

Affective Entanglements: Shifting Attitudes Toward the Ancient Greek Body

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This work is rooted in my understanding that the ancient Greek world's conceptions of Nature and natures-in-the-world are fundamentally affective and entangled. In the chapter entitled "Somatophobia: Anxieties of Subjection," I study the Homeric uses of the word *sōma*, arguing that, as opposed to the dominant belief that it purely means "corpse," it displays a fear of becoming objected to culturally inadmissible forms of subjection. Moving away from the reading of *sōma* as simply a matter of death, I make the claim that *sōma*'s inertness is a pivotal notion in the (re)casting of it as irrecoverable for social life.¹ I contend that the *sōma* may be understood as a material form that has been stripped of its instrumentality (i.e., its ability to be an active agent) and, thereafter, exposed to improper and culturally inadmissible forms of subjection and consumption.

Concluding that this *sōma* is an epistemic and conceptual object, in chapter two, "Holistic Networks of Care, Perception, and Community," I argue that this medicalized *sōma* is the form that comes to be articulated as the subject of anthropologically driven care that emerges out of the *peri phūseōs historia* ("inquiry into nature") tradition and the emergence of medicine as a *tékhnē* ("technical craft") with significant resonances philosophical and enviro-medical discourses. I understand this body, one deeply porous and liable to "affection" (*páthē*), to be a response particularly to the latter, and I postulate that the innovatively ethnographic tinge of the Hippocratic Corpus' *On Airs, Waters, Places* (c. fifth-century B.C.E.) reveals the exegetical

¹ I heartily thank Brooke Holmes for this phrasing to articulate the *Wortfeld* of Homeric *sōma*.

nature of medicine as implicit in the explication and perpetuation of communities that share *nomoi* (“customs”), a particular look, a *glôssa* (“language”), and geographic space. Nonetheless, this type of deeply shared community building abounds, too, in the creation of firm boundaries.

I attend to this dichotomy in the third chapter, “*Sunalgeîn: Community, Kátharsis, and Exclusion*,” wherein I study the ability of unique ability of tragedy, in its provocations of *éleos* (“pity”) and *phóbos* (“fear”), to both extend and withhold ties of empathy within and beyond a proscribed group, appealing to Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* (c. 463 B.C.E.) as my case-study.

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Preface

This thesis, though bearing my name, is the work of many more hands and hearts. They—who have poured into me their time and saintly patience, lent me their ears and expertise, and humored me when blithe and edified me when downhearted—are the co-creators of the world that permitted “Affective Entanglements” to exist as it does, grow as it did, and nurture me, too, along that journey. I am fortunate *sine fine* for their faith and devotion to this project.

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but I would like to particularly highlight Professor Marcie Persyn’s “Intermediate Latin: Verse” course, which brought me back into Classics; Professor Gabby Yearwood’s “Introduction to Cultural Anthropology”; Professor Lee’s “Latin Prose Composition” and “Antiquity Now” seminars; Professor Maggie Beeler’s “Marginality in the Ancient Greek World”; Professor Wein’s “Advanced Readings in Ancient Greek Epic”; Professor Christian Wildberg’s “Advanced Readings in Latin Philosophy”; Professor Wein and Wildberg’s “Pre-Platonic Philosophy” seminar; Professor Joy Priest’s “Black Surrealism.”

I thank, too, the beautiful people who I’ve met on my journeys, from Athens to Amsterdam and Princeton to Pittsburgh, who showed me the multitude of expressions that friendship and care—the choice of sharing life (*suzên*)—may take the form of. These people have increased my expanse for joy, what I thought possible to ask, and they have taught me that the world we want is the one we fashion mutually. This thesis is, ultimately, about humanity in its numberless facets and reflects all that I have come to know of it from my companions.

Lastly, but never least, I want to thank my mother—from her strong encouragement of my reluctant 14-year-old-self to take Latin to her faith in me to pursue my passions—whose *love has obtained for me both the brightness and beauty of the sun* (μοι τὸ λάμπρον ἔρωσ ἀελίω καὶ τὸ κάλον λέλογγε). I am all that I am, never more and never less, because of her.

I dedicate this thesis to her, who first put my hand into her own.

INTRODUCTION

YOU MAY HAVE THE BODY

In an influential essay from 1982,² Elizabeth V. Spelman positions the soul/body or mind/body distinction as a fundamental notion within the history of Western philosophy and gender dynamics. Such a differentiation—mediated by a belief that canonical philosophers’ opinions about women are “asystematic” (i.e., they come from the subjectivity of the *heart*), while their philosophizing *qua* philosophy is of the objective *mind*—underlies that tradition’s enduring prejudice against the body. Indeed, it is women whose knowledge is frequently seen as embodied and sensual, connected to nature and the earth, and whose very beings are often synonymized with physiological processes such as menstruation and parturition.³ Man, ultimately, is mind and sublimity, while woman is body and mundanity. “[F]eminist theorists,” Spelman argues,

frequently have wanted to reject the kinds of descriptions of woman’s nature found in Plato and other philosophers, and yet at the same time have in their own theorizing continued to accept uncritically other aspects of the tradition that informs those ideas about “woman’s nature.”⁴

² Spelman, Elizabeth V. “Woman as Body: Ancient and Contemporary Views.” *Feminist Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1982, pp. 109–31.

³ This is not a modern notion; throughout history, there has been an association with women and Earth as providers of life and sustenance. From the perspective of historical and modern linguistics, for example, the word for “nature” in many languages is grammatically feminine (e.g., *die Natur* (German), *la natura* (Spanish), *la nature* (French), etc.). Indeed, the abundance of feminine nouns for “nature” even leads English, a natural gender language, to often personify inanimate “nature” with feminine pronouns. Adding the valence of religion, mother-earth goddesses in the Proto-Indo-European sphere (from the roots **Dʰéǵʰōm* or **Pl̥th₂éwih₂*) have been described as maternal, agrarian, and fecund in aspect (e.g., Demeter and Persephone). Beyond the PIE-sphere, as in Ancient Egyptian religion, dynamics are reversed; goddesses such as Nut and Hathor are the celestial counterparts to terrestrial gods such as Osiris and Geb.

⁴ Spelman 1982, pp. 110-11.

It is worthwhile to note that it is only Plato who is named here. For it is Plato who stands as the foremost representative of the somatophobic, mind-body dualism tradition that has cast its long shadow over Western philosophy for more than two millennia.⁵ In such a dialectic, we are to think of the body *vis-à-vis* the soul as a tomb,⁶ a grave or a prison,⁷ or as rocks and barnacles weighing it down.⁸ Plato goes so far as to liken the lowest (i.e., the most corporeal) part of the soul to a collection of animals.⁹ The body, with its misleading senses, keeps us from genuine *epistēmē*, puts us in thrall to a world of materiality far removed from the world of reality,¹⁰ and it

⁵ While our epigraph would seem to imply that Empedocles is an even earlier exponent of somatophobia, other fragments of his, which we will touch upon later, espouse much more positive views about the body and its various capacities (for *aisthēsis*, *phrónēsis*, etc.). Likewise, note should be taken that this an “R” fragment (i.e., that which exists in the history of the reception of Empedocles’ doctrine), not a direct attestation *per se* or testimonial of his thought (i.e., a “D” fragment).

⁶ Plato, *Gorgias* 493a: ἤδη γάρ του ἔγωγε καὶ ἤκουσα τῶν σοφῶν ὡς νῦν ἡμεῖς τέθναμεν καὶ τὸ μὲν σῶμά ἐστιν ἡμῖν σῆμα. One of the *sophōn* might have been Philolaus of Croton, a Pythagorean contemporary of Socrates, who, according to Clement of Alexandria (D30), said that ancient theologians and seers thought that the “soul is yoked with the body, just as it is buried in it as in a tomb” (ἀ ψυχὰ τῷ σώματι συνέζευκται καὶ καθάπερ ἐν σήματι τούτῳ τέθασται). For a survey of Philolaus’ thought, see Huffman 1993.

⁷ Plato, *Cratylus* 400c: δοκοῦσι μέντοι μοι μάλιστα θέσθαι οἱ ἀμφὶ Ὀρφέα τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα, ὡς δίκην διδούσης τῆς ψυχῆς ὧν δὴ ἐνεκα δίδωσιν, τοῦτον δὲ περίβολον ἔχειν, ἵνα σώζηται, δεσμοτηρίου εἰκόνα: εἶναι οὖν τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦτο, ὡσπερ αὐτὸ ὀνομάζεται, ἕως ἂν ἐκτεῖσθαι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα, τὸ ‘σῶμα,’ καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖν παράγειν οὐδ’ ἐν γράμματι.

⁸ Plato, *Republic* 611e-612a: εἰς τὴν φιλοσοφίαν αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐννοεῖν ὧν ἀπτεται καὶ οἶον ἐφίεται ὀμιλιῶν, ὡς συγγενῆς οὕσα τῷ τε θείῳ καὶ ἀθανάτῳ καὶ τῷ ἀεὶ ὄντι, καὶ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο τῷ τοιούτῳ πᾶσα ἐπισπομένη καὶ ὑπὸ ταύτης τῆς ὀρμῆς ἐκκομισθεῖσα ἐκ τοῦ πόντου ἐν ᾧ νῦν ἐστίν, καὶ περικρουσθεῖσα πέτρας τε καὶ ὄστρεα ἃ νῦν αὐτῆ, ἅτε γῆν ἐστιωμένην, γηερὰ καὶ πετρώδη πολλὰ καὶ ἄγρια περιπέφυκεν ὑπὸ τῶν εὐδαιμόνων λεγομένων ἐστιάσεων.

⁹ Plato, *Republic* 590c: ἢ δι’ ἄλλο τι φήσομεν ἢ ὅταν τις ἀσθενὲς φύσει ἔχη τὸ τοῦ βελτίστου εἶδος, ὥστε μὴ ἂν δύνασθαι ἄρχειν τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ θρεμμάτων, ἀλλὰ θεραπεύειν ἐκεῖνα, καὶ τὰ θωπεύματα αὐτῶν μόνον δύνηται μανθάνειν;

¹⁰ Schiebinger 1993 investigates the gendered and (socio-)political history of mammalian onomastics (i.e., Why did Linnaeus choose the term *Mammalia* for animals of that class, when terms such as *Pilosia*, *Aurecaviga*, *Lactentia*, or *Sugentia* could have worked just as well?). The larger stakes of Schiebinger’s excursus are the destabilization of the notion that the natural sciences are value neutral; rather, like the humanities and social sciences, they are a means of epistemic inquiry that emerge from an intricate complex of culturally and chronologically contingent contexts. Indeed, Linnaeus is merely an ideal case study of the ways in which scientific breakthroughs, particularly those in the life sciences, are never purely objective and scientific, but ones colored, consciously and not, by factors such as education and religious beliefs (likewise, the want of them), and a particular *Zeitgeist*—indeed, what amounts to a *Weltanschauung*. At any rate, with the terms *Mammalia* and *Homo sapiens* emerging in a pas-de-deux in the same volume of *Systema Naturae* (10th, 1758/59), Schiebinger argues that Linnaeus’ concatenation of an embodied, viviparous characteristic (lactating mammae), one that he genders as female, ties women to ‘lesser’ animals. On the other hand, the human male is synonymous with rationality (*sapiens*, *rationalis*), the primary characteristic that differentiates humans from other animals. Historically, Schiebinger argues, this was tied to the political rhetoric of the Enlightenment, which sought to circumscribe the role and power of women to the domestic sphere. Indeed, this took the shape of anti-wet nursing sentiments, fueled variously by classism, racism/eugenics/physiognomy, and the takeover of gynecology and obstetrics by male physicians, to encourage mothers to follow the “animal instinct” to

beguiles us away from the life to be lead virtuously.¹¹ It is by means of the soul—if at all—that we may have the aforementioned knowledge, contact with reality, and virtuous life. Indeed, only the soul can truly know, for only it is able to transcend the world of appearances and ascend to the world of the Forms. As Socrates says of his life’s work:

οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πράττων ἐγὼ περιέρχομαι ἢ πείθων ὑμῶν καὶ νεωτέρους καὶ
πρεσβυτέρους μήτε σωμάτων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι μήτε χρημάτων πρότερον μηδὲ οὕτω σφόδρα
ὡς τῆς ψυχῆς ὅπως ὡς ἀρίστη ἔσται.

Plato, *Apology* 30a-b

For I go about doing nothing other than prevailing upon you all [Athenians], both young and old, to take care of neither your bodies nor your property as your first and, in this way, excessive priority, but to cultivate the highest welfare of the soul.

We most certainly can read this quote alongside Spelman’s earlier one about the rejection by “feminist theorists” of Platonic beliefs about women’s natures, especially in light of mainstream

breastfeed their own children, one that was allegedly “consonant to the laws of nature” that they, but not men, share in. Nonetheless, there are fabulous tales of males of given species producing milk (cf. Aristotle, *Historia animalium* 522a; Buffon, *Histoire naturelle* 2, p. 543; Hunter, *Essays and Observations on Natural History*, pp. 238-39), but these were widely held by naturalists to be spurious. Even so, stories of *human* men breastfeeding infants was a popular theme. In the nineteenth century, travelers claimed that Brazilian men nurse all infants (“Mammifères,” *Dictionnaire classique d’histoire naturelle* 10, p. 105). Travelers to eastern Ethiopia claimed that God had providentially given the men there “breasts of milk as amply supplied as those of the women.” In Portugal, a man fifty years old was said to have suckled two orphans of a female relation, as Joano dos Santos relates in “History of Eastern Ethiopia,” in John Pinkerton’s edition *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World* (1808). Likewise, Pliny the Elder, citing Calliphanes and Aristotle, speaks of a group of androgynous people living in Africa who have the left breast of a woman and the right breast of a man (*Naturalis Historia* 7.2, 14-17). On ancient Africa/Libya as a space abounding in *thaumata* in Latin literature, cf. Giusti 2024 (forthcoming).

¹¹ Alexander Nehamas’ chapter in *Presocratic Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Alexander Mourelatos* (Ashgate, 2002) touches upon earlier antecedents of a differentiation between the material world and reality in the philosophical systems of Parmenides and Heraclitus. Indeed, in Nehamas’ estimation, they are the first, after Xenophanes—who draws on archaic poetry’s *tópos* of knowledge versus ignorance (cf. Pindar, *Olympian Ode* 2.86-8 for the knowing poet versus the ignorant rival; Homer, *Iliad* 2.485-493 and Pindar, *Paeon* [52f] 6.54-61 for the knowing Muse versus the subject whom she inspires; Theognis, 141-2 for gods versus humans)—sets a limit on human knowledge (cf. D53, D49, D51, D50), to promote philosophy as the discourse capable of bridging the gap between human knowledge (i.e., that which pertains to the world of appearances) and, in Nehamas’ words, “a new realm... [c]ompletely distinct from the world that surrounds us and which people believe exhausts what there is, that realm is, in a word, reality” (p. 46). For Parmenides’ goddess who tells the *koûros* ‘all’ that there is to know, cf. D4.28-32, D6, and D8.50-2. Similarly, Heraclitus believes that he has complete possession of the *lógos* (D1, D110, R86, D2) and the knowledge represented by *tò sóphron* (D43). Crucial to note is the possibility present in Xenophanes’ fragments that humans may come to know more/better; this potentiality, however, seems to be entirely absent for Parmenides’ ‘mortals’ and Heraclitus’ ‘many,’ who are blinded by the seeming world’s *dóxa*.

Feminist theory’s disavowal of the biological and the pharmaceutical.¹² Likewise, we could perhaps focalize such a turn around the *longue durée* entanglement of women, the cultivation of physical pulchritude, value, and Plato’s conception of somatophobic beauty as one of the “aspects of the tradition” that feminist thinkers, theretofore, have held fast to.¹³

Spelman’s essay, in its Platonic rooting of the bifurcation of the mind from the soul, opens us up to the discursive world of Greco-Roman antiquity and the antecedents that have come, consciously and unconsciously, to canonize Western gender dynamics, rendering them so outsized as to become natural, if not nearly providential. This bifurcation is one that we also see along the lines of ancient Greek medicine and philosophy, in which many in the former were very keen to split what was, in early Greek thought, known as the *περὶ φύσεως ἱστορία* (“inquiry into nature”) into two separate epistemic fields. The former was concerned with embodied, empirical matters (the care of the body), whereas the latter was concerned with the more abstract (cares that we might see as more metaphysical and ontological; i.e., of the soul). I see this

¹² In *Gut Feminism* (Duke, 2015), Elizabeth A. Wilson exhorts this strand of feminism to move away from antibiological stances; rather, citing research on anti-depressants, placebos, transference, phantasy, disordered eating, and suicidality, she argues that they should incorporate pharmaceutical data into their theorization. Indeed, biology seems to have become a scene of alterity within such feminist discourses. I argue that the obviation of the biological is an overcorrection for Platonic beliefs about women’s natures and feck(s) (i.e., (un)intentionality; cf. Bosak-Schroeder 2020 (esp. section three “Female Feck” in Part One)), one which falls into sentiments of somatophobia and views of the body as both capable of reducibility and as a sight liable to testimonial injustice (cf. Fricker 2007, esp. chapter one) and epistemicide. Naturally, alterized feminisms (esp. Black), which are typically raced, classed, and gendered along specific rather than generic lines, are more attuned to (racialized) embodiment and subjectivity. Cf. Threadcraft 2015 on embodiment in feminist theory. My thanks to Carla Nappi for suggesting Wilson’s work to me.

¹³ *Physical* beauty, as we are told in the *Symposium* (211a) is not *real* beauty, which does not “share in the form of a face, or of hands, or of anything that is of the body” (τὸ καλὸν οἷον πρόσωπόν τι οὐδὲ χεῖρες οὐδὲ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ὧν σῶμα μετέχει). Rather, ‘real beauty’ (i.e., its *eidōs*) is “everlasting and neither comes to be nor passes away, neither increases nor decreases; therefore, it is not beautiful, on one hand, and ugly on the other; nor is it so at one time, and not so at another time; nor is it beautiful in one respect, and ugly in another respect; nor, in one place, is it beautiful and, in another, is it ugly, so as to be beautiful to some, but ugly to others (ἀεὶ ὃν καὶ οὔτε γιγνώμενον οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον, οὔτε ἀξανάμενον οὔτε φθίνον, ἔπειτα οὐ τῆ μὲν καλόν, τῆ δ’ αἰσχρόν, οὐδὲ τοτὲ μὲν, τοτὲ δὲ οὔ, οὐδὲ πρὸς μὲν τὸ καλόν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ αἰσχρόν, οὐδ’ ἔνθα μὲν καλόν, ἔνθα δὲ αἰσχρόν, ὡς τισὶ μὲν ὃν καλόν, τισὶ δὲ αἰσχρόν).

Dichotomy as one that must be read side alongside questions and the specter of gender.¹⁴ For Aristotle’s metaphysics is, fundamentally, a degradation and devaluation of matter, which I read as being deeply implicated with his degradation of the feminine. For one example, I turn to his *Generation of Animals*, in which he states that human women are “like infertile (ἄγονον) males” (728a, 17), that a female is “like a male with disabilities (πεπηρωμένον)” (737a, 28), that female nature needs to be considered “like a natural mutilation (ἀναπηρία φυσική)” (775a, 15-16), and that the nature of human women is “nearly resembling (παραπλησία) that of children” (784a, 5). Hence, we see that, even at the level of heredity and reproduction, Aristotle’s metaphysics is violently misogynistic.

Nonetheless, thinking beyond Aristotle, I am moved by consideration of the ancient world as one that is fundamentally posthuman and entangled, a fascination that takes me into the next section, which considers Anaxagoras’ own metaphysical claims.

EVERYTHING-IN-EVERYTHING

καὶ ὅτε δὴ ἴσαι μοῖραὶ εἰσι τοῦ τε μεγάλου καὶ τοῦ μικροῦ πλῆθος, καὶ οὕτως ἂν εἴη ἐν παντὶ πάντα· οὐδὲ χωρὶς ἔστιν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ πάντα παντὸς μοῖραν μετέχει· ὅτε δὲ τοῦλάχιστον μὴ ἔστιν εἶναι, οὐκ ἂν δύναίτο χωρισθῆναι, οὐδ’ ἂν ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῦ γενέσθαι, ἀλλ’ ὅπωςπερ ἀρχὴν εἶναι καὶ νῦν πάντα ὁμοῦ. Ἐν πᾶσι δὲ πολλὰ ἔνεστι καὶ τῶν ἀποκρινομένων ἴσα πλῆθος ἐν τοῖς μείζουσι τε καὶ ἐλάσσοσι.

D26, Simplicius, *In Physicorum*, pp. 164.26-165.1

And since the portions of both large and small are equal in amount (πλῆθος),¹⁵ all things, in this way, would also be in everything; it is not possible for a thing to exist separately, but all things share in a portion of everything; since it is not possible for a smallest to

¹⁴ Bibliography here is substantial, but King 1998, Hanson 1992, and Dean-Jones 1992 and 1994 are foundational. Brill 2013 is also very invested in this line of inquiry. I sincerely thank Brooke Holmes for these references.

¹⁵ With its dynamic semantic range, providing an adequate translation of Anaxagorean πλῆθος in English is difficult. For a survey of why, and the different approaches scholars have taken, see Sider 1981, p. 71 and Curd 2007, p. 34. I take after both Curd’s translation and reasoning, in that Anaxagoras seems to variously use πλῆθος as either “number” or “amount” (D9) and “extent” (D10). Hence, a specific translation will depend upon context.

Exist, it would not be able to have been separated, nor to ever have come into being, but, even as at the beginning, many things are together even now. Indeed, amidst all things there is much inside that is also being separated off, equal in amount, both amidst the greater and the smaller portions.

Anaxagoras' metaphysics is fundamentally Eleatic at heart. Nothing comes-to-be and nothing passes-away; indeed, nothing undergoes changes or transformations in quality. When a hot liquid cools, for example, its hotness does not pass-away, and the quality of coolness does not come-to-be in its place. Rather, each of these qualities is within the other and has been since the beginning (*arkhēn*). Indeed, Anaxagoras' "Everything-in-Everything" principle asserts that all things that exist are a mixture of omnipresent (perhaps fluid)¹⁶ ingredients in a shared space, and, from this, the rotation (*perikhōrēsis*) initiated by *nóus* may separate off (*apokrínein*) an ingredient, making it manifest (*éndēlos*) as a separate phenomenon,¹⁷ which may be falsely perceived as something "new" having come-into-being.¹⁸ This is a difficult theory to understand;

¹⁶ Curd 2019; Marmodoro 2015 and 2017 theorizes that Anaxagoras' metaphysical ingredients are properties—or, as the ancients called them, opposites—that are "causal powers" of a distinctive kind suited to the ontology of his metaphysics. Curd 2007 (ch. 3, "Everything in Everything") provides a thorough overview of the literature pertaining to the "Particulate" and the "Proportionate" interpretations of Anaxagoras' claim that the opposites are unlimitedly small (nonetheless, there is no smallest among them), which has challenged those essaying the issue since antiquity.

¹⁷ D6, Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* 7.140: ὄψις τῶν ἀδύλων τὰ φαινόμενα. – ("Things which appear: sight of invisible things"). D9 expands our understanding of this neighboring fragment: at the time when things were either large or small in infinite amounts (ἄπειρα), nothing was visible (ἐνδηλος)—or, rather, easily distinguishable (εὐδηλος; this is a manuscript reading proposed by Diels. Laks 2006, p. 234, notes that Anaxagoras seems to have adopted the common view (cf. Diogenes D38, Theophrastus, *Sens.* 40) that sight is the result of reflection (ἐμφασίς) in the pupil: D72, Theophr. *Sens.* 27) as an instance of this principle. Hence, with things dissociated, they can be perceived and understood phenomenologically. Interestingly, Torrijos Castrillejo 2021 raises the specter of Philo's variant (*De vita Mosis* 1.280: πίστις τῶν ἀδύλων τὰ ἐμφανῆ. – "Visible things: trust in invisible things"), which is not well-accounted for in the literature of the Pre-Platonics. Philo's text seems to more directly explain that, to Anaxagoras, ἐμφανῆ and φαινόμενα are not truly what is (i.e., the fundamental opposites which are infinite and invisible), but, rather, how we perceive and understand them.

¹⁸ D15, Simplicius, *In Phys.*, p. 163.20-24: τὸ δὲ γίνεσθαι καὶ ἀπόλλυσθαι οὐκ ὀρθῶς νομίζουσιν οἱ Ἕλληνες· οὐδὲν γὰρ χρῆμα γίνεται οὐδὲ ἀπόλλυται, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ ἐόντων χρημάτων συμμίσγεται τε καὶ διακρίνεται. Καὶ οὕτως ἂν ὀρθῶς καλοῖεν τὸ τε γίνεσθαι συμμίσγεσθαι καὶ τὸ ἀπόλλυσθαι διακρίνεσθαι. – ("The Greeks do not use "coming-to-be" and "passing-away" correctly; for a thing neither comes to be nor passes away, but, because of things existing, there is both mixture and dissociation. And, in this manner, they would have to call "coming-to-be" "mixing" and "passing-away" "dissociating"). An additional bone of contention is the translation of χρῆμα, where, across its twelve occurrences in Anaxagoras' fragments, it seems to mean "thing" in the ordinary sense in four of those, and, in the remaining eight, it seems to refer to those basic, homoeomerous entities that provide a foundation for his metaphysics (e.g., D9 implies this sense). Our passage here (D15), however, seems to have both senses. As such,

hence, the various overtures of interpretation.¹⁹ And, indeed, such abstruse metaphysics is not the focus of this work. Rather, I have opened with Anaxagoras' cosmology because it is inspiring to me.

The doctrine that everything enjoys a share of (*metékhein*) everything, that all things were, are, and will be together, and that everything is equal in amount is, in my estimation, an implicit forerunner to the emergence of the concept of Greco-Roman sympathy, which, as Brooke Holmes notes, does not have the sense of “affective intersubjectivity” that sympathy has today (i.e., I share in your emotions and the experience of them). Rather, from the fourth-century B.C.E. on, disparate literary genres seeking to make an account of the natural world speak of a *sumpátheia* pervading it, shuttling from the most basic forms of life (vegetality) and the sympathetic natures within and between bodies to celestial forms.²⁰ Sympathy gives the authors of such texts the opportunity to expound their theories about *how* and *why* the world is, providing the foundations for an ecological economy of Nature that abounds in both distinguishment and universalization. Life is poecilious: it is happening to everyone, all the time, and everywhere. Nonetheless, human participation with(in) the world is entwined (*sumplekēs*), mutually influential (*sumpathēs*), and intimate (*sunēthēs*). The world as a sympathetic, vital organism renders us inextricable from each other's lives, the toils of beasts of burden, the water which runs over stones, the sprouting of a blade of grass, and the position of the heavenly bodies at one's birth.²¹

whether we understand neuter plural substantives such as πάντα and πολλά to bear the ontological weight of ‘thingness’ within themselves or χρῆμα to be a special, technical distinction for entities in Anaxagoras (cf. Curd 1998), the word's multivalent activations make it resistant to consensus. On homoeomereity in Anaxagoras, see Sisko 2009.

¹⁹ Cf. Matthews 2002 and 2005; Sisko 2005.

²⁰ Holmes 2019b, p. 239.

²¹ For a general overview of the history and philosophy of the concept of sympathy, Schliesser 2015's edited volume is helpful. Particularly, for a corporeal (i.e., Stoic) account of sympathy, chapters one (Brouwer on Stoic sympathy)

Thus, I will now turn to the stakes of this work, which I root in my understanding that the ancient Greek world's conception of nature and natures are fundamentally affective and entangled. In the chapter entitled "Somatophobia: Anxieties of Subjection," I study the Homeric uses of the word *sōma*, arguing that, as opposed to the dominant belief that it purely means "corpse," it anticipates and displays a fear of becoming objected to culturally inadmissible forms of subjection. Moving away from the stakes of authors who believe that *sōma* is simply a matter of death, I make the claim that *sōma*'s inertness is a pivotal notion in the (re)casting of it as irrecoverable for social life.²² Therein, I contend that *sōma* may be understood as a material form that has been stripped of its instrumentality (i.e., its ability to be an active agent) and, thereafter, exposed to improper and culturally inadmissible forms of subjection and consumption.

Concluding that this *sōma* is an epistemic and conceptual object, in chapter two, entitled "Holistic Networks of Care, Perception, and Community," I argue that this medicalized *sōma* is the form that comes to be articulated as the subject of anthropologically-driven care that emerges out of the "inquiry into nature" and the emergence of medicine as a *tékhnē* (technical craft) with significant resonances with philosophical and enviro-medical discourses. I understand this body, one deeply porous and liable to affection (*páthē*), to be a response particularly to the latter, and I postulate that the innovatively ethnographic tinge of the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places* reveals the nature of medical discourse as implicit in the explication and perpetuation of communities that share *nomoi*, a particular look, a language, and geographic space. Nonetheless, this type of deeply shared community building abounds, too, in the creation of firm boundaries. I attempt to square this dichotomy in the third chapter "*Sunalgeîn: Community, Kátharsis, and*

and three (Holmes on Galen's medical sympathy) are relevant. Beyond this volume, Holmes is prolific with respect to the concept of sympathy.

²² I heartily thank Brooke Holmes for this phrasing to articulate the *Wortfeld* of Homeric *sōma*.

Exclusion,” wherein I study the unique ability of tragedy to both extend and withhold ties of empathy within and beyond a proscribed group.

I. CHAPTER ONE

Somatophobia: Anxieties of Subjection

ὅταν δὲ ἐμαυτὸν ἴδω, φοβοῦμαι τὸ σῶμα καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ὅπως αὐτὸ καλέσω, ἄνθρωπον ἢ κύνα ἢ λύκον ἢ ταῦρον ἢ ὄρνιν ἢ ὄφιν ἢ δράκοντα ἢ χίμαιραν· εἰς πάντα γὰρ τὰ θηρία ὑπὸ τῶν φιλοσοφούντων μεταβάλλομαι, χερσαῖα ἔνυδρα πτηνὰ πολύμορφα ἄγρια τιθασσὰ ἄφωνα εὐφωνα ἄλογα λογικά· νήχομαι ἵπταμαι ἔρπω θέω καθίζω. ἔτι δὲ ὁ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ θάμνον με ποιεῖ.

