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THE CONCEPT OF “EMOTION” FROM PLATO TO CICERO*

DAVID KONSTAN

The ancient Greek term that best corresponds to the English “emotion” is πάθος. However, πάθος had a wide range of meanings, and the use of πάθος in classical Greek to refer specifically to emotion may have been a relatively late development – if it can be said to have occurred at all.¹ In this paper, I discuss how Aristotle came to restrict the term πάθος to something like what we mean by “emotion” today, excluding pain and pleasure (which are constitutive elements of emotion), and also, albeit inconsistently, appetites or desires. I then return to Plato, where I argue that πάθος is still a very inclusive term, and in psychological contexts may embrace pleasure, pain and appetites. I next look briefly at Epicurus’ use of πάθος, which, as though in conscious opposition to Aristotle, refers precisely to pain and pleasure, and not to emotion as such; one consequence of this redefinition is that Epicurus seems to have no specific word for emotion in the modern sense. Finally, I consider the Stoics’ use of πάθος, in which pain, pleasure, and appetite are enlisted among the genera of the several emotions, and I conclude by examining two passages in Cicero, which appear to combine the Aristotelian and Stoic accounts to produce, once again, a more latitudinarian concept than the modern “emotion”.

At the beginning of the second book of the *Rhetoric*, where Aristotle is about to enter upon a discussion of the emotions, he provides a tantalizingly brief definition or description of the topic: “Let the emotions” – that is, the πάθη – “be all those things on account of which people change and differ in regard to their judgments, and upon which attend pain and pleasure, for example anger, pity, fear, and all other such things and their opposites” (2.1, 1378a20-23). I shall not discuss here the first part of this statement, concerning the role of emotion in altering our judgments, save to say that I believe that it constitutes a more adequate and profound insight into the nature of what Aristotle means by πάθος than

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¹ William Harris (2001: 84) suggests that the word πάθος may only have acquired the sense of emotion as late as “the 420s and probably later.” As we shall see, this may be a conservative estimate.

scholars have generally supposed (see Konstan 2006: 33-37). Rather, I focus on the second part, that is, the examples of πάθη that Aristotle offers: “anger, pity, fear, and all other such things and their opposites”. This seems like a fairly uncontroversial list or selection. Today, anger and fear are universally included among inventories of emotions, and although pity, for various reasons, rarely gets mentioned in modern catalogues, at least in English, we have no great difficulty in accepting it as a valid member of the set. It is true that we may perhaps be puzzled at Aristotle's mention of the opposites of each of these emotions. In any case, anger, fear, and pity are three of the major πάθη that Aristotle proceeds to investigate, along with love and hate, envy, shame, and indignation.

There are a few πάθη covered by Aristotle that we might be less inclined to identify as emotions. In accord with his idea that the πάθη have opposites, Aristotle provides anger with a contrary, which, to go by his term – πράυνσις – and description means something like calming down. This does not seem like much of an emotion; perhaps, as I have argued elsewhere, we may understand it rather as the positive feeling associated with obtaining satisfaction (see Konstan 2006: 77-88). Similarly, Aristotle offers θάρρος, “confidence”, as the opposite of fear. Here again, confidence may seem more like a state than a passion, but perhaps the idea is rather that rush of energy we experience when we are on a roll and believe that nothing can stop us. Along these lines, Jonathan Barnes has suggested rendering the term as “excitement”.

Aristotle also analyzes the πάθος of gratitude, along with its opposite ingratitude (this gets a bare mention), and finally ζήλος, a competitive emulousness or admiration for others which has as its opposite contempt. But if we leave aside the business of opposites, and some odd items like gratitude, perhaps, and emulousness, then the range of πάθη that Aristotle treats in Book II of the *Rhetoric* seems, again, like a reasonable approximation to the spectrum of sentiments that we would identify as emotions. Anger, love, hate, fear, shame, pity and righteous indignation are plausible candidates, even if not all of them might spring to mind if we were asked to name five or ten fundamental emotions today. So too, in the third book of the *Rhetoric* (3.19, 1419b24-26), Aristotle, noting that the proper place in a speech for arousing the emotions is the epilogue, proceeds to mention pity, a thing he calls δεινωσις which perhaps means something like “outrage”, anger, hatred, envy, the good kind of competitiveness he calls ζήλος, and also a corresponding bad strife or ἔρις (cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 272a5, where δεινωσις, along with βραχυλογία and ἔλεινολογία, appears as a feature of rhetorical speech). Again, in *On the Soul* (403a16-17), the πάθη include temper (θυμός), calmness or satisfaction (πραότης), fear, pity, confidence, joy (χαρά), loving and hating.

