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An Apologia for Anger
With Reference to Early China and Ancient Greece

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

by

Alba Antonia Cercas Curry

September 2022

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Lisa Raphals, Chairperson
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Dr. Perry Link

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2022

The Dissertation of Alba Antonia Cercas Curry is approved:

Committee Chairperson

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This dissertation is dedicated to
Ana María Pérez del Campo,
incansable luchadora por los derechos de la mujer.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

An Apologia for Anger
With Reference to Early China and Ancient Greece

by

Alba Antonia Cercas Curry

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Comparative Literature
University of California, Riverside, September 2022
Dr. Lisa Raphals, Chairperson

Anger, far from being only a personal emotion, often signals a breakdown in existing societal structures like the justice system. This does not mean we should uncritically submit to our angry impulses, but it does mean that anger can reveal larger issues in the world worthy of attention. If we banish anger from the socio-political landscape, we risk losing its insights. To defend that claim, I turn to a range of sources from ancient China and Greece—philosophy, poetry, drama, and political theory—that depict and analyze anger in a variety of situations and people. My basic claim is not that anger is simply "good" or "bad" but rather that it helps reveal and clarify our values, often pointing us towards real situations deserving of our ethical scrutiny. I situate the project amidst ongoing debates in analytic philosophy of emotions and feminist philosophy, joining the conceptual precision and clarity of the former with the latter's attention to lived experience. Such cross-cultural, multidisciplinary conceptual analysis of

anger parochializes Aristotelian understandings of anger by introducing different types and functions of anger. What role does anger play, for example, in a minister rebuking the king in an ancient Chinese court? How do Greek sources depict female anger differently than male anger, and why? By using ancient and comparative sources, I show how deeply anger is shaped by particular cultural and social structures, whilst remaining recognizably anger.

CONTENTS

Prolegomena……..……………………………………………………………………….xi

Introduction……………………………….…………………………………………1

Chapter I
Encourage the Thoroughbred Horse:
Anger and the Attainment of Goodness in Mozi and Mencius ……………….…………….…..…27

Chapter II
The Angry Mantis and the Pragmatic Minister:
Anger as a Response to the World in Zhuangzi and Xunzi…..………….……..………………….57

Chapter III
Mistaking the Warp for the Weave:
Anger and Gender in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳......……………….……………….……..……..……100

Chapter IV
Watch the Throne:
The Uses and Abuses of Political anger in the Homeric Epics……..……………………….128

Chapter V
Kill me then, dear girl, with the pitiless bronze:
Penelope, Clytemnestra, and Female Alternatives to Anger.……………………..………180

Chapter VI
To Kill a Tyrant:
Anger in Aristotle…..……………………………………………………..……………202

Conclusion………………………………………………………………….……..238

Bibliography……………………………………………………………………….245

Prolegomena

The Moral and Political Importance of Anger

As they become known to and accepted by us,
our feelings and the honest exploration of them
become sanctuaries and spawning grounds for
the most radical and daring of ideas.
–Audre Lord, "Poetry is not a Luxury"

σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτοι ματᾴ-
ζει, πρὸς ἐνδίκοις φρεσὶν
τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκλούμενον κέαρ.
And my inwards, my heart whirling
In eddies that betoken fulfillment
Around a mind that understands justice, do not speak in vain.
–Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 995-7

Anger, far from being only a personal emotion, often signals a breakdown in existing societal structures such as the justice system. My basic claim is not that anger is simply "good" or "bad" but rather that it helps reveal and clarify our values, often pointing us towards real situations deserving of our ethical scrutiny. It does this in three ways: (1) it signals to the *agent* of the anger, the angry person, that she perceives a wrong to have been done to her; (2) it signals to the *patient* of the anger—the person perceived to have committed the wrong deed and towards whom the anger is now directed—what the agent values as right or wrong; and (3) it lays bare the relationships between the agent, the patient, and their society and its values. Why is the anger of Achilles criticized but that of Odysseus championed, when both lead to many deaths? Why does Euripides' Hecuba turn into a dog whilst Odysseus does not? What are the differences between the anger of Heaven (*tian* 天) and the remonstrations of a minister? The ideal Greek woman

could not be angry, the ideal Chinese woman could—what does that tell us about each society? Is one misogynistic and the other not, or do they both have different flavors of misogyny? What do the answers to these questions tell us about anger more broadly?

Claims (1) and (2) above have received decent scholarly attention, although they are by no means uncontroversial. They rest on a *cognitivist* theory of emotion, as opposed to a *feeling* theory of emotion.[1] Anger, like all emotions, is *intentional*: it is directed towards an object. When you are afraid or jealous, for example, you are afraid *of* something and you are jealous *of* losing someone to a rival. Anger is directed toward a perceived wrong. Feeling theories of emotion identify emotions with somatic changes and seem unable to account for the emotion's intentionality. On the feelings model of emotion, emotions are individuated by the distinct physiological changes characteristic of each response. Our awareness of these bodily changes *is* the emotion. For defenders of feeling theories, such as William James, we do not cry *because* we are sad. We are sad because we cry.

On the cognitivist account, emotions can be assessed in terms of rationality, and fittingness. When you are angry you may be called upon to justify your anger, in a way that you would not be asked to justify a stomach ache. We can give justificatory reasons

[1] They could also be accommodated by perceptual models of emotion (particularly quasi-perceptual accounts) as well as by an account such as the one Michael Brady defends in *Emotional Insight: The Epistemic Role of Emotional Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). However, it is not imperative that I defend a particular approach here since broadly speaking perceptual accounts and cognitivist accounts can accommodate my three claims. I do reject feeling theories of emotion since they suffer from a number of drawbacks. For example, some emotions do not appear to be accompanied by a characteristic feeling (e.g., contempt). Furthermore, science no longer supports the idea that emotions have physical "fingerprints." If anything determines that one is experiencing emotion X, instead of emotion Y, it is not a feeling but the context, and yet that can easily turn into a behaviorist account. See Lisa Feldman Barrett, *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain* (New York: Mariner Books, 2018).

for our emotions in ways that we cannot give for back pain.[2] But feeling theories cannot easily account for the fact that emotions may be assessed in terms of their rationality or reasonableness.[3]

There are, at this point, several distinct types of cognitivism, and no attempt will be made here to sort through all their different permutations.[4] Cognitivists generally maintain that emotions are directly connected to propositional attitudes. According to the most robust versions of cognitivism, emotions are identified with judgments. To be afraid, for example, is to judge that the object of one's fear is dangerous. Other cognitivists offer more nuanced accounts according to which emotions are constituted by belief/desire complexes or affect-laden judgments. There are, however, good reasons to reject cognitivism, or at least the strongest versions of cognitivism in which emotions are wholly identified with judgments or beliefs. The most basic problem is that neither judgments nor beliefs seem sufficient for emotions. Additionally, cognitive approaches cannot easily explain the *grip* that emotions have on us, or their distinctive phenomenology, nor can they account for emotions in non-human animals. Most Pre-Qin thinkers I examine, except Zhuangzi, would feel comfortable with a broadly cognitivist theory of emotion, or with a quasi-perceptual account. But it is beyond the scope of this

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[2] We can, of course, give reasons in the sense of cause-and-effect explanations for back pain (e.g., "I fell and now my back hurts"), but this is something different from a justification.

[3] For a contemporary defender of feeling theories of emotion see Antonio Damasio, *Looking For Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, And The Feeling Brain* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2003).

[4] For an overview of the different kinds of cognitivism, see Andrea Scarantino and Ronald de Sousa, "Emotion", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2021 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/emotion/>.

dissertation to analyze which particular flavor of cognitivism or quasi-perceptual model each thinker would defend. Nothing about their portrayal of emotions aligns with feeling theories of emotion.[5]

The basic goal of the dissertation is to defend anger, an emotion which has received relatively negative treatment in recent moral philosophy.[6] Martha Nussbaum, for example, thinks that anger is always normatively problematic because: "anger includes, conceptually, not only the idea of a serious wrong done to someone or something of significance, but also the idea that it would be a good thing if the wrongdoer suffered some bad consequences somehow."[7] Nussbaum here relies on an Aristotelian definition of anger that sees payback as an inherent component of the emotion: "Anger (ὀργή) may be defined as an impulse (ὄρεξις), accompanied by a pain (λύπης), to a conspicuous revenge (τιμωρίας) for a conspicuous slight (ὀλιγωρίαν) directed without justification (μὴ προσήκοντος) towards what concerns oneself or towards what concerns one's friends" (*Rhetoric* 1378a31-33).[8] Other thinkers and scholars offer different definitions of what

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5 At least during the Pre-Qin period one would be hard pressed to find the description of an emotion in terms of bodily feelings or facial expressions—with the possible though quite complicated exception of certain medical texts. It is quite different in Greek materials. For more on this see: Shigehisa Kuriyama, The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine (New York: Zone Books, 2011).

6 There have been different attempts at defending anger. For example, Céline Leboeuf defends anger based on a phenomenological basis, arguing that anger can help a black person undo her bodily alienation. "Anger as a Political Emotion: A Phenomenological Perspective" in Myisha Cherry and Owen Flanagan, *The Moral Psychology Of Anger* (Blue Ridge: Rowman & Littlefield Publ, 2019), 15-29. More recently, Myisha Cherry defends a variation of anger which she calls Lordean anger which aims at racial injustice, *The Case For Rage: Why Anger Is Essential To Anti-Racist Struggle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

7 Martha Nussbaum, *Anger And Forgiveness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 5.

8 Translated by W. Rhys Roberts.

anger is that do not include payback.[9] The issue of anger is therefore in part definitional. Nussbaum's one exception is what she calls Transition-Anger, which "does not focus on status; nor does it, even briefly, want the suffering of the offender as a type of payback for the injury."[10] In a similar vein, Emily McRae following Indo-Tibetan perspectives, argues for "the metabolization of anger for the sake of the liberation from suffering of self and others."[11] She highlights how this is important for members of oppressed groups who are particularly vulnerable to the psychological and moral burdens of any view on anger.[12] As with Nussbaum, we see here that the focus is on the possible harm of anger: both to the angry person and to others. We are warned against acting on anger-as-is, and even against cultivated or virtuous anger. The call is, instead, for a more radical transformation of the emotion.

Although Pre-Qin Chinese philosophy is not generally in the business of providing definitions, no Pre-Qin text would agree with Aristotle on either anger being exclusively, or even predominantly, about revenge, nor about it revolving around a personal slight. Anger can certainly be about those things, what we might call *self-*

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[9] Myisha Cherry for example defines anger as "a judgment that one has been wronged; it is aimed at leveling the wrongdoer's status with one's own by negating the wrongdoer's implicit assertion of superiority; and aimed further at changes to any societal structures that affirm the false notion that the wrongdoer or people of the wrongdoer's social class are superior." "Love, Anger, And Racial Injustice," in Adrienne M. Martin, ed., *The Routledge Handbook Of Love In Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 157-168.

[10] *Anger,* 36.

[11] "Anger and the Oppressed: Indo-Tibetan Perspectives" in Myisha Cherry, and Owen Flanagan, *The Moral Psychology Of Anger* (Rowman & Littlefield Publ, 2019), 106.

[12] Part of her argument is that moral theories should take seriously the psychological and moral burdens implied by moral prescriptions, particularly in the case of members of oppressed groups.

regarding anger, which often coincides with verbal or physical violence. The Chinese texts I look at are interested in *other-regarding anger*, which signals wrongdoing to the agent of the anger, but which is not focused on feeling slighted. Its object is not linked with pride or honor, but with a more generalizable injustice and it always aims at change, not punishment or revenge. Without wanting to get into a semantic argument, it is possible that other-regarding anger refers to what Nussbaum calls Transitional-Anger, or what the metabolized result of anger is for McRae. However, although it is true that other-regarding anger is praised and deemed virtuous in Chinese texts, it is not the result of arduous cultivation nor an ability only exceptionally good samaritans possess.

Nussbaum claims that payback and personal status are necessarily part of anger, but this leads us to the alarming conclusion that, as far as we can tell from extant sources, ancient Chinese people did not feel anger. My definition of anger, however, requires a perceived wrong and a desire for change, which can encompass Nussbaum's more limited definition along with early Chinese sources. To continue defending a strictly Aritotelian definition of anger entails claiming that whatever the Chinese texts I look at here say, they are not talking about anger. That seems to me too big a bullet to bite.

Glen Pettigrove takes a more flexible approach to anger than Nussbaum. He argues for meekness as a virtue: "The meek person is slow to anger and is not prone to resent others, to desire their suffering, or to take pleasure in their distress."[13] And while he does not claim that anger is never justified, since there is room in meekness to anger,

[13] "Meekness And 'Moral' Anger," *Ethics* 122, no. 2 (2012), 341-370, 343.

he believes that meekness can do the same work that anger is supposed to do with several advantages: “the ‘morally’ angry are epistemically disadvantaged and that meekness corrects for a number of the epistemic errors to which the ‘morally’ angry are prone.”[14]

While I agree that one’s anger may be criticized and that anger may be more or less virtuous, I do think Pettigrove’s stance neglects to give anger its full importance. Before I get into that, it is worth mentioning that we assess and criticize emotions along a number of distinct dimensions, and it may be helpful to distinguish these different forms of assessment: first, emotions may be criticized when they do not fit their targets. You may, for example, be open to criticism for feeling fear in the absence of danger. Unfitting emotions fail to correctly present the world. Second, an emotion may be open to criticism when it is not based on good evidence or is
unreasonable. Consider the person who suffers from hydrophobia: given that in the vast majority of situations water is not dangerous, this person’s fear is both unreasonable and unfitting. But even fitting emotions may be unreasonable. One may, for example, be terrified of tsunamis because one believes that they cause genetic mutations. In this case, one’s fear is fitting—tsunamis are very dangerous—yet the fear is unreasonable since it is not based on good reasons. Third, an emotion may be criticized because it isn’t prudent to feel. We might warn a new minister not to show anger when interacting with their blood-lusting tyrant since a tyrant might interpret their anger as a transgression and they might get themselves killed; anger in this case may be reasonable and fitting given the tyrant’s

[14] "Meekness," 361.

actions yet still criticizable as imprudent. Finally, we may condemn emotions as morally non-valuable because of the unacceptable way in which they present their targets. One may, for example, argue that *schadenfreude* is morally objectionable because it presents the pain of another person as risible. In any case, the words I will use most often are *appropriate* or *inappropriate anger* to capture all the different attitudes found in the text's portrayal of anger. By 'appropriate anger' I mean anger that is morally, ethically, or even socially sanctioned. In other words, anger that is approved of in the text. The reason I do not call it 'moral anger' like other authors have done is to instead highlight the social dynamics at play in the admissibility of anger.

Unlike Pettigrove, I do not think that other emotions can perform the epistemic, conative, and didactic work that anger does. I will go through each of these one by one. Let us compare grief and anger, where grief signals the loss of something valued. Epistemically speaking, by observing who grieves, how, about what, and how different people respond to said grief, we can learn about what that particular person holds dear, maybe to what extent, and whether the rest of the society agrees that that is an appropriate object of grief. There is no necessary moral coloring.[15] If my cat dies, I will grieve for her, but I do not expect other people to share my grief. I would also be

[15] Although there certainly can be. We can imagine a scenario where one is grieving for Hitler. We would agree that deeming his death a loss is morally compromising to say the least.

surprised if someone found my grieving morally condemning.[16] The grieving person certainly sees the loss of the valued object as bad for them, but they are not making a categorical claim à la Kant—i.e., the grieving person does not necessarily universalize her value judgments. On the other hand, when we observe the angry person, what is being condemned is what they perceive as an injustice, an injustice which would be an injustice to most anyone in a similar situation. Anger is all moral coloring. Even petty anger. If I were to get angry because you insulted my taste in music, what prompts my anger is that it is wrong for you to insult my taste. Anger rests on an assumption that the person who committed the wrong intended to do so and that therefore they are blameworthy. It is for that reason that if someone brushes against your shoulder in the street, your anger will immediately subside if they gesture that it was an accident or if they apologize. Grief can turn into anger the moment one sees the loss as having been intentionally performed. For example, if I believe that my cat was killed by my nosy neighbor. Other emotions, like contempt, do have moral coloring but they target a person's whole character, not their actions.[17] Guilt could be a contender to do the work that anger does, but the agent may feel guilty entirely apart from the patient's experience; we only know the other person is

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[16] It is certainly true that anger and grief can be very close to each other. Anne Carson writes, "Why are you full of rage? Because you are full of grief. Ask a headhunter why he cuts off human heads. He'll say that rage impels him and rage is born in grief." Anne Carson, *Grief Lessons*', (New York: New York Review Books, 2014), 7. It is also true that grieving is policed, but not for moral reasons, as much as do with notions of etiquette or political power.

[17] For a defense of contempt see Macalester Bell, *Hard Feelings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). According to Bell, "contempt is a response to perceived *badbeing* whereas hard feelings like resentment and guilt are responses to perceived *wrongdoing*." 39. Shame is also often categorized as a moral emotion, but moral content is not necessary since what shame is is a condemnation of the self by itself for some failure to measure up. See Sandra Lee Bartky, *Femininity And Domination: Studies in Phenomenology of Oppression* (Routledge, 1991), 87.

angry, however, because they have told us so. Guilt runs the risk of merely signaling traditional wrongdoings, whereas I will argue later that anger can, at least more easily, be morally innovative.

Other emotions also do not do the conative work that anger does. Nussbaum's Transition-Anger, which she describes as akin to indignation, does not have the same first-person imperative motivation that anger proper does. She describes Transition-Anger as the thought that "This is outrageous! Someone ought to do something about it!," which is very different from the first person involvement of "I have been wronged and I need to make it right!" Part of anger's power is the psychological pain that comes with it, as well as one's personal involvement in it. Nussbaum's Transition-Anger tries to have the social benefit of anger ("someone should fix this") without the actual psychological experience of anger. Pettigrove and McRae, in different ways, also lack an appreciation for the more personal and painful dimension of anger.

Lastly, since anger seeks change it performs a didactic role that cannot be easily substituted by any other emotion. That anger 'seeks change' needs some unpacking. All emotions seek change. When I am envious I want for me to have what you have, which I think I deserve and you do not. In that sense all emotions imply a wish for a change of affairs. The content of anger, as I explained, is moral content which is viewed as universal.[18] When someone gets angry at me because I stepped on them, they believe that, all things being equal, anyone that steps on them is doing them wrong. In case I was

[18] I am not here defending a claim that anger always gets it right.

unaware that stepping on people was wrong, someone getting angry with me because I stepped on them should signal that it is wrong to step on anyone. Envy does not have such universalizable content. I also want to unpack the distinction between epistemic and didactic anger: The anger of the characters of the texts I examine performs both epistemic and didactic roles. In the epistemic role, which I mentioned in (3) above, both the characters in the story and the readers acquire knowledge, at the very least information, from the anger in these stories. That is different from what I am calling didactic. For anger to be didactic there has to be intentionality.[19] The didactic role is therefore narrower than the epistemic role. The following characters intended to teach the patients of the anger a lesson in order that the wrong will not be committed again in the future.

In a nutshell, my line of defense is that anger is wrongly maligned for two main reasons. Firstly, arguments about anger rest on a faulty conception and definition of anger, as well as on the narrow definition of justice as payback. That in turn rests on an emphasis on justice as only backward-looking (i.e., to do justice is to seek payment for a past offense). I say 'emphasis' because it is well established that anger involves a double movement. Anger is both backward-looking and forward-looking. Aristotle emphasizes

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[19] The question arises as to whether that means that didactic anger is always performative in a more strict sense than other types of anger or any other emotion. In other words, can didactic anger be substituted by something like pretend anger, an anger that is not actually experienced but only performed for the purposes of motivating change in others? The problem with this question is that it presupposes that in order to be angry one must *feel* angry. A strong cognitivist about emotions would reject the question since to a cognitivist all that is necessary and sufficient for someone to be angry is that they have the right kind of propositional attitude. It does seem possible to me to make a distinction between didactic anger that arises out of genuine anger, and a performed didactic anger that perhaps foreshadows a wrong being committed in the future. Furthermore, it seems that both types of anger could be equally successful if the patient of the anger is actually convinced they are acting wrongly, or will do so soon, and they hold the agent of the anger with authority.

the latter. He describes the forward movement of anger as the pleasant part of anger and links anger to hope. The second reason anger is wrongly maligned is that its critics rely on the universal epistemic subject of traditional Western philosophy. Even Nussbaum, who breaks down her criticism of anger into different realms (an intimate realm, a middle realm, and two aspects of anger in the political realm) and addresses head on the issue of gender starts from a universal concept of anger that was based solely on the experiences of men of a particularly privileged background and cultural tradition. As I show in the following chapters, there is a big difference between how anger operates depending on the social strata one belongs to and what role one is performing. The assumption that anger is about status and payback rests solely on the anger of those in positions of extreme power and whose power stems solely from their status.

Less explicitly, anger is also often conflated with aggression, with aggression sometimes treated as an unavoidable effect of anger. As a counterexample of this tendency, the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳 (*Biographies of Exemplary Women*) explicitly makes a distinction between aggression as the result of anger and aggression as the result of fear. Many emotions (fear, jealousy, envy, etc.) may involve aggression, but this does not make aggression necessarily constitutive of those emotions. Aggression, as an amorphous mood, can be attached to any number of emotions; it is distinct and thus deserving of its own treatment apart from anger. Moods, unlike emotions, are not intentional, that is, moods do not have objects. To be afraid requires an object of fear, but to be in a proverbial "bad mood" requires no particular object or even discernible cause. Given that

aggression is not unique to anger, this dissertation asks what is it about anger (that is not aggression) that has made it so undesirable from a societal point of view in some cases.

A lurking preoccupation throughout this dissertation is whether or not anger is capable of producing what I call *moral innovation*. If anger entails that perception that one has been wronged by *x*, then such a perceived wrong can only rest on values one already holds. For example, in a predominantly patriarchal society when a woman disagrees with a man's statement about issues of abortion, he might be angry because in that patriarchal system, she is transgressing her role as a woman and thus commiting a wrong against him.[20] Under the rubric of his society, his anger is fitting, and depending on how he expresses it, even justified. It seems that anger's role might often be reduced to a kind of *tradition policing*. Can anger produce actual innovative change in these systems and traditions? If so, how does that happen? The answer lies in a bottom-up anger, which is why it is imperative that anger is not eradicated from the moral and political realm, since anger plays such an important conative and epistemic role for the self, and society at large.[21]

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[20] See Kate Manne, *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[21] I do not think that this preoccupation or the presumption that there is something like *moral innovation* commits me at this point to any metaethical view.

Introduction

It is hard to find a time when anger has not enjoyed a complicated reputation. The *Shijing*詩經, the Chinese *Classic of Poetry*, which the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry, comprising 305 poems dating from the 11th to 7th centuries BCE, is evidence of the prominent role of anger from the domestic, to the spiritual realm. These poems that would have been sung by people as they worked the fields or as part of official ceremonies in court speak of anger as a source of disharmony in the household,[1] it shows anger to be a Heavenly response to injustice,[2] and as a force for rulers to do good.[3] Anger is also famously said to be the first word found in all of western literature. The *Iliad* starts with Achilles' *'menis'* meaning 'anger' or 'wrath' before we are even introduced to him as a character or the situation, helping its reader (or listener as it would have been in ancient Greece) understand that it is the theme running through the entire epic.

The study of anger in ancient Greece is a well-established field, with several books dedicated solely to the subject. Most recently, the topic of anger has been covered with some breadth both with regard to content and disciplinary approach in the edited volume *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen.* Also, William V. Harris'

[1] For example, *Shijing* ode "Gu Feng" 谷風 (Ode 35).

[2] For example, *Shijing* ode "Jie Nan Shan" 節南山 (Ode 192).

[3] For example, *Shijing* ode "Qiao Yan" 巧言 (Ode 199).

Restraining Rage traces through a wide range of ancient Greek and Roman texts the persistent concern with the control or elimination of anger. Anger is also explored in David Konstan's *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (2006), a study of individual emotions which is an invaluable resource in Classics.

The contemporary scholarship on anger in early China is sparse.[4] The topic of the emotions is not, however, absent in scholarship.[5] There is a long running interest in the development of the meaning of the character *qing* 情, and whether its conceptually comparable to 'emotion.'[6] More recently, Curie Virág argues that "emotions became a focal point of intense philosophical debate. Early [Chinese] thinkers espoused wide-ranging views about the nature of emotions and their proper role in moral life," and yet her book is the only book dedicated to the philosophical discussion of the emotions in early China.

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[4] See Colin Lewis, "Moral Anger In Classical Confucianism," in Court D. Lewis and Gregory L. Block, eds., *The Ethics of Anger* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020), 131-154. Kwong-loi Shun, "On Anger: An Experimental Essay in Confucian Moral Psychology," forthcoming in Davd Jones & He Jinli, eds., *Zhu Xi Now: Contemporary Encounters with the Great Ultimate* (State University of New York Press).

[5] One possible reason for the general dearth of scholarship on anger in early China is the outdated but still widespread view that Chinese culture is somehow irenic and collective in contrast to the competitive and individualistic Greeks. This despite the fact that nearly all major Chinese philosophical texts explicitly mention anger and its proper expression. The incongruity between evidence and scholarship is striking. Recently there has been a growing interest in individuated emotions within Chinese philosophy, such as grief, the hard to translate *yuan* 怨 (akin to "resentment"), shame, and a few others. For grief see: Amy Olberding, "Sorrow and the Sage: Grief in the Zhuangzi," *Dao 6*, no.4 (2007), 339-359, and "The Consummation of Sorrow: An Analysis of Confucius' Grief for Yan Hui," *Philosophy East and West* 54, no.3 (2004), 279-301. For *yuan* see Winnie Sung, "The Early Confucian Worry About Yuan (Resentment)," *The Journal Of Value Inquiry* 54, no.2 (2019): 257-271. For shame see Jingyi Jenny Zhao, "Shame and Moral Education in Aristotle and Xunzi" in *Ancient Greece and China Compared* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 110-130, and Bryan W. Van Norden, "The Emotion Of Shame And The Virtue Of Righteousness In Mencius" *Dao* 2, no.1 (2002), 45-77.

[6] See: Halvor Eifring, ed., *Love and the Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); and Curie Virág, *The Emotions in Early Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 6-7.

Semantic Fields of Anger: A word is not a concept

I tried to explain to my Spanish friends and family that I was working on anger. I found myself lost for words. Am I writing an *apologia* for *'la ira*'? That is akin to 'rage' or 'wrath' (and not to be confused with the English 'ire.' Perhaps I mean I am defending '*la cólera.*' But that word suffers from the same problem.[7] In English, I tell my friends "I am angry." In Spanish, "*estoy enfadada*." However, to my bilingual family the Spanish version feels milder. If I am *enfadada* with them they want to know what is wrong, but when I am *angry* with them they want to defend themselves. Turns out that to be *enfadada* is akin to being upset, but more towards the angry than the sad of English 'upset.' There is no 1:1 equivalent.[8]

One may wonder whether we can simply assume that there is an ancient Chinese and Greek equivalent to anger. One's answer to whether or not emotions are universal will depend on one's philosophical commitments. But philosophical arguments aside, even if one were a strong social constructivist, by which I mean someone who is committed to the belief that absolutely everything is an artifice of each particular society and culture, one can compare semantic fields and concept clusters to ascertain whether or

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[7] In French, Aristotelian anger (*orgē*) is translated as *la colère*.

[8] Anger, the character from the 2015 Pixar film *Inside Out,* is called Ira in the Spanish version. However, what characterizes Anger is his irascibility. In contrast, what the political movement born the 15th of May of 2011 known as *Los Indignados* (The Indignant) wanted to highlight and register their discontent, and nothing else–they were still met with brutal police force, and called anti-system.

not each culture has conceptualized the world similarly enough for one to claim that both societies share a concept.[9]

The present section is a brief and comparative historical overview of the semantic fields of ‘‘anger’’ in Early China and Ancient Greece.[10] For the purposes of this dissertation I have restricted myself the majority of the time to passages where words in these semantic fields appeared. This approach is in some respects unnatural since we do not tend to announce our emotions by name. We tend to show rather than tell what our emotional state is. However, this approach avoids the pitfall of bringing into these texts assumptions about what anger looks like. For example, one may make the mistake of assuming that because there is a violent scene, anger is behind it. As I mentioned above, violence may be the result of many things, including fear. A conservative approach, such as mine, is bound to miss some literary richness. For that reason, I see this as merely part of the beginning of the study of anger.

The following is intended to be schematic, since to describe it in every detail is not necessary for the purposes of this study. Particularly in the Chinese case, the results of this study are, of course, qualified by the limited amount of material that it takes into

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[9] A semantic field refers to a consistent association of a group of words over a long period of time and their consistent distinction from other words of different usage.

[10] The concept of emotion also has its difficulties. For the concept of emotion (*pathos*) in Greece see Konstan, *Emotions*, 3-40. For China see footnote 6 above. Throughout the dissertation I will use the term ‘emotion’ instead of ‘feelings’, ‘passions’ or ‘affects.’ In contemporary philosophy, ‘emotion’ more readily accommodates the cognitive and somatic components than other terms. In both the Chinese and Greek texts anger is a very cognitively sophisticated emotion.

consideration.[11] Further, the semantic landscape referred to here is a literary one, and therefore some distance removed from everyday semantics.

China

The usage of the character *nu* 怒 is fairly consistent. Warring States Period (471-221 BCE) texts and texts from the Han dynasty use the graph *nu* 怒 in arguably two district senses: (1) an attitudinal reaction to a perceived wrong with dispositional force; (2) a hopeful propeling/guiding force for action (akin to certain uses of *thumos* in Classical Greek). The first sense closely matches how the word 'anger' is used in English. It leaves ambiguous the intensity of the emotion, and its valence is determined by the context. A clear example of the second sense is found in the beginning lines of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 where *nu* is used to talk about the Peng bird's flight and where it clearly does not mean anger.[12] A more ambiguous passage is found in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳 or *Biographies of Exemplary Women*:

> 逐女對曰：「昔者齊桓公尊九九之人，而有道之士歸之。越王敬螳蜋之怒，而勇士死之。葉公好龍，而龍為暴下。物之所徵，固不須頊。」

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[11] It is based on the *Shijing*, the *Lunyu*, the *Mencius*, the *Mozi* 墨子, the *Xunzi* 荀子, the *Zhuangzi*, and the *Lienüzhuan*. I hope to be able to pursue this semantic analysis further in the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子, the *Sunzi Bingfa* 孫子兵法, the *Shiji* 史記, and the *Huangdi Neijing* 黃帝內經, as well as in excavated texts.

[12] 鵬之背，不知其幾千里也；怒而飛，其翼若垂天之雲。"When he rouses himself and soars into the air, his wings are like clouds draped across the heavens" (ICS Zhuangzi: 1/1/4). Translation indebted to Brook Ziporyn, *Zhuangzi: The Complete Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2020), 3.

> The king said, "How shall I employ him?" The outcast maid replied, "Formerly, Duke Huan of Qi honored a mathematician and thereby gained the allegiance of many accomplished officers. When the King of Yue honored the courage of a praying mantis, brave officers were soon willing to die for him.[13]

Although *nu* is by far the most predominant graph, it forms part of a broader semantic field of words: *fen* 忿 corresponds to a disposition towards aggressiveness and violence, and unlike *nu* its connotations are always neutral or negative. It is akin to 'ferociousness' in English and it often denotes the behavior of predatory animals. However, even in their case it corresponds to a behavior that is expressed as the result of dissatisfaction or perceived wrong. *Yun* 慍 denotes a negative feeling that ranges from something akin to indignation, an exclamatory dissatisfaction, pure dislike or hatred. It is most often of negative valence (for example in the *Shijing* and the *Lunyu* 論語) although it is not associated with any particular action or behavior. Another graph in the semantic field of anger is *fen* 憤, also often translated as 'indignation,' although it is extremely rare in pre-Qin texts where it seems to mean something akin to 'eagerness.' Another rare graph is *hui* 恚 which refers to intense rage or wrath. Mozi uses it to delegitimize Confucius. The graph *ji* 疾 can be used to denote a particular kind of anger which is always bad for the agent, although not in a way that characterized the agent as morally lacking. For example, in the *Mencius* 孟子 it is used to talk about the self-regarding anger

[13] *Lienüzhuan* (LNZ) 6.12; Unless otherwise noted, citations from the LNZ are from *Lienüzhuan huibian*, volume 4. LNZ translations are indebted to Anne Behnke Kinney, *Exemplary Women of Early China The Lienüzhuan of Liu Xiang*, (Columbia University Press, 2014), often modified, 128-29.

of a king, but in the *Shijing* it is to show the effect that tyranny has on Heaven (*tian*, 天). One way to understand it is to think of the English phrase, “it sickens me.” It is broader than anger but what is important is that it highlights the importance of getting rid of the feeling for the health of the agent.

Yuan 怨, although often translated as ‘anger,’ should be considered to refer to a separate emotion, perhaps a cousin of *nu*.[14] The situations in which it appears, and the normative attitudes towards it are different enough to warrant considering it a different emotion; a better translation could be ‘bitterness,’ or *‘ressentiment’* to capture the meaning that it is a more passive, backward looking attitude of not having what one deserves. Or in other words, it implies an inability to act directly against the perceived injustice or unfairness of the situation.

Greece

The Greek semantic field of anger has been recently studied by a number of people.[15] There are notable differences between the Homeric epics and works from the Classical period.

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[14] For a discussion of yuan in Confucian sources see: Michael D. K. Ing, "Born Of Resentment: *Yuan* 怨 In Early Confucian Thought," *Dao* 15, no.1 (2016): 19-33; Eric S. Nelson, "Recognition And Resentment In The Confucian Analects," *Journal Of Chinese Philosophy* 40, no.2 (2013): 287-306; Sung, "Yuan," *The Journal Of Value Inquiry* 54, no.2 (2019): 257-271.

[15] As William V. Harris also notes, there is no single publication that can be referred to for any kind of history of the Greek semantic landscape of anger. *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 50 n.1.

Homeric Anger-Terms

In "Ethics, ethology, terminology: Iliadic anger and the cross-cultural study of emotion," Douglas L. Cairns examines the terminology, ethics, and nonverbal expression of anger in the *Iliad*.[16] The semantic field of anger in the *Iliad* showcases two main characteristics: 1) Homeric Greek possesses a number of terms which can be used in "anger" contexts but also cover other forms of emotional arousal or expression; and 2) in contrast with later classical Greek (in which the main terms for anger are *orgē* and *thumos*), Homeric Greek presents a multiplicity of terms which are routinely translated as forms or aspects of anger. Homeric Greek possesses a number of terms which seem to me very clearly to refer to the experience of some form of anger, namely *cholos*, *chōesthai*, *kotos*, *skuzesthai*, and *nemesis*.[17] *Cholos* (literary 'bile') is the most common of these. It is typically elicited by some form of slight or affront; it is associated with the *thumos*, the *ētor* (*Il*. 14.367), or the *kēr* (16.585; 21.136); it is a painful affect, which seems to "seize," "come/fall upon," or "enter" one; it craves satisfaction through retaliation (4.178) and is expected normally to lead to a vigorous response (2.195, 241–2). It can burst out in indignant speech, insults, or threats, but also in violent retaliation, including killing the offender. Its physical symptoms, "aura," and imagery include the swelling of the chest (or

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[16] "Ethics, ethology, terminology: Iliadic anger and the cross-cultural study of emotion," in Susanna Braund and Glenn W. Most, *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 11-49.

[17] Harris also includes the verb *ochthein*, although he says it fails to correspond exactly with "to be angry." Instead, most of the time it means something like "distressed." *Restraining Rage*, 52 no.8.