Empedocles R87 (Hermias, *Irrisio gentilium philosophorum* 4)

Whenever I look at myself, I fear my body, and I do not know how I will describe it: human, dog, wolf, bull, bird, snake, dragon, or chimera. For I am changed by the philosophers into all sorts of beasts—those on dry land, living in water, winged, having many forms, wild, tame, mute, musical, irrational, rational. I swim, I fly, I walk, I run, I make to sit down. And Empedocles yet makes me into a bush, too.

mangō and *σωματέμπορος**

It can be of little surprise that the paradigmatic transformations of the Roman Republic, principally driven by military conquests in the Mediterranean that were unparalleled in extent, consisted of recourse to forced labor on an extraordinary scale. Likewise, given the constraints on other methods of making available such labor, it is also hardly unexpected that Rome's hegemony across the Mediterranean eventually came to depend upon the wide-scale deployment of chattel slavery throughout the Italian peninsula, the geopolitical core of the imperial state. Indeed, the prevailing dynamic of enslavement, one seemingly founded upon the matter of defaulting upon one's creditor(s),²³ gave way to one in which the very institution of slavery was

* I would like to sincerely thank Noel Lenski for bringing this word to my attention (pers. comm.).

at the core of society, whose political and socioeconomic orders were being entirely reimagined by the cavalcade of successes brought about by the Roman military and, subsequently, maintained by its tributary system. Indeed, by the twilight of the fourth century B.C.E. and the dawn of the third, the Republic's military and political forces had set its system of enslaved labor sprawling across the Mediterranean, ranging from Carthage in the south to as far north as Latium and Etruria—a scale theretofore unseen.²⁴ As Orlando Patterson has argued, the legal doctrine of absolute property developed *in tandem* with the growth of slavery, whereby its condition “was transformed into a condition of powers *in rem*... the slave was above all a *res*, *the only human res*.”²⁵

Thus, if understanding the expansion of chattel slavery throughout the Mediterranean as a vicissitude of war, then the consistency of the demand fabricated by both the system's sustained and extensive use is an indubitable aspect of its ability to transform into an industry, one based off the traffic in objectified humans. After 200 B.C.E., for example, the eastern Mediterranean degenerated into upheaval, wherein pirates and other seaborne entrepreneurs became the principal channels for the supply of humans to large island depots like that on Delos.²⁶ As a

²³ A notion of private property was vital to the advent of this manifestation of enslavement, and the most archaic written law in Rome, recorded in the residua of the Twelve Tables, even then accounted for it. As seen in the early, (semi-)mythic stories of Rome (e.g., in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*, Lucretia and the enslaved women of her household), slavery of some form is a given. Nonetheless, these same sources, and others, imply that debt was the more prominent tool of aristocratic groups to effect control over the means and conditions of labor of the masses. As a result, to meet their labor productivity goals, the wealthy subjected nominally free persons of the lower classes to some kind of debt bondage, or *nexum*. The status of persons who were either bound in *nexum* or already *addicti* (enslaved debtors), regardless of the hermeneutic difficulty in ascertaining the particulars of their condition and origin, rendered them as essentially enslaved, their bodies becoming instrumentalized and synonymized with their labor, until their debts to their creditor were considered repaid (cf. Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 20.1.42-52, which records the contents of the third of the Twelve Tables). The counterbalancing dispensations—that allowed creditors either “to cut [the debtor's body] into pieces,” *partes secando*, with impunity, or to sell the debtor “across the Tiber” into slavery—illustrate both *nexum*'s violence and an ideology that fixedly identified the enslaved person (even if, ostensibly, a member of a *familia*) as one whose rights have been entirely alienated from them.

²⁴ Cf. Scheidel 2005, pp. 76-8. The number of enslaved persons—between two and four million—imported by the Roman state in the last two centuries B.C.E. is intimately tied, as Scheidel notes, to both direct and tangential activations of imperial power. Cf. also Bradley 2011, who offers additional insights.

²⁵ Cf. Patterson 1982, p. 32.

²⁶ Cf. Maróti 1969; Pohl 1993, pp. 186-90. For more critical accounts, cf. Avidov 1997; de Souza 1999, pp. 97-148.

result, the trade in enslaved people steadily came to be one of the singularly most profitable enterprises (besides assuming ‘government’ contracts) to be found in the Roman Mediterranean.²⁷ By-and-large, the trade was an enlargement of routes and sources that were already well-defined and primarily those located in the Black Sea region with its entrepôts for enslaved people, such as Tanais on the Don river.²⁸ Subsequently, the regional, seaborne sources of enslavement to be found in the Black Sea, with their links to the Mediterranean, remained influential nodes of the trade in enslaved people until the thirteenth-century C.E.²⁹

In a Roman context, the figures themselves who trafficked humans were called *mangones*—a term which denotes those who attempted to give an appearance of greater value, both to persons and to wares, by adorning them—and were widely derided as an ignoble set.³⁰ Indeed, such people seldom remarked upon their industry and avoided allusions to it in personal monuments. Perhaps tellingly, all extant Plautine comedies, while they abound in enslaved characters and the buying and selling of humans, have not a single main character that deals in the trade of enslaved persons.³¹ In a Greek context, a term frequently used to designate the main actors in this unsavory profession is one that directly links them to the persons which they have assumed control over: *sōmatéporos*, or a dealer in bodies. Formed from the yoking of *sōma* (body) and *époros* (merchant), the word *sōmatéporos* leaves no room for uncertainty about the status of the enslaved person. Indeed, its uses provide us with an aperture into views surrounding the enslaved. When discussing pseudo-Dioscorides’ concoction for the removal of

²⁷ Cf. Shaw 2014, p. 189.

²⁸ Cf. Strabo 11.2.3.

²⁹ Cf. Finley 1962; on the abiding continuity of the Black Sea sources for the trade in enslaved people, cf. McCormick 2001, pp. 734-77. Rotman 2009, pp. 59-66, makes the case for the Balkans as the primary source.

³⁰ Cf. Kleberg 1945; indeed, they did not even have the legal footing to call themselves merchants (*mercatores*): cf. *Dig.* 50.16.207: et ob eam rem mangones non mercatores venaliciarios appellari ait [scil., the jurist Mela], et recte – (“and, for this reason, [Mela] says that *mangones* are not called merchants but, with good reason, *venaliciarii* (i.e., those who deal in enslaved people)”).

³¹ Cf. Dumont 1987, p. 350. For a survey of slavery in the Plautine corpus and its broader contexts, cf. Richlin 2017.

tattoos (*stigmata*) in *On Simples* (1.100),³² John G. Fitch explicitly notes that such tattooing was not for self-decoration, but for marking enslaved persons, so that, in the event that they have become fugitives, they may be readily identified as lost ‘property.’³³ Later in the text, when speaking of how to treat sciatica (1.233) and inflamed lungs (2.37.5), the author speaks of applying a pitch-plaster (*drôpax*) frequently used by *sōmatémporoi*. According to Pliny the Elder, this plaster found currency among *mangones* for its ability to obscure the fact that enslaved people were gaunt and malnourished and, as a result, less likely to be bought.³⁴ In the *Oneirocritica*, when discussing the “sculpting of humans” (ἀνθρώπους πλάσσειν, 3.17) in dreams, Artemidorus discusses the metaphorical aspects of a sculpture; that is, ‘molding’ humans in the sense of physical or intellectual formation.³⁵ Among the persons for whom seeing such come to pass in a dream foretells good fortune are *sōmatémporoi*, who “will make a very large profit from their trade.”³⁶ *Kérdos* is the key notion at work here, and such gain is closely tied to the ‘success’ of the enslaved person, which is predicated by both an appearance of salubrity and their (capacity for) productivity; it has nothing to do with their personality and potential to act as an agent. It would seem rather fitting, then, that the people who sell them are not “human-sellers,” but specifically “body-sellers.”

³² A punitive, ostracizing practice, tattooing (*dermatostixia*), according to Herodotus, was learned from the Persians around the sixth-century B.C.E. His writings describe the use of tattoos in a disciplinary sense on captives, the enslaved, criminals, deserters, and prisoners of war. The enslaved, in particular, were tattooed with the letter delta (Δ), the first letter of the word ‘δοῦλός,’ standing for ‘enslaved person.’

³³ Cf. Fitch 2022, p. 55; for studies in tattooing and its implications for enslaved persons in Greco-Roman antiquity, cf. Kamen 2010 and Jones 1987.

³⁴ *Natural History* 24.35: et totis corporibus mangonum maxime cura ad gracilitatem emendandam – (“*Mangones*, in particular, are at pains (scil., to rub terebinth resin) over the entire body to remedy thinness”). Other artifices include ‘chemical’ castration (*NH* 21.170) and depilatory procedures (*NH* 30.41, 32.135).

³⁵ Cf. Plato, *Republic* 377c, wherein Socrates notes the association between the molding function of books on souls and of mothers on bodies.

³⁶ Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica* 3.17: γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐμπορίας πολλὰ καὶ μεγάλα κερδανοῦσιν

Indeed, in this word, *sōma* takes center stage, and it bears within itself a semantic anxiety about the nature of enslavement, wherein the person is stripped of their agency and rendered purely instrumental. This objectified *sōma* seems to have a valence that is distinct from the *sōmata*, whether Platonic or Hippocratic, that are prevalent in scholarly discourses. The question I want to pose, thus, at this juncture is the one of intellectual history. Did *sōma* always have this valence of objectification? Is it a product of the manifold processes that brought about the rapid flood of slavery throughout the Mediterranean during the Hellenistic era? If it is neither one of these, is there anything that the Homeric uses of *sōma*—which, in the *communis opinio*, refer to a corpse—can reveal to us?

In this chapter, I argue that the Homeric instances of *sōma* anticipate and display a fear of becoming objected to culturally inadmissible forms of subjection. Moving away from the stakes of authors who believe that *sōma* is simply a matter of death, I make the claim that *sōma*'s inertness is a pivotal notion in the (re)casting of it as irrecoverable for social life.³⁷ For, thinking with the Platonic description of the *sōma* as an *órganon* (“instrument” or “tool”) of the *psukhē*, which moves itself³⁸—but, crucially, not overlaying any would-be anachronistic mind/body distinction—I contend that *sōma* may be understood as a material form that has been stripped of its instrumentality (i.e., its ability to be an active agent) and, thereafter, exposed to improper and culturally inadmissible forms of subjection and consumption, the most extreme of which—cannibalism—will receive treatment herein. Indeed, in assaying instances of Homeric threats of raw-eating (*omophagia*), Odysseus' unspoken anxieties about eating Circe's feast (*Odyssey* 10.383-7), and the scholiastic tradition of Tydeus eating Melanippus' head, I understand

³⁷ My thanks to Brooke Holmes for this language.

³⁸ Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 245c, 2-4. Cf. Campbell 2022 on the Plato's characterization of the body as the soul's tool, with particular attention paid to its role in perception.

Homeric *sōma*, as a form deprived of agency, to form a continuity between Plato’s mind-body dualism, where the *sōma* is fully mastered by the *psukhē*.

Logique du corps articulaire, or Homeric Physiology

Within the history of scholarship pertaining to the Homeric *sōma*, the (in)famous opening chapter of Bruno Snell’s *The Discovery of the Mind* stands as a *locus classicus* for the argument that Homer had no concept of a unified, living body.³⁹ Instead, *sōma*—a word which, by the time of Plato,⁴⁰ had come to represent a “body” that was firmly subordinate to a governing *psukhē*—referred exclusively to corpses in the eight instances it appears across the Homeric epics.⁴¹

Nonetheless, Snell does contend that the Homeric person *did* have a body like Post-Homeric Greeks, but that it was not, in his estimation, a unitary one. Rather, it was merely the sum of smaller parts, being spoken of in kinesthetic terms such as *guīa* (limbs as part of the body stirred to action by joints)⁴² or *mélea* (limbs in their muscular strength), both of which are only found as *pluralia tantum*. Another one of these words—*chrōs*—refers particularly to the externality of the

³⁹ Snell 1953, p. 5. The name “Homer” and the adjective “Homeric” stand as synecdoches for both the assemblage of rhapsodes performing under that name and the epistemologies that were present in the era in which the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were moving away from purely oral recitation as the means of transmission to also including the scribal as a method of recording. Likewise, we have the epics as our most comprehensive record of the way of thinking of the people it refers to—that is, the Greeks, or the people we label with that moniker, of the Bronze Age into the Archaic period (cf. Nagy 1996, p. 42). Therefore, they are our most ancient collections of their intellectual conceptions of reality, religion, and knowledge—if, indeed, only at the fundamental level of belief and assumption rather than highly articulate, abstract reflection (i.e., what we later conceive of as being within the purview of philosophy). Indeed, the poems seem to represent the accretion of centuries-old ways of thinking, holding within themselves the kernels of later philosophical and scientific traditions.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Phaedo* 62b-65a; *Alcibiades I* 130a, 1-130c, 6; *Timaeus* 33a, 2-6, 42a, 3-42b, 2; *Sophist* 249a, 4-10.

⁴¹ Cf. *Odyssey* 11.53, 12.67, 24.187; *Iliad* 3.23, 7.79, 18.161, 22.342, 23.169. Note, at *Sophist* 227a3, b7, and 265c3, the increased specificity to be found in the phrase ἄψυχα σώματα (“soulless bodies,” i.e., corpses) that engenders a perception of the body as inert, if not useless, without a soul. The idea of the *sōma* alone is no longer sufficient. It is worthwhile to note, however, that Plato and his dialogues also offer us the first uncontested instances of the adjective *asōmatos* (“disembodied, incorporeal”; cf. *Phaedo* 862a, 2-3; *Philebus* 65b, 6-8; *Statesman* 286a, 5; *Sophist* 246b, 8, 247d, 1). Before Plato, Melissus of Samos, a follower of Parmenides of Elea, had elaborated upon Parmenides’ τὸ εἶν (“what-is”) doctrine about what may exist (D8), cryptically saying that τὸ εἶν, on account of its “infinite magnitude” (D4: μέγεθος ἄπειρον), “does not have a body” (D8: σῶμα μὴ ἔχειν). For more on Melissus’ engagement with Parmenides, see Palmer 2004, pp. 22-41. For the question of *sōma* (or lack thereof) in Melissus’ thought, see Holmes 2010, pp. 124-130.

⁴² The root of *guīon*—*gu-* “to bend”—shows that, although the word is often translated as “limbs” in Homer, “joint” is a more precise translation.

body (i.e., the skin) and is, statistically, the most frequently used word among those for ‘body’ in Homer.⁴³ Likewise, *démas*, used only in accusative of respect constructions, and *phuē* signify structure, frame, and stature.⁴⁴ This array of body parts echoes what Snell believes concerning the cadre of terms that denote the cognitive, spiritual, and emotional aspects of the person: *phrēn*, *phrénes*, *thūmós*, *êtor*, *kêr*, *kradiē*, *prapides*, and *nóos*. Equipped with such exempla, it would seem as though the Homeric person seems to be conceived of piecemeal, but, nonetheless, with a sense of oneness from the process of synonymization with one of the various, discrete parts. Tydeus, for instance, is not simply small, but small with respect to his *démas*.⁴⁵

Building upon Snell via the domain of ancient color and pigment studies, Jennifer Stager, in a chapter devoted to “material color” (*khroma*) and language,⁴⁶ specifically expands upon the semantic range of *khros* and its constellations, noting that “ancient Greek nouns for color,”

khroma and *khroia*, are etymologically related to *khroia*’s cognate *khros* (“skin,” but also “surface”). *Khros* itself can refer to the outer layer of the human body, or to the entire body and its limbs, as well as more generally to “color.” Skin, a multilayered organ, possesses solid substance, and *khroma* retains this synthesis of surface and depth. Unlike its synonym *derma*, which can refer to the hide of a dead animal, *khros* describes the living system of skin as the outermost layer integrated into the body, more similar to “flesh” (*sarx*), but with a greater emphasis on the surface-part-layer. The relationship in ancient Greek between material color and skin, the largest organ in the human body, retains the idea of an integrated system or assemblage of connected parts. In this sense, just as *khros* connects the surface layers to the interior parts and systems of the body, so do material colors on the surface of an object connect to its interior color-parts and systems.⁴⁷

⁴³ It occurs on 110 occasions across the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. *Guia* and *mélea*, for comparison, only occur 52 and 33 times across the same works.

⁴⁴ Snell 1953, pp. 6-10.

⁴⁵ Cf. Homer, *Iliad* 5.801: Τυδεύς τοι μικρὸς μὲν ἔην δέμας.

⁴⁶ Stager 2022, p. 36: “I am translating *khroma* as “material color” to distinguish this earlier conception from the post-Newtonian understanding of color as dematerialized hues. Distinguishing color (singular *khroma*) from hues (plural *khromata*) also marks the difference between the umbrella term *khroma*, which captures the material, spatial, and kinetic components of material color, and one of its components (plural *khromata*), hues.”

⁴⁷ Ibid. On those in concurrence concerning an etymological relationship between *khroma*, *khroia*, and *khros*, Stager cites Chantraine [2009], p. 1233; Bradley 2009, pp. 69, 83, 132; Bradley 2013, p. 132; Price 1883, p. 6; Brinkmann 2008, p. 32; Lichtenstein 1993, p. 52; James 1996, pp. 59-62.

Noteworthy here is the solid, living, and layered nature of *khros*, its differentiation from *derma* (which can refer to a dead animal’s coat), and its participation in a synaptic system of parts that it conceals. When understood as an aesthetic covering,⁴⁸ *khros* stands as the barrier between the unaffected body and the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ world, physical and psychic ‘intrusion.’ When it is affected, however—whether by consumption, liquification, piercing, penetration by a weapon, or rendered pliant by pain, joy, temerity, and suffering, there is a breakdown in binaries between the *khros* and the person’s ‘inner parts’⁴⁹ that inculcates a manner of unity. This unity comes to be from the newly created similarity in *texture* between the *khros* and the inner parts, which opens an aperture to influence, both prophylactic and pathogenic, and deformation. Thinking along these lines, Valeria Gavrylenko understands Homeric *khros* as a “‘body without skin.’”⁵⁰ This, to paraphrase Guillemette Bolens, ‘body logic’ (*logique du corps*) is of the articulate (*articulaire*) variety, corresponding to the *Iliad*’s scenes of heroic deaths, wherein injured body parts—disrupted joints and tendons—are described in great detail and have fundamental roles.⁵¹ This is

⁴⁸ Stager (p. 37) notes that the etymology of the English word “color,” variously from Latin *celare* (to hide), *occulere* (to cover), and *clam* (secretly), furthers the perception that surface color intends to deceive about what lays below (i.e., its depths) and emphasizes, too, the notion that surface as a separate, rather, than integrated part of an assembled whole. Cf. Duigan 2004, pp. 81-82 for a more in-depth analysis.

⁴⁹ Cf. Gundert 1992, p. 453, n. 2 on the language of internal physiology in Hippocratic medicine, which chronologically follows the era over which we are discoursing: “I speak throughout of “parts of the body” and their “roles” or “actions,” since the expressions “organ” and “function” might imply teleological associations that are not present in Hippocratic thought. Cf. Helene Ioannidi, “Les notions de partie du corps et d’organe,” in *Formes de pensée dans la Collection hippocratique*, ed. François Lasserre and Philippe Mudry (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1983), pp. 327-330; and Simon Byl, “Note sur la polysemie d’*OPTANON* et les origines du finalisme,” *L’Antiquité Classique*, 1971, 40:121-133.”

⁵⁰ Cf. Gavrylenko 2012, p. 481.

⁵¹ Cf. Bolens 2000. For instance, Hector dies from an articulate wound, with Achilles aiming at his clavicles (*klēides*), bones which are said to connect two joints: the neck and the shoulders (*ap’ omōn aukhén ékhousi*, 22.324). Aeneas’ wound is described similarly (5.305-8): “[Diomedes] threw it (a boulder) at Aeneas’ hip-joint, where the thigh revolves in the hip-joint, a spot they call the *kotyle* [‘socket’]; he crushed the socket, and he tore both tendons besides; and the jagged stone pushed the *rhinos* away” (τῷ βάλεν Αἰνεΐαιο κατ’ ἰσκίον, ἔνθά τε μηρὸς / ἰσχίῳ ἐνστρέφεται, κοτύλην δέ τέ μιν καλέουσι· / θλάσσε δέ οἱ κοτύλην, πρὸς δ’ ἄμφω ῥῆξε τένοντε· ὥσε δ’ ἀπο ῥινὸν τρηχὺν λίθος).

The chronology of the actual events here is reversed in the narration (i.e., the socket would have been reached after the *rhinos* was torn away), highlighting the importance of joints and connection in the *Iliad* and the cultural

in marked contrast to the other logic, which conceives of the body *qua* ‘envelope,’ emphasizing its openings and containers; this view is espoused much more in later Greek thought, with Plato (particularly in the *Timaeus*) as a strong exponent.⁵² Hence, thinking with Stager and Bolens, we can approach the Homeric person as connected, articulated and articulable, synaptic and synthetic, and existing in dimensions, in which the fullness of the person is revealed from a particular perspective.

Returning to Snell’s observation that an equivalent of the singular and all-inclusive word ‘body’ did not exist in the Homeric vocabulary, Robert Renehan contradicted Snell with the argument that the word *sōma*, meaning ‘corpse’ in Homer and only later acquiring the meaning ‘body’, could already signify ‘body in general’ and not merely ‘corpse.’⁵³ Snell’s and Renehan’s positions, which we cannot disentangle from the intellectual, historical, and philosophical traditions in which they were reared, intimate that they think about the body anatomically and topographically, as an envelope and a unit, and not in terms of phenomenological connections and junctions.⁵⁴ This is in spite of the fact that Snell himself noticed the importance of joints in

epistēmai, both current and vestigial, that flourished at the time of its codification into its extant, written form. On the word *rhīnós*, Gavrylenko 2012, applying the same logic to *dérma*, understands it to denote animal skin which can be separated from an animal body (p. 484). This accords well with the poet’s use of the verb *apōtheîn* (to push back, to thrust away, to draw away from) to describe its movement.

⁵² Cf. Bolens 1999. Noting that “mobility and plurality are central in the *Iliad*,” Bolens says that the urges in the *Timaeus* are diametrically opposed—namely, it is concerned with matter’s unity and stability (p. 152). The subject of chapter two—medical literature—is largely preoccupied with pores and containment, too.

⁵³ Cf. Renehan 1979, n. 1, wherein he draws us to scholars such as Adkins 1970 (p. 21), Gomperz 1932 (“*σῶμα* bedeutet, wie bekannt, ursprünglich den Leichnam, dann den Leib überhaupt,” p. 164), and Guthrie 1962 (II.111) believe that *sōma* refers purely to a corpse.

⁵⁴ Cf. Holmes 2020, p. 363 on the historical background to Snell’s influential text: “...*Die Entdeckung des Geistes* was first published in 1946, in Hamburg, the product of a bone-chilling period in German history. The chapter on “the origin of scientific thought” appeared in the *Philosophischer Anzeiger* in 1929, as the political crisis of the Weimar Republic was deepening and National Socialism was on the rise. By the end of 1945, Hitler was dead, Germany had surrendered to the Allies, and Hamburg was in ruins after the firestorm of Operation Gomorrah. That same year, Snell assumed the newly created position of vice-chancellor of the philosophical faculty in the reopened University of Hamburg. Against this backdrop, one can see why he envisioned the book as the foundation for a unified European sense of community that could rise from the ashes of the Second World War and its murderous nationalisms by looking to a common heritage in ancient Greece.” On poetic explanations of embodied experience, cf. Onians 1951, pp. 44-65; Clarke 1999, pp. 53-126, though both still valorize the anatomical body.

archaic Greek art.⁵⁵ Indeed, in this historical period prior to the rise of “muscle-consciousness,” Shigehisa Kuriyama notes,

was the virtue of articulation. Before they became fascinated with special structures named muscles, the Greeks celebrated bodies that had a particular look—a special clarity of form, a distinct “jointedness,” which they identified with the vital as opposed to the dying, the mature as opposed to the yet unformed, individuals as opposed to people who all resemble each other, the strong and brave as opposed to the weak and cowardly, Europeans as opposed to Asians, the male as opposed to the female.⁵⁶

Such an “aesthetics of articulation” is more fully expressed in texts ranging from the tragic to the technical,⁵⁷ and these uses espouse concerns about the potential for a myriad of misfortunes to be had by a lack of articulation. Nonetheless, departing from the numerous and detailed references to different body parts, Snell considered such as proof that Homer conceived of the body as an aggregate of pieces. Troubling is the connotation that ‘aggregate’ has of incoherence. Indeed, Snell views ‘physical terminology’ in Homer in terms of its ‘deficiency’ rather than in terms of what is provided.⁵⁸ From the *Iliad* alone, however, a picture of the human body emerges that is more precise and complete than in any other epic that follows in its tradition. Thus, to term Homer’s physiological vocabulary and imagery deficient, on account of the want of a word for ‘body,’ displays an unconscious surfeit of anachronism that arises from a particular intellectual habitus born in the wake of Platonic binarism around the mind and body, one upheld by Western *epistēmai*.

At any rate, the Homeric body *is* remarkably coherent, existing as a form articulated by means of junction—conversely, their ability to be disjointed—and viewed as an array of

⁵⁵ Cf. Snell 1987, pp. 49-50.

⁵⁶ Kuriyama 1999, p. 143.

⁵⁷ After his poisoning in *The Women of Trachis*, for example, Heracles is borne by a litter, writhed with pain, exhausted, and jointless (*ánarthros*, 1103). In the Hippocratic *On Airs, Waters, Places* 19, the Scythians are said to be “inarticulate” (*ánarthra*). In *On Generation* 18, a fetus that has been miscarried before thirty days is, likewise, *ánarthron*. Conversely, one which has gone beyond the threshold of thirty days gestation has begun to articulate (*diēthrōmenai*).

⁵⁸ Cf. Snell 1987, p. 51.

relations.⁵⁹ Ajax, to provide an example, fatally wounds Archelochus by hurling his spear into the joint (*en suneokhmōi*) that connects his head and neck (*kephalēs te kai aukhēnos*)—the final vertebra (*neiaton astrágalon*)—tearing both tendons (*apo d’ ámphō kēse ténonte*, 14.465-66). The importance of the terminal vertebra, labeled as the joint between Archelochus’ head and neck, arises from both its locality and the relational, connecting role it plays to the rest of his body. This particular instance of bodily articulation brings us to understand that the single word—indeed, a word in the singular—desired (and, subsequently, anachronistically read for) by scholars such as Snell and Renehan to denote the body as a unit cannot be elucidated; for the Homeric body is a plurality. Even the center of the body is plural: they are any one of the areas of confluence *and* separation of the bones, where, to recalibrate Gavrylenko’s and Stager’s ideas, there is a sympathetic entanglement of textures, surface and depth, of part and whole.⁶⁰

φρήν and θῦμός, or Symbiotic Tissues of Psychic Life

With the physiological outlined, how, then, should we think through the psychic life of the Homeric person? As we have seen from the poet’s expansive imagination, the body’s parts, actions, and deformations, in moments of articulation, are expressed in vividly ekphrastic language. Likewise, cognitive behaviors seem to be distinguished among the unique parts and differentiated from each other. Nonetheless, these parts, while potentially difficult to define and

⁵⁹ Cf. Austin 1975, p. 114 on relationality in Homer: “We prefer the all-purpose prosaic generalization, but Homer’s visual acuity and his own kind of logic lead him to locate things and events within the nexus of their relationships. The use of directional enclitics... and the great variety of untranslatable particles remind us that Homer is a poet who thinks in terms of structural relations.”

On the capacity to be disjointed, see n. 50 on the phrase “both tendons” (ἄμφω... τένοντε), which reoccurs at 14.466 and 10.456, where Diomedes strikes Dolon’s neck and severs both tendons. Likewise, mortal wounding, even when not articulated, is frequently expressed by formulas such as “he unbound his joints” (γούνατ’ ἔλυσσά, 22.335) and “he unbound his limbs” (λῦσε γυῖα, 11.260). Cf. Garland 1981 for an exhaustive survey of these two phrases in the *Iliad*.

⁶⁰ I am trading on the language of sympathy *not* in its capacity as related to later medical and Stoic sympathies, but in the literal sense of the verb *sumpīptein* (to fall in with, to meet with, to be in accordance with) and the adjective *sumpathēs* (interacting, sensitive to influence) in order to signify the enmeshment of two ontologically distinct categories (i.e., internal and external). For more on symptomology, cf. Holmes 2010 and 2015. For a study of ancient holism along the axes of part-to-part and part-to-whole sympathies, cf. Holmes 2021.

describe, do exist symbiotically in a capacity that accords a synaptic quality to plurality, with the parts becoming a kaleidoscopic whole.⁶¹ Indeed, the individuation of each part, whether kinesthetic or cognitive, does not instantiate any synthetic union, but, rather, their championed singularity provides the means for a clearer understanding of the perspectival figure which houses them. As we have intimated before, the Homeric person seems to not be a harmonized multiplicity or a fragmentary form; rather, the person is a cohesive plurality, existing fully from a variety of viewpoints.

Returning to the *phrēn*, *phrēnes*, *thūmós*, *êtor*, *kêr*, *kradiē*, *prapides*, and *nóos*, we understand that these parts are actionable, symbiotic phenomena of a jointed human, in which the intricacies of mental life and intention are most reasonable and conceivable when taken without trying to separate them from the embodied aspect of the person. Indeed, verbs such as ‘to see’ and ‘to know’ hold within themselves the tendency to extend over both the mental act and the attendant corporeal action in a lone word, implying that the realms of emotion, cognition, and action were not differentiated and are not to be.⁶² We are able to elucidate this by means of the union of mind in which perception and/or cognition is concomitant, either with—or subsequently followed by—an emotion and a proclivity to act, which fluctuates in intensity and type with respect to the nature of an entity.⁶³ We have the means to edify this interpretation with the knowledge that there are no instances across the Homeric epics where the aforementioned parts act contrarily to one another, in a way that mirrors how we frequently juxtapose such things as ‘heart’ and ‘mind’ and ‘logic’ and ‘passion’ in our modernity. “The implication of all this,” Michael Clarke notes,

⁶¹ Di Giuseppe 1993, pp. 48-56.

⁶² Colli 1948, p. 24.

⁶³ Onians 1951, p. 16.

is that Homer does not oppose mental life to the life of the body but takes them as an undifferentiated whole. There is no ‘ghost in the machine’: Homeric man does not have a mind, rather his thought and consciousness are as inseparable a part of his bodily life as are movement and metabolism.⁶⁴

One can say “No” with confidence, then, to the question of whether Homeric Greeks had a conception of a soul and a body joined together, since there simply is no notion of them as entities by which the person is divided. It is possible, too, to answer “No” to the question of the Homeric person being a unitary whole. For, there is something to be said for looking beyond structures and principals—perfect unions and ideal ratios—and, instead, being at ease with plurality and distinctions that are mutually influential, whether for better or worse.

One of the most pressing questions, however, is, naturally, one of those which is hardest to answer: What did the Homeric person make of themselves? Hermann Fränkel’s assertive definition of such a person provides us with much to think about:

Not in his lifetime, but only in death [...] was Homeric man divided into body and soul. He felt himself not as a cloven duality but as a unitary being. And because he felt himself such, such he was in fact. [...] Homeric man is not the sum of body and soul, but a whole. But of this whole, specific portions, or better, organs, can sometimes occupy the foreground. All individual organs appertain directly to the person. Arms are as much an organ of the man himself, rather than of his body, as *thymos* [...] is an organ of the man, himself, rather than of his soul. The whole man is equally alive in all his parts; activity which we would term ‘spiritual’ can be attributed to each of his members.⁶⁵

Like Snell and Renehan, Fränkel is of a structuralist intellectual genealogy that imposes limitations on the ability to read speculatively along lines of epistemologies that are embodied. Take, for example, his mentions of *thūmós* as an “organ,” the person’s plurality as “unitary,” and the human’s postmortem division into “body and soul.” These notions are purely from conjecture, and we have no evidence that a Homeric *Weltanschauung* would have accounted for them. Indeed, as reflected upon earlier, parts such as the *phrēn* and *thūmós* still

⁶⁴ Clarke 1999, p. 115.