I would like to suggest, however, that the very familiarity, or apparent familiarity, of Aristotle's list may blind us to its novelty. When Aristotle says, “Let the πάθη be all those things...,” and so forth, and then specifies, “for example anger, pity, fear, and all other such things and their opposites”, he means to indicate

more precisely, I think, just what kinds of affect the term πάθος, as he is using it here, embraces. Certainly, his spare definition – “those things on account of which people change and differ in regard to their judgments”, provided that they are accompanied by pleasure and pain – would not by itself have made entirely clear just what qualified as a πάθος and what did not. I do not say that Aristotle is offering the type of definition that so irritated Socrates, namely giving a list of instances; in any case, he has just provided what looks like a proper formal definition – the πάθη, are “all those things that are X”. But he is helping the reader to see what kind of thing he is busy defining. And well he might have, since, unlike the English “emotion”, the term πάθος by itself would not have provided a sufficiently transparent clue as to what Aristotle had in mind.

It is true, of course, that the word πάθος had a very wide range of connotations in classical Greek. In the broadest sense, it designated pretty much anything that might befall a person, often, but by no means always, in the negative sense of an accident or misfortune, although it might also bear the neutral significance of a condition or state of affairs. Thus, in the *Poetics* (13, 1543b18), Aristotle states that pity may be excited by πάθος itself (οὐδὲν ἐλεεινὸν ... πλὴν κατ’ αὐτὸ τὸ πάθος): he presumably means the terrible events that are portrayed on stage, which have an effect on the emotions. In philosophical language, πάθος sometimes signifies a secondary quality as opposed to the essence of a thing, and Aristotle avails himself of this usage (e.g., *Metaphysics* 1022b15-21; cf. Urmson 1990: 126-27). In the intellectual sphere, it may denote a mental activity or phenomenon such as remembering (cf. Aristotle, *De memoria et reminiscencia* 449b4-7; also 449b24-25 for memory as the πάθος of formerly perceived or contemplated things). Even in what we may think of as the affective domain, however, the term πάθος could include feelings that lie outside the range of responses that we typically think of as emotions.

We may take as an example the treatise called the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, formerly ascribed to Aristotle but now commonly thought to be the work of a certain Anaximenes, and composed somewhat earlier than Aristotle’s own *Rhetoric* (cf. Chiron 2002). This text pays relatively little attention to the πάθη, but when the author does mention them, he offers by way of illustration such sentiments as contempt, fear, taking pleasure (ἡσθέντες), feeling pain (λυπηθέντες), and desiring (ἐπιθυμοῦντες, 7.5 = 1428a36-b5). Elsewhere in this same tract (7.14), the list of characteristic πάθη embraces passionate love, anger, drunkenness, and ambition (ἔρως, ὀργή, μέθη, and φιλοτιμία) – drunkenness seems out of place to us in a classification of emotions, and so too, I think, ambition. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle himself employs the term rather more widely than he does in the *Rhetoric*; here, he writes, “I call πάθη desire [ἐπιθυμία], anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy [χαρά], love, hatred, longing, competitiveness, pity, and in general those things upon which attend pleasure and pain” (1105b21-23; cf. 1147a14-15; for πάθος complemented by ἐπιθυμία, 1151b8-9; also *Eudemian Ethics* 1220b12-13). The inclusion of desire (ἐπιθυμία) among the πάθη, as well

as a sense of longing (πόθος) and joy, distinguishes this series from the more restricted array of feelings that Aristotle discusses in Book II of the *Rhetoric*.

When Aristotle states, in the passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics* just cited and again in virtually the same language in the *Rhetoric*, that the πάθη are affects “upon which attend pleasure and pain,” he is of course stipulating a further condition for something being an emotion – that pleasure and pain, or perhaps at least one of these, must accompany whatever it is that causes a change in our judgments if it is to qualify as a πάθος in this particular sense. But we may also understand him to be indicating once again, this time by way of exclusion rather than inclusion, what kind of thing he means to pick out by the term πάθος. What I mean is that, if pleasure and pain are constitutive elements of πάθη, then they themselves do not count as πάθη.² It would appear that Aristotle is subtly but carefully distancing himself from the kind of account given in the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, where feeling pleasure and pain was, as we have seen, subsumed under the general rubric of the πάθη.

