THE SHIPWRECK OF FREEDOM: ARISTOTLE, TRAGEDY AND AN IRISH NOVEL

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For mortal men there is no escape from the doom we must endure.
—Sophocles, *Antigone*, l.1462-3.

They are more doomed and fixed in their courses, the men of Sligo, it seems to him, than those bewildered and doomed Greeks of old...
—Sebastian Barry, *The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty*.[1]

The question I will address in this paper is, what is the nature of the experience one can have reading a novel? There are, of course, many kinds of literary experience; but in this paper I will consider only what I will call a *transformative* experience. The particular novel in question here is Sebastian Barry's 1998 novel, *The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty*. Eneas McNulty is a man who doesn't know what's going on around him. He is rocked and buffeted by forces of which he has little understanding and over which he has even less influence. Born in Sligo, in 1900, he sets out on a voyage that takes him from the West of Ireland to West Africa and from Texas to the North Sea, only to find again and again that the world is a painful and bewildering place. The reader of Barry's novel is taken on a similar voyage. Charmed by the poetry of its prose, we experience the confusion and pain of this outcast who struggles to understand his own doom. And through this experience we begin to question what it is to be free.

My aim is to try to understand this experience, and to do so I will add one more Greek name—that is, Aristotle—to the list Barry already gives us. Barry's novel is full of ancient Greeks. Eneas reflects that although his father may be "the worst tailor on earth" he is in other respects "a kingly man, a very Greek of a man".[2] On the other hand, his fellow Sligomen are, he believes, as "bewildered and doomed" as the "Greeks of old" that the schoolmaster used to talk about. And that same master used to explain how, in the Greek, nostalgia is not a

pleasant feeling, but "the sickness of returning home"; a sickness that Homer's mariners felt.[3] And although Eneas himself, shadowing as he does Virgil's wandering Aeneas, is not exactly Greek, he is connected both with Homer through the Trojan wars and with Odysseus through a shared fate. Nevertheless, it may seem strange to choose Aristotle's theory of tragedy to help us to understand a late 20th century Irish novel, but I hope to show that Aristotle's account of the play of tragic emotions is particularly suited to clarifying the experience that Barry's novel provides.

I.

Let's start with the story of Eneas. Eneas McNulty may be, like Leopold Bloom, another Irish wanderer, but he doesn't begin that way. Born with the 20th century, he spends the first five years of his life at the centre of his loving parents' world. But this idyll is undercut, from the very beginning, by the threat of loss. "In the middle of the lonesome town", the novel begins, Eneas is born with a century "some of which he will endure, but none of which will belong to him".[4] At the end of childhood, his loss of sexual innocence comes in a fumbled sexual encounter with Tuppenny Jane, a girl who is reputed to have been the reason why a young priest had hung himself. Jane defends her own honour to Eneas by telling him that his mother too has her dark secrets—she is the illegitimate child of a wealthy Englishman. From this rite of passage—both sexual and epistemic—Eneas emerges with a new sense of freedom. He reflects:

> It is curious. Perhaps Tuppenny Jane has been his liberator of sorts. He has a sudden sensation of freedom, a surge of it, like a bump in his heart, a lump in his throat. The love for his mother and his distance from her is a sort of freedom. It is liberty. Anything is possible with such liberty, he knows. Love, and distance.[5]

Added to this new surge of freedom, we are told, is his old feeling for France—a country which has always signified freedom, and exile, to the Irish.

> There is a frightful, some would say a peculiar love among the men of Sligo for the land of France, it is an old feeling that has survived. Eneas himself has strong views for France. He thinks her pleasing rivers and fragrant meads must be solemnly, solemnly protected.[6]

This half-explained feeling for France, combined with his new sense of freedom, lead Eneas, in 1916, to join the British Merchant Navy. So, while Irish nationalists begin to fight for political freedom at home, Eneas pursues his own freedom through the British war effort, which he understands as a defense of the freedom of France. This is the

first time in his life that Eneas feels in control of his destiny. Sailing to Galveston, Texas to pick up war supplies, he is master of "love, and distance". He thinks now that, "it is not such a bad thing to be adrift on the limitless ocean".[7] "He really does think," we are told, "that the world is various and immense, and curiously homely".[8] But when Eneas returns to Sligo at the end of the war he finds that home is not as homely as he had thought. In his absence, everything has changed. Popular opinion has turned strongly against the British and anybody involved with the British administration—especially the military—is seen as a traitor. And a new sense enters Eneas: the sense that there was something wrong—something innocent and naïve—about his believing in the homeliness of the world:

> There's someone else or new inhabiting him who is grievious critical of that boy setting off to sea as if the world being his oyster he could really go like that, *untrammelled and with no price at length to pay.*[9]

Unable to find work, Eneas follows his father's advice and makes the fatal decision to join the increasingly unpopular police force—the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). Now the War of Independence starts and Eneas is caught up in reprisals and counter-reprisals. From that moment on, he begins to pay the price for his own assumption of freedom; and the price he pays is to lose his friends, his family and his nation and to have forced upon him the freedom of the exile. He realises that there is no way to have his name taken off an IRA black-list:

> He doesn't know if anyone has succeeded, before execution, in being taken off a black-list, but then the history of Sligo is not the history of great escapes. They are more doomed and fixed in their courses, the men of Sligo, it seems to him, than those bewildered and doomed Greeks of old...[10]

Now, at the age of 18 or 19, he realises that he has gone from being a wanderer, which is "a romantic thing like someone in a western picture" to being an outcast who has "lost the love of his people".[11] He spends most of the next 20 years working on a fishing boat in the North Sea. In 1939 he witnesses an ocean liner full of Jewish refugees who have been refused asylum in the US and also in Ireland and who are being forcibly returned to Germany. He can't understand how De Valera, former freedom fighter and now Prime Minister, could refuse to give them sanctuary and he thinks that he would take them all up like fish into his own boat if he could—"for what is the world without rescue, but a wasteland and a worthless peril?".[12] There is nothing Eneas can do for these people, but as soon as war is declared he signs up with the British Army to defend his beloved France once again—a country he has yet to visit.

Many years after the War, when he is in Nigeria working on an irrigation channel with his new friend, a Nigerian called Harcourt, Eneas has a rare insight into his predicament:

> Yet all of Africa is strewn with men like him maybe, from Dar es Salaam to Cape Town. Lads from Southampton, Cardiff, Mullingar. Men without kids or sweethearts. Poor rain-ruckled, diminished men. Like himself. Not as good as monkeys even. Rubbed-out men in the ravelled empire of the Queen.[13]

We might say that this idea—the human cost of nationalist, anti-colonial struggle—is a defining theme of the novel. And indeed Sebastian Barry himself has said that he wanted to write something like an "anti-epic" of the foundation of a nation[14]—a story which he tells once in the Irish context and then shadows in Nigeria. Eneas's friend, Harcourt, like Eneas, is a victim of emerging patriotism. As Eneas reflects, "Beloved Ireland. Disastrous freedom. These fellas, the Nigerian police, are just like them [his old comrades in the RIC], in the wrong suits to please the patriots".[15] But Barry's novel is much more than an anti-epic of either Irish nationalism or postcolonialism. And it is more than a story of a naïve unfortunate adrift in the 20th century. It is also an exploration of the nature of freedom and its relation to the ties of home: freedom at both the personal and the political level, and home as both one's family and one's nation. In particular, what the novel suggests is that personal and political freedom are often in conflict with each other—especially during times of revolutionary politics.[16] While that is a point which needs to be made—especially in the Irish context—it shouldn't come as any surprise to us. But the point which is just as important, is the suggestion that individual freedom is always limited and circumscribed by forces that come from outside—forces which, for want of a better word, we may unify under the sign of destiny or fate. For Eneas is as doomed in his course as are the men of Sligo or the Greeks of old. This reason alone would be enough to justify our turning towards Greek tragedy and Aristotle to help in understanding the novel. But for me, in fact, that turn was motivated by my sense that something like a catharsis had occurred for me in reading the novel—coupled with the equally certain sense that I really had no idea what a catharsis was.

II.

On a first approach, Aristotle's *Poetics* seems to be a cross between a handbook for tragic playwrights and a guidebook for theatre-goers. It gives a history of the genre and its major types and tells us exactly

what features make a tragedy great. It expounds what came to be known as the principle of three unities (action, time, place), it makes a claim for the primacy of plot over character and it argues that set design and costumes are a peripheral distraction from the true business of the stage. And of course it contains that most tantalising definition of tragedy in terms of catharsis—tantalising because it is so difficult to know what Aristotle meant. But the *Poetics* is not just about tragedy—its insights and arguments are relevant to much more than that particular art form. A recent work by Stephen Halliwell argues that an entire theory of mimetic art can be extrapolated from the *Poetics*,[17] but for my purposes here the expansion will be much more modest. I will simply be suggesting that in the *Poetics* Aristotle gives us a way of talking about, and understanding, certain kinds of narrative literature in general.

