DRAMATIC GENRE AS AN UNELABORATED CATEGORY.
THE ARISTOTELIAN SCHOOL: A SURVEY.
NORTHROP FRYE'S *ANATOMY OF CRITICISM*.
A NEW CLASSIFICATION OF THE DRAMATIC GENRE. TYPES OF POTENTIALS
AND THE DRAMATIC GENRE.
CHARACTERS' PREDISPOSITION AND POTENTIAL IN *THE SEAGULL*.

DRAMATIC GENRE AS AN UNELABORATED CATEGORY.

Contemporary scholars admit that the notion of the dramatic goes far beyond theatrical performances and is an integral part of any literary work.

A definition of an unelaborated category. A category is generally considered unelaborated when, first, it has *no elaborated degree* (i.e., when it operates only with *extremes*), and second, when it *is reduced to another category or a characteristic*.

1. Since the comic is the core of comedy it is necessary to define the comic. Traditionally, he notion of the comic in literary criticism is reduced to the laughable/funny. This presents a problem since a category can not be reduced to a single characteristic.

According to the Encyclopedia of Aesthetics, "Since the Greeks, laughter has been the characteristically comic response, and throughout history, theories of laughter have shaped theories of comedy" (Kelly 1: 402). Grawe, on the other hand, writes: "Because the most fundamental questions are brought the true meaning of laughter as the essential element of the comic, the field can resemble a very contentious contest over a highly specialized topic" (9). However, this nonorthodox statement is not supported in criticism simply because it requires a reconsideration of the category of the comic, which is traditionally connected to laughter.

To Aristotle and his school, the laughable is what makes comedy, comedy, and the most recent attempts to define the comic have all addressed the question of what can become an appropriate subject of laughter and for what reason. Stemming from the notion of the laughable and the harmless nature of defect or ugliness, the Aristotelian idea of the comic equates comedy with an imitation of the lives of a lower type of character.

2. When reading general, modern definitions of dramatic genre, represented in such respected sources as **Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature**, one notices some important omissions concerning intermediate stages; the theory operates on two extremes—comedy that is based on the light and tragedy that is based on the serious. Comedy-drama is also defined as a combination of these two extremes, seriousness and lightness, without establishing the degree and magnitude of each:

SLIDE Comedy . . . The genre of dramatic literature that deals with the light or the amusing, or with the serious and profound in a light, familiar, or satirical manner.
Comedy-drama . . . Serious drama with comedy interspersed.

Tragedy . . . A drama of a serious and dignified character that typically describes the development of a conflict between the protagonist and a superior force . . . and reaches a sorrowful or disastrous conclusion. (260)

The **degree of seriousness**, which is different in different works, is not discussed in the statement above, creating a major problem in defining a genre of literary works whose degree of seriousness creates a spectrum.

WHAT is seriousness? How does one measure the degree of seriousness?

The diversity of literary works creates a wide range of novels, stories, dramas, and poems, which reveal different degrees of seriousness to be measured. The question concerning the degree of seriousness of the artistic work is linked directly to the measurement of the degree of power of any system.

To take something seriously means to admit to its **significant influence** on one's development. At this point, one should refer to **a measurement of the potential**—the only way the degree of strength and richness of the entity can be defined. Thus, the degree of seriousness of a literary work is linked to the degree of strength and richness of its protagonists' potential, making the dramatic a phenomenon.

Therefore I assume that core of dramatic genre is the degree of strength of protagonists' potential. Limitations inherent in the comic character have certainly been discussed before in criticism; as the Encyclopedia of Aesthetics summarizes, **"Throughout comedy, the emphasis is on human limitations rather than greatness"** (Kelly 1: 401). The structure of these limitations **has never been analyzed as independent from the laughable and laughter, however, and it has never been considered to be the core of dramatic genre.**

The role of laughter in comedy

Concerning laughter and the laughable, it seems that the degree of its initial parameter is not taken into account by some scholars discussing major problems concerning dramatic genre, namely, comedy, one of its types. Like many other scholars, Paul H. Grawe notices this omission with regard to comedy:

> **Just as bad, once we have made the basic mistake of equating comedy and laughter, we also fail to notice that many of the greatest comedies, Shakespeare's best comedies, for example, are often much less funny than obviously second-rate, cliché-ridden, hack comedy and some of the greatest comedies contain very little that is laughable.**

Like Grawe, I differentiate between the comedy of trivial action and the comedy of witty, intelligent characters of works termed "comedies" (by either their authors or their critics) with a subsequent degree of the laughable in them. However, I do not consider this second type to be comedy; I call it succedy.