What, then, are pleasure and pain, if they are not πάθη? In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle makes it clear that pleasure and pain (ἡδονή and λύπη) come under the heading of perceptions or αἰσθήσεις: “since feeling pleasure is in the perception of some experience [πάθος], and φαντασία is a weak kind of perception [αἰσθησις], some φαντασία of what one remembers or expects always occurs in a person when he remembers or expects something. Thus, it is necessary that all pleasures are either present in perception or arise in remembering things that have happened or in expecting things that will happen” (1.11, 1370a27-34). Whatever the πάθη may be, they are not simply αἰσθήσεις or perceptions, and so theories which assimilate the two categories are, on the view Aristotle offers here, mistaken. The πάθη, then, comprise such affects as anger and fear, but do not extend so far as to include pleasure and pain.³

² We may note that they are not, on Aristotle's view, components only of πάθη; thus, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle affirms that the virtues are about actions and πάθη, and he adds that “pleasure and pain attend on every πάθος and every action,” 1104b14-15.

³ When Aristotle speaks of the several emotions “and their opposites”, he does not mean to distinguish them on the basis of whether they are accompanied by pleasure in the one case, and pain in the other – what modern accounts of the emotions sometimes call their positive and negative valence (contra Aspasius, the 2nd century A.D. commentator on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, who treats pleasure and pain as species of emotion, pp. 43-46 Heylbut; transl. Konstan 2006b: 43-47). This is clear from the fact that Aristotle goes to some lengths to insist that the emotion opposite to pity is not envy but rather indignation and yet he classifies both pity and indignation as πάθη accompanied by pain. Note too that Aristotle, in the *Rhetoric* and also in the passage cited from the *Nicomachean Ethics* speaks of the emotions as accompanied by pleasure *and* pain, not pleasure *or* pain, although in the *Eudemian Ethics* 1220b14-15 he speaks of pleasure *or* pain as accompanying the πάθη – or rather, as accompanying them for the most part. This is puzzling, and William Fortenbaugh (2002: 105-107), noting that Aristotle explicitly states in the *Rhetoric* that hatred is not, or not necessarily, accompanied by pain (he says nothing about pleasure), suggests that, while pain and pleasure may be typical of emotions, they are perhaps not a constituent element of every πάθος – here hatred would be an exception. It is also possible that Aristotle was writing carelessly in the *Eudemian Ethics*, or

If, in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle excludes pleasure and pain from the category of πάθη, what about that other class of affects that are themselves often associated with pleasures and pains, namely desires?⁴ We have seen that desires were among the items collected under the rubric of the πάθη not only in the *Rhetoric to Alexander* (ἐπιθυμοῦντες; cf. also ἔρωσ and perhaps φιλοτιμία or ambition), but by Aristotle himself in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where ἐπιθυμία occurs at the head of the list. Still worse, in the *Rhetoric* itself, immediately after the detailed discussion of the πάθη, Aristotle states: “I mean by πάθη anger, ἐπιθυμία, and such things as we have just discussed” (2.12, 1389b32-33). And yet, ἐπιθυμία is not among the πάθη that Aristotle mentions or analyzes in the preceding sections of Book II of his *Rhetoric*. It is true that at least some of the πάθη in the *Rhetoric* involve desire, most prominently anger, which is defined precisely as a desire or ὄρεξις for revenge, and also love or φιλία, in the definition of which is included the wish (τὸ βούλεσθαι) that good things may accrue to the person who is loved. But neither ὄρεξις nor βούλησις is itself treated as a πάθος.⁵

Nor is ἐπιθυμία mentioned in the definition of any of the πάθη that Aristotle examines in the *Rhetoric*. But it does enter into his account of the conditions under which people may be more or less inclined to grow angry. Aristotle recognizes that there are certain states in which we are disposed to be sensitive to insults or slights, which he treats as the sole reason for anger, and among these, for example, is thirst: we will be prone to irritation if someone gets in the way of our drinking when we are thirsty (2.2, 1379a13; cf. *De anima* 1.1, 403a19-22), and we are more irascible “in general when we desire something [ἐπιθυμοῦντες] but do not achieve it” (2.2, 1379i17-18). Aristotle defines appetite as “a desire for what is pleasant” (1.11, 1370a17-18), and he gives as examples hunger, thirst, and the urge for sex (cf. 2.7, 1385a21-23). These states may be considered πάθη in the wide acceptance of the term, but they do not constitute part of that more

that at some stage he modified his view. However this may be, pain and pleasure, at all events, are not themselves πάθη, at least so far as the account in the *Rhetoric* is concerned.