⁶⁵ Fränkel 1951, pp. 76-77.

bear within themselves notion(s) of (dis)jointedness, in which the former is seen to function as a dual surface of contact after recognition as differentiable or differentiated from within the subject.⁶⁶ *Thūmós* is vital to the project of a connective, tissual body in Homer.⁶⁷ Its meaning has long been debated, and translations range from ‘soul,’ ‘life(-force),’ ‘breath,’ ‘temper,’ ‘desire,’ ‘organ of movement,’ etc. Such variances in its meaning comes from the valences of its activities: upon death, *thūmós* can be exhaled; it can depart from limbs and leave bones; it can appear as a phenomenon upon a person’s inundation of energy;⁶⁸ it is sometimes found in the chest or in the *phrénes*.⁶⁹

Theorization around this word has often consisted of trying to localize *thūmós* in the body, or to what substance or specific physical manifestation it corresponded.⁷⁰ Indeed, the pivotal trait of the *thūmós* is precisely that it is ardently resistant to localization; it is unable to be constrained within a particular area or rendered fixedly symptomizable—a logic that positions the *thūmós* as fundamentally anti-biological. It is liable to both increase and decrease in intensity, and it is exceedingly motile. The *thūmós* is not anchored to a substance or an organ, for—akin to the tissual body—it revolves around the experience of association. It is profoundly intertwined with self-perception, as seen when Locrian Ajax notices that his *thūmós* is eager to fight, and he

⁶⁶ Cf. *Iliad* 1.362-63: “Child, why are you crying? What grief has come upon your *phrénes*? Speak out! Do not conceal it in your *nóos*, in order that we both may know” (τέκνον τί κλαίεις; τί δέ σε φρένας ἵκετο πένθος; / ἐξάδῃ, μὴ κεῖθε νόῳ, ἵνα εἶδομεν ἄμφω).

⁶⁷ Formative, thought-provoking studies of *thūmós* include, among others, Austin 1975, Redfield 1975, Garland 1981, and Caswell 1990.

⁶⁸ Clarke 1999 draws attention to the Homeric person’s subjective epistemologies, whose self-reflexivities often foreground substances outside the individual themselves: smoke, honey, water, wind (cf. pp. 79-115, but, particularly, 80-83, which discuss the connotations of *thú(n)ō*, a verb often used when such stuffs are discussed). These are all integral to the Homeric person’s self-conception, which hinges upon their participation in, and creation of, what Holmes 2017 calls a “field of dynamic activity” variously characterized by surges of anger, strength, and *ménos* (vitality) through them (p. 30).

⁶⁹ Cf. Caswell 1990. Like a Matryoshka doll, the parts are often frequently within each other and capable of movement; see *Il.* 22.451-52 where, upon learning of Hector’s death, Andromache’s *ētor* leaps from her breast (*stēthos*) into her mouth (*stóma*): ἐν δέ μοι αὐτῇ / στήθεσι πάλλεται ἦτορ ἀνὰ στόμα.

⁷⁰ Cf. Darcus Sullivan 1989 on similar urges for *phrénes* in Hesiod, who uses the word far less frequently than Homer does.

senses that both his feet and arms are quivering with eagerness as a result (13.73-75). He himself is the platform of the manifestations of his *thūmós*. To maintain life in Homer requires one to keep their joints together and to also be *in connection with* expressions of one's *thūmós*, which fastidiously articulates the joints, furnishing the person with a vigorous and sympathetic ecosystem of sensations and affects. Appearances of *thūmós* might be, to provide an example, the alteration of musculature, the quickening of breath, the cramping of the stomach, etc. These occurrences are subsequently variously construed and voiced as a yearning to battle, as enthusiasm or angst or exultation, as appetite or temerity. This field of activity is *thūmós*, which ever dwells *in the association* of the person to their kinesthetic and interoceptive impressions. Such a conception provides a causality for why a loss of consciousness implies an absence of *thūmós*. Yes, respiration is maintained; the beating of the heart continues apace. Nonetheless, they have lost the ability to be in relation with these physiological events and with the sensations that arise from them. Tellingly, the Homeric person refers to their *thūmós* in order to render an explanation for and of their actions and thoughts, as the *thūmós* plays a role in the casting the person's kaleidoscopic, tissual cohesion. After fainting, the *thūmós* comes back and revives the individual; indeed, its return is described as being 'gathered' or 'reassembled' (ἐσαγείρετο, *Il.* 15.240; 21.417) into the person.⁷¹ This suggests that the absence of *thūmós* is tantamount to a breakdown in cohesiveness. Ultimately, the *thūmós* functions as something of a keystone in a synaptic network of psycho-physical interactions that engenders coherence through plurality.

As mentioned earlier, the *thūmós* is intrinsically motile; its stabilization would require that the person be brought to extirpation (i.e., their death). Indeed, when such an event comes to pass, the *thūmós* does not fly away to a new abode—as the *psukhē* does to Hades—but simply

⁷¹ Cf. Pape 1914, p. 739, who renders εἰσαγείρω as 'hineinversammeln,' describing its occurrences with *thūmós* as "faßte sich wieder, kam wieder zur Besinnung" (collected oneself again, came to one's senses again).

ceases to exist.⁷² The kinetic ability of the *thūmós*, then, seems to have something to offer our coming discussion concerning the nature of the *sōma*, which, as many scholars have conjectured, refers to the dead body; that is, the body that has been rendered as an object—immobilized, circumscribed, ineffectual. Working with these criteria, we may begin our recalibration of *sōma*.

Corpses: *Sōma*? *Nékūs*/*Nekrós*?

Homeric *sōma* denotes a certain conception of the human person, casting them as a corporeal mass, with the all-important dimension being that this mass, a property of any physical body, has no capacity for self-motion.⁷³ For it to be moved, then, it must be acted upon by an external force to be moved from its inert state—that all-important first Newtonian law of motion. Hence, I argue that the Homeric sense of *sōma* to have a broader, more profound, and more culturally contingent semantic range than simply ‘corpse.’

From the perspective of the philologist, one might hope to find clues to a conclusive definition for *sōma* from a veriloquial excursus. However, such studies have not borne much fruit. Indeed, Hjalmar Frisk’s *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* enumerates an abundance of possibilities, connecting *sōma* variously to roots found in *sōos* (safe, intact, preserved), *sōtēr* (savior, preserver), *soústhai* (to chase, to put into swift motion), *sōrós* (heap, quantity), *síntēs* (ravens), and *sēpesthai* (to rot, to mold). As we see, none of these etymologies are very compelling and/or telling, with respect to the *communis opinio* on *sōma*, but they have resonances along the semantic field of our posited definition. At any rate, a source

⁷² Cf. *Iliad* 1.3-5: “And many strong souls of heroes were sent forth to Hades, and they themselves made prey to dogs and for all birds” (πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν / ἠρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεύχε κύνεσσιν / οἰωνοῖσι τε πᾶσι). Citing these lines, Vivante 1983 argues that the body in Homer is the *autós*, describing it as coterminous with the person until they meet their death. 23 times in the *Iliad* and 6 times in the *Odyssey* does the *thūmós* leave or is lost in death. For a survey of *thūmós* from Homer to Aristotle, see Cairns 2019.

⁷³ While of an entirely different era, Plato’s dialogues *Alcibiades I* and *Phaedrus* present notions of the *sōma* that accord well with its position in Homer. In the former (130a, 1-c, 6), Socrates induces Alcibiades to agree that *sōma* cannot use or rule itself. The ruler, in turn, is the *psukhē*, which, as we are told in the latter, moves itself and, subsequently, the *sōma* (245c, 2-4).

that has been used by scholars on the definition of *sōma* is Apollonius Sophista's *Lexicon Homericum*, in which Aristarchus of Samothrace said:

σῶμα Ὅμηρος οὐδέποτε ἐπὶ τοῦ ζῶντος εἶρηκεν.

Homer never said *sōma* of the living.

Given Aristarchus' repute as an exegete and the soundness of his scholarship, it is no wonder that many scholars have argued that *sōma* is to be rendered as the equivalent of corpse.⁷⁴ As Renehan has noted, Aristarchus' statement does not say that *sōma* means corpse, cadaver, or dead body, but only that it was not ever used to speak of a living body—which, I contend, is a temporally and culturally necessary clarification. For, in Aristarchus' post-Platonic era (c. 220 – c. 143 B.C.E.) *sōma* would have referred to the body of a living person. Hence, the status of *sōma* as denoting static mass is not to be discounted. A word that is less ambiguous in its meaning, and that refers exclusively to a 'corpse' in Homeric Greek, is *nekūs* or *nekrós*.⁷⁵ This word is grammatically rather different from *sōma* in its uses, as Clarke shows:

This word [*nekūs/nekrós*] differs crucially from modern words like 'corpse', because it goes with the nominative rather than the genitive of the noun denoting the person who has died: a *nekys/nekròs* is not the corpse of someone, rather it is unambiguously identified with them [...] Those who lie on the battlefield are not men's mortal remains but 'men who have died', νεκρὸς κατατεθνηῶτας. Consistently, *nekys/nekròs* stands in apposition with the proper name.⁷⁶

Indeed, *sōma* is always paired with a person's name in the genitive, suggesting that the *sōma*, while coterminous with the person, is not the same thing as the person themselves. There is sure proof, then, that the dead person (*nekūs/nekrós*) is differentiated from the corporeal mass itself (*sōma*) by Homer. Furthermore, while *nekūs/nekrós* and the *psukhē* can go to Hades, the *sōma*

⁷⁴ Cf. n. 52 for just a few scholars.

⁷⁵ The two words are entirely synonymous and interchangeable, with metrical position in a given line being the most likely reason one is chosen over the other.

⁷⁶ Clarke 1999, p. 158.

never does. *Sōma* can refer to both animals and humans; *nékūs* and *nekrós* is exclusively used for humans. This occurrence of relationality is noteworthy for the connection *sōma* establishes and maintains between humans and other animals.⁷⁷ Likewise, if agreeing with Clarke's supposition—the dead are commonly called *nékūs/nekrós*, 'corpse, dead man' both in the world of the living and in Hades—then there is an even firmer basis upon which to make our claim that *sōma*'s semantic range must be broader than just 'corpse.' Indeed, given *nékūs/nekrós*' status as standing appositively to the proper name of a person, it seems to represent them in their totality as someone who, at one point, was living. *Sōma*, meanwhile, is the designation for the corporeal mass that has been made into an object, paired with the genitive of the living person that they once were.

The stakes of becoming a *sōma*—that is, of having a somatic existence—is the haunting of the subject with the specter of becoming an object, of becoming liable to objectification and consumption.⁷⁸ There is a notion of fear and futility that seems to perambulate the *sōma*, whose relative dearth of appearances across the Homeric corpus intimates as much.⁷⁹ At this point, it must be asked by what means we may be able to reconstruct and/or analyze the cultural mores of the Homeric world that saw becoming a *sōma* as an unequivocally deleterious happenstance.

Scenes of Consumption, Human and Divine

⁷⁷ Hoepner 1987 argues that three types of anthrozoological dynamics prevail in Homer: 1) humans dominating animals, 2) equality between humans and animals, and 3) animals dominating humans. Heath 2005 is a study of the criterion speech among the Greeks from Homer to Plato, with special attention paid to how Greeks used speech to distinguish themselves from alterized Others, most notably non-speaking animals. The first chapter of Part One (three in all, which are dedicated to Homer) focuses on animals and deities, the former of which Heath contends are very similar to humans, both physiologically and psychologically, with little significant difference between the mental and emotional lives of humans and other creatures.

⁷⁸ Though it will not be taken up in this work, the anxieties of becoming a *sōma* have, I believe, inarguable resonances with later Platonic somatophobia concerning the body's impurities and the need to be kept away from them inasmuch as one can (cf. *Phaedo*, 67a).

⁷⁹ *Sōma* appears only eight times (five times in the *Iliad* and thrice in the *Odyssey*). Fortunately, the small sample size means that we will be able to discuss them all later herein. On the other hand, *nekrós* and *nékūs* occur in much higher frequency across the same works—respectively, 65 and 78 times.

Etiological myths such as Cronus' filial cannibalism (crucially, before the Zeus-ordered era), epic cannibalism by Polyphemus, and the numerous instances of tragic cannibalism and consumption (e.g., Pelops' (accidental) consumption by Demeter, Atreus' cooking of his brother Thyestes' sons, Procne's murder of Itys and feeding of him to his father Tereus, etc.) detail a picture of bodies in the most extreme states of subjection and *páthē* (suffering, affection, feeling). Indeed, *sōma* is thus to be understood as the causal economy of the felt,⁸⁰ as extirpating lines of kinship, connectivity, and customary care for the dead.⁸¹

Nonetheless, I think that, while the prevailing view is that cannibalism is a grave faux pas, there *does* seem to be a differentiation between godly vs mortal practices of consumption. For instances of the former, we have the myth of Zeus swallowing the pregnant Metis; in her hatred of them, Hera (according to Zeus) desires to eat Priam and his son raw, a process known as *omophagia*;⁸² at some point or another, Priam, Achilles, and Hecuba all desire to eat someone raw, using either *ōmēstēs* (raw-eating) or *ōmós* (raw) and an optative form of *édmenai* (to eat) to express their yearning. Achilles' longing to eat the raw flesh of Hector (22.346-54) is, perhaps ironically, foreshadowed in the lamentations of Priam and Hecuba over their fates,⁸³ and it is approximately mimicked by Hecuba's yearning to raw-eat her own son's raw-eater (24.207, 213-4).

In the *Odyssey*, after his first copulation with Circe, Odysseus is sat before a feast, one to which he expresses an ardently negative reaction to the sight of such bounty, as he was "having thoughts (other than eating)" (*ἀλλοφρονέων*, 10.374) and his "*thūmós* suspecting evil things"

⁸⁰ I give thanks to Brooke Holmes, who offered me this language (pers. comm.).

⁸¹ Cf. Garland 1985, who provides a survey of funerary rites and attitudes toward death from the time of Homer to the fourth century B.C.E.

⁸² Cf. *Il.* 4.34-38. In the cult worship of Dionysus, *omophagia* is a large element; the god even has the epithet *Omophagos* ("Raw Flesh-Eater"; cf. Henrichs 1978, p. 144). For a survey of Hera's lust for vengeance and her brutality, cf. O'Brien 1990.

⁸³ Cf. *Il.* 22.42, 67, and 82-89.

(κακὰ δ' ὄσσετο θυμός, 10.374). When asked by Circe why he is not eating his food but only his *thūmós*, Odysseus replies with the following (10.383-7):

ὦ Κίρκη, τίς γάρ κεν ἀνὴρ, ὃς ἐναίσιμος εἶη,
πρὶν τλαίῃ **πάσσασθαι ἐδητύος ἠδὲ ποτήτος,**
πρὶν λύσασθ' ἐτάρους καὶ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ιδέσθαι;
ἀλλ' εἰ δὴ πρόφρασσα πιεῖν φαγέμεν τε κελεύεις,
λύσον, ἵν' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδω ἐρίηρας ἐταίρους.

Oh, Circe, what man, any man who is righteous (ἐναίσιμος),
could ever bear **to taste of this food and drink,**
before he had set free his companions and seen them with his own eyes?
No, if you really are asking me with the best intentions to eat and drink,
then set them free, so that I can see my faithful companions with my own eyes.

While the poet does not specify what exactly is served to Odysseus,⁸⁴ it may be solidly inferred that Odysseus thinks it might be pork, but, at any rate, the reasons for his concern are not explicated. With respect to the wider themes of the poem, a less specific kind of anxiety emerges. The quest pattern dramatizes the dangers of and anxieties about eating meat in general, especially meat that is (too) readily available. Eating meat can easily be conceived of as linked with human death; hunting brings hunter and prey closer to each other in more ways than just in physical space. If we assume, indeed, that humans are an integral part of the animal kingdom, then pigs and humans can be said to form an exclusive subgroup within which the dividing line between human and animal is further weakened. Pigs are neither ruminants nor carnivores, but omnivores, just as humans are; the two are thus capable of eating each other. They have very similar digestive tracts and may compete for the same food.⁸⁵ Circe gives the swine she has created acorns to eat, a reminder that the pig is originally a woodland species, though in other

⁸⁴ The word used to describe the food offered is *sítos* (10.371, 375), which typically means “bread” as opposed to “meat” or “food” as opposed to “drink.” However, other terms used in rapid succession include *eídār* (10.372), *edētūs* (10.384), and *brōmēs* (10.379), which can all refer to food in the sense of “meat.” Indeed, *brōmēs* makes the linkage between this current meal and the meat of the stag (10.176).

⁸⁵ Cf. Swindle and Smith 2015 on swine physiology.

circumstances pigs may get wheat, or other food suitable for human consumption to eat.⁸⁶

Moreover, within the poetic world of the *Odyssey*, the conditions suitable for survival of a human deprived of clothing and tools—that is, reduced to an animal state—are similar to the shady lair of the wild boar, as is formulaically expressed in the identical description of Odysseus’ shelter on Scheria and the lair of the wild boar of the hunting expedition on Mount Parnassus (cf. 5.478–83; 19.440–3).

But most uncannily to the point is that human flesh and pork are very similar in taste and smell. Within the ancient world, a suggestive formulation comes from Galen in *On the*

Properties of Foodstuffs (6.663):

τῆς δ’ ὑείας σαρκὸς τὴν πρὸς ἄνθρωπον ὁμοιότητα καταμαθεῖν ἔστι καὶ τοῦ τινας ἐδηδοκότας ἀνθρωπείων κρεῶν ὡς ὑείων οὐδεμίαν ὑπόνοιαν ἐσχηκέναι κατὰ τε τὴν γεῦσιν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ὁσμὴν· ἐφωράθη γὰρ ἤδη πού τοῦτο γεγονός ὑπό τε πονηρῶν πανδοχέων καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν.

The flesh of swine is very similar to that of man, as can be inferred from the fact that people who have eaten human flesh served to them as pork did not have any suspicion as to the taste and smell of it (criminal innkeepers have been known to do this).

Circe’s actions have not only laid bare man’s nature as an eating animal, but they have also drawn attention to the dangers of eating. No overt cannibalism takes place and, moved by his petition, Circe undoes her theriomorphizing *pharmakeía* and Odysseus’ companions are returned to their human forms, which are now “much more beautiful and bigger” (πολὺ καλλίονες καὶ μείζονες, 10.396) than they were before.

Though only implicit, Odysseus is clearly concerned that he might be eating his own companions, and, thus, engaging in an inadmissible form of conception, one that, I contend,

⁸⁶ Harris 1985, pp. 75-6, attributes the religious taboo on pork in Jewish and Muslim cultures to deforestation in the Middle East and the subsequent deterioration of the resulting farming and grazing lands to desert, pigs having been more popular as domestic meat animals before.

would be even more egregious given that Odysseus has sat down for a feast (*dais*), and the sheer number of them in the Homeric epics and the formulaic quality of their scenes in both layout and vocabulary attest to their undeniable importance in the cultural imaginary represented by the poems.⁸⁷ In the context of (re)casting *sōma*, I understand Odysseus' concern about remaining righteous (*enaisimos*) reflects a desire to not risk subjecting his zoomorphized companions to a scenario that would be final and unchanging (i.e., death via cannibalistic eating) and that would not allow for their bodies to be recuperated for social life. This is a principally mortal concern, one which is not so manifest in divine instances of cannibalism, where the stakes are never as high concerning the irrecoverable nature of consumption.

These culturally inscribed scenes of cannibalism are of great importance, but even they do not overtly condemn such behavior.⁸⁸ Indeed, we only find the fullest condemnations of cannibalism from the Homeric world in *scholia*, which attest to an episode of self-preservatory encephalophagy on the part of Tydeus, the father of Diomedes, that does not happen in our extant text. In some attestations, it is spurred on by the wiles of the seer Amphiaraus, and, in others, it is purely of Tydeus' desperate volition. Most compelling here in these *scholia* is Athena's subsequent disgust at his behavior and withholding of her gift of immortality to him, which undeniably reveals ancient Greek attitudes to such behavior.

⁸⁷ Cf. Kirk 1962, p. 167. For historical surveys of feasting in the epics, Węcowski 2020 enumerates Sherratt 2004 (who provides an archaeological perspective), Ulf 1990, pp. 191-212, and van Wees 1995. For feasting specifically in the *Odyssey*, cf. Bakker 2013.

⁸⁸ An audience, of course, could have taken away the knowledge that cannibalism was an unsavory practice. Nonetheless, I believe that it was not imperative to have done so, as cannibalism was culturally inscribed as inadvisable and fundamentally 'un-Greek.' Cf. Sulimirski and Taylor 1992 on the Androphagoi, a cannibalistic Scythian tribe.

The exact origin of the tale of Tydeus' encephalophagy is unclear, but it has received scholarly attention principally thanks to its presence in Statius' *Thebaid*.⁸⁹ At any rate, the relevant *scholia* are as follows⁹⁰:

Schol. AbT ad Il. 5.126

<p>Τυδέα τρωθέντα ὑπὸ Μελανίππου τοῦ Ἄστακου σφόδρα ἀγανακτῆσαι. Ἀμφιάρεω δὲ κτείναντα τὸν Μελάνιππον δοῦναι τὴν κεφαλὴν Τυδεΐ. Τὸν δὲ δίκην θηρὸς ἀναπτύξαντα ῥοφᾶν τὸν ἐγκέφαλον ἀπὸ θυμοῦ. Κατ' ἐκεῖνο δὲ καιροῦ παρεῖναι Ἄθηνᾶν ἀθανασίαν αὐτῷ φέρουσαν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ διὰ τὸ μῦσος ἀπεστράφθαι. Τὸν δὲ θεασάμενον παρακαλέσαι κἄν τῷ παιδί αὐτοῦ χαρίσασθαι τὴν ἀθανασίαν. ἱστορεῖ Φερεκύδης (FgrHist 3, 97). A b (BC) T</p>	<p>“They say that when Tydeus was wounded by Melanippus, Astacus’ son, he got pretty upset. And Amphiaras, after he killed Melanippus, gave his head to Tydeus. Like a beast, Tydeus ripped it open and slurped up his brains to his fill. Athena happened to be there at that time, bringing some immortal medicine to him from heaven, and she turned away from the defilement. When he saw her, he asked that she favor his son with the divine favor. That’s Pherecydes’ story.”</p>
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Schol. In Pind. Nem. 11.43b

<p>(FHG I O M, I 117 J). ὁ δὲ Μελάνιππος οὗτος Θηβαῖος ἦν ἐπὶ τοῦ πολέμου συστὰς τῷ Τυδεΐ. Τούτου δοκεῖ διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν λαβῶν ὁ Τυδεὺς τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ ῥήξας ἐκροφῆσαι τὸν ἐγκέφαλον· διὸ καὶ ἀπεστράφη ἡ Ἄθηνᾶ τότε κομίζουσα αὐτῷ τὴν ἀθανασίαν.</p>	<p>“That Melanippus was Theban and stood in battle against Tydeus. It seems that Tydeus took his head in rage, smashed it, and gulped up his brains. For this reason, Athena turned back even though she was bringing him a revitalizing drug.”</p>
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Schol. Ad Lyk. 1066, 1-7

<p>τοῦ κρατοβρῶτος τοῦ Τυδέως, ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῷ Θηβαϊκῷ πολέμῳ λέγεται ὁ Τυδεὺς τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ Μελανίππου κατεδηδοκέναι. Κρατοβρῶτος οὖν ὁ Τυδεὺς, παῖς δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ Διομήδης.</p>	<p>“of the brain-eating by Tydeus: the story goes that during the Theban war, Tydeus ate up Melanippus’ head. Thus, Tydeus is called “brain-eater” and his child is Diomedes.”</p>
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Apollodorus, 3.76-77

<p>Μελάνιππος δὲ ὁ λοιπὸς τῶν Ἄστακου παίδων εἰς τὴν γαστέρα Τυδέα τιτρώσκει. ἡμιθνήτος δὲ αὐτοῦ κειμένου παρὰ Διὸς αἰτησαμένη Ἄθηνᾶ φάρμακον ἤνεγκε, δι’ οὗ</p>	<p>“Melanippus, the last of Astacus’ children, wounded Tydeus in the stomach. While he was lying there half-dead, Athena brought him a drug she had begged from Zeus,</p>
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⁸⁹ *Thebaid* 8.751-66; for a survey of scholarship on Tydeus’ cannibalism, cf. Gervais 2015; Augoustakis 2016, pp. xxx-x1; Ganiban 2007, pp. 123-7; Gantz 1993, p. 518.

⁹⁰ The translations of these *scholia* are those of Joel Christensen, with my own edits made to them.

<p>ποιεῖν ἔμελλεν ἀθάνατον αὐτόν. Ἀμφιάραος δὲ αἰσθόμενος τοῦτο, μισῶν Τυδέα ὅτι παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνου γνώμην εἰς Θήβας ἔπεισε τοὺς Ἀργεῖους στρατεύεσθαι, τὴν Μελανίππου κεφαλὴν ἀποτεμῶν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ (τιτρωσκόμενος δὲ Τυδεὺς ἔκτεινεν αὐτόν). ὁ δὲ διελὼν τὸν ἐγκέφαλον ἐξερρόφησεν. ὡς δὲ εἶδεν Ἀθηναῖα, μυσαχθεῖσα τὴν εὐεργεσίαν ἐπέσχε τε καὶ ἐφθόνησεν.</p>	<p>intending to make him immortal. But when Amphiaraus perceived this, because he hated Tydeus for persuading the Argives to march against Thebes against his own judgment, he cut off Melanippus' head and gave it to him (Tydeus killed him when he was wounded). He drew out the brains and gobbled them up. When Athena saw him, she felt disgusted, and withheld and kept the medicine."</p>
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Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniae Hypotyposes* 3.208

<p>ἀγαθῷ τινι τούτῳ χρῆσθαι τῷ κακῷ πυνθανόμεθα. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀνθρωπείων γεύεσθαι σαρκῶν παρ' ἡμῖν μὲν ἄθεσμον, παρ' ὅλοις δὲ βαρβάροις ἔθνεσιν ἀδιάφορόν ἐστιν. Καὶ τί δεῖ τοὺς βαρβάρους λέγειν, ὅπου καὶ ὁ Τυδεὺς τὸν ἐγκέφαλον τοῦ πολεμίου λέγεται φαγεῖν, καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς οὐκ ἄτοπον εἶναί φασι τὸ σάρκας τινὰ ἐσθίειν ἄλλων τε ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἑαυτοῦ;</p>	<p>"We consider eating human flesh to be wrong; but it is a matter of ambivalence among the barbarians. But why should we even speak of 'barbarians' when Tydeus is said to have eaten an enemy's brains and when the Stoics claim it is not strange for someone to eat another's flesh or his own?"</p>
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Of note here are the various ways that Tydeus' cannibalism, while intending to revitalize himself (i.e., bring him back into the fullness of his humanity after his integrity has been violated), simultaneously dehumanizes him. He is variously described as a 'wild animal' (θηρὸς), an 'eater of brains' (κρατοβρώς), and as "polluting his jaws with living blood" (*vivo scelerantem sanguine fauces*, 8.761) after having seized Melanippus' head in a 'rage' (ὀργή). There is an animal baseness to the whole affair, and it is worthwhile to note that Tydeus is inhumanely speechless throughout—until Athena arrives, and he propitiates her to honor Diomedes. As mentioned earlier, both worst and most telling of all, however, is the allegation that Athena 'felt disgusted' (μυσαχθεῖσα) at the 'defilement' (μύσος) of Melanippus' body, and she 'turned away' (ἀπεστράφθαι) from such unsightliness. Her disapproval of Tydeus' cannibalism is divine and, thus, belongs to the domain of unchanging, time-honored *nómoi*. Indeed, it would not be a

significant stretch of the imagination to consider Melanippus as a *sōma*—indeed, he is even ‘genitivized’ as *sōma* is wont to be in Homer (τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ Μελανίππου), fulfilling the fear of objectification, liability to consumption and exploitation, and the disjointedness that somatic existence threatens.⁹¹

Naturally, these *scholia*—particularly, the Homeric world which they discuss—exist in a broader cultural context, where cannibalism is viewed as inadmissible (*kakós*, as Sextus Empiricus plainly says) and against the cosmic order instituted by Zeus’ reign and will.⁹²

With this theorization of *sōma* provided, now would be a useful time to (re)conceptualize the eight instances of *sōma* across the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, seeing in them semantic cares and concerns that are greater than mere just ‘corpses.’

Homeric *sōma*

Herein, Hector is speaking about his intention to duel with the *áristos Akhaiōn*, so that the Trojan War may be decided once and for all. The following is his description of what will happen if he wins or loses:

Iliad 7.77-86

<p>εἰ μὲν κεν ἐμὲ κεῖνος ἔλη ταναήκεϊ χαλκῶ, τεύχεα συλήσας φερέτω κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας, σῶμα δὲ οἴκαδ’ ἐμὸν δόμεναι πάλιν, ὄφρα τυρός με Τρῶες καὶ Τρώων ἄλοχοι λελάχωσι θανόντα. Εἰ δέ κ’ ἐγὼ τὸν ἔλω, δῶη δέ μοι εὖχος Ἀπόλλων, τεύχεα σύλησας οἴσω προτὶ Ἴλιον ἱρὴν, καὶ κρεμόω προτὶ νηὸν Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκάτοιο, τὸν δὲ νέκυν ἐπὶ νῆας εὖσσέλμους ἀποδώσω, ὄφρα ἔ ταρχύσωσι κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοί, σῆμά τέ οἱ χεύωσιν ἐπὶ πλατεῖ Ἑλλησπόντῳ.</p>	<p>“...if that man slays me with the long-edged bronze, let him strip me of my armor and carry it to the hollow sips, but my sōma let him give them to take back home, so that the Trojans and the Trojan wives may give me my share of fire in my death. But if I slay him, and Apollo gives me glory, I will strip him of his armor and carry it to sacred Ilios and hang it on the shrine of Apollo, the god who strikes from afar, but his nékus I will give back to the well-benched ships, so that the long-</p>
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⁹¹ Consider Apollodorus’ description of Tydeus as laying out ἡμιθνήτος, in which he exists in a zone of indistinction, neither living fully and convivially but also not yet having expired and become fully disjointed.

⁹² Cf. Wein 2022 on the *kósmos* that Zeus institutes, which itself is argued to be an apparatus used by Zeus to bring his will (*boulē*) to fruition. Cf. Wilson 2007 on Homer’s *boulē Diós*.

haired Achaeans may give him burial, and heap up for him a mound by the wide Hellespont.”⁹³

This passage is peculiar on account of the proximity between *sōma* and *nékus*, since both are, ostensibly, in reference to the same thing: a person who is no longer living. The key factor here is that Hector is speaking of his *own* body (*sōma emón*). We have already seen that *sōma* is often rendered possessively/genitively (i.e., ‘my *sōma*,’ ‘the *sōma* of [X]’) in reference to the part of the person that will be motionless once their *thūmós* and/or their *psukhē* leave them. Likewise, there is a subjunctive air that surrounds Hector’s body—he does not know, but he is preparing for the event that he does become subject to forces hostile to him; that is, if he becomes a *sōma*. At such a juncture, will it be cared for properly according to *nómos*? It is uncertain, given the vicissitudes and human costs of what has become a war of attrition. Hector’s *teúkhē*, however, are free to be plundered (*sulēsas*) from him.⁹⁴ The *nékus*, on the other hand, refers to an unknown, heretofore hypothetical opponent. Indeed, it refers to the totality of another individual who, at the moment, is living, but one who could also die. Therefore, *nékus* is the anonymized, impersonal corpse, but one that Hector has acknowledged will be duly honored—that is, he will return his opponent’s body for it to be cared for appropriately. Jean-Pierre Vernant’s analysis of death in the *Iliad* adds an additional dimension to this scene, for Hector, alongside his very life, loses his youth (*hēbē*), which is arguably more egregious than Patroclus’ own, since the former might have been younger. It is this same *hēbē* that Achilles guarantees for himself in perpetuity by choosing a short life and an early, heroic death. While the warrior is alive, his youth appears primarily in vigor (*biē*), strength (*kratos*), and endurance (*alkē*); when he has become a weak,

⁹³ Passage translations are by A. T. Murray and revised by W. F. Wyatt.