"heart," *kradiē*) and "being full of *menos*;"[18] it is a fire that must be extinguished (9.678), a disease that must be healed by retaliation (4.36), or an appetite that must be satiated (4.35–6). "Bitter *cholos*" is the response of a lion who has lost his cubs (18.318–22), but it is also a passion "sweeter than honey," (18.109).[19]

Cairns shows that the prototypical scenario of *cholos* is identical to that which Aristotle establishes for *orgē* and that which Lakoff and Kövecses establish for anger in American English;[20] the concept of *cholos*, moreover, is constructed in terms which bear the closest comparison with English anger–its basic ontological metaphor (*cholos* is an entity) is identical; the existence of this entity is conceived of as presence; it is experienced as a force or a fluid within a pressurized container; it is a fire, a beast, an opponent with whom one can struggle, and a sickness or burden of which one wishes to be relieved. Even though the folk physiology on which it is based is in many specific details different from our own, fundamentally, Homeric *cholos* labels the same concept as English anger, the correspondences are systematic and not accidental.[21]

In terms of the valorization of anger, Cairns explains *cholos* can be deprecated as excessive, unhelpful, or inappropriate,[22] but also seen as a legitimate response to an

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[18] *Menos* is not anger, although it can be when it has been specified as such elsewhere in the context. *Menos* can be the force which drives a warrior to battle; the verb *meneainein* may mean earnest desire or striving. Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 22.

[19] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 24-25.

[20] See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 18; Zoltán Kovecses, *Metaphor And Emotion: Language, Culture And Body In Human Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[21] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 26.

[22] *Il*. 6.626; 10.107; 16.206; 18.107-10, 119; 20.251.

affront (9.523), and even criticized as insufficient (2.241-2). To Cairns this shows that in Homer the rationality of *cholos* is thus recognized, although it can evade the control of reason (24.584-5). There is also a conative aspect to *cholos* as well as painful symptoms and specific physiological changes.[23]

Kotos is the long-term dispositional form of anger:

> κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς ὅτε χώσεται ἀνδρὶ χέρηϊ:
> εἴ περ γάρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ,
> ἀλλά τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον, ὄφρα τελέσσῃ,
> ἐν στήθεσσιν ἑοῖσι:
> A prince is stronger when he *chōesthai* with an inferior man;
> for even if he digest his *cholos* at the time, he retains *kotos* in his breast in
> the future, until he brings it to fruition. (*Il*. 1.80-3)

For Cairns, *kotos* is thus what remains when the occurrent emotion of anger becomes dispositional; like occurrent anger, it exhibits a strong desire for retaliation.[24]

Mēnis is of course a key term in the *Iliad*. *Kotos* and *mēnis* have no difference in terms of their reference: like *cholos* and *chōesthai* it responds to a perceived offense, to another individual's failure to accord *timē* (honor). Cairns points out that although it is frequently a response of the gods, and thus people have attempted to deem it "divine wrath," that fails to explain all the mortals that are said to display it (by Achilles; by Agamemnon, e.g. 1.247; by Aeneas at Priam, e.g. 13.460; and in the Odyssey by

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[23] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 26.

[24] He further points out that this dispositional aspect of *kotos* is apparent in other passages, and should probably be assumed in others. Thus in 5.177–8 "*kotos* is presumably to be regarded as the long-term consequence of an offense which originally aroused occurrent *mēnis*, and at 16.386 *kotos* is probably the dispositional basis for the immediate expression of anger in *chalepainein*." Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 31.

Telemachos, e.g. 16.377; and by a beggar, even if he is a hero in disguise, e.g. 17.14). The explanation is often that the noun is never used for mortals, only the verb form *mēniein*. However, Cairns points out that the verb is denominative, that is to say, to possess *mēnis*.[25] Therefore the application of the noun to gods and Achilles is presumably accidental, and "the distribution of the verb provides legitimate evidence for the concept as a whole."[26] Cairns concludes that *mēnis* and *cholos* co-occur and may be used apparently interchangeably to designate the same response. All *mēnis* is *cholos* and therefore it is without a question a form of anger.[27]

Lastly, a term that is particularly important in the Odyssey is *nemesis*. Although *nemesis* bears some resemblance to *mēnis*, *cholos*, *skuzesthai*, *chōesthai*, and *kotos* in that they are all the response of the victim/affected party or their partisan, Cairns argues, *nemesis* is on occasion the response of a bystander, even a disinterested one. In such cases *nemesis* is a response to an action or state of affairs one deems inappropriate by society's general standards of what's honorable, as opposed to something which directly wrongs one.[28] Moreover, *nemesis* "characterizes the response of the offended party as the

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[25] *Il*. 5.177-8.

[26] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 32.

[27] Further, he says that if there is a difference it is one of connotation but that such a conclusion cannot be drawn from the Iliadic data alone without being circular: "The preponderance of "supernatural" applications, in Homer and after, lends some weight to the view that there is something about *mēnis* that makes it particularly appropriate as a term for divine anger, but a specific restriction to "divine anger" is clearly out of the question: I hazard a guess that it is the gravity and intensity of *mēnis* that makes it suitable as a term both for divine wrath and for human anger which exceeds the norm in those two respects." Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 31-2. Cf. Leonard Charles Muellner, *The Anger Of Achilles: Mēnis In Greek Epic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press.Muellner, 1996); Harris, Restraining Rage, 51.

[28] For example, in 6.351 *nemesis* is used as a general response to Paris's shortcomings. See Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 33 no.100 for more examples.

sort of response that others, in accordance with the general norms of society, would endorse."[29] In other words, *nemesis* is a justified anger. It can also be reflexive, as in the case of Glaucus in 16.544-7. Lastly, due to its connection with justification Cairns points out that "*nemesis* is the Homeric anger-term which above all lends itself to universalization."[30]

Although I agree with Cairns that *nemesis* belongs to the semantic field of anger, I distinguish it from anger-proper. *Nemesis* is akin to indignation. It differs from anger in at least one key respect: it does not involve the desire to act, to take things into one's own hands. Instead, what characterizes *nemesis* is its communicative aspect. For example, Stéphane Hessel chose to title his work against political and social indifference *Indignez Vous!* (translated into English as *Time for Outrage!*).[31] While we can argue that the point of noticing injustice is to do something about it, the point of indignation is to register, and communicate one's disapproval. Its goal is to prevent someone from doing or continuing to do something. The countrywide protests in Spain in 2011 called themselves "*Los Indignados*" as they took over public squares across the country. Their protest was

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[29] Although Cairns likens *nemesis*, if it retains the implicit appeals to the standards that others can be expected to endorse, to Adam Smith's "resentment" which is endorsed by the "impartial spectator," I fail to see how they are similar. The approval of Smith's "impartial spectator" is the result of Smith's understanding of sympathy, the emphasis is not on some common understanding of society's rules. There is nothing about Smith's understanding of resentment that incorporates what nemesis arguably does. Smith's resentment seems more akin to Joseph Butler's understanding of resentment which is a response to wrongdoing (as distinct from Nietzche's *ressentiment*). Perhaps Cairns's point is simply that *nemesis* presupposes the "sympathy" of others as justification. Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 34.

[30] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 36.

[31] Stéphane Hessel (20 October 1917 – 26 February 2013) was a French diplomat who participated in the French resistance at the end of WWII. Stéphane Hessel, Sylvie Crossman, and Jean-Pierre Barou, *Indignez-Vous!* (Montpellier: Indigène éd., 2013).

characterized by setting up camp in politically meaningful spaces, main city public squares, to demonstrate discontent. Their discontent had reached such heights that they were willing to live in the street until *the government* did something about it. So certainly indignation does something by communicating something, but it generally stops there. It is then up to someone else to do something. At least in theory, all that we need is for citizens to become aware of injustice, and communicate it by voting against it. Indignation can therefore be seen to be particularly useful in representative democracies. *Nemesis* is very similar. I show in Chapters V and VI that it is for the very reason that it does not involve a desire to take things into one's own hands that *nemesis* tends to be an emotion displayed by those who are not in an immediate position of power, such as members of an agora. It is also an emotion women and young adults, like Telemachus, display.[32]

Classical Period

By the fifth century *orgē* and *thumos* had largely replaced Homeric terminology, although not in all poetic contexts.[33] According to Harris the easiest texts in which orgē means anger are fragments of Sappho, and the most clear instances appear in Theognis and Pindar.[34]

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[32] For Aristotle, *nemesis* is not a type of anger but rather the mean between envy (*phthonou*) and spite (*epichairekakias*). See *NE* 1108a35-b6.

[33] *Orgē*, according to Harris, appears to have originally meant something like "temperament" or "disposition." They also sometimes retained that meaning. Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 52 no.11.

[34] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 52-53.

In Aristotle, *orgē* and *thumos* are the predominant term for anger.[35] Interestingly, Cairns highlights that Homeric *cholos* appears to be different from Aristotelian *orgē* in one respect: *Cholos* can be the result of losing in competition and losing a comrade in battle. There is an apparent discrepancy between such cases and Aristotle's definition of anger in terms of the perception of unwarranted offense. Cairns solves it by drawing a distinction between a prototypical definition and instances of family resemblance (following Wittgenstein) as opposed to the conclusion that Aristotle and Homer must be talking about different things.[36]

Thumos does not only denote anger, in fact its relation to anger is complicated. *Thumos* refers to one's 'spirit.' It is therefore used also to denote 'spiritedness,' it is associated with courage. The Homeric heroes are characterized as "high-hearted," or possessing a great *thumos*. It is a force that drives action. The way Aristotle uses *thumos* with respect to anger is not very different from its Homeric counterpart. Cairns explains that "[*t*]*humos* in the *Iliad* is never anger as such, always the general psychic force under whose head (along with other emotions) belongs; on occasion, however, and application of *thumos* can amount to a reference to anger (as at 1.192, where ceasing one's cholos and restraining one's thumos are the same event). *Thumos* is also important in the phenomenology of *Iliadic* anger as the seat of the affect described by many of the particular anger-terms (*cholos*, e.g. 9.436; *chōesthai*, e.g. 1.243-4; *nemesis*, e.g.

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[35] I discuss Aristotelian *orgē* in more detail in Chapter VI.

[36] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 27.

2.223).”[37] In Aristotle, *thumos* often appears close to *orgē*. Therefore, although it at times means anger, it highlights the conative force of anger.

Barbara Koziak argues against an understanding of thumos that hovers between the broad concept, spiritedness, and the narrow concept, anger.[38] For example, when Plato calls a third part of the soul “*thumos*,” it is difficult to see how the word could mean only anger or even spiritness for then “where in the soul do love, joy, or sorrow occur?”[39] Koziak explains that such a narrow understanding of thumos has led to the narrow conceptualization of thumos as the fundamental political impulse, but as one that is characterized only as a desire for recognition, to protect one’s family and property, with justice, and manliness.[40] Instead, Koziak argues that *thumos* “is one formulation of the place of emotion in the soul that the ancient Greeks envisioned.” She argues that in Homer thumos as a quasi-bodily organ is the seat of a variety of emotions including grief and love. She argues for three diverse uses of *thumos*: (1) *thumos* as anger; (2) the aggressive martial *thumos*; and (3) *thumos* as the general capacity for emotion. The latter constitutes an innovation over the formulations in the Homeric epics and Plato’s *Republic*.[41]

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[37] Cairns, “Ethics, ethology, terminology,” 21.

[38] *Retrieving Political Emotion* (Pennsylvania State University, 2000), 32.

[39] *Ibis*.

[40] She identifies a history of *thumos* in political philosophy with the group of scholars influenced by the writings of Leo Strauss on classical political philosophy. *Retrieving Political Emotion*, 32-33.

[41] *Retrieving Political Emotion,* 34.

A Brief Taxonomy of Anger

Throughout the dissertation I distinguish between different categories and types of anger which reveal the prevailing issues in the texts. The following list is certainly neither definitive, nor are the relationships between categories and types self-evident. They do offer a make-shift cartography. They also obscure what at first might have seemed self-evident. For example, what does it mean to say anger is a personal emotion?[42]

1. Rhetorical Anger

I use the phrase 'rhetorical anger' to capture ways in which anger is used. Often the word 'anger' appears in a text but it is not in fact talking about anger. Rather, anger is standing for something else. I can only speculate as to why they used anger in these ways. I presume it has to do with their idea of their imagined audience given that these texts aim at convincing us of certain things. However, my point is not that these passages tell us nothing about anger. Rather, my point is that we can still learn something about what anger was by understanding how it was used as a rhetorical device.

The most prevalent examples are:

a. Anger as a metonymy

Metonymy is a specific type of literary device which features anger. For example, in the *Xunzi* anger stands for all emotions. In Aristotle, it sometimes represents not just all

[42] For an illuminating contemporary taxonomy of five varieties of anger see Cherry, *A Case for Rage*, 16-27.

emotions but for the non-rational aspect of the soul. Anger is merely the representative for emotions or the non-rational, presumably because it is assumed to be more visible. For example, the *Zhuangzi* uses anger as a metonymy to argue against emotions because it would be more difficult to persuade someone that emotions like joy are detrimental.[43]

b. Delegitimizing anger

Sometimes all that one needs to say in order to discredit someone is to accuse them of being angry. This phenomenon also indicates something about anger's status in that text, after all if the text instead used joy to discredit someone it would showcase very different values. For example, if women could be delegitimized de facto by being charged with appearing happy.[44] What would the criticism be then? Most often, anger is presumed to delegitimize someone because of what it implies about said person. In the case of the *Mozi*, for example, what makes you angry matters. If you preach caring about social inequality but then you only appear to become angry at people walking over your beautiful lawn, one may question your true values. All of this is related to but different from your anger being seen as illegitimate. The emphasis of delegitimizing anger is what it says about the agent of the anger, not about the anger itself.

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[43] Even today when philosophers criticize thinkers who argue against emotion their arguments seldom start by saying that a life without anger is not a human life. They argue instead about a life without joy, or sorrow.

[44] Of course, we often criticize someone for being too happy at inappropriate times. Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* predicts criticisms that she was not sad enough during Agamemnon's absence.

2. Self-regarding versus Other-regarding Anger

Two types of anger that I have already briefly discussed in the Prolegomena are self-regarding, and other-regarding anger. Self-regarding anger is characterized by violence, whether verbal or physical, following a perceived slight. Other-regarding anger, on the other hand, is seldom characterized by violence, although it can, and is the result of a broad wrongdoing that violates the shared values of a community. For example, if a king feels slighted and feels the urge to kill the offender, he is experiencing self-regarding anger. On the other hand, if a king is angered by a neighboring king mistreating their own people and is urged to go to war against them, it is other-regarding anger. To some extent we can think of other-regarding anger as being angry on someone else's behalf.

These two opposing categories have a lot of explanatory power in the Chinese texts considered in the following chapters (except the *Zhuangzi*). The debates surrounding anger's place in our socio-political landscapes can be very fruitfully mapped out via this simple distinction.[45] However, they are not particularly helpful when it comes to male anger in Greek texts. In the Chinese texts, self-regarding anger is rarely appropriate. For example, in the *Lienüzhuan* male self-regarding anger is neither praised nor problematized. In the Greek texts, self-regarding anger is a societal requirement.[46] It

[45] I am using the term 'socio-political' to encompass what we may now call ethical, moral, and political concerns. In the Chinese texts the moral, ethical, and political are, at least for our purposes, one and the same. Except perhaps in the *Zhuangzi*.

[46] I explore this in Chapter Four in particular. The functions of anger in the Greek texts obscures what we may have wanted to call 'personal' anger. Philosophically speaking the meaning of 'personal' is not self-evident even today.

is equally important to be angry on one's own behalf, as it is to be angry on behalf of one's dependents.

a. Didactic anger

In the Chinese texts, one function of anger is didactic anger. Often the anger of the agent is used to teach a lesson to the patient of the anger. Didactic anger relies on the apparent motivation of the patient to avoid the anger of the agent. For example, Mozi uses his own anger to motivate a disciple. It also relies on anger's seemingly unique ability to track normative values. For example, the anger of a caring mother represents a lesson aimed at the well-being of her child but also the community as a whole. Although in theory there appears to be nothing preventing didactic anger from being a type of self-regarding anger, in the examples it never is. That is because in order for it to be didactic it has to be deemed a worthy generalizable lesson aimed at the good of the community. Because self-regarding anger is about status and one's ego it is very limited in its scope.

b. Nemesis

The function of *nemesis* is comparable to other-regarding anger in the Chinese texts, bearing in mind that *nemesis* is a cousin of anger-proper, akin to indignation. It is not only *not* self-regarding, but it often serves a similar function to didactic anger. There is one important distinction between the two. *Nemesis* relies on the patient immediately knowing that she has breached some type of norm, even if she had never been consciously aware of said norm. In that sense, nemesis is an emotion that polices tradition whereas didactic anger can be morally innovative for the patient.

3. Political anger

Political anger is as hard to define as politics. However, Aristotle's understanding of political virtue (in contrast with personal virtue) can help us get our bearings. For Aristotle political virtue aims at the preservation and safety of the community. Similarly, in the Homeric texts I argue that, to a significant extent, what curbs honor-based anger, a type of self-regarding anger, is the political, sometimes in the guise of political anger. Whereas self-regarding anger polices the honor-based ethics of reciprocity, political anger polices order, or in Hobbian terms it prevents mayhem.[47] As Aristotle also points out, people do not respond to reason and arguments hence, political anger resorts to more than its propositional content. Political anger is not simply anger that is about politics, it is also related to authority, power, legitimacy, force, and fear. Political anger, thus, is also not limited to the political decision making of the agent, by signaling to its agent something political. The role of political anger is multi-faceted and complex.

4. Medicalized anger

Anger appears in some of the Chinese texts as something that is bad for the agent at the physical level. It is usually denoted by the graph *ji* 疾. This graph is most commonly used to refer to a literal 'illness' or 'disease.' In *Mencius* 1A7, it is also used to refer to the anger of the people when their lives are not as good as they would be if they had a better ruler. It has negative connotations insofar as it is bad for the entity who

[47] It would be worth exploring in terms of "the liberalism of fear" of Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 55.

is afflicted, although it is positive in that it is a driving force for goodness. This is also related to my argument in the Prolegomena that part of what makes anger conatively powerful is the urge to return to a 'healthy' state. While I do not delve into this type of anger, I do make note of it when it seems to appear. It would be worth exploring further in medical texts, and the *Zhuangzi.*[48]

Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation adopts a predominantly author-based (rather than a topic based) approach, for various reasons. We may of course talk loosely of what 'the Greeks' or 'the Romans' thought on this or that subject at this or that time, and there is perhaps no harm in our talking in this fashion, as a way of picking out certain (apparently) widely-shared ideas or patterns of thinking. Both 'thought' and 'theory', however, require individuals to do the thinking. At the level of theory, our concern must inevitably be with the specific theses and arguments advanced by particular individuals, which are in principle as likely to cut across as to support contemporary thought and practice; and the reflections of other writers - poets, historians and others–whom we may class as 'non-philosophical' (though the boundaries between categories here are notoriously permeable) are often themselves highly distinctive and individual. Again, different genres may offer different opportunities for, and invite different modes of, reflection: the thought of a poet like Hesiod, or Sophocles, is quite different in quality and feel from that of a Herodotus or a Thucydides.

[48] For medicalized anger in Greek and Roman texts see Harris, *Restraining Rage,* Part Four.

A breakdown of the chapters is as follows:

Chapters One, Two, and Three turn to specific Chinese sources. Chapter One focuses on the *Mozi,* a key philosophical work written by a major social and political thinker of the fifth century B.C.E by the same name, and *Mencius,* a book attributed to a disciple of Confucius, starting from their shared treatment of anger as a tool for establishing social and moral harmony. For Mozi, anger plays two crucial roles: (1) it is epistemically invaluable given that it tracks its agent's values; (2) it performs a didactic function. Second is an analysis of anger in Mencius, for whom anger is a natural disposition we cannot eradicate and which must therefore be managed depending on the circumstances. He distinguishes between two realms: (1) anger in politics and war; (2) anger in the family. Both thinkers limit appropriate anger to *other-regarding* anger. Part of the difference between Mozi and Mencius hinges on their respective views of human nature and where anger fits into that.

Chapter Two turns from anger in the socio-political realm in Mozi and Mencius to a consideration of anger and human nature in Xunzi and Zhuangzi. Xunzi famous criticizes Zhuangzi thus: "Zhuangzi was blinded by nature and did not understand humans" (莊子蔽於天而不知人). Xunzi reads Zhuangzi as endorsing a king of sagely equipoise in which we effortlessly flow through emotional changes without fixating on them and thereby entering into conflict with an indifferent world. For Xunzi, such unfeeling equipoise is dubious at best and disastrously misunderstands human nature at worst. Xunzi's emphasis on ritual cultivation begins from a recognition that human anger

is inescapable and must be dealt with. Zhuangzi on the other hand emphasizes what many scholars describe as a kind of therapeutic skepticism aimed at loosening our judgments about the world. This relates to anger in that for Zhuangzi anger is the natural result of a judgment. Strongly held beliefs, judgments, and therefore anger (and other emotions) go contrary to nature which is in a state of change. Going against nature is not only bad for oneself in terms of health but also causes unnecessary strife between people. The *Zhuangzi*'s authors so limit the space for appropriate anger that the anger might not even be recognizable as such. Xunzi approaches the constraints of appropriate anger from the dual perspective of rulers and ministers: a ruler's anger inspires awe in his subjects, and an effective minister must restrain his anger in order to remonstrate effectively with his ruler. There are two rhetorical problems: (1) both texts have a general negative stance regarding emotions, which tends to subsume anger, often using anger as a catchall for all emotions; (2) when anger is appropriate or valuable, it often goes by another name entirely.

Chapter Three turns to the *Lienüzhuan*, or *Biographies of Exemplary Women*, which adds the dimension of gender to the running topics of sociopolitics and human nature. This chapter explores the gendered representations of anger in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳 or Biographies of Exemplary Women, attributed to Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE). I focus on the two most important themes: (1) gendered differences in the didactic role of anger; and (2) women's strategies against the anger of others. I end with a discussion of

anger and female vice. In conclusion, the gendered representations of anger in the LNZ provides an important alternative to views of anger as motivated by the desire for payback and status. The LNZ, like other pre-Qin texts, understands anger very differently, and focuses on other-regarding anger, based on perceptions of wrongdoing and injustice. The LNZ also provides an important focus on the role of didactic anger by women and others.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six draw on the Greek materials. Chapter Four begins with the different guises of *political* anger in the Homeric epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The dynamics of anger in the *Iliad* have been difficult to pin down. With most scholars claiming that they are a mix of personal, ethical, moral, and social dynamics bound in some way by Homeric honor. Anger in the Odyssey has been ignored, despite making key appearances. I argue that anger in Homer is predominantly political. I begin by explaining what political anger is and what the political is in a Homeric context. I then focus on the debate between Agamemnon and Achilles, and how Agamemnon and Achilles show two types of political anger. Lastly, I show the development of political anger in Telemachus.

Chapter Five reintroduces issues of gender through readings of Aeschlylus's *Oresteian Trilogy*. Female anger in Greek texts has received little attention largely due to the fact that examples are hard to find. For that reason this chapter explores female alternatives to anger: how are female characters represented in situations where their male counterparts would have been expected to show anger? It begins with a brief

account of female *nemesis*, and how it is used. Second is a close examination of Penelope's alternatives to anger in the *Odyssey*. Third is an analysis of Clytemnestra's in the *Oresteia*.

Chapter Six returns to socio-political theories of human emotion, this time in Aristotle. Aristotle's writings provide a largely systematic account of anger with regards to what I am calling personal and political virtue. The aim of personal virtue is eudaimonia whereas the aim of political virtue is the safety of the community. Previous scholarship focuses on how anger is an element of personal virtue but the role of anger in political virtue has largely been ignored. My contribution is to argue that anger in terms of political emotion is instrumental for political stability, but not primarily because of its conative role for citizens. According to Aristotle, the burden of whether anger is politically virtuous does not fall on the citizen. Instead, Aristotle emphasizes the epistemic value of anger for anyone who studies political science and, most crucially, for rulers. Aristotle's solution to the anger of citizens is not to crush it, rather for rulers not to trigger that anger through their actions to begin with. In other words, anger is only an issue if the ruler is incompetent.

The Conclusion chapter draws together the threads of the previous chapters into a more direct comparison of China and Greece. A major similarity that the chosen Chinese and Greek texts show is the link between the perceived status of the agent of anger and the legitimacy of their anger. This is important because it shows how often negative views about anger are the result of delegitimizing rhetoric and not about the actual moral

appropriateness of the anger. There are however some major differences between the Chinese and the Greek texts, one of them being that the Chinese texts do not tend to single out anger but tend to show a concern towards all extreme emotions using anger as the paradigm. Another important difference is that at last in the *Record of Exemplary Women,* some women can show legitimate anger which is not the case in any of the Greek texts. It ends with further questions to explore.

Chapter I

Encourage the Thoroughbred Horse:
Anger and the Attainment of Goodness (善) in Mozi and Mencius

王赫斯怒，爰整其旅，以遏徂莒，以篤周祜，以對于天下。

The King blazed with anger, and marshaled his troops, to stop the advance to Chu,
to deepen the fortune of Zhou, with the approval of the Empire.

–*Shijing* 詩經, Ode 241

Abstract

This chapter articulates the socio-political theories of anger from the ancient Chinese philosophers Mozi and Mencius with particular attention to the role of anger in building harmonious polities. It begins with Mozi focusing first on the question of whether given his seemingly negative attitudes towards emotion there is still room for anger. For Mozi, anger plays two crucial roles: (1) it is epistemically invaluable given that it tracks its agent's values; (2) it performs a didactic function. Second is an analysis of anger in Mencius, for whom anger is a natural disposition we cannot eradicate and which must therefore be managed depending on the circumstances. He distinguishes between two realms: (1) anger in politics and war; (2) anger in the family. Both thinkers limit appropriate anger to *other-regarding* anger.

Introduction

Despite the *Mozi* 墨子 and the *Mencius* 孟子 traditionally being seen to belong to two competing schools of thought, they both see anger as a tool used by rulers and

teachers to promote social harmony in comparable ways.[1] These texts highlight the conative and didactic value of anger: anger motivates the agent of the anger to act towards change, hence it is conative; furthermore, anger can be intentionally used by the agent to enlighten and motivate the patient of the anger to produce the particular change she is invested in.[2] However, this does not mean that they accept anger wholesale.

Anger can lead to different kinds of violence, whether that is simply the verbal correcting of a teacher, or the drawing of a sword, or scheming to end an entire state. Both texts warn us of the dangers that come with *self-regarding anger*: one that shows that the agent of the anger is not truly concerned with benevolence (*ren* 仁) and righteousness (*yi* 義).[3]

They both think of anger as a particularly sincere emotion, one that we do not have that much control over in terms of feeling it and expressing it, and for that reason it is an emotion that can show a person's true colors thus having true epistemic value.[4] It is

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[1] To eponymous texts attributed to two pre-Qin thinkers (403-221 BCE). Mozi is seen as the founder of the Mohist school of thought and the views ascribed to him come to us from the text the *Mozi*. Mencius, on the other hand, is seen as a follower of Confucius, and the views ascribed to him come to us in the form of the *Mencius*, a collection of dialogues. For ease I will often talk about what Mozi and Mencius thought, although I am referring to the texts bearing their names. For a discussion of the Mozi as a text see Ian Johnston, *Mozi: A Complete Translation* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), xxv-xxxiiv. For a general discussion of the *Mozi* see A.C. Graham, "A Radical Reaction: Mo-tzu," in *Disputers of the Tao* (La Salle: Open Court, 1989), 33-52.

[2] The change need not necessarily be morally innovative, it can also involve motivating someone to adopt traditional values which of course do not need to be bad.

[3] For a discussion of benevolence in Mencius see Richard King, "Ren in the Analects: Skeptical Prolegomena," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39, no.1 (2012), 89-105; for a discussion of righteousness see Bryan Van Norden, "The Emotion of Shame and the Virtue of Righteousness in Mencius," *Dao* 1, no.2 (2002), 45-77.

[4] By "epistemic value" I mean that it makes a generalizable contribution to knowledge.

not that they think other emotions are not sincere, but rather that due to anger's moral coloring, it shows what the agent of the anger is really about and thus it can make plain whether someone is actually virtuous, or not.

However, because both base their practical stances towards anger on their understanding of human psychology and human motivation, as well as their unique socio-political views more generally, the kind of anger that they see a use for differs. Mozi advocates for an impartial kind of anger that is at the service of benevolence and righteousness, something that anger can readily do since it aims at moral goodness. Mencius is not as troubled by partiality: it is acceptable to take things personally insofar as the focus of the anger is not only on oneself but that it seeks to make the situation better for everyone.

Mencius's stand toward anger is not too surprising given that his project is to extend and cultivate what is already in us and therefore he ought to have a way of addressing everyday anger. Mozi's stand, on the other hand, is much more telling given his extreme anti-emotion philosophy. Despite his criticism of any kind of partiality, there is something about anger which he wants to preserve which implies that what anger does is not easily replaceable. Mencius takes a generally positive stance towards emotions: they are a necessary part of ethical conduct. Emotions are both (i) constitutive of good action and (ii) the sprouts that spur one to moral deliberation in the first place. A positive stance towards emotions generally does not, however, clarify the role of anger specifically, especially given the number of philosophers who value emotions but

condemn anger. There are, after all, plenty of thinkers who believe emotion to be an essential part of the moral landscape but would still single out anger, and related emotions, as detrimental.[5] We can divide views on the role of emotions in moral decision making into three camps: (1) emotions are necessary; (2) emotions are unnecessary but not bad; (3) emotions are detrimental. Mencius belongs in the first camp with regards to the emotions and I argue that he sees a particular kind of anger as necessary, what I am calling "other-regarding anger." When Mencius criticizes anger, he is criticizing the "self-regarding" aspect of it.

Mozi

Mozi presents us with a very different perspective. The literature on Mozi is divided, with different interpretations positioning him in any of the three camps.[6] Those who, like Mencius, position him in the first camp, think that Mozi's vision is too demanding and also fails to capture an important aspect of what it means to be human, i.e., that we care for those close to us more than strangers (and furthermore that we

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[5] Nussbaum, for example. See *Anger*; and *Upheavals of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), especially Chapter One.

[6] Youngsun Back argues that Mohist 愛 *ai* is material-oriented care (not 'love') and that the Mozi has a negative view of emotions. They get in the way of our ability to care in the way prescribed by Mohist doctrines. "Rethinking Mozi's Jian'ai: The Rule to Care," *Dao* 18, no.4 (2019), 531–553. See also Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 41; Benjamin Schwarts, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 149,159. Dan Robins, on the other hand, understands Mohist care to involve some affective component, "Mohist Care," *Philosophy East and West* 62, no.1 (2012), 60-91. Carine Defoort takes a different route and reevaluates whether we are asking the right question. Defoort's argument is that the center of the debate was never caring itself but its scope and specific content (although she does understand *Jianai* to involve some feelings). "Are the Three "Jian Ai" Chapters about Universal Love?" in Deffort and Nicholas Standaert, eds., *The Mozi as an Evolving Text: Different Voices in Early Chinese Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 35–67. See also Defoort, The Growing Scope of "Jian" 兼: Differences Between Chapters 14, 15 and 16 of the "Mozi," *Oriens Extremus* 45 (2005/06), 119-140.

should). Those who place Mozi in the second camp argue that Mozi's key concept of *jianai* 兼愛 ("universal love" or "impartial care") is not a feeling or emotion so much as a moral principle, and because we can follow principles without necessarily feeling something, emotions for Mozi are unnecessary but not bad (i.e., actually feeling love would probably not *hinder* one's ability to act on *jianai*).[7] Lastly, those who interpret Mozi as belonging to the third camp explain that for Mozi emotions are always detrimental to his project of *jianai* since they are always partial and particular.[8] I would like to defend an interpretation of Mozi as belonging to the last camp but that is not without its complications. My particular contribution is that despite his negative views of emotion, Mozi sees an instrumental value to anger in order to motivate people to act in the right way. Furthermore, he also sees epistemic value in the communication of anger and other emotions that express dissatisfaction to motivate and provide impartial care successfully.

Anger appears in the *Mozi* in three main contexts: (1) anger as indistinct from the other five emotions (*xi* 喜, *le* 樂, *bei* 悲, *ai* 愛, *e* 惡) in being a certain kind of impediment to benevolence and righteousness; (2) anger as evidence of the hypocrisy of Confucians; 3) anger as didactic. What these passages tell us is that in the *Mozi* anger shows what one values in a sincere way. Our anger shows to whom and what we are

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[7] For a detailed discussion of the meaning of *jian*, see Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 41; and Johnston, *Mozi*, xliii–xliv.

[8] For an analysis of three arguments for impartiality in the Mozi and their ethical implications see Hui-chieh Loy, "On the Argument for Jian'ai," *Dao* 12, no.4 (2013), 487–504.

partial regardless of what we may say on other occasions. Other emotions besides anger can also show what one is partial to, but for Mozi anger is normative and therefore the emotion we must pay attention to in others—since it will show what someone's true values and interests are. In this, anger is a unique emotion for Mozi: it reveals information about the angry person that other emotions do not reveal. Therefore, anger is not only moral insofar as it reveals values, but it is also epistemic insofar as it shows us something; it helps us know what the content of our values, and the values of others, is.[9] Anger, for Mozi, also serves a didactic purpose: it motivates both the agent and the patient of the anger to change in a way that is perceived as progress towards a normative standard.

Since Mozi's general opinion of emotion is a matter of contention, I will begin by discussing a passage that suggests that Mozi views emotions generally as detrimental to benevolence and righteousness , which puts him in the third camp mentioned above. However, other passages in the Mozi would suggest the opposite: my main argument will be that for Mozi anger is indispensable in making oneself and those around you more benevolent and righteous.

Anger and the Six Partialities

In the following passage from the chapter *Gui Yi* 貴義 ("Esteem for Righteousness"), Mozi presents a general view of the emotions in relation to sagehood:

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[9] Other emotions also reveal what people value, and yet they are not the focal point of Mozi. That is because as I mentioned anger reveals our moral values, not just our likes and dislikes, or preferences.

> 子墨子曰：「必去六辟。嘿則思，言則誨，動則事，使三者代御，必為聖人。必去喜，去怒，去樂，去悲，去愛，[去惡]，而用仁義。手足口鼻耳，從事於義，必為聖人。」
>
> Master Mo Zi said: “It is necessary to do away with the six partialities. When silent, one should be thinking; when speaking, one should be instructing; when acting, one should devote oneself to affairs. If one employs these three [rules] in turn, one will certainly become a sage. One must do away with pleasure, do away with anger, do away with joy, do away with sorrow, do away with love, [do away with hate] and make use of benevolence and righteousness. When hands, feet, mouth, nose, ears and [eyes] are devoted to affairs through righteousness, one will certainly become a sage.”[10]

There are three or four improvements Mozi lists that one must undertake to become a sage. The first is to do away with the six partialities (*liu pi* 六辟), which he later lists: pleasure, anger, joy, sorrow, love, with hate generally added to complete the six. The second thing appears to be a kind of active efficacy: being silent should not be a passive activity, one should be thinking; one should also not speak if one is not at the same time achieving something, i.e., instructing; and lastly, one should not simply do things, but do things that matter (*shi* 事). The third (and fourth) are related to righteousness: one’s entire body and organs of perception should be targeting righteousness. That is the ultimate goal of the sage. The reason why I said there are potentially only three things and not four is that the meaning of the sentence in which Mozi lists the six partialities is ambiguous. He

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[10] All references to the *Mozi* are from 洪業主編《墨子引得》，哈佛燕京學社引得特刊第21號，哈佛燕京學社引得編纂處 *Mozi Yinde (A Concordance to Mo Tzu)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement no. 21 (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1956), HKCS-MZ 47/104/23-26. All translations of the *Mozi* are indebted to Ian Johnston, *The Mozi: A Complete Translation* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), unless otherwise noted, 664.

writes: "必去X, Y, Z, …, 而用仁義." The character *er* 而 links verbal phrases, so it's unclear whether Mozi means something like "do away with the emotions *in order to* use benevolence and righteousness" or whether he means "do away with the emotions *but* use benevolence and righteousness" or whether he means "do away with emotions *and* use benevolence and righteousness." Our reading of the passage must rely on more than syntax alone. Does this passage suggest that Mozi belongs to the third camp mentioned above, that emotions are detrimental to his project of social harmony? Or does it only suggest that there are detrimental aspects of the emotions, which would leave Mozi in the first camp—emotions are a necessary part of social harmony but require cultivation in the form of extension towards more people?[11]

There is a well attested consequentialist strain in the Mozi, which would suggest that *bi* 必 is telling us what we need to do in order to achieve some result.[12] In that sense, the passage is very much a practical one, concerned with giving direct instructions for how to achieve a desired end. He is telling us "you need to get rid of X, if you want Y." By calling the emotions the six partialties, he is highlighting a particular aspect of the emotions that get in the way of benevolence and righteousness. In that reading Mozi is not saying we ought to eradicate our emotions, only that we need to focus on making

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[11] This passage would not allow him to be in the second camp since he has shown that he is not ambivalent about emotions.