To Aristotle and his school, **the laughable is what makes comedy**, comedy, and the most recent attempts to define the comic have all addressed the question of what can become an appropriate subject of laughter and for what reason. Stemming from the notion of the laughable and the harmless nature of defect or ugliness, the Aristotelian idea of the comic equates comedy with an imitation of the lives of a lower type of character. In this context, Richard Janko's translation highlights the role of laughter as an integral part of the Aristotelian concept of comedy:

> Comedy is a representation of an action that is **laughable and lacking in magnitude**, complete, [in embellished speech,] with each of its parts [used] separately in the [various] elements [of the play] represented by people acting and [not] by narration; accomplishing by means of pleasure and laughter the catharsis of such emotions. It has laughter as its mother. (Poetics I 49)

There is obviously no comedy without laughter for Aristotle, and this is certainly true for traditional comedy, which exploits laughter to a great extent. For all their diversity and their inquiries into different aspects, all subsequent concepts—including the most recent—agree on the laughable nature of the comic.

As **Elder Olson** states, **"[T]he comic includes only the ridiculous, the ludicrous, the things which are taken as such by analogy, the witty and the humorous"** (23).

The traditional understanding of the comic, as a structure rooted in the laughable/ridiculous, remains prevalent in modern criticism. The constant attempt to link the comic and the laughable, including jokes, humor, ridicule, and so on, is explained by the fact that very often in comedy the notion of the characters' potential and the laughable conflate into one, complicating the outlining of the comic as an independent structure. Though **critics admit that comic theory is the least-elaborated field** in the theory of drama, the Aristotelian paradigm remains favored. Richard Keller Simon writes, "Comic theory has received relatively little critical attention, far less than theories about more serious subjects" (12–13).

According to **Grawe**, **"Comedy has been misdefined for two millennia and, on the basis of that misdefinition, comedy has been relegated to an almost Cinderella-like position compared to her sister, tragedy"** (9).

Aristotle's great contribution to the theory of genre was the systematization of its manifold features. His thorough analysis of the structure, function, and genesis of tragedy, comedy, and epic poetry drew one's attention to artistic devices inherent in different literary genres. He discussed the quantitative structuring of tragedy, and he established rules for the portrayal of tragic personages and for the formation of epic poetry. All this was an excellent guide for authors and historians.

At the same time, the Aristotelian school paid no attention to the character's potential. Aristotle stated in Poetics that the principal element of the dramatic work was the plot, which he considered the main "moving principle."

> Tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life, of happiness and misery. All human happiness or misery takes the form of action; the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity, not a quality. Character gives us qualities, but it is in our actions—what we do—that we are happy or the reverse. (Basic Works 1461; 1450a, 16–20)

The Aristotelian philosophy resembles behaviorism, which has never inquired into the individual's inner structure, genetic code, or system of emotions; therefore, an observation on a person's behavior is the only possible way to speculate about his or her character. In the Aristotelian concept, the plot reveals the character through action, focusing on behavior rather than potential and predisposition.

Needless to say, behavior can sometimes be in disagreement with the one who performs it. It may, moreover, hide the personality of the individual and greatly deceive the observer. The development of genetics made it possible to research physiological structures that had never been discovered before. The Aristotelian tendency to consider character as a secondary concern suggests the absence of such analytical tools, which enable one to inquire into protagonists' potential. This absence has caused constant confusion and misrepresentation of the types of dramatic genre. Writers and critics have often used external features in defining the dramatic genre of a literary work; for instance, Dante's surprising decision to call his Divine Comedy a comedy was based simply on the happy ending of the story. In my classification this work belongs to succedy.

"Poetics" and "Physics": concerning the paradigm of thinking in Aristotle's theory of tragedy

Aristotle's neglect of the character's potential echoes his deterministic philosophy of development of the physical world. As Katsenelinboigen notes, physicists work with systems whose changes require millions of years. In this sense, one can speak of physical objects' slow-going process of change. Such physical laws as the law of gravity have made scientists believe that the universe is ruled by a set of firm, basic, unchangeable laws. The model of physics has remained a powerful one.

Unlike physical systems, however, social and biological systems are subject to rapid change; therefore, attempts to apply the methodology elaborated in physics have limited success. Only some individual parts of the system can be successfully linked via programmed relationships, while the system as a whole represents a more sophisticated way of uniting all its elements.