⁴ I cannot agree with Sorabji 1999 that desire or appetite is essential to Aristotle’s classification of the emotions.

⁵ In Book I (1.10, 1369a1-4), Aristotle explains that those acts for which we are responsible are due either to habit (ἔθος) or to desire (ὄρεξις), and adds that “some are due to rational desire (λογιστικὴν ὄρεξιν), while others are due to irrational (ἄλογον) desire”. He then adds that “βούλησις is a desire [ὄρεξις] for something good (for no one wishes for something except when he believes it is good), whereas ὀργή and ἐπιθυμία are irrational ὀρέξεις”. Aristotle cannot mean that anger is simply an irrational ὄρεξις, since his definition is far more specific than that: “Let anger be a desire, accompanied by pain, for a perceived revenge, on account of a perceived slight on the part of people who are not fit to slight one or one’s own” (*Rhetoric* 2.2, 1378a31-33). In fact, it is clear, I think, that in Book I Aristotle is employing the term ὀργή in the broad sense of “temperament”, rather than in the more restricted sense of the πάθος “anger”. That is why, immediately afterwards, he lists as the seven causes of action chance, nature, force, habit, reasoning, θυμός (equivalent here to ὀργή), and appetite (1.10, 1369b6-7); θυμός is more general than the πάθη per se, and may be seen as a motive force behind them, or at least some of them (see Viano 2003).

restricted category of πάθη that Aristotle analyzes in Book II, which seems to conform to the modern sense of the term “emotion”. When, right after this part of the treatise, Aristotle sums up the way human beings are in respect to “their πάθη, their habitual states [ἔξεις], their ages, and their fortunes” (2.12, 1388b31-32), and then casually includes ἐπιθυμία along with anger under the rubric of the πάθη, I can only suppose that he has fallen back for a moment on the wider connotation of πάθος, in spite of his own more precise analysis immediately before. Aristotle goes on to note (1389a3-11) the dominant role of appetite or ἐπιθυμία in young people, which helps to explain why they are more readily disposed to become angry – ἐπιθυμία is here again, I think, treated as a factor in the production of emotion, not an emotion as such.⁶

Aristotle’s innovation in differentiating the πάθη from pleasure, pain, and desire stands out clearly when his treatment is compared with that of Plato. As might be expected, Plato too employed the term πάθος very broadly. Toward the end of the *Apology*, for example, Socrates imagines himself in the underworld, where he can compare his πάθη with those experienced by Palamedes, Ajax, and others.⁷ More closely related to the verb πάσχειν, πάθος may simply designate what happens to one, as opposed to what one actively does (e.g., *Sophist* 248d4-5; *Gorgias* 476c2-3); it may also be applied in this sense to inanimate things (cf. *Phaedo* 72b5, 78b5, etc.; also *Hipp. Maior* 285b1). Like Aristotle, Plato too uses the term to indicate secondary as opposed to essential qualities of a thing, or simply any attribute (e.g., *Euthyphro* 11a8; *Sophist* 245a1, b4, c2; *Parmenides* 129c3, 136b; *Hipp. Maior* 300b5, 301b8; *Republic* 376a11, etc.). In the psychological sphere, the word, again as in Aristotle, may denote a mental activity or phenomenon such as wisdom or remembering (e.g. *Phaedo* 73e2, 7d5 [πάθημα]); for memory, *Theaetetus* 166b3); perception (αἴσθησις, *Theaetetus* 161d3-4, 179d3, etc.; cf. *Timaeus* 77e5); judging something to be false (*Theaetetus* 187d3-6, 193d4); stupidity (βλακικὸν πάθος, *Republic* 432d5), or wonder (θαυμάζειν, *Theaetetus* 155d3) – this last perhaps closer to what we might consider a feeling.