⁹⁴ Cf. Dué, Lupack, and Lamberton 2020 on weapons and armor in Homer.

lifeless corpse, the glow of his youth persists in the beauty of his body. “So long as the body is alive, it is seen as a system of organs and limbs animated by their individual impulses; it is a locus for the meeting, and occasional conflict, of impulses or competing forces,” writes Vernant.⁹⁵ At death, when the body is deserted by these, it acquires its formal unity. After being the subject of and medium for various actions, more or less spontaneous, it has become wholly an object for others. Above all, it becomes an object of contemplation and a visual spectacle, and, therefore, it ought to become the focus for care, mourning, and funeral rites.

In my argument for *sōma*’s meaning of the body that has been improperly subjected, the treatment of Hector’s body by the Achaeans (22.369-75), who look upon his stature (*phuē*) and beautiful form (*eidos agētón*) before violating those very things by impaling it, realizes his fears of becoming a *sōma*.⁹⁶ He has, in a manner of speaking, been extirpated from the world’s economy of *timē*,⁹⁷ and, at that this juncture, has not received the share of fire that is, culturally, his due.

In the following passage, we are shown Hector in fear of (but also, it could be argued—given that he knows his opponent and their state of mind—sure of his fate) becoming a *sōma*, where the threat of becoming prey to lesser animals is a stark possibility (μή με ἔα παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνας καταδάψαι Ἀχαιῶν). Indeed, lines 342-43 use the same language as 7.79-80:

***Iliad* 22.339-43**

<p>λίσσομ’ ὑπὲρ ψυχῆς καὶ γούνων σῶν τε τοκίων μή με ἔα παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνας καταδάψαι Ἀχαιῶν, ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν χαλκόν τε ἄλις χρυσόν τε δέδεξο δῶρα τά τοι δώσουσι πατήρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ, σῶμα δὲ οἴκαδ’ ἐμὸν δόμεναι πάλιν, ὄφρα πυρός με Τρῶες καὶ Τρώων ἄλοχοι λελάχωσι θανόντα.</p>	<p>“I beg you by your life and knees and your own parents, do not let the dogs devour me by the ships of the Achaeans; but take heaps of bronze and gold, gifts that my father and queenly mother will give you, but my sōma give to be taken back to my home, so that the Trojans and the</p>
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⁹⁵ Cf. Vernant 1991, p. 62. My sincere thanks to Matt Newman for bringing Vernant’s work to my attention.

⁹⁶ Cf. Holmes 2010, pp. 67-72 for an extended analysis of this scene.

⁹⁷ Cf. Holmes 2007 on the ‘economy of *timē*’ in the *Iliad*.

Trojans' wives may give me my share of fire in my death."

Just as Hector's armor could be freely stripped from his person, so, too, can material gifts and riches be taken from him, but he beseeches Achilles to give that which he *knows* will be made an object back to those who will do his *sōma* proper reverence.

In this next passage from the *Odyssey*, *sōma* is used comparably, where Odysseus has just finished the ritual required to converse with the dead:

Odyssey 11.51-55

<p>πρώτη δὲ ψυχὴ Ἑλπήνορος ἦλθεν ἐταίρου: οὐ γάρ πω ἐτέθαπτο ὑπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης: σῶμα γὰρ ἐν Κίρκης μεγάρῳ κατελείπομεν ἡμεῖς ἄκλαυτον καὶ ἄθαπτον, ἐπεὶ πόνος ἄλλος ἔπειγε.</p>	<p>"The first to come was the spirit of my comrade Elpenor. Not yet had he been buried beneath the broad-wayed earth, for we had left his sōma behind us in the hall of Circe, unwept and unburied, since another task was then urging us on."</p>
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This *sōma* refers to the body that has been subject to the grave ignominies of remaining *áklautos* and *áthaptos* in Circe's palace, in a use eerily similar to that of the previous passage for Hector. Their states of existence—one alive (Hector) and the other dead (Elpenor)—have no bearing; they both either will or have been subject to culturally inadmissible objectification. Tellingly, in *Odyssey* 12.10-13, when Odysseus and his companions return to recover Elpenor's corpse and hold a proper funeral for him, the choice word is consistently *nekūs/nekρός*. There, it is used appositively in the expression *nekròn Elpēnora*, 'deceased Elpenor.'

In this passage, *sōma* is used in the same manner, wherein the souls of the suitors, murdered by Odysseus, are speaking with Agamemnon's own:

Odyssey 24.186-87

<p>ὥς ἡμεῖς, Ἀγάμεμνον, ἀπωλόμεθ', ὧν ἔτι καὶ νῦν σώματ' ἀκηδέα κεῖται ἐνὶ μεγάροις Ὀδυσῆος:</p>	<p>Thus we perished, Agamemnon, and even now our sōmata still lie uncared-for in the halls of Odysseus.</p>
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Noteworthy is the fact that the suitors' *sōmata*, like Elpenor's once was, lay apathetically *akēdēs*.

Unlike Elpenor, however, they will never find themselves honored with right-proper burials.

Herein, the Achaeans are building the pyre for Patroclus' cremation:

Iliad 23.166-69

πολλὰ δὲ ἴφια μῆλα καὶ εἰλίποδας ἔλικας βοῦς
πρόσθε πυρῆς ἔδερόν τε καὶ ἄμφεπον: ἐκ δ' ἄρα πάντων
δημὸν ἐλῶν ἐκάλυψε **νέκυν** μεγάθυμος Ἀχιλλεὺς
ἔς πόδας ἐκ κεφαλῆς, περὶ δὲ **δρατὰ σώματα** νήει.

And many noble sheep and many sleek cattle of shambling gait they flayed and dressed before the pyre; and from them all great-hearted Achilles gathered the fat, and enfolded the **nékūs** in it from head to foot, and about him heaped the **flayed sōmata**.

Close in proximity again, we see that the two terms are to be differentiated. *Nékus* stands substantively for the deceased Patroclus as a whole being who is being cared for in accordance with time-honored custom; in fact, *nékus* is the word used with the same meaning in previous lines.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the specificity of *es pódas ek kephalēs*, 'from head to foot,' makes it indisputable that we are speaking about Patroclus' entire being, which, while dead, is still whole inasmuch as it can be. *Sōma*, on the other hand and as we have seen, here denotes animals' flayed bodies for the purposes of funereal sacrifice; indeed, they have been instrumentalized in service of another aim. As such, the significance rests in the corporeality of these static bodies, their mass. These animal *sōmata* have no importance vested in their identities, which have been mediatized into an anonymous collective.

In the following passage. Circe shares with Odysseus the dangers of sailing past the Planktai:

⁹⁸ Cf. 23.160: κήδεός ἐστι νέκυς; παρὰ δ' οἷ τ' ἀγοὶ ἄμμι μενόντων; 23.165: ἐν δὲ πυρῇ ὑπάτη νεκρὸν θέσαν ἀχνύμενοι κῆρ.

Odyssey 12.66-68

τῆ δ' οὐ πώ τις νηῦς φύγεν ἀνδρῶν, ἧ τις ἵκηται,
ἀλλὰ θ' ὁμοῦ πίνακας τε νεῶν καὶ **σώματα φωτῶν**
κύμαθ' ἀλὸς φορέουσι πυρός τ' ὀλοοῖο θύελλαι.

And thereby has no ship of men ever yet escaped that has come thither, but the planks of ships and **sōmata of men** are whirled confusedly by the waves of the sea and the blasts of baneful fire.

Of the *sōmata* here, both Hermann Koller and E.L. Harrison say that they do not refer to the dead.⁹⁹ In our broader context, whether they are alive or not is not the most vital implication at play here. What is of note here is the poet's juxtaposition of humans' *sōmata* and ships' *pinakes*. The latter, made of wood, were the principal material in shipbuilding, and that they comprise (most of) the physical mass of a given ship. Relatedly, the *sōma* is an inert form without the ability to move itself—indeed, they are both born along (*phoreîn*) by waves and fire. Such a connection shows *sōmata* as purely objects (indeed, it is used in a genitive construction) and the notion of their inert instrumentality is heightened by their proximity to a material substance like wooden planks.

Iliad 3.21-28

τὸν δ' ὡς οὖν ἐνόησεν ἀρηϊφίλος Μενέλαος
ἐρχόμενον προπάροιθεν ὀμίλου μακρὰ βιβάντα,
ὡς τε λέων ἐχάρη **μεγάλῳ** ἐπὶ **σώματι** κύρσας
εὐρῶν ἢ ἔλαφον κεραδὸν ἢ ἄγριον αἶγα
πεινάων: μάλα γάρ τε κατεσθίει, εἴ περ ἂν αὐτὸν
σεύωνται ταχέες τε κύνες θαλεροὶ τ' αἰζηοί:
ὡς ἐχάρη Μενέλαος Ἀλέξανδρον θεοειδέα
ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδῶν:

But when Menelaus, dear to Ares, caught sight of [Paris] as he came out in front of the throng with long strides, then just as a lion is glad when he comes upon a **large sōma**, having found a horned stag or a wild goat when he is hungry; for greedily doth he devours it, even though swift dogs and vigorous youths set on him: so was Menelaus glad when his eyes beheld godlike Alexander;

⁹⁹ Koller 1958, p. 277; Harrison 1960, p. 64.

Murray’s translation of *méga sōma* as “great carcase” manifestly shows his perspective on the semantics of *sōma*, but—it is necessary to note—Paris, who is likened to the *méga sōma* in this extended simile, is alive and remains so. Nonetheless, my argument for *sōma* is that it denotes the state of one becoming subject, a feast for others, consumable, and static. Indeed, our understanding of *sōma* as also denoting corporeality and material mass gains strength because of the lion’s pleasure when it comes upon an animal, such as a horned stag or a wild goat, seemingly increasing on account of its largeness and physique. A source of edification for our argument might be found intertextually, namely, from the author of the archaic, pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*, who seems to understand *sōma* as capable of referring to a living person:

Interlude: *Shield of Heracles* 425-28

<p>αὐτὸς δὲ βροτολοιγὸν Ἄρην προσιόντα δοκεύσας, δεινὸν ὄρων ὄσσοισι, λέων ὧς σώματι κύρσας, ὃς τε μάλ' ἐνδυκέως ῥινὸν κρατεροῖς ὀνύχεσσι σχίσσας ὅττι τάχιστα μελίφρονα θυμὸν ἀπήυρα·</p>	<p>And as mortal-destroying Ares attacked he himself [Heracles] observed him closely, glaring terribly with his eyes, like a lion that has come upon an animal and, very ravenously rending the hide with his strong claws, deprives it as quickly as possible of its sweet spirit.¹⁰⁰</p>
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Written in imitation of the above passage from the *Iliad*, the meaning of *sōma* matches the one we are proposing therein, a match made even more explicit given that the quarry of the lion is alive—it is the pleasure of rendering something a *sōma* (i.e., extirpating its means to be an agent and/or alive). *Sōma* is undeniably correlated here, then, with a living person. The lion simile, too, reappears later in the *Iliad*, when the Achaeans are trying to protect Patroclus’ corpse from Hector’s rage:

¹⁰⁰ This translation is that prepared by Glenn W. Most.

Iliad 18.161-64

<p>ὥς δ' ἀπὸ σώματος οὐ τι λέοντ' αἴθωνα δύνανται ποιμένες ἄγραυλοι μέγα πεινάοντα δίεςθαι, ὥς ῥα τὸν οὐκ ἐδύναντο δύο Αἴαντε κορυστὰ Ἴκτορα Πριαμίδην ἀπὸ νεκροῦ δειδίξασθαι.</p>	<p>And as shepherds in the field cannot in any way drive from a sōma a tawny lion when he hungers greatly, so the two warriors Aiantes could not frighten Hector, Priam's son, away from the nékros.</p>
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The lion is near to its target, which could already be dead or about to die, and it is rendering it impossible for the shepherds to retrieve its motionless body. In this passage, too, *sōma* denotes a form without the ability to move itself, one that must be enacted upon by an external force.

Meanwhile, Patroclus' corpse is described as a *nekros*, because he has just died and his wholeness as an individual yet remains in the corpse.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

At the opening of this chapter, I spoke of nefarious human actors like *sōmatémporoi* and *mangones* who traffic and trade in enslaved persons for the labor that they have the capacity to perform. Such dealers are co-representatives of the world in which the enslaved are variously termed *andrápodon* (lit., “one with the feet of a man”),¹⁰² *oikétēs* (lit., “one who lives in house”), and *akólouthos* (lit., “one who accompanies”)—all designations that synonymize the entirety of the enslaved individual's personhood to an external entity. Such people are not corpses in particular senses of the word, but their nonexistent sociopolitical lives and objectifying, instrumentalizing treatment seem to share in the notion of inertness that our recasting of *sōma* recalls, in which the person is no longer recuperable for proper social life. Their lives are

¹⁰¹ This translation comes from Glenn W. Most. Cf. 18.173: οἱ μὲν ἀμυνόμενοι νέκυος πέρι τεθνηῶτος; 18.180: σοὶ λώβη, αἶ κέν τι νέκυς ἠσχυμμένος ἔλθῃ. These two lines use *nékus* in the sense outlined in the above passage.

¹⁰² This is, ostensibly, in direct opposition to *tetrápodon*, or “quadruped.” However, it is difficult to extricate the semantic sense of “livestock” that *tetrápodon* has from the objectification inherent to *andrápodon*.

ontologically necrotized, if not necropolitical.¹⁰³ Indeed, in terms of the conceptual field of sociology, Orlando Patterson understood modern slavery as a form of social death,¹⁰⁴ one in which the institution of slavery robs the enslaved person of their “socially recognized existence outside of his [*sic*] master,” which transforms them into a “social nonperson.”¹⁰⁵ I argue that the arguments put forward in this chapter prove that slavery in antiquity inscribed much of the same status upon enslaved persons. Such a technology of oppression is one that dovetails with power and dominion, and all instances of Homeric *sōma*, looking beyond its status as a “corpse,” participate in an ecology of being where they have been mastered; or, rather, the threat of being so looms large. This reading provides an all-important continuity for the later Platonic ideal of a *sōma* subordinated to a governing *psukhē*, as I postulated at the beginning of this chapter. Indeed, even in Plato, the soul is self-moving, while the body is inert.¹⁰⁶

Nonetheless, the semantics of *sōma* do shift in later thinkers, with it no longer being a certain perspective from which the whole person is viewed, but, instead, one of the two parts into which humans are divided. In this division, the *sōma* emerges as, to use the language of Brooke Holmes, a “conceptual object,”¹⁰⁷ one which, by having been explicated in terms of interiority and exteriority, becomes the subject of prognosis- and praxis-focused medical care.¹⁰⁸ Working from the stage of porosity and affectivity of the person in the Homeric epics, I will examine the emergence of the medical *tékhnē* in the fifth-century B.C.E. in pas-de-deux with Presocratic approaches to perception and cognition, in the light of the person’s constitution as ‘living matter.’ Indeed, I will discuss the theoretical contexts and intellectual processes through which

¹⁰³ Cf. Mbembe 2003 and 2019; Henao Castro 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Patterson 1982.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Patterson 2016.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 245e, 3-246a, 1 on soul being what moves itself and as the source of movement (*kinēsis*).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Holmes 2017, p. 37.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. DeHart 1999, pp. 349-82 on this approach in Hippocratic medicine.

humans could be conceived of, and represented, as a ‘perceiving body’—i.e., a *complex* and nonetheless *coherent* perceptual, cognitive, as well as biological, unity.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ On the emergence of the ‘subject,’ cf. Holmes 2010, pp. 121-91.

II. CHAPTER TWO

Holistic Networks of Care, Perception, and Community

sōma, or A Conceptual and Epistemic Object

In the previous chapter, I recast the *Wortfeld* of the Homeric *sōma*, with an eye to problematizing arguments that it simply meant ‘corpse.’ These claims, as we saw, are buoyed by the legitimizing power of Aristarchus of Samothrace’s commentary and broad buy-in to an *argumentum ex silentio*, two factors that have contributed to its finding currency in scholarly discourse.¹¹⁰ Rather, I argued that the term *sōma* represents both the realization and the anxiety of being made prey to culturally inadmissible forms of subjection that extirpate the individual from social life, an event signified most strongly by (the fear of) consumption, both cannibal and not.¹¹¹

In the selfsame chapter, I also stressed, through the specter of the solid, living,¹¹² and layered nature of *chrōs*, that this most exterior stratum of the body is synaptically connected to the body’s more opaque, internal parts.¹¹³ Indeed, if conceived of as an aesthetic covering, *chrōs* signifies the barrier between the unaffected body and the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ world, between physical and psychic ‘intrusion.’ When it is affected, however—whether by consumption, liquification,¹¹⁴ piercing, penetration by a weapon, or rendered pliant by pain, joy, temerity, and

¹¹⁰ Cf. Dodds 1951, pp. 15-17; Vivante 1955; Koller 1958, p. 276; Fränkel 1975, p. 76; Ferwerda 1986, pp. 111-12; Redfield 1994, p. 175; Clarke 1999, pp. 115-19. Cf. Renehan 1979, p. 274, who explicitly notes that the *communis opinio* view is problematically rooted in an *argumentum ex silentio*.

¹¹¹ Though *sōma* is not directly referenced there, one cannot help but think of *Iliad* 1.3-5: πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν ἥρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεύχε κύνεσσιν οἰωνοῖσι τε πᾶσι (“And many strong souls of heroes were sent forth to Hades, and they themselves made prey to dogs and for all birds”). Citing these lines, Vivante 1983 argues that the body in Homer is the *autós*, describing it as coterminous with the person until they meet their death.

¹¹² This is in opposition to *dérma*, which has been shown capable of referring to a dead animal’s coat (cf. *Il.* 10.23).

¹¹³ Cf. Gundert 1992, p. 453, n. 2 on the language of internal physiology in Hippocratic medicine.

¹¹⁴ The verb *tēkesthai* has the sense of both physical and emotional liquification, as we see at *Odyssey* 19.205 and 206, wherein the word is used to reference the melting of snow. In that same Homeric context, however, it is also used in reference to the lachrymose Penelope, who is pictured as physically ‘dissolving’ in sadness (*Od.* 19.204, 207, and 208) and such affects both her *chrōs* (204) and cheeks (*pareiai*, 208).

suffering—there is a breakdown in binaries between the *khros* and the person’s inner parts that evinces a sense of pluralized unity. This unity comes to be from the newly created similarity in texture between the *khros* and the inner parts, which opens an aperture to influence, both prophylactic and pathogenic, and deformation. The question, then, becomes how does this affectable, porous form in Homer come to be fully articulated, embodied, but not yet laden by ideas of a Platonic-Cartesian “ghost in the machine?”¹¹⁵ Likewise, how does this form come to be conceptualized as an object subject to (but, frequently, beyond)¹¹⁶ human epistemologies, technologies, and therapeutics?¹¹⁷

In this chapter, I put forth the argument that the *epistēmai* of sense-perception and embodied cognition in the Pre-Platonics—namely, Empedocles—and the emergent Hippocratic, medical *tékhnē* can be read sympathetically as processes of thought that represent attempts to articulate the production of a *sōma* that has an internal, impersonal—as opposed to daemonic—space that is subject to anthropologically-driven care and discursive speculation, theorization, and hypothesis.¹¹⁸ I, too, pay special court to the figures of fluids and *haîma* (blood) as suspensions in which the body that has a *phúsis* (nature) takes shape. Ultimately, I end with an argument on how fifth-century medico-environmental discourse is implicated in the conscious creation of *éthnē*.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Ryle 1949.

¹¹⁶ Such is the imperativity of the medical symptom in initiating medical care. On Hippocratic medicine as praxis and prognosis-based, cf. DeHart 1999.

¹¹⁷ Here, I am trading on the semantics of language inherent to the respective works of Brooke Holmes (“conceptual object”; cf. 2010 and 2017, but, particularly, the latter) and Verity Platt (“epistemic object(s)” and the importance of sea sponges in Hippocratic medical discourse; forthcoming from Oxford University Press) to articulate the figure of the form that emergences as able to be known, both consistently and not, by human learning.

¹¹⁸ On the depersonalizing turn in causes in the post-Homeric era, cf. Holmes 2010, pp. 116-20.

Cosmological Doctors¹¹⁹

During the approximately three centuries between the Homeric and Hippocratic eras, a discourse—variously known as *περὶ φύσεως ἱστορία* (“the inquiry into nature”), *τὰ φυσικά* (“natural things”), and *φυσική*—emerged in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. While the exact reasons for the emergence of natural philosophy are opaque,¹²⁰ what is clear is that the thinkers associated with the Pre-Platonic tradition shared an interest in devolving causes (*aitía*) from personal agents to impersonal forces, with the aim of imposing a knowable regularity and order upon the natural world from observation of phenomena.¹²¹ To provide an account of this nature (*phúsis*), I think it worthwhile to take an excursus into its earliest extant appearance.

Homeric *phúsis*

The earliest appearance in Greek literature of the word *phúsis* is in the *Odyssey*, at 10.303. While its verbal forms *phúō* and *phúomai*—to grow, to beget, to bring forth, to be born—occur rather frequently,¹²² its nominalized form is a *hapax legomenon* in the Homeric corpus. Gerard Naddaf, in his exposition on the meaning of *perí phúseōs*, quotes linguist Émile Benveniste, who says that the affixation of the *-sis* suffix to the root *phúō* to form a noun of action conveys “the (completed) realization of a becoming—that is to say, the nature [of a thing]

¹¹⁹ As Camden 2023 terms the authors of the Hippocratic treatises *On Flesh*, *On Breaths*, and *On Regimen*. I, myself, in order to avoid the connotations that words such as “doctor,” “physician,” and “healer” bear within themselves, have chosen the orthographic convention of transliterating the Greek word for a medical practitioner: *īātrós*. Camden contends that these authors used cosmological principles as a supplement to, rather than a replacement of, more traditional approaches to health and disease, creating theories about the cosmos, whose obscurities can best be understood as the products of medical thinking, in an attempt to rehabilitate customary views of the intersections between medicine and cosmology. I use this phrase here to show that the customary divide between medicine (typically seen as a therapeutic of the *sōma*) and philosophy (typically conceived of as the therapeutic of the *psukhē*) did not always exist.

¹²⁰ Working against the teleological, malignant connotations of any “Greek miracle” in the early history of philosophy, Sassi 2018 speaks of a “*plurality* [emphasis in original] of beginnings of philosophy in Greece... in different contexts and different periods” (xiv-v).

¹²¹ DeHart 1999, p. 376, astutely notes the variegated “sacral intensities” of archaic space-time, which contrast with the homogeneity of Ionian cosmology.

¹²² *Odyssey* 1.381; 5.63, 238, 241, 477, 481; 7.114, 119, 128; 9.109, 141; 10.303, 393, 397; 18.410; 20.268; 23.190; 24.410. *Iliad* 1.235; 4.109, 483, 484; 6.148, 149; 14.288, 347; 18.372, 409, 412, 468, 470; 21.352.

as it is realized, with all its properties.”¹²³ While compelling from the perspective of a totalized, Aristotelian conception of nature, Emanuela Bianchi wisely points us to similarly-formed words—*poiēsis* (“poetry, skillful making”), *phthīsis* (“decay, waning”), *dōsis* (“giving, apportionment”)—that indicate a sense of completion, revelation, and manifestation is not to be taken as either necessary or for granted with this part of speech, but, rather, it may simply refer to ongoing, inchoative processes;¹²⁴ indeed, the aforementioned words are typically rendered into English as gerunds.¹²⁵ Understanding early Greek *phūsis* in this more dynamic light lessens our chance of reading it anachronistically, obviating the teleological connotations of Aristotle, the Hippocratics, and Galen.¹²⁶ *Phūsis*, then, when conceived of as both a foundational aspect of human existence and also of the non-human world, can be seen as coming to light not only in language that is always hegemonic, determined, and normative, but simply in and for itself. Indeed, with recourse to Heraclitus’ fragments, I agree with Bianchi’s reading of early Greek *phūsis* as capable of being rehabilitated as a phenomenological space of queer performativity and playfulness, of showing forth and hiding away.¹²⁷

We come upon *phūsis* in a portion of the text in which Odysseus is recounting his experiences of preternatural beings and realms; or, as Dennis Schmidt articulates, his encounters

¹²³ Naddaf 2005, p. 12, citing Benveniste 1948, pp. 78-9. For another brief yet incisive perspective, see Jones 1973.

¹²⁴ By means of the *-sc-* infix, Latin is rich in verbs with inchoative aspect (*nascor*, *crescō*, *vesperāscit*, etc.) that denote the beginning of a state. Greek’s ingressive aorist covers much of the same ground (*ebasileusa*, *edākṛūsa*, etc.).

¹²⁵ Bianchi 2019, p. 219; on words with *-sis* suffixes, she cites Herbert Weir Smyth, §840 “Names of Actions and Abstract Substantives,” in Smyth 1920, p. 230.

¹²⁶ Kovačić 2001 notes that *phūsis* is used 618 times across the *corpus Hippocraticum*, approximately 623 times across the three magna opera of Aristotle’s works on biology (*History of Animals*, *Generation of Animals*, and *Parts of Animals*), and thousands of times by Galen, who, per the author, establishes a tripartite orthography for his hierarchy of *phūsis*: “Die Physis als das dem Individuum immanente Agens wollen wir als Φύσις schreiben; die Physis als das κοινὸν εἶδος als Φύσις; die Physis als den göttlichen Demiurg als ΦΥΣΙΣ” (p. 87). The long shadow cast by *phūsis* across these texts highlights the word’s polysemy, and one can say that such prominence arises from what seems like the multivalent quality of *phūsis* among the Pre-Platonics.

¹²⁷ Bianchi 2019, p. 218.

“with a natural world that is full of strangeness and surprise.”¹²⁸ Particularly, we are in the episode where Odysseus is working to free his crewmen from the theriomorphizing *pharmakeía* of the *poluphármaikos* Circe, who has captured them and transformed them into swine. However, just as he has traversed the sacred glen to enter her palace, his purported great-grandfather Hermes appears at his side, bearing knowledge of a useful drug (*phármakon esthlón*) called “Moly,” which has the ability to protect him from Circe’s own concoctions and sorcery.¹²⁹ Once it is manifest that he is impervious to her spells, Circe will make to attack him with her “very long wand” (περιμήκης ράβδος), and Odysseus is to rush upon her, drawing his “sharp sword” (ξίφος οχύ) from alongside “his thigh” (παρὰ μηροῦ). To allay his attack, she will then invite him to her bed, which he is to proceed to, in order to persuade her to restore his companions to freedom and to their human forms. The enmeshment of erotic lure with the pharmacological, of the sensual with the supernatural, is conspicuous here, and has distinct nodes of resonance throughout Odysseus’ *nóstos*.¹³⁰ Of the drug, Homer describes,

ὥς ἄρα φωνήσας πόρε φάρμακον ἀργεῖφόντης
 ἐκ γαίης ἐρύσας, καί μοι φύσιν αὐτοῦ ἔδειξε.
 ρίζη μὲν μέλαν ἔσκε, γάλακτι δὲ εἴκελον ἄνθος:
 μῶλυ δὲ μιν καλέουσι θεοί: χαλεπὸν δέ τ’ ὀρύσσειν
 ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι, θεοὶ δὲ τε πάντα δύνανται.

(*Od.* 10.302-6)

So he spoke, then Argeïphóntēs gave me the drug (φάρμακον),
 pulled from the earth, and he showed (ἔδειξε) the *phúsis* of it to me.
 With respect to the root, it was black, and the flower was like milk:
 “Moly” the gods call it: and it is difficult to dig up (ὀρύσσειν),
 for mortal men, at any rate, but the gods are capable of all things.

¹²⁸ Schmidt 2013, p. 168.

¹²⁹ Note that the quality of a *phármakon*—whether healing or noxious—is indeterminate, if the sense is not determined by an epithet (as it typically is in Homer): “φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλά... πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά,” *Od.* 4.230; “τόδε φάρμακον ἐσθλόν,” 10.287, cf. 292; φάρμακα ἦπια, ὀδονήφατα; κακὰ φάρμακα 10.213; φάρμακα λυγρά 10.236; φάρμακον οὐλόμενον 10.394; “ἀνδροφόνον,” 1.261; “θυμοφθόρα φάρμακα,” 2.329.

¹³⁰ The episodes with Circe, Calypso, Nausicaä, and the Sirens all have, to some extent, suggestive undertones. In his monograph devoted to Achilles and the *Iliad*, Fantuzzi 2012 thoroughly analyses the different perceptions of Homer’s sense for love throughout Greco-Roman antiquity.

It is Hermes' godhood that permits him to show a mortal like Odysseus the Moly's *phúsis*, which is explained to us in terms of its phenomenal structure: it has a black root and a flower that is milk-like (ostensibly in color).¹³¹ Here, *phúsis* does not refer to the unseen, pharmacological properties that permit Odysseus to be rendered invulnerable to Circe's power, but its appearance: a black root—hidden from the light of day and from mortal knowledge, difficult to dig up (*khalepón... orússein*)—and a flower resembling milk (*gálakti... eikelon*), visible in the open air. Gods, on the other hand, have no such limitations and may expose (*deiknūmi*—to make known, to point out, to bring to light, to display) *phúsis* to humans.¹³² Schmidt and Naddaf both magnify the uprooting of the *phármakon* as the moment of its revelation as a totality, with Schmidt remarking that it is “the movement that makes this plant whole and that brings it to realization.”¹³³ Undoubtedly, the Moly's entire structure is shown forth by Hermes' actions, but it is, I must emphasize, an ongoing, inceptive process. For the *phúsis* is ever emerging into the openness of the wider, human world as an act of growth itself, its black root drawing away from the chthonic, obfuscatory earth and its milky-flower blossoming into the realm of light, appearance, and perceptibility.¹³⁴ It would seem as if *phúsis* here purely pertains to externality,

¹³¹ Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 14.291-2: *Pacifer huic dederat florem Cyllenius album, / moly vocant superi, nigra radice tenetur.* – (“Peace-bearing Cyllenius had given a white flower to this man [Ulysses], “Moly” those above call it; by a black root is it upheld”). The particular “Moly” or the plant that may have served as its inspiration is unknown; Schmidt 2013 cites a cadre of investigations, observing that such uncertainty is natural, given that we are only given its divinely-given name, not its mortal one (p. 169).

¹³² Bianchi 2019 (p. 220) cites Heubeck's portion (books 9-12) of the Heubeck and Hoekstra commentary (1990), noting that *deiknūmi*'s sense of explaining serves as proof that *phúsis* may refer to “the hidden power within the plant” (p. 60), an explanation which I read as anachronistically associating *phúsis* with Aristotelian and post-Aristotelian metaphysics of *dúnamis* (power, capacity, ability, potentiality).

¹³³ Schmidt 2013, p. 169.