In Aristotle's theory of tragedy, characters are equal to fixed physical objects ruled by laws; they are subjugated to plot development, which unfolds in compliance with these laws. In accordance with Aristotelian theory, the object cannot change the law; in the same manner, the character is unable to change the plot. In his treatise Physics,

Aristotle discussed the intelligible reality in which everything in the world of nature was thought to be causally dependent. This theory of causality holds that all events are determined by previously existing causes, and human behavior is precluded by them. The statement that "whatever is moved, is moved by something" appeared first in Physics and was elaborated by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*: "There must, then, be such a principle, whose very essence is actuality. Further, then, these substances must be without matter; for they must be eternal, if anything is eternal. Therefore they must be actuality" (Basic Works 878; 1071b, 19–22).

Two ideas are important for our current discussion: (1) the object is moved by the external cause; and (2) there is a universal principle of movement that exists independently as an eternal cause. In other words, the object develops owing to the movements of other objects, which, in turn, are moved by the eternal principle. As Aristotle sees it, the object as such has no inner resources for its movement and development. This philosophy has shifted to the realm of art. In speaking about the cause, Aristotle notes in *Physics*:

> We must explain then (1) that Nature belongs to the class of causes which act for the sake of something; (2) about the necessary and its place in physical problems, for all writers ascribe things to this cause. . . . Now intelligent action is for the sake of an end; therefore the nature of things also is so. . . . Each step then in the series is for the sake of the next; and generally art partly completes what nature cannot bring to a finish, and partly imitates her. If, therefore, artificial products are for the sake of an end, so clearly also are natural products. (Basic Works 249–50; 198b, 10–15; 199a, 10–15)

Hence, according to Aristotle, "the end" is "the truth" that exists before the beginning and predetermines the structure of events. In Poetics, a parallel to the concept of causality is apparent. "Tragedy, however, is an imitation not only of a complete action, but also of incidents arousing pity and fear.   . . . Even matters of chance seem most marvelous if there is an appearance of design as it were in them . . ." (Basic Works 1465; 1452a, 1–7).

In Aristotle's concept, the plot is seen as a principle that is intended to "move" characters. Consequently, characters, whose internal mechanisms of development are not taken into account, are equal to objects whose movement depends on external causes (such as peripeteia and discovery). The echo of this philosophy can be found in Nietzsche's destructive principle, and Schopenhauer's principle of ruling characters and universe. In addition, the correction of moral imbalances becomes a central idea in Hegel's concept of tragedy; according to Hegel, tragic heroes serve as a means of reconciling conflicting moral statements—another echo of the Aristotelian paradigm of the "principle." Even some modern and substantive research on tragedy is captivated by the concept of the "ruling principle" that determines protagonists' lives. George Steiner, in The Death of Tragedy, speaks of a type of tragedy that depicts the tragic hero struggling with inevitability. He calls this type of tragedy "the true tragedy" (xii). Steiner writes:

Outside and within man is l'autre, the "otherness" of the world. Call it what you will: a hidden or malevolent God, blind fate, the solicitations of hell, or the brute fury of our animal blood. It mocks us and destroys us. In certain rare instances, it leads us after destruction to some incomprehensible repose. (9)

It seems that the view of a character as a puppet-like figure whose inner potential and predisposition are completely insignificant impoverishes the notion of the tragic character, his or her resourcefulness, and the inner factor that is the true cause of the character's failure. As the analysis reveals, it is first and foremost the character's predisposition that leads him or her to a certain outcome. Even in seemingly deterministic cases, such as in *Oedipus the King*, the protagonist's action is a matter of his wild temper in combination with his conditional thinking.4

It would therefore be a simplification to assume that a complete determination by the supernatural was the subject of the greatest classical tragedies. Besides, Greek tragedy gave birth not to singularity, not to one "genuine" kind but to a spectrum of tragedies. Steiner's interpretation of development as a convergent process is therefore a matter of his own bias. The process of development can be interpreted as either convergent or divergent, though in actuality, the creation of diversity is the way in which nature generates new forms more effectively. Various types of tragedies are branches of the same tree, whose roots cannot be determined by a single characteristic pertaining to the fatalistic role of gods, especially because the question of outer influences on the system is much more sophisticated than that.

COMEDY IS USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE THREE FOLLOWING THINGS:
1. Laughter
2. Successful outcome
3. A crucial role of chance occurrences

The impossibility to define comedy by the successful outcome in comedy

The outcome in a literary work is not the point of destination, but rather a point of departure for the interpreters. Decisions made by characters shed light not only on the question of their momentary success or failure, but they also reveal their predisposition for future development. The outcome may be successful but the entire predisposition can be quite dangerous.