[12] For example, Bryan Van Norden contrasts Confucius's cultivated ethical connoisseur, whose intuitive responsiveness cannot be captured by general rules, with Mozi's general algorithm for determining what is right. Mozi, according to Van Norden, aims at maximizing benefits impartially, *Virtue Ethics and Consequentialism in Early Chinese Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 139.

them impartial in order to be able to act benevolent and righteous. That interpretation would fit in well with Mozi's theory of universal love (*jianai* 兼愛): love is not detrimental, but it must be extended and felt equally towards everyone. Therefore, this passage would not entail that it is morally wrong for you to have emotions. Both dispositions, benevolence and righteousness, concern themselves, particularly for Mozi, with the whole world and they should be guided by *jianai*. It is not the case that emotions get in the way of sagehood as much as the fact that they are partial in their concern and must be extended. It would be possible to conceive of non-partial emotions. The passage is therefore explaining the kind of efficacious action and attitude that a sage must follow. I will refer to this as the weak interpretation of the passage since it is not expressing a wholesale removal of the emotions to be a sage but rather only an aspect of the emotions. This interpretation would put Mozi in the first camp.

A stronger interpretation would be that Mozi is in fact telling us to completely eliminate emotions since they are *always* partial and therefore not conducive to the kind of impartiality and efficacy that he is after. If emotions are always partial, they cannot be a part of his conception of benevolence and righteousness. There is a particular intentionality that Mozi pursues in this passage in both the attitude we should take to silence, speaking, and acting using benevolence and righteousness as summarized in the last sentence of the passage. Our tools (hands, feet, mouth, and the organs of perception) ought to be put to use with righteousness as a guide. What the body, our perceptual system, and the emotions have in common is that they can all be focused on the self, on

what benefits oneself and one's likes or dislikes. What Mozi prescribes is to put our whole selves, physiological and physical, to the service of righteousness. The strong interpretation would align with the suggestion that *jianai* should not be translated as "universal love," but rather "universal care." *Jianai* under that interpretation refers to a moral principle which does not require any emotions. The strong interpretation puts Mozi in the third camp.

Confucians and Petty Anger

The second context in which anger appears in the Mozi supports at first glance the stronger reading of the passage. Confucians and other people that Mozi criticizes are described as angry (*nu* 怒), or enraged (*hui* 慧), or indignant (*yun* 慍). Their anger is used to delegitimize them by showing what they truly value, which is neither righteousness nor other people.[13] Mozi lets Confucian anger speak for itself. He uses anger to ridicule and criticize Confucians, gentlemen, and Confucius himself.

In four passages Mozi uses anger to delegitimize his opponents. In doing so he shows the characteristics that he takes anger to have as well as how anger may be used both by the agent of the anger, the patient of the anger, or by a third party. In the first passage, *Fei Ru Xia* 非儒下 "Anti-Confucianism,"[14] Mozi lists how Confucianism imparts the wrong values, and what makes Confucians the wrong models for virtue.

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[13] This is very different from how anger is used to delegitimize by other authors who focus more on their target's anger being extreme as opposed to on what it says about their values (e.g., Achilles).

[14] HKCS-MZ 39/64/22-26.

Confucians emphasize the rites and music, which shows their lack of concern for poor people and furthermore they themselves are hypocritical about their own values. For Mozi, Confucians are actually only concerned with their own honor, and appearance, not with the wellbeing of the people around them. This attitude is exemplified by what makes them angry. Confucians become angry when they are mocked: "When a gentleman laughs at them, they angrily (*nu* 怒) reply: 'Useless fellow! What do you know of good Confucians?" (散人！焉知良儒。)[15] When Confucians hear someone laughing at them in the way the first passage describes, they angrily respond with arrogance by claiming that the other party does not know anything about what it is to be a good Confucian. The purpose of anger in this particular case is to ridicule them and to show that they only care about themselves. Despite Confucian texts repeatedly saying that they *should not* care about what others think but should *only* care about their good character, they still become angry.

Although that passage on its own might not seem to be saying much apart from Mozi having a very poor opinion of Confucians and gentlemen, in two other passages Mozi uses their anger more obviously to show their hypocrisy:

> 子墨子曰：「世俗之君子，貧而謂之富，則怒，無義而謂之有義，則喜。豈不悖哉！」

[15] HKCS-MZ 39/64/22-26; Johnston, 352.

> Master Mo Zi said: “It is customary among gentlemen that if you say they are rich when they are poor, they become angry. But if you say they are righteous when they are not, they are pleased. Is this not perverse?”[16]

Similarly,

> 子墨子曰：「世之君子欲其義之成，而助之修其身則慍，是猶欲其牆之成，而人助之築則慍也，豈不悖哉！」
>
> Master Mo Zi said: “Gentlemen of the age wish their righteousness to be complete, but if you help them cultivate themselves, they become indignant. This is like wishing to complete a wall, but becoming indignant if someone helps you build it. How is this not perverse!”[17]

It is not anger that is the problem per se, but rather what they are angry about and what their anger in turn says about what they actually value. In the first passage, Mozi severely criticizes what Confucians do, and he likens them to animals (mice, goats, and pigs). Their angry response to criticism only highlights how far from reality Confucians are: despite all the flaws that Mozi lists they still feel insulted and think of themselves as good. In the two passages quoted, Mozi shows how gentlemen do not care about any kind of truth and only care about their social appearance and honor. Furthermore, they are impervious to constructive criticism and therefore cannot truly be invested in the cultivation of righteousness.

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[16] HKCS-MZ 46/102/11-12 “*Geng Zhu* 耕柱”; Johnston, 652.

[17] HKCS-MZ 47/105/1-2 “*Gu Yi* 貴義”; Johnston, 666.

Confucius himself is accused of being enraged, resulting in the imminent destruction of two states.[18] In this story Confucius went to see a duke but the duke's advisor warned him that Confucians were not to be trusted since due to their arrogant, opinionated nature they could not instruct subordinates. They do not care about the people and therefore cannot be part of the government or bear responsibility. Their ideas are not suited for the common people since it takes over a lifetime to master their rituals and no amount of wealth can provide for his music, which he uses to hoodwink people. These accusations lead the duke not to enfeoff Confucius. This and the fact that the duke was not interested in Confucius's way (*dao* 道) leads him to become enraged (*hui*), and in anger (*nu*) he plots against the duke, which lead to the states of Qi and Wu facing destruction, filled with the corpses of hundreds of thousands. For Mozi this acts as an ultimate proof that Confucius himself does not truly care about benevolence, righteousness or the people. The actions that followed the rage and anger of Confucius show the conflict that arises between what Confucius says he cares about and what his anger and actions show that he cares about. This passage shows that there is a kind of violence, a payback that is associated with anger, but Mozi is here making an argument against *Confucians*, and not against *anger* per se, what he is highlighting is the character flaws in Confucius, and in turn his implicit views about anger.

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[18] HKCS-MZ 39/66/4-14 "*Fei Ru Xia* 非儒下 "Anti-Confucianism II"; Johnston, 362.

Didactic Anger

Although the passages I have discussed so far, particularly the one about Confucius, might suggest that Mozi ultimately rejects the usefulness of emotions in becoming righteous or benevolent, Mozi himself is angry in the following passage:

> 子墨子怒耕柱子，耕柱子曰：「我毋俞於人乎？」子墨子曰：「我將上大行，駕驥與羊，子將誰敺？」耕柱子曰：「將敺驥也。」子墨子曰：「何故敺驥也？」耕柱子曰：「驥足以責。」子墨子1曰：「我亦以子為足以責。」
>
> Master Mo Zi was angry with Geng Zhu Zi. Geng Zhu Zi asked: "Do I not surpass [other] men?" Master Mo Zi [in turn] asked: "If I were about to ascend Taihang Mountain and I yoked a thoroughbred horse and an ox [to my cart], which one would I urge on?" Geng Zhu Zi replied: "You would urge on the thoroughbred horse." Master Mo Zi asked: "And why would I urge on the thoroughbred horse?" Geng Zhu Zi replied: "Because the thoroughbred horse is up to the task." Master Mo Zi said: "I also take you to be up to the task."[19]

What this shows is that anger has the strong tendency to be extremely partial (at least in the hearts of the Confucians), an impediment to progress, as well as going alongside the impulse to scheme and instill violence. At the same time, anger in the right hands motivates others to become the best versions of themselves. To put it differently, anger itself does not have content: it arises when the things we value are lacking or are being attacked but what those values are dependent upon is the individual. In the case of Mozi's anger, it made him notice what was lacking in Geng Zhu, and Mozi knowing that the performance of anger can act as an urge to improve one's behavior he showed it to Geng Zhu. The difference between the anger of the Confucians, the gentleman, Confucius himself, and Mozi is that Mozi relates to his anger differently. He is not personally

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[19] HKCS-MZ 46/100/3-5; Johnston, 640.

attacked by Geng Zhu. This passage also says something about Geng Zhu who, unlike the gentleman and the Confucians, can absorb Mozi's anger and criticism to make himself better. Mozi is not insulting Geng Zhu's honor. Quite the contrary. He is angry at Geng Zhu because he knows what Geng Zhu is capable of. In the eyes of Mozi, Confucians do not use other people's criticisms to better themselves.

Furthermore, this passage highlights an important role that anger plays for Mozi: it is instructive. If we follow Mozi's analogy closely there are two things that make anger successfully instructive. One is that the agent of the anger is in a position of power relative to the patient of the anger. The driver of the cart has the power to inflict pain on the animal. The anticipation of a kind of pain is the second necessary thing making anger useful in instruction. Mozi highlighted a further aspect that is necessary: a good student. If Geng Zhu were like the ox perhaps there would be little point in encouraging him. The patient of the anger must have the right kind of disposition to readily respond with change or there is no sense in being angry.

At this point we may ask, in what camp is Mozi then? The three camps were: (1) emotions are necessary; (2) emotions are unnecessary but not bad; (3) emotions are detrimental. How do we make sense of Mozi's negative portrayal of anger, Mozi's own use of anger, and how he uses anger to show the hypocrisy of the Confucians? The answer partly rests on what we think Mozi is doing when he admonishes Geng Zhu. Is he truly angry, or is he pretending to be angry? That is a hard question to answer for many reasons. We cannot ask Mozi whether he was or not, but he certainly does not deny that

he is angry. Furthermore, the question gets to one of the core criticisms of cognitivist theories of emotion. Namely, does one have to *feel* an emotion in order to have an emotion or is a propositional attitude enough? Chinese texts from this time period do not make our life easy in terms of knowing whether they would favor feeling theories, cognitivist theories, or something else, since they never, or almost never, describe emotions in terms of bodily sensations. Although I will not satisfactorily answer the question of Mozi on emotions here, I can at least show that Mozi does see two uses for anger. And he does that against a very negative backdrop against emotions in his own thought. Mozi certainly has many reasons to see emotions as detrimental, particularly in the context in which he is situated. For Confucians, emotions are and ought to be partial. One does and should love one's parents more than a stranger. The goal for Confucians is to also love a stranger, but it would be morally wrong to love a stranger as much as one's family. Mozi stands in contrast to the Confucians, where he either thinks regardless of how we feel we ought to care for everyone equally, or we ought to love everyone equally. We can at least say that he condemned self-regarding anger, which is only concerned with one's own honor, and makes room for anger on behalf of others, which I call other-regarding anger. Furthermore, if there is an emotion that can be impartial, it would be anger. Impartial in the sense that it cares only about right and wrong and not about *who* is committing the right or wrong action. Given Mozi's emphasis on righteousness, it makes sense that anger is the only emotion that could have room in his moral and political system.

Mencius

So far I have highlighted the two main uses of anger in the Mozi, namely its epistemic and didactic value, as well as its potential danger: that it can lead to undue harm. I now turn to Mencius and his eponymous text. There are at least two major differences between these thinkers when it comes to anger. Where Mozi thinks anger must never be self-regarding, Mencius holds that anger can be personal as long as it is put to the benefit of others. Further, Mencius does not emphasize the epistemic role of anger and he gives us clear boundaries for where there must be no anger, in the father-son relationship.

Mencius shares the notion that anger's purpose is correction at the hands of teachers, rulers, and even friends. He also shares the same worry that Mozi has: too often all that anger shows is that one is overly concerned with one's honor as opposed to a sense of righteousness or benevolence. Mencius does not treat anger much differently than he does other emotions. For him, anger happens, it is a fact of human nature, and given that morality for him is dependent on understanding the universal tendencies of human beings, and knowing how to extend our dispositions properly, anger is put to the service of others by teaching goodness and correcting any deviation from it. One difference between anger and the other emotions for Mencius is that unlike, say, compassion, anger is not appropriate in almost any given situation. As long as anger is not inhibiting love (*ai* 愛), it serves more than oneself and so is welcomed as a sign of great courage. There is a realm where anger is only and always detrimental: the family.

For Mencius, anger should not be at all present in the father-son relationship and therefore family relationships should not be dependent upon goodness (*shan* 善). The consequences of anger in family relationships are too heavy a price to pay for Mencius. For that reason both goodness and anger have no place in the family.

Anger in the Political Context: Petty anger, Remonstration, and Punitive Wars

Mencius's discussions of anger appear most often in the political context where he lays out some of the ways in which anger is inappropriate, as is the case of petty anger, and where anger is appropriate and necessary, as is the case for punitive wars and justice. The main concern when it comes to the anger of ministers and kings is that their anger ought not to be self-regarding. Ministers have access to the ritual of remonstration and departure to express their political discontent and there is no room for any angry feelings that may arise out of feeling personally wronged. In the case of the anger of the king there are two main concerns when it comes to inappropriate anger: anger that is solely focused on having felt belittled or dishonored; and anger towards someone that is of lesser station but who has more expertise. It appears that for Mencius anger should only happen in a downward motion–i.e. from someone of a higher hierarchical position towards someone below. Kings, and teachers may be angry; ministers remonstrate.

a) Petty anger:

Mencius agrees with Mozi that petty anger is that which is solely tied to one's honor, which I am calling self-regarding anger.[20] In 2B12, Mencius himself is accused of being distasteful or dissatisfying (*buyue* 不悅) for allegedly being angry that the King of Qi did not take his advice which he is said to have demonstrated by taking too long to leave the state of Qi.[21] Mencius's response is seen negatively because in the eyes of the accuser he was either not clever (*buming* 不明) for thinking that the King had the potential to become better,[22] or he was after personal gain (*ganze* 干澤) which is the option the accuser accepts. Mencius rejects both options by explaining that he was not seeking personal gain and that he just hoped that the King would change (*gai* 改) and use the good by using Mencius. That would have not only ensured the safety (*an* 安) of the people of Qi but of the whole world. Mencius then distinguishes himself from the type of men that his accuser was describing, i.e. petty men:

> 予豈若是小丈夫然哉？諫於其君而不受，則怒，悻悻然見於其面。去則窮日之力而後宿哉？[23]

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[20] This appears to be the common view. The anger that is seen as problematic in all the Chinese texts I look at is anger that arises from losing face.

[21] It is Mencius that makes the connection between taking too long to reach Zhou and being accused of being angry, he is not explicitly said to be angry. The accuser described Mencius' departure as 'dilatory and sluggish' (*ruyi* 濡滯).

[22] Literally that the King could be made into a Tang 湯 or a Wu 武, who were two exemplary rulers.

[23] The standard commentary says that *gan* 干 is *qiu* 求 ('seek'). And *ze* 澤 is *enze* 恩澤 (an archaic phrase meaning 'favors bestowed by monarchs').

> I am not like those petty men who, when their advice is rejected by the prince, take offense and show anger all over their faces, and, when they leave, travel all day before they put up for the night.

Mencius sees himself as having done nothing of the sort. He is not angry at having been rejected nor at not having received favors from the monarch. What is upsetting to Mencius is that he is accused of thinking only about himself when the reason he took so long was that he was thinking about the whole world.[24] In that sense, whether or not Mencius was angry it was not the anger of the petty man.

b) Remonstrance:

This passage is part of a series of rituals of remonstration (*jian* 諫) and subsequent departure passages in the Mencius which describe a remonstrating official who is rebuffed and thus expected to leave court.[25] What was originally thought of as distasteful in the case of Mencius was that he was perceived to have done that with a long face and therefore with an assumed personal stake. Mencius points out the importance of this ritual which turns a remonstration into an even more public protest and gives the ruler a chance to change his mind. In 2B5, he criticizes his own time on the basis that remonstrances are not met, with the rebuffed ministers sometimes being imprisoned and their property seized.

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[24] The initial accuser, Yin Shi 尹士, upon hearing Mencius' explanation calls himself a petty man (*xiaoren* 小人) since he was only able to think of those two options for Mencius.

[25] See *Mencius* 2B5, 4B3, 5A9, 5B9.

Although remonstrances[26] are not directly or explicitly described as instances of anger in the Mencius, they are protests concerned with what is good and with correction and therefore overlap with anger.[27] It might appear from 2B12 that anger is inappropriate in a remonstrance. Mencius does not want to be seen as angry because to him that implies a concern with himself and not others. The tone of his response seems sad but hopeful. He does not see himself as having been personally wronged by the King of Qi and therefore is not angry. Anger would serve no use here in the eyes of Mencius, he does not have the position to inflict change on the King through anger in the way a teacher can, or a ruler can.[28] Whether or not anger is appropriate hinges on whether or not that anger will benefit anyone, particularly anyone other than oneself. Anger in that sense would serve no further use for Mencius since by remonstrating, departing, and traveling as slowly as possible he has exhausted all possibilities to exercise change.

c) Punitive wars:

Mencius's strongest recommendation for a kind of anger (*nu* 怒), one linked with great courage (*dayong* 大勇), is found in 1B3 where he advises King Xuan of Qi 齊宣王

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[26] One loose thread on the topic of remonstrating ministers is the relationship between remonstration and anger. I suspect that although remonstration and anger intersect, anger is not necessary (especially since for Mencius anger seems to be a feeling that simply arises). It might also be the case that the anger of a kind of underling is called a remonstration. Anger for Mencius is always top-down and the king-advisor relationship is a complicated one since the king is above in terms of political power and societal standing but is 'under' the advisor in terms of expertise.

[27] More on this to follow in the next section.

[28] Ministers, and other people that are not in positions of power, may express their anger through specific rituals and, as mentioned in the Analects, through poetry.

to make the small courage (*xiaoyong* 小勇) that he confesses he enjoys into something greater. The passage starts with King Xuan asking Mencius about good international relations, but the King is skeptical that he can become the kind of king that Mencius is recommending because he is fond of courage.[29] In true Mencian style, Mencius responds by showing the King how all he needs to do is amplify what he already has ("I beg your majesty to greaten it!" *Wang qing da zhi* 王請大之！).[30] Once he grows his courage, King Xuan will be able to be like Kings Wen and Wu, using his anger to bring peace to all the people of the kingdom.[31]

Mencius describes the courage that the king already has as small courage: what one experiences when one draws up one's sword in anger (*ji* 疾) because someone dared oppose you.[32] In other words, when someone does not respect the worth or position you perceive yourself to have or as some commentators have put it, when it is a question of honor.[33] Such courage and anger can only target one opponent and they are what the common man (*pifu* 匹夫) does. By contrast great courage is described as what King Wen

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[29] This passage is part of a series of passages in book 1B where the king will say "But I am fond of women, money, etc."

[30] A famous example of this rhetorical move is found in 1A7.

[31] 今王亦一怒而安天下之民，民惟恐王之不好勇也。"Now King you also in one instance of anger bring peace to the people of the kingdom, the people will only fear that you are not fond of courage."

[32] It is interesting that the character used here is *ji* 疾 which has the connotation of being bad for the agent of the anger at a physical level. It is most commonly used to refer to a literal 'illness' or 'disease.' In 1A7, it is also used to refer to the anger of the people when their lives are not as good as they would be if they had a better ruler. I will say more about medicalized anger in Chapter 3.

[33] For a discussion of this passage in relation to courage see Van Norden, "Mencius On Courage," *Midwest Studies In Philosophy*, vol 21 (1997), 237-256.

文王 and King Wu 武王 showcased: it is associated with anger (*nu* 怒), punitive war, peace (*an* 安), aid (*zhu* 助), rulers (*jun* 君), teachers (*shi* 師), heaven (tian 天), and benefiting the people of the empire (*tianxia zhi min* 天下之民). Mencius cites two passages, one from the *Book of Odes* 詩經 and one from the *Book of History* 尚書, to illustrate the courage of those two kings respectively. However, and most importantly, courage is not mentioned in either passage—Mencius is the one who calls them exemplars of courage. The poem from the *Shijing*, which Mencius says represents the courage of King Wen, actually talks about the *anger* (*nu*) of the King, an anger that stops the enemy troops and brings good fortune (*hu* 祜) to the Zhou 周 with the approval (*dui* 對) of the Empire (*tianxia* 天下).[34] Mencius himself offers us his summary of this poem: "In one instance of anger King Wen brought peace [安] to the people of the Empire."[35] In order to act with/have great courage, one must also appropriately relate to their own anger—i.e. they must not identify with it personally, but wield it in favor of the other. Neither can they identify personally with their courage, on the same grounds. So, anger and courage are not exactly equated, but the two are being dealt with in similar ways, along the lines of identification.

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[34] 王赫斯怒，爰整其旅，以遏徂莒，以篤周祜，以對于天下。"The King blazed with anger, and marshaled his troops, to stop the advance to Chu, to deepen the fortune of Zhou, with the approval of the Empire" (Ode 241).

[35] 文王一怒而安天下之民.

The case of King Wu is slightly different: Wu feels ashamed (*chi* 恥) by other people's crimes and implements justice.[36] He too is described by Mencius as bringing peace to all people with one instance of anger. The passage Mencius quotes from the *Book of History* serves as the legitimization of kingly anger and its relation to a sense of justice. The passage explains its origin, purpose, and scope:

> 天降下民，作之君，作之師。惟曰其助上帝，寵之四方。
> 有罪無罪，惟我在，天下曷敢有越厥志？[37]
> Heaven sent the people down, made them a lord, and made him their teacher. He helps God take care of them in the world. Whether criminals or the innocent, I am here. Who under heaven dares to violate his will?[38]

There is a hierarchical structure which consists of the teacher king and his people. The king was created to assist God to favor all the people. The king's role is to be an imposing symbol at the service of heaven and God for the people. The king does not exist to serve his own personal interests but the interests of God for the people.

Although there is no mention of anger in the passage quoted by Mencius, he related it to King Wu's pursuit of justice via his anger, and shame.[39] That Mencius mentions shame might suggest that there is some degree of King Wu's honor being at stake. He is the lord and teacher of his people and if his people commit crimes that

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[36] 一人衡行於天下，武王恥之。

[37] *Mencius* 1B3.

[38] My own translation.

[39] For a further discussion of shame in the *Mencius* see Van Norden, "The Emotion Of Shame And The Virtue Of Righteousness In Mencius," 45-77.

reflects badly on himself. If that is the case the difference between small courage and great courage might be even more nuanced: one could say that King Xuan drawing his sword at someone belittling him is also an act of correction (e.g., "Do not dare belittle me again!"). In that sense the difference between small courage and great courage is not about whether or not it protects one's honor but about whether or not that honor is tied to a king's function on Earth as the teacher of his people. The emphasis for Mencius is always on the benevolence of the ruler. King Xuan being personally offended about something does not benefit all people alike. What Mencius uses at the very beginning to distinguish between small courage and great courage is that small courage is about only one other person. This is part of the point Mencius is trying to get across, the fact that King Xuan feels anger at being offended is not bad per se, much like the passage of the ox the king just needs to slightly redirect and extend his anger. The fact that anger is attached to courage for Mencius shows that one will always feel personally affected by injustice, perhaps he is even saying that one should, but one's main concern should not be oneself but whether it benefits everyone or not.

There are other situations in which the king's anger is inappropriate. Anger for Mencius serves as a corrective. It is about goodness, and also what is right or wrong. In 1B9, Mencius shows how even the king must yield to those who are more knowledgeable than him in certain areas. In 1B9 the anger of the king is unreasonable; it is used to show what the role of the king is and what it is not. Mencius is also using anger to show an inconsistency in someone's behavior. The king is pleased when the master carpenter finds

huge pieces of timber, and will trust his skill but will be angry when he whittles it down and will not consider him up to the task. The problem with the king's behavior for Mencius is that the king is not a master carpenter, and he should trust experts to do their job. In other words, the king's anger in this case is ill-informed and it shows a deficiency in the king's ability to rule and delegate. The passage then makes the case even more urgent by using a jade-cutter example: can the king advise a jade-cutter? Would we want someone that is not trained in jade-cutting, no matter their hierarchical position, to have a say on how something as precious as jade should or should not be cut? This passage is also linked with anger and instruction and it further problematizes their relationship. If a king gets angry with his master carpenter despite him actually having done a good job, the master carpenter will start following the king's wishes and in fact do a bad job. That is why this kind of ill-informed anger is undesirable particularly when expressed by someone of superior authority. Furthermore, this is exactly the type of anger that made the job of government advisors difficult. Government advisors are trained and knowledgeable, whereas kings are mostly just born into their positions. It is therefore important that Mencius emphasizes who gets to do the correcting (*zheng* 正).

Anger in the Family

So far, I have talked about anger in the context of ministers and kings, remonstrating and rebuking—in other words, a political context. Now I shift to consider anger in more familial and personal contexts.

Anger is part of teaching and correcting which means that teaching is not the job of a father:

> 公孫丑曰：「君子之不教子，何也？」
> 孟子曰：「勢不行也。教者必以正；以正不行，繼之以怒；繼之以怒，則反夷矣。『夫子教我以正，夫子未出於正也。』則是父子相夷也。父子相夷，則惡矣。古者易子而教之。父子之間不責善。責善則離，離則不祥莫大焉。」[40]
> Gongsun Chou said, "Why does a gentleman not take on the teaching of his own sons?"
> Mencius said, "Because of the nature of things it will not work. A teacher necessarily resorts to correction, and if correction produces no effect, it will end by him losing his temper. When this happens, father and son will hurt each other instead. 'You teach me by correcting me, but you yourself are not correct.' So father and son hurt each other, and it is bad that such a thing should happen. In antiquity people taught one another's sons. Father and son should not demand goodness from each other. To do so will estrange them, and there is nothing more inauspicious than estrangement between father and son."

For Mencius, a father should not instruct his own son because of the nature of teaching and the way that human emotions work. Teaching is about correcting (*zheng* 正) what someone does, and for Mencius it is simply a matter of fact that fathers will become angry (*nu* 怒) with their sons if they do not correct themselves. Since the father will naturally get angry at the son for not acting correctly, the son will in turn get angry at the father for not acting correctly himself. This will just lead to them hurting each other (*xiangyi* 相夷) and eventually they will become estranged.[41] A father-son relationship

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[40] *Mencius* 4A18.

[41] This is another instance of the perceived relationship between anger and violence or harm that appeared in the passage about the schemes of Confucius in the Mozi.

therefore ought not concerned with goodness (*shan* 善). Mencius reminds us that in antiquity people taught one another's sons.[42]

Anger is a problem in this case because it hampers the father-son relationship, but it is a part of teaching. In 4B30 Mencius says: "It is for friends to demand goodness from each other. For father and son to do so seriously undermines the kindness [*en* 恩] between them."[43] In that passage Mencius is asked by his disciple Gong Du 公都 to explain way he is courteous to Kuang Zhang 匡章 despite him being deemed unfilial by others. Mencius explains that there are five things that make one unfilial and Kuang Zhang was none of them. The issue between him and his father was a disagreement about goodness: "Father and son made each other responsible for goodness and did not agree with each other" (子父責善而不相遇也).[44] Anger interferes with familial relationships but not with friendships or teacher-student relationships (having someone else's father teach you in the

[42] Mencius himself was an orphan, but we have stories of what and how his mother taught him. Meng Mu is said to have taught without anger. I will be talking more about Meng Mu and anger as it pertains to mother-son relationships in general see Chapter 3.

[43] 責善，朋友之道也；父子責善，賊恩之大者。 *Mencius* 4B30. Kindness (*en* 恩) is the same character used in 1A7 where Mencius points out that the 恩 of the king is enough to reach animals but it is not benefiting the people.

[44] Interestingly, Mencius does not see a problem with a son feeling *yuan* 怨 regarding issues in a father-son relationship (6B3). Also there is the famous episode where Mencius's mother is angry at him and it serves as a teaching moment for him (*Lienüzhuan* 1.11). More on this latter.

case of 4A18).[45] Therefore one of the limited but important uses of anger is to instruct. Mencius, unlike Mozi, does not say that anger helps one teach only that it is a natural occurrence in teaching.[46] Part of the problem in the father-son relationship is that the son will perceive the father as not having the right kind of knowledge and authority to correct him.

Conclusion

To sum up, both Mozi and Mencius believe a kind of anger, other-regarding anger, to play an important role in the advancement of society. This means different things for each thinker: anger for Mozi is important because it shows us what the people around us truly care about and it becomes instructive in that sense—this is what I have called the epistemic value of anger. Anger is also didactic, a notion he shares with Mencius: teachers are angry and should perform that anger since it motivates receptive students. We see this in Mozi's example of the short dialogue with Geng Zhu. For Mencius, the teacher-pupil relation is a larger concern and it can take many forms. The ruler should be the teacher of his subjects and command an imposing will that terrifies and inspires his

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[45] Which includes the king-subjects relationship since the king is also supposed to act as the teacher of the people. This does raise the question of why anger gets in the way of the father-son relationship in terms of the love they should feel for each other but not in the way of the emotions the king is supposed to feel for his people or in friendships. It seems more obvious that love is unnecessary in the teacher-student relationship.

[46] It is not clear to what extent Mencius means what he says. It seems strange that a father would play no part in his son's broader instruction such as disciplining him as a young child. Since Mencius mentions 'goodness' (*shan* 善) by name he must mean his son's moral education since there is no guarantee that the father will be a moral exemplar himself and therefore subject to criticism.

subjects. For this reason the king should also know the limits of his expertise and therefore the limits of the scope of his anger. What both thinkers show is that in order to be legitimately angry one must be perceived to be in a privileged position of power via one's knowledge of what is good. For that reason, Mencius sees no value in fathers teaching their sons what is good since there is no guarantee that the father himself knows what is good, and the power dynamics between them and the authority of the father will break down.

They also both warn us about the particular dangers of self-regarding anger: since anger can motivate one to seek change through violence or payback, it is all the more urgent that we cultivate a concern for other people's well being and not our own social position. However, it is worth noting that neither philosopher thinks of anger as a particularly or uniquely dangerous emotion. For both Mozi and Mencius, emotions like love or compassion can have devastating consequences when they go awry, particularly in the hands of a ruler, if not extended and cultivated properly.

Chapter II

The Angry Mantis and the Pragmatic Minister: Anger as a Response to the World in Zhuangzi and Xunzi

知天之所為，知人之所為者，至矣。

To know what is Heaven's doing and what is a person's is the utmost in knowledge.

–*Zhuangzi*, 大宗師

莊子蔽於天而不知人。

Zhuangzi hides in Heaven and does not know human beings.

–*Xunzi*, 解蔽

Abstract

This chapter articulates the dynamics of anger in the *Zhuangzi* and the *Xunzi*. The *Zhuangzi*'s authors so limit the space for appropriate anger that the anger might not even be recognizable as such. Xunzi approaches the constraints of appropriate anger from the dual perspective of rulers and ministers: a ruler's anger inspires awe in his subjects, and an effective minister must restrain his anger in order to remonstrate effectively with his ruler. There are two rhetorical problems: (1) both texts have a general negative stance regarding emotions, which tends to subsume anger, often using anger as a catchall for all emotions; (2) when anger is appropriate or valuable, it often goes by another name entirely.

Introduction

Unlike Mengzi and Mozi in the previous chapter, the *Zhuangzi* and Xunzi take up the theme of anger much more frequently, if not always explicitly. Whilst the first chapter looked at how Mencius and Mozi have clear spaces for anger in society and they see it as necessary and productive, the *Zhuangzi* and Xunzi have a very strong anti-emotions rhetoric. In the case of the Zhuangzi, the space for anger is so limited to the point that

anger is unrecognizable by most contemporary standards. For Xunzi, anger becomes so synonymous with disorder, and violence that appropriate anger becomes coded in rituals of remonstration. Furthermore, for Xunzi, anger is so undesirable that even the king ought not to express it, except to an extent at war. Only the sage kings of the past are described as instilling awe in their subjects through their anger.

Zhuangzi: *Is there room for appropriate anger?*

The status of the emotions throughout the *Zhuangzi* has received a great deal of scholarly attention due to the seemingly contradictory positions in the text. Amy Olberding, Chris Fraser, and David Wong have all emphasized that normatively speaking, despite their tendency to misfire and disrupt one's peace of mind, the emotions are an integral and necessary part of the *Zhuangzi*'s conception of the perfected life.[1] Curie Virag, from a different stance, has argued that there is no uniform normative stance when it comes to the emotions in the *Zhuangzi* and has traced the multivalence of the emotions throughout the text.[2] None of these scholars mention passages related to anger—when they choose to focus on a particular emotion they talk about grief, or filial piety, or pleasure/enjoyment/joy (*le*). The fact that they focus on those emotions instead of anger might make intuitive sense since all but Virag hope to argue that emotions are

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[1] See Amy Olberding, "Sorrow and the Sage: Grief in the Zhuangzi," *Dao* 6, no. 4 (2007): 339– 359; Chris Fraser, "Emotion and Agency in Zhuangzi," *Asian Philosophy* 21, no. 1 (February 2011): 97– 121; David Wong, "Identifying with Nature in Early Daoism," Journal of Chinese Philosophy 36, no.4 (2009), 568–584.

[2] Virág, *Emotions in Early Chinese Philosophy*, 133-162.

normatively necessary in the *Zhuangzi*'s conception of the good life. Looking at anger, which suffers from a bad reputation, complicates their arguments. For the same reason that Zhuangzi chooses anger to be the emissary of what is wrong about emotions, contemporary defenders of Zhuangzi's positive outlook consider emotions that would be difficult to argue in favor of eliminating (e.g., joy).

The Rhetorical Uses of Anger

The *Zhuangzi's* more philosophical views on anger are embedded within anger's rhetorical use.. Here I look specifically at how the *Zhuangzi* pairs emotions often for rhetorical effect, showing how everything is balanced or constituted by opposites. In the *Zhuangzi*, we find passages where four emotions are listed (*xi nu ai le* 喜怒哀樂) which stand for all emotions.[3] Passages that include the four emotions do not include value judgements, they present themselves as making descriptive claims. By contrast, passages where there is only a pair, either "joy and anger" (*xi nu* 喜怒)[4] or "sorrow and happiness" (*ai le* 哀樂), include a criticism of the emotions in general.[5] These pairings do not always appear immediately together. Whenever the pair that concerns us, that of joy and anger, is

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[3] They appear three times in the *Zhuangzi*: ICS Zhuangzi: 2/3/29; ICS Zhuangzi: 21/58/3, ICS Zhuangzi: 23/67/10. The last passage which belongs to the miscellaneous chapters is different in that in also includes *e* 惡 and *yu* 欲 and they are described as the six things which entangle virtue and obstruct the Dao (惡、欲、喜、怒、哀、樂六者，累德也).

[4] The pair appear immediately together in: ICS Zhuangzi: 2/5/5; ICS Zhuangzi: 6/16/8; ICS Zhuangzi: 11/26/15; ICS Zhuangzi: 11/27/6; ICS Zhuangzi: 15/42/3; ICS Zhuangzi: 31/94/2.