⁶ At *NE* 1.3, 1095a2-4, Aristotle explains that young people are not a good audience for discussions of ethics and politics, because they “follow their πάθη”; they are compared to those who are ἀκρατεῖς, and contrasted with those who dispose their desires (ὀρέξεις) in accord with reason (1095a9-10). Note that the ἀκρατής person is said knowingly to do base things διὰ πάθος, whereas the ἐγκρατής person, knowing that his ἐπιθυμῖαι are base, does not yield to them thanks to his reason (7.1, 1145b12-14; cf. *De anima* 433a3-8). Here, then, πάθος is more or less equivalent to ἐπιθυμία. However, in these passages Aristotle is not considering how ἐπιθυμία influences judgments, but rather how it opposes reason by virtue of being wholly non-rational; but it is the rational character of the πάθη that Aristotle is particularly concerned to exhibit in the *Rhetoric*: cf. Konstan 2006: 20-22, 33-34 for further discussion (my thanks to Marcelo Boeri for calling my attention to these passages).

⁷ For the most general sense, that is, anything that one has perceived or experienced, cf. *Gorgias* 481c5-8; for the meaning “misfortune”, *Republic* 380c5-6, in connection with Niobe’s sufferings. Again, πάθος may designate a state of affairs or condition (e.g., *Statesman* 264b2, 269b5, 273b7-8, 303d6-7).

If we seek to narrow the field still further, and look at those uses of πάθος that relate to what we may, for want of a more precise name, call psychological affect or "feelings", there is an intriguing example in the beginning of the *Phaedo*, where Phaedo says of the scene in the jail with Socrates: "I had an utterly strange πάθος, an unusual mixture of pleasure blended at the same time with pain" (59a4-6; for the blend of feelings, cf. *Phaedrus* 251d7-8). Still in the *Phaedo*, Socrates speaks of the soul being bound by the body as a result of a specific πάθος (83d1), which here designates precisely pain and pleasure (83c5-7, d4; for λύπη as a πάθος, cf. *Cratylus* 419c1-3). It is in the *Philebus* that Plato offers his most extended discussion of pleasure and pain, and here, his usage is complex. On the one hand, pain and pleasure are results of certain πάθη or processes, that is, when the natural state is destroyed and when there is a return to it, respectively (32b6-7; cf. παθήματα in b9; also 35e9, 36a1-6, 46c6-8, 47c1-3). So too, in the *Protagoras* (352c6-7; cf. 353a5, 357c7), Socrates inquires about the πάθος involved in being overcome by pleasures. At other times, Plato seems to equate pleasure and pain with the πάθος itself (e.g., 46a8-11, 50d5-6, 60d9). Most often in the *Philebus*, the term refers to a state or condition. In the *Republic* (604a10-11), πάθος, that is, the experience of suffering, as opposed to λόγος, is that which induces one to yield to pain (I return to this passage below).

Apart from pain and pleasure, πάθος can also designate, in Plato, a wide range of other affects or feelings. For example, being thirsty or hungry can be labelled a bodily πάθος (*Phaedo* 94b7-10), which the rational soul can resist, if it chooses, and refuse to drink or eat. At *Timaeus* 69c8-d4, Plato speaks of the πάθη that the mortal soul contains within itself, and names pleasure and pain, confidence and fear, temper (θυμός) and hope (cf. Aspasius 46.7-12 Heylbut, transl. Konstan 2006b: 46). This may seem to resemble a modern set of emotions, but on closer inspection the inclusion of hope, along with pleasure, pain, and fear, makes it clear that Plato has simply listed the many affects to which the mortal soul is susceptible. The varied uses in the *Laws* fall under one or another of the headings indicated above (cf. 869e, where voluntary homicide is said to occur when a person is under the influence of pleasure, appetite, or envy: although the term πάθος is not used, the three items evidently form a single category).

In sum, there is no clear evidence that, for Plato, the term πάθος has as its specific referent what we think of as the emotions; on the occasions when it seems to coincide with the modern notion, it would appear to do so simply because the term is so capacious that these phenomena too, in the appropriate context, come under its umbrella (contra Rosswein 2006:33, who affirms that πάθος meant for Plato "more or less what 'emotion' means to an Anglophone).

That the word πάθος did not, for Plato, specifically designate what we think of as emotion does not mean that no such concept was available to him, of course. Plato did not devote a special discussion to the emotions, as Aristotle did in the *Rhetoric*, but he does touch upon various passions in the course of his writings, for example pity in the *Republic* and shame in the *Gorgias*, along with ἔρωσ