The impossibility to define comedy based on the role of chance

As a rule, the development of a system is described as either depending on a chance occurrence or determined by the law as another extreme of a complete imbalance. Darwinism emphasizes the exclusive role of chance occurrences in the system, giving top priority to randomness as its method. This paradigm of thinking influences scholarly works, including literary criticism. For instance, Olson states that "in nature the ridiculous always occurs by chance" (19). This speculation is very questionable and leads

to the more general problem of the role of chance occurrences in systems with different predispositions.6 Later, we will discuss this problem in detail with regard to chance and fate in tragedy and comedy.

Conversely, creationism states that the system develops comprehensively; that is, that programming is the only method that participates in the development of the system. As Katsenelinboigen notices, both schools neglect the fact that the process of the system's development includes all methods, which may vary on different stages, depending on the system's goals and conditions.

The question of how a system develops is fundamental for all fields, including literature and art. With regard to my study, this question concerns the problem of chance and fate in comedy and tragedy, as formulated by Aristotle and his school. From the point of view of the process, the traditional definitions of comedy and tragedy are based on a dichotomy of complete order (fate) and complete chaos (chance). According to Aristotle, peripeteia in tragedy cannot be based on chance—this is a prerogative of comedy. Such a statement presents a problem, since in some cases it is very difficult to investigate the genesis of an occurrence; therefore, the presence or absence of a "hidden design" often remains the act of one's belief.

In actuality, there is a very limited number of works in which a single chance occurrence drastically changes the protagonists' lives (i.e., cataclysms or accidents whose sudden appearance cannot be absorbed by their victims). All other changes concerning human life must be considered with regard to one's predisposition and free will. As analysis reveals, in a masterful work (whether it is comedy, dramedy, or drama), the role of the characters' predisposition in interactions with chance occurrences is crucial. A chance occurrence, whether spontaneous or orchestrated, always interacts with a certain predisposition and must therefore be considered within the system, since it may result in a different outcome if combined with a different predisposition. This is true for any system, including artistic ones.

The need for finding isomorphism for types of dramatic genre

The theory of dramatic genre (based on the assumption that it is synonymous with dramaturgy) has been primarily occupied with the differences between tragedy and comedy, rarely searching for the isomorphic structure of all types of dramatic genre. The importance of the establishing of isomorphisms for different systems, however, was very well understood by proponents of general systems theory.

The founder of general systems theory, **Ludwig von Bertalanffy**, writes:

> Thus, there exist models, principles, and laws that apply to generalized systems or their subclasses, irrespective of their particular kind, the nature of their component elements, and the relations or "forces" between them. It seems legitimate to ask for a theory, not of systems of a more or less special kind, but of universal principles applying to systems in general. . . . A consequence of the existence of general system properties is the appearance of structural similarities or isomorphisms in different fields.

There are correspondences in the principles that govern the behavior of entities that are, intrinsically, widely different. (32–33)

Concerning dramatic genre, the fact that it becomes an integral part of any artistic work allows one to talk about **isomorphisms** of different dramatic types—a core that would contribute to the definition of the category. The next step should be directed towards establishing the degree and magnitude of the initial and dual parameters structuring the category, thus enabling a classification of the various types and branches that appear as a result of the measurement of the system's constituent parts.

In accordance with the analysis, the structure of dramatic genre is comprised of three basic types—comedy (limited potential), dramedy (powerful potential), and drama (average/above average)—with each type divided into branches. Tragedy and comedy are not opposite types in dramatic genre. Tragedy is a branch of dramedy whose other branch is succedy. I also introduce the notion of the comedy of a new type (the CNT), which is based on a quasi-strong potential and elaborate a new technique of analysis for it.

The structure of the potential

Katsenelinboigen defines the notion of the potential from a multidimensional perspective. From this perspective, the potential of the system can be described in the following way: Functionally, the potential is linked to the system's ability to develop. From the structural point of view, the potential of the system consists of the following characteristics:

SLIDE
• Orientation (types of goals)
• Energy
• Will
• Cleverness (an independent parameter that is responsible for the integration of various characteristics)
• Physical and intellectual might
• Knowledge
• Experience
• State (material parameters and their coordinates)
• Position (in addition to material parameters—also includes relational ones)
• Values

All these features can be transformed and applied to systems, even those that are not human systems.