¹³⁴ I think it is worthwhile to raise the question of the color binary—black root and milk-white flower—with recourse to the vividly ekphrastic image that it would have created for a rhapsode's audience during a recitation. Indeed, there are many scenes throughout the Homeric corpus that attest to the expanse of the poet's imagination (cf. *Iliad* 11.267-72, where Agamemnon's pain, after having been stabbed clean through the arm by the Trojan warrior Coön's spear (11.251-53), is likened to that of a woman in childbirth (ὥς δ' ὄτ' ἄν ὠδίνουσαν ἔχη βέλος ὀξὺ

hinting at nothing of an internal “nature” being revealed. Indeed, in a sense, there might not even be one to distinguish. For, taking Homer as our horizon, the inside of anything can be likened to a black box, whereby it only becomes manifest via symptoms. Or, in the case of human and divine agents, when they have had their corporeity compromised.¹³⁵ In a manner of speaking, we find ourselves privy to the particular natures of Ares and Aphrodite—their *ikhōr*—when their respective integrities are violated by Diomedes’ spear in *Iliad* 5.¹³⁶ I would thus argue that the poet has no conception of a separate, internal *phúsis* that is differential or can be differentiated from the phenomenal *phúsis* of an object. At any rate, Bianchi recalibrates the stakes of the deracination of the Moly, referring to it as a transgression of the earth’s surface, symbolizing its potentially duplicitous nature—either panacea or poison—that distinguishes it from the landscape, including other plants, animals, and elements,¹³⁷ in its spanning of the binaries of emergence and concealment, of prophylaxis and pathogenesis.

Halves of A Whole: Early Medicine and Philosophy

“Philosophy” and “medicine” are headings that, although not entirely inappropriate to the early Greek period, may easily conceal the very substantial overlap that existed between the various areas of activity. Making too rigid a use of these concepts presents a risk of

γυναῖκα... ὡς ὄξει ὀδύνη δύνον μένος Ἄτρεΐδαιο), a thoroughly hapactic simile). For an in-depth analysis of this scene and its stakes within the broader context of the *Iliad*, see Holmes 2007. For a particular instance of color binarism, cf. *Iliad* 5.354, where, after being struck by Diomedes’ spear, Aphrodite’s “beautiful skin became black” (μελαίνετο δὲ χροῖα καλόν). The gods do not have mortal *haîma* (“blood”), but an immortal *ikhōr* (“serum”) that runs through their bodies; per Jouanna and Demont 1981, *ikhōr* is already conceived of as a *clear* liquid in Homer, so this must be a purely dramatic choice on the poet’s part.

¹³⁵ Nomikos 2018 charts trauma across the Homeric epics, finding that, among the 190 reported cases across them, 178 were from guerrilla contexts, 6 from participation in sports, and the remaining 6 from miscellaneous activities (crushing of all the cranial bones due to the falling of a ship mast, *Od.* 12.411-14; fracture of the cervical spine from falling off a roof, which resulted in death, *Od.* 10.559-60; three from wild boar bites to the leg (*Od.* 19.393, 450-51; 23.74).

¹³⁶ See Loraux 1986; 1995, p. 93. For Holmes 2010, pp. 58-64 the dialectic between the seen and the felt is a vital node in the earliest stages of the physical body’s emergence before the later advent of the symptom.

¹³⁷ Empedocles’ later terming of the elements (*stokheîa*) earth, fire, water, and air as the “four roots of all things” (D57: τέσσαρα τῶν πάντων ῥιζώματα), however, complicates even this separation. Nonetheless, there is a rich analogy of vegetality here, with the elements-as-roots as the means by which things flower forth.

misrepresenting the views that the main protagonists in early Greek thought themselves had about the disciplines or intellectual contexts in which they positioned themselves. Moreover, it would be misleading to present the relationship between *īātroí* and philosophers solely in terms of interaction between science and philosophy, the empirical and the theoretical, the practical and the systematical, or observation and speculation; for this would ignore the philosophical, speculative, theoretical, or systematizing aspects of Greek medicine and science, as well as the extent to which empirical research and observation was part of the activities of people whom we have come to regard as philosophers. Thus, Empedocles, Democritus, Parmenides, Pythagoras, Alcmaeon, Philolaus, Diogenes of Apollonia, Plato, Aristotle, and Theophrastus took an active interest in subjects we commonly associate with medicine, such as the anatomy and the physiology of the human body, embryology and reproduction, youth and old age, respiration, the causes of disease and of the effects of food, drink, and pharmaceuticals on the body. Indeed, according to one major, authoritative ancient source, the Roman author Celsus (first century C.E.), it was under the umbrella of philosophy (*studium sapientiae*) that a theoretical, scientific interest in health and disease first started, and it was only when the *īātrós* Hippocrates “separated” the art of healing from this theoretical study of nature that medicine was turned into a domain of its own for the first time—yet without fully abandoning the link with “the study of the nature of things,” as Celsus himself recognizes when reflecting on developments within the field of dietetics during the fourth century B.C.E.¹³⁸

It would be quite wrong to regard this perception as just a later, anachronistic distortion or to believe that these medical interests of philosophers were nothing more than eccentric

¹³⁸ Cf. Celsus, *On Medicine* proem. 8-11. Bosak-Schroeder 2020, particularly chapter 4 (“Dietary Entanglements”), provides an overview of ethnographic accounts from Herodotus and Diodorus to demonstrate the ecological sense of terms such as *bíos* and *diáita*. Therein, they find that food shapes cultural and anthropological activity.

curiosity. To the Greek thinkers, these areas represented aspects of natural and human reality just as interesting and significant as the movements of the celestial bodies or the origins of earthquakes, and at least equally revealing of the underlying universal principles of stability and change. And it would be equally wrong to retroject the Aristotelian distinction between theoretical and practical sciences to the earlier period and to imply that while *īātroí* were primarily concerned with practical application, philosophers' interests in the medical area were limited to theoretical study or the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake without extending to clinical or therapeutic practice. Some are known to have put their ideas into practice, for example; Empedocles, who seems to have been engaged in considerable therapeutic activity, or Democritus, who seems to have carried out anatomical experiments on a significant scale. Such connections between theory and practical application are, of course, in accordance with the fact that, in the early Greek period, philosophy itself was hardly ever pursued entirely for its own sake and was deemed of considerable practical relevance, be it in the field of ethics and politics, in the technical mastery of natural things and processes, or in the provision of health and healing. We may rightly feel hesitant to call people such as Empedocles, Democritus, Pythagoras, and Alcmaeon *īātroí*, but this is largely because that term conjures up associations with types of professional organization and, indeed, specialization that only developed later, but which are inappropriate to the actual practice of the care for the human body in the archaic and early classical periods. The evidence for specialization in this period is sparse, for *īātroí* as well as mathematicians and other scientists, and there is good reason to believe that disciplinary boundaries, if they existed at all, were fluid and flexible. Indeed, it is not until the earliest treatises of the Hippocratic corpus, as Celsus notes, that medicine (*iatrikē*) attempts to emerge as a stable, reliable craft, or *tékhne*, of its own.

Celsus' work is especially noteworthy for its bifurcation of two alleged schools of medicine: the empiricists and the rationalists. Whereas the empiricists were proponents of empirical observation to decide whether a treatment was followed by its desired effects, the rationalists insisted that theory about how a treatment works was essential for choosing effective treatments. Indeed, the empiricists believed that, since many causes in nature were obscured from human view, speculation was a necessity. This is in opposition to the rationalists, a school, *per Celsus*, founded by Polybius, a son-in-law of Hippocrates. They claimed to follow the *dógmata* (opinions) of Hippocrates and believed that all origins of diseases had to be known in order to treat diseases effectively, and that both reason and experience were imperative. These qualities are fundamentally espoused in the Hippocratic *On Ancient Medicine*, a text that disdains the type of speculation to be found among earlier and contemporaneous philosophical overtures—a position that, thus, explains its importance in the history of Greek thought and the systemization of knowledge that drew lines in the epistemic field constituted by the “inquiry into nature”; namely, lines that contributed to the distinction between medicine and philosophy.

On Ancient Medicine, or The Novel tékhḗ

On Ancient Medicine (*VM*) is one of the earliest treatises in the Hippocratic corpus and, as such, offers an invaluable glimpse at an otherwise poorly documented period of intellectual history. What makes this text so intriguing is that, on the one hand, it sits comfortably within the familiar philosophical and scientific debates of late fifth-century Greece, but, on the other, offers what seem to be idiosyncratic approaches to them. At its most fundamental level, *On Ancient Medicine* offers a polemic against speculative philosophy that relies on a “novel hypothesis” (καὴν ὑπόθεσις, 1.3) to account for disease and formulate treatment, and argues for a method

that instead combines empirical research and analogical reasoning.¹³⁹ What is distinct about the work, however, is the author’s focus on food and dietary regimen as the foundation of medical *tékhnē* and the steps in their thinking that lead them to this position. To reach this conclusion, the author deploys in a now famous section of the work (ch. 3) their own form of hypothesizing about the condition of the human species in an imagined, prehistoric state of primitivity.

That chapter is, in part, a self-promotional argument for the antiquity and validity of medicine as a *tékhnē*, but it also deserves a place alongside other works of the period that took an interest in what might be called cultural anthropology. At any rate, *On Ancient Medicine* most famously stakes out its intellectual position in the polemical chapter 20. There, the author sets themselves against opponents to whom they refer as “certain *īātroí* and sophists” (τινες ἰητροὶ καὶ σοφισταί). It would be prudent for us, I believe, to resist the assumption for now that these ‘*īātroí* must mean ‘non-Hippocratic *īātroí*,’ and that *On Ancient Medicine* must, therefore, showcase uniquely Hippocratic views. As scholars have shown, after all, several other treatises in the corpus at least dally with some of the approaches *On Ancient Medicine*’s author is trying to repudiate.¹⁴⁰ We need only notice, however, that *On Ancient Medicine* is arguing against what seems to be a common, probably orthodox, approach of the late fifth-century that spoke of disease, the human body, and medicine in terms of cosmology and theories of nature (*phúsis*).¹⁴¹

Indeed, the author complains at the opening of chapter 20 that these theories “tend towards philosophy” and are more like “Empedocles or others who have written about nature from the beginning, as to what a human being is.”¹⁴² They then proceed to make several quite

¹³⁹ Cf. Schiefsky 2005, pp. 111-15, on the notion of ‘hypothesis’ as ‘basis’ or ‘foundation’ as opposed to the typical expectation of a meaning akin to ‘postulate.’

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Schiefsky 2005, pp. 20-23, who posits that that *VM*’s positionality is explicitly against the “materialist anthropology” to be found in *Fleashes* (cf. *Carn.* 1.188.1-11; *Vict.* 2.122-27).

¹⁴¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 295-98, where an extended bibliography is provided.

¹⁴² *VM* 20.1: τείνει... ὁ λόγος ἐς φιλοσοφίην καθάπερ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς ἢ ἄλλοι οἱ περὶ φύσιος γεγράφασιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὅ τί ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος.

striking claims, first that one can only have a precise understanding of nature from medicine,¹⁴³ and second that the aspect of human nature *īātroí* need especially to understand is “what a human being is in relation to things eaten and drunk, and what it is in relation to other practices, and what is the result of each thing on each person.”¹⁴⁴ This passage shows that *On Ancient Medicine* was concerned to address a fundamental controversy over how a doctor should conceptualize the etiology of disease and what the relationship is between this etiology and effective treatment. To understand the causes of diseases implies an understanding of the nature of human beings, and this is the main point of contention. Whereas the author’s opponents believe they can analyze human *phúsis* in terms of the interaction of a few ingredients (“laying down the same one or two things as the cause in all cases,” 1.1.5-6), whether it be Empedoclean elements (air, fire, water, and earth) or the related principles of hot, cold, wet, and dry, the author of *On Ancient Medicine* finds this approach both philosophically speculative and therapeutically misguided, as they demonstrate in chapter 13 with a hypothetical experiment, one which takes the shape of giving a feeble person a diet of only raw foods, watching them deteriorate in terms of health, and then reflecting upon how to restore their health.¹⁴⁵

As is often pointed out,¹⁴⁶ this debate is well entrenched in Pre-Platonic theorization concerning the *kósmos* and its material constituents. At the root, such theorizing reflects an interest in origins—origins of matter, origins of natural phenomena, and, for others, origins of human behavior and institutions. In this regard, *On Ancient Medicine* is simply another

¹⁴³ Cf. *VM* 20.2: νομίζω δὲ περὶ φύσιος γνῶναί τι σαφὲς οὐδαμῶθεν ἄλλοθεν εἶναι ἢ ἐξ ἰητρικῆς.

¹⁴⁴ *VM* 20.3: ὃ τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος πρὸς τὰ ἐσθιόμενα καὶ πινόμενα, καὶ ὃ τι πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα ἐπιτηδεύματα, καὶ ὃ τι ἀφ’ ἐκάστου ἐκάστῳ ξυμβήσεται.

¹⁴⁵ Indeed, the author *fully* understands that the patient will suffer for this experiment: εὖ οἶδ’ ὅτι πείσεται πολλὰ καὶ δεινὰ – (“I know well that they will suffer many terrible things”). For a comparanda of the ethics of the clinical encounter between the Hippocratics, Galen, and Rufus of Ephesus, cf. Letts 2015. Similar assumptions surrounding bodies used for experimentation appear at the beginning of *Nat. Hom.*, through *Art.*, and other texts of the Hippocratic corpus.

¹⁴⁶ For an overview of Pre-Platonic cosmologies, cf. Wright 2008.

installment in a familiar enough intellectual narrative. As such, the agenda of the author is to create a divide between philosophy—which, at its heart, is theoretical and speculative—and medicine, which the Hippocratics practice as empirical, applied, and, above all, a *tékhnē* rooted in reality and precision (*akrībeia*).¹⁴⁷ Nonetheless, there is significant overlap in how the Pre-Platonics and early Hippocratic writers approach the question of the body that has a *phúsis*, particularly in how they conceive of it in terms of it as a vehicle of sense-perception and cognition.

Empedocles' Embodied Cognition: Localized and Haptic

If we understand a person to be a mixture of phenomenologically experienced parts and a physical form that participates in the world, the question becomes, then, how exactly, and by what apparatus, is that world conceived of, perceived, and thought through? While explicit words for intelligence (*phrónēsis*, *súnesis*, *diánoia*) are later inventions, overtures for a concomitant 'mind' to be localized recall those made for Homeric *phrénes*, *thūmós*, *étor*, etc.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, some Hippocratic authors assume that it is situated in the blood,¹⁴⁹ while others assume that the heart is the seat of cognition (*gnómē*).¹⁵⁰ I am drawn to establishing a connection between these two particular strands of thought—that cognitive activity is rooted in either the blood or in the heart—for two reasons: 1) the primacy of blood as a substance of mortal life and 2) the bodily processing of emotions, knowledge, and thought. For these two phenomena, while featuring prominently in the Homeric epics, are never explicitly connected therein. However, in the

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Rosen 2017, p. 283; on general Hippocratic polemic, cf. Ducatillon 1973, esp. pp. 89-143; Jouanna 1999, pp. 181-209; Nutton 2013, pp. 64-71.

¹⁴⁸ For a general survey of the remarkably different ways that Hippocratic authors address this question, see Gundert 2000 and Van der Eijk 2005, pp. 124-31; cf. Singer 1992.

¹⁴⁹ See *De Flatibus* 14 and *De Morbo Sacro* 1.30.

¹⁵⁰ Namely, *De Corde* 10; cf. Langholf 1990, pp. 40-6, 50-1.

thought of Empedocles, the two are intertwined as a root of his notion of embodied cognition, wherein the “blood around the heart is for thought.”¹⁵¹

Indeed, Empedocles’ views on sense perception and cognition, belonging entirely to what Gábor Betegh calls the ‘portion model,’ argue that the soul, or another vehicle said to carry the psychic capacities of a human, is merely a portion of one or more specific materials that also have cosmic functions.¹⁵² This model “can give an account of how ‘psychic matter’ interacts with the other constituents of the cosmos, but is unable to explain the unity and self-identity of the individual soul,” Betegh surmises.¹⁵³ This inability, as a result, shows itself in Empedocles’ theories of sense perception and cognition. As we know, he, to use Roberto Lo Presti’s words, conceives of reality as a sort of “pan-aesthetic whole,”¹⁵⁴ where he puts *aísthēsis* and *phrónēsis*—that is, ‘perceiving’ and ‘thinking’—and each entity endowed with *aísthēsis* into a hierarchical scale ordered only by the criterion of the mixture (*krāsis*) of the four elementary roots,¹⁵⁵ which, according to Empedocles, all things consist of.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, he looks at perception as an activity resulting from like connections, an approach coherently localizes the seat of cognition in the blood. For he does not think it possible to find such a homogeneous and balanced mixture of the four elements in any other part of the body.¹⁵⁷ At the very same time, Empedocles admits that each region of the body can participate in *phrónēsis* in different ways, in proportion to the balance or lack of balance of the elements occurring in that specific part of the

¹⁵¹ D240: αἷμα... περικάρδιόν ἐστι νόημα.

¹⁵² Cf. Betegh 2006, pp. 29-32. The ‘portion model’ is in opposition to the ‘journey model,’ which is the framework that sees soul as the entity that departs the body after death and has a ‘cosmic migration.’ Betegh understands the Homeric *psukhē* and Pythagoreanism to follow this model). The material composition of the ‘stuff’ endowed with psychic function(s) is not of much importance to either model.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Lo Presti 2015, p. 168.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Empedocles D242, R69.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Ibid., R31, R3a-b, D80, D97, D127, D134c, D239, D56, R89, R90, R92, D85a; also D57. On the notable relevance of D80, cf. Giannantoni 1997, pp. 235-55.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Ibid., D240 and n. 42.

body. This account of the positioning of the mixture would explain, for example, why some can attain excellence in oratory eloquence while others are endowed with manual and technical skills: as reported by Theophrastus in *De sensibus* 11, “In one case the happy mixture (*krâsis*) is presumed to be in the tongue, in the other it is in the hands. And such holds true for all the other forms of ability (*dúnamis*).”

From Theophrastus’ words, I argue that Empedocles’ efforts to account both for the human body as a living unity within a broader cosmic life and for the ‘subject’ as an intricate aggregate of different abilities (including perceptual and cognitive functions) eventually result in an idea of the body that, I postulate, is structured as follows: a physical space within which a complex of biological, perceptual, and cognitive phenomena takes place while obviating questions of empirically-provable ontogeny through which matter gradually forms into an individual body.¹⁵⁸ In other words, this notion of the body composed of various *kráseis* helps to understand how the various *dunámeis* themselves are localized in various parts of the body as a result of the mixture of the four elements to be found in that specific part and *not* throughout the whole body. I think it likely that Empedocles’ dismissal of the empirical technicalities of morphogeny irritates the author of *On Ancient Medicine*, and such irritation is a catalyst that compels them to initiate their pivotal hypothesis of medicine as its own *tékhnē*. That reading, however, would be an oversimplification. For Empedocles *does* give profound emphasis to the role of what can be duly perceived—as we see in his privileging of touch, which takes shape through the figure of the palms (*palámai*: D42).¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ While Empedocles does pay attention to sexual reproduction (e.g., D157, 164, 162, 171, 172), his ontogeny is not empirically based; hence, the author of *VM*’s disapproval. For example, cf. D156 (in Ael. *Nat. anim.* 16.29), where he asserts the possible existence of chimeras: human-faced figures born of oxen (βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωρα) and human figures with the heads of bulls (ἀνδροφυῆ βούκρανα).

¹⁵⁹ Empedocles, D42: τεινωποὶ μὲν γὰρ παλάμαι κατὰ γυῖα κέχυνται – (“For, indeed, narrow palms are spread through the limbs”).

This significant fragment intimates to us that Empedocles understands cognition as a dynamic, haptic process that holds both the embodied agent and the physical space around them as essential to every cognitive process: we are envisaged as being constituted by a small army of palms that are massed throughout and along the entire person and work synergistically to make sense of feedback from the external world. Nonetheless, Empedoclean touch *and* taste are, perhaps paradoxically, given little treatment by Theophrastus, who critiques Empedocles' omissions (D211). Anthony A. Long, however, astutely contends that what we term "direct touch or taste, actual physical contact between finger and tongue and the objects perceived, was viewed by Empedocles not as the *explanation* of these sense operations but the *conditions* necessary for awareness."¹⁶⁰ Thus, in other words, we could be in contact with emanations (*aporroai*), which entered our trafficking pores, but we could be unaware of them as sensations unless there was direct touch between (a) sense and object. Conversely, we could be in contact with an object but fail to be aware that we are (if, for instance, our hands were numb). Indeed, Aristotle, in *De anima*, espouses the view that 'touch' is not direct touch or contact but perceived through the medium of the flesh¹⁶¹:

Is then the perception of all things one only, or is it different of different things, just as it is now generally supposed that taste and touch both act by contact, but that the other senses act at a distance? This is not the truth; we perceive hard and soft through a medium, just as we apprehend what sounds, or is seen, or smelt; but since we perceive the latter from a distance, and the former only from nearby, the facts escape us. We perceive all things through a medium; but, in this case, the medium is not obvious. Still, as we have said before, if we were to perceive all tangible things through a fabric, without noticing the separation caused by it, we should react exactly in the same way as we do now in water and in air; for we seem to touch them directly without the intervention of any medium. But there is a difference between tangible things, and visible or audible things. We perceive the latter because some medium acts on us, but we perceive tangible things not by a medium, but at the same time as the medium, like a man wounded through his shield; for it is not the stricken shield that struck him, but both he and the shield were struck simultaneously. In a general sense, we may say that as air and

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Long 1966, p. 266. Emphasis is in original text.

¹⁶¹ For more on this notion, cf. Solmsen 1955, pp. 159-60.

water are related to vision, hearing and smell, so is the relation of the flesh and the tongue to the sense organ in the case of touch.¹⁶²

These ancient views of touch and sense-perception dovetail with the haptocentricity so integral to the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. For when we touch something, Merleau-Ponty observes, we are, simultaneously, tangible ourselves, “such that the touch is formed in the midst of the world and as it were in the things.”¹⁶³ Neither we nor the world completely determine our experience(s) of tactility because touch forms by means of a “chiasm” of reciprocal transport between our own flesh and the “flesh of the world” (*la chair du monde*).¹⁶⁴ For the chiasm is a crisscrossing or a bi-directional becoming or exchange between the body and things that justifies speaking of a “flesh” of things, a kinship between the sensing body and sensed things that makes their communication possible. The actions of perceiving and being perceived are ever “intertwining” (*entrelacs*) in this dialectic, and such interlocking is more vital than any subject-object dualism à la Platonic mind-body distinction. Indeed, as Empedocles relates to us, the interlocking nature of perceiving and being perceived dovetails with wisdom (*mêtis*) of what is at hand (*pròs pareón*).¹⁶⁵

As for what exactly *pròs pareón* means in this context, we have Aristotle to provide an exegesis. He seems to understand it to imply that the subject of thought must be physically

¹⁶² Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* 423b, 2-21: πότερον οὖν πάντων ὁμοίως ἐστὶν ἡ αἴσθησις, ἢ ἄλλων ἄλλως, καθάπερ νῦν δοκεῖ ἢ μὲν γεῦσις καὶ ἡ ἀφή τῷ ἄπτεσθαι, αἱ δ' ἄλλαι ἀποθεν; τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σκληρὸν καὶ τὸ μαλακὸν δι' ἐτέρων αἰσθανόμεθα, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ψοφητικὸν καὶ τὸ ὀρατὸν καὶ τὸ ὀσφραντὸν· ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν πόρρωθεν, τὰ δ' ἐγγύθεν. διὸ λανθάνει, ἐπεὶ αἰσθανόμεθα γε πάντων διὰ τοῦ μέσου· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τούτων λανθάνει. καίτοι καθάπερ εἵπαμεν καὶ πρότερον, κἂν εἰ δι' ὑμένοιο αἰσθανοίμεθα τῶν ἀπτῶν ἀπάντων λανθάνοντος ὅτι δειρῆται, ὁμοίως ἂν ἔχοιμεν ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀέρι· δοκοῦμεν γὰρ αὐτῶν ἄπτεσθαι καὶ οὐδὲν εἶναι διὰ μέσου. ἀλλὰ διαφέρει τὸ ἀπτὸν τῶν ὀρατῶν καὶ τῶν ψοφητικῶν, ὅτι ἐκείνων μὲν αἰσθανόμεθα τῷ τὸ μεταξὺ ποιεῖν τι ἡμᾶς, τῶν δὲ ἀπτῶν οὐχ ὑπὸ τοῦ μεταξὺ ἀλλ' ἅμα τῷ μεταξὺ, ὥσπερ ὁ δι' ἀσπίδος πληγεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἡ ἀσπίς πληγεῖσα ἐπάταξεν, ἀλλ' ἅμ' ἅμφω1 συνέβη πληγῆναι. ὅλως δ' ἔοικεν ἡ σὰρξ καὶ ἡ γλῶττα, ὡς ὁ ἀήρ καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν καὶ τὴν ἀκοήν καὶ τὴν ὀσφρησιν ἔχουσιν, οὕτως ἔχειν πρὸς τὸ αἰσθητήριον ὥσπερ ἐκείνων ἕκαστον. Translation is by W.H. Hett (with slight modifications).

¹⁶³ Merleau-Ponty and Lefort 1968, p. 134.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

¹⁶⁵ D243: πρὸς παρεὸν γὰρ μῆτις ἀέξεται ἀνθρώποισιν.

present, as accords with perception.¹⁶⁶ Orestis Karatzoglou contends that the expression could be construed as referring to the situation at hand that an agent is faced with, and that *mêtis* and the concomitant accumulation of knowledge is dependent on one's surroundings.¹⁶⁷ A Homeric word, *mêtis* is synonymous with not merely technical skill, but also in activities with a certain goal, connoting reflection, planning, and cunning. It is also crucial to skills that necessitate vigilance and acute sensitivity to surrounding circumstances without the opportunity to judiciously evaluate a given scenario: Odysseus' *mêtis* is embodied, for instance, in his skills as shipwright and as helmsman.¹⁶⁸ The former requires detailed measuring, cutting, and arranging so that the intangible, mental image of the ship may be realized into a physical vessel; the latter's skillset requires not only following static rules, but the ability to be dynamic, responding to challenges posed by a changing environment with alacrity.¹⁶⁹ Thus, cognition in Empedocles' thought seems to be dependent upon the interface of the situated body within its environs: as D243 posits, the quality of *mêtis* as growing in relation to what is present represents the agent's cognitive skills as coming to be heightened when a given scenario calls for instantaneous action sans forethought.

Such primacy of touch is, as we have seen, echoed by Merleau-Ponty, whose phenomenology is, in a manner of speaking, haptocentrism taken to its height.¹⁷⁰ Recalling our

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *De anima* 427a, 21-2; *Metaphysics* 1009b, 12-13.

¹⁶⁷ Karatzoglou 2023, pp. 15-16.

¹⁶⁸ Detienne and Vernant 1991, p. 236.

¹⁶⁹ Kingsley 2003, p. 91: "There is the absolute need to keep focused in spite of the way everything is constantly changing or appearing to change. *Mêtis* has nothing to do with argument or careful reasoning, because there is not even the time to think." Cf. Aeschylus, *Suppliant Women* 767-70: οὐδ' ἐν ἀγκυρουχίαις / θαυροῦσι ναῶν ποιμένες παραντίκα, / ἄλλως τε καὶ μολόντες ἀλίμενον χθόνα / ἐς νύκτ' ἀποστείχοντος ἡλίου. φιλεῖ / ὠδῖνα τίκτειν νύξ κυβερνήτη σοφῶ - ("At anchor, captains of ships do not straightaway feel secure, especially when they have come into a harborless land as the sun sinks into the night. Night is wont to engender woe in a wise helmsman."). See Hutchins 1996 for the distribution of cognitive load across a number of specialists to govern a large Navy vessel.

¹⁷⁰ In *On Touching*, Jean-Luc Nancy (Stanford University Press, 2005), Jacques Derrida critiques what might be considered Merleau-Ponty's 'haptophilia.'

earlier mention of his idea that perceiving and being perceived are inextricable from one another, Merleau-Ponty enmeshes touch, sight, and other senses with one another: we see only because we touch the world with our gaze, yet what we see is not determined by our gaze alone: “one cannot say if it is the look or the things that commands.”¹⁷¹ Likewise, with tasting, hearing, and smelling, these all require a receptivity to touch (respectively, on the tongue, tympanum, and olfactory receptors) by some form of synesthesia. We pursue with our senses those things that give themselves over to us. Whenever we are sensing, we participate in the world and receive from it in an unending cycle, one that predicates and contours our lived experience. Ultimately, sight is not touch and touch is not sight, but each informs the other and works through “the same body” and “the same world.”¹⁷² Indeed, as we mentioned earlier, a cadre of words of cognition and perception appeal to an experience of sight in ancient Greek. Snell, for instance, explicated the Homeric concept of *nóos* from its verbal form *noeîn*, which means “to acquire a clear mental image of something. Hence the significance of *noos*. It is the mind as the recipient of clear images, or more briefly, the organ of clear images.” Indeed, “*Noos* is, as it were, the mental eye which exercises an unclouded vision,”¹⁷³ as we saw in Odysseus’ capacity as a shipwright.

In the same vein, Shigehisa Kuriyama, in his comparative study of medical antiquities in Greece and China, cites Aeschylus’ mention of a “mind furnished with eyes” (*phréna ômmatôménēn*) and Pindar’s “blind heart” (*tuphlón êtor*) as being in the same tradition of intertwined cognition and visual perception.¹⁷⁴ Likewise, derived from the verb *ideîn*, ‘to see,’ the nouns *idéa* and *eîdos*—form, shape, image—are Plato’s objects of *epistēmē*, or what can be

¹⁷¹ Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, and Claude Lefort. *The Visible and the Invisible*, p. 133.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁷³ Snell 1953, p. 13.

¹⁷⁴ Friedländer 1969, p. 13.

known as fact.¹⁷⁵ Indeed, Kuriyama notes that is the allegory of the caves that plays on this exact “elision of seeing and knowing.”¹⁷⁶ On the subject of haptic phenomena such as pulse in the human body, Kuriyama notes that *iātroí* Galen and Rufus of Ephesus’ word for pulse, *sphugmós*, produced a continuum with terms from Hippocratic treatises such as *palmós* (palpitation), *trómos* (tremor), and *spasmós* (spasm). In such works, the *phlébes* system either palpitates or pulses, and often it does both.¹⁷⁷ I am drawn to this line of inquiry for *palmós*’ etymological connection to the verb *pálllein*, ‘to leap, to quiver, to shake, to vibrate, to brandish a weapon’ which cannot help but put one in mind of *palámē*, an appendage which, in its Homeric uses, is often used in moments of physical, haptic violence.¹⁷⁸

While this interlocking of sight and touch may seem very modern, Empedocles himself exhorts us to use all our sense faculties when trying to ascertain the nature of the cosmos (D44):¹⁷⁹

ἀλλ’ ἄγ’ ἄθρει πάσῃ παλάμῃ, πῆ δῆλον ἕκαστον, μήτε τιν’ ὄψιν ἔχων πίστει πλέον ἢ κατ’ ἀκουήν ἢ ἀκοήν ἐρίδουπον ὑπὲρ τρανώματα γλώσσης, μήτε τι τῶν ἄλλων, ὀπόσῃ πόρος ἐστὶ νοῆσαι, γυίων πίστιν ἔρυκε, νόει δ’ ἦ δῆλον ἕκαστον.