in various dialogues. We may take as an example his treatment of pity. In his attack on poetry in *Republic X*, Socrates observes that a decent man (ἐπιεικής) will fight against the pain (λύπη) caused by the loss of a child or other misfortune (603e-604a). Reason and law, says Socrates, bid him resist his pain, while it is πάθος – the direct experience or affect – that draws him to it (604a10-11; at 604d8-10, πάθος refers to the misfortune itself, and the part of the soul that leads us to recall it is characterized as ἀλόγιστον, “irrational”). These represent two parts of the soul, since a single part cannot entertain contradictory opinions of the same thing at the same time. Poets appeal to this weaker part (605a2-4), which is why they must be banished from the ideal city. Worst of all, they can even affect decent people, because when we see or hear characters bewailing their fate in poetry or on the stage, we surrender ourselves and feel the same thing (συμπάσχομεντες, 605d4) that they do. This occurs because the baser, irrational part of the soul takes pleasure in such weeping, while the censure of the rational part is inhibited when it sees the otherwise noble heroes of legend yielding to such grief; and so we feel free to praise and pity (ἐπαίνειν καὶ ἐλεεῖν) them for their suffering (606b3). Socrates concludes that the same obtains concerning laughter, and also sex (ἀφροδίσια), temper or anger (θυμός) and all things involving desires, pleasures and pains (ἐπιθυμητικά, λυπηρά, ἡδέα, 606d1-2). It is not entirely clear from this passage whether pity is experienced uniquely in the irrational part of the soul; it may be that when the rational part is induced to approve the behavior of fictional characters, it also pities them.⁸ Nor is it clear that feeling the same thing as another (συμπάσχειν) is equivalent here to pity (ἐλεεῖν): we presumably feel the pain or pleasure of the other, and are induced by this to pity him or her. Pity may, then, involve a judgment that the misfortune of the other is indeed an evil, perhaps too that it is undeserved: it would not be just the irrational part, then, that both praises and pities the sufferer; rather, the rational part submits to the pressure of the irrational. However this may be, we see that sympathy, pity, desire or appetite, pleasure, pain, and the impulse to laugh are all collected under irrational and inappropriate responses to another’s situation, whether or not some element of reasoning collaborates in the sentiment. Neither pity nor shame – also mentioned in this passage as a factor that inhibits lamentation in public and so evidently cooperates with reason (αἰσχύνουσι, 604a7) – is separated out as categorically distinct from the other sentiments that are mentioned.

As is well known, Epicurus employs the term πάθος to designate one of the three (or perhaps four) basic epistemological capacities or “criteria” by which we know the world. Diogenes Laertius, in his summary of Epicurus’ teaching, re-

⁸ Marcelo Boeri points out to me that the philosopher who returns to the cave is expected to feel pity for those who are still imprisoned in it (516c), a sign that pity is not a wholly irrational emotion. On the other hand, Plato cautions against pity among the guardians for their offspring, who must be consigned to the lower classes if they should prove to be of inferior ability (415b-c); this point is emphasized by Robert Gallagher, “A Town without Pity: Lamentation and Pity in Plato’s *Republic*”, talk delivered at the American Philological Association annual meeting in January 2005.

ports (10.31) that “in the *Canon*, Epicurus says that the criteria of truth are sensations [αἰσθήσεις] and preconceptions [προλήψεις] and the πάθη, and some Epicureans add the imaginative projections of thought [τὰς φανταστικὰς ἐπιβολὰς τῆς διανοίας]”. Diogenes observes further (10.34) that the Epicureans “say that there are two πάθη, pleasure [ἡδονή] and pain [ἀλγηδῶν], which exist in every animal, the one pertaining to what is one's own [οἰκεῖον], the other pertaining to what is foreign [ἀλλότριον], by which choices and avoidances are distinguished”. The πάθη of pleasure and pain function automatically, and do not depend on λόγος; according to Diogenes (10.137 = fr. 66 Usener), Epicurus cited as proof that pleasure (ἡδονή) is the goal (τέλος) the fact that “animals, as soon as they are born, are satisfied with it but are in conflict with suffering [πόνος] by nature and apart from reason [λόγος]. So it is by the πάθος itself [αὐτοπαθῶς] that we avoid pain [ἀλγηδῶν]” (trans. Inwood and Gerson 1997: 44, modified). The πάθη, then, pertain to the irrational or ἀλογον part of the soul, in the same way that sensations or αἰσθήσεις do.⁹ The πάθη are what inform us about the affective value of things in the world – whether they are to be pursued or shunned – whereas the αἰσθήσεις inform us about how things appear physically.