Subjectivity of the Evaluative Process

The roots of one's subjective evaluation lie in the fact that the executor cannot be separated from the evaluator, who evaluates the system in accordance with his or her own

particular ability to develop it. This can be observed in chess, in which the same position is evaluated differently by different chess players, or in literature with regard to hermeneutics. Katsenelinboigen writes:

> **The subjective element arises not because the set of positional parameters and their valuations are formed based on a player's intuition. Rather, the choice of relevant parameters depends on the actual executor of the position, that is, the particular strengths and weaknesses of a given player. The role of the executor becomes vital because the actual realization of the position is not known beforehand, so future moves will have to be made based on the contingent situation at hand. (Indeterministic Economics 70)**

In talking about subjective and objective valuations of the positional variables, Katsenelinboigen explains why subjectivity of the managerial decision is inevitable:

> **The original subjective evaluation of the situation by the decision-maker is critical in the creative strategic management. Subjectivity of the managerial decisions is inevitable due to the intrinsically indeterministic nature of the strategic management, meaning that the subjectivity arises not just because of the lack of scientific foundation in business management. The effective approach to the strategic decision-making, as demonstrated in the game of chess, presupposes that each player has a unique, individual vision of his strategic position. To make it more systematic, one should not substitute the player's intuition with some objective laws that relate essential and positional parameters, but rather complement the intuition with the statistical analysis. (Concept of Indeterminism 164)**

When approaching a literary work that is an indeterministic system, one interprets its structure based on one's ability to explore it. In each particular case, the interpreter endows each artistic element with a weight, then integrates them all into a whole in accordance with his or her vision and skills to wield the manifold artistic elements; this process cannot be unified.

One may agree or disagree with the weights ascribed to certain parameters or with the way they are integrated into a whole. However, one must understand that no interpretation can be called "wrong" unless it is based on facts that contradict the information provided in the text or it reveals a gap between the logic of the analysis and the examples chosen by the critic.

By "information" I mean characters' names, their positions, origins, preferences, and the like. For instance, if in my research on myth in Chekhov's plays I propose an association between Shamraev, the manager of Sorin's estate, and Poseidon, I must base my speculations on details provided in the text; namely, the name of the protagonist, his position as the manager of the estate, his love for horses, and the like. This would assist me in finding an isomorphism between both characters, no matter how "contrived" it may seem to other scholars who would integrate all these details differently.

Laughter and subjectivity

The neglect of subjectivity causes confusion in approaching some basic problems in literary criticism, including the concept of laughter, which is traditionally associated with a **search for an algorithm**. Hegel, for instance, attempts to trace laughter to the contrast between the object and the method of its representation. Freud attributes laughter to a subconscious reduction of tension; Schopenhauer does the same based on the idea of incongruity.

As one can see, the common approach is to attempt to derive laughter from the initial parameter—whether it is incongruity or tensions or any other condition—assuming that anyone would react in the same way to the same situations. Descartes therefore affirms that laughter is a manifestation of joy mixed with either surprise or hatred or both. Thomas Hobbes links laughter with glory, saying that "[s]udden Glory, is the passion which maketh those Grimaces called Laughter" (43).

The establishment of a programming linkage between the initial conditions (a situation) and the final outcome (a laughing reaction) is still unrealistic, as tempting as it may be. As experience shows, laughter cannot be derived directly from certain situations. In reality, anything can arouse either laughter or tears—these manifestations are symmetrical, for they can be applied to similar feelings. There are people who cry after receiving exciting news and people who scream and laugh in analogous situations; there are people who are in tears after overcoming an infirmity, and there are people who start laughing for the same reason; there are people who are so relieved after having good sex that they laugh, while there are also people whose sexual relief is celebrated by tears. Even sorrow can be manifested as either laughter or weeping. In her discussion of two Bakhtinian paradoxes regarding the comic and the laughable, Caryl Emerson points out that "Bakhtin never systematically discussed the relations . . . between laughter and tragedy, or between comedy and ethical duty" (9).