My first basis for making this suggestion is that Aristotle is constantly at pains to show the continuum between epic and tragic poetry—his greatest admiration is for Homer and Sophocles and much of what he says will apply to both equally (for example, the discussion of unity of plot in Chapter 8 draws all of its examples from epic rather than from tragic poetry[18]). It is a characteristic feature of Aristotle's teleological approach to literary history that the more recent genre—tragedy—should include all of the significant features of its predecessor—epic. In Chapter 5, he states quite clearly that "the parts of epic are all common to tragedy, but the latter has some peculiar to itself".[19] These common parts are the use of mimesis and spoken metre and the treatment of "ethically serious subjects". The differences are, first of all, the relatively unimportant (from Aristotle's point of view) features of music, lyric and spectacle and the much more important difference in scale and scope—"whereas tragedy strives as far as possible to limit itself to a single day, epic is distinctive by its lack of a temporal limit".[20] It is crucial to emphasise the point that for Aristotle the performance aspects of tragedy—as well as its lyric components—are of marginal interest and importance:

> Of the remaining elements, lyric poetry is the most important of garnishings, while spectacle is emotionally powerful but is the least integral of all to the poet's art: for the potential of tragedy does not depend upon public performance and actors.[21]

Not only does Aristotle claim that tragedy will have its characteristic effect if it is read rather than seen, he even goes so far as to say that simply hearing the plot structure will induce the tragic emotions of fear and pity:

> For the plot-structure ought to be so composed that, even without seeing a performance, anyone who hears the events which occur will experience terror and pity as a result of the outcome; this is what someone would feel while hearing the plot of the *Oedipus*.[22]

On the basis of these quotes, one might well ask what Aristotle has left for the poet to achieve in his/her work, if the simple recitation of a plot can achieve the tragic effect. But even setting aside his general downplaying of poetic language and spectacle, it would be true to say that for Aristotle the primary work of the poet is precisely plot construction. The story of Oedipus, as told by Sophocles, didn't just happen; it is a story constructed by a poet and its effect is due to that construction. "It is clear," Aristotle says elsewhere, "that the poet should be a maker of plot-structures rather than of verses".[23] In any case, the point I want to make here is that while Aristotle defines tragedy and epic as separate genres he also provides us with the means of seeing them as sharing many significant characteristics. Therefore, whatever he says about the effects of tragic drama may also be taken to apply to epic narrative—at least, we will be able to do so once a final point has been made.

So far I have focused on what Aristotle says are the common features of epic and tragedy, and I've also mentioned some of the distinctive, although relatively minor, features. But if the differences are really so minor, then why does Aristotle make the genre distinction in the first place? Isn't it possible that the really distinctive feature of tragedy—catharsis—is not shared by epic? If that is the case—if drama can generate catharsis but epic cannot—then my whole argument here will fail. So, does epic produce catharsis?

Even though catharsis is assumed to be the central feature of Aristotle's account of tragedy, the term only appears once in the *Poetics*. The first few chapters of the book set out the history and the basic characteristics of tragedy, and then in Chapter 6 he gives us "the definition of its essential nature":

> Tragedy, then, is a representation of an action which is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude—in language which is garnished in various forms in its different parts—in the mode of dramatic enactment, not narrative—and through the arousal of pity and fear effecting the *katharsis* of such emotions.[24]

All the elements of tragedy are here: it portrays a serious action in a way which is complete; it uses poetic language; it is enacted on the stage; it arouses fear and pity; and it achieves a *katharsis* of these emotions. It is interesting to note that tragedy is defined here partly on its

own terms and partly in terms of the audience response—its *effect*. As Jonathan Lear argues (in a way that perhaps make Aristotle sound too much like the Sartre of *What is Literature?*), "for Aristotle, the activity of the poet creating his tragedy occurs ultimately in an audience actively appreciating a performance of the play."[25] But, what is the nature of this active appreciation—what is *katharsis*?