[5] Less often *bei le* 悲樂.

being used to make a claim about the emotions, the "positive" side of the pair, joy, is dropped. Thus appearing to be only criticizing anger.[6] In other words, anger is subtly used as a metonymy for the emotions. This tells us two things: On the one hand, the *Zhuangzi* uses anger in this context as a shorthand criticism of all to all emotions, and in that sense the authors are not interested in singling out anger; and yet, on the other hand, they are indeed singling it out.[7] The fact that anger is used in this way suggests that the imagined audience considered anger in particular as negative or at least problematic. Anger then becomes the face of what is negative about the emotions and proof that something is to be avoided.

Anger appears rhetorically in several passages but if we look carefully, we can see that the target of these passages is not necessarily anger itself. Here are two examples: the messenger and the two students.

The Messenger:

Lord Zi Gao of She 葉公子高 asks Confucius 仲尼 for advice on how to deal with his mission as an emissary to the state of Qi. Zi Gao sees his mission as a catch 22 situation based on a previous conversation that he had with Confucius: either he will suffer the penalties of the Way of Man if he fails, or he will suffer from the maladies of

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[6] The pair appear immediately together in: ICS Zhuangzi: 2/5/5; 6/16/8; 11/26/15; 11/27/6; 15/42/3; 31/94/2.

[7] Moreover, the *Zhuangzi* also uses another pair of emotions, sorrow/grief and pleasure/happiness (哀樂 *aile*), but both emotions are treated equally and in fact are always used to stand for all emotions. See: ICS Zhuangzi: 2/3/29; ICS Zhuangzi: 3/8/21; ICS Zhuangzi: 4/10/21; ICS Zhuangzi: 6/17/30; ICS Zhuangzi: 21/58/3; ICS Zhuangzi: 22/63/23.

Yin and Yang if he succeeds. Only the Man of Power is able to escape both ill consequences. Zi Gao confesses that his worries are already causing him to suffer from the maladies of Yin and Yang and he sees himself as an inadequate minister so he will therefore surely suffer from the penalties of men. Confucius dismisses his concerns by invoking the ideas of destiny (*ming* 命) and duty (*yi* 義).[8] Both concepts, although different, include something which is inevitable:

> 為人臣子者，固有所不得已，行事之情而忘其身，何暇至於悅生而惡死！夫子其行可矣！
>
> Being a son or a subordinate, there will inevitably be things you cannot avoid having to do. Absorb yourself in the realities of the task at hand to the point of forgetting your own existence. Then you will have no leisure to delight in life or abhor death. That would make this mission of yours quite doable![9]

Although this might not be particularly reassuring since Confucius essentially said "what will be will be." He then proceeds to give him some advice that Zi Gao can act on. In true Confucian fashion he claims to have heard as opposed to having devised it himself.[10] It is in this context that we find our first instance of anger being singled out.

For Confucius, Zi Gao's job will consist of avoiding the exaggerated language often encountered in international relations:

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[8] 天下有大戒二：其一，命也；其一，義也。

[9] ICS Zhuangzi: 4/10/21-2. All translations of the *Zhuangzi* are indebted to Brook Ziporyn, *The Zhuangzi: A Complete Translation* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2020), 39.

[10] In the *Lunyu* 7.1 (*Analects of Confucius*), Confucius famously says that he only transmits knowledge (述而不作).

夫傳兩喜兩怒之言，天下之難者也。夫兩喜必多溢美之言，兩怒必多溢惡之言。凡溢之類妄，妄則其信之也莫，莫則傳言者殃。

These words have to be transmitted by someone, and there is nothing in the world more difficult than communicating mutual esteem or mutual anger between two people. Joy gets exaggerated into flattery and anger into insult. These exaggerations then become outright lies, and once the lying starts trustworthiness is lost, and then the ability to communicate is destroyed—and perhaps the messenger as well.[11]

So far, both joy and anger are treated equally by Confucius. It is not immediately clear what the negative consequences of flattery are, and Confucius does not give us an example. He does, however, provide examples of what happens when exaggeration, and excess more generally, lead to anger:

[...] 且以巧鬥力者，始乎陽，常卒乎陰，大至則多奇巧；以禮飲酒者，始乎治，常卒乎亂，大至則多奇樂。凡事亦然。始乎諒，常卒乎鄙；其作始也簡，其將畢也必巨。夫言者，風波也；行者，實喪也。風波易以動，實喪易以危。故忿設無由，巧言偏辭。獸死不擇音，氣息茀然，於是並生心厲。剋核大至，則必有不肖之心應之，而不知其然也。苟為不知其然也，孰知其所終！ [...]

[...] when two people test their skills against one another, it starts out brightly enough but usually ends darkly; when it really gets extreme, they end up engaging in all sorts of outrageous tactics to defeat each other. A drinking ritual is orderly at first but usually ends up in turmoil, and when it really gets extreme, the amusements start to get perverse. All things are like this. They begin in good faith, but in the end they get ugly. They start out simple but end up oversized and unwieldy. Words are like winds and waves, and actions are rooted in gain and loss.
Winds and waves can easily shake a man, and gain and loss can easily endanger him. So the rage (*fen* 忿) comes forth for no apparent reason and the cunning words fly off on a tangent like the panicked cries of a dying animal with no time to choose. The breath and vital energy come to a boil

[11] ICS Zhuangzi: 4/10/23-24. Ziporyn, 39.

> and with that everyone becomes bloody-minded. As the feeling of being threatened reaches its zenith, the more unlovely states of mind come with it and nobody even notices it—and if they don't realize what is happening to them, there is no saying where it will all end! [...][12]

The *Zhuangzi* here ends on a warning about excess in general, with particular attention to the ways in which the equilibrium of activities can go awry and lead to disaster (wrestling matches, drinking parties, courtly audiences, etc.).[13] Confucius remarks that trying to convey the feelings of one person to another person is a particularly risky business because of this tendency for things to fall into imbalance: joy inflates to empty flattery, and anger sours into feuding. So far the issue is not with anger *per se* even as anger features in the passage. When he gets into details and examples of communicative disasters, Confucius makes a key move: he drops all mention of more positive emotions and instead broods on the potential risks associated with anger. By the time the passage ends, he has compared the messenger's task with the brutality of the elements, dying wild creatures, and fevered minds. No wonder, then, that we may be left feeling as if the passage criticizes and warns us against anger. My point is a small but important one: while this passage features anger topically, it does not provide an argument for abandoning anger altogether.

Anger often functions as a metonym for the emotions more generally in the *Zhuangzi*. The text does not directly argue against anger here, but the rhetorical

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[12] *Ibis.*

[13] For another passage that talks about excess and the emotions see: ICS Zhuangzi: 11/26/14-15.

movement of the passage is illustrative. What begins as a pragmatic warning about necessary caution in political communication ends with what looks like a dismissal of anger. This makes a certain amount of sense, since anger recommends itself more easily than joy for warnings about excess, but that does not mean that anger is categorically more dangerous than any other emotion. In fact, Confucius notes that many of these affairs often begin with quite positive emotional approaches: politeness and sophistication, respect for others, calmness and happiness. Despite these positive beginnings, chaos inevitably follows, meaning that anger is not necessarily the cause of the breakdown. Anger can certainly ruin political negotiations, but so can every other emotion when taken to excess. The warning is about excess—not about anger.

The Two Students:

Another example is the brief dialogue between Shen Tujia 申徒嘉 and Zichan of Zheng 鄭子產, both students of Master Bo-Hun Nobody 伯昏無人. Zichan, a prime minister, believes himself superior to the crippled Shen Tujia, who lost his foot as a punishment for committing some alleged past crime. When the prime minister questions why Shen Tujia is not adhering to hierarchical etiquette, Shen Tujia answers:

> 「先生之門，固有執政焉如此哉？子而說子之執政而後人者也！聞之曰『鑑明則塵垢不止，止則不明也。久與賢人處，則無過。』今子之所取大者，先生也，而猶出言若是，不亦過乎！」子產曰：「子既若是矣，猶與堯爭善，計子之德不足以自反邪？」申徒嘉曰：「自狀其過以不當亡者眾，不狀其過以不當存者寡。知不可奈何而安之若命，惟有德者能之。遊於羿之彀中，中央者，中地也，然而不中者，命也。人以其全足笑吾不全足者多矣。**我怫然而怒**，

而適先生之所，則廢然而反。不知先生之洗我以善邪！吾與夫子遊十九年矣，而未嘗知吾兀者也。今子與我遊於形骸之內，而子索我於形骸之外，不亦過乎！」子產蹴然改容更貌曰：「子無乃稱！」

> "Here at our master's place is there really such a thing as a holder of power? You delight in your office and push others behind you. I have heard that a bright mirror gathers no dust; if dust gathers there, it wasn't really bright to begin with. Long interaction with a truly worthy man (*xianren* 賢人) should free you from error. Now it is our master whom you claim to esteem, and yet you still talk like this. Is that not a mistake?" Zichan said, "A man in your condition, and yet you still think you can wrangle over goodness (*shan* 善) with Yao the sage king. In light of the condition of your own virtue (*de* 德), don't you think you should critique yourself instead?" Shen Tujia said, "There are many who dress up their mistakes to make themselves think they should not lose a foot, but very few who do not dress up their mistakes, knowing they have no particular entitlement to retain that foot. Only a true virtuoso [*dezhe* 德者] can understand what is unavoidable and find peace in it as his own fate (*ming* 命). If you play around near Archer Yi's target, lurking near the bull's-eye, it is only normal to get hit. If you manage to escape being hit, that's just fate, random good luck. Many two-footed people laugh at me for having one foot, which always used to infuriate me [我怫然而怒]. But as soon as I arrived here at our master's place, everything fell away, bringing me back to where I'd started from. It's as if the master cleansed me with his goodness (*shan*, 善) without my even realizing it. I have studied under him for nineteen years and never once in all that time have I been aware that I was one-footed. Here you and I have been wandering together on the inner side of the corporeal—is it not wrong of you to seek me on its outer side?" Zichan's face changed suddenly, jolted as if by a swift kick. "Please say no more about it!" he said.[14]

Again, the passage is not about anger but a critique of external appearances. What matters is virtue, goodness, and understanding what destiny is. However, the misguided belief of the minister that his station matters as both characters are trying to learn from

[14] ICS Zhuangzi: 5/13/26-5/14/4; Ziporyn, 47.

Master Bo-Hun Nobody is made parallel to Shen Tujia's anger at people who mock his mutilation. Both Shen Tujia and the prime minister need to learn to let go of external appearances. In the case of the minister, this has to do with how he perceives others; in the case of Shen Tujia, this has to do with how he perceives himself. The Prime Minister has taken the first step by keeping company with Master Nobody (notice his name) but somehow he still sees himself as above Shen Tujia.

The reason we are told external appearances do not matter, even in the case of someone that appears to be a criminal, is the idea of fate (*ming* 命) or the inevitable. Shen Tujia positions himself with the rare few that have completely accepted their fate. We are not told whether that means that his crime or his punishment was inevitable for we do not know whether he even actually committed a crime. But the fact that he now lacks a foot is inescapable. All he can change is how he sees himself in terms of his mutilation. He also had to learn from his master to ignore people that laughed at him—something that made him angry (*wo fei ran er nu* 我怫然而怒).

It is not immediately clear why being angry is problematic or how it is related to his previous point about accepting destiny unless we consider *why* one gets angry. To laugh at someone requires placing oneself above the object of laughter. Shen Tujia gets upset for being perceived as less, or differently than how he has learned to see himself, but once he is in the vicinity of Master Nobody, his anger subsides. Of course, we cannot ignore the name of his master. Once he is reminded that status does not matter and, to

link it to his previous statement that things are destined, he stopped being angry and furthermore he himself forgot that he had an amputated foot.[15] In other words, once he let go of the notion of status his anger disappeared. Once he shows the minister that holding on to status is to roam in the outside-the-external-form (*xiang hai zhi wai* 形骸之外) when he ought to roam in the inside-the-external-form (*xiang hai zhi nei* 形骸之內) the minister was able to learn from someone below his station. Shen Tujia shows his transformation by not being moved by the minister's former attitude towards him; he did not show anger—he simply tried to persuade the minister.[16]

As was the case in the story of Confucius advising the messenger above, this story includes anger in a rhetorical way without necessarily criticizing anger itself. Of particular interest is the link between anger and status. Shen Tujia, when he cared about external appearances and status, would become angry towards those who discriminate against him for his mutilation. Anger arises here in response to a perceived devaluation: Shen Tujia felt devalued by people mocking him, and Zichan, the Prime Minister, feels devalued by having his status being on a par with Shen Tujia's. Anger is thus a response to some state of affairs in the world that the two characters perceive as wrong. The *Zhuangzi* does not here deny such a link but instead emphasizes the wrongness of the

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[15] Invoking destiny in terms of learning might be seen as problematic given that the capacity to learn might be outside of one's hands. However, Shen-tu Jia allows for the possibility that his anger has disappeared due to his own self awakening (implying more agency) or to his master's presence although the overall tone of the passage suggests that the Prime Minister can arrive at his own conclusions through words and being in the presence of the Master was not enough,

[16] Shen Tujia's past anger would not be considered didactic anger under my rubric, it would however be a great example of the epistemic value of anger.

perceptions in the first place. So again, the focus is on the problematic, misleading nature of human categories (our perceptions of value) themselves rather than on anger directly. This is not to say that the *Zhuangzi* supports or endorses anger—only that anger does not come under fire for being anger but for being an emotion. In this sense, the text does not appear to discriminate between emotions: the real issue is the anthropocentric values and categories that usually give rise to emotions.

At this point we may ask: does the *Zhuangzi* use anger as a metonymy for emotions that frequently because anger already had an especially negative connotation in the intended readership of the text? There are at least two responses to this. First, maybe so, but it is beyond my scope here to delve into questions of authorial intent and implied audience in Warring States philosophical literature. The common narrative is that the Warring States philosophers competed for the attention of kings and lords, and so we might suppose that the risk of an overly angry lord was more pressing than the risk of an overly joyful lord. And yet, the *Zhuangzi* is an odd text that in its content quite often aims to subvert and even insult traditional rulership structures. The idea that its audience is a king who shouldn't be angry is difficult to defend. Second, and related, the content of the *Zhuangzi* overall should not be ignored when focusing on anger. Perhaps one of the few elements all interpreters of the *Zhuangzi* agree on is that the text relentlessly attacks human categories and value judgments projected onto the world. Given that, it seems bizarre to also argue that some of these categories and values (anger) are significantly

worse than others (the other emotions). The problem consistently throughout the text is the fact that we project in the first place.

Anger, Power, and Self-Preservation

Anger also appears in the context of self-preservation dealing with unequal power structures where the danger is the direct result of the social position and relative strength of the one experiencing and expressing the anger. Two examples of this occur in Chapter Four of the Inner Chapters titles "In the Human World" (*ren jian shi* 人間世). One is the passage of the messenger, which I discussed in above, where Zi Gao worries about his life. In the following passage we hear about Yan He 顏闔 who has been appointed as the tutor to the eldest son of the Duke Ling of Wei 衛靈公. Both passages are about how to preserve one's life in court. There is one further passage where Zhuangzi is called upon to persuade the ruler to let go of his fondness for raging swordplay.

The Tutor:

Yan He asks Qu Boyu 蘧伯玉 how to deal with a man whose virtue which was instilled in him by Heaven is murderous (*qi de tian sh*a 其德天殺). In his opinion, there are two ways of dealing with it:

> 與之為無方，則危吾國；與之為有方，則危吾身。其知適足以知人之過，而不知其所以過。
>
> If I find no way to contain him, he will endanger my state, but if I do try to contain him, he will endanger my life. His cleverness (*zhi* 知) allows him

> to understand the crimes people commit (*ren zhi guo* 人之過), but not why they were driven to commit these crimes.[17]

Qu Boyu, after offering an initial response, illustrates his nuanced advice by offering three animal stories. Two of which deal with anger. In the first story, a mantis shakes her arms furiously or angrily (*nu* 怒) in the middle of the road thinking she will have the strength to stop a wagon. This story refers to the second part of Yan He's question. The tutor is the mantis in this case, and the wagon the king's son. The beliefs and anger of the tutor at the actions of the king's son will not stop anything, but rather endanger his own life.[18] This passage is reminiscent of Mencius' passage about who should teach one's son. For Mencius, it should be a tutor and not one's own father since anger will arise when mistakes are made. However, here we are being recommended not to be angry at a Duke's son since ultimately one's authority and excellence as a teacher is not enough. However, as the next story shows, that does not mean one should just not accept the position. The way to manage the king's son is to learn from a tiger trainer. The trainer's job is to understand the angry heart (*nu xin* 怒心) of the tiger. The trainer needs to manage the natural ferocity of the tiger because the tiger is more powerful. In the case of the mantis she ought to have managed her own anger because she is less powerful. In a way the issue here is not anger, I doubt that we would find the same advice if Yan He was

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[17] ICS Zhuangzi: 4/11/8; Ziporyn, 40.

[18] One could argue that *nu* here does not mean 'anger' and instead means something like the Greek word *thumos*, a sort of strong motivational force. There are cases in the Zhuangzi where nu is used to mean 'excite', or 'puff out', 'impel.' The key difference here is that the passage is talking about right and wrong.

tutoring anyone other than royalty, and also remember he is not any royalty but a "king which Heaven has made murderous." The lesson is that you do not want to be a mantis when dealing with a tiger.

Anger and Swords:

While previous passages were concerned with one-to-one interactions, we also find one chapter in the *Zhuangzi* (*shuo jian* 說劍) which shows a more direct concern for the social consequences of having a king who is fond of behaviors here associated with anger, namely excessive sword fighting contests, and a general aggressive demeanor. There are several reasons for this: Firstly, this king, although violent, is not even concerned with war, which makes his interests appear particularly frivolous, and hard to defend. He gets excessive enjoyment (*xi* 喜) from seeing his men kill each other in the hundreds for his viewing pleasure. Not only is this bad for the men fighting amongst themselves, but it also means that he has neglected his kingdom, and allowed competing states to plot invasions. Secondly, the king has a disposition to punish by death anyone who displeases him which makes it difficult for his ministers to change his ways. It is for that reason that Zhuangzi, and his sagacity, are summoned to help the kingdom. Furthermore, the king is so set in his ways that he will only grant an audience to swordsmen who look like they have an angry temperament that he enjoys.

In this passage shows four features of anger in the *Zhuangzi*: (1) angry temperaments are hard to persuade;[19] (2) the physical features of an angry temperament;[20] (3) general concern that for many kings power and authority were legitimized through violence and fear;[21] and (4), which is the one I will focus on, the *Zhuangzi* positions ruling through aggressive violence as the lowest form of ruling.

The way that Zhuangzi decides to deal with the king is by asking him to choose between three swords, the Sword of Heaven, the Sword of the Feudal Lord, and the commoner's sword. Here is how he describes the last one:

> 「庶人之劍，蓬頭、突鬢、垂冠，曼胡之纓，短後之衣，瞋[22]目而語難，相擊於前，上斬頸領，下決肝肺。此庶人之劍，無異於鬥雞，一旦命已絕矣，無所用於國事。今大王有天子之位，而好庶人之劍，臣竊為大王薄之。」
>
> "The commoner's sword is wielded by men with tangled hair and protruding whiskers, decked up in hanging caps and wild tassels and short

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[19] See Romain Graziani, "Of Words and Swords: Therapeutic Imagination in Action—A Study of Chapter 30 of the Zhuangzi, "Shuo Jian" 說劍," *Philosophy East and West* 64, no.2 (2014), 375-403.

[20] 太子曰：「然。吾王所見，唯劍士也。」莊子曰：「諾。周善為劍。」太子曰：「然吾王所見劍士，皆蓬頭、突鬢、垂冠，曼胡之纓，短後之衣，嗔目而語難，王乃說之。今夫子必儒服而見王，事必大逆。 The prince said, "Yes, that is true. But look, my father will only give an audience to swordsmen." Zhuangzi said, "Right. But I am good with the sword myself." The prince said, "But the swordsmen my king receives are all men with tangled hair and protruding whiskers, decked up in dangling caps and wild tassels and short-bottomed coats. Their eyes are full of rage and their words are full of threats. This is what the king likes. But you, sir, are the type who will present himself to the king dressed in the garb of a Confucian scholar. I'm afraid things will then go very badly indeed." ICS Zhuangzi: 30/91/13; Ziporyn, 250-1.

[21] 王曰：「子之劍何能禁制？」 The king said, "Tell me about how your swordplay lays down the law." ICS Zhuangzi: 30/91/17; Ziporyn, 251.

[22] The character *chen* 瞋 appears only in three passages in the entire *Zhuangzi*, once in the Outer Chapters, and twice in the Miscellaneous chapters. Each time it is used to describe angry stares (*chen mu* 瞋目). It becomes more popular in texts during the Han dynasty, most often in that same combination to show the outward appearance of angry intentions.

> bottomed coats. Their eyes are full of rage and their words are full of threats. They attack one another before you, slashing through the head and neck above, slicing out the liver and lung below. Such is the swordplay of commoners, no different from fighting roosters. In the flash of an instant their lives are cut down. This makes no contribution to the affairs of state. Now your majesty has the position of the Son of Heaven and yet he is fond of the sword of a commoner. To be honest, I think it is a little beneath you."[23]

Zhuangzi uses the same description that was used by the king's son to describe the kind of men with whom the king wishes to surround himself to describe his style of ruling. This style of ruling contributes nothing but entertainment and death in the same way that fighting roosters do. He shows the king that he can still think of himself as wielding a sword, which is what the king enjoys and what he thinks commanding is about, but that he can do so in two other ways. Both are preferable to the commoner's sword since they are both more effective for ruling.

Both the passage about the tutor and the passage about Swords are about how to preserve one's life in court, and the future of the country. In other words, they are about how to deal with unequal power structures. Both being the victim of one's own anger, which is the result of over confidence and imprudence, as well as being the patient of the king's anger are equally dangerous. Anger is not the point in either passage but it is used as the most undesirable result of not understanding how to conduct human affairs—undesirable because to have a monarch angry at you is, quite possibly, to die or suffer in some way. Furthermore, in the Swords passage the king is not said to be angry, nor are

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[23] ICS Zhuangzi: 30/92/12-15; Ziporyn 251.

we given any reasons for why he behaves the way that he does apart from the fact that he enjoys sword fights. We could say that what this passage shows is that those in power can afford to express their anger and dislikes aggressively, whether justified or not. Whereas, on the other hand, the anger of a minister, even if justified, serves no one. However, both the tutor and Zhuangzi learn about what their respective kings care about thanks to the latter's expression of anger. In that sense, although one ought to keep anger at bay, one learns how to navigate the world by observing anger.

Appropriate anger: The Genuine Person

Due to the fact that value judgments are deemed so problematic in the *Zhuangzi*, it is hard to imagine any type of endorsement of anger. So far, anger has a clear epistemic value: both the characters in the text, and ourselves, learn by observing anger. Although the following passages seem to make room for anger in the Genuine Person (*zhen ren* 真人), the scope of anger is so narrow that we would not conceptualize it as an emotion, but rather something akin to affect. The Genuine Person's anger is limited to what we experience when our clothing is stuck on a door knob, or when we stubb our toe against a table leg with a table. We are overcome by an effective response that dissipates quickly. Even today it is hard to describe that feeling as something other than anger, and yet, we know it is not quite anger. We do not think that the door knob wrongs us, or that the table leg slighted us. Our physical symptoms dissipate as quickly as they came, and we go about our day.

In a paradigmatic example, Confucius hears about an old fisherman who has criticized the former's way of living to some of his disciples. Confucius immediately identifies the old fisherman as a sage, and runs to find him. The old fisherman calls Confucius a busybody for trying to transform and codify human affairs and emotions,[24] instead recommending genuineness:

> 真者，精誠之至也。不精不誠，不能動人。故強哭者雖悲不哀，強怒者雖嚴不威，強親者雖笑不和。真悲無聲而哀，真怒未發而威，真親未笑而和。
>
> The genuine is whatever is most unmixed and unfaked. For nothing that is done when one is faking it or of two minds about it can be persuasively moving to others. Thus someone who forces himself to cry, however sad it may sound, inspires no sorrow; someone who forces himself to be angry, however severe he may seem, inspires no awe; someone who forces affection, however he may smile, fails to get along with others.[25]

The main point of this passage is to criticize the things that hamper what emotions are there to do. To the old fishermen the mere idea of appropriateness of emotion overlooks that emotions are about genuine, sincere, affective reactions. What the old fisherman says resonates with other passages where emotions are linked to music:

> 喜怒哀樂，慮嘆變慹，姚佚啟態；樂出虛，蒸成菌。。日夜相代乎前，而莫知其所萌。
>
> Joy and anger, sorrow and happiness, plans and regrets, transformations and stagnations, unguarded abandonment and deliberate posturing—music flowing out of hollows, mushrooms of billowing steam! Day and night they

[24] 和喜怒之節，而幾於不免矣, ICS Zhuangzi: 31/94/2.

[25] ICS Zhuangzi: 31/94/5-6; Ziporyn, 257.

alternate before our eyes, yet no one knows whence they sprout![26]

The *Zhuangzi* makes room for appropriate anger, but is not the appropriate anger of Mozi, or Mencius. Zhuangzian anger is not socio-political. For Zhuangzi appropriate anger is reduced to the natural anger to a newborn's displeasure: instinctive, and fleeting. It is not attached to a self-conceptualization either.

Xunzi: *On Anger as Disorder or Dissent*[27]

Anger arises in a slightly different context for Xunzi. Like the authors in the *Zhuangzi*, the *Xunzi* warns us against certain dangers of the emotions in general, but the emphasis is on how emotions pose a threat to society rather than to oneself. Of course, in the *Zhuangzi* emotions end up being problematic for society too, but this seems a secondary consequence of the harm they cause to the individual: emotions lead you to be mistaken and that leads you to act on the basis of an inaccurate view of the world. Xunzi's emphasis is on the effect that the emotions have on a grander scale. For Xunzi, human nature is selfish and desirous, and emotions arise as a result of those desires being met or not. Emotions are not primarily epistemological mistakes for Xunzi. They might indeed assess the situation correctly from the perspective of the self: You desired food and you got something delicious so you are happy; you wanted food and someone took it away from you so you got angry. The problem for Xunzi is that we cannot all get what we

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[26] ICS Zhuangzi: 2/3/29-30; Ziporyn, 12.

[27] The distinction I have made between disorder and dissent is taken directly from incoming president Joe Biden's speech following the storming of the Capitol on January the 6th 2021.

want. Resources are limited and the population is growing. Therefore, the sages established societal order which is used to regulate emotions.[28]

For Xunzi, human nature is famously bad (*e* 惡), but this does not mean that the emotions arising from human nature should be eradicated or ignored. My goal in this section is to sketch the context within which Xunzi thinks anger does and should operate. The question is what appropriate anger might look like: what are the contexts where anger arises, which of those if any are appropriate, and how is anger appropriately expressed? I will start by showing how anger is also used rhetorically by Xunzi but to a lesser extent than in the *Zhuangzi*. Although Xunzi, like Zhuangzi, criticizes all emotions, he is mostly concerned with refining the expression of those emotions as opposed to advocating for the more transformative project of the *Zhuangzi*. For that reason, Xunzi places greater emphasis on restraining anger in particular since for him anger manifests itself in impulsive, hasty, and often violent ways.[29] Anger too, more than other emotions, causes one to forget their social position since it inflates one's sense of self which poses a problem for a system that is based on everyone adhering to their social role. However, I will argue that this does not mean that Xunzi thinks anger is useless for society. He certainly limits the use of anger more than, say, Mengzi, but he acknowledges anger's association with perfections of right and wrong and its ability to instill fear, another

[28] By societal order I mean hierarchical relations, rituals, and, importantly for Xunzi, music.

[29] Comparable emotions would be jealousy or envy, and greed, since they all hinge on believing oneself worthy of something.

powerful motivator, on whomever happens to be the patient of the anger. The appropriate place for anger is war, and kings ought to behave so as to not be the victims of the anger of their people, or their neighbors. We will see that for Xunzi, appropriate anger often depends on a distinction between dissent and disorder.

One difference between Xunzi and the *Zhuangzi* on emotions has to do with their respective views of emotions in the larger scope of human activity in the world. Norbert Elias offers a compelling suggestion that can help us understand Xunzi's negative views of emotions and anger in particular.[30] Elias argues that the societal role, and acceptance, of aggressive affect diminished as the result of the civilizing process. Aggressive impulses are placed under an increasingly strong social control anchored in the state organization. All the forms of pleasure associated with the aggressive impulse, which are hemmed in by threats of displeasure, have gradually come to express themselves only indirectly, in a "refined" form. And only in times of social upheaval or where social control is looser do they break out more directly, uninhibited, less impeded by shame and repugnance."[31] What Elias calls "aggressive affects" or "aggressive impulses" is not the same as what we call "anger." He notes that what counts as aggressiveness is very much in flux throughout the different times and traditions of Western civilization (e.g., tone or intensity); the degree to which aggressiveness in general is accepted varies. When he

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[30] Elias is not talking about anger specifically, rather about aggressiveness. Nonetheless I argue his views still help illuminate Xunzi's views on anger. *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 161-171.

[31] Elias,*The Civilizing Process*, 162.

talks about aggression he is not referring to something as conceptually coherent as anger, but rather the more amorphous set of aggressive reactions that arise for many reasons, anger being one of them.[32] In that sense, what society regulates is not anger *per se*, but the aggressive expression of anger.[33]

Martha Nusbaum makes the more anger-specific claim that the law in Athens was introduced to establish social control over anger: the law was established to transfer the mechanics of justice away from individuals and families to the state, thus making anger obsolete.[34] In Xunzi we see something similar, and we saw it in a few passages in the *Zhuangzi*. Namely, that ritual, music, and state-sanctioned punishments are established in order to refine anger. One can express anger through the ritual of remonstration, or music in the form of poems, and that is the extent to which anger can be performed or acted upon.[35] Punishments, as Xunzi envisions them, ought not to be motivated by anger but by the desire to build and maintain order. Xunzi's criticisms of anger, therefore, should be seen as quite different, for the most part, from those found in the *Zhuangzi*. For Xunzi,

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[32] Essentially aggressive impulses are involved in many emotions (fear, envy, jealousy, etc), but need not even be a part of an emotion. One can be in an aggressive mood for example. Briefly, the distinction between a mood and an emotion is that one is not intentional, and the other one is, respectively. 'Intentional' here does not mean 'on purpose' but rather that it has an intentional object. One is afraid of something but one is in a mood for no particular reason, perhaps one slept badly. However, very often societal discourses against aggression limit themselves to anger as if they were the same. Given that it is a fact that aggression is not unique to anger, this dissertation asks what is it about anger (that is not aggression) that has made it so undesirable from a societal point of view.

[33] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 161.

[34] Nussbaum can make this more specific claim because what is salient about anger to her is not just aggression, but also the normative conceptual content of anger.

[35] In his "Discourse on Music" (*yue lun* 樂論), Xunzi argues that music is the necessary and inescapable natural expression of human nature.

emotions are mistaken in a sense, yes: they are the result of a misunderstanding about how society works and one's place in it—but emotions are *not* a kind of cognitive error involving anthropocentric distortion of the universe, as is the case in many of the *Zhuangzi* passages. In some of the passages in the *Zhuangzi*, anger is the result of the mistaken belief and desire to change the state of affairs, and therefore to cure oneself of anger is to reconcile oneself with the notion of fate.[36]

Disorder: Sudden Anger and the Petty Person

One aspect of Xunzi's criticism of anger is the relationship between anger and disorder. For Xunzi, acting on anger is often equated to acting self-interestedly. Acting in self-interest necessarily comes with a kind of transgression: one is heedless of social boundaries in pursuit of whatever one wants. For Xunzi, who thinks that all of human society depends on an intricate structure, one person violating their role has a cascading effect. To pursue one's self-interest is like a cog rattling loose through the machine wreaking havoc. Disorder for Xunzi is going back to the state of nature where everyone acted out of self-interest and yet still suffered due to violence and scarcity.

Anger for Xunzi, much like in the *Zhuangzi*, enjoys a slight spotlight among all other emotions in that the question of appropriate anger is framed within a broader

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[36] Xunzi has some passages that resemble this notion but the emotion he associates with that mistake is resentment (*yuan* 怨), which is more of a wish that things had been different that results in having negative attitudes towards the people around you as if they are somehow responsible. For how the Zhuangzi and Xunzi treat the problem of how bad things happen to good people see Franklin Perkins, *Heaven and Earth Are Not Humane: The Problem of Evil in Classical Chinese Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

context of the refinement of all emotions. Xunzi offers us the figure of the *junzi* 君子, the gentleman, who is the one to emulate in contrast to the petty person or *xiaoren* 小人. The gentleman exercises restraint in seeking personal gain, guided by a sense of public spiritedness and impartiality (*gong* 公):

> 君子之求利也略，其遠害也早，其避辱也懼，其行道理也勇。君子貧窮而志廣，富貴而體恭，安燕而血氣不惰，勞勧而容貌不枯，怒不過奪，喜不過予。君子貧窮而志廣，隆仁也；富貴而體恭，殺埶也；安燕而血氣不衰，柬理也；勞勧而容貌不枯，好交也；怒不過奪，喜不過予，是法勝私也。《書》曰：
>
> 「無有作好，遵王之道。無有作惡，遵王之路。」
>
> 此言君子之能以公義勝私欲也。[37]
>
> In seeking profit, the gentleman acts with restraint. In averting harms, he acts early. In avoiding disgrace, he acts fearfully. In carrying out the Dao, he acts courageously. Even if living in poverty, the gentleman's intentions are still grand. Even if wealthy and honored, his demeanor is reverent. Even if living at ease, his blood and *qi* are not lazy. Even if weary from toil, his countenance is not disagreeable. When angry he is not excessively harsh, and when he is happy he is not excessively indulgent. The gentleman retains grand intentions even in poverty, because he exalts ren. He maintains a reverent demeanor even when he is wealthy and honored, because he takes contingent fortune lightly. His blood and *qi* do not become lazy when at ease, because he is headful of good order. His countenance is not disagreeable even when weary from toil, because he is fond of good relations. He is neither excessively harsh when angry nor excessively indulgent when happy, because his adherence to the proper model overcomes any personal capriciousness. The *Documents* says:
>
> Do not create new likes.
> Follow the king's way.
> Do not create new dislikes.
> On the kings' path stay.

[37] ICS Xunzi: 2/8/12-16; Unless otherwise stated, all translations of the Xunzi are indebted to Eric Hutton, *The Xunzi: The Complete Text* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 15.

> This is saying that through avoidance of prejudice and through *yi* the gentleman overcomes capricious personal desires.

The gentleman also endeavors to express their emotions appropriately:

> 恭敬、禮也；調和、樂也；謹慎、利也；鬥怒、害也。故君子安禮樂利，謹慎而無鬥怒，是以百舉而不過也。小人反是。
>
> To be reverent and respectful makes for ritual propriety. To be accommodating and harmonious makes for musicality. To be careful and cautious makes for benefit. To go brawling and act angrily makes for harm. And so, the gentleman rests in ritual propriety and musicality, employs carefulness and caution, and avoids brawling and acting angrily. For this reason, in a hundred actions he commits no errors. The petty person does the opposite of this.[38]

In these two examples, we can see that the issue appears to be excess and not feeling anger in general. Excess is bad for any emotion. While anger is the only emotion that appears here, it must be measured in the same way that everything about the gentleman is. That said, we cannot escape the fact that it is *anger* that gets singled out rhetorically. Why might this be?

We can more clearly see the special status that anger holds in Chapter Four, "Honor and Disgrace" (*Rongru* 榮辱), which begins with a poem followed by a statement about how certain actions lead to negative consequences for oneself. The consequences of anger begin the argument:

> 快快而亡者、怒也，察察而殘者、忮也，博而窮者、訾也，清之而俞濁者、口也，豢之而俞瘠者、交也，辯而不說者、爭也，直立而不見

[38] ICS Xunzi: 13/65/22-23; Hutton, 139.