Joy, rage, anger, love, relief, tension, and the like, represent a wide range of emotions whose evaluation may be manifested in laughter, as well as in tears. Even physical pain and some unpleasant feelings, such as excessive tickling, can be accompanied by laughter. It would therefore be a mistake to link the notion of the comic with laughter, for laughter could be manifested from many evaluations, including those linked with lethal outcomes. As a leading theoretician of the neo-Aristotelian school, Olson notices, "[W]eep-ing, for instance, can betoken extreme joy as well as extreme grief, as we all know, or can find out by watching the next Miss Universe when she wins the contest; and laughter presents the same ambiguity"

Laughter and weeping appear as subjective reactions to certain evaluations, and their occurrences cannot be programmed. Katsenelinboigen distinguishes between subjective and individual values in the sense that the latter can be objectivized, but the former always remains a part of the unique that cannot be formalized. For example, one can analyze a customer's particular preferences for food and make a special menu and recipes so that anyone could prepare them. One can then say that the customer's individual values are objectivized. However, one may not be able to calculate which day the customer would ask for a certain combination of foods or ingredients because this

would necessitate a consideration of a great number of initial and dual parameters and their various degrees—a subjective choice that is impossible to predetermine.

The same can be said of laughter and tears, which, as shown above, can be calculated based on statistics in only some particular, simple cases. Unification does not work for the majority of other cases, however, for the linkage between one's evaluation of the entity and one's reaction to it is subjective—it is based on the observer's subjective choice of self-expression.

It seems that both laughter and weeping belong to a multifunctional category, but scholars typically attempt to discover a single function of laughter that can shed light on this phenomenon. George Meredith, for instance, focuses on the corrective purpose of laughter. Konrad Lorenz associates laughter with group behavior among animals; he analyzed specific situations in which aggression was thwarted and a laughlike phenomenon appeared among herds. Alexander Bain's concept represents the violent nature of laughter, which stems from one's attempt to discomfort or suppress his rival. Analogously, Henri Bergson outlines the destructive function of laughter: "[L]aughter is, above all, a corrective. Being intended to humiliate, it must make a painful impression on the person against whom it is directed" (187). All of these observations on the functions of laughter certainly complement each other and enrich our understanding of this phenomenon that cannot be limited to a single function. They once again confirm that the correlation between the evaluation and its manifestation cannot be unified.

Objective methods of evoking laughter and their subjective evaluation

Characters may evoke either sympathy or indifference, and this cannot be completely controlled by the author, since he or she does not determine one's perception of the protagonists. The author may, however, elaborate devices to partially influence the audience's emotional state and thus assist the reader/spectator in adjusting to the author's valuations. From the viewpoint of genre recognition, certain artistic devices serve to control the degree of one's emotional involvement. In the traditional comedy, for instance, the author finds a way to alienate the audience from the protagonist in order to decrease the degree of emotional involvement. Some of the devices can be formalized while others are the property of their creators.

All artistic devices used in comedy fulfill the same function: humor, jokes, word play, and other similar devices are intended to serve as "separating" means that keep the observer alienated from the observed. In extreme cases, this alienation may elicit cruelty and heartlessness on the part of the reader/spectator. At the same time, all these devices may evoke pity and sorrow in a particular reader/spectator, suggesting that the application of artistic devices does not assist in creating uniformity in the audience's reactions. Different interpretations of the same characters then result. The reaction to humor, jokes, funny incidents, and the like, depends on the individual. The artist may intend to create a very laughable situation, but the reader can be left totally indifferent or bored. Not every reader/spectator would enjoy distortions of the comic character, even though pure—comical—comedy implies "harmless" distortions intended to prevent the common spectator from feeling for the protagonists.

In choosing one or another type of dramatic genre for his or her work, the artist attempts to moderate the intensity of the audience's emotional involvement. This means that even if one feels for the comic character, it would not be the deep emotional stress

typical of a reaction to tragedy. Different nouns are used to describe the differing degrees of one's emotional involvement: thus, the word pity is used to emphasize a feeling typical of the strong toward the weak; the word compassion conveys the idea of a confluence of values inherent in the observer and the observed. (Such a merger is based on the idea of equality between the observer and the observed.) Conversely, some readers/spectators may feel deeply for the comic character but remain indifferent to the tragic hero's misfortunes. With regard to the comedy of a new type, the audience's involvement can oscillate between very strong (as in drama or tragedy) and light (as in traditional comedy). The reasons for this variation in reactions will be discussed below.

The further development of comedic genres and the appearance of unfunny comedies, including Balzac's Human Comedy, emphasized that comedy could exist with less laughable content, thus proving that the laughable (in all its varieties, including the ridiculous and the funny) and the comic are not synonymous. Nor should they be derived from one another.

Thus, the dramatic in the present research is considered synonymous with the potential of the artistic system. Later I will discuss all the peculiarities of the artistic potential. For now, I would just like to mention that the introduction of artistic devices generates some new structures not observed in other systems (such as the implied space and the mytholiterary continuum) that essentially enrich one's understanding of the potential and the methods of its analysis.