For a long time, in the history of the reception of Aristotle, the term was translated as purge, purgation or purification. On this model, Aristotle would be suggesting that tragedy removes or weakens the (perhaps pathological) emotions of fear and pity. This certainly is one of the senses in which the term was used in Aristotle's time, and it is even used in that way by Aristotle himself in other works (most notably in a discussion of music in *Politics* 8), but more recently (since the work of Leon Golden in the 1960s and 1970s[26]) this translation and interpretation has been rejected as overly narrow and inconsistent with much of the rest of Aristotle's account of tragedy and the emotions. Many commentators today—for example, Martha Nussbaum and Stephen Halliwell—prefer to read catharsis as a kind of clarification of the emotions, while Alexander Nehamas interprets it as a clarification also, but a clarification of the events of the tragedy rather than the audience's emotions. These interpretations emphasise the cognitive aspect of the emotions in Aristotle and draw on the root meaning of *katharsis* as a kind of "cleaning up" or "clearing up".[27] On this account, tragedy would be a form of art which arouses fear and pity and then clarifies these emotions, leaving us the audience in a state of greater emotional maturity. And this process is one which is accompanied by a particular kind of aesthetic pleasure—what Halliwell calls the "from-pity-and-fear-through-mimesis pleasure".[28]

It's quite possible at this stage that we'll ask ourselves whether replacing "catharsis of emotions" with "clarification of emotions" really clarifies the issue—after all, what does it mean to have our emotions of fear and pity clarified? Well, I'm afraid we'll have to leave that issue to one side for the moment. But at least for my purposes I hope it should be clear that whatever kind of 'clarification' we finally take catharsis to be, it is not an effect which could by definition be confined to drama as opposed to any other literary form. If catharsis is the clarification which arises from the arousal of fear and pity through a representation of human actions in the form of a well-structured plot, then it should on principle be available also through non-dramatic narrative forms. But, why are the emotions in question specifically—and exclusively—fear and pity?

The simple answer is to say that they just are—it's a feature of this kind of drama that it arouses fear and pity, whereas other kinds of drama (for instance comedy) arouse different emotions. It is for this reason that what Aristotle calls "the finest tragedies" are constructed around the families of those such as Oedipus who have "suffered or committed terrible deeds".[29] Indeed tragedy, in its classical form, almost exclusively deals with stories in which the most fundamental family bonds are broken (for example, *Oedipus*, *Medea*, *Antigone*, and so on). As Martha Nussbaum notes, tragedy focuses on "losses of loved ones, country, sphere of action".[30] The twin emotions of fear and pity arise in spectators because we both sympathise with the characters and recognise that such things could possibly happen to us. It is for this reason that plausibility is such an important feature of plot for Aristotle—we must believe that such things can happen, and that therefore that they could happen to us. Translating this into a different idiom, we could say that Aristotle's account is based on the fact of identification between audience and character. When we watch *Oedipus the King*, we are Oedipus; when we watch *Medea* we are Medea. Because in some sense, as Freud pointed out, we already are Oedipus and Medea.[31] What the play does, then, is to arouse in us the emotions of fear and pity through sympathy—or identification—and then to 'clarify' these emotions through the resolution of the plot.

But, can I really say that, for Aristotle, catharsis is as likely to occur in an epic (or other) narrative as in a tragedy? Surely that would be, once again, to erase the difference he insists on between the two genres? This issue comes to the fore again in the final chapters of the *Poetics*, in which Aristotle discusses epic and then considers the relative ranking of the two genres. It is clear that Aristotle applies the same categories and criteria to epic as the earlier chapters had applied to tragedy. Hence, the unity of the plot structure is again of crucial importance and Aristotle singles out Homer as the epic poet who has most successfully applied these standards: "it is evident that its [epic's] plot-structures should have a dramatic coherence, just as in tragedy, and that they should concern an action which is unitary and complete".[32] It is a part of Homer's "inspired superiority" that his poems do not try to cover the entire Trojan War, but limit themselves to a "unitary portion" of the events in order to construct a plot which is capable of providing the pleasure that is appropriate to epic.[33] Epic poems such as the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* can provide the material—presumably the plot-structures—for several tragedies, but they have the added advantage over tragedy of

being able to represent many simultaneous events which, if they are integrated into a unified plot, can greatly enhance the "grandeur" of the narrative. Epic would appear, therefore, to be a genre which—contrary to an earlier formulation—includes all of the (important) features of tragedy and has the *additional* advantages of expansiveness, variety and grandeur.