But come, consider with every resource in what way each thing is evident, without holding some vision in greater trust than what accords with hearing, nor a resonating sound as superior to the clarities of the tongue, and from none of the other limbs, in whatever way it provides a path for thought, withhold your trust, but think in whatever way each thing is evident.¹⁸⁰

Knowing, perceiving, and understanding what lies beyond us, then, is a task that requires us to participate fully with ourselves. Such embodiment is the foundation of social functioning and

¹⁷⁵ Fritz 1939, pp. 41-52.

¹⁷⁶ Kuriyama 1999, p. 120. Cf. Plato, *Republic* 517b-c.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 29. Cf. *Peri nousōn* 2.4, 12, 16. The role(s) of Hippocratic’s vascular system will be elaborated later in this chapter.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. note 32.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Trepanier 2004, p. 49: “[...] Parmenides seems to imply that truth and the divine must be sought beyond humanity, Empedocles stresses the reintegration of truth and the divine to the human community and to man himself.”

¹⁸⁰ Translation comes from that of Laks and Most.

relationships in the Homeric epics, where, in the *Odyssey*, recognition always draws two individuals, through kisses, embraces, and the clasping of hands.¹⁸¹ Additionally, though recognition signs in Homer prompt vivid memories, as opposed to deductive reasoning,¹⁸² the phrase “they recognized the signs” foregrounds objects in abstraction, which, as Ruth Scodel posits, means they are “pointing beyond themselves”¹⁸³ into a world that is once tangible and not.¹⁸⁴

In this section, I have shown that Empedocles’ haptic cognition has distinct resonances with both earlier (Homeric) and later (Aristotelian and continental) forms. However, as Jacques Jouanna has noted,¹⁸⁵ Empedocles’ views on *phrónēsis* also show remarkable similarities and points of contact with the theory of intelligence (*phrónēsis*) outlined in a dedicated section (35–36) of the first book of the Hippocratic *On Regimen*, similarities that seem to testify to Empedocles’ influence on this author.¹⁸⁶ In the following section, I outline the physical, elemental nature of the *psukhē* provided by *On Regimen*, a composition that has a distinctly Empedoclean tinge to it. However, in the individuation of the intelligence and cognition and the move of intelligence away from the blood to the *psukhē*, the author of *On Regimen* breaks away from Empedocles epistemically.

¹⁸¹ *Od.* 10.397, 16.190, 16.214, 21.223-5, 23.207-40, 23.347-8, 24.397-8. For more on this idea, see Murnaghan [1987] 2011, p. 15.

¹⁸² Cf. Scodel 2002.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Scodel 2012, pp. 319-44, for a study of Homeric theory of mind.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Jouanna 1961, pp. 15-18; 2007, pp. 9-38.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Jouanna 1961, pp. 452-463, on the figure of Empedocles throughout the Hippocratic corpus. Likewise, in the doxography of Empedocles (P24), Diogenes Laërtius reports that Satyrus, in his *Lives*, says that Empedocles was a physician (*iatrós*). Rhee 2013 notes that the author of *Nature of Man*, unlike the author of *On Ancient Medicine*, seems to espouse some of Empedocles’ views.

On Regimen's Phrónēsis

On Regimen is the Hippocratic medical text for which the most diverse influences from, or analogies with, early philosophical inquiries have been traced by a large number of scholars, and whose main medical interest has been interrogated on a host of occasions.¹⁸⁷ One of the main subjects on which the first book of *On Regimen* focuses concerns the status of *psukhē*, which is described in exclusively physical terms as a material substance consisting in a more or less balanced mixture of a hot and dry element and a cold and wet one (1.6). Moreover, *psukhē* is referred to both as air, which all animals breathe, and as seed (*sperma*), thus resulting in an overall generating principle related both to the ontological definition of a person—as one breathes, they are a living being—and to their embryonic formation, since this psychic substance plays a pivotal role in the development of the body from the embryo to the child (1.7). Furthermore, the author of *On Regimen* makes *psukhē* the center of *phrónēsis*, in other words the actual agent of sense perception and cognition in a human being. It is thanks to a complex system of ‘revolutions’—that is, of circular motions occurring inside the body—that the *psukhē* accomplishes its physiological as well as its cognitive duties, as in their unceasing circulation psychic particles precipitate themselves toward—and thus mingle with— “perceptible particles” (*aithēseis*), as Jouanna translates, which are said to penetrate into the body through specific configurations defined as *skhēmata aisthēseōn* (1.23).¹⁸⁸ According to the different proportions in which the two elements are mingled, seven different typologies of *psukhē* can be identified, each of them showing distinctive intellectual and temperamental features (1.35). The one composed of the moister fire and the dryer water is the perfect, that is

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Jouanna 2007, pp. 9-38. Cf. also Joly 2003, pp. 25-34; Vegetti 1976, p. 496, n. 10. On the Near Eastern background of the theory of sleep and dreams stated in *Vict.* 4, cf. van der Eijk 2004, pp. 187-218.

¹⁸⁸ On the notion of ‘perceptible particles’ as expressed by the plural αἰσθήσεις in *Vict.*, cf. Jouanna 2007, pp. 19-25.

the most balanced, form of intelligence. Different degrees of predominance of water give rise to lesser and slower forms of intelligence down to the condition that Jouanna has defined as ‘folie dépressive’ (1.35.7);¹⁸⁹ on the other hand, different degrees of predominance of fire give rise to quicker kinds of *psukhai*, which, however, are characterized by increased instability. This instability, in its more extreme expressions, results in a sort of hallucinatory madness (subjects endowed with this form of intelligence are defined as *hupomainómenoi* (raving mad) by the writer of *On Regimen*). The most striking point of contact between Empedocles’ and *On Regimen*’s theories of intelligence is to be traced to the fact that they share some lexical choices and explicative principles, especially as regards two intermediate forms of intelligence as described both in the Hippocratic account and in Empedocles’ own. The latter, as reported in Theophrastus’ *De sensibus* 11, admits the existence of two intermediate forms of intelligence, while the author of *On Regimen* speaks of four intermediate grades of *phrónēsis*, along with two extreme grades and a central and perfectly balanced one. In both theories, these intermediate *psukhai* obey what Lo Presti deems “a sort of law of compensation”¹⁹⁰: a fault of intelligence is counterbalanced by a temperamental feature such as firmness; by contrast, distinctive qualities such as rapidity and vividness,¹⁹¹ which connote the cognitive activity in a positive way, can result in a fault of character like inconstancy.

Indeed, we see that, in a marked move of originality, the author of *On Regimen* moves the theory of intelligence away from the blood to the *psukhē*.¹⁹² However, this is not the only novelty. This theory, rather, goes farther and deeper in its efforts to define the body as a

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Jouanna 1966, p. xvi.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Lo Presti 2015, p. 172.

¹⁹¹ cf. *Vict.* 1.35: διὰ ταχύτητα of the revolution of the soul; Theophrastus, *De Sensibus* 11: διὰ τὴν ὀξύτητα τῆς τοῦ αἵματος φορᾶς.

¹⁹² In turn, *On the Sacred Disease*, another text of the Hippocratic corpus, moves the seat of intelligence from the *psukhē* to the brain. This shift, while fascinating, will not be taken up here.

biological and cognitive agent. What, in my own estimation, marks a visible rupture between this account of cognition and Empedocles' is the attempt by the author of *On Regimen* to trace a principle of individuation that makes it possible to account for the rise of perception and that of intelligence *in tandem*. At this juncture, the principle of individuation rests in the *sōma* rather than in the *psukhē*: notwithstanding that *phrónēsis* is said to be exclusively a faculty or an activity of the soul, the soul is in fact looked at, and explicitly defined as an actual "part of the body" (μοῖρα τοῦ σώματος, 7). The intrinsic nature of each of the types of *phrónēsis* differentiates according to a combination and proportion of elements by which the entire body, no part of it being excepted, is affected and to which each of these parts somehow responds. This being the schematic, we can say that *On Regimen*'s theory of intelligence does not admit the possibility that various qualities of thinking, as well as a diverse range of temperamental features, thrive in different parts of the same body. It is true that a substantial variety of characters exists, and that the intelligence of the soul changes as the mixture of elementary constituents changes (à la Empedocles). This centrality of the body, so strongly affirmed, enables *individuation* of the person and *differentiation* of abilities in body parts to be accounted for conjointly as the two opposite and complementary poles of the physiological and cognitive life of the human body, and also to account for the differentiation of faculties as immanent in, rather than a negation or a reduction of, the coherence of the body.

On the immanence of the faculties within, it is worthwhile, I believe, to still consider the figure of fluids and their movement in their capacities as a suspension for which the body—

whether holistically and sympathetically whole or in terms of *loci affecti* (diseased parts)—as the subject of anthropologically-driven care may take shape.¹⁹³

The Holo-Somatic Body, Sympathetic and Affectable

It is evident that the conventional orthodoxy of disease etiology and therapy is based on an essentially holistic view of the body: disease in its different manifestations is believed to have a common origin in flux from the stomach to the head, with ensuing flux from the head to some affected bodily part. Treatment is considered to depend on the identification and elimination of matter regarded as excessive (typically too hot, too cold, too wet, or too dry) or as (typically) either bilious or phlegmatic in character, and on the restoration of overall bodily balance. To achieve equilibrium, the part affected—or, alternatively, the body as a whole—is treated by immediate methods such as purging, in conjunction with longer-term measures such as digestive manipulation, to reduce or thin down (*ischnainein*) the body.¹⁹⁴ Thus, attention to a *locus affectus* is commonly combined with, or even subordinate to, attention devolved to the whole body. The fundamental idea of bodily intercommunication is given expression in two very different texts, the practical *On Places in Man* and the theoretical treatise *On Bones*, as follows: “There is no beginning in the body; but everything is alike beginning and end. For when a circle has been drawn its beginning is not to be found.”¹⁹⁵ Indeed, across a wide range of Hippocratic texts (*Epidemics*, *On Places in Man*, *On Diseases in Women*, *On Regimen*, and *Nature of Man*),

¹⁹³ As I stated in the first chapter, I am not speaking of sympathy in terms of its later conception(s), but in the sense of somatically affective entanglement that is brought about by the fluid nature of the humoral body, which is both capable and liable of shuttling *páthē* from one part of the body to another (cf., e.g., [Hp.] *Aff.* 29 on sciatica as the result of blood or bile corrupted by phlegm that *travels through* the body). For a study that articulates later sympathy (i.e., that of the Stoics, Epicureans, and Galen) in terms of its connection to ancient holism, cf. Holmes 2021.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Craik 1998, p. 150, who gives an overview of the technical term *ischnainein*. Likewise, cf. Baker 2021, p. 414, on its use by Aristotle.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. *Loc. Hom.* 1; *Oss.* 11. Much as we have spoken of the (co-)presence of the Pre-Platonics in the Hippocratic corpus, there is the famous fragment of Heraclitus (D54), who says that, when taking the circumference of a circle, the beginning and end are coterminous.

there is evidence for a widespread, holistic view of the body, wherein there are *koinōniai* (associations) in parts of the body; likewise, the body's parts are *homoethniē* (neighborly) in their distribution of *páthē*;¹⁹⁶ the adjectives *homotropos* (of the same character) and *homóphulos* (of the same kind) are applied to bodily components.¹⁹⁷

The ideas presented here result in what Brooke Holmes has termed “proto-sympathy”¹⁹⁸ in response to the affectable nature of the body, in that its parts (and their subsequent roles within the body)¹⁹⁹ are sympathetic to affections that may interfere with their roles in the person. Indeed, such interference is girded by the notion that affections may move beyond where they start, a process facilitated by the various ‘vessels’ (*phlébes*, *phlébia*, *teúkhea*)²⁰⁰ that traffic fluid ‘stuffs’ throughout the body.²⁰¹ Such vascular trafficking takes place according to rules of attraction, reception, and discharge.²⁰² The conception that vessels responsible for allowing life-endowing fluid and air to circulate are also responsible for the transmission of noxious stuffs is a

¹⁹⁶ Holmes 2013b translates *homoethniē* as “relatedness,” while Craik 2020 translates it as “organic unity.” These are both perfectly adequate translations, and my (admittedly loose) own is one that trades on the semantics of *éthnos* (community) and the sympathetic, communal manner in which each ‘part’ of the body “announces” (*ἐπαναφέρει*) *páthē* to another part. On the language of ‘parts’ in the community of the body, cf. Gundert 1992, p. 464: “parts are not the mere passive sites of bodily processes that take place through the actions of fluids or air, but rather that there is a reciprocal, active interrelationship parts and fluids.” I will return to the matter of *éthnos* later in this chapter in the context of another Hippocratic treatise.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. *Epid.* 2.1.6; *Loc. Hom.* 1; *Mul.* 2.174; *Vict.* 1.6; *Nat. Hom.* 3.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Holmes 2014, pp. 123-38.

¹⁹⁹ Gundert notes that she is not using terms like “organs” and “functions,” since these terms have an essence of Aristotelian teleology and biological functionalism that, as far as we are aware, was not yet emergent in early Hippocratic writings. Hence, “parts of the body” which play certain “roles” and take particular “actions” provides the foundation for a more rigorous and intellectually broader survey of the processes believed to underly the humors.

²⁰⁰ *teúkhos* has an incredibly broad *Wortfeld*, one circled around notions of ‘tool’ or ‘implement’ that range from armor to bathtubs and vases for libation. While I, *pace* Gundert, do not want to overlay any of the teleological overtones that she is rightly scrupulous in avoiding, I think it is worthwhile that the *teúkhea* and other vessels *do* have roles in the shuttling of humors and other fluids through the person, bringing about either equilibrating or pathogenic conditions within.

²⁰¹ Cf. *Loc.* 3. Duminil 1983, pp. 79-82, offers an account of the author’s perception about the vascular system. Cf. also *Loc.* 9 for the notion that the body communicates with itself.

²⁰² Cf. Gundert 1992, pp. 458-62.

vital tenet of the ecology of the humoral body,²⁰³ which is fundamentally porous, receptive, and sensitive to stimuli.²⁰⁴

At this point, I think it would be useful to articulate the nature of the humoral body, particularly zeroing in on of the hematic fluid (i.e., blood), which is the most prominent and visible of the four humors, in its recurring role as the cue for diagnosis and prognosis.²⁰⁵ Likewise, beyond blood's importance in a medical capacity, I highlight in this section its role in Empedocles' cognition, in which it functions as the embodied ground for which to conceptualize the human person as the subject of anthropologically-driven care.

Blood in Early Greek and Hippocratic Thought

The idea that blood is the fluid of life is a fundamental paradigm in several traditional cultures,²⁰⁶ and the Homeric epics' notion of blood, suffused with significant elements of what might be conceived of as proto-scientific knowledge, worked their way, more or less undisturbed, into later Greek medicine and life science.²⁰⁷ Essentially, blood is the stuff of human life, nourished by the food and drink of such persons, as opposed to the “immortal blood” (*ámbroton haîma*) of the gods, who partake exclusively of ambrosia and nectar (*Il.* 5.340-42).²⁰⁸ Indeed, sustenance not only gives mortals life, but also strength—that can manifest in the

²⁰³ For specific parts of the body across which these movements occur, cf. Gundert 1992, p. 459.

²⁰⁴ It is not hard to see the conceptual overlap which we find here in terms of Empedocles' idea of compositional likeness in *cognition* (D207). Cf. Kamtekar 2009, who problematizes this notion by placing it in terms of the activity of “analogical reasoning” as opposed to *perception*, which is a matter of the interplay between effluences and pores.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Angeletti and Romani 2005, pp. 551-77. For studies of blood and fluid in antiquity, cf. Dean-Jones 1994 (particularly menstrual blood), Boylan 2015, and Bradley, Leonard, and Totelin 2021's edited volume.

²⁰⁶ Onians 1951 is seminal in this respect, while Spatafora 1999 is preoccupied with specifically Homeric exempla. Padel 1992 (esp. pp. 18-31) focuses on this topic in tragedy. Consider also Dan 2011, who focuses on the fascinating distinction in Latin between undisturbed, internal blood (*sanguis*), the subject of medical literature from Hippocrates to Galen, and visible blood/bleeding that signifies wounding/death (*cruor*).

²⁰⁷ See Smith 1966 on this notion. Likewise, given the specificity of corporeal wounding in the epics, it has been postulated that Homer had some familiarity with medicine, perhaps as a surgeon. For this argument, see Grmek 1989, p. 33.

²⁰⁸ ῥέε δ' ἄμβροτον αἶμα θεοῖο is the formula used for the liquid flowing from both Aphrodite (*Il.* 5.339) and Ares' (5.870) wounds after both were struck by Diomedes' spear. Additionally, Aphrodite's blood is called *ikhōr* (5.340), whose meaning (“serum”) Jouanna and Demont 1981 state remains unchanged from Homeric Greek to Koine.

marrow (*muelós*, *Od.* 2.290)—and vitality (*ménos*, *Il.* 6.260-68).²⁰⁹ Blood’s carrying power also applies to the affective realm, where anger is traced to some ill-humor or poison a hero may have swallowed (*Il.* 16.203, 22.94); imbibing wine is purported to increase *thūmós* in the breast (*Od.* 10.460–61).²¹⁰ As I showed in chapter one, *thūmós* is a complex word with a dynamic semantic range. If conceived of in its sense of expressing heated passion and bellicosity, it is particularly associable with its Latin cognate *fūmus* (“steam”), and, thus, may be understood as like a vapor that comes from the blood, whose energy-producing quality is compounded by the process of breathing. In *On the Preservation of Health*, for instance, Galen says the following on *thūmós*, in the sense of “rage” (2.9):

ὁ μὲν γε θυμὸς οὐδ’ ἀπλῶς αὐξήσις, ἀλλ’ οἷον ζέσις τίς ἐστι τοῦ κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν θερμοῦ - διὸ καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ τῶν φιλοσόφων οἱ δοκιμώτατοι τοιαύτην εἶναι φασι - συμβεβηκὸς γάρ τι καὶ οὐκ οὐσία τοῦ θυμοῦ ἐστὶν ἢ τῆς ἀντιτιμωρήσεως ὄρεξις.

Now, rage is not simply an increase, but as it were a kind of boiling of the heat in the heart; which is why the most reputable philosophers state that this is its essence; for the appetite for revenge is an incidental feature, and not the essence, of rage.

Such boiling (*zésis*) is in contrast to *phóbos*, which connotes a sense of cooling down.²¹¹

The notion of blood as a ‘carrier’ of qualities also seems to exist in Homer, as seen when Menelaus praises Telemachus for the properness of his speech, which affirms the gentility of his blood.²¹² As Susan Lape notes, the later Periclean citizenship law that stigmatized “bad citizens” as noncitizens is based on the ‘foreignness’ of their blood or ‘illegitimacy’ of their birth,

²⁰⁹ Cf. Boylan 2015, p. 1, on the “mysterious” nature of *ménos* in early Greek thought, which “constitutes the difference between life and death. Such a nature, in his estimation, is why blood is variously the seat of cognition, a necessity in procreation, and a carrier of virtues and vices.

²¹⁰ For the belief in antiquity that wine consumption stimulated blood production, see *de Flatibus* 14.3, *Vict.* 2.51.1-2, and Athenaeus of Naucratis, *Deipnosophistae* 1.32e, 33a.

²¹¹ The pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* distinguishes the correlatives *agōnía*, *thūmós*, and *phóbos* in terms of heat and its location and/or motion at 869a, 2-8; 869b, 7-9; 902b, 37-903a, 4 (mentioning also *aiskhúnē*) and 905a, 6-13 (differentiating *aidōs/agōnía* and *phóbos*); likewise, *thūmós* and *phóbos* are contrasted in terms of upward or downward motion of the blood/heat at 947b, 24-34, cf. 957b, 9-14 and 961a, 8-13 (contrasting the motions of heat in anger and shame).

²¹² *Od.* 4.611: αἵματός... ἀγαθοῖο

happenstances which allegedly rendered them innately hostile to the state. Despite such stigmatization, Lape argues that the citizenship primarily instantiated a form of “auto-referential racism” that emphasized and rendered particular positive traits and characteristics as inheritable within a definite citizen group, one that could be maintained and transmitted via sexual reproduction.²¹³

From a biological perspective, in his *Generation of Animals*, Aristotle’s third definition of seed—the “secretion” (*perittōma*) (726a, 26-28)²¹⁴ of women and men—is given as a useful nourishment formed from passing through of blood at an intermediate stage. It is the most concentrated and complete of the residues of food, which is in its final degree of secretion.²¹⁵ In her study on women’s bodies in classical Greek science, Lesley Dean-Jones cites the Hippocratic author of *Diseases of Young Girls*, who says that there is excess blood flowing throughout the pubescent body during the onset of menarche because of both food (*sitos*) and growth (*auxēsis*).²¹⁶ The author does not postulate a mechanism for this surfeit, but the author of *Diseases of Women I* (14.6-7) does elaborate upon the role of food, theorizing that women produce menstrual blood because they do not work enough to use all the nourishment in their bodies.²¹⁷ Later (28.12, 15), the author suggests that menorrhagia (heavy menstrual bleeding) could be lightened by curtailing food intake. Indeed, from discourses ranging from the

²¹³ Lape 2004, p. 36; cf. Aeschines 2.78; 2.173-74, 177; 3.171-72; Democritus 21.149-50; Dinarchus 1.15, with Connor 1971, pp. 168-70; Ober 1989, pp. 268-70; Harding 1987. On auto-referential, as opposed to altero-referential, racialization, cf. Guillaumin 1995, pp. 29-60. Concerning ethnicization and democratic citizenship, cf. Cohen 2001.

²¹⁴ Ὅτι μὲν οὖν περίττωμά ἐστι τὸ σπέρμα χρησίμου τροφῆς καὶ τῆς ἐσχάτης... φανερόν. Cf. *GA* 766b, 8-14, 19. The *gonē* (seed) is more ‘concocted’ than the *katamēnia* (menses), but both residues, nonetheless, are hematic, spermatic, and generative. Aristotle works from received dogma before coming to his functional definition (cf. Bolton 1987, pp. 151-66).

²¹⁵ Aristotle, *GA* 726a, 27-28: περίττωμά ἐστι τὸ σπέρμα χρησίμου τροφῆς καὶ τῆς ἐσχάτης.

²¹⁶ [Hp.] *Diseases of Young Girls* 466.16: τε σιτία καὶ τὴν αὐξήσιν.

²¹⁷ Dean-Jones 1994, p. 48.

gynecological to the sociopolitical, we understand the significance of blood in Greek thought and its concomitant imaginary.

As we have seen, it isn't until Empedocles, however, that we have an undisputed participant of what Socrates, in the noted "doxographical" passage of the *Phaedo* (96b, 3-8), calls the *peri phuseōs historiā* (96a, 7) tradition. It is in this tradition that Empedocles explicates the role of blood as "that by which we think."²¹⁸ For we know that he understands that perceptual processes arise via 'emanations' that detach from external objects and make their way into the body through openings (*póroi*) in the sense organ. These, according to the principle of attraction of "like to like,"²¹⁹ are 'recognized' by the corresponding elements in the subject's body. All beings, whether animate or not, have some sort of cognitive capacity (*phrónēsis, nóēma*) on account of their composition, which is contoured by their relative proportions of the four elements.²²⁰ In Empedocles' thought, we see no clear-cut distinction made between perception and intellectual knowledge.²²¹ Despite this indistinction, Empedocles notes that the nature and quality of *phroneîn* (which, writ large, is the capacity for processes ranging from perception to thought)²²² changes with respect to the particular proportion(s) of the elements therein. For this

²¹⁸ Mansfeld 2000 supplies a detailed analysis of the doxographic method of this passage.

²¹⁹ Empedocles D27, cf. D243, D244a-b, D211, D218, D226, D229, D233, D235, D237, R25.

²²⁰ Empedocles D244a-b, D257, R89. Championing a pluralistic cosmogony, Empedocles put forth that there are "firstly, four roots of all things" (τέσσαρα τῶν πάντων ῥιζώματα πρῶτον: D57). In fragment D56, the word used for "elements" is the polysemantic στοιχεῖα. It is known that Empedocles only refers to the elements as the "roots of all things" (τῶν πάντων ῥιζώματα), despite Aristotle's remarks in the *Metaphysics* (985a32, 948a8) that Empedocles was the first to term fire, air, water, and earth στοιχεῖα. Likewise, Simone 2020 notes that other Early Greek thinkers used terms such as σχήματα, ἰδέαι, φύσεις, and ἄτομα to refer to the elements (p. 4). When exactly στοιχεῖα begins to mean "elements" is unknown. Crowley 2005, citing a fragment preserved by Simplicius, notes that Aristotle's pupil Eudemos of Rhodes identifies Plato as the first to call the "elementary principles of natural things' *stoicheia*" (p. 367).

²²¹ Laks 1999 offers a comprehensive elucidation on this question, mentioning that the distinction between the sensation and thought was "a matter of course" (p. 257), but he goes on to discuss what exactly this amounted to. The notion that Parmenides "rejected the senses" is a popular one, and Laks responds to this with an effective commentary on two key Parmenidean fragments (D8 and D51) and a vivid comparison of this to a passage in Empedocles (D95).

²²² Cf. Hüffmeier 1961 and Lo Presti 2008 on *phroneîn* in *Morb. Sacr.* and the broader Hippocratic corpus; see also Sassi 2016 on the concept within both Parmenides and Empedocles.

reason, humans represent the best and highest level of intelligence, since their composition of flesh and blood is the most balanced *krâsis* of the four elements.²²³ Within the human, the *krâsis*, which happens to be in pericardial blood, is so positioned because human blood is the most homogenous of the elements:

αἷματος ἐν πελάγεσσι τεθραμμένη ἀντιθορόντος,
τῆ τε νόημα μάλιστα κικλήσκειται ἀνθρώποισιν·
αἷμα γὰρ ἀνθρώποις περικάρδιόν ἐστι νόημα

Empedocles D240 (Porphyry in Stobaeus 1.49.53)

Contained (τεθραμμένη) among seas of blood, which leap back and forth, is, above all, that which is called thought (νόημα) among humans; for the blood around the heart is thought among humans.²²⁴

In the exposition to this fragment, Porphyry states that Empedocles' understanding of blood is as an organ of *súnesis*.²²⁵ However, the last line clarifies such a claim, stating that it is *pericardial* blood which has cognitive power.²²⁶ As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, Empedocles' grounding of noetic capacity in the blood is eerily similar to *On Regimen*'s own localization of *phrónēsis*,²²⁷ and it is emblematic of the mutually influential and shared *epistēmai* that early philosophical and medical ideas represent. For, at this time, I believe that we are still motivated by the idea of the person as a conceptual, epistemic object whose existence and experience of the world are mediated by interactions with stimuli, which can take the shape of other people as phenomena, injuries and wounding,²²⁸ and unseen, daemonic agents.²²⁹ Indeed, the personality of

²²³ D189 and 194, R23; D211, 218, 226, 229, 233, 235, 237, R25; D58a, 190.

²²⁴ τεθραμμένη is Grotius' emendation of the manuscript reading τετραμμένα. For a survey of philological scrutiny and varying readings of the text in which this fragment is found (Theophrastus' *De sensibus*), see Bollack 1969, pp. 444-48 and Jouanna 2007, pp. 30-31.

²²⁵ *De Styge ap. Stob. Ecl.* 1.49, 53.

²²⁶ Sassi 2023, p. 174.

²²⁷ Cf. n. 157 for Empedocles' presence in the Hippocratic corpus. Likewise, the author of *VM* mentions Empedocles by name in a not so very positive context (20.1) for his mixing of philosophy and mixing (see 2.2).

²²⁸ For a survey of pain and wounding in a Homeric context, see Holmes 2007, pp. 45-84.

²²⁹ See Holmes 2010, pp. 67-110.

these forces is only lost as the epistemic tides shift to impersonal forces and symptoms. This cavernous anonymity, I believe, is the force that opens an aperture for both the body as an object of anthropological care and discernment to emerge and for the cultivation of specialized skills and discourses to take shape that respond to pressing questions in the world, such as human variation, the seasons and changes in the weather, differences of *glōssa* (language) and *nómos* (custom). The penultimate section of this chapter deals with the most famous of the Hippocratic corpus, and the one that, in my estimation, attempts to provide a holistic, theoretical account for the above.

The Ecology and *éthnos* of Living Beings,²³⁰ or *Airs, Waters, Places*

Airs, Waters, Places, we are told, was written for the itinerant *tātroi*; namely, the one who “wants to investigate medicine correctly.”²³¹ However, this treatise is not purely medical in subject matter but, rather, can be conceptualized as a nascent study of the theory of environmental determinism and its relation to medicine.²³² It is an aspect of the methodical, structuralist arguments employed in this work that the entire makeup, physical and mental, of all peoples is presented as subject to conditioning by their varying environmental circumstances. Different peoples have different inherent characteristics, all dependent upon their respective geographical and meteorological positions. Everyone, thanks to the author’s framework, in the ecumene is subject to verifiable, static stereotypes, existing in what almost seems like an almost providential scheme that shapes minds and bodies alike.²³³ Indeed, holistic views of the inborn

²³⁰ But not of ‘life,’ *per se*. According to Holmes 2021, p. 52, the concept of ‘life’ is an invention of biology, a field that, despite the etymology of its name, does not emerge until the 19th century. Holmes, n. 10, cites Gottfried Reinhold Treviranus’ *Biologie, oder, Philosophie der lebenden Natur für Naturforscher und Aerzte* and Jean-Baptiste Lamarck’s *Recherches sur l’organisation des corps vivants*, both published in 1802, as foundational texts. Cf. Holmes 2019c for an extended discussion of *bios* and biopolitics.

²³¹ *AWP* 1: Ἰητρικὴν ὅστις βούλεται ὀρθῶς ζητεῖν

²³² For an overview of this theory in terms of racecraft and its reception by Vitruvius, cf. Peart 2023.

²³³ There are, however, those groups (such as the Macrocephaloi; cf. *AWP* 14) that engage in *nómoi* that seem to alter *phúsis*.

character to be tracked in different peoples are woven into the author’s worldview.²³⁴ To provide an account of the author’s methodology, I will take us through their excursus of the Scythians, a group long known to the Greeks by the fifth century²³⁵ and, particularly, the androgynous subset known as the Anarieis and reproductive discourse.

AWP’s Account of the Scythians

The climate of the Scythians is cold and wet for the entire year; this produces a corresponding constitution (*phúsis*): cold, moist, soft, and flabby—all things that are “unconducive to sexual relations,”²³⁶ which, when coupled with the frequent horse-back riding of their lifestyle (*nómos*), leads them to also have no energy for intercourse. Scythian women, too, are not spared: the author of *Airs* is mesmerized (*thaumastón*, 20.2) that they are even able to have children, given that they are so cold, stout (along with their wombs being sealed up by fat), and wet. Given these reproductive ‘impediments,’ it is thus no surprise that the “eunuch-like” (εὐνουχία) among them are very great in number (*pleístoi*). The use of the term “eunuch-like” by the author of *Airs* places emphasis on their foreignness, whereas Herodotus uses “androgynous ones” (ἀνδρόγυνοι) and juxtaposes them with the many (*polloi*, 4.67.1) practitioners of “paternal” divisions—implying that the Anarieis’ numbers are fewer.²³⁷

Thus, as the author of *Airs* argues (22.8) that the “eunuchs” are all Scythian aristocrats (hence, their designation of being *pleístoi*), it is worth noting that Herodotus’ nomadic Royal

²³⁴ Cf. *AWP* 16, in particular.

