

What must be noted at this point, as it is also highlighted by various European stakeholders, implies the necessity to address the gap between the needs of the industry and the availability of highly skilled workforce at EU level.<sup>19</sup> Mention is made, in a report<sup>20</sup> of how to combat decreased funding for cultural policy. Another focal point as regards funding is referred to by the European Commission.<sup>21</sup> As announced in the New European Agenda for Culture, and symmetrically to the mobility scheme for artists and culture professionals, this action aims to facilitate cross-border circulation of performing arts performances (theatre plays, dance productions, circus, street art etc. excluding music). All issues raised in the realm of CCIs are of value also for the visual arts (De Caro, 2020b). Needless to add that this is also true as regards the policies that favour the digitalisation of culture.

As has been seen, the direction being taken by numerous cultural groups both in Europe and beyond is following a line taken in Ancient Greece by Aristotle. While Plato was pessimistic about the social, public and institutional character of the theatre, Aristotle's rationalism stresses how little can be done if we ignore the importance of theatre as an institution, a lesson which modern Europe is learning fast and putting into practice in a variety of innovative and forward-looking ways. Theatrical art is ceasing to be merely a necessary incantatory procedure that aims to console us for the evils of our time and is finally becoming a necessary cognitive and didactic process.

<sup>18</sup> Cf., *Report on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries*, pp.15-16.

<sup>19</sup> Cf., *Report on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries*, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> Cf., *ReShaping Cultural Policies* (2018), p.121.

<sup>21</sup> Cf., "European Commission 2020 annual work programme for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme", p.138.

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