知者、勝也，廉而不見貴者、劌也，勇而不見憚者、貪也，信而不見敬者、好剸行也。此小人之所務，而君子之所不為也。[39]

For all their cheerfulness, they perish because of their anger. For all their careful investigations, they are destroyed by their jealousy. For all their breadth of knowledge, they are reduced to poverty because of their penchant for slander. For all their appearance of personal probity, they sink further into corruption because they revile others. For all the fine foods they eat, they become ever more emaciated because they associate indiscriminately. For all their discriminations, they do not provide convincing explanations because they are interested only in debate. Though they have an upright position, they are not recognized because they are interested only in "victory." Though they are scrupulous, they are not valued because they are injurious to others. Though they are bold, they do not inspire dread in others because they are greedy. Though they are trustworthy, they are not respected because they are fond of acting on their own. The petty person is intent on behaving in these ways, but the gentleman will not do so.[40]

The first issue is how should we understand *nu* 怒 here, meaning where in the spectrum of anger is it positioned. In other words, is *nu* just “anger” broadly speaking, or “rage,” or some sort of “uncontrolled fury”? How strong is Xunzi’s argument here? To argue that this passage is a warning about rage would make this warning trivially true: that is, it goes without saying that overweening wrath or fury is bad for pretty much all involved. The idea that Xunzi needs to warn us against that is uncompelling. Instead, I think that Xunzi is here making the stronger argument that anger broadly understood—not just extreme fury—leads one to perish. Anger is the first example of the kind of actions (for he is arguing against acting in certain ways) that transgress societal rules and roles. In

[39] ICS Xunzi: 4/12/21-24.

[40] ICS Xunzi: 4/12/21-24. Here I use my own adaptation of John Knockblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 186-87.

that sense, anger is not the target but rather an insistence on one's egoistic self-interests. Anger is just one of selfishness's many faces (the chapter begins "Pride and excess bring disaster for human beings"). Xunzi here draws our attention to a serious irony: acting on self-interest will lead to self-annihilation. Anger is labeled by Xunzi as one of the greater forces that motivate people to behave out of self-interest and therefore he takes time to show how in the long run not acting out of anger is in one's own interest since disorder will benefit no one.

Immediately after, Xunzi further elucidates the problem, and similarly to the *Zhuangzi*, he focuses on anger and not the other actions:

> 鬥者，忘其身者也，忘其親者也，忘其君者也。行其少頃之怒，而喪終身之軀，然且為之，是忘其身也；家室立殘，親戚不免乎刑戮，然且為之，是忘其親也；君上之所惡也，刑法之所大禁也，然且為之，是忘其君也。憂忘其身，內忘其親，上忘其君，是刑法之所不舍也，聖王之所不畜也。乳彘觸虎，乳狗不遠遊，不忘其親也。人也，憂忘其身，內忘其親，上忘其君，則是人也，而曾狗彘之不若也。
>
> A man who engages in brawling is someone who has forgotten his own person, forgotten his family, and forgotten his lord. When carrying out a moment's anger will result in losing your only body, to do it nevertheless is to have forgotten your own person. When your kin will straightaway be maimed and your parents will not escape punishment and execution, to do it nevertheless is to have forgotten your own family. When it is what your lord and superior hates, and what his laws greatly prohibit, to do it nevertheless is to have forgotten your own lord. To forget your own person below, and to forget your family in the middle, and to forget your lord above–this is something the laws and punishments will not pardon, something the sage king will not accept. A nursing sow will charge a tiger, and a nursing dog will not wander far from her pups, because they do not forget their family. If someone forgets their own person below, forgets his

> family in the middle, and forgets his lord above, then this is a human being who is not even as good as pigs and dogs![41]

The way the anger Xunzi is talking about manifests itself in fighting or brawling (*dou* 鬥). *Dou* is a generic term for fighting, but Xunzi here refers specifically to violence amongst individuals rather than, say, an organized war. He does specify the type of anger he is talking about: namely short-lived anger or sudden anger (*shao qing zhi nu* 少頃之怒). Xunzi is making a qualification; it is a particular kind of anger that leads to the kind of fighting he is condemning.

What is this "sudden anger" Xunzi mentions? Joseph Butler in trying to find the moral standing on anger in Christianity made a similar distinction between what he calls sudden anger, which he condemns, and deliberate resentment:[42]

> Sudden anger, upon certain occasions, is mere instinct; as merely so as the disposition to close our eyes upon the apprehension of somewhat falling into them; and no more necessarily implies any degree of reason. I say, necessarily: for, to be sure, hasty, as well as deliberate anger, may be occasioned by injury or contempt; in which cases, reason suggests to our thoughts that injury and contempt, which is the occasion of the passion: But I am speaking of the former [sudden anger] only so far as it is to be distinguished from the latter [deliberate resentment]. The only way in which our reason and understanding can raise anger, is by representing to our mind injustice or injury of some kind or other. Now, momentary anger is frequently raised, not only without any real, but without any apparent reason; that is, without any appearance of injury, as distinct from hurt or

[41] ICS Xunzi: 4/13/1-5; Hutton, 24.

[42] Joseph Butler writes, "Resentment is of two kinds: Hasty and sudden, or settled and deliberate," "Upon Resentment and Forgiveness of Injuries," *Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel. To Which Are Added, Six Sermons Preached on Public Occasions. By Joseph Butler, LL. D. Late Lord Bishop of Bristol. Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Printed for C. and R. Ware, T. Longman, and J. Johnson, 1774), 92.

> pain. It cannot, I suppose, be thought that this passion, in infants, in the lower species of animals, and, which is often seen, in men towards them; it cannot, I say, be imagined, that these instances of this passion are the effect of reason: no, they are occasioned by mere sensation and feeling. It is opposition, sudden hurt, violence, which naturally excites the passion; and the real demerit or fault of him who offers that violence, or is the cause of that opposition or hurt, does not, in many cases, so much as come into thought.[43]

If we liken Xunzi's distinction to Butler, by "sudden anger" Xunzi means the kind of impulsive anger that arises quickly and intensely which for him leads one to forget one's safety, and those around us. Furthermore, Xunzi links sudden anger to the stubborn belief that one is right and the other party wrong, which is the sort of justification that leads to fighting:

> 凡鬥者，必自以為是，而以人為非也。己誠是也，人誠非也，則是己君子，而人小人也；以君子與小人相賊害也，憂以忘其身，內以忘其親，上以忘其君，豈不過甚矣哉！是人也，所謂以狐父之戈钃牛矢也。將以為智邪？則愚莫大焉；將以為利邪？則害莫大焉；將以為榮邪？則辱莫大焉；將以為安邪？則危莫大焉。人之有鬥，何哉？我欲屬之狂惑疾病邪？則不可，聖王又誅之。我欲屬之鳥鼠禽獸邪？則又不可，其形體又人，而好惡多同。人之有鬥，何哉？我甚醜之。
>
> Every person who engages in brawling is sure to think himself right and the other person wrong. If he thinks himself resolutely right and the other person resolutely wrong, then this is to consider himself a gentleman and the other a petty person, and to use the enmity between gentleman and petty person to harm and kill others. He forgets his own person below, forgets his family in the middle, and forgets his lorde above. Is this not a grave fault! Such people are "using prized Gu Fu lance to slice cow dung." Do they think it wise? There is no greater stupidity. Do they think it beneficial? There is nothing more harmful. Do they think it honorable? There is nothing more disgraceful. Do they think it safe? There is nothing more dangerous. Oh why do people engage in brawling? I would classify

[43] Butler, "Upon Resentment," 93.

> them as mad, confused, or ill, but I cannot, because the sage kings will nevertheless punish them. I would classify them as birds. Rodents, or beasts, but I cannot, because they are nevertheless humans, and their likes and dislikes are mostly the same as those of humans. Oh why do people engage in such brawling? I loathe it utterly.[44]

For both Butler and Xunzi, anger is an apprehension, sometimes not quite rational, that an injury or injustice has been committed. For Butler, sudden anger is hasty and is more the result of the mere feeling, rational thought not having yet quite yet come into play. It is the anger of children and lower animals. However, as much as Xunzi is tempted to say that sudden anger belongs to non-human animals or sick people, he holds it to result from a kind of arrogance that one's personal way is the right way. Sudden anger is the result of a mistaken apprehension of the actual situation, a forgetting of one's hierarchical place, and a mistaken view of what the gentleman is, and what the sages teach. For Xunzi, the individual who acts on this kind of anger is very much blameworthy.

Xunzi then links this kind of anger and fighting with an inferior kind of courage that very much resembles Mengzi's observations about the distinction between great and small courage. Xunzi divides courage into four categories: that of dogs and pigs, that of merchants and robbers, that of petty men, and lastly that of well-bred people and gentlemen. For Xunzi, the courage that arises from his conception of sudden anger is the courage of dogs and pigs. They struggle over food and drink, are ignorant of right and wrong, are heedless of injury and death, and have no fear of superior numbers or greater strength. The best kind of courage is one which upholds righteousness (*yi* 義)

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[44] ICS Xunzi: 4/13/5-11; Hutton, 24.

unswervingly while taking death seriously.[45] Xunzi's main issue with sudden anger is that it arises out of a mistaken belief, and it makes light of death for oneself and those around. Zhuangzi's concern with emotions is that whatever else an emotion may be, it is at least some sort of evaluation of a situation in the world—that is, emotions are fundamentally limited to our own individual human perspectives and are thus unreliable guides to the world. Xunzi's approach is not to deny that emotions grant access to some state in the world but rather to argue that whatever the state might be, our selfish desires are not sufficient to evaluate it and then act.

Further evidence that Xunzi's criticism are of a hasty and thoughtless kind of anger is that he positions anger in opposition with careful calculation:

> 魯哀公問於孔子曰：「請問取人。」孔子對曰：「無取健，無取詌，無取口啍。健、貪也；詌、亂也；口啍、誕也。故弓調而後求勁焉，馬服而後求良焉，士信慤而後求知能焉。士不信慤而有多知能，譬之其豺狼也，不可以身尒也。語曰：『桓公用其賊，文公用其盜。故明主任計不信怒，闇主信怒不任計。計勝怒則彊，怒勝計則亡。」
>
> Duke Ai of Lu asked Confucius, "May I inquire about how to choose people?"
> Confucius answered, "Do not choose those who are self important. Do not choose those who are domineering. Do not choose those whose mouths talk excessively. Those who are self important are greedy. Those who are domineering create disorder. Those whose mouths talk excessively engage in deception. Thus, only when bows are properly strung does one seek for the strongest among them. Only when horses are tame does one seek for the best among them. Only when men are trustworthy and honest does one seek for the most intelligent and capable among them. If a man is not trustworthy and honest but has much intelligence and ability, one can compare him to a wolf–one must not allow oneself to get close. A saying

[45] See ICS Xunzi: 4/13/13-17; Hutton, 139.

> goes, 'Duke Han employed someone who tried to do to him villany. Duke Wen employed someone who stole from him.' And so, an enlightened ruler relies on careful calculation and does not trust in his anger. The benighted ruler trusts in his anger and does not rely on careful calculation. He in whom careful calculation wins out over anger will be strong. He in whom anger wins out over calculation will not last long."[46]

Xunzi's Confucius is giving us a list of attitudes and behaviors that are loosely associated with trusting in one's anger. How does this passage go from who to choose, to how to act once you've chosen? The passage is written in a recognizable style where the advisor shifts the focus of the initial question. Xunzi's Confucius is offering more than he was asked for, he is not only telling Duke Ai how to choose government officials, but also how he himself as a ruler should behave. The common thread is making hasty decisions. The passage then becomes a warning to rulers not to make hasty decisions in anger. However, we can understand the unity of the passage in terms of the above passages from Chapter Four where he qualified anger as a brief sort of anger that lends itself to excesses, is unrestrained, and thoughtless. Xunzi shares with Mengzi, Mozi, the *Zhuangzi* (and Butler) the idea that the sort of anger that is reproachable is anger that is exceedingly self-regarding, that sees oneself as more important than one is. Trusting in one's anger can also lead one not to question one's perceptions and therefore be domineering. Talking excessively also implies lack of restraint, and in that sense the person who talks

[46] ICS Xunzi: 31/147/14-31/147/18; Hutton, 337.

excessively is like the person who places undue trust in their anger.[47] Xunzi more generally wants to enforce social behaviors for the greater good—but that means acting for the aim of social cohesion rather than personal vendetta.

For these reasons, Xunzi also limits the role of anger when it comes to establishing appropriate punishments and rewards:

> 故刑當罪則威，不當罪則侮；爵當賢則貴，不當賢則賤。古者刑不過罪，爵不踰德。故殺其父而臣其子，殺其兄而臣其弟。刑罰不怒罪，爵賞不踰德，分然各以其誠通。是以為善者勸，為不善者沮；刑罰綦省，而威行如流，政令致明，而化易如神。傳曰：「一人有慶，兆民賴之。」此之謂也。
>
> Thus, if punishments fit the crimes, then one will have awe-inspiring authority. If they do not fit the crimes, then one will be considered disgraceful. If official salaries fit the worthiness of the recipients, then one will be considered noble. If they do not fit the worthiness of the recipients, then one will be considered base. Among the ancients penalties did not exceed the crimes, and official salaries did not outstrip the recipient's virtue. Thus, they might kill a father and yet employ his son as a minister. They might kill an older brother and yet employ the younger brother as a minister. In meeting out punishments and penalties, they did not rage against the crime, and giving out rewards and salaries, they did not exceed the recipient's virtue. Each case was carefully processed according to the truth of the matter. Thus, those who did good were encouraged, and those who did bad were stopped. Their punishments and penalties were extremely sparse, yet their awe-inspiring authority proceeded like a great river flowing. Governmental orders were extremely enlightened, and they changed and transformed the people as though they had the power of spirits. A saying goes, "When there is goodness in the one right person,

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[47] We might then ask ourselves whether, since for Xunzi maintaining order through hierarchical distinctions, ritual, and music, is absolutely essential for he believes human nature to be innately bad, he does not believe it possible to develop one's character to the point where one can intuitively act well and it will always take careful consideration.

then the myriad common folk will rely upon him." This expresses my meaning. [48]

亂世則不然：刑罰怒罪，爵賞踰德，以族論罪，以世舉賢。故一人有罪，而三族皆夷，德雖如舜，不免刑均，是以族論罪也。先祖當賢，後子孫必顯，行雖如桀紂，列從必尊，此以世舉賢也。以族論罪，以世舉賢，雖欲無亂，得乎哉！

In a disordered age, things are not like this. Punishments and penalties are acts of anger against a crime, and rewards and salaries exceed the recipient's virtue. Whole clans are included in the judgment of guilt, and the people help up as worthies because of the deeds of former generations. Thus, one person is guilty, but all three clans are extinguished, and even if the others's virtue is like that of Shun, they cannot avoid sharing in the punishment–this is for whole clans to be included in the judgment of guilt. When the ancestors were worthies, then their sons and grandsons are sure to be well-known. Yet if the descendants are unfailingly given honored positions among the ranks of followers even though their conduct is like that of the tyrants Jie and Zhou, then this is for people to be held as worthies because of the deeds of former generations. When the whole clans are included in the judgment of guilt, and people are held up as worthies because of deeds of former generations, then even if one wished for no disorder, could one achieve this?[49]

By placing anger and justice in the same passage, Xunzi is once again highlighting the fact that anger is the result of a perceived injury or of having been wronged. When anger is what drives the punishment, the results will be perceived as excessive by others and therefore one will lose authority. This is quite novel if we compare Xunzi with any of the other Chinese thinkers I have mentioned so far. For Mengzi and Mozi, at least, one positive of anger is its ability to inspire awe and thus motivate others to act in certain

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[48] ICS Xunzi: 24/118/17-24/119/1; Hutton, 259.

[49] ICS Xunzi: 24/119/3-6; Hutton 259-260.

ways—hopefully in just ways. But Xunzi divorces justice and anger, arguing that justice or punishment administered in anger loses its legitimacy.[50] Xunzi contrasts a disordered age where punishments are excessive because they are the result of anger to ancient times where punishments fitted the crime. Relying on anger to punish people leads to excessive punishment, meaning that not only the culprit will suffer but their entire family and clan. By contrast, in an age where punishments are not the result of anger only the culprit will be punished and their relations or clan might still enjoy rewards if they deserve it on their own terms. This might suggest that Xunzi thinks that one knows what a crime is and what an appropriate punishment is without any feeling of anger. However, I do not think that Xunzi is going that far. Once more, he is concerned about the expression of anger in the form of punishment due to his concerns about anger leading one to be overly concerned with oneself, and leading to excessive violence.

Dissent: War and the Fear of the People

The previous section explains Xunzi's wariness towards anger for its disordering effects on society. In short, anger leads to self-serving behavior which leads to transgressing one's social role which leads to social disruption. This section will shift to the theme of dissent, by which I mean that for Xunzi anger can be used to express one's opinion, or sentiment of non-agreement or opposition to a prevailing idea or policy

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[50] See also: 君子至德，嘿然而喻，未施而親，不怒而威：夫此順命，以慎其獨者也。"The gentleman is the ultimate in virtue. He makes himself understood without speaking. He is loved without bestowing favor. He inspires awe without showing anger. His orders are obeyed with such diligence because he is vigilantly steadfast." ICS Xunzi: 3/11/7; Hutton, 20 (repeated in 58).

enforced by a government, or individual in a capacity of authority. Xunzi does not explicitly distinguish a kind of anger that is morally superior in the way that Butler does, nor does he have explicit passages where he recommends anger in the way that Mozi and Mengzi do, nor does he even have more neutral passages in the way that the *Zhuangzi* does (at least when animals are involved). However, since for Xunzi the Heavenly dispositions need to be nurtured,[51] we know that when Xunzi writes about anger he is not talking about the feeling of anger but rather the expression of it.[52] Anger cannot be exterminated or ignored; the balance lies on how to express it in a way that channels them towards their practical societal uses. For these reasons, Xunzi talks about three different examples of what I am calling dissent: (1) war as an expression of anger as dissent, (2) the people expressing dissent against their king, (3) a minister remonstrating.

There is only one passage where Xunzi mentions explicitly how anger is appropriately expressed and that is in war:[53]

> 且樂者、先王之所以飾喜也；軍旅鈇鉞者，先王之所以飾怒也。先王喜怒皆得其齊焉。是故喜而天下和之，怒而暴亂畏之。
>
> Moreover, music is the means by which the former kings adorned their happiness. Military campaigns and armaments are the means by which the

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[51] Briefly, Xunzi things that there is a certain nature (*xing* 性) that we get from Heaven (*tian* 天) and which needs cultivation through ritual (*li* 禮). Xunzi does not think we can just turn off or escape emotions. Because we cannot simply discard our nature, we need to do something about it and not let it cause disorder.

[52] ICS Xunzi: 20/99/21-100/2; Hutton, 220.

[53] See also: 武王怒，師牧野，紂卒易鄉啟乃下。 “When King Wu was stirred to anger, To the fields of Mu he brought his army. The soldiers of Zhou changed their direction.” ICS Xunzi: 25/120/8-9; Hutton, 264.

> former kings adorned their anger. The happiness and anger of the former kings achieved a uniform measure in these things. Therefore, when they were happy, all under Heaven harmonized with them, and when they were angry, then violent and disorderly people feared them.[54]

The first thing to point out is that for Xunzi, both happiness (*le* 樂) and anger (*nu* 怒) need to be decorated (*shi* 飾) which is how he gets around his metaphysical constraint that human nature is bad and that one cannot stop oneself from feeling emotions.[55] Another thing to point out is that in the case of anger, it becomes effective as a method for showing dissent against violent and disorderly people. Of course whether or not we can describe this as dissent will depend on who the people being violent and disorderly are. If Xunzi were here referring to how to preserve a sort of tyrannical rule and saying that the king may use anger against its own people then the people that would actually be showing dissent would be the so-called disorderly people. But that is not something Xunzi would be behind. As I mentioned above, a ruler resorting to anger to instill awe (or rather fear) unfairly through punishments will only end up causing disorder since he will delegitimize himself. I think Xunzi is here talking about military campaigns against other states as an act of offensive war since he does not believe the king can legitimize his rule through violence against his own people. Lastly, the third important thing is that anger decorated through war is effective because it instills fear (*wei* 畏) on those transgressing.

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[54] ICS Xunzi: 20/99/10-13;

[55] Xunzi also mentions the problems of happiness (*le* 樂) when it comes to rewards which I quoted above. When Xunzi places happiness and anger as oppositional he argues why both are equally problematic whereas as we saw in the *Zhuangzi* why happiness is problematic is not explained in detail. ICS Xunzi: 24/118/17-24/119/1; Hutton, 259.

Xunzi's views on anger show a great understanding of human psychology and political legitimacy. Anger cannot be a tool for justice within one's one state for the same reason it is instrumental at war. Anger for Xunzi leads to quick decisions, excessive punishments and violence, a lack of fear of death or injury (which the *Zhuangzi* also pointed out and is supported by empirical data today), as well as a feeling of self-importance. The fear comes from the knowledge that anger might make one excessive which is good at war, since one wants to appear ruthless and willing to to great violent extents. For those very same reasons, anger is detrimental in dealing with one's own people. One needs to appear righteous and measured in dealing with one's own people since acting otherwise will either instill fear, which drives people away, or anger, which leads to revolts:

> 荀卿子說齊相曰：處勝人之埶，行勝人之道，天下莫忿，湯武是也。處勝人之埶，不以勝人之道，厚於有天下之埶，索為匹夫不可得也，桀紂是也。然則得勝人之埶者，其不如勝人之道遠矣！夫主相者，勝人以埶也，是為是，非為非，能為能，不能為不能，併己之私欲，必以道，夫公道通義之可以相兼容者，是勝人之道也。
>
> Xunzi attempted to persuade the prime minister of Qi, saying, "If one occupies a position of authority that prevails over the people, but also practices the way that prevails over the people, then nobody under Heaven will regard one with anger–such were Tang and Wu. If one occupies a position of authority that prevails over people, but does not practice the way that prevails over people, then although one might be so generously endowed as to have a position of authority over the whole world, one could not successfully seek even to finish out one's days as a mere commoner–such were the tyrants Jie and Zhou. That being the case,

> obtaining a position of authority that prevails over the people is far inferior to the way that prevails over people.[56]

The anger that Xunzi is talking about is a sign that the ruler is not ruling well. In other words, the people can use their anger to show dissent and the ruler should interpret that anger as dissent since the people would not show anger towards a ruler who was not a tyrant. Here is one case where Xunzi clearly associated anger with a communal self-interest which is not excessive and which is the result of the people perceiving that the ruler is not acting correctly. For Xunzi, it is not enough to be in a position of authority, one needs to act in a way that will be accepted by the people.

Interestingly, however, in the case of ministers remonstrating, which would be a form of showing dissent, they must navigate a careful balance which neither shows one's own anger nor elicits the king's anger:

> 為人臣下者，有諫而無訕，有亡而無疾，有怨而無怒。
>
> In serving as another's minister or subordinate, you may remonstrate with him, but you may not disparage them. You may leave him, but you may not simply run off. You may be upset at him, but you may not act in anger towards him.[57]

This passage is reminiscent of the passage in the *Mengzi* where Mengzi himself is accused of having acted in anger because he took too long to leave the state. In this case Xunzi makes clear distinctions between what it means to remonstrate appropriately or inappropriately. Remonstrating involves communicating to the king one's disapproval. If

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[56] ICS Xunzi: 16/76/12-15; Hutton, 166.

[57] ICS Xunzi: 27/129/8; Hutton, 296.

the king decides not to uptake one's disapproval then one can further protest by leaving the state. Xunzi is pointing out the difference between showing dissent and slandering, and then between leaving the state to make a point, and running off. The difference between those two scenarios is the difference between being critical of the king (*yuan*, 怨) and acting angrily. *Yuan* is in many ways similar to anger, in that it is a feeling which also arises from a perception that one is acting incorrectly but it does not have any actively aggressive associations. Part of the reasoning behind Xunzi's recommendation stems from the common worry of how to survive as a minister since one's life is at the mercy of the king. But also that ultimately Xunzi does not believe the anger of a minister is an effective method of motivating the king:

> 有大忠者，有次忠者，有下忠者，有國賊者：以德覆君而化之，大忠也；以德調君而輔之，次忠也；以是諫非而怒之，下忠也 [...]
>
> To use one's virtue to envelop one's lord and thereby transform him is the greatest kind of loyalty. To use one's virtue to temper one's lord and thereby patch up his faults is the next kind of loyalty. To use what is right to remonstrate against what is wrong and thereby anger him is the lowest king of loyalty.[58]

By 'loyalty' Xunzi means to act in a way that best serves the king and the kingdom. Although Xunzi here does not mention the anger of the minister, but only that of the king, it would be difficult to understand what he means without it. Xunzi is not saying that one ought not to remonstrate, as we saw in the previous passage. He is merely pointing out a reality which is that expressing dissent, whether it is justified or not, runs the risk of

[58] ICS Xunzi: 13/65/8-12; Hutton 138.

being perceived as a transgression. The king is hierarchically above the minister, and more powerful, which means that it will be easy for the king to perceive one's individual remonstration as an illegitimate criticism. In that sense, dissent only works when one is in a position of sufficient power to instill the potential of fear for Xunzi. The king should take seriously the anger of his people because they can ultimately cause him harm, and for that same reason he ought to take the attack of neighboring states seriously.[59] In other words, it rests on an idea that "might is right" with the added ingredient of having a legitimate reason for disagreement.

Conclusion

From a contemporary perspective, Xunzi might be said to sacrifice too much for the sake of order. However, what he offers is a sophisticated system that still allows for dissent without leading to disorder. He is invested in hierarchical differences in a way that would make us uncomfortable today but he finds a way for everyone to be able to give proper expression to their anger without putting themselves and others in danger. One strand of the *Zhuangzi* also leaves us with a view where the only way in which one should exercise one's agency is to become somewhat aloof by today's standards. Another strand of the *Zhuangzi* so limits the space for appropriate anger that the anger might not even be recognizable as such. However, one could also understand the *Zhuangzi* as

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[59] See: 凡攻人者，非以為名，則案以為利也；不然則忿之也。"In all cases those who launch offensive campaigns against others, if they are not acting for the sake of good reputation, then they are acting for the sake or profit, or if for neither of those reasons, then it is because they are angry at those whom they attack." ICS Xunzi: 10/48/9-19; Hutton, 96.

advocating for a life of contemplation and attunement to one’s own dispositions, and other’s, that focuses on what is essential, just staying alive.

Chapter III

Mistaking the Warp for the Weave:

Anger and Gender in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳

《詩》云：「載色載笑，

匪怒匪教。」此之謂也。

The *Odes* says, "With weighted looks and weighted smiles,

She teaches without anger." This describes her well.[1]

Abstract

This chapter explores the gendered representations of anger in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳 or *Biographies of Exemplary Women*, attributed to Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE).[2] I focus on the two most important themes: (1) gendered differences in the didactic role of anger; and (2) women's strategies against the anger of others. I end with a discussion of anger and female vice. In conclusion, the gendered representations of anger in the LNZ provides an important alternative to views of anger as motivated by the desire for payback and status. The LNZ, like other pre-Qin texts, understands anger very differently, and focuses on other-regarding anger, based on perceptions of wrongdoing and injustice. The LNZ also provides an important focus on the role of didactic anger by women and others.

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[1] Zhen Xiaoxia 鄭曉霞 and Lin Jianyu 林佳郁, eds. *Lienüzhuan huibian* 列女傳匯編, 10 volumes (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan, 2007), volume 4, 446, quoting the *Shi jing* ode "Pan Shui"泮水 (ode 299). The phrase 匪怒伊教 (she teaches without anger) is transcribed in the LNZ as 匪教匪教.

[2] Unless otherwise noted, citations from the LNZ are from *Lienüzhuan huibian*, volume 4. LNZ translations are indebted to Anne Behnke Kinney, *Exemplary Women of Early China The Lienüzhuan of Liu Xiang*, (Columbia University Press, 2014), often modified.

Introduction

The *LNZ* is one of the few early Chinese sources dedicated to stories about women.[3] It presents historiographical problems, since its life stories present idealized depictions of women. In the context of the present discussion, it is these very idealizations that make it a rich source for the study of the normative status of anger. The characters showcased as exemplary will be represented as dealing with anger in an exemplary way, if there is room for anger there at all, and the people that are presented as vicious will deal with anger viciously.[4]

The stories in the LNZ have a consistent structure of at least three components: (1) a brief statement the subject's virtues, accomplishments, and abilities; (2) one or more "life stories" that illustrate these virtues in practice in her life, including an assessment of the life story and (usually) an illustrative quotation from the *Shijing*; and (3) a "eulogy" (*song* 頌), which summarizes the subject's virtuous deeds and lists her virtues. It is striking that four eulogies refer to anger specifically.

The LNZ consists of one hundred and twenty-five exemplary life stories of women from legendary times to the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE). The work itself is thematically divided into seven chapters based on types of women in their relation to

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[3] For additional historical sources on women see Clara Wing-chung Ho, ed., *Overt & Covert Treasures: Essays on the Sources for Chinese Women's History* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012); Joan Judge and Ying Hu, *Beyond Exemplar Tales* (University Of California Press, 2011); Chenyang Li, The Sage and the Seconf Sex (Open Court, 2000); Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, *Confucianism And Women* (SUNY Press, 2007). For women and virtue in the LNZ see Lisa Raphals, *Sharing The Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early Chin*a (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).

[4] But the fact that in the LNZ virtue is not holistic might complicate this, since a character could in theory possess one virtue but no others.

their particular virtue (or vice): (1) Maternal rectitude (*Mu yi* 母義); (2) sage intelligence (*Xian ming* 賢明); (3) benevolent wisdom (*Ren zhi* 仁知); (4) purity and obedience (*Zhen shun* 真順); (5) chastity and righteousness (*Jie yi* 節義); (6) skill in argument (*Bian tong* 辯通): and (7) pernicious and depraved (*Nie bi* 孼嬖).[5]

Twenty-eight *LNZ* stories mention anger explicitly (*nu* 怒, *fen* 忿).[6] The agents of anger in this text are most often men (men sixteen times and women twelve times).[7] Their anger is most often towards women (women are the patient of their anger seven times, and men four times). However, women are the agents of anger against men (adult males and children) eleven times, and they are angry against other women one time (a mother in law towards a daughter in law in 2.9). This information does not say much on its own but it does paint the general picture of the *LNZ*'s gendered representations of anger.[8] Four stories mention anger in the verse summary of the life story which showcase the main concerns with regards to anger in the *LNZ*: (1) the didactic role of anger, both because of

[5] There is an eighth chapter with supplementary biographies (*Xu lie nü chuan* 續列女傳).

[6] As in the previous chapters, I have chosen not to incorporate *yuan* 怨 since we have good reason to treat it as a close but different emotion.

[7] Of course, it is difficult to define whether that is a significant difference or not. Statistically speaking one would have to use a chi-square test to determine whether or not the frequency in which men and women are angry in the LNZ is significant in terms of gender. That would require, however, counting how many women and men appear in text, and how often they are not angry. For the purposes of this paper, that effort is not necessary since whether or not how often they are angry is significant or not has no bearance on genders expressing anger in different ways.

[8] It would be worth cross-referencing this with other historical and biographical narratives to see whether the LNZ is typical in these respects. Unfortunately, that is beyond the scope of this chapter.

its motivational role for the agent and the patient, and because of its didactic role; (2) the democratic power of rhetoric in mitigating or placating the anger of one's superiors.

Didactic Anger

It is important to note that anger has both epistemic and didactic roles, but anger is prominently used for didactic purposes in the LNZ. In accounts of what we will call epistemic anger both the characters in the story and the reader learn from the depiction of anger in the story. In accounts of *didactic anger*, the expression of anger is deliberate and for a didactic purpose. Didactic anger is therefore narrower in its effects than epistemic anger. In the LNZ there are important differences of gender in the use of didactic anger.[9]

There are many examples of female didactic anger. One set of stories showcases examples of the didactic anger of mothers towards their sons; another set consists of the didactic anger of wives towards their husbands. However, there is a tension in the relationship between teaching and anger: should didactic anger be pure performance–meaning that the agent is not in fact angry but is rather performing anger as a method of motivating change–or can the didactically angry agent also experience anger? In other

[9] The question arises as to whether that means that didactic anger is always performative in a more strict sense than anger or any other emotion. Does didactic anger always have to be pretend anger? I do not see why it needs to be merely performative, as opposed to experienced, and performed in an intentional way. In my mind didactic anger can be felt, but it need not be. Anger always has epistemic value to some degree; people can always learn something (both the agent, the patient, and an observer) but one can be the agent of anger and choose to teach a particular lesson, in a particular way, to the patient of the anger. One can also not actually be angry, and choose to perform anger in order to instruct the pretend patient of the anger. People who take anger to be irrational, or destructive, or about payback, might be skeptical that anger can ever perform such a constructive role.

words, does the LNZ value the felt anger of didactic agents, or does it recommend an attitude of distance and reservation from this strong emotion?

The Didactic Anger of Mothers

The Mother of Juan Buyi

"The Mother of Juan Buyi" (*Juan Buyi Mu* 雋不疑母) oversees her son's work as Han Governor of the Capital:

> 還，其母輒問所平反，母喜笑。飲食言語異於他時；或無所出，母怒，為之不食。由是故不疑為吏，嚴不殘。
>
> When he returned, his mother would always immediately ask if he had overturned any convictions and inquire how many people had been spared the death penalty. When Buyi had overturned the convictions of many people, his mother would smile, drink, eat, and talk with a great joy that was markedly different from her usual behavior. But if no one had been released, his mother would become angry and refuse to eat. Because of this, Buyi was strict but not cruel in the administration of his official duties.[10]

She manifests approval at her son's compassion, and manifests anger (*nu*) when he is cruel. Juan Buyi clearly values her opinion, and she uses it to shape his morality. This seems to be an example of anger without reservation, and it is typical of many LNZ accounts of female didactic anger. The story ends with this assessment:

> 君子謂：「不疑母能以仁教。」《詩》云：「昊天疾威，敷于下土。」言天道好生，疾威虐之行於下土也。

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[10] LNZ 8.8, 650, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 162.

> A man of discernment would say, “Buyi’s mother was able to teach with benevolence.” The Odes says, “Compassionate Heaven's angry terrors / extend through the world below.” This means that the dao of Heaven loves life and hates cruelty in the world.[11]

Juan Buyi's mother, who teaches with anger, is praised for her benevolence (ren 仁) and compared to Heaven's (tian 天) “animosity” (ji 疾) toward tyranny and cruelty.[12] By contrast, Mencius's mother is praised as a virtuous mother for teaching without anger.

The Mother of Mencius

“The Mother of Meng Ke of Zou” (*Zou Meng Ke mu* 鄒孟軻母) describes four didactic incidents at four points in Mencius’s life. First, the story describes the mother of Mencius (henceforward Mengmu 孟母) moving house three in order to find a suitable environment to raise her son. Second, when he fails to advance in his studies, she uses a knife to slash her weaving, and terrifies Mencius into improving in his studies. After his marriage, she intervenes in a disagreement, reproaches him, and asks him to apologize to his wife. Finally, in her old age, when Mencius is worried about his future in Qi, she says she, a widow, must now obey her adult son. The assessment praises her for “understanding the *dao* of women” (*zhi fu dao* 知婦道) and for “teaching without anger.”[13]

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[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Here *ji* is contrasted to *hao* 好 (to like, cherish, love), and means to strongly dislike or disapprove of something.

[13] 匪怒匪教. LNZ 1.11, 443. Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 18. See the epigram above.

Although the LNZ never describes her as angry, Mengmu's life story suggests didactic anger. When her son under-performs in his studies, her response is dramatic. When he asks why she cut her weaving, she frightens him by explaining that a woman's livelihood rests on weaving and a man's on study. Was she angry or was this a performance of feigned anger? It is hard to say, but the LNZ strongly associates knives and violence with anger and rarely depicts a woman with a knife, which makes this passage even more dramatic.