²³⁵ For example, in Hesiod’s *Catalogue of Women* and Homer’s *Iliad*, the Scythians are idealized as mare-milking and milk-drinking. Chiasson 2001, pp. 33-73, provides a comparative account of Herodotus’ own account of the Scythians, particularly concerning the Enarees/Anarieis, an androgynous sect among them. For the sake of simplicity and uniformity, I adhere to calling the sect “Anarieis.”

²³⁶ Cf. Chiasson 2001, p. 46.

²³⁷ Herodotus notes the existence of certain diviners among the Scythians—distinguishing between the many who use a “paternal” (πατρωίη, 4.67.2) technique and the androgynous sect who use a technique allegedly originating from Aphrodite (Hdt. 4.67.1-2); a technique earlier described as coming from a “female disease” (θήλεαν νοῦσον, 1.105.4) inflicted on them by the goddess for their desecration of her temple at the Syrian city of Ascalon.

Scythians are depicted as being “the most noble and greatest in number” (οἱ ἄριστοί τε καὶ πλεῖστοι) and as seeing the other Scythians as subservient and enslaved to them (4.20.1). As for the origins of the Anarieis, the Hippocratic author gives a much vaguer explanation for the phenomenon, only stating that some divinity was responsible, with none of Herodotus’ added details of gender and foreignness—implying that the tradition is an indigenous—not imported—one.²³⁸ Likewise, despite what the author perceives as the Scythians’ attitudes toward them—reverence (*sébonai*) and fear (*dedoikótes*)—the Hippocratic writer does not depict the androgynes as a separate sect of diviners as Herodotus does. The author states (22.3) that all diseases are divine because they have a “cause” from nature (*phúsis*) and are, therefore, natural. This rationalization subsequently recalibrates the traditional, “anthropomorphic,”²³⁹ and anthropocentric narrative that human ailments are divine retributions. Rather, they simply display the divine being in accordance with nature—and, since, diseases are natural, they are, thus, divine. The author of *Airs* is clearly trading on the pathology of epilepsy that the author of *On the Sacred Disease* describes, in which that affliction is neither any more sacred nor more divine than any other.

Airs’ author goes further by saying an operation to relieve the equestrian arthritis that arises because of the Scythians’ nomadic way of living—a cut behind the ear—causes them to

²³⁸ In Herodotus’ account, the Anarieis are ostracized for two reasons: 1) them being the complete antithesis to the hypermasculinity entrenched among Scythian hunter-warriors, 2) their “diseased” (νοσέειν, 1.105.4) technique of divination deriving from a foreign goddess, contrasting with the indigenous, paternal one, and 3) their name potentially meaning “unmanliness.” In the context of the mention of the peculiar mention of the desecration of the temple in Ascalon—a Syrian city—it must be known that Aphrodite was the Greek equivalent of the Syrian goddess Atargatis, whose worship—which included the consecration of eunuchs who wore women’s clothing—shocked the Greeks. Thus, the description of a particular sect in Scythian society as “eunuch-esque” (εὐνουχίαι, 22.1) by the author of *Airs*—a sect that wore women’s garments (22.7), did women’s work (22.1, 7), spoke like women (22.1), and were revered and feared by other Scythians, since they thought such a sect came about by divine wrath and wanted to avoid having such a fate befall them (22.2)—follows much in the footsteps of Herodotus by giving such a custom Syrian origin.

²³⁹ Cf. Chiasson 2001, p. 50.

become impotent (*àgonoi*, 22.6) because they believed that this incision cuts the vein by which semen travels from the head to the gonads—directly contradicting and refuting (22.8-9) the Scythians’ own view that divine power is the cause of male sterility. The author says that only the noblest and wealthiest of the Scythians are afflicted because only they own horses, unlike the poor.²⁴⁰

Given this frame, the multiple meanings of *phúsis*—the “nature” of the human body and the “nature” of one’s environment—must be discussed, as well as if they condition each other as, in Chapter 18, when the author begins their discussion of Scythians’ customs, it is all prefaced by descriptions of local topography and weather conditions. Such a causality explains how an unchanging climate results in a nation of fierce warriors becoming a nation of androgynous people, ones who, in the Hippocratic paradigm, do not have the ‘privileged status’ they had in Herodotus’ account, in which they are royal and lord over the rest of their *éthnos*.²⁴¹ In *Airs*, *nómos* and *phúsis* cooperate and collaborate with one another, as seen elsewhere in the text. In the summaries of the ontological contrasts between Asia and Europe in chapters 12, 16, and 23, the *phúsis* of a given land is seen as a causative factor in the various *phúseis* of the inhabitants of a place, all of which are reinforced by the effects of *nómos*.²⁴²

Ultimately, the *phúsis* of environmental determinism and the Scythians’ nomadic *nómos* being filtered through the Greek polis system of social stratification (with its equestrian aristocracy and pedestrian *hoi polloi*) causes the Anarieis to move from the margins of society

²⁴⁰ [Hp.] *AWP* 22.8: κεκτημένοι... τὴν ἰππασίην

²⁴¹ Cf. Chiasson 2001, p. 55.

²⁴² Cf., e.g., [Hp.] *AWP* 12.1-3: βούλομαι δὲ περὶ τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ τῆς Εὐρώπης δεῖξαι ὅκόσον διαφέρουσιν ἀλλήλων ἐς τὰ πάντα καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐθνέων τῆς μορφῆς, ὅτι διαλλάσσει καὶ μηδὲν ἔοικεν ἀλλήλοισιν – (“Concerning Asia and Europe, I want to explain how much they differ from one another in all things; and, concerning the appearance of the peoples differs, that they are different, and looks not at all like the other”).

(as in Herodotus) to the upper echelons of Scythian society, where their reproductive discourses became overlaid on the group as a whole.

Environmentally Determined

Though it may seem tangential, I think it is worthwhile to note the intersection of tragedy and medical literature: the stereotypical inhabitants of ‘Asia’ fabulated by the author of *Airs* are comparanda to the stereotypical *bárbaroi* of the ‘decadent’ East and enslaved persons commonly implicated in tragedies. Such ethnic stereotyping is marked in the contrast between Greek moderation and oriental extravagance to be seen in Aeschylus’ *Persians*, while interest in distant places and peoples is evident in accounts of the mythical wanderings of Io in Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* and *Prometheus Bound*.²⁴³ Further, in late Euripidean plays, such as *Orestes*, exotic localities are envisaged in staging and there is exaggerated characterization of foreigners, especially as enslaved persons.²⁴⁴ The question of tragedy is taken up in significantly more detail in the next chapter.

The discourse of environmental determinism innovated by *Airs* is one with a fraught reception history, with a host of canonical texts engaging with the theory.²⁴⁵ The *Timaeus*, for example, speaks of Athena settling the Athenians in Attica because she saw in it “a good mixture of the seasons that would bring forth the most prudent men.”²⁴⁶ In the *Politics*, Aristotle says the following of the inhabitants of Asia and Europe (1327b, 27-34):

τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ψυχροῖς τόποις ἔθνη καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην θυμοῦ μὲν ἔστι πλήρη, διανοίας δὲ ἐνδεέστερα καὶ τέχνης, διόπερ ἐλεύθερα μὲν διατελεῖ μᾶλλον, ἀπολίτευτα δὲ καὶ τῶν πλησίον ἄρχειν οὐ δυνάμενα: τὰ δὲ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν διανοητικὰ μὲν καὶ τεχνικὰ τὴν ψυχὴν, ἄθυμα δέ, διόπερ ἀρχόμενα καὶ δουλεύοντα διατελεῖ: τὸ δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος, ὥσπερ μεσεύει κατὰ τοὺς τόπους, οὕτως ἀμφοῖν μετέχει. καὶ γὰρ ἔνθυμον καὶ

²⁴³ Cf. Hall 1989, pp. 56-100, on the Greek delineation of Europe and Asia arising from the Persian Wars; also, cf. Collard 2008, esp. xcii.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Kosak 2004, who provides an entire study on the influence of medical thought in Euripidean tragedy.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Peart 2023, n. 17-21, 23.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*: 24c: τὴν εὐκρασίαν τῶν ὥρων ἐν αὐτῷ κατιδοῦσα, ὅτι φρονιμωτάτους ἄνδρας οἴσιν.

διανοητικὸν ἔστιν: διόπερ ἐλεύθερόν τε διατελεῖ καὶ βέλτιστα πολιτευόμενον καὶ δυνάμενον ἄρχειν πάντων, μιᾶς τυγχάνον πολιτείας.

For, while the people (ἔθνη) in cold places and about Europe are full of spiritedness, they lack more in discursive thinking and cunning; therefore, while they live with more freedom, they are not civically-minded (ἀπολίτευτα) and not able to rule those nearby them. About Asia: while its inhabitants are intellectuals and artisans with respect to temperament, they are also without spirit—therefore, they continue being ruled and enslaved. The descent group of the Greeks, as it stands midway in relation to these places, partakes of both accordingly. For [the group] is both spirited and discursive; therefore, it continues to be free, the best governed, and able to rule over all others—if chancing upon a single commonwealth.²⁴⁷

Aristotle’s rhetoric is intimately tied up with his notion of the existence of those who are “enslaved by nature” (φύσει δοῦλός), which also has a long, violent, and complex reception history, one which I will not belabor here. Nonetheless, I think it worthwhile to highlight that the rhetoric that Aristotle raises here is merely concomitant with what is provided by the theory of environmental determinism that *Airs* puts forth. The stretch between ‘a difference in the seasons means that illnesses manifest in people differently and must, subsequently, be treated differently’ is not a far stretch from ‘the particular climate of a locality alters and shapes the *phúsis* of the people in it, subsequently providing an etiology for the way in which they live.’ Indeed, it is Aristotle in the *Politics*—a text principally concerned with arguing that the *pólis* is the most natural and beneficial form of community for humans—whose agenda accommodates such a stretch a rhetoric. At any rate, the concept that I want to highlight here is the notion of *éthnos* provided by this work and its role in the Hippocratic corpus, which I elaborate more fully upon in the final section of this chapter.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Isaac 2004, pp. 84-85 on Vitruvius’ reception of the environmental determinism theory as closely mimicking Aristotle’s own (i.e., the effects of climate on the quantity of blood in the body and on mental aptitude), but with key differences (the geographic polarities shifting from East and West (Aristotle) to North and South (Vitruvius); Aristotle’s wistful desire of “μιᾶς... πολιτείας” having been fulfilled by the *imperium Romanum* of Vitruvius’ time).

Conclusion

While, as we saw, *homoethniē* is a term used in the corpus to describe co-affectations, the idea that the *parts of the body* form an *éthnos*—a word used of a group of people living together, often, in the medical writers, under the same environmental conditions—is not found elsewhere in the classical Hippocratic corpus. Indeed, uses of *éthnos* in terms of community are restricted to *Airs* and *On Regimen*.²⁴⁸ However, the innovatively ethnographic tinge of *Airs* reveals the nature of medical discourse as implicit in the explication and perpetuation of communities that share *nomoi*, a particular look, a language, and geographic space. Thus, I think that it would be wise to (re)summon the specters of the Periclean citizenship law, Athens' degraded, stifled classes of perpetual immigrants (*métoikoi*), illegitimate offspring (*nóthoi*), and the generally disenfranchised (*átimoi*),²⁴⁹ and the prevalent anxieties about foreignness that are emblemized by a plethora of fifth-century Attic tragedies, many of which are being written as Athens is engaged in conflicts, both international and internecine. The stereotyping, delineating rhetoric of *Airs* cannot be extricated from these causes. It is, too, a remarkably intentional turn, one that I set out early in this chapter, when I discussed the shift from daemonic agents to impersonal forces. However, we now see very personal, prejudicial agents emerging in the sphere of sociopolitical life in reaction to external, visible forces, both real and imaginary.²⁵⁰ There is clearly an idea of a community with firm boundaries that has come to be articulated, even when the body itself is extraordinarily porous, open, and affectable. The question of how to square this dichotomy is taken up in the third and final chapter of this work.

²⁴⁸ Cf. *AWP* 12, 13, 17; *Vict.* 2.37.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Kamen 2013, but, particularly, chapters four (on the metic class; cf. *Pol.* 1278a, 38a on how a metic is excluded from all *timai* accorded to citizens), six (on *nóthoi*), and seven (on *átimoi*). Cf. also Kasimis 2018 for an illuminating study of immigration's overlooked role in Athens' history.

²⁵⁰ I leave aside debate of the autarkic, “structurally disembodied” *īātrós* here. For more on this figure, cf. Holmes 2013a.

III. CHAPTER THREE

Sunalgeîn: Community, Kátharsis, and Exclusion

Tragedy, or an Ethical (and Ethnic) *Agōn**

In the previous chapter of this work, I set out to explain the artificiality of Hippocratic medicine's emergence as a *tékhnē* distinct from philosophical speculation as a symptom of the "inquiry into nature" and its transition from the absoluteness of daemonic *aitíai* to the empiricism of observable, impersonal *aitíai*. I argued that an outgrowth of this empirical turn was the onslaught of Greek epistemic productions, particularly those at the interstices of medicine, ascriptive categories, and ethnography, that began to look outward explicitly, seeking to provide etiologies beyond the purely nosological. I understood the fifth-century Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places* as a particular node in this networked transformation, representing the conscious implication of medicine and ecology in the creation of *éthnē*.

At the close of that chapter, too, I raised the specter of coeval Athenian tragedies, many of which abound in characters of diverse *éthnē*, are set in foreign lands, and degrade foreign customs and/or deride foreigners as inferior.²⁵¹ These works were being written at a time when Athens was facing a series of international and internecine conflicts, ones which were poking at the fabric of its fragile democracy.²⁵² As such, I contend that a means of explicating such

* "The heart of all tragedy," Mervyn Frost says, "is an ethical *agon*" (39).

²⁵¹ Cf. Hall 1989, p. 1: "The Athenian theatre of the fifth century BC saw the production of at least a thousand tragedies. Something is known about just under three hundred of them, whether from a complete text, fragments, a title, or from passages which have turned up on papyrus. Nearly half of these portrayed barbarian characters, or were set in a non-Greek land, or both; almost all the extant plays at least refer to barbarian customs or inferiority. These strikingly high proportions are usually explained by pointing to the popularity of themes from the tale of the Trojan war, but this can account neither for the great difference between the portrayal of the Trojans of epic and those of tragedy, nor for the frequent introduction of invented barbarian characters and choruses into plays where Greeks could have satisfied the demands of the plot. There was no requirement, for example, for the slave who reports the assault on Helen in *Orestes* to be Phrygian, nor for the libation-bearers in *Choephoroe* to be Asiatic."

²⁵² Given that pre-modern Athens failed to cultivate the norms that we are accustomed to seeing in a democratic society (e.g., concepts of personal autonomy, inalienable rights, and distributive justice), Carugati and Ober 2023 deem Athens a "basic [yet, still distinct from modern] democracy": "a system of collective self-rule by an extensive

encounters came in the form of theatrical, particularly tragic, performances, which typically had a mythic backdrop that an audience could share in the experience of cathartically.²⁵³ However, many of the most famous figures in mythology to grace the tragic stage seem to be fundamentally at odds with the ideology and values of the nascently democratic Athens. A case in point being Heracles, the principal figure in Euripides' homonymous drama. A violent hero of archaic epic, one with an aristocratic nature and a lethal, punitive temper, Heracles is in possession of traits both unseemly and unfit for a *pólis* striving to be democratic in its governmental processes.²⁵⁴

For all that, Heracles is the panhellenic hero *par excellence*, one with deep-seated, mythological connections extending over all Greece.²⁵⁵ Thus, his presence in Euripides' tragedy is to be read as an instrumentalization of those virtues which accompany his vices: strength, courage, cunning,²⁵⁶ and his status as both ancestor of the Heracleidae and champion of the Olympians against chthonic figures who threatened humanity and the Zeus-ordained order. Such instrumentalization is propaganda *tout court*, drawing on patriotic and political perceptions to create and reinforce a communal identity, normally created in contrast with 'other' identities conceived of as antagonistic, making culture a category that is intrinsically chauvinistic. Hence, "[e]mbedded within any work of art," writes Rebecca Futo Kennedy,

and socially diverse *demos* legitimately empowered to seek, and capable of achieving the goals of security, prosperity and non-tyranny" (2). For more on "basic democracy," cf. Ober 2017, esp. chapters 1 and 2. For critiques of Ober 2017, cf. Cammack, Mansbridge, McCormick, and Urbinati (all 2019).

²⁵³ Audience composition has long been a question relevant for the contextualization of Greek tragic performance. Carter 2008 (pp. 1-20) stakes the claim that plays were performed in front of diverse and international audiences, a state of affairs that moves away from tendencies to conceptualize the politics of tragedy in terms of collective experience, which, subsequently, makes ascribing a prescriptive 'political philosophy' to any tragedy difficult. As such, while the idea of tragic catharsis can be described collectively, a shared political message(s), arguably, cannot.

²⁵⁴ For a study, one which pays special court to Euripides' *Heracles*, that examines Heracles' appropriation and portrayal in Athenian religion, politics, architecture, and literature, cf. Frade 2023.

²⁵⁵ For an account of Heracles' omnipresence, cf. Stafford 2012, pp. xxv-xxvi.

²⁵⁶ As a comparison, it would be worthwhile to raise the specter of *mêtis* and its application to Odysseus in the previous chapter.

will be the norms and attitudes of the members of the society that produced it. When the work is promoted, performed, or disseminated among those within the community, it fosters chauvinism. When presented to outside communities it serves to spread and promote those norms as superior and desirable to others. Furthermore because both imperialism and culture are frequently attached to and promote a patriotic vision of a community, they are also about recreating that community's identity elsewhere. Tragedy, as a public art form that was closely identified with Athens specifically, and performed not only for Athenians but for allies and other foreigners, served the interests of empire by promoting a certain version of Athenian identity as Athenocentric, pan-Ionian, and pan-Hellenic.²⁵⁷

I believe that we can safely say that Kennedy's words on the nature of tragedy as a public spectacle, when understood as complicit in cultural propaganda's aims of inculcating certain beliefs and teasing out specific patterns of behavior within a population, are richly apparent along the breadth of extant fifth century tragedies. However, resounding along these lines in most dramas, I contend, is a constant political value: the importance of safety and stability in the *pólis*; that is, Athens.

It would be remiss of me to not strongly reiterate the contentious relationship between tragedy and Athenian democracy. For some, the genre itself is democratic and the politics of extant productions speak principally to citizens of a democracy. Others have shown that the default political context of tragic drama is heroic monarchy; some plays have a democratic context, but these emerge as conspicuous exceptions to the rule; from this perspective, Greek tragedy is politically relevant to the Greek *pólis*, democratic or not. Nonetheless, even if this latter view is right, we still need to explain the 'Athenocentric' nature of Greek tragedy, a genre that flourished under the Athenian democracy and, subsequently, became a distinctively Athenian cultural product, one which was exported and displayed to diverse audiences at annual

²⁵⁷ Cf. Kennedy 2009, p. 10.

City Dionysia, where tragic performance, by way of Thespis, is traditionally held to have had its birth in 534 B.C.E.²⁵⁸

***Kátharsis*, or (Re)balancing Pity and Fear**

I believe that it would be useful to localize some of the aspects of tragedy in terms of dramatic theory, beginning with Aristotle, whose *Poetics* is the earliest extant critical analysis of tragedy. Therein, he elucidates the concepts of *mímēsis* (imitation) and *kátharsis* ((re)balancing) to explain the function of tragedy. Subsequently, he asserts that “tragedy is, therefore, a *mímēsis* of a noble and complete action... which through pity (ἔλεος) and fear (φόβος) produces purification of the emotions.”²⁵⁹ Whereas *mímēsis* implies an imitation of anthropological activities, *kátharsis* means a certain emotional cleansing for the spectator. Though what exactly “purification of the emotions” (κάθαρσις τῶν παθημάτων) means remains unknown,²⁶⁰ Stephen Halliwell has argued that there is a “close relationship between tragic *katharsis* and the transformation of pity and fear... into essentially pleasurable emotions in the theater.”²⁶¹ In such a reading, “[*k*]atharsis,” Halliwell comes to conclude,

... will denote the overall ethical benefit that accrues from such an intense yet fulfillingly integrated experience. Exempt from the stresses that accompany pity and fear in social life, the audience of tragedy can allow these emotions an uninhibited flow that... is satisfyingly attuned to its contemplation of the rich human significance of a well-plotted play. A *katharsis* of this kind is not reducible to *either* “purgation” *or* “purification.”²⁶²

²⁵⁸ Cf. Winnington-Ingram et al. 1985, p. 2; Sinisi and Innamorati 2003, p. 3; Horace, *Ars Poetica* 275-77.

²⁵⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449b, 24-28: ἔστιν οὖν τραγωδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ χωρὶς ἐκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι’ ἀπαγγελίας, δι’ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.

²⁶⁰ For an overview of scholarly opinions on *kátharsis*, cf. Lear 1988.

²⁶¹ Cf. Halliwell 2005, p. 405. For Aristotle, pity and fear are typically “painful” emotions.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

From another valence, Jonathan Lear, citing other scholars with the “most sophisticated view of katharsis,”²⁶³ says that it “provides an education of the emotions.”²⁶⁴ Essentially, then, the tragic genre is a therapeutic space, one that “provides us with the appropriate objects towards which to feel pity or fear.”²⁶⁵

I find Aristotle’s pairing of pity and fear very compelling, and I see in their relation to *kátharsis* one that is not dissimilar to that between medicine and philosophy, wherein there is a robust ethical commitment to the care of both the soul and the body.²⁶⁶ Indeed, contemporary models of medicine that see *kátharsis* as ‘merely’ a purgation of feeling are those that distract from ancient articulations towards a bioethics, one seeking the restoration of health to the soul as well as to the body.²⁶⁷ Both philosophy and medicine require a certain kind of engagement with the other as vulnerable—whether physically wounded or wounded in soul—as well as acknowledging one’s own limits; for instance, the *īātrós*’ own limits. As Sara Brill notes, Hippocratic medicine “requires both investment and detachment.”²⁶⁸ Health in the Hippocratic model is not the absence of a negative presence of to the soul, but, rather, its restoration to a proper and proportional state of health. Purgation did not exist as a treatment that only excised what was pathogenic from the body, but rather, as a treatment that, in removing the pathogen,

²⁶³ Lear enumerates House 1956, Halliwell 1986, Golden 1962, and Nussbaum 1986. The latter two speak of a “clarification” of the emotions.

²⁶⁴ Cf. Lear 1988, p. 303.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Cf. McCoy 2013, particularly chapter four, for an analysis of medicine and philosophy in Plato’s *Gorgias*.

²⁶⁷ Jacob Bernays is typically credited as being among the first of contemporary commentators to identify *kátharsis* with a physiological discharge of affections—akin to medicine and not to aesthetics or ethics—in the first two sections of his essay *Grundzüge der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über Wirkung der Tragödie* (*Outlines of Aristotle’s Lost Work on the Effects of Tragedy*, 1857). Porter 2015 disagrees with this reading of Bernays’s work, seeing in his hypothesis a more general account of affective, ecstatic experience in the Greek world (in the same volume, Porter prepares a translation of the fourth and final section of Bernays’s essay). Other sections of Bernays’s essay (i.e., the preamble and sections one and two) are also available in an English translation prepared by Jennifer Barnes in Laird 2006.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Brill 2006, p. 6.

thereby restored an equilibrium that the body and its component humors was accustomed to. As the author of *Nature of Man* says,

The body of a human has in itself blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile; these make up the nature of their body, and through these they feel pain or enjoy health. Now they enjoy the most perfect health when these elements are duly proportioned to one another in respect of compounding, power and amount, and when they are perfectly mingled.²⁶⁹

I thus understand *kátharsis*, then, as a (re)balancing, redistributive notion, a reading that coheres along both tragic and medical discourses.

Aristotle's *Politics* also uses *kátharsis* as an image of the effect of experiencing pity and fear in the context of music, in which the goal here, as well, is the development of a more balanced state of soul (1342a):

[F]or some persons are very liable to this form of emotion, and under the influence of sacred music we see these people, when they use tunes that violently arouse the soul, being thrown into a state as if they had received medicinal treatment and taken a purge; the same experience then must come also to the compassionate and the timid and the other emotional people generally in such degree as befalls each individual of these classes, and all must undergo a *kátharsis* and a pleasant feeling of relief; and similarly also the cathartic melodies afford harmless delight to people.²⁷⁰

I find that the message of this passage is to argue that, given the great power that music has upon the human soul, the *correct kind* of music must be used for the *correct* educational purpose, with sensitivity given to the temperament, character, and age of those listening to music. Aristotle offers his remarks about *kátharsis* here as part of a theory about musical education,²⁷¹ a form of pedagogy that is meant to balance out the unbalanced (i.e., unvirtuous) soul. Halliwell astutely

²⁶⁹ [Hp.] *Nature of Man* 4: Τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔχει ἐν ἑωυτῷ αἷμα καὶ φλέγμα καὶ χολὴν ξανθὴν καὶ μέλαιναν, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ἢ φύσις τοῦ σώματος, καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἀλγεῖ καὶ ὑγιαίνει. ὑγιαίνει μὲν οὖν μάλιστα, ὅταν μετρίως ἔχη ταῦτα τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα κρήσιος καὶ δυνάμιος καὶ τοῦ πλήθους, καὶ μάλιστα μεμιγμένα ἢ·

²⁷⁰ Aristotle, *Politics* 1342a: ὁ γὰρ περὶ ἐνίας συμβαίνει πάθος ψυχᾶς ἰσχυρῶς, τοῦτο ἐν πάσαις ὑπάρχει, τῷ δὲ ἥττον διαφέρει καὶ τῷ μᾶλλον, οἷον ἔλεος καὶ φόβος, ἐπι δ' ἐνθουσιασμός· καὶ γὰρ ὑπὸ ταύτης τῆς κινήσεως κατοκώχμοι τινές εἰσιν, ἐκ τῶν δ' ἱερῶν μελῶν ὀρῶμεν τούτους, ὅταν χρῆσωνται τοῖς ἐξοργιάζουσι τὴν ψυχὴν μέλεσι, καθισταμένους ὡσπερ ἰατρείας τυχόντας καὶ καθάρσεως· ταῦτό δὲ τοῦτο ἀναγκαῖον πάσχειν καὶ τοὺς ἐλεήμονας καὶ τοὺς φοβητικούς καὶ τοὺς ὄλως παθητικούς, τοὺς ἄλλους καθ' ὅσον ἐπιβάλλει τῶν τοιούτων ἐκάστω, καὶ πᾶσι γίγνεσθαι τινα κάθαρσιν καὶ κουφίζεσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῆς.

²⁷¹ Cf. Golden 1992, pp. 8-12.

notes that musical *kátharsis*, under the belief that music shapes the *éthos* (character) of the soul (cf. *Pol.* 1340a-1342a), is intended to alleviate pain and to increase pleasure, but not merely by means of some manner of pressure valve.²⁷² Instead, *kátharsis* effects a change in the soul through altering its very *éthos*. However, music does even more than shape the soul's *éthos*. Within the same extended passage, there is a deep connection between imitation (*mímēsis*) and like feeling (*sumpathēs*), with the former producing the latter (1340a):

And, moreover, everybody when listening to imitations (μιμήσεων) comes into like feelings (συμπαθεῖς), even apart from the rhythms and tunes themselves. And since it is the case that music is one of the things that give pleasure, and that virtue has to do with feeling delight and love and hatred rightly, there is obviously nothing that it is more necessary to learn and to become habituated to than to judge correctly and to delight in virtuous characters and noble actions.²⁷³

By *sumpathēs* here, Aristotle does not seem to have in mind compassion for the person or persons suffering, but, rather, experiencing feelings that correspond strongly to whatever is being imitated.²⁷⁴ Nonetheless, the passage is a node for deepening our understanding of an audience's experience of tragedy, for it states that *sumpathēs* is one natural outcome of being affected by imitations, whether these imitations are strictly musical, theatrical, or something else entirely. Here is where I mean to lay out the goals of this chapter.

From the fourth-century B.C.E. on, disparate literary genres seeking to make an account of the natural world speak of a *sumpátheia* (sympathy) pervading it, shuttling from the most basic forms of life (vegetality) and the sympathetic natures within and between bodies to

²⁷² Cf. Halliwell 2005, pp. 404-5.

²⁷³ Aristotle, *Politics* 1340a: ἔτι δὲ ἀκροώμενοι τῶν μιμήσεων γίνονται πάντες συμπαθεῖς, καὶ χωρὶς τῶν ῥυθμῶν καὶ τῶν μελῶν αὐτῶν. ἐπεὶ δὲ συμβέβηκεν εἶναι τὴν μουσικὴν τῶν ἡδέων, τὴν δ' ἀρετὴν περὶ τὸ χαίρειν ὀρθῶς καὶ φιλεῖν καὶ μισεῖν, δεῖ δηλονότι μανθάνειν καὶ συνεθίζεσθαι μὴθὲν οὕτως ὡς τὸ κρίνειν ὀρθῶς καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς ἐπιεικέσιν ἤθεσι καὶ ταῖς καλαῖς πράξεσιν: ἔστι δὲ ὁμοιώματα μάλιστα παρὰ τὰς ἀληθινὰς φύσεις ἐν τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς καὶ τοῖς μέλεσιν ὀργῆς καὶ πραότητος, ἔτι δ' ἀνδρείας καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐναντίων τούτοις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἠθικῶν.

²⁷⁴ As I, and others, have mentioned, there is a tendency to conflate fourth-century B.C.E. ideas of *sumpátheia* with what we call intersubjective sympathy today (cf. Halliwell 2002, p. 16). However, our notion of sympathy may map more accurately onto *éleos*.

celestial forms.²⁷⁵ Sympathy gives the authors of such texts the opportunity to expound their theories about *how* and *why* the world is, providing the foundations for an ecological economy of Nature that abounds in both distinguishment and universalization. Life is poecilious: it is happening to everyone, all the time, and everywhere. Nonetheless, human participation with(in) the world is entwined (*sumplekēs*), mutually influential (*sumpathēs*), and intimate (*sunēthēs*). The world as a sympathetic, vital organism renders us inextricable from each other’s lives, the toils of beasts of burden, the water which runs over stones, the sprouting of a blade of grass, and the position of the heavenly bodies at one’s birth.²⁷⁶

Hence, there seems to be an efflorescent belief that the world is affective, shared, and joined together (*sunaptós*) like a body is; everything has its portion of everything. The Greek language itself even seems to bear out this interpretation. Brill offers an account of “*sy(n)-* constructions” in Aristotle’s political and ethical corpora that show the abundance of such words therein.²⁷⁷ Brill notes that Aristotle’s concept of “sharing life” (συζῆν) is derived from the verb *suzáō*, “to live with or together.” Within his political corpus, *suzên* typically appears in relation to manifestations of habitual acquaintance (*sunētheia*), which requires *lógos* and freedom of choice, and in elucidations of the dynamic forms of anthropological activity that constitute friendship (*philia*), which Aristotle describes as “the choice (*proáiresis*) of sharing life.”²⁷⁸ In his ethical works, Brill notes that *suzên* connotes one’s awareness of self that arises from habitating

²⁷⁵ Cf. Holmes 2019, p. 239.

²⁷⁶ For a general overview of the history and philosophy of the concept of sympathy, Schliesser 2015’s edited volume is helpful. Particularly, for a corporeal (i.e., Stoic) account of sympathy, chapters one (Brouwer on Stoic sympathy itself) and three (Holmes on Galen’s medical sympathy) are relevant.