Even though Chapters 23 and 24 clearly suggest this view, it is not the judgement that Aristotle finally settles on. In Chapter 26, he admits that on some grounds epic may seem superior to tragedy—for instance, because tragedy, by relying on the use of actors, may be said to appeal to a more vulgar kind of audience. But this reasoning is quickly rejected, and Aristotle finally gives a list of the ways in which tragedy is superior to epic. It is more vivid (because of its use of music and staging), more intense (because it operates in a shorter scope), and more unified (because its plots avoid the breadth and scope of epic). But it remains, like epic, directed to the production of a particular form of pleasure—that pleasure which Halliwell paraphrases as the "from-pity-and-fear-through-mimesis pleasure".[34] In other words, tragedy is a more effective means of achieving the same end at which epic aims—that is, catharsis. So, for Aristotle, catharsis can take place just as easily—well, almost as easily—in epic narrative as in tragedy. I hope I have now shown that Aristotle's final hierarchisation of tragedy and epic shows pretty conclusively that the only significant difference—from the point of view of my argument—between epic and tragedy is that tragedy offers a much more intense experience, but not a qualitatively different experience, from epic.

III.

I said that the problem I wanted to address in this paper was the nature of the experience I had—or that somebody else might have—in reading the novel. I wanted a way to understand that experience and I thought I might find that way in Aristotle's theory of tragedy. I have already argued that, for our purposes here, we can expand Aristotle's account of tragedy to cover other literary forms, not just drama. But the question I have to ask now is whether that forces me to read Barry's novel, not as the anti-epic he describes, but as a non-dramatic tragedy. In other words, if I am going to say that catharsis is one of the possible effects of the novel, am I committed to saying that the novel conforms, more or less, to Aristotle's account of tragedy in other respects also?

One of the central tenets of Aristotle's account of tragedy is the claim that plot-structure is "the soul of tragedy" while characterisation is "the element of second importance".[35] This encapsulates Aristotle's

idea that just hearing the events of the Oedipus story will incite fear and pity, even if we know nothing (or almost nothing) of the hero's character. But this is an idea which hardly applies to the tradition of the modern novel, in which, in many cases, characterisation is equally if not more important than plot. And at first glance we might say that, despite the many things which happen in the life of Eneas, really the soul of the novel is the unfolding of his inner world—a world which the reader is constantly inside. But, read in the light of Aristotle, I would suggest that the novel is—also—a story of the relentless hammering of an individual by fate through (almost) no fault of his own. Our hero, Eneas, stands like all the heroes of Greek tragedy—alone against the world, and alone against his own doom (at least until his final friendship with Harcourt).

But what of this idea of fault—or *hamartia* as Aristotle calls it. People used to speak—at least when I went to school—about tragic heros having a 'tragic flaw', some character trait that leads to their downfall. So, for Macbeth it was ambition, for Othello jealousy, and so on. But in Aristotle, *hamartia* is not quite as simple as that. First of all, because fate—in the form of the gods—is responsible for a great deal of what happens in a Greek tragedy. But, more importantly, because the point for Aristotle is that the hero must engage in his or her own downfall, must be active in it—a tragedy is a representation of action. For that reason, Oedipus is a tragic character, but Job cannot be. *Hamartia*, then, isn't so much a moral failing as an error, a mistake, or a miscalculation on the part of the hero—one might even say, a *parapraxis*, in the Freudian sense. The question is, whether Eneas can fit this model. Eneas, unlike any other tragic hero, is fundamentally naïve. In fact, we occasionally get hints that he might actually be of severely limited intelligence. When his younger siblings are excelling at school he reflects that he has inherited "sheep's brains" from his father.[36] And when his Sergeant is killed, the killers wonder if they should also kill Eneas, but one of them says, "That's McNulty the Sligoman. Let Sligo look after him if they want. I'm not killing a simpleton like that".[37] Even the more sympathetic passages convey something of the same idea. For example, on his visit home in 1944, he says to his mother:

> Mam... do you know, if it's a sad life, it's a bloody mysterious one too... I don't understand the world, nor think I ever will, our going into it or our getting out of it. I am forty-four and none the wiser. Why is that?[38]

But maybe it is precisely this naivete that constitutes Eneas's *hamartia*. Eneas sets out in life believing that the world is his oyster, believing

that he can have both love and distance. What he finds—thanks to revolutionary politics—is that he can only have one or the other. When he makes the choice to join the RIC police force in 1919, he guarantees that he will have distance, but not love. Or, that he will have freedom, but not of the kind that he had wanted.