It is telling that the quotation of Ode 299 on "teaching without anger" appears only after the fourth incident in the life story. At this time in their lives, she is a widow and he is an adult; she no longer needs to teach him with anger. Even if she did not welcome the prospect of his leaving Qi, her virtuous anger is always other-regarding, never self-regarding.

There is some apparent tension between the portrayals of anger in these two life stories. Mengmu is a virtuous mother because she taught without anger; Juan's mother is virtuous because she used anger in teaching her son. How can we reconcile these two views? One explanation is differences of time frame and context. The life story of Juan Buyi's mother describes one incident, while that of Mengmu describes interactions over many years. Nor can we take the "teaching without anger" slogan as a blanket endorsement because "anger" means different things in different contexts. The "anger" of Juan Buyi's mother is evidence that she values and dislikes the right things; she teaches what is right and wrong as a result of her compassionate feelings. She also expresses

disapproval in an appropriate way, by refusing to eat. Mengmu's anger manifests in the context of her role as an elderly widow; here the emphasis is on correct ritual, rather than benevolence. It was appropriate for her to express anger as a parent to a young child, but not as a widow to a mature adult. In addition, Mencius and Juan Buyi are acting badly in very different ways. The only victim of the young Mencius' negligence is the adult Mencius, whereas Juan's judicial decisions hold the power of life or death.

The story of Mengmu raises important issues about the perceived status of anger and the perceived nature of anger. The LNZ shows a great concern for egotistical and violent tendencies of anger, particularly in those in positions of power. For these reasons, Mengmu is a virtuous mother because she has distilled what is useful about anger, and most important for didactic purposes: signaling that certain behavior is wrong and motivating change.

To sum up what these two biographies show: Normative statements in the *LNZ* are extremely situational, and therefore we cannot take the reference to the ode of teaching without anger as a blanket statement. We must, instead, look at the salient characteristics of the story. Anger means two different things in these two passages. In the case of Buyi's mother, to be angry is evidence that one values and dislikes the right things.[14] The passage highlights that she felt the right things, and that she was an effective teacher because of it. She is said to teach with benevolence because she teaches what is

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[14] What the anger Buyi's mother showcases is in the spirit of what Aristotle says: "The person who is angry at the right things and toward the right people, and also in the right way, at the right time, and for the right length of time, is praised." (N.E. 1126a) As I showed Mencius also believes that the virtuous person is angry in the right ways, but it is much more explicit in the *Lienüzhuan*.

right and wrong as a result of her compassionate feelings, which according to the *Mencius* are the sprout of benevolence.[15] Furthermore, she teaches her son by expressing her values appropriately (i.e. not by hitting him, or poisoning him, etc., but by refusing to eat.

In the case of Mengmu, her anger is set in opposition to her role as an old widowed woman, and in the context of whose interests come first. In other words, ritual is emphasized, not benevolence. Notice too that in the passage of Buyi's mother, the summary talks about the anger of Heaven, but she is said to teach with benevolence. Both the anger of Heaven and hers arise out of a love for life and a dislike for cruelty and tyranny. It could be the case that the word anger is perceived to have too many negative connotations for the imagined audience for a passage to be able to end by saying "Buyi's mother was able to teach with anger," what is important is that her anger arises out of compassion for other people's suffering.[16] It is also likely that Heaven can be described as angry because of Heaven's hierarchical supreme position, whereas it would be too daring to make a statement that a woman's virtue lies in her anger given her social position. Evidence for this is found in the fact that she performs her anger through self-harm. No man in the *LNZ* performs his anger in this way. Further evidence of this is Mengmu. Her

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[15] See *Mencius* 2A6.

[16] And as I showed in the previous chapters the word anger (*nu*) does tend to invoke negative connotations which is why authors tend to use anger as metonymy for everything that is bad about emotions in general. Therefore it makes sense that this text too would disavow anger, and attribute any perceived benefits to a more original cause, such as compassion. But as the text itself admits all that anger shows is a kind of disapproval which does signal when felt appropriately that one cares about the right things.

anger is gestured towards, since she uses what might usually be understood to be an angry expression (violently breaking something to show disapproval) to illustrate a point without in fact ever being called angry.

Mengmu's passage raises important issues about the perceived status of anger and the perceived nature of anger. The *LNZ* shows a great concern for egotistical and violent tendencies of anger, particularly in those in positions of power. For these reasons, Mengmu is a virtuous mother because she has distilled what is useful about anger most important for didactic purposes: (1) signaling that certain behavior is wrong; (2) motivating change. These observations, however, do not dissolve the tension I described above but they do clarify it. Anger, when felt, signals to oneself that what one values, and shows to others our approval and disapproval. This anger is good when it sprouts out of compassion for others. For these reasons, when one is in a position of authority by the patient of the anger it has the power to signal wrongdoing and motivate change. The tension I highlighted about anger is a tension between two virtues, that of benevolence and ritual. Appropriate anger is the result of the correct mediation of those two virtues.

The Didactic Anger of Wives

The LNZ has several accounts of wives using didactic anger to admonish their husbands. These stories are more complex than the stories of mothers' didactic anger, and their success is less clear. "The Wife and Daughter of Wang Zhang" (*Wang Zhang qi nü* 王章妻女, 8.13) provides two examples of a wife admonishing her husband, but her

anger is validated in only one case. In their youth, she saves him from illness and despair by angry criticism:[17]

> 仲卿為書生，孪於長安，獨與妻居。疾病，無被，臥牛衣中；與妻訣，泣涕。妻呵怒曰：「仲卿尊貴在朝廷，誰愈於仲卿者？今疾病困厄，不自激昂，乃反涕泣，何鄙也！」後章仕宦至京兆尹。
> As a student, Zhongqing studied in Chang'an, living alone with his wife. Once he fell ill, and lacking a quilt, he slept under cattle-warming blankets. When he began to utter his dying words, weeping profusely, his wife snorted and became angry, saying "You are honored and valued at court. Indeed, who is more honored than you? But now that you have become ill and fallen on hard times, you don´t rouse yourself to action but instead weep and snivel. How pathetic!" Afterward, Zhang's official rank reached that of Governor of the Capital.[18]

The wife's anger is the result of Zhang harming himself by allowing himself to despair.[19] She is not the subject of the anger, she is successfully angry for his sake and with the clear intention to instill in him the motivation to act that he is missing at that moment. In fact, in her second admonishment she tries to appeal to the previous instance to restrain him from endangering his life, but her reminder fails, and he does in fact die after being imprisoned. Zhang's wife is praised for knowing when to act and when to stand back. Her husband did not rouse to action when he should have on his own, but did so when he should not have. She is praised despite the fact that her husband ignored her advice in the

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[17] His name is Wang Zhang, also known as Wang Zhongqing.

[18] LNZ 8.13, 659, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 167.

[19] Of course, her husband's demise would have negative consequences for herself as well but she does not appeal to her own future, or even their shared future, only his own. This is different from for example Andromache's appeal to Hector where she explicitly appeals to his compassion for her and their baby's future. None of the women's anger that is portrayed as appropriate in the *Lienüzhuan* appeals to the women's future, or even their shared future. It is also a pattern found in the *Mencius*, the *Xunzi*, and the *Mozi*, where they appeal to the self-interest of the person in power for the sake of people.

second instance. It seems important that when her recommendation failed she was not angry, but simply reminded him of how he got a previous situation wrong. She was appealing to her authority by showing how he had been wrong in the past, but he insisted in this instance that women and children did not understand the court. The passage goes on to show that both his wife and his daughter understood the injustices of the court better than him.

The expression of anger figures in differences between the remonstrances of mothers or wives and ministers. Admonition and anger very often go explicitly hand in hand in the LNZ, in ways that would never occur in a minister's remonstrance to a ruler; it is appropriate for a wife to express anger toward her husband or son, but never for a minister toward a ruler.[20]

For both women and men in the LNZ, anger is a first resort for an agent who perceives a wrong and desires change. If the the expression of anger fails, they resort to other strategies, such as self-harm, tears, withdrawal, or departure. The strategies vary but they share the same goal, which is the desire for change, rather than for "payback."

Differences in the manifestation of anger by mothers toward sons and by wives toward husbands also illustrate how one's perceived status in the social hierarchy affects the efficacy of anger. Put another way, didactic anger is a skill that requires fine-tuned navigation of complex hierarchical dynamics. In the case of mothers and sons, these

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[20] For example, the Wife of Dazi of Tao "repeatedly admonished him but it was of no use"(其妻數諫不用). The LNZ portrays her standing alone, holding her child and weeping. While this is not a direct expression of anger, it clearly shows her dissatisfaction. Then, much like a minister in comparable circumstances, she requests to leave her husband. LNZ 2.9, 469, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 36.

dynamics inevitably change over time; whereas the dynamics of husband-wife relationships vary according to circumstance.

Finally, it is important to note that all these "performances" of anger are always other-regarding, and never involve personal slight, offense, payback or punishment. Instead, the LNZ agents of anger act for the sake of the virtuous future of their sons, husbands, and families. Nonetheless, there are no guarantees of success, which depends on whether the patient of the anger respects the authority of the agent.

Male Didactic Anger

Admittedly, it is difficult to find of male didactic anger in the LNZ.[21] In Chapter 1, I showed an example in the *Mozi*, and a few others in the *Mencius*. In both cases, the intention of the agent of the anger was to enlighten and motivate the patient of the anger, not to punish or receive payback–potentially because the later strategies might just motivate one to avoid doing the thing that makes them angry without any further notion as to *why* one ought not to do it. In other words, punishment and payback may also motivate the patient to change but for the sake of not receiving punishment as opposed to out of some realization of some deemed higher end. Someone like Confucius (or Thrasymachus) would argue that then people might just be motivated to *appear* virtuous. One might simply pretend to have changed one's behavior in front of the angry person, and thus has not actually learned anything about self-cultivation, etc. In many cases angry

[21] For another possible instance of ineffective male didactic anger see "Wen Jiang of Duke Zhuang of Lu" (*Lu huan Wen Jiang* 魯桓文姜), LNZ 7.5, 619, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 140.

men kill the patient of their anger, thus preventing any kind of learning.[22] One could argue that they serve as an example for others but the text never mentions that; and we might wonder whether they would learn the behavior is bad in terms of lack of virtue, or whether they simply learn not to do it because it leads to death. In fact, severe punishment and rewards are suggested by thinkers like Hanfeizi, sometimes characterized as a political realist, who does not believe one can rely on people becoming good, but one can rely on their aversion to punishment and desire for pleasure. Certainly for someone like Hanfeizi, punishments would constitute a kind of learning, but not one that leads to virtue.

A potential example appears in 1.9 "Jing Jiang of the Lineage of Lu," where Wenbo uses the supposed anger of a powerful minister to convince his mother Jing Jiang 敬姜 to stop spinning:

> 文伯曰：「以歜之家，而主猶績，懼干季孫之怒，其以歜為不能事主乎！」
>
> 敬姜歎曰：「魯其亡乎！使童子備官而未之聞耶！居，吾語汝。昔聖王之處民也，擇瘠土而處之，勞其民而用之，故長王天下。夫民勞則思，思則善心生，逸則淫，淫則忘善，忘善則惡心生。
>
> Wenbo said, "In a family such as mine, though you are the matriarch, you continue to spin. I'm afraid this will provoke Jisun's anger. Won't he think that I am incapable of providing for you?."

[22] Or in the case of Xiang Yu, an enemy of the Han, he boiled the already dead body of a woman who sacrificed herself for the Han in anger which only served to make the Han even more determined to stop him (8.6).

> Jing Jiang sighed, saying, "Lu must be going to perish. They order youths who know nothing about such things to fill office. Sit. Let me explain this to you. In antiquity, when the sage kings settled the people, they chose poor land and settled them there. They utilized the populace by putting them to work, so their rule of all under Heaven endured. Now, when the people labor they become thoughtful, and if they are thoughtful they develop hearts that are good. If they are idle they become dissolute, if they become dissolute they forget goodness, and if they forget goodness they develop hearts that are bad."[23]

It is interesting that he appeals to the anger of a duke to try to convince his mother to stop doing something. Wenbo's tactic fails, because he is more interested in Jisun's good opinion of him than in actually being a good son. She makes clear that, were she to stop spinning and weaving, she would cease to be a good mother, which in turn could harm Wenbo. Her correction does succeed, and Wenbo continues to benefit from her instruction, including the performance of anger.

There appears to be an important difference in the LNZ between female didactic anger, which is always other-regarding, and male didactic anger, which is always self-regarding. Put differently, women are positioned as human givers and men as human beings. If so, the men of the LNZ teach through punishment because they are interested in avoiding their own discomfort, whereas the very virtue of the women of the LNZ depends on their providing moral support.

In summary, anger is clearly gendered in the LNZ. Male anger is typically expressed through violence, either as payback or as corrective punishment. Furthermore, the text often addresses how male anger can go wrong. The text addresses the dangers of

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[23] LNZ 1.9, 437, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 12.

male anger and what it means for a woman to navigate it virtuously, and even how women can help their male relatives deal with the anger of their hierarchical superiors within the family.

Navigating Anger: Mitigating and Placating Anger

While the previous sections focused on the gendered differences between the agents of anger, in this section I move onto the strategies and responses the patients of anger have, particularly when faced by inappropriate anger. In the context of the LNZ, inappropriate anger is characterized by agents having mistakenly appraised the situation either by perceiving that a wrong has been committed when it has not, or by shifting the blame onto the wrong agent, or at times the anger might be appropriate in that the wrong identified has been committed but the text does not deem that to be a worthy wrong.

Two main strategies are deemed virtuous. One may be praised due to one's ability to endure someone else's anger. One may also be praised by one's ability to placate through argumentation someone else's anger. Within these narratives, there are two underlying abilities that are praised in the text: The ability to avoid experiencing resentment (*yuan* 怨) even when faced by incessant waves of inappropriate anger; and second, and most prevalent, is the ability to argue one's way out of someone's anger. I will focus on two examples of the former, and spend more time on the latter since it is more informative when it comes to the basis under which anger is judged.

Dealing With Violent Anger, Avoiding One's Own Resentment:

The LNZ starts with the biography of Ehuang 娥皇 and Nüying 女英, the two consorts of the sage king Shun 舜,[24] and how they placated the anger of Shun's father. Daughters of the sage king Yao 堯, they are superior to Shun in social rank, but the text praises them for taking a deliberately subordinate role:

> 承舜於下，以尊事卑，終能勞苦，瞽叟和寧，卒享福祐。
>
> Sutaning and following him [Shun] as his subordinates. Though nobly born, they willingly served the humble, and to the end they were able to labor and bear hardships. They placated Gusou, and finally enjoyed happiness and blessings.[25]

In the biography of the two consorts, Shun's mother hates (*zeng* 憎) him and loves his brother Xiang 象 despite the fact that the sage king Yao notices Shun's virtue, and Xiang is dissolute. Shun's father is described as perverse (*wan* 頑), and his mother as duplicitous (*yin* 嚚), yet Shun was able to harmonize and placate (*xie rou* 諧柔) them. He maintained internal composure (*nie zhi* 內治) and harbored no ill will (*jian ji* 姦意). This story is puzzling for several reasons. Placed within the chapter on "maternal models" it is about consorts, not mothers, with more emphasis on Shun than on his wives.

One possibility is that they are exercising maternal roles, insofar as they observe, guide, and support Shun on Yao's behalf. As daughters of the Son of Heaven, they are his

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[24] A mythical king prior to the Xia (夏) Dynasty (2205-1766 BCE).

[25] LNZ 1.1, 423-24, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 3.

superiors, but as consorts, they deliberately take on a subordinate role, and their moral authority over him inevitably reaches an end point. Finally, their role in the story is focused on their service to Shun, as Mengmu's is to Mencius.

The story shows them supporting Shun's filiality despite extreme, and unjustified anger:

> 父母欲殺舜，舜猶不怨，怒之不已。舜往于田號泣，日呼旻天，呼父母。惟害若茲，思慕不已。不怨其弟，篤厚不怠。
> Although Sun's parents wanted to kill him, Shun never harbored resentment towards them. They raged against him incessantly, so that Shun would go forth into the fields, wailing and weeping. Daily he cried out to merciful Heaven; he cried out to his father and mother. Though they tried to harm him, his feeling of affection for them endured. He bore no resentment against his younger brother but treated him with sincere and unfailing generosity.[26]

It is rare in the LNZ to present anger in this way, but the story is only effective if the anger portrayed is excessive. It is because the anger of Shun's family had no basis that it is a test of his filiality. Ehuang and Nüying advise him meet all his family's demands, despite his awareness of their plot to kill him; and they devise ways to protect him without impeding his ability to do this.

The wife of Dazi of Tao (2.9, discussed above) presents another example of avoiding resentment at anger. When she fails to correct Dazi's behavior, her mother-in-law reacts with anger (*nu*). Even after she explains the situation and asks to leave her husband, the mother-in-law remains angry (*nu*) and expels them. Nonetheless, after Dazi

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[26] *Ibid.*

is put to death, his wife returns to care for the mother-in-law, despite their differences, and the text explicitly praises her for this.[27]

Shun and the wife of Dazi show that one's position with respect to the agent of the anger, and one's relationship with them, is what determines what is considered a virtuous response. Shun is a sage king, but also a son. The wife of Dazi, can express her disapproval to him, but can do little to convince her mother-in-law.

Great Rhetoricians against anger

As briefly mentioned above, the striking representation of female virtuous rhetoricians in the *LNZ* resolves one of the most pressing problems in the previous texts referred to: how to deal with the anger of hierarchical superiors. So far I have shown how virtuous mothers and wives will sometimes use their anger to change their sons and husbands, respectively. But what happens when a duke is about to kill someone in anger? Can anything be done about it? In the LNZ, more often than not it is women that step in to save their male relatives from a superior's punitive anger.[28]

In 6.3. "The Wife of the Bow Maker of Jin" (Jin gong gong qi 晉弓工妻), Duke Ping has waited three years for a bow he ordered, but when he shoots, his arrows do not pierce even one layer of the target. He blames the bow maker taking three years to make a terrible bow. He is angry (*nu*) and wants to execute the man. The wife of the bow

[27] Cf. 5.10 "The Loyal Concubine of the Master of Zhou" (*Zhou wang zhong qie* 周主忠妾), LNZ 563.

[28] In none of the examples are the rhetoricians persuading someone to get over justified anger.

maker intervenes. She introduces herself as the daughter of an armor craftsman and the wife of a bow maker. She makes three arguments to dissuade him from killing her husband. The first focuses on the benevolence of former kings, who were able to forgive actual bandits: “Duke Mu of Qin encountered bandits who ate the meat of his fine steed, but he gave them wine to drink.”[29] The second addresses the question of blameworthiness: Duke Ping has put blame on the wrong person. He does not understand the labor and exquisite materials that went into the bow, and wrongly directs his anger at the bow maker, rather than himself:

> 此四者，皆天下之妙選也，而君不能以穿一札，是君之不能射也，而反欲殺妾之夫，不亦謬乎！
> Since these four things are among the most select and extraordinary materials in the world, your inability to pierce even one layer of armor must be due to your inability to shoot. Yet you want to kill my husband, isn’t this mistaken?[30]

In other words, her arguments run as follows:

(1) Let us presume my husband is guilty, a bandit of sorts, an actual good king would be able to extend kindness and benevolence towards him and help him instead of kill him (and in fact, if you were benevolent you would be remembered in posterity).

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[29] 秦穆公，有盜食其駿馬之肉，反飲之以酒. LNZ 2.9, 579. The arguments used by these masters of rhetoric are of particular interest insofar that they show what stands in opposition to the anger of the dukes.

[30] LNZ 6.3, 579, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 113.

(2) However, you perceived the situation incorrectly. The materials and work involved in the making of the bow are the best around. Sage kings have been satisfied with less. My husband, therefore, cannot be guilty.

(3) If you do not believe me, try what I have heard of the Way of Archery, if you can still not pierce the armor then it is my husband's fault. If not, it was all you.[31]

Her skill is shown to be far superior to many others. She has no status with respect to the Duke, she is the daughter and wife of craftsmen. Yet, she manages to convince the Duke to disade his anger, something which Zhuangzi managed to do in the previous chapter only after having taken the time to disguise himself as someone the king would respect. This master rhetorician is nameless, and holds no status. Her strategy is also not like that used by Zhuangzi. Her argument does rely very slightly in appealing to his self-interest and on the authority of the past, but her main argument is that the Duke's anger is not only the opposite of benevolence, which kings should have, but most importantly in dissolving blameworthiness. Ultimately, what dissuades the duke is empirical proof that he misappraised the situation and blamed the wrong person. Perhaps, she knew that appealing to benevolence might work with some people, but ultimately what makes anger dissolve is the realization that no wrong was committed.

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[31] For further details see Raphals, "Arguments by Women in Early Chinese Texts," *Nan Nü* 3 no. 2 (2001), 157-195.

In another example, 6.5 “The Discriminating Woman of the Chu Countryside” (*Chu ye bian nü* 楚野辯女), another nameless woman uses her rhetorical skills to dissuade an angry duke from whipping her when her carriage wheel bumps into his carriage on a narrow road. Her argument relies on two now familiar strategies. She points out that the fault lies with his driver, not with her. Then she appeals to the *Book of Zhou* (*Zhoushu* 周書): “You look down on those who are less important and weaker than you.”[32] This case is interesting because the woman of Chu is using her skills in self-defense, rather than on behalf of others, as in most other life stories. The story further emphasizes her virtue when, having convinced the duke that his anger was inappropriate, she declines his offer to follow him to his state of her husband waiting for her at home. It is also significant that she does not criticize the duke for his anger per se; what is wrong is being angry at the wrong person for the wrong reason.

The Dark Side of Anger: Illicit Relations and Losing Favor

There is a separate group of biographies that portray women engaging in a particular kind of destructive anger. Said anger is linked to two main categories: (1) anger that is linked to their illicit relationships having been found out; (2) anger that is the result of losing favor or status in court. In other words, in these biographies anger is the outward expression of their previously well established vicious character.[33]

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[32] 釋僕執妾，輕其微弱, LNZ 6.5, 583, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 116.

[33] For more on this topos, see Raphals, *Sharing the Light*, 17, 61-83.

Sheng Ji 聲姬, in 7.10 "Sheng Ji of Duke Ling of Qi" (*Qi Ling Sheng Ji* 齊靈聲姬) is having illicit relations with a grandee named Qing Ke 慶剋.[34] She becomes angry when their relationship is discovered, her husband's assistant Guo Zuo 國佐 reproves Qing Ke, and he avoids her.[35] Unlike some other life stories, her response to the situation is anger, rather than fear.[36] She reacts with punitive aggression and slanders both Guo Zuo and the man who informed him of the situation.[37] Her actions lead to disorder in the state, which is only resolved by the eventual death of Sheng Ji. The LNZ portrays her anger as unjustified because of the illicit nature of the relationship. Here, as in many other contexts, an adulterous relationship is a threat to the established order of things.[38]

The long story of the anger "Xian, Wife of Huo Guang" (*Huo fu ren Xian* 霍夫人顯, LNZ 8.10) is linked to her desire for status. Xian 顯 is described as "extravagant, dissolute, and cruel, and disregarded laws and regulations."[39] Her "loyal and cautious"

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[34] She is the daughter of a marquis, the wife of a duke, and mother to the heir apparent. She is also known as Meng Zi 孟子.

[35] "For a long time afterward, Qing Ke did not venture out, but told Meng Zi, "Guo Zuo reproved me." This infuriated Meng Zi." (慶剋久不出，以告孟子曰：「國佐非我。」孟子怒.)

[36] See LNZ 5.10, 563, "The Loyal Concubine of the Master of Zhou" (*Zhou zhu zong qie* 周主忠妾), Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 100.

[37] For another example of women slandering others see LNZ 7.12 "The Two Depraved Women of Wei" (*Wei er luen nü* 衛二亂女), 635, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 151.

[38] Some claim that stories of vengeful women are cautionary tales intended to make men treat women better. In our view, their role is to police the most minute infractions committed by women in patriarchal societies. They rely on a slippery slope fallacy to keep women on a tight leash. See Mary Beard, *Women & Power* (London: Profile Books, 2017) and Manne, *Down Girl*.

[39] 奢淫虐害，不循軌度. LNZ 8.10, 653, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 163.

(*zhong shen* 忠慎) husband had supported the young emperor when his father died. Xian was not satisfied with the honors and status he received, and seeking a noble rank for her daughter Chengjun 成君, poisoned the Empress Xu 許后 during childbirth to secure an opening for her daughter. The scheme fails, and Xian becomes so angry that she spits blood, refuses to eat, and plots (unsuccessfully) to kill the new emperor. After her husband's death, her son receives a title and Xian attains the wealth and status she has always sought. Eventually, her role in the death of the former empress comes to light. Xian foments an unsuccessful rebellion. She is executed by being cut in two at the waist and her body was exposed in the market place as a cautionary tale.

A final example is the jealous anger of "Zhao Feiyan of the Han" (漢趙飛燕). The sisters Zhao Feiyan 趙飛燕 and Brilliant Companion 昭儀 are described as arrogant, seductive, unyielding, regarding everyone in the palace with jealous suspicion.[40] When one of them discovers that a concubine of the emperor was pregnant:

> 生懟，手自擣，以頭擊柱，從床上自投地，涕泣不食，曰：「今當安置我？我欲歸爾！」
> She became angry, striking herself with her own hands and dashing her head against a pillar. She then flung herself from the bed to the floor, weeping and refusing to eat, saying, "Not what are you going to do with me? Just let me die![41]

[40] 嬌媚不遜，嫉妒後宮. LNZ 8.15, 665, Kinney, 172. Envy/jealousy (嫉妒) appears in the LNZ also as an emotion that virtuous women lack. See LNZ 2.5, 461, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 31, "Fan Ji of King Zhuang of Chu" (*Chu Zhuang Fan Ji* 楚莊樊姬).

[41] LNZ 8.15, 665, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*,172.

The emperor does not understand why she is angry (dui), and he too refuses to eat. Brilliant Companion takes this as a sign of remorse for implied wrongdoing: going back on a promise (fu yue 負約) that he would never turn his back on her.[42] Their solution is to kill the concubine's child, and to kill the child (or even unborn child) of every woman the emperor chooses to favor, sometimes killing the mother as well. Brilliant Companion again becomes angry (*nu*) when one of the women refuses to kill her child.

Male and Female Anger

These stories show important differences in the LNZ portrayal of male and female anger. Angry men are consistently redeemable, whereas angry women are not, because male anger is portrayed as responsive to reason, whereas LNZ characters never attempt to persuade or reason with an angry woman. There is a partial analogy to the LNZ portrayal of vice, which is different for women than for men. One context for male anger in the LNZ is a wife's illicit relationship, which violates male expectations of female chastity that has no male equivalent. Virtuous and vicious women in the LNZ are all extremes, whereas only two men are portrayed as irredeemably vicious: the son of a vicious woman and a man so infatuated by a vicious woman that he accedes to all her wishes.[43]

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[42] According to Brilliant Companion he always said, “I will never turn my back on you” 陛下常言: 約不負汝, LNZ 8.15, 665, Kinney, *Exemplary Women*,172.

[43] See LNZ 3.10 “Shu Ji of Yang of Jin” (*Jin yang shu ji* 晉羊叔姬), 501; 7.2 “Da Ji of Zhou of Yin” (*Yin Zhou Da Ji*), 613; 7.5 “Wen Jiang of Duke Huan of Lu” (*Lu Huan Wen Jiang* 魯桓文姜), 619; and 7.11 “Dongguo Jiang of Qi” (*Qi Dongguo Jiang* 齊東郭姜), 633.

In the case of some of the irredeemably vicious women, their conduct arises from the desire for status. For example, Brilliant Companion's jealousy and violence arise from this desire, which in her case, depends on being the sole mother of the emperor's male heir. Similarly, Xian, the wife of Huo Guang sought status through her daughter's proximity to the emperor. Both contrast to the virtue of Empress Wang 王后, who becomes angry at attempts to remarry her after her husband's death.[44] Her anger, its violent expression by caning her complicit attendants, and her subsequent illness and suicide, attest to the depth of her chaste and virtuous loyalty to her husband. Empress Wang cares about others, but she also cares for her own image, and is capable of defending it against servants who cannot defend themselves. Faced with an impossible situation, her eventual suicide is entirely consistent with the themes of anger in the LNZ. By contrast, the anger of vicious women is self-regarding anger, which is part of their capriciousness and concern with status. Brilliant Companion's anger has a particularly female flavor since it arises from jealousy, an emotion never attributed to men who are angry at unfaithful wives.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has explored the gendered representations of appropriate and inappropriate anger in the LNZ, and noted several important gendered differences

[44] See LNZ 8.16, 667, "Empress Wang, Consort of Filial Emperor Ping of the Han" (漢孝平王后). For discussion see Raphals, *Sharing the Light*, 18-19, and note 28 and Kinney, *Exemplary Women*, 173.

between male and female anger. First, male anger is always portrayed as eliciting violence, but also as being susceptible to reason and argument. Female anger has a wider range of expressions and fewer curbs; no one in the LNZ ever tries to curb or reason with female inappropriate anger. Second, male anger is never a sign of bad character, whereas inappropriate female anger is portrayed as representative of character. Women must navigate anger skillfully to avoid a charge of depravity and vice. Similarly, male self-regarding anger is consistently linked to honor, and female self-regarding anger to capriciousness. Usually it is a sign of imminent catastrophe, sometimes extending to the entire state or to several generations in a family.

Nonetheless, some women in the LNZ play a unique role as master rhetoricians and teachers. Ultimately, the LNZ shows that at least in the mind of its imagined audience anger enjoyed a complicated reputation as the the figures of Mother Meng, Empress Wang, and the Sage King Shun show. However, this apparent ambivalence can be explained by the distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding anger. Self-regarding anger is problematic from a societal point of view due to its associations with violence, often against the innocent. By contrast, the LNZ restricts appropriate anger to didactic anger, as in the Mozi and the Mencius.

Questions remain about "performative" anger, such as that of Mengmu, and these questions ultimately hinge on the question of what an emotion is. Without addressing that question here, we can imagine feigned anger as filling a gap between a strongly emotion component of something we truly care about that makes us angry, things we care about,

but without the emotional trigger. It is possible that, because Mengmu is concerned with long-term future consequences, she is not "angry," but nonetheless uses feigned anger to communicate the urgency of her instruction to her son. Such feigned anger is clearly other-regarding.

In conclusion, the gendered representations of anger in the LNZ provides an important alternative to views of anger as motivated by the desire for payback and status. The LNZ, like other pre-Qin texts, understands anger very differently, and focuses on other-regarding anger, based on perceptions of wrongdoing and injustice. The LNZ also provides an important focus on the role of didactic anger by women and others.

Chapter IV

Watch the Throne: The Uses and Abuses of Political Anger in the Homeric Epics

It is not aggressiveness that triggers conflicts
but conflicts that trigger aggressiveness.
–Norbert Elias,"Violence and Civilization: The State Monopoly"

αἴθ’ οὕτως ἐπὶ πᾶσι χόλον τελέσει’ Ἀγαμέμνων.
Might Agamemnon accomplish his anger thus against all his enemies.
–The *Iliad*, Book 4

Go back and proclaim to him all that I tell you,
openly, so other Achaians may turn against him in anger
if he hopes yet one more time to swindle some other Danaan,
wrapped as he is forever in shamelessness; yet he would not,
bold as a dog though he be, dare look in my face any longer.
He cheated me and did me hurt. Let him not beguile me
with words again.
–The *Iliad,* Book 9

Abstract

The dynamics of anger in the *Iliad* have been difficult to pin down. With most scholars claiming that they are a mix of personal, ethical, moral, and social dynamics bound in some way by Homeric honor. Anger in the Odyssey has been ignored, despite making key appearances. I argue that anger in Homer is predominantly political. I begin by explaining what political anger is and what the political is in a Homeric context. I then focus on the debate between Agamemnon and Achilles, and how Agamemnon and Achilles show two types of political anger. Lastly, I show the development of political anger in Telemachus.

Introduction

In previous chapters I looked at *other-regarding anger* and *self-regarding anger*. That distinction is not particularly useful in Homer given that honor systems are always

self-regarding.[1] Therefore, Homeric characters are not troubled by *self-regarding* anger (and *other-regarding* anger is often accompanied by or discussed in terms of pity).[2] Homeric heroes care unashamedly about status and honor, *timē*. For that reason, anger is necessary (in fact perhaps even essential) to Homeric heroes. My main goal is to complicate the perceived normative status of anger in Homer which has so far been cataloged in combination of the ambiguous realms of the personal, the social, or the moral. The problem with that understanding of Homeric anger is that it often leads to the privileging of pity which I argue is not supported by the text, nor by Homeric ideals, in the case of the *Iliad*.[3] Interpretations of anger in Homer also seem to suffer too much from views about anger that we bring to the text that are not supported by close readings. We might be troubled by the violent anger that many Homeric heroes express, partly because we have a hard time coming to grips with the importance of honor, but as I hope to show what troubled Homeric characters was not violent anger but how to navigate the conflict between unbound nature of the honor system and the needs of the community.

I have so far mentioned but not clearly delineated the political and moral spheres in which anger operates, and therefore I have talked about the two spheres indistinctly. However, in this chapter I show that in Homer anger is predominantly *political*, it emphasizes the 'power' aspect of anger, or the authority and social position of the agent

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[1] More on this below.

[2] For example see Glen Most, "Anger and Pity in Homer's *Iliad,*" in *Ancient Anger Perspectives*, 50-75.

[3] Most, "Pity in Homer's *Iliad*," 50-75.

of the anger, as opposed to only the validity of the propositional content of anger (what the anger is *about*).[4] My claim is that anger in the *Iliad* becomes frivolous if understood from what can be called the more personal enterprise of ethics but becomes epistemically invaluable from the point of view of politics. For example, anger in the *Iliad* is both a sign of the gradual breakdown of the political legitimacy of Agamemnon, and threat to community organization; in the *Odyssey* anger reestablishes order in Ithaka and serves no purpose for Odyseus outside of that political issue, to the point that once that order is established amnesia is necessary to maintain it.[5] The political aims at order, and the moral or ethical does not.[6] In fact, what we might call Homeric ethics, which is an ethics of honor, forgoes considerations of order entirely. In that sense the value of Homeric anger lies beyond honor.

I spend the first section explaining how the political applies to the Homeric epics, as well as how the political and not the ethical circumscribes anger. Both terms require

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[4] I am not arguing that what I am calling 'political' and other types of anger are mutually exclusive. I am simply trying to capture an important role that anger plays alongside honor policing, etc.

[5] Odysseus is angry at the suitors. He articulates the wrongdoing in terms of the disorderly banqueting of the suitors. He plans his retribution with Athena, who uses her own anger to help bring it to fruition. Once he has killed all the suitors and their collaborators, Zeus makes everyone in Ithaka forget Odysseus's retribution. The ending of the *Odyssey* shows that it was about Odysseus reestablishing himself in Ithaka and all his belongings. Odysseus' anger was never about honor.

[6] This distinction will become more clear below. For now, I am using this distinction to highlight that moral questions do not answer questions of order, but rather of harm or goodness.The morally right thing to do may well entail causing disorder (which is not to say that it never takes into account chaos, but it does so only insofar as it may cause moral harm). The terms 'moral' and 'ethical' are complicated. For the purposes of this chapter I restrict the use of 'moral' given its universalizing connotations that conflict with what is more easily described as the ethics of honor which resists any attempt to invoke universalizable principles. Although, the terms 'ethics' can also be mistaken to mean something like customs due to its etymology, and I would argue that what is at stake in ethical dilemmas in the Homeric context is more than whether or not a custom has been violated.

unpacking. I do acknowledge that the distinction between the two is messy, and that I am perhaps advancing a distinction without a difference, as Aristotle might put it. In that sense the political is merely a heuristic category as opposed to a distinct ontological one. I will then aim to show how the political iluminates: the conflict between the anger of Agamemnon and Achilles, the development of anger in Telemachos. Although I talk about the Homeric epics, the case of the *Odyssey* is different because scholarship has largely ignored anger, although I argue it plays a crucial role in both Telemachos' coming of age. The claim that anger is (predominantly) political in Homer will seem trivially true to feminist scholars who argue that "everything is political." I am not denying that.[7] My argument is smaller. My modest contribution is to articulate clearly the terms under which anger is appraised as a political instrument in the Homeric epics.