In my classification, dramatic genre is divided into types and branches; both types and branches are pure and mixed. There are three basic types and with a total of eighteen varieties.

Pure Types and Branches of Dramatic Genre

Basic types of dramatic genre. The pure types are the following:

• Dramedy—A type of dramatic genre that represents main protagonists with powerful and rich potential. Dramedy exploits the potential that is pregnant with great possibilities

• Drama—A type of dramatic genre that represents main protagonists with average or above average and strong potential

• Comedy—A type of dramatic genre that portrays main characters endowed with limited and powerless potential

The basic types of dramatic genre are formed exclusively by the degree of richness and the degree of strength of characters' potential, which attests both to their inner ability to develop and to their external influence on society.

Branches of dramatic genre. The next step is to determine the branches of dramatic genre. Branches are formed by types of endings and types of potential; for instance, the limited potential combined with successful, unsuccessful, and ambiguous endings respectively generate cheerful, sad, and open comedy. The strong potential combined with different types of endings is assigned for cheerful, sad, and open drama. Accordingly, the combination of powerful potential with types of endings creates three branches of dramedy whose structure will be discussed below. In accordance with the matrix (see table 1), the following pure main branches are formed:

- Succedy: Powerful potential and successful outcome
- Tragedy—Powerful potential and unsuccessful outcome
- Open dramedy—Powerful potential and ambiguous ending
- Happy drama—Normal potential and successful outcome
- Unhappy drama—Normal potential and unsuccessful outcome
- Open drama—Normal potential and ambiguous outcome
- Happy comedy—Limited potential and happy ending
- Unhappy comedy—Limited potential and unhappy ending
- Open comedy—Limited potential and ambiguous ending

The matrix reveals that tragedy is not a type but a branch of dramatic genre. It represents potentially powerful protagonists predisposed to a lethal outcome. The degree of strength of the tragic hero's potential is not sufficient to preserve him or her from catastrophe, yet the potential of the tragic character is rich and powerful enough to make him develop and influence his society. For instance, in Romeo and Juliet, the deaths of the protagonists change the society in essence by virtue of their unconditional view of love. In a world strictly divided into friends and enemies (a conditional valuation), Juliet's famous monologue "What's in a name?" sounds like a hymn to love as an unconditional feeling, which elevates the couple to the level of the sublime. Conversely, in The Seagull (1896), the death of the main protagonist, Treplev, has no influence on his world—it cannot change the way all other protagonists live and think.

The tragic hero has the explosive potential of a star that after its blast may generate a new galaxy. The tragic outcome is not predetermined, however, but only predisposed by features forming the tragic hero's potential, and a decrease of the explosiveness may generate another type of rich and powerful potential that is predisposed to success. Owing to the character's intellectual, physical, and emotional power, this new type may turn disadvantages into advantages and achieve his or her goal successfully. Wit, sensitivity, and a strong analytical mind combined with a rich imagination may prevent a tragic outcome and turn a dangerous predisposition into a successful outcome. This branch of dramedy—dealing with characters of rich and powerful potential that succeed in achieving their goals—I propose to call succedy (the term succedy is derived from "success"). A Midsummer Night's Dream, whose main protagonists at some point resemble Romeo and Juliet, belongs to this type of dramedy. A detailed analysis of their success appear in part two.

In addition to the definite outcome, some works leave readers/spectators in obscurity, giving them the opportunity to guess about the outcome and the protagonists' future. Heinrich von Kleist's Amphitryon (1807) belongs to this type, in which there is ambiguity not only in his characters' futures but in their present states as well. I will provide a discussion of this play in chapter 2.

Like types, branches can also include outer evaluations of the potential, which generates their varieties. There is no need to discuss all possible combinations creating the varieties of branches, for their number is considerably large, and knowing the principle of their formation, one may easily draw an additional table of new names. For instance, the combination of an unhappy outcome, weak potential, and the important outer position of main characters evaluated positively creates a sad idyllic comedy. This list of characteristics can be continued.

BEHAVIORISM VERSUS POTENTIAL: ARISTOTELIAN SCHOOL AND OTHER APPROACHES TO THE DRAMATIV GENRE

The new classification combines the modern theory of predispositioning with the traditional observations on comedy and tragedy (taking into account their structural elements, such as types of outcomes). The new classification absorbs previous achievements and develops them in accordance with modern thinking.