IV. CONCLUSION

At this point I want to set aside the question of how closely the novel may conform to the conventions of tragedy and turn, by way of conclusion, to a more general question. Very briefly, this question is the question of freedom—the question I refer to in my title. Drawing on what I have said about Aristotle and catharsis, I would argue that Barry's novel leads us through an experience of fear and pity which culminates in a clarification of our responses to, and our thoughts about, freedom. In the story of Eneas, in the question of his 'whereabouts', we are confronted with a series of stark contrasts—between personal and political freedom, between loneliness and friendship, between love and distance—and through this confrontation we are transformed. Even if, in the novel, Eneas and several other characters repeatedly appeal for "rescue", and even if the novelist finally contrives some sort of redemption for Eneas, there is no such rescue available for the reader. We pity Eneas and we fear for ourselves, but we cannot escape our own doom—and that is, to recognise with Eneas that, "Perhaps freedom cannot be won because a man is ever a hobbled beast and is not among the beauties of God's old catalogue of animals".[39]

NOTES

1 Sebastian Barry, *The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty* (hereafter *WEM*) (Picador, London, 1998), p. 71

2 *WEM*, p. 72.

3 *WEM*, p. 168.

4 *WEM*, p. 3.

5 *WEM*, p. 30.

6 *WEM*, p. 21.

7 *WEM*, p. 36.

8 *WEM*, p. 86.

9 *WEM*, p. 46.

10 *WEM*, p. 71.

11 *WEM*, p. 98.

12 *WEM*, p. 132. This incident seems to be based on the case of the SS St Louis which was refused access to Cuba and the US in 1939. Whether it was also refused by the Irish Free State, on its return journey to Germany, I haven't been able to discover.

However, as Josh Fellman has pointed out to me, it is yet another instance of the plight of 20th century Jews being used for purely symbolic effect in Irish fiction—cf, for example, the Jewish character in Roddy Doyle's recent *A Star Called Henry* (1998).

13 *WEM*, p. 249.

14 "All our founding myths in Ireland have been based on revolutions and new beginnings and I suppose I wanted to write a book that had as its shadow the reverse of that, a kind of unfounding myth, if there is such a word. An anti-epic with an ambiguous hero." See: http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides/whereabouts_of_eneas_mcnulty-author.asp

15 *WEM*, p. 242.

16 A similar theme is explored in Roddy Doyle's *A Star Called Henry*, cited above.

17 Stephen Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: ancient texts and modern problems* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

18 As noted by Stephen Halliwell in the commentary accompanying his translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* (London: Duckworth, 1986), p. 165.

19 Aristotle's *Poetics*, trans. S. Halliwell (London: Duckworth, 1986), Ch. 5, p. 36.

20 *Poetics*, Ch. 5, p. 36.

21 *Poetics*, Ch. 7, pp. 38-39.

22 *Poetics*, Ch. 14, p. 45.

23 *Poetics*, Ch. 9, p. 41.

24 *Poetics*, Ch. 6, pp. 37.

25 Jonathan Lear, "Katharsis", in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 328.

26 See, for example, the following papers by Leon Golden: "Catharsis", *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, vol. 93 (1962), pp. 51-60; "Mimesis and *Katharsis*", *Classical Philology*, vol. 64 (1969), pp. 145-153; "The Purgation Theory of Catharsis", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 31, no. 4 (Summer, 1973), pp. 473-479.

27 Martha Nussbaum, "Tragedy and Self-sufficiency: Plato and Aristotle on fear and pity," in Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 282.

28 Stephen Halliwell, "Pleasure, Understanding, and Emotion in Aristotle's *Poetics*," in Rorty (ed.) *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 255. This formulation echoes a phrase in Halliwell's own translation of *Poetics*: "And since the poet ought to provide the pleasure which derives from pity and fear through mimesis..." (*Poetics*, Ch. 14, p. 46).

29 *Poetics*, Ch. 13, p. 45.

30 Nussbaum, "Tragedy and Self-sufficiency", p.276.

31 Freud makes this point about Oedipus in his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, but I have added the Medea reference myself.

32 *Poetics*, Ch. 23, p. 58.

33 Halliwell's commentary on this passage is telling: "Homer is a true tragic poet who has grasped the greatest requirement of poetic art" (Aristotle's *Poetics*, p. 165, my emphasis).

34 Stephen Halliwell, "Pleasure, Understanding, and Emotion in Aristotle's *Poetics*," in Rorty (ed.) *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 255. This formulation echoes a phrase in Halliwell's own translation of *Poetics*: "...the poet ought to provide the pleasure which derives from pity and fear through mimesis..." (*Poetics*, Ch. 14, p. 46).

35 *Poetics*, Ch. 6, p. 38.

36 *WEM*, p. 20.

37 *WEM*, p. 65.

38 *WEM*, p. 197.

39 *WEM*, p. 243.