The normativities of Homeric Anger: The Political versus The Ethical

A fundamental problem in Homeric scholarship concerning anger is articulating the normative dimensions of anger both in terms of what provokes the anger as an emotion signaling a perceived wrongdoing as well as how that anger is then normatively appraised by third party observers.[8]

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[7] For example, the fact that Homeric women are excluded from being normatively able to be angry with the exception of a few cases in the *Odyssey* where they express *nemesis*, which as I discuss below implies societal backing and it is not therefore seen as their own anger.

[8] For the ways in which revenge is limited see Hans-Joachin Gerke, 'Die Griechen und die Rache. Edin Versuch in hirtorischer Psychologie,'*Saeculum* 38 (1987), pp.121-49, 139-140.

Harris frames Achilles' anger in negative terms although he does acknowledge that Agamemnon "partly thanks to Achilles" learns his lesson and releases his captive. According to Harris, Achilles' lack of loyalty to Agamemnon causes him to request intervention from his divine mother. Further, he refuses to relent despite being asked in reasonable terms. His inability to relinquish his anger has severe consequences for the Achaians, and is partly responsible for the death of Patroclus.[9] In other words, for Harris Achilles is entirely to blame.

For Harris anger acts as a sort of "justification" for uncooperative behavior that others can respect, and it also helps maintain social hierarchy. His conclusion is that although the poet of the Homeric epics understands that heroes must feel anger, he was highly critical of the unrelenting anger of Achilles.[10] He offers a historical motivation for the poet to present such a view. I will not go into the details of his view because the potential historical motivations are beyond the scope of this chapter, and because I am more interested in the internal textual dynamics of anger, than on picking certain passages that seem to reflect potential historical concerns. I generally agree with Harris' overview of anger in Homer. Anger is important to maintain the honor-based hierarchical structure, and therefore in general Homeric heroes are not troubled by displays of anger. However, although he sets out to describe the ideology of anger control in the Homeric

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[9] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 132.

[10] He contrasts his view with that of people who have advanced that the poet ennobled anger. See Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 141, no.46.

epics, he does not really address the reasoning behind instances of anger control beyond saying that they are deemed in some capacity to affect the community at large.

Harris mentions the importance of prudence when it comes to expressing anger for both Odysseus and Achilles, but he does not mention that in both cases prudence is framed in terms of helping the heroes get what they want, therefore its purpose is not to mediate their desires against the community's interest. Athena tells Achilles that if he obeys her, he will "some day three times over such shining gifts shall be given you by reason of this outrage" (ποτέ τοι τρὶς τόσσα παρέσσεται ἀγλαὰ δῶρα ὕβριος εἵνεκα τῆσδε)(*Il*.i.213-214). Athena herself restrains her anger against Zeus because she knows that nothing will come of it given that she is not in a position of relative authority against Zeus. In fact, it could be argued that the community of Ithaka has a much more adverse reaction to Oddyseus' final display of anger, which is divinely sanctioned, than any of the Achaians against Achilles.

Harris is not entirely interested in systematizing the source and normative appraisal of anger in the epics. It is enough to say that Homeric heroes are irascible due to their honor-conscious-world. Anger is part of a precise social order where heroes compete against one another and where one must show one's superiority to one's inferiors through anger. I do agree with Harris that, "since honor has to be recognized, and the Homeric heroes do not go for tacit assertions of superiority such as titles or special costumes (other than armor), they have to express their superiority as well as feel it."[11]

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[11] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 139. This fact is a stark contrast to Chinese society.

Still, community interests are clearly at play when it comes to normative appraisals of anger. These normative appraisals go beyond issues of fittingness, reasonableness or morality, and honor-based concerns do not help us illuminate them. My argument is that given the limitations of the honor-system in terms of conflict resolution, anger in the epics plays an important political role.

Cairns sets out to analyze anger and ethics in the *Iliad*. He draws the conclusion from his analysis of anger terminology in the *Iliad* that there is in general no hard and fast distinction between personal and moral offense.[12] It is hard to know what exactly he means by personal and moral, but perhaps that is precisely the point. He warns not to take the justificatory implication as implying a "moral" argument. Although he again does not define what he means by moral. He says: "Homeric Greek can express the important idea that an ethical (as opposed to a purely egotistical or exploitative) attitude to self–other interactions should be based on the recognition that the standards one sets for others must apply without partiality to oneself."[13] I take it that he means that Homeric Greek accommodates some idea of "justice." However, justice need not be impartial.[14] I agree with Cairns that when Homeric characters appeal to universal standards and distinguish between a "pique and a legitimate complaint," and recognize that there are generally accepted standards there is no absolute moral/non-moral distinction. However, Cairns

[12] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 39.

[13] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 37.

[14] For example, for Aristotle justice is precisely partiality, "equality for equals, and inequality for unequals"

fails to explain what the source of the normativity is. Cairns, like Harris, describes anger as arising from a number of situations. But they fail to explain why some of those situations are seen as legitimate and why some are not. It would not be satisfactory to think that Homeric legitimate anger is random, since that would seem to ascribe some kind of irrationality for which we have no evidence. Clearly the instances where anger arises are systematic,[15] which is not to say homogeneous,[16] so we should assume that whether that anger is deemed appropriate or not is also systematic. The question is what are the parameters of that system.

Cairns is right to identify anger within an ethics of reciprocity. For him anger denotes a response of the victim to a particular breach of reciprocity or it expresses the recognition that the reciprocity of honor and respect that pertains in one-to-one relationship extends generally throughout society and constitutes the basis of ethical norms. It even explains instances of being angry at oneself as having failed to live up to one's responsibilities to oneself. He concludes that Homer anger-terms "focus on the protection of the self-image that the individual projects and wishes to see validated in social interaction."[17]However, it is clear that everyone has an issue with Agamemnon's anger and then that of Achilles even though they are both acting in the interest of their self-image (to different degrees as I show below).

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[15] By 'systematic' I mean that it adheres to predictable norms. No one's anger is random or pure chaos.

[16] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 38.

[17] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 39.

My argument and reason for introducing the political sphere into discussions about anger in the epics is that anger that arises out of honor-based considerations is not constrained by considerations of order (or what Aristotle would call "the preservation and safety of the community") and the effects that honor-based anger feuds have on the broader community. Said differently, Harris and Cairns mostly articulate honor-based anger and thus cannot explain what is underpinning criticism of the anger of Agamemnon and that of Achilles. Both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* show how political anger is used as an outside constraint to honor-based anger as a way of mediating the prudence/imprudence of honor-based anger. I agree with Cairns that the distinction between moral/non-moral anger in Homer clearly has no explanatory force and should not be pursued.[18] However, part of the problem in Homeric scholarship is not defining precisely how these categories are being used (moral, ethical, personal, social, etc.). Scholars not defining how they are using moral or ethical might be a symptom of the epics themselves not using language that one would readily associate with moral arguments such as 'good' or 'bad' (as for example some of the Chinese texts used) nor do they attempt to legitimize actions based on something higher (such as what Chinese texts do with the concept of sage, or former kings, or Heaven). One could argue the gods perform such a function, which I admit they do at times, but Homeric heroes interact with gods at many levels, only one of which is to legitimize actions and judgments. If there is a category that might illuminate Homeric anger it is the political. The political deals with questions of

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[18] *Ibis.*

normativity, hierarchical structures, legitimacy, distribution of wealth and resources, and most importantly order, i.e., the safety and preservation of the community.

That this is the case can be illuminated by Terence Irwin's brief critical analysis of Homeric ethics. Terence Irwin describes the Homeric ideal person in order to describe the Homeric moral outlook which later thinkers like Xenophone and Plato took issue with. Homeric *aretē,* or virtue, is based on two things. The first one is outside one's own control. In Homer, a person of *aretē* must come from a good family, must himself have wealth and strength. In fact the hereditary, social, and material components are so important that if one has then one remains a person of *aretē* despite behaving badly (e.g., Paris). Some aspects of *aretē* are within one's control. One is expected to show one's excellence through one's actions, characteristically the actions of a warrior and leader. A person of *aretē* excels in battle, where the characteristic virtues are strength, skill, and courage. Further, Irwin says,

> He is born into a leading place in society with a large share of its resources, and he has the virtues needed to defend his place against attack. [...] Achilles' father sent him to Troy 'always to be best and to excel the others' [...] Achilles tries to achieve prominence in the qualities and actions that make a person's excellence.[19]

The goal of the excellent person is *timē* which includes primarily other people's good opinion, and secondarily, the material and social honors that are both the causes and effects of *timē*. Importantly, the excellent person is only other-directed insofar as they must attend to the good opinion of the people who control the goods he aims at. The hero

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[19] Terence Irwin, *Classical Thought* (Oxford University Press, 1989), 7.

seeks it in a sincere way, not by mere manipulation, since it defines the values that make his own aims worthwhile.

The interests of other people are important to a hero, and he is criticized if he is indifferent to them as Achilles is; yet a hero's attitude to these interests is not a prominent part of his excellence: "Criticism of such indifference remains rather mild; for selfish indifference is a minor flaw, compared with the main components of a person's goodness."[20] Some other-regarding concerns are purely instrumental to a hero's primary aims: "A hero displays his power and strength most effectively when he can protect his dependents as well as himself. Since these concerns for others are instrumental to his concern for his own honor, he has no reason to care about other people's interests if they conflict with the demands of his own honor."[21]

Crucially, for Irwin because Homeric ethics is predominantly self-regarding, with other-regarding concerns being only secondary and indeed merely instrumental, Homeric leads to constant conflicts both within the individual and within the society at large. It creates conflicts within the individual because he needs to adjust his aims to the demands of those who can honor him; and it creates conflicts in the society since it gives each individual good reasons to do things which are detrimental for the community at large. For this reason Irwin finds Homeric ethics to be deeply flawed.

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[20] Irwin, *Classical Thought*, 10.

[21] *Ibis.*

It is precisely for this reason that in the Homeric world we find an interaction between Homeric honor ethics, and what I am calling the political. Honor systems always require an external system which circumscribes honor considerations. The normativity behind Homeric anger, now broadly speaking to include ethical and political normativities, is the result of the nature of sustaining an honor society (as opposed to a society based on the principles of dignity such as the liberal democracy of the U.S.) which requires a relatively stable set of institutions and institutional roles.[22] Stable institutions and institutional roles cannot accommodate the needs of an honor based society because honor has no hard and fast rules. We now tend to understand the political sphere moralistically, but that need not be the case as political realists have long argued.

The Political Sphere in Homer: What is Political Anger?

In terms of moving my argument forward of the importance of the political sphere to the normativity of Homeric anger one has to address whether the political can even be applied to the Homeric epics. Part of the problem is that historically speaking the Homeric epics have been understood as pre-political. Politics begins with the *polis*. However, in my use of the term 'political' I will be following the recent work of Dean Hammer who argues persuasively in *The Iliad as Politics* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2002) that the *Iliad* is both engaged in critical reflection and that this reflection is political in nature. It therefore a mistake to identify the political with political institutions.

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[22] See Peter Berger, "On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honor, " *European Journal of Sociology* 11, no.2 (1970), 339-347.

However, I will deviate from Hammer by insisting on a separation between the political and the ethical/moral following the work of Bernard Williams in *In the Beginning was the Deed* (Princeton University Press, 2005).

Hammer argues that the *Iliad* is not only a critical work but furthermore a political one.[23] He is therefore arguing against a long tradition of scholarship which insists that the oral nature of Homeric poetry precludes it from engaging critically with its subject matter. Furthermore, his interest lies not in instances of *polis* organization,[24] but on the broader question of how the composition, as a whole, is engaged in a reflection of political life. Hammer argues against the assumption that political means the political activity that is an outgrowth of the polis, that is political does not mean political institutions. You do not need a *polis* to have politics. The problem with what has been the predominant approach, Hammer argues, is that it conflates an activity–politics–with an institutional form–the polis.[25] Instead, by 'political' he means the activity of politics which constitutes the political field, a realm in which questions of community organization are raised, determined, and implemented. For Hammer, "the polis does not

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[23] He first argues against a long tradition of scholarship which insists that the oral nature of Homeric poetry precludes it from engaging critically with its subject matter. He then needs to argue how it critically engages in political activity.

[24] As opposed to the work of Donlan and Finley, although Hammer admits he is hugely indebted to their work.

[25] A point which Carl Smit also used to begin his work *The Concept of the Political: Expanded Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996): "The concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political." 19. See also John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 14, No.3 (Summer, 1985), 223-251.

provide the conditions for, as much as it provides evidence for, the activity of politics."[26] Thus, "the *Iliad* appears as a narrative account of the drama of politics. This account is not of already established institutions but of communities in formation, conflict, and transition."[27]

Politics, says Hammer following Arendt, is an activity dealing with questions about the identity and organization of community life. It is a realm in which people think about themselves, and constitute themselves as communities.[28] Political activities include raising questions about authority and legitimacy, the exercise of persuasion and force, the emergence of demands or claims on the community, the appearance of conflict that threatens community organization, and the encounter with ethical questions of our relationship, obligations, and responsibilities to others.[29] In the *Iliad*, conceptual issues, such as authority, power, rights, and ethics, are given form within the context of dialogue, action, and plot.[30] Therefore, he argues that not only does politics not require political institutions, it also does not require thinking from abstraction, "rather contemplation

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[26] Dean Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 14.

[27] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 44. Cf: C.J. Rowe, "Introduction" in C.J. Rowe and Malcom Schofield, *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1. Rowe makes a distinction between political thought, political theory, and philosophical thinking about politics. Political theory is according to him the invention of the 5th century, and in its fully fledged form it was Plato's invention. It emerged as a result of the *polis*. Hammer's argument is therefore a strong one since he not only thinks that at least the Iliad is a work of political thought, but one of political theory. The potential problem with Hammer's contention is that it might take political theory from being too narrow, to being too broad.

[28] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 31-32.

[29] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 27.

[30] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 16.

including critique, may arise through the narrative shape given to the performance of politics."[31]

Lastly, he addresses the potential philosophical obstacle that Homeric cosmology can present to political activity. Simply stated, if the gods play a predominant role in the epic as a force originating outside of, and appearing to act upon, human agency, and if political activity rests upon the will of its participants, then there can be no political activity in the *Iliad* (or it would be too limited to be of significance). Hammer shows that there is a pattern of response of the Homeric characters to the unpredictable actions of the gods, whereby warriors respond to divine interference by seeking to maintain (or restore) their status in the community. What this reveals is that through divine intervention the *Iliad* in fact reinforces issues of community maintenance, as well as how individuals through their willful actions seek to maintain a cultural equilibrium. Somewhat ironically, notions of divinity are integral to and integrated into a conception of human action.[32]

Briefly then, we can understand the *Iliad*, for now, as political in so far as it is a critical work which reflects on issues of authority, legitimacy, power, community, persuasion and force, and which does so through the narrative performance of political activity, as opposed to through the abstract conceptual analysis that we have grown accustomed to. I hope that if one accepts that the Iliad is a critical work, meaning that its oral composition does not preclude critical reflection, then there is nothing stopping the

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[31] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics* , 29.

[32] See Chapter 2 of Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*.

Odyssey from being a similarly critical work. I will argue how the *Odyssey* is similarly interested in political activity when I offer a close reading of the anger of Telemachos and Odysseus. The crucial aspect of Hammer's work for my argument that the normativity of anger in the epics is predominantly political is that the sphere of the political is relevant and not anachronistic to the Homeric epics.

However, if I simply meant 'political' in Hammer's sense my own analysis would be a platitude because now by definition everything in the *Iliad* can be deemed political. I make the further distinction, the political versus the ethical/moral, which is not a necessary distinction for Hammer's argument since he offers a moralistic interpretation of how the *Iliad* answers the "fundamental political problem of how communities can be given endurance when they are made vulnerable by the nature of human connectedness." In this chapter, I expand upon Hammer's argument, with which I largely agree, in the sense that I aim to show the importance of framing Homeric anger as political anger by paying attention to three case studies in Homer that show. In other words, whereas in previous texts, such as the Mencius and the Mozi, the debate is to a large extent framed in terms of good and bad/evil, Homeric anger is framed in terms of order, and disorder.

At the same time, I deviate from Hammer's reading of the *Iliad* as political by saying that the political ethic of the *Iliad* does not rely on *feeling with others*. Instead it is purely instrumental for the maintenance of the honor-based system. In order to articulate that I rely on Bernard Williams's separation between the political and the moral, and articulation of what is distinctively political.

In the essay called “Realism and Moralism In Political Theory,” Bernard Williams sets out to show how the predominant political theories of today understand the political as applied morality, therefore he calls them versions of “political moralism,” as opposed to theories which give greater autonomy to distinctively political thought which may be called versions of “political realism.”[33] While he too admits that the difference between the moral and the political is messy, he identifies the first political question in Hobbesian terms as “the securing of order, protection, safety, trust, and the conditions of cooperation.” He calls it first because solving it is the condition of solving, indeed posing, any others. He does not imply that once it is solved it never has to be solved again, rather it is a first question which is required all the time. He sees the solving of this first question as a necessary condition for legitimacy (but need not be sufficient). What is important for the purposes of the chapter is that the first question is distinctively a political question. Solving this question is a political endeavor which Williams articulates by saying that if solving the first question is a moral principle, it does not represent a morality which is prior to politics.[34] The difference between political moralism (e.g., utilitarianism, or Rawls's theory of justice) and political realism is that in the former there is a morality prior to politics, whereas in the latter there is not.[35]

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[33] Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 2-3.

[34] Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 5.

[35] For a further discussion of the concept of the political see Willians, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 12-14.

Part of the reason Williams is interested in this distinction is that political moralism, due to its universalist tendencies, tends to imply that past societies had a failure of rationality and whose political systems were illegitimate. Although this may not seem directly related to my point, since I am not trying to argue that Achilles was a political realist, as opposed to a political moralist, it does I hope highlight not only that the political is separate from the moral but also that if we as scholars do not keep this distinction ever present we might read the anger of Achilles for example as illegitimate full stop, when it is only illegitimate to *us*. As I have already briefly mentioned, Achilles is a prime example of a character who has suffered at the hands of a political moralism that was really already present even in classical Athens when Plato started to make universalist claims. On the other hand, if we adopt the lens of political realism which is sensitive to historical realities and finds evaluative value in asking "how far, and in what respects, a given society of the past is an example of the human capacity for intelligible order, or of the human tendency to unmediated coercion" we may better understand the precise nature of the debates surrounding anger in the epics.[36]

Lastly, interest in the concept of political emotion in contemporary scholarship is fairly recent. Barbara Koziak in *Retrieving Political Emotion* highlights how despite the obvious importance of emotions in the world's political stage a conception of political emotion is severely lacking, and "no general treatment of the emotional has been written

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[36] Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed,* 10

in the history of normative political theory."[37] This fact is the result of the political realm often being construed as open only to those who possess reason. What Koziak is after is a normative conception of political actors that are driven by more than 'rational motives.' Said more expiciply Koziak is after a well-founded feminist politics that addresses how to incorporate and addresses how to incorporate and educate the emotional capacities of citizens.[38] Although Koziak's study is a retrieval of what she calls Aristotelian political emotion, she traces it back to the *Iliad*. Along similar lines, Marlene K. Sokolon argues for the important role of emotion in political decision making focusing on Aristotle's contributions. She challenges, like Koziak, that reason and emotion are dichotomous or opposing aspects of our psyche and that good political decision making solely requires reason.[39] I am not just interested in the role that anger plays in the individual's political decision making, but rather the role that anger plays in the political sphere more broadly. How does one's anger affect other people's decision making? In other words, what is the performative role of anger in politics? What does it mean when I express anger in the *agora*?

Hammer's argument that the *Iliad* is a political work opens doors to exploring political emotion in the epics, which in turn allows for a fresh understanding of anger beyond the personal, and the honor system. My aim in this chapter, then, is to

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[37] Koziak, *Retrieving Political Emotion*, 1.

[38] Koziak, *Retrieving Political Emotion*, 5.

[39] Marlene K. Sokolon, *Political Emotions: Aristotle and the Symphony of Reason and Emotion* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 2006), 4.

demonstrate the further value of Hammer's argument that the *Iliad* is political, which I will apply to the *Odyssey* as well, and argue that we ought to understand anger in that context.

Achilles and Agamemnon: Two Types of Political Anger

The anger of Achilles has long been a topic of discussion given its status as the narrative driving force of the epic and it would be impossible to do justice to the many arguments that have historically been put forward here.[40] Some of it I have already addressed in the Introduction chapter, and some above. Here I want to focus on more recent readings of Achilles' anger, predominantly those put forward by Hammer, and Most. In this section, I explore two main preoccupations in the literature in terms of the normative status of Achilles' anger in the *Iliad*: (1) how to understand the clash of anger of Achilles and Agamemnon which I argue is best understood in the sphere of the political, not the ethical or the personal and why; and (2) the normative status of Achilles' anger as it relates to the ending of the *Iliad*. To offer a complete reading of the *Iliad* is beyond the scope of the present chapter, my aim with regards to my second question is simply to complicate the common reading of the *Iliad* as a cautionary tale that recommends we develop only pity. My claim is that anger and pity are two political emotions (not exclusively political but importantly political). A Homeric world of pity

[40] On the wrath of Achilles as the dominant theme of the *Iliad* see Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 131.

would no longer be a Homeric world, anger and pity must both navigate the ethics of reciprocity of the honor system and the political sphere.

Achilles' anger is not petty, even though it has historically been seen as such. Often because one is trying to justify in moral terms that do not belong to the *Iliad*.[41] The *Iliad* does start with a condemnation of Achilles' anger,[42] and Athena does intervene when Achilles is about to attack Agamemnon. But what exactly is being criticized, and what is being stopped? Death might be a contender, since that is what the narrator tells us is the consequence of Achilles' wrath (*mēnis*) as well as what Athena prevents. Death, however, need not be understood exclusively in moral terms. Neither the *Iliad*, nor the Homeric epics together, have a particular issue with death. Harris is correct that when it comes to the *Iliad* condemning Achilles' anger it does so with the community in mind, but it seems important to know what about the community is being deemed as important as well as how that is then being imposed. As I mentioned above, ethically speaking Homeric heroes have no reason to put community needs above theirs, so if the *Iliad* is condemning anger it is not straightforwardly doing so from the point of view of ethics. I argue that it is instead primarily related to the "first" political question mentioned above,

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[41] Such as understanding Achilles' anger against Agamemnon as a supposed lack of loyalty. See Harris, Restraining Rage; M.I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (London: Folio Society, 2002), 82-89.

[42] "Sign, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians, hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting of dogs, of all birds [...]" (Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος/ οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,/ πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν/ ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν/ οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι [...] *Il*.1.1-5).

the securing of order, protection, safety, trust, and the conditions of cooperation.[43] Achilles himself problematizes anger in terms of strife (*eris*):

> ὡς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο
> καὶ χόλος, ὅς τ' ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ χαλεπῆναι,
> ὅς τε πολὺ γλυκίων μέλιτος καταλειβομένοιο
> ἀνδρῶν ἐν στήθεσσιν ἀέξεται ἠΰτε καπνός·
> ὡς ἐμὲ νῦν ἐχόλωσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων.
> ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι ἐάσομεν ἀχνύμενοί περ,
> θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλον δαμάσαντες ἀνάγκῃ·
>
> I wish that strife would banish away from among gods and mortals,
> And gall, which makes a man grow angry for all his great mind,
> That gall of anger that swarms like smoke inside of a man's heart
> And becomes a thing sweeter to him by far the dripping of honey.
> So it was that the lord of men Agamemnon angered me.
> However, what is done is better left alone, though we resent it still,
> And we must by force curb the dear passion in our breast.[44] (*Il*. 18.107-113)

At the same time, anger is the result of a disorder or a threat to order. Hammer reads the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles as a political conflict instead of the personal conflict that much of the scholarship has argued it is.[45] The reasons Hammer puts forward is that the conflict begins as a public discussion of how the community should respond to Apollo's plague and Agamemnon's specific breach against Achilles is quickly framed as a broader crisis of authority that threatens the stability of the

[43] It is "first" because solving it is the condition for solving, indeed posing, any others. However, "first" does not mean that it never needs solving again. A solution to the "first" question is required all the time and is affected by historical circumstances. Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 3.

[44] Translation by Richmond Lattimore with my own modifications, 378.

[45] Personal in the sense that it only involves Achilles feeling dishonored.

community.[46] Hammer does not investigate the role of anger and instead he mentions anger in contrast to the broader conflict: "Achilles' response is one of anger, but he quickly structures the conflict as raising a broader, and overly political, question about the nature of Agamemnon's authority." I do not wish to read too much into what Hammer implies is the nature of anger although it is inline with a general sentiment that anger is always personal in a way that precludes social, or political concerns.[47] I hope that the previous chapters have already made some way into showing that anger need not be understood in that way. Although it is true that anger is personal, it is not in a pejorative sense in opposition to communal interests: a breach to communal interests can be very much personal. I deviate from Hammer's reading of the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles only insofar as I think anger is an important political actor in the exchange. Let me begin by pointing out the stark difference between Achilles's and Agamemnon's anger and how it is perceived as different by the rest of the Achaians.

Agamemnon most often uses his (potential) anger as a threat if someone chooses to displease him, or perhaps more accurately challenge his perceived ultimate authority. On our first encounter with Agamemnon's anger he is using it to threaten the priest Chrysis, who is trying to ransom back his daughter.[48] His goal is to frighten him thus proving his power and might, "So go now, do not make me angry; so you will be safer"

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[46] Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 80-92.

[47] It may also be part of what has long been a trend in political thought, that politics exclusively involves reason.

[48] It is worth noting that Agamemnon gets angry first at every turn.

("ἀλλ' ἴθι μή μ' ἐρέθιζε σαώτερος ὥς κε νέηαι." *Il.*1.32). He threatens the priest despite all the Achaians crying in favor that the priest be respected and the ransom Chrysis offered be accepted (1.22-23). As Harris points out, anger is a way for Homeric heroes to show and receive explicit values of worth.[49] Cairns also links anger to esteem.[50] However, in the case of Agamemnon he is at the same time using it to instill fear and achieve compliance. The problem with relying on shear power to compel obedience is that it has limits, and there is bound to be someone more powerful than you. This fact is quickly made evident when Chrysis, unable to do anything himself, prays to Apollo who is angered by the harm done to his priest (and which the text explicitly describes as 'dishonoring'). Agamemnon's anger has also managed to intimidate the seer Kalchas and has thus prevented him from explaining Apollos' plague. Kalchas explains his fear:

> ἦ γὰρ ὀΐομαι ἄνδρα χολωσέμεν, ὃς μέγα πάντων
> Ἀργείων κρατέει καί οἱ πείθονται Ἀχαιοί·
> κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς ὅτε χώσεται ἀνδρὶ χέρηϊ·
> εἴ περ γάρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ,
> ἀλλά τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον, ὄφρα τελέσσῃ,
> ἐν στήθεσσιν ἑοῖσι·
>
> Since I believe I shall make a man angry who holds great kingship
> Over the men of Argos, and all the Achaians obey him.
> For a king when he is angry with a man beneath him is too strong,
> And suppose even for the day itself he swallow down his anger,
> He still keeps bitterness that remains until its fulfillment
> Deep down in his chest. (*Il.* 1.78-83)[51]

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[49] *Restraining Rage*, 133.

[50] Cairns, "Ethics, ethology, terminology," 40.

[51] Further evidence of this use of anger can be found in *Il.* 2.195-197 which I discuss more below.

Agamemnon's overreliance on his threat to violence via anger, which is so far unquestioned by the Achaians due to his hierarchical position, is now the center of the discussion. It is here that Achilles first questions the legitimacy of Agamemnon's claim of being "far the greatest of the Achaians" (1.91). Agamemon responds to the seer's interpretation with rage but agrees to give the girl back so long as the Achaians give him another prize (1.102-105). Agamemnon's demand is described by Achilles as unbecoming. To Achilles, Agamemnon is shameless and only fixated in profit–as opposed to honor, which would at least in principle make more room for the needs of the community.[52]

Agamemnon's anger stands in stark contrast to that of Achilles, which is articulated both in terms of being the result of having been dishonored and Agamemnon's demonstration of his lack of political legitimacy. Agamemnon's legitimacy as leader rests on him adhering to an ethics of reciprocity as well as his might. Agamemnon is neither fighting his own battles nor showing any regard for those who in return for his protection honor him. He has chosen profit over the lives of those who can honor him. Achilles perceives that he himself has been wronged and that the Achaians are being wronged by obeying a ruler such as Agamemnon. Aside from Achilles's brief slight against Agamemnon when he questions his claim of being the best of the Achaians, he calls into

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[52] For different views of Agamemnon's role in the *Iliad* see Keith Stanley, *The Shield of Homer: Narrative Structure in the* Iliad, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Oliver Taplin "Agamemnon's Role in the *Iliad*," in Christopher Pelling, *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 60-82; Jasper Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 70-73.

question Agamemnon's legitimacy on two more occasions in Book 1. When Agamemnon threatens to take away someone else's prize Achilles says, "how shall any of the Achaeans readily obey you either to go on a journey or to fight men strongly in battle? I for my part did not come here for the sake of the Trojan spearmen to fight against them, since to me they have done nothing. [...] but for your sake [...]. You forget all this or you care nothing" (1.149-171). After Agamemnon obstinately reasserts his authority, and Athena prevents Achilles from physically attacking Agamemnon, Achilles continues to articulate the wrongdoing not only in terms of his own honor but in terms of the fittingness of Agamemnon as leader (1.225-244):

> δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς ἐπεὶ οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις:
> ἦ γὰρ ἂν Ἀτρεΐδη νῦν ὕστατα λωβήσαιο.
> ἀλλ᾽ ἔκ τοι ἐρέω καὶ ἐπὶ μέγαν ὅρκον ὀμοῦμαι:
> ναὶ μὰ τόδε σκῆπτρον, τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτε φύλλα καὶ ὄζους
> φύσει, ἐπεὶ δὴ πρῶτα τομὴν ἐν ὄρεσσι λέλοιπεν,
> οὐδ᾽ ἀναθηλήσει: περὶ γάρ ῥά ἑ χαλκὸς ἔλεψε
> φύλλά τε καὶ φλοιόν: νῦν αὖτέ μιν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
> ἐν παλάμῃς φορέουσι δικασπόλοι, οἵ τε θέμιστας
> πρὸς Διὸς εἰρύαται:
>
> King who feed on your people, since you rule nonentities;
> Otherwise, son of Atreus, this were your last outrage.
> But I will tell you this and swear a great oath upon it:
> In the name of this scepter, which never again will bear leaf nor
> Branch, now that it has left behind the cut stump in the mountains,
> Nor shall it ever blossom again, since the bronze blade stripped
> Bark and leafage, and now at last the sons of the Achaians
> Carry it in their hands in state when they administer
> The justice of Zeus. (1.231-239)

The anger of Achilles is *the* sign of the gradual breakdown of Agamemnon's political authority as a leader.[53] Achilles gives this speech after Athena intervenes and promises three times the amount of gifts ("καί ποτέ τοι τρὶς τόσσα παρέσσεται ἀγλαὰ δῶρα ὕβριος εἵνεκα τῆσδε" 1.214). That Agamemnon is acting in this way is not just a personal attack on Achilles, but a sign that he is unfit as a leader. When Achilles explains to his mother Thetis the reason behind his anger he does not identify the moment when Agamemnon threatened to take away Brises as the reason for his anger, rather he begins with Agamemnon's behavior toward the priest, and his disregard for the wishes of the rest of the Achaians (1.365-412). Moreover, he highlights the unfittingness of Agamemnon as a ruler by calling him a cruel king, ruinous, and with no wit (1.342). My main point is that Achilles' anger understands the conflict with Agamemnon as a war-prize conflict which invites the broader question of the nature of Agamemnon's authority. The anger is what makes this epistemically possible. Achilles does not arrive at his conclusion that Agamenon is acting illegitimately via reason alone. It is not the case that the anger and the broader question of the nature of Agamemnon's authority are separate, but one and the same.[54]

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[53] Finley has already pointed out that the king who ignored the prevailing sentiment was within his right, but he ran a risk: "Any ruler must calculate on the possibility that those bound by law or custom to obey him may one day refuse, by passive resistance or outright revolt. The Homeric assembly thus provided the kings with a test of public opinion, as the council of elders revealed the sentiment among the nobles," *The World of Odysseus,* 72.

[54] One can read my point in opposition to Hammer if we understand him to be contrasting anger to Achilles' political point, or as a mere elucidation of his point. Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 82.

At this point we might want to ask why Athena intervenes if Achilles' anger is legitimate or less problematic than Agamemnon's? The problem is that while the content of Achilles's anger might be deemed appropriate,[55]what the anger is *about*, the fact that it is against the leader of the Achaians constitutes a threat to order. Evidence of this is the fact that while Athena stops Achilles from killing Agamenon, she does not deem Achilles wrong. She is, however, communicating that Achilles' way of expressing his anger would be imprudent. Similarly, although Agamemnon's anger is legitimized once by Nestor on the basis of Agamemnon's status (1.254-285) it is condemned by Athena, and of course Achilles. The rest of the Achaians also disagree with Agamemnon's actions.

Anger in the *Iliad* must navigate two variables in order to be deemed legitimate or illegitimate, the content of the anger, whether it is deemed an accurate appraisal of the situation, and the perceived hierarchical relationship between the agent and the patient of the anger. For example, if the agent of the anger is not a member of the aristocratic warrior elite and she gets angry at Agamemnon and her appraisal of the situation is deemed incorrect her anger is fully illegitimate. The problem with this graph is that ultimately the positive appraisal of anger is based more heavily on one's status, which is something that constantly comes up throughout the epics, particularly when it comes to the gods.[56] Agamemnon's anger is about something illegitimate, but he carries the

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[55] By which I mean that it is an accurate representation of the situation according the values of the *Iliad*.

[56] For example, when Zeus makes both Hera and Athena angry only Hera chooses to express her anger which she justified by reminding Zeus of her status. On the other hand, Athena chooses to keep it to herself. More evidence of something like this in the mortal realm is the episode with Thersites in Book 2 which I discuss briefly below.

scepter; on the other hand, Achilles's anger is about something legitimate but he is not the leader of the Achaians. Part of what makes the confrontation between Agamemnon and Achilles complicated is that their relative status to one another is not as clear cut as it could be. They both have some claim to higher honor. Politically speaking, Agamemnon holds a higher position than Achilles. What this graph does show is that anger only becomes politically problematic when it is in the ambiguous camps that Agamemnon and Achilles are: the top-left quadrant, and the bottom-right quadrant. Part of the reason is the important but complicated role that anger plays. Anger is part of the competitive honor system in two simultaneous ways: (1) the fact that you get angry if someone challenges your position, and that others validate your anger shows your worth; on the other hand, (2) if you get angry and act on it successfully by dominating the other party your honor is increased.[57] Part of the problem in this particular case is that Achilles is prevented from truly challenging Agamemnon. However, what this graph is intended to show is that there is more to Homeric anger than honor, and that part of how anger is navigated is political concerns, as the episode between Agamemnon and Achilles shows.