²⁷⁷ Brill 2019, pp. 97-121. Likewise, see Brill 2020’s monograph, particularly part one.

²⁷⁸ *Politics* 1280b, 38-39: ἡ γὰρ τοῦ συζῆν προαίρεσις φιλία. Within the Stoicism of Epictetus, προαίρεσις is a distinctly anthropological phenomenon. For it is the only thing that we can control, and it exercises the faculty of choice, by which we judge φαντασίαι (“impressions”) rationally, since they are neither inherently good nor bad. As the human faculty to which all others are subordinated, cf. *Discourses* 2.23.6-16, 20-29.

with others.²⁷⁹ Such awareness, when more fully defined, explicates the three primary dimensions of *philia*: mutual affect (*sumpátheia*), such as sharing both joy and grief (*sunkhairein*,²⁸⁰ *sunalgeîn*,²⁸¹ *sunēdesthai*,²⁸² *sunákthesthai*, *súnodos*,²⁸³ *sullupeîsthai*),²⁸⁴ especially between mothers and their children and even between non-human animals such as birds,²⁸⁵ joint perception (*sunaisthēsis*) of justice and injustice alike that constitutes the foundations of a political community,²⁸⁶ and both shared consideration (*suntheōreîn*)²⁸⁷ and thought (*sungnōrizeîn*)²⁸⁸ that transpire from philosophizing together (*sumphilosopheîn*).²⁸⁹ Brill’s philological survey arises from a question posed in Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* by the leader of the Chorus, who, after having been asked by Pelasgus to move from the sacred altar to Zeus to a public, shared space, asks, “How could a grove permitted to be trespassed keep danger away from me?”²⁹⁰ In the context of the drama, such anxieties are well-founded; for the Danaïdes fled Egypt for Argos to obviate forced marriages to their cousins, so any route by which they could be accessed is a legitimate cause for concern. The question, however, has significant ramifications for the very fabric of democracy, and it evinces “a deep awareness of the relation between how humans bear the weight of symbolic life and the fragility of embodied existence,” Brill writes.²⁹¹

²⁷⁹ *Nicomachean Ethics* 1171b, 32-1172a, 8.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1166a, 8.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 1166a, 27.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 1171a, 8.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1160a, 26.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1171b, 7.

²⁸⁵ *Eudemian Ethics* 1240a, 35.

²⁸⁶ *Politics* 1253a, 15.

²⁸⁷ *Eudemian Ethics* 1245b, 4.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 1244b, 26.

²⁸⁹ *Nicomachean Ethics* 1172a, 5; *Eudemian Ethics* 1245a, 22. A variety of these constructions are well-aligned to Holmes 2019’s conception of Stoic sympathy, which is in the same volume.

²⁹⁰ Aeschylus, *Suppliants* 509: καὶ πῶς βέβηλον ἄλλοσος ἄν ῥύοιτό με;

²⁹¹ Brill 2019, p. 98.

In this chapter, I argue that the rebalancing (i.e., cathartic) nature of tragedy as an art form, in which pity and fear are transformed before a global audience, has two distinct valences: one that humanizes and empathizes and another that dehumanizes and renders entire groups differentiated and hostile to one another. In the former, I look to the mimetic nature of tragedy as a scene of critical, empathetic witnessing,²⁹² and how it is able to enlarge a community's vision of its own identity and the realities of its citizenry, including vulnerable citizens—a state of affairs that not only shows tragedy as an aesthetic category, but also one that emphasizes its variously political and philosophical functions. In the latter, I look to the broader discourses of autochthony that pervaded the sociopolitical sphere of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. as implicated in the rhetorical strategies of othering that pervade the tragic stage, a scene of fundamental voyeurism, deixis, and spectacle-bearing of racial, biological, and ethnic difference.

Underlying this chapter are my conceptions about democracy's predication upon *sunētheia* and *suzên*, in which the affairs of public life take shape in open spaces and decisions made and voted upon in friendship (*philia*), trust (*pistis*), and confidence that one's free speech (*parrhēsiā*) will not be impugned. For I am moved by the belief that the pairing of *suzên* and *sumpátheia* has the power to illuminate how humans and their political communities not only come-to-be and flourish—What are the factors that draw people together, both ontologically (i.e., What does it mean to have a body?) and sociopolitically (i.e., What structures and events bring communities together?), and how are these connected? How does the sympathetic sharing of life have the capacity to distribute and to withhold affective ties both between humans and within the

²⁹² Theorizing around the notion of “empathetic witnessing” to be found in pseudo-Aristotle's *Problems* 7.7, Holmes 2021 pays court to the work of Sontag 2003, Hartman 1997, and Brown 2014.

broader ecology of living beings, material substances, and ideas and beliefs?—but also why they do not: What stops humans from flourishing and why? When is the world “hostile” (ἀλλότριος)?

Thinking With pseudo-Aristotle’s *Problems*

Beyond the uncertainties of the time of its production,²⁹³ the seventh book of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, which is concerned with “all things that come from sympathy” (ὅσα ἐκ συμπαθείας, 886b), is one that dovetails with the multitude of concepts and questions that we have taken up in this work. In a particular section of the work (887a), the author poses the questions of why, when we see another person suffering, do we “suffer with them in mind” (συναλοῦμεν τῇ διανοίᾳ)? We are provided with two alternative answers, which, perhaps, testifies to the difficulty of conceptualizing sympathy.²⁹⁴ The first response proposes that we do so because of “the nature common to all of us... owing to our kinship” (ἡ φύσις ἡμῶν κοινὴ ἅπασιν... διὰ τὴν οἰκειότητα), and the other proposes that, just as our noses and ears receive emanations (*aporroai*), our eyes experience (*páskhei*) both what is pleasant (*hēdús*) and what is painful (*lupēρός*). I have variously essayed the question of emanation along the lines of sense-perception and embodied cognition, the question of nature, both those belonging to persons and that to be found in the ecological world, and, in this chapter, the notions of pity and fear (which I read as not unlike those things which are pleasant and painful) that the tragic genre means to balance.

I thus place the stakes of my reading in this passage in light of the questions of what it means to “suffer along in thought” and “experience” something beyond us, and what is to be

²⁹³ Cf. Mayhew 2011, pp. xvii-xxiv; Flashar 1991, pp. 356-57, who date the text to the fourth and third centuries B.C.E. The nature of the work, however, seems to intimate that it is one that was produced over an extended period of time.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Holmes 2021, pp. 18-21, for an overview of the difficulty of conceptualizing and (trans)historicizing sympathy, which quickly became something of a “quasi-technical term in a range of discourses” (p. 19).

expected from undergoing such an event. In the tragic context, *per* Aristotle, the aim to provoke both pity and fear (1452b). It is thus a form of *lógos* concerned with the arousal of feeling in the audience. These emotions, as we have seen, are made possible through *mímēsis* of ‘what is before us’;²⁹⁵ audience members may experience overwhelming emotions only because the play imitates what they conceive of as ‘possible’ to happen to them.²⁹⁶ Aristotle somewhat cryptically states that one of the features of a good character in tragedy is ‘likeness’ (1454a). While he does not elaborate upon this proposition, I believe that he is referring to a likeness and familiarity between certain characters and the audience, to the extent that they may have the appropriate, balancing experience of the production. In other words, tragic figures are those for whom we can feel pity or fear, because we understand that, to some degree, we are like them—an awareness that rouses both pity and fear in the empathetic audience member. Indeed, Aristotle’s thoughts in the *Rhetoric* further illuminate the idea of ‘likeness’ of the tragic figure in the *Poetics*. Therein, we find insights into the psychology of exactly how *lógos* can produce fear and pity in an audience. The *Poetics* states that witnessing recognition (*anagnōrisis*) and reversal (*peripéteia*) at once triggers the audience, in the context of tragic performance, to experience fear or pity. Indeed, which one is experienced and to what extent is likely to depend upon whether or not the audience member can imagine themselves to experience the same kind of reversal in fortune.

Recognitions of Vulnerability and Like Feeling

Aristotle’s union of pity and fear in *both* the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* is particularly significant. Their connection in the *Rhetoric* suggests that in Aristotle’s view of tragedy, the two experiences are mutually influential for an audience, and they may, in fact, coexist together in a

²⁹⁵ Though not a question of tragedy, there are distinct resonances with Empedocles’ notion of knowledge being that which is at hand (*pròs pareón*) for humans (cf. D243).

²⁹⁶ Let us not forget that the verb *sumpīptein* has the sense of ‘(an event or misfortune) happening to,’ and such use is found in tragic contexts (cf. Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 113; Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 337).

single individual. Nonetheless, they are important to keep conceptually distinct for the purpose of discerning the subtleties to be found within a larger audience's experiences. For, as I have mentioned before, the variegated nature of tragic performance's audiences means that distilling a space of universal, particularly political, message and experience is impossible.²⁹⁷ If our own present belief as to the likelihood of experiencing harm informs whether we experience fear or pity, then it is likely that, with any given audience, different individual members may experience a greater predominance of fear or pity depending upon their identity and positionality. A young male citizen who has little first-hand experience in war, for example, may be more likely to experience pity than fear in response to the pleadings of the mothers in Euripides' *Suppliants*, especially if he identifies with Theseus' on-stage verbalization of such pity. However, a woman or metic (or a metic woman, at that particular intersection), who has a different set of experiences concerning the treatment of non-citizens, could have a response that is closer to that of fear, if they and their lived experience find identification with the powerlessness of the women in that drama. They may recollect prior experiences of having to rely upon others for the safe return of corpses after conflict and proper treatment of the dead—all scenes of subjection. Furthermore, earlier experiences might deepen their pity in such a way that it becomes close to the experience of what the author of *Problems* means by dianoetic *sunalgeîn*.²⁹⁸

Situated likewise in the affective realm, Aristotle asserts that tragedy, by its nature, requires the presence of *páthos*, that is, the undergoing of suffering of significant magnitude and lasting effect. Among the central features of audience experience, thus, is to recognize

²⁹⁷ Cf. n. 252.

²⁹⁸ The question of whether women, enslaved people, and children attended the City Dionysia has been a subject of scholarly debate, one which I will leave aside in this work. For an overview, however, cf. Croally 2005, pp. 62-3.; Csapo and Slater 1995, pp. 286-93; Henderson 1991, pp. 133-47.

vulnerability in both tragic characters and the events performed.²⁹⁹ Indeed, such vulnerability may invite meditation upon broader, abstract truths about mortality or sudden reversals of fortune that lead an individual to think of themselves and their own susceptibility to suffering. As a reminder, I spoke at length, in the previous chapter, of medical *páthē*, which also has the capacity to move and to be shared and communicated within the broader ecosystem (i.e., in terms of co-affection) of the body. In that context, the distribution of *páthē* is pathogenic and disruptive of humoral balance. The movement and witnessing of *páthos* within the tragic figure, however, is intended as cathartic; that is, a catalyst of rebalancing and reorientation. Tragedy, as a result, brings together our desire for human flourishing as imaginative, rational viewers and also our conception of the tragic world, in which another's life is denied the same kind of flourishing that all humans strive for. We, subsequently, are made more deeply aware of our own frailty and the possibility that the flourishing that we long for, envision, and work towards might not always be achieved. Further, in seeing this limit exhibited by another whose circumstances we see ourselves as able to fall into, too, there is also sociopolitical valence, in which individuals became aware of the vulnerabilities of others, a happening that has the potential to extend affective ties between individuals and the wider community, a moment of learning that recalls the educative potential of music to sculpt the unvirtuous soul into a virtuous one.³⁰⁰

Significantly, this *páthos* for suffering is a *páthos* shared with others, one that is bidirectional: what I will call the 'vertical' and 'horizontal' dimensions. First, when an audience member shares at least partly in the feelings of a character, we find a 'vertical' connection between character and audience, one that is asymmetrical (A spectator feels along with a

²⁹⁹ Cf. Scodel 2005, pp. 233-50. Scodel notes that Sophocles is particularly noteworthy among the tragedians for exhibiting compassion for those who suffer.

³⁰⁰ Cf. section 3.1.

character but not vice versa). Second, there is an additional set of shared feelings between audience members who are simultaneously experiencing the performance of a tragedy together. Witnessing a play as part of a community includes this ‘horizontal’ dimension of like feelings across sociopolitical confines that otherwise exist in the community. Shared feelings and experiences, brought on through the experience of strong feeling in response to a work of art, serve as unifiers of the community. At times, the connections between lived experience and tragic events might be striking. Bernard Knox notes that in the light of the fragility of the political situation at the time of the performance of *Oedipus Rex*, and its recent experience of the plague, “[t]he audience which watched *Oedipus* in the theater of Dionysus was watching itself.”³⁰¹ Such shared feelings may intimately connect those within the community who are reminded of shared experiences in times of suffering, such as war or plague.

Tragedy also may include a wide range of characters that expand the sense of who constitutes the community, through its own inclusion of enslaved persons, women, children, foreigners, and those defeated in war among its characters. As Edith Hall has put forth, members of groups that were excluded from political participation on the basis of gender, ethnicity, or status were ubiquitous in tragic storylines.³⁰² In response to the aperture for representation of marginalized figures that tragedy opens, Neil Croally proposes that the genre serves the purpose of subversively questioning the prevailing ideology of the society, in which ideology is understood to mean “the authorized self-definition of the dominant group, that is, the citizen body.”³⁰³ Viewing Euripides’ *Trojan Women*, a play that asks deep questions about the institution of slavery, would be a particularly emotional experience, to give an example, for an

³⁰¹ Cf. Knox 1998, p. 77.

³⁰² Cf. Hall and Macintosh 2005, p. 123.

³⁰³ Cf. Croally 2005, p. 67.

enslaved person, if they were watching the tragedy along with the person(s) who had enslaved them. In such circumstances, spectators may not only be engaged with their own responses to the staged events, but also with how others in the community are responding to them. A spectator's like feelings, in such cases, would be not only for the enslaved women on stage, but also, perhaps, for the person whom they have enslaved. Even if enslaved persons were not present in the audience, the articulations and thoughts and feelings on stage may sympathetically expand a citizen's understanding and awareness of the enslaved person's experience.

In these examples, I hope to have shown how tragedy and its rhetorics have the natural power to catalyze ethical discussions about broader, collective concerns, since an audience member must weigh whether the suffering of a production's characters is morally deserved or not, an opinion that often must be read in the context of circumstances in which a character is subject to substantial, inequitable, and contradictory demands. The conflict between Antigone, for instance, and Creon is symbolic of the potential for conflict between loyalty to one's loved ones and to one's *pólis*, especially given that discourse's numerous entanglements of gender, sociopolitical status, and cultural practice.³⁰⁴ Tragedy as an art form, then, permits a society to explore difficult issues in a proscribed way by means of what Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood calls "zooming devices," which shifts an Athenian audience closer to the experiences of characters themselves and events of the drama itself, and "distancing devices," which separates the world of a tragedy from the reality of the *pólis*.³⁰⁵ I understand Sourvinou-Inwood's structures of such

³⁰⁴ The second *epeisódion* of the *Antigone* opens with a guard reporting that Antigone has been caught in the act of attempting to bury her elder brother Polyneices. Such an act was expressly forbidden by the edict of Creon, lately King of Thebes and *kúrios* (guardian) to Antigone as her uncle, who had deemed Polyneices *persona non grata* since "the exile returned wishing to burn his patrimony down from its highest reaches, as well as his native gods, by means of fire" (199-201). When Creon questions her overstepping of his *nómoi*, Antigone replies that her actions were in accordance with the customs of the gods, customs which transcend any human decree (450-60). At once, then, a distinction emerges between that which is *hósios* (sanctioned by the gods) and that which is *dikaíos* (sanctioned by human law), with Antigone representing the former and Creon the latter.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, pp. 297-8; also, cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1989, pp. 134-48.

‘camera work’ to help audience members conceive of the vulnerability of specific groups within their own *pólis*, an awareness that requires both interest and disinterest in order to holistically and rationally experience their situation.³⁰⁶

As I have shown, the tragic stage can function as a space that humanizes and empathizes, by means of mimetic nature of tragedy as a scene of complexifying, empathetic witnessing, and how it is able enlarge a community’s vision of its own identity and the lived experiences of its citizenry, including those living at the margins. However, I understand the tragic stage to also have the capacity to function as an alterized space of dehumanization and differentiation, for, as I postulated early in this chapter, the importance of safety and stability in the *pólis* is the one constant political value to be consistent found along the length and breadth of extant fifth century tragedies. In the following section of this work, I analyze one play in particular—Aeschylus’ *Suppliants*—that sees it as cautioning against integration, an apprehensive reading that many modern scholars, performers, and audiences, who read the text reparatively as one of promoting integration, have gone away from.³⁰⁷ It is not my intention to replace or problematize these other readings, but, rather, I aim to elucidate how, from another angle, the tragic stage is able to create community by means of exclusion and xenophobia. I open by meditating upon the *hapax legomenon* Pelagus uses to describe the Danaids.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁶ Cf. n. 267, in which Brill notes the need for closeness and detachment that the Hippocratic *īātrós* must observe in their practice.

³⁰⁷ Zeitlin 1992 argued that *Suppliants* was both a story of integrating the Danaids into society through marriage and an etiology for the Thesmophoria. Building upon Zeitlin’s influential reading, scholars have also frequently centered discussions around *Suppliants* as a play concerned with immigration (cf. Vasunia 2001; Tzanetou 2012, esp. pp. 10-11, 13; Bakewell 2013). Tzanetou 2012 reads Aeschylus’s Danaid trilogy, of which *Suppliants* was the first, as presenting Athenian imperialism at its most magnanimous: giving shelter to refugees, defending them against the threats they had fled, waging war in their defense, and then peacefully integrating them into the city through marriage. For influential analyses that focus on gender in *Suppliants*, cf. Seaford 1987, Foley 2003, and Murnaghan 2005.

³⁰⁸ The grammarians Aelian and Hesychius interpret the word as meaning being related by blood but being of foreign birth.

astóxenos: Aeschylus' *Suppliants*

Astóxenos can be translated in a myriad of ways: “citizen stranger,” “native stranger,” “kin stranger,” and more. It is a special word with a very specific range of use. For the Danaids, fundamentally, are kin-strangers. Holger Friis Johansen and Edward Whittle believe that the word is little more than a “single-word oxymoron” for Aeschylus meant to emphasize the genealogical strangeness of the Danaids.³⁰⁹ After swearing that they are fleeing Egypt not because they have committed violence but because of the threat forced, “impious” (*asebēs*, 9) marriage, they appeal to an ancient kinship, by way of Io, that brings them to Argos (κέλσαι δ’ Ἄργους γαῖαν, ὅθεν δὴ γένος ἡμέτερον, 15-16). They appeal to this kinship twice more (40-56; 274-76) in supplication, a practice taught to them by Danaus, their father (19-22). Their kinship and proper performance of supplication are in contrast to their physical appearance, speech, and adherence to Greek *nómoi*. In their opening chorus, the Danaids emphasize their “foreign speech” (καρβᾶνα δ’ αὐδᾶν, 119, 130) and, subsequently, make note of their belonging to a sun-tanned, black *génos* (μελανθῆς ἠλιόκτυπον γένος τὸν γάιον, 154–55),³¹⁰ in opposition to the Argives, whom they call “native” (ἔγγαιος, 58). I understand these two characteristics to be so remarked upon because, culturally, they seem very Greek. Their skin color reflects ancient theories of environmental determinism (they openly declare themselves to be *hēlióktupos*), but it could also suggest a parallel to the vaunted ideal of wealthy citizen wives having pale skin and Greek goddesses being white-armed (*leukōlenos*), while women who were foreign and/or of a lower social class (i.e., potentially, they labored outside) could be darker.³¹¹

³⁰⁹ Cf. Mitchell 2006, pp. 210-18.

³¹⁰ I follow the orthography of Derbew 2022 when speaking of “black” people in ancient Greek and Latin literatures, with “Black” referring to a modern group emerging out of the trans-Atlantic traffic and trade in enslaved persons.

³¹¹ Cf. Derbew 2023; Sassi 2001.

The later references to the Aegyptids' black skin by Danaus (719-20) and by the Danaids themselves (745) seems to associate the former more with blackness than the Danaids, a position argued by Phiroze Vasunia.³¹² Although the initial claim of a *génos* marks the Danaids as phenotypically "black," they may still belong to the same *génos* as Pelasgus, here designated as Argive. They relate their genealogy to Pelasgus (291-324), which shows their skin color is nothing more than an epiphenomenon of their environment; it does not undermine their Greekness and is as superficial as their clothing, which is described "unhellenic" (*ἀνελληνόστολος*) and barbarian (234-35). At the end of this initial meeting, Pelasgus accepts the Danaids' claim of Greekness, despite his own initial confusion over their appearance contrasting with their knowledge of the specific panhellenic practice of supplication, accepting their argument: "seeing our ancient *génos*, you should receive our supplication, this Argive expedition" (*εἰδὼς δ' ἄμὸν ἀρχαῖον γένος πρᾶσσοις ἄν, ὡς Ἀργεῖον ἀνστήσαι στόλον*, 323-24).

While accepting their claim of kinship, Pelasgus, understanding the Danaids to be *astóxenoι*, is still uncertain of their legal status in relation to the sons of Aegyptus (387-91). While he, seemingly, has no grounds to dismiss their request out of hand, Pelasgus is still wary and ultimately defers to the citizens of Argos (365-69):

You are not seated at the hearth of my halls. But, if the polis as a whole is to be polluted by them, let the people in common concern themselves to work out a remedy. I will not make promises before, but only after, discussing these matters with the whole citizen body.

The king swiftly follows up his overture to include the citizenry in this decision with a statement that simultaneously affirms his sovereign power and stresses the foreignness of the Danaids (398-401):

³¹² Cf. Vasunia 2001, p. 34.

As I said before, I should not act on these things without the people, although I am not without the power to do so, lest sometime later one of the people should say, “Honoring outsiders, you destroyed the city” (ἐπήλυδας τιμῶν ἀπόλεσας πόλιν).

The use of the term *épēlus* (foreigner) emphasises that, though “Greek,” the Danaids are *still* outsiders, still *xénoi*. By the end of the play, they will be accepted into the *pólis* as *métoikoi*, and they will, most likely, marry Argive men, and, thus, they will themselves be integrated into the sociopolitical structure of the state. However, the process of getting to that point emphasizes some very important and potentially dangerous differences between these Argive-Egyptians and the Argives themselves that undermines the Danaids’ Greekness and may be where some audience members would question whether they were “Greek enough.”

For example, the Danaids seem to struggle in understanding why Pelasgus would even stop to consider the opinions of his citizens in the deliberations over whether to grant them asylum or not. “You are the city,” they declare,

you are the public (σὺ δὲ τὸ δάμιον); a leader, not subject to judgment (πρύτανις ἄκριτος), in charge of the altars, the hearth of the land (ἔστιαν χθονός), by your vote alone (μονοψήφοισι), by your nod (μονοσκήπτροισι), with your single scepter on your throne, you judge all matters. (370-75)

This response shows clearly that the procedures of democratic government, or, at least, a representative voice by the citizens are foreign to them. The Danaids synonymize the city and the body politic with the sovereign alone. They emphasize Pelasgus’ power, royal and religious authority, the fact that impunity is his right, and that he is accountable to no one. Ultimately, he is the people.

The Danaids follow this (mis)conceptualization of the Argive political situation by threatening to pollute the sanctuary by completing suicide within its confines (455-67), thereby forcing Pelasgus to bring their request before the people (468-89). This act of sacrilege is in direct violation of the Greek practices of supplication that they perform to prove their Greekness

and makes visceral Pelasgus' concern that admitting foreigners could bring harm to the city. Argos has long been seen as a stand-in for Athens within the play, with its democratic sentiments and origins among the autochthonous Pelasgians.³¹³ It would be no great difficulty for an audience member to respond to the threats of *miasma* by the Danaids by increasing fears of such pollutions coming from foreign women entering Athens.

The Terrain of Autochthony

An explanation for such fears of foreignness also appears in the play, an answer that we often associate with later periods of Athenian history: autochthony.³¹⁴ For Pelasgus not only introduces himself as ἔγγαιος to Argos, but as born of it (250-59):

For I am Pelasgus, son of the earth-born Palaechthon (τοῦ γηγενοῦς γὰρ εἰμ' ἐγὼ Παλαίχθονος), and ruler of this land. From me, the king, the Pelasgian people, who enjoy the fruits of this land, are well-named. And I rule over all the land through which the sacred Strymon runs, toward the setting sun. I mark the borders at the land of the Perraiboi and the country beyond the Pindus, near the Paeonians and the Dodonian mountains and the boundary created by the watery sea.

He is a member of the “earth-born people” (τοῦ γηγενοῦς); the Pelasgian *génos*, then, is equally a product of the land and a consumer of it. As I have noted, the Pelasgians are referred to by Danaus and his daughters on numerous occasions as “native” (ἔγγαιος) or its equivalent, whereas the Danaids themselves are variously *xénai* (strangers, foreigners), *epēludes* (outsiders, immigrants) and *astóxenoι* (kin-strangers) who speak a foreign (*kárbanos*) language and come to Argos wearing non-Greek raiment. In the end, they are called *métoikoi*: those who live in a given land, but who are not part of it. The language of autochthony appears in *Suppliants* and links the Pelasgian's indigeneity to democratic practice, a mirror of Athenian ideals. Although it seems

³¹³ Noteworthy, too, to this connection is the historical fact that Athens and Argos had a series of alliances during the fifth-century B.C.E.

³¹⁴ For an overview of autochthony through the lens of material culture (namely, the Erechtheion) in the later decades of the fifth-century B.C.E., cf. Clements 2015.

the myth of autochthony became central to Athenian identity only starting in the 440s B.C.E., there is evidence of its existence and also of a broader Greek discourse that bound people in various ways to the land they came from well before then.³¹⁵ Indeed, notions of autochthony appear in Hesiod and Pindar, the latter of whom takes pains to make mythical connections to a given land through the descent to the elite classes and not the average person.³¹⁶ As I showed last chapter, the environmental determinism of the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places* is not only a matter of climate, but also a matter that speaks to notions of *phúsis* and form of government. In Asia, the author of the *Airs* suggests that, because of the uniformity of the land and the temperate climate, the people there are passive (12.6-7) and elect to live under monarchical rule, a state of affairs which results in their souls being “enslaved” (αἱ γὰρ ψυχαὶ δεδούλωνται, 23.3; 16). Such habitus might be what encouraged them to see in Pelasgus alone the *pólis* itself and, thus, his ability to act solely on its behalf. This stereotypical view of the differences to be found among Greeks and others might well have stimulated audience members in their fears and anti-immigrant prejudices, especially concerning the newly-formed metic class.

Conclusion

My reading of *Suppliants* is not the dominant one, and I am not, as I mentioned before, trying to swing the prevailing, rehabilitative readings of the play. However, as I showed in my bifurcation of this chapter between a notion of the tragic stage as being able to both extend and withhold affective ties to certain people, I wanted to highlight the polyvalence of how a production can be interpreted. A fifth-century B.C.E. audience member could, indeed, view *Suppliants* as a tale of integration while another, having watched the very same production, could

³¹⁵ For the opposite urge, in which mythological movements into Greece to found cities are prevalent, cf. Kaplan 2015.

³¹⁶ Cf. Kennedy 2015 for notions of autochthony in the sixth and fifth centuries.

View it as one abounding in anxieties over the presence of foreigners in a land that prides itself on indigeneity. Both are valid, and both, I believe, reveal tragedy in its fullest extent as an inherently political and aesthetic art form.

IV. EPILOGUE

This study has been fundamentally preoccupied with questions of the human body in ancient Greek thought: the body with a nature (*phúsis*), the notions that we both invest and divest in the articulation of such a form, and how such conceptions frequently find themselves implicated in both intellectual and sociopolitical contexts. The body can be harmed, the body can be healed, and the body can be terrifyingly astounding and, sometimes, we can only marvel at what it can do—what we can do. “The body keeps the score,” as Dutch psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk says in his eponymous study on lingering effects of trauma on human physiology. Hence, my interest in the discourse of medicine, and how studying medical writers gives us a unique and privileged aperture into the variety of ideas and claims that were being contested and argued about human nature itself, the body, and disease in the Classical period. For, as the ancient Greeks often thought of the medicalized body and its suffering in terms of cavities, humors, and fluid fields liable to flux, trained care of the body emerges as the result of aspirations to not only *think* about the nature of the physical body, but also to *act* upon it and maintain its wellbeing.

However, there are times when, for a variety of reasons, particular bodies are extirpated from economies of care. I spoke in this thesis, as an example, enslaved people,³¹⁷ who are functionally social nonpersons. This designation draws upon the work of scholars in the field of Black Studies, but I also hesitate, in reflection, to deracinate and alter the context of that designation’s use. For scholars of an Afropessimist bent, Black people are said to be socially

³¹⁷ Though I did not take it up in this thesis directly, the word *sōma* itself is a formulaic word for an enslaved person in the Delphic Manumission inscriptions. For more on the inscriptions, cf. Tucker 1982 and Zelnick-Abramovitz 2005, particularly chapter three. I heartily thank S. B. Breitenfeld for this information and the concomitant references.

dead as a result of anti-Blackness as a fundamental condition of civil society.³¹⁸ My reading of the plight of the Black subject is more aligned to those who understand that condition as conceiving of the social world of the Black subject as unfathomably rich, with necrotized lives only manifesting in the civic realm. This reading may cohere more clearly with the experiences of ancient, enslaved persons, but I am rather agnostic in this matter. At any rate, we become witnesses to such persons as spectacles and objects; us vs. them. “Are we witnesses,” asks Saidiya Hartman,

who confirm the truth of what happened in the face of the world-destroying capacities of pain, the distortions of torture, the sheer unrepresentability of terror, and the repression of the dominant accounts? Or are we voyeurs fascinated with and repelled by exhibitions of terror and sufferance? What does the exposure of the violated body yield? Proof of black sentience or the inhumanity of the ‘peculiar institution’? Or does the pain of the other merely provide us with the opportunity for self-reflection? At issue here is the precariousness of empathy and the uncertain line between witness and spectator.³¹⁹

Hartman’s account invites us to reflect upon the expansive space for a *politics of the body*, wherein social constructions of difference are made providential,³²⁰ beyond the *body politic* of the capital-M “Man.”³²¹ These modes of differentiation are to be read critically, and Greco-Roman antiquity must, too, always be implicated in this discourse.

Further lines of inquiry that I am curious to explore include expanding my notions of embodiment, ideas of corporeality, and death with a comparatist’s lens—particularly, thinking with the Gĩkũyũ people of highland Kenya’s pre-colonial conceptions of corporeality. On parts within the body, I am deeply moved by comparative study of the language of heartbreak in pre-modern cultures, particularly in Greco-Roman and Mesopotamian contexts. Views of

³¹⁸ Cf. Chavez 2021 for a bleak reading of the state of the raced subject.

³¹⁹ Cf. Hartman 1997, p. 3.

³²⁰ Cf. Brown and Gershon 2017; for feminist conceptions of the body as socially made and colonized, cf. Brownmiller 1975, Davis 1983, Dworkin 1974, Griffin 1978, 1979; Rich 1982.

³²¹ Cf. Wynter 2003 for an analysis of the “Western bourgeois” conception of the human (i.e., “Man”).

corporeality, too, to be found in Neoplatonism present a veritable treasure-trove. The body is extraordinary, and the questions that I want to ask of it and about are endless and endlessly complex.

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