Clearly, Epicurus' use of the term πάθος to designate the non-rational feelings of pleasure and pain is different from that of Aristotle, for whom pleasure and pain were components of πάθη rather than πάθη themselves. Epicurus' usage comes closer to that of Plato, at least in the *Philebus*. But with πάθος thus reserved for this special function, by what term does Epicurus denote the emotions? The answer, I believe, is that he has no specific name for them. As in the case of Plato, the emotions, as they are understood today, do not form a distinct category in Epicurean psychology. Corresponding to the positive and negative sensations of the non-rational part of the soul, that is, to pleasure and pain or ἡδονή and ἀλγηδῶν, there are positive and negative states of the rational part, which Epicurus calls χαρά or joy and παραχή or perturbation; the latter results from irrational fears, above all the fear of death and punishment in the afterlife. People who are beset by such fears are also subject to having irrational desires, that is, desires that are incapable of being fulfilled because they are for things that do not correspond to any natural need, for example great wealth and power. There are also perfectly natural desires or appetites (ἐπιθυμίαι), such as those for food and drink, as well as fears, which have as their object things that are real and dangerous (cf. Diogenes of Oenoanda frag. 35.II Smith). In addition to these fundamental motives of attraction and avoidance, the Epicureans discussed other emotions, such as anger. Philodemus devoted a treatise to the latter, distinguishing in turn a good and a bad form, and he does not hesitate to name these πάθη (*De ira* III 23,

⁹ Epicurus associates sensations and πάθη in several passages in the *Letter to Herodotus* (37-38, 55, 63, 82; cf. *Principal Doctrines* 24). The πάθη operate alongside αἰσθήσεις and certain processes of thought, and together provide us with all the information we have concerning the world.

VI 13, etc.) although I believe that Epicurus himself was more strict in limiting the term to non-rational pleasure and pain (cf. Fish 2004). But the Epicureans evidently saw no need to group all these phenomena – desires or appetites, fears both reasonable and unreasonable, anger in either of its varieties, joy and perturbation, and whatever other sentiments they may have mentioned in passing, such as pity and envy, under a single heading, any more than they sought to separate out as a class such sentiments as “anger, fear, and pity.”¹⁰

The Stoics were more systematic in categorizing a large number of feelings, and they collected them under four great classes: pain, pleasure, desire, and fear. For example, the Stoics define pain or λύπη as “a contraction of the soul that is not obedient to reason, the cause of which is a fresh opinion that harm is present” (Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.90.7 Wachsmuth). Under pain, they grouped, on one account, such πάθη as envy, jealousy, pity, grief, and an assortment of other feelings for which it is difficult to find suitable English equivalents (e.g., ἄχθος, ἄχος, ἀνία, ὀδύνη, ἄση). Pity, to take one of these sub-types, is defined as “pain for someone who has suffered undeservedly” (DL 7.111; cf. Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.92.7 Wachsmuth; Andronicus *Peri pathôn* 2, p. 12 Kreuttner). In these classifications, elaborate as they are, the general term, e.g., λύπη, is not repeated among the species of emotion. I am inclined to wonder whether the Stoics might have considered pain itself not an emotion but rather an element in those emotions that are subsumed under the label, “pain”.

The difficulty with this hypothesis is twofold. First, the Stoics clearly refer to the larger categories as πάθη. To take one example, Stobaeus (*Ecl.* 2.88.6 Wachsmuth) reports: “one must suppose that some passions are primary and dominant, while others have these as their reference. The generically primary ones are these four: appetite, fear, distress, pleasure. Appetite and fear come first, the former in relation to what appears good, and the latter in relation to what appears bad. Pleasure and distress result from these: pleasure, whenever we get the objects of our appetite or avoid the objects of our fear; distress, whenever we fail to get the objects of our appetite or experience the objects of our fear” (trans. Long and Sedley 1987: 410–11; cf. Cicero *De fin.* 3.35; *Tusc. Disp.* 3.11.24; Aspasius 44 Heylbut, transl. Konstan 2006b: 44–45; Andronicus *On the Pathê* 1 p. 11 Kreuttner; Galen *De Hippocr. et Plat. decretis.* 5.2.135). The second difficulty is that, whatever our view of pleasure, pain, and desire, surely fear (φόβος) seems to be a proper emotion. To begin with the latter question, the Stoics would seem to have understood φόβος in the early, Homeric sense of “flight” or “fleeing”, and thus signifying something like “avoidance”, the negative counterpart of ἐπιθυμία or “attraction”. The Stoic definition of ἐπιθυμία is a desire (ὄρεξις) that is not obedient to reason (we have seen that Aristotle had already spoken of rational and non-rational ὀρέξεις), whereas φόβος is “an avoidance that is not obedient to reason” (Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.90.7 Wachsmuth). As for the description of

¹⁰ For detailed discussion of Epicurean views of the πάθη, see Konstan 2006a.