NORTHROP FRYE'S "ANATOMY OF CRITICISM" IN THE LIGHT OF PREDISPOSITIONING THEORY

Now that the general concept of dramatic genre has been presented, let us discuss in detail the ways of measuring protagonists' potential. From the functional point of view the degree of strength of the protagonist's potential is related to his or her ability to develop and to influence the development of the outer world. This is the main difference between my approach to dramatic genre and that given by Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*.

Frye outlines five types of the hero's power of action: (1) "superior in kind both to other men and to environment" (a divine being); (2) "superior in degree to other men and to environment" (the hero of romance); (3) "superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment" (a leader); (4) "superior neither to other men nor to his environment" ("one of us"); and (5) "inferior of power and intelligence to ourselves" (33–34).

As follows from this description, Frye establishes the degree of one's power based on one's interactions with other people. However, any system with either limited or rich potential has its hierarchy. Aristophanes' Frogs, for instance, represents a system that includes gods, poets, and simple people who act in accordance with their current status; namely, poets write poems, gods command, and simple people obey. But the question is to what extent the superior characters are responsible for the development of their universe.

As further analysis will show, gods and leaders in comedy are formal figures unable to change their system, while in drama and dramedy they influence the

development of their universe and, besides, are able to develop themselves. Thus, the existence of a hierarchy does not shed light on the nature of protagonists' basic differences, which requires a different approach. Frye's outline draws one's attention to the degree of protagonists' superiority, and on this point, our positions coincide. Superiority itself is considered sufficient, however, and the fact that it can be a mere formality is not taken into consideration. This causes contradictions in Frye's classification; for instance, Frye states that the low mimetic mode based on the type called "one of us" is typical for comedies. Naturally, the question arises, how does one classify gods and heroes of comedies who are definitely not "some of us"? As Elmer Blistein notices:

Jupiter's presence has strikingly different results in the different versions. Jupiter's presence in Plautus leads inevitably and reverently to the birth of a divine hero; his presence in Molière succeeds in raising bedroom farce to the level of high comedy and leads to the birth of a semi-divine hero; his presence in Dryden creates, along with a potential sweeper of the Augean stables, a farcical triangle of an arrogant cuckolder, a shrewish strumpet, and a pompous cuckold.

Understanding the insufficiency of the parameters introduced in his outline, Frye switches from an analysis of the character's social status to an analysis of plot structure. Frye's further speculations about comic and tragic structures are based on the traditional idea of successful/unsuccessful endings in tragedy and comedy.

Also there is a general distinction between fictions in which the hero becomes isolated from his society, and fictions in which he is incorporated into it. This distinction is expressed by the words "tragic" and "comic" when they refer to aspects of plot in general and not simply to forms of drama.

The idea of the isolated protagonist corresponds with an unsuccessful ending, while the incorporation of the character into society is analogous to a happy ending. Frye writes, "The theme of the comic is the integration of society, which usually takes the form of incorporating a central character into it" (43). However, the introduction of this parameter of "integration" into society generates new contradictions within Frye's classification. Suppose that the idea of integration is combined with the high mimetic mode, defined by Frye as the possession of great passions and powers of expression and belonging to epic and tragedy. What type of genre should we discuss in that case? For instance, the main protagonists of A Midsummer Night's Dream all possess characteristics inherent in mode three: they are characters of great passions, expressing themselves in a way that elevates them to a higher level than that of the common environment; they are subject to social criticism; at the same time, they are incorporated into society. Frye's classification only sharpens some questions for which the answer requires a different, non-Aristotelian approach that would be linked to the analysis of protagonists' potential, not to the plot structuring or hierarchy.

THE CHARACTER'S POTENTIAL: ASPECTS OF ANALYSIS

The analysis of the character's potential is important for understanding the essence of dramatic genre. As further analysis will show, some comedies and tragedies exploit the same topics and represent protagonists with seemingly analogous behavior. Without referring to the character's potential, it would be impossible to detect the main

difference between the similar characters represented in different dramatic genres, especially when it concerns the CNT.

In analyzing the protagonist's potential, I will refer to the following aspects:

• The character's physical and intellectual abilities, including cleverness

• The type of the character's vision, namely, local/global, comprehensive/disjointed

• The character's use of certain methods (reflexive and selective), styles (positional and combinational), and ways of connectivity of elements (programming, predispositioning, and randomness)

• The character's ability to set a goal, to choose a direction, and to elaborate a strategy

• The character's presence/absence of will and inner energy required for achieving a goal

• The character's experience

• The character's knowledge

• The character's values

• The character' genesis