φόβος and the other generic categories as πάθη, along with the specific terms grouped under them, I can only say that the Stoics evidently saw no good reason to assign separate labels to the two classes. Since the general term is not repeated in the specific lists, there is no logical error here of confounding the genus with the species. We have simply to understand that πάθος is used here in two different senses, first to denote the greater category, then to identify the members of the set. What is noteworthy is that the Stoics, good logicians though they were, were not troubled with the idea of applying the term πάθος to both, no doubt because it was so broad a notion, applicable to any movement in the soul (on πάθος as a movement, cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.88 Wachsmuth), and they saw no reason to invent a different term that would apply exclusively to the emotions that are subsumed under the general types.

I conclude with a brief look at two lists of emotions recorded by Cicero. At *De oratore* 2.206, Cicero affirms that the orator must above all excel at arousing “affection, hate, anger, envy, pity, hope, joy, fear, and grief” (*amor, odium, iracundia, invidia, misericordia, spes, laetitia, timor, molestia*; trans. May and Wisse 2001); this is very like Aristotle’s inventory, with the addition of hope, joy, and grief. At *Brutus* 188, Cicero says that a crowd listening to a good speaker “feels pleasure and pain, laughs and cries, hates, scorns, envies, is moved to pity, shame, and disgust, grows angry, calms down, hopes, and fears” (*gaudet, dolet, ridet, plorat, favet, odit, contemnit, invidet, ad misericordiam inducitur, ad pudendum, ad pigendum; irascitur, mitigatur, sperat, timet*). Cicero, it seems to me, has added to Aristotle’s set of πάθη the four so-called generic πάθη defined by the Stoics, namely pleasure, pain, desire or anticipation, and fear or avoidance.¹¹ Taken together, Cicero’s set constitutes a class of feelings in which pain and pleasure sit comfortably alongside such sentiments as anger, fear, and envy.

I do not mean to suggest that Cicero is somehow in error in his understanding of what counts as an emotion, or that he represents a kind of regression in respect to Aristotle’s classification – as though Aristotle had discovered the true nature of the πάθη, but the lesson was somehow lost on his successors. Aristotle’s inventory of πάθη in the *Rhetoric* is indeed a stricter one, and in many ways anticipates the modern idea of “emotion”, as I have said. But this does not mean that Aristotle’s view is necessarily more right or true than the others. I should like to suggest rather that, for philosophical systems other than Aristotle’s, and indeed for Aristotle’s own, outside the specific analysis in the *Rhetoric*, the more limited

¹¹ These are rendered in the first passage as *spes, laetitia, timor, molestia*, and less distinctly in the second as *gaudet, dolet, ridet, plorat; irascitur* and *mitigatur* = Aristotle’s ὀργή and πράυνσις; cf. Horstmanshoff 1999: 261 on the list in the medical writer Caelius Aurelianus, who “caractérise les émotions: *appetere, desiderare, timor, maestitudo* et *iracundia* comme des *passiones animae*, des affections de l’âme, distinctes des *passiones corporis*, des maladies du corps”; Galen *On Diagnosing and Curing Ailments of the Soul* 3.5.7 K., who lists as πάθη ψυχῆς: θυμὸς καὶ ὀργή, καὶ φόβος καὶ λύπη, καὶ φθόνος, καὶ ἐπιθυμία σφόδρα φιλεῖν ἢ μισεῖν ὅτιοῦν πράγμα; Gregory of Nyssa *On the Beatitudes* 44.1228.21-33.

modern concept of emotion was not necessarily relevant, and the ancient thinkers had no need either to restrict the term πάθος in the way Aristotle did or to invent an alternative term to capture sentiments such as anger, pity, fear, shame, and envy, while excluding such items as pleasure, pain, desire, and avoidance. It is not a matter of progress in the understanding of what counts as an emotion; there were simply multiple approaches, Aristotle's among them. Rather than say, with Harris, that πάθος may only have acquired the sense of emotion in "the 420s and probably later" (cited in n. 2), it might be better to say that the idea of emotion as such, at least in one of its most common modern acceptations, never crystallized in classical antiquity – nor, perhaps, was there a good reason why it ought to have.

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