The political significance of Achilles's anger is also made evident in Book 2, where Odysseus becomes the political instrument of Agamemnon, and Thersites's speech

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[57] So long as you already belong to the same category of *horizontal* honor. For the distinction between horizontal and vertical honor see Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). Briefly, horizontal honor means that you're entitled to a level of respect just by virtue of belonging to the honor group. For example, belonging to the aristocrazy already entitles you to honor. Horizontal honor equivalent to what Irwin calls your birthright in the case of Homeric characters. A defining feature of horizontal honor is that it's distributed equally to all group members. Another is that it is not tied to a specific action or achievement. On the other hand, vertical honor is competitive. Once you belong to a horizontal honor group you must compete for vertical honor to improve your status within the group.

echoes Achilles's complaints. Briefly, in Book 2 Agamemnon has been visited in his dreams by Zeus to misguide him into thinking that he should attack the Trojans the following day in order to assure himself a victory. The dream is part of the plan devised by Zeus and Achilles's mother, Thetis, to make evident to Agamemnon that having dishonored Achilles will cost him greatly. In other words, to make evident that Agamemnon is the one responsible for the strife that will ensue. The problem is that Agamemnon instead of listening to his dream, decides to test the Achaians by lying to them and saying instead that his dream showed that they would lose and that they should go home. The Achaians having been at war for nine years see no reason to doubt Agamemnon's dream so they begin to go back to their ships. Hera and Athena are paying close attention and they do not want the Trojans to win, therefore Hera sends Athena to encourage Odysseus to do something about it. Odysseus uses a similar strategy to Agamenmon. Holding Agamemnon's scepter,[58] a symbol of political authority, he uses the hypothetical anger of Agamemnon to persuade the other leaders to stay:[59]

> μή τι χολωσάμενος ῥέξῃ κακὸν υἷας Ἀχαιῶν·
> θυμὸς δὲ μέγας ἐστὶ διοτρεφέων βασιλήων,
> τιμὴ δ' ἐκ Διός ἐστι, φιλεῖ δέ ἑ μητίετα Ζεύς.

> May he not in anger do some harm to the sons of the Achaians!

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[58] For a rich reading of the significance of the scepter see Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 81, 84, 86-88, 117-21, and 132.

[59] Although I do not pursue it here, it might be significant to track how hypothetical anger as opposed to anger that is presently being experienced is used. Hypothetical anger appears to be primarily used to instill fear, whereas currently experienced anger is used to signal wrongdoing. It could be the case, at least in the Iliad, that Agamemnon tends to use hypothetical anger because actual experienced anger would too often entail having to kill someone.

> For the anger of god-supported kings is a big matter,
> to whom honor and love are given from Zeus of the counsels. (2.195-197)[60]

By contrast, Odysseus uses the scepter as a weapon to hit those hierarchically below him (δήμου τ’ ἄνδρα “some men of the people”), and says:

> οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,
> εἷς βασιλεύς, ᾧ δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω
> σκῆπτρόν τ’ ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνά σφισι βουλεύῃσι.
>
> Lordship for many is no good thing. Let there be one ruler,
> one king, to whom the son of devious-devising Kronos gives
> the scepter and right of judgment, to watch over his people. (2.204-206)

With this strategy Odysseus manages to order everyone, except one man, Thersites. He is clearly described negatively by the narrator (the ugliest man who came beneath Ilion for example) and although I would argue that the text uses irony from time to time, Thersites’s description has not been read as such.[61] He offers a long speech which echoes

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[60] For irony in the *Iliad* see, e.g., John J. Canavan, *The Irony of Homer* (1946), Master's Theses, 15.

[61] Thersites’s speech (2.225-242) has received a lot of scholarly attention. Hammer reads the physical description of Thersites as emphasis for his lower status, which explains why although he speaks accurately his lowly status does not allow him to speak in this way against the king. Raphals highlights Thersites as a provoker of disorder whose ill-considered speech makes him the worst of the Argives (2.246-49), whose opposite is Odysseus as one who strives to be “the best of the Achaians” (*Odyssey* 14.521-34 and 17.415-16). Harris, the episode of Thersites shows that the anger of a lower person was likely to be severely suppressed. The slight problem with that interpretation is that Thersites is not said to be angry, although of course we can argue that he is expressing anger. It does seem generally the case that the Homeric epics are reluctant to explicitly ascribe anger to certain groups, mortal women being one of them and if we had more examples perhaps people of lower status such as Thersites. For example, the anger of the Trojans is also almost non-existent: Paris disclaims anger (χόλος) (*Il*.6.335); and Priam’s anger (χόλος) is only mentioned as a hypothetical in Book 24 as a reason for Achilles to bathe Hektor’s body before letting Priam see it, not because Achilles would be in danger but because Priam getting angry would make Achilles kill him (*Il*. 24.582-586). Of course, we may read the Trojans as expressing anger even if words for anger are not used. However, given how many Achaians are said to be angry the contrast is noticeable. Harris uses Hecuba as an example of the eating of raw human flesh as the imagined result of extreme anger (*Il*. 24.212-214) but compared to both Hera (*Il*.4.34-36) and Achilles (*Il*. 22.346-347) no words for anger are used to describe her.

Achilles' concerns but both the narrator and Odysseus dismiss it not on the basis of being a bad speech, but on the basis of being disorderly (*akosmos,* 2.213).[62] It does not matter what Thersites has to say because as Odysseus points out, "there is no worse man than you are." I am not arguing that Thersides is angry in the way Achilles is, or in any way. I am merely using this exchange to highlight issues in terms of the anger of Agamemnon, and that of Achilles. This episode is further evidence that Agememnon's anger is political in the sense that it is a performance and assertion of his might which he mistakes for legitimate authority, whereas Achilles' is political in that it raises the political question of what ought to constitute legitimate authority.[63]

Furthermore, we may look at Achilles' anger beyond its epistemic value to himself (meaning that we can argue his anger is good insofar as it signals something to himself), and beyond a narrow understanding of its instrumental value (meaning did he achieve his goal, arguably to make Agamemnon change or revert back into a legitimate authority?), and think about his anger's expressive or communicative value. In politics one may argue that there is value in the mere expression of condemnation or disapproval, and to an extent regardless of the consequences. As I am writing these pages, Russia is attempting to invade Ukraine and there are debates about the moral and political value of

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[62] For example the narrator says, "Thersities of the endless speech, still scolded, who knew within his head many words, but disorderly; vain, and without decency, to quarrel with the princes with any word he thought might be amusing to the Argives" (2.212-215). Odysseus says, "Fluent orator though you be, Thersites, your words are ill-considered" (2.246-247).

[63] Hammer makes the important point that contrary to how many people read the scene in Book 2 of Odysseus gathering back everyone as proof of Agamemnon's authority, the fact that Odysseus had to use physical violence and threats of anger shows that he does not restore Agamemnon's power. Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics*, 88.

imposing sanctions on Russia.[64] Sanctions are often conceived of exclusively as a necessary way of persuading or preventing a country from doing something. They are often seen as preferable to direct physical conflict (whether it be outright war, or some other physical violent act). In terms of whether or not a saction is justified we tend to think in utilitarian terms, in terms of whether or not the potential harm to the citizens of said country is outweighed by the benefits of said sanction having enough persuasive force to make the country stop its actual or potential condemnable behavior. This type of argument may entail that stronger sanctions are preferable–insofar as small sanctions are more likely to harm civilians than to persuade political leaders. However, there is an argument to be made for the expressive value of sanctions. The argument that countries ought to express their condemnation regardless of its efficacy allows for smaller sanctions since the goal is simply for the country giving the sanctions to express its position as a way of demonstrating its own values (so this would be akin to an Aristotelian argument that being virtuous is not just doing the right thing but feeling the right thing, so countries too should have and express the right values).[65] We might imagine a small country deciding to impose sanctions on Russia as a way of communicating disapproval, knowing full well that its sanctions will not materially affect Russia. Moreover, one can think of the expressive value of sanctions as a speech act

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[64] A distinction that is difficult to make nowadays since many countries have adopted political moralism, despite its theoretical problems. The invention began on the 24th of February 2022.

[65] I do not see that these values need to be moral, they can be political in the way that I described above. In other words, they are expressions of judgments or beliefs about political normativity.

which acts as a way of achieving better discourse, a means of activating deliberation. The problem with an expressive approach to sanctions is that one may mistake the degree of seriousness of the sanction with the degree of seriousness of the act being committed. In other words, there might be an issue of proportionality. Sanctions, whether merely expressive or not, ought to be proportional to the wrong being commited.

Going back to Achilles, if we understand his anger and the actions that ensue (his removal from battle) as a political sanction against Agamemnon's illegitimate actions, then the question becomes not whether his anger is condemnable or not but whether his sanction was proportional to Agamemon's transgression. My aim here is to demonstrate that by taking Achilles's anger outside of the realm of the personal, which makes Achilles's anger philosophically irrelevant and ethically frivolous since it would be difficult, even by Homeric standards, to defend one instance of dishonor entailing the need for many of his dependents to die, and into the political realm we may begin to understand why Achilles anger is in many ways compelling and complicated. We can now think of Achilles' anger in terms of the value of expressing condemnation proportionally or we may think of Achilles's sanction in instrumental ways, in terms of whether or not it proved efficacious and whether the harm endured by the Greeks was justified.

The analogy between Achilles's anger, and the 'inaction'[66] it motivates raises further interesting philosophical questions: if we were to understand the scenario as Agamemnon having been the first to perform an act of aggression, and Achilles as therefore defending himself (and the Achaian political structure) then we have to ask ourselves whether the question of 'sanctions' is different. What I mean is that were Achilles to be seen as a third party to the act of aggression, understood as a transgression of his authority, then we might criticize his approach of sanctioning Agamemnon because although it may be proportional it results in Greeks having lost their lives. In other words, the threat to order that Agamenon posed does not ultimately justify the death of Greek warriors.[67] However, if we understand Achilles' anger and his response as a defensive response we might understand the situation differently. We might intuit that people in the defensive position against an act of aggression are not under the same constraints (what might be called a 'reasonable prospects of success condition' used in just war theory). Ultimately a sanction by a third party appears to be justified insofar as it was successful, whereas the actions of someone defending themselves are not. We do not generally insist

[66] I am hesitant to call it 'inaction' because he does actively ask his mother, Thetis, to ask Zeus to intervene in the conflict. So while Achilles sits in his tent, the gods are actively sabotaging the Achaians.

[67] So someone might argue that there are constraints on what's permissible for those on the defensive side and that is that if escalation is absolutely foreseeable then one should not contribute to that. I find that argument to not be persuasive since that would mean that we would always default to the most powerful or the most willing to inflict harm. Therefore the burdens of responsibility should always be on the aggressor.

that defensive violence against an aggression be successful in order to be justified, even if the two parties are not mismatched in terms of power.[68]

Why is any of this helpful? Well if we insist in reading Achilles' anger as *simply* personal we will have a difficult time trying to justify his actions whereas the text is sympathetic to Achilles' anger. True, the gods get involved because they are being guided by principles of reciprocity, but the Achaians are also sympathetic, even Agamemnon eventually admits he wronged Achilles and that his anger was justified. They do not deny Achilles apprehension of the situation, which Cairns also points out, but they do remind him that there are other factors. Agamemnon acted outside of what is a legitimate use of his role, but it is not only Agamemnon that has responsibilities, Achilles has responsibilities towards the rest of the Greeks which they do not think he is respecting in some way. In other words, they agree that Achilles ought to be angry, they disagree with the fact that they must die for it. The fact that these pose actual dilemmas to the Achaians, that they are conducted in the setting of the *agora*, and that they are framed along the lines of kingship support Hammer's argument of the *Iliad* as political.

The rest of the Achaians understand Achilles' anger as a condemnation of Agamemnon's political actions (he is directly responsible for the death of many Greeks as a result of Apollo's plague, and he is now seen by Achilles and Thersites as a king fixated on profit, not *timē*–which as opposed to profit comes with responsibilities to

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[68] What I mean here is that even in cases where the aggressive party and the defensive party are matched in terms of power, we do not tend to think that means the defensive party needs to justify its acts of aggression in terms of whether they are successful or not, the fact that it is defending itself is enough.

others) is also evident in Book 9. Agamemnon has come to grips with the fact that Zeus deceived him on account of Achilles, "now he has devised a vile deception and bids me go back to Argos in dishonor having lost many of my people" (νῦν δὲ κακὴν ἀπάτην βουλεύσατο, καί με κελεύει δυσκλέα Ἄργος ἱκέσθαι, ἐπεὶ πολὺν ὤλεσα λαόν. *Il.* 9.21-22). Nestor understands the situation in the following way:

> [...] οὕνεκα πολλῶν
> λαῶν ἐσσι ἄναξ καί τοι Ζεὺς ἐγγυάλιξε
> σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνά σφισι βουλεύησθα.
> τώ σε χρὴ περὶ μὲν φάσθαι ἔπος ἠδ' ἐπακοῦσαι,
> κρηῆναι δὲ καὶ ἄλλῳ, ὅτ' ἄν τινα θυμὸς ἀνώγῃ
> εἰπεῖν εἰς ἀγαθόν· σέο δ' ἕξεται ὅττί κεν ἄρχῃ.
> αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐρέω ὥς μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα.
> οὐ γάρ τις νόον ἄλλος ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοήσει
> οἷον ἐγὼ νοέω ἠμὲν πάλαι ἠδ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν
> ἐξ ἔτι τοῦ ὅτε διογενὲς Βρισηΐδα κούρην
> χωομένου Ἀχιλῆος ἔβης κλισίηθεν ἀπούρας
> οὔ τι καθ' ἡμέτερόν γε νόον· μάλα γάρ τοι ἔγωγε
> πόλλ' ἀπεμυθεόμην· σὺ δὲ σῷ μεγαλήτορι θυμῷ
> εἴξας ἄνδρα φέριστον, ὃν ἀθάνατοί περ ἔτισαν,
> ἠτίμησας, ἑλὼν γὰρ ἔχεις γέρας·
>
> [...] [S]ince you
> Are lord over many people, and Zeus has given into your hand
> The scepter and right of judgment, to be king over the people.
> It is yours therefore to speak a word, yours also to listen,
> And grant the rights to another also, when his spirit stirs him
> To speak for our good. All shall be yours when you lead the way. Still
> I will speak in the way that seems best to my mind, and no one
> Shall have in his mind any thought that is better than this one
> That I have in my mind either now or long before now
> Ever since that day, illustrious, when you went from the shelter
> Of angered Achilles, taking by force the girl Briseis
> Against the will of the rest of us, since I for my part
> Urged you strongly not to, but you, giving way to your proud spirit's
> Anger, dishonored a great man, one whom the immortals
> Honor, since you have taken his prize and keep it. (*Il.* 9.97-111)

Agamemnon failed in his responsibility to listen, not just to Achilles but to all the Achaians regardless of rank since he also ignored Nestor who is an elder. Nestor also very explicitly understands Achilles as having been stirred to speak *for the good* (ἀγᾰθός) *of everyone*, not just himself whereas Agamenon acted out of a proud spirit. In this passage we also see the contrast between Achilles and Agamemnon.[69] Nestor's observation seconds Diomedes's clear statement:

> σοὶ δὲ διάνδιχα δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω·
> σκήπτρῳ μέν τοι δῶκε τετιμῆσθαι περὶ πάντων,
> ἀλκὴν δ' οὔ τοι δῶκεν, ὅ τε κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον.
>
> The son of devious-devising Kronos has given you
> gifts in two ways: with the scepter he gave you honor beyond all,
> But he did not give you courage, and of all power this is the greatest. (*Il*.9.37-39)

While Agamemnon has been given divine authority to lead, he has not been given the physical attribute that would allow him to do as he sees fit without help. Hence the idea of "crooked council" (ἀγκυλομήτεω) and the "divided" (διάνδιχα) endowing. The last line is on the verge of tautological. The Achaians find themselves in this situation because Agamemnon confused his position with the ability to do as he pleases.

The problem for Achilles and why ultimately the results of his anger are condemnable is that although Achilles tries to engage the rest of the Achaians in his

[69] After Agamemnon expresses his wish to return home defeated and the Achaians offer their council Agamemnon finally apologizes. He attributes his actions to madness (*ate*). For a discussion of Agamemnon's madness and his apology, see Eric R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1973), 1-27.

resistance, they are never fully persuaded–except for Thersites. In the "Embassy to Achilles" in Book 9 Achilles attempts to rouse the Achaians against Agamemon.[70] Achilles raises again the wider issue of Agamemnon's overall legitimacy as a ruler being the actual subject of his anger:

> [...] τῷ πάντ' ἀγορευέμεν ὡς ἐπιτέλλω
> ἀμφαδόν, ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλοι ἐπισκύζωνται Ἀχαιοὶ
> εἴ τινά που Δαναῶν ἔτι ἔλπεται ἐξαπατήσειν
> αἰὲν ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένος· οὐδ' ἂν ἔμοιγε
> τετλαίη κύνεός περ ἐὼν εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι·
> οὐδέ τί οἱ βουλὰς συμφράσσομαι, οὐδὲ μὲν ἔργον·
> ἐκ γὰρ δή μ' ἀπάτησε καὶ ἤλιτεν· οὐδ' ἂν ἔτ' αὖτις
> ἐξαπάφοιτ' ἐπέεσσιν· ἅλις δέ οἱ· ἀλλὰ ἕκηλος
> ἐρρέτω·
>
> Go back and proclaim to him all that I tell you,
> openly, so other Achaians may turn against him in anger
> if he hopes yet one more time to swindle some other Danaan,
> wrapped as he is forever in shamelessness; yet he would not,
> bold as a dog though he be, dare look in my face any longer.
> He cheated me and did me hurt. Let him not beguile me
> with words again. (*Il*. 9.369-376)

There are things worth dying for, but dying humble Agamemnon is not a valid enough reason for the rest of the Achaians. So while the Achaians agree with Achilles, with regards to Agamemnon acting outside of his authority, they do not agree with them having to die for it. Furthermore, the Achaians appear to have accepted Agamemnon's apology where he explained that he acted out of madness (*ate*). For the Achaians the matter has been resolved, therefore is no longer needed, as Phoenix reminds him:

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[70] After Agamemnon expresses his wish to return home defeated and the Achaians offer their council Agamemnon finally apologizes.

> [...] τῶν μὴ σύ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς
> μηδὲ πόδας· πρὶν δ' οὔ τι νεμεσσητὸν κεχολῶσθαι.
>
> [...] Do not make in vain their argument
> Nor their footsteps, though before this one could not blame your anger. (*Il.* 9.522-523)

Phoenix validates Achilles by adding the adjective *nemestos* to his anger (here the verb χολόω).

The question then can be structured as a question of ethics of reciprocity that becomes much more inseparable from questions of political order: Who is responsible for whom?[71] Achilles as the best of the Achaians has responsibilities towards the rest of the Greeks, but he is mistaking what his responsibilities are in precisely the ways in which Irwin mentions. It is for this reason that pity needs to step it, as a reminder of his responsibilities towards those who rely on him. But that should not be mistaken for the much simpler explanation that his anger is only personal and therefore misplaced, always

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[71] For a discussion of political legitimacy, see Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 55.

misplaced, and that pity reigns. Anger and pity are both essential for the Homeric hero.[72] Furthermore, Achilles's anger was always articulated in terms of what is good for *everyone*, and he already shows his ability to express pity in Book 1. Achilles' anger then raises an important political question, and his actions were successful, meaning Agamemnon does realize what the nature of his authority is. In other words, the anger of Achilles regardless of perceived eventual dysfunction was valuable if we take political anger to be valuable as: (1) a speech act, a way of achieving better discourse or a means of activating deliberation, *and* of demonstrating one's values; and (2) in terms of its efficacy and persuasive force (i.e., did it achieve its aim?).

Book 9 highlights further the nature of the difference between the anger of Agamemnon and that of Achilles. Agamemnon is being criticized in terms of his political role and performance, the criticism of Achilles now takes on what can be read as an

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[72] My entire argument of the political value of anger may be rendered invalid if we understand the ending of the *Iliad* in terms of an alleged character development of Achilles, who has been transformed from a selfish angry person, to someone who experiences pity, an other-regarding emotion. The question of Achilles' anger appears to be unavoidably tied to the epic's ending on an episode of pity (*eleos*). A literary analysis needs to explain the unity of the Iliad, which is what both Most and Hammer attempt to do in different ways. For Irwin, who discusses the *Iliad* from a philosophical point of view the ending of the *Iliad* is unproblematic. The *mēnis* of Achilles mentioned at the beginning is a problem because Achilles by taking his anger too far he is unable to attain what contributes to his *aretē*, namely *timē*. For Irwin, the *Iliad* is far from an epic of developing other-regarding feelings. Pity, just like anger, helps attain the primary virtues of the Homeric hero, which includes primarily other people's good opinion, and secondarily, the material and social honors that are both the causes and effects of *timē*. For Most, and Hammer, on the other hand, the *Iliad* shows the character development of Achilles and by ending on an episode of pity it prioritizes pity over anger. In other words, they take the *Iliad* to be an epic that shows anger to be worse than pity, because anger can be self-regarding in ways that pity is not. Firstly, as mentioned above self-regarding attitudes are not inherently problematic in the Iliad, they are necessary in an honor-based system and even when Homeric characters seem to showcase other-regarding emotions they do so in order to accrue honor. Secondly, the Iliad would be unique in terms of archaic and classical Greek literature if it was based on character development. Odysseus does not undergo character development in the Odyssey. One could potentially argue that Telemachos does but he is in a very particular transitional stage and therefore is not a good example. It should also be suspect that pity is not a virtue in later thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, nor one that even Odysseus is expected to showcase.

ethical turn. Agamemnon is being criticized because his answer showed his mistaken understanding of what made his role as bearer of the scepter legitimate. As Diomedies says, he bears the scepter but there are conditions he must meet. The eventual problem with Achilles's anger against Agamemnon is one of not being able to let go despite Agamemnon's apology, his attempt to make amends, and the imminent danger to his dependents.[73] The problem begins when Achilles insists on his anger continuing: it is then not a matter of the scale of Achilles' anger, but of its duration.[74] While the Achaians criticize Achilles in terms of pitilessness, Achilles himself, as I mentioned above, ends up criticizing anger on the basis that it brings about strife reminding us that while it it is tempting to understand the conflict of Achilles' anger in purely ethical terms given the language of pity, what is most compelling is anger association with bringing about disorder.

To summarize, Agamemnon and Achilles offer two different ways in which anger can serve as a political instrument and be criticized by the political normativity which centers around avoiding disorder. Agamemnon's is seen as immediately problematic. His anger is intended as a sign of his power of authority which he demonstrates by his ability to achieve compliance, by force if need be. Instead Achilles's anger is a sign of the

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[73] This observation might lead us to think about translating his *mēnis* as 'rage,' or simply 'anger,' as opposed to 'wrath,' since wrath tends to signal intensity but short duration. It seems to me that Achilles's anger against Hektor more easily fits 'wrath.' Particularly given Cairns's argument that there is nothing particularly unique about the use of *mēnis.* Cf. Muellner, *The Anger of Achilles: Mênis in Greek Epic*.

[74] Whether we should still hold Achilles in contempt is a matter of debate. Agnes Callard, for example, argues that while it is easy to understand why one gets angry, it is harder to explain why one would cease to be angry. Agnes Callard, "The Reason to be Angry Forever," in *The Moral Psychology of Anger* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 123-137.

gradual breakdown of Agamemnon's legitimacy as a ruler which started when Agamemnon ignored the priest Chryses and the Achaians that were in favor of respecting him (1.22). The success of Agamemnon's anger rests on how he is uniquely positioned to threaten with violence and inflict payback, whereas Achilles's rests on everyone's agreement that his anger is both fitting, and reasonable, according to honor-norms, but imprudent in political terms both in his impulse to attack Agamemnon and most importantly on not being able to let go in Book 9. It is worthy of mention that Achilles's anger against Agamemnon is up to Book 9 always articulated in terms of seeking change, not retribution.

Because political anger is interested in efficacy, it must navigate order in both the legitimacy of its content and the status of the agent. In the *Iliad* anger that is illegitimate on both accounts (content and status) is unproblematic because it simply cannot prosper. Similarly, anger that is completely legitimate, is unproblematic because by definition it cannot provoke strife. This is a stark contrast to what we might now think of as moral anger, where in terms of the legitimacy of the anger one's status is normatively irrelevant. It is also different from honor-anger where one may be tempted to use anger as a way of climbing the vertical ladder of honor, and always seeks retribution.

The Development of the Political Anger: The Case of Telemachos

One of the most important examples of the crucial role that anger plays in the Homeric epics is Telemachos' transformation from grieving and fantasizing about his

father restoring order in his household as a child, to being an angry young man who begins to take order in his household into his own hands. Telemachos' anger is illuminating in several respects: (1) it is the result of Athena's plan, a goddess who more often than not advocates for the restricting of anger in both herself and others; and (2) it shows the close association between anger and its conative strengths since it gives rise to courage.

In what follows I give a close reading of how Athena and Zeus' plan to restore Odysseus to Ithaka translated into Athena kindling anger in Telemachos. I identify three key moments: (1) Athena's spear; (2) Mentes' legitimation of Telemachos' situation as one worthy of anger; and (3) Telemachos taking things into his own hands by calling and leading the first assembly since Odysseus' departure.

Athena does not set out to make Telemachos angry, she sets up to stir him up and give him confidence, "ὄφρα οἱ υἱὸν μᾶλλον ἐποτρύνω καί οἱ μένος ἐν φρεσὶ θείω" (*Od*. i.89). Her intentions are to help Odysseus return to Ithaka and help Telemachos win a good reputation among people, "ἠδ᾽ ἵνα μιν κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔχῃσιν" (*Od*.i.95). However, the way that Athena's intentions translate into action is by taking Telemachos from grieving to anger. Before Telemachos notices Athena's presence, now disguised as a man called Mentes, he is described as sitting among the suitors who are destroying his inheritance grieving (φίλον τετιημένος ἦτορ) and imagining Odysseus taking care of the situation (i.115). The sight of Mentes, waiting by the door unattended, prompts Telemachos to change from sitting in sorrow to walking anger that a guest

should still be waiting, βῆ δ᾽ ἰθὺς προθύροιο, νεμεσσήθη δ᾽ ἐνὶ θυμῷ ξεῖνον δηθὰ θύρῃσιν ἐφεστάμεν (i.120). In this key moment, Telemachos' *nemesis* has turned him from someone who thought himself helpless, towards someone who will take things into his own hands. The poet signals that by naming his emotions, by associating his sorrow with passive-siting and his anger with active-walking.

The poet had already signaled the important part that anger plays in Telemachos being able to obtain *kleos*, glory, with the description of Athena's spear which Telemachos has now taken from Athena as a symbol of his taking care of the household:

> εἵλετο δ᾽ ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ἀκαχμένον ὀξέι χαλκῷ,
> βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν, τῷ δάμνησι στίχας ἀνδρῶν
> ἡρώων, τοῖσίν τε κοτέσσεται ὀβριμοπάτρη.
>
> Then she caught up a powerful spear, edged with sharp bronze,
> Heavy, huge, think, wherewith she beats down the battalions of fighting
> Men, against whom she of the mighty father is angered. (1.96-106)

Athena is seldom described as angry, and when she is it is to highlight her prudence and the imprudence of others.[75] She is most often the one who curves someone's anger, as in the case of Achilles, but in the *Odyssey* she encourages the anger of Telemachos, Penelope, and Odysseus.[76] She even talks to Zeus in a way that prompts him to say, "My child, what sort of word escaped your teeth's barrier? τέκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν

[75] For example, in the *Iliad* whenever her and Hera are angry at Zeus the poet formulaically mentions how Athena will restrain her anger, whereas Hera will not. Hera will then always highlight her status with regards to Zeus as a way to justify her ability or right to express her anger.

[76] In book xviii we find the only instance where Penelope is angry, and it is again the result of Athena's attempt to give the characters the confidence and inspiration to do what they need to do. In this particular case, part of what Penelope needs from Athena is help being respected by others through her beauty and stature. Telemachos legitimizes and approves of his mother's anger against him by describing her anger as *nemesis* (227).

ἕρκος ὀδόντων" (*Od*. i.64). The fact that Athena is described as taking with her a spear that is used in her anger against men, and that Telemachos takes it from her at a key moment when he is for the first time seeing himself as responsible for his household is significant.

However, Telemachos experiencing *nemesis* and taking care of Mentes is not enough to fulfill Athena's initial plan. For that reason, Mentis spends the majority of his conversation ensuring that the movement that Telemachos just made, from sorrow to anger, from passive to active, is encouraged. Telemachos himself seeks confirmation of his *nemesis* by asking Mentes if he feels the same, ξεῖνε φίλ', ἦ καὶ μοι νεμεσήσεαι ὅττι κεν εἴπω; (i.158). Mentes answers, "How insolently they seem to swagger about in their feasting all through the house. A serious man who came in among them could well be outraged, seeing so much disgraceful behavior. ὥς τέ μοι ὑβρίζοντες ὑπερφιάλως δοκέουσι δαίνυσθαι κατὰ δῶμα. νεμεσσήσαιτό κεν ἀνὴρ αἴσχεα πόλλ᾽ ὁρόων, ὅς τις πινυτός γε μετέλθοι" (i.225). Moreover, having established the legitimacy of Telemachos' *nemesis*, Mentes proceeds to convince Telemachos to do something about it. The extent of Telemachos' involvement in ridding his household of the suitors will be determined in part by finding out whether his father lives; if Odysseus were dead then Telemachos will have to decide whether to rid himself through treachery or open attack. To convince Telemachos Mentes now employs two related moves: one is to remind him that he is not a child anymore; the second one is to appeal to Orestes as an exemplar (i.297-305). Orestes and Telemachos are comparable because they are both at the cusp of

adulthood and part of what it takes to make that transition is the shift from passive to active attitudes. Further, what is at stake for both Orestes and Telemachos is *kleos*, which Orestes obtained by avenging his father in anger.

Evidence that Athena's plan worked is already gestured towards with Telemachos' treatment of his mother Penelope (i.345-359) when he sends her back into the house to focus on weaving, and to leave the men, but him specially, to discuss important matters. Penelope responds in amazement (θαμβέω) thus confirming that the behavior is new. Telemachos asserts himself by policing gender roles, and by distinguishing himself from the other men when he emphasized that he himself will do the talking (μάλιστα δ᾽ ἐμοί). Furthermore, he ends his command to his mother by saying, "For mine is the power in this household. τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ᾽ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ."

Lastly, Athena's plan comes to complete fruition during his speech in the assembly that he convened, the first assembly since Odysseus' departure, where Telemachos has now moved from *nemesis* to *chōomai* as he asserts his place in the household and his plan to sail in search of his father (ii.80).[77] The reason this is significant is that whereas *nemesis* has a universalizing aspect, an inbuilt justificatory power, χώομαι does not, which means that Telemachos is now relying completely on his own sense of authority. Said differently, the cognitive content of *nemesis* would be akin to "everyone would agree that a wrong has been committed," whereas other anger terms

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[77] Χώομαι only appears eight times in the *Odyssey*, compared to thirty-four times in the *Iliad*. It is undoubtedly anger, and it is the same word used for Odysseus' reaction to Penelope's bed trick.

lack that explicit justification. In the *Odyssey*, *nemesis* is most often used by women. Penelope repeatedly justifies herself by appealing to the hypothetical *nemesis* of fellow women.[78] One would be hard pressed to find female non-*nemesis* that is condoned in Greek texts.[79] The poet signals the efficacy of Telemachos' angry speech by saying:

> [...] οἶκτος δ' ἕλε λαὸν ἅπαντα.
> ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἀκὴν ἔσαν, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
> Τηλέμαχον μύθοισιν ἀμείψασθαι χαλεποῖσιν [...]
> And compassion held all the people.
> Now all the others were stricken to silence, none had the courage
> As to answer, harsh word against word, the speech of Telemachos (ii.81-83).

That the men in attendance showed οἶκτος as opposed to being angry themselves, for example, is important since it signals that they sincerely understand Telemachos' plea. Moreover, the men recognized Telemachos' power, an important part of legitimacy in the Homeric context, and hence they did not dare talk back (except for the suitor Antinoös).[80] It is also worth pointing out that after Telemachos' speech, Mentos, to whom Odysseus left the command of the house, highlights the courage and initiative of Telemachos (whilst at the same time foreshadowing Odysseus return) when he accuses everyone of having done nothing:

> μή τις ἔτι πρόφρων ἀγανὸς καὶ ἤπιος ἔστω
> σκηπτοῦχος βασιλεύς, μηδὲ φρεσὶν αἴσιμα εἰδώς,

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[78] For an example see ii.101.

[79] This is true of mortal women exclusively.

[80] Antonoös rebuttal is not unimportant since he tries to delegitimize Telemachos' anger by calling him "high-spoken intemerapte Telemachos" (ὑψαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε) which should be reminiscent of how Achilles' anger is described by those to whom it does not benefit. Although his insults are further proof that Athena has succeeded in instilling in Telemachos courage (*menos*).

ἀλλ᾽ αἰεὶ χαλεπός τ᾽ εἴη καὶ αἴσυλα ῥέζοι:
ὡς οὔ τις μέμνηται Ὀδυσσῆος θείοιο
λαῶν οἷσιν ἄνασσε, πατὴρ δ᾽ ὣς ἤπιος ἦεν.
ἀλλ᾽ ἦ τοι μνηστῆρας ἀγήνορας οὔ τι μεγαίρω
ἕρδειν ἔργα βίαια κακορραφίῃσι νόοιο:
σφὰς γὰρ παρθέμενοι κεφαλὰς κατέδουσι βιαίως
οἶκον Ὀδυσσῆος, τὸν δ᾽ οὐκέτι φασὶ νέεσθαι.
νῦν δ᾽ ἄλλῳ δήμῳ νεμεσίζομαι, οἷον ἅπαντες
ἧσθ᾽ ἄνεῳ, ἀτὰρ οὔ τι καθαπτόμενοι ἐπέεσσι
παύρους μνηστῆρας καταπαύετε πολλοὶ ἐόντες.

No longer now let one who is a sceptered king be eager
To be gentle and kind, be one whose thought is schooled in justice,
But let him always be rather harsh, and act severely,
Seeing the way no one of the people he was lord over
Remembers godlike Odysseus, and he was kind, like a father.
Now it is not so much the proud suitors I resent
For doing their violent acts by their mind's evil devising;
For they lay their heads on the line when violently they eat up
The house of Odysseus, who, they say to themselves, will not come back;
But now I hold it against you other people, how you all
Sit there in silence, and never with an assault of words try
to check the suitors, though they are so few, and you so many (ii.230-241).

Athena's strategy of instilling anger in Telemachos by highlighting his legitimate power, as well as the injustice done to his house is, thus, also part of the change that Odysseus' household will have to undergo.[81]

[81] Further evidence of Telemachos's transformation is found in ii.310-317 where Telemachos assures Antinoös that he can no longer force him to do anything. He mentions that he will be taking things into his now that "I am grown big, and by listening to others can learn the truth, and the *thumos*-anger is steaming up inside me, I will endeavor to visit evil destructions upon you, either by going to Pylos, or remaining here in the district. νῦν δ᾽ ὅτε δὴ μέγας εἰμὶ καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἀκούων πυνθάνομαι, καὶ δή μοι ἀέξεται ἔνδοθι θυμός, πειρήσω, ὥς κ᾽ ὔμμι κακὰς ἐπὶ κῆρας ἰήλω, ἠὲ Πύλονδ᾽ ἐλθών, ἢ αὐτοῦ τῷδ᾽ ἐνὶ δήμῳ."

To summarize, Athena's intervention to get Telemachos to establish his position in his household is executed by kindling Telemachos' anger.[82] That Athena, a goddess who most often restrains the anger of the heroes and that of herself, strategizes to incite Telemachos into action by kindling his anger suggests the acknowledgement of anger's important role and association to courage, political power, honor, and therefore *kleos*. Thanks to Athena, Telemachos' passive-sorrow, becomes active-anger by first experiencing *nemesis* appears when he sees that a guest is not being attended to, and then becomes χώομαι, as he takes control of the assembly and the future of his household.

Concluding Remarks and Further Questions

In my view, anger is most correctly understood as political given that not only does Homeric anger respond to wrongs regarding order, authority, legitimacy, and power, but also it is judged by others according to those standards. What matters to Homeric heroes is *who* is angry as much as *why* one is angry. That is a striking contrast to the previous texts discussed, which cared about who was angry but not to the extent that identity could legitimize or delegitimize the anger. I began by explaining what political anger is and what the political is in a Homeric context. I then focus on the debate between Agamemnon and Achilles, and how Agamemnon and Achilles show two types of political anger. Lastly, I showed the development of political anger in Telemachos.

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[82] This is a clear exception to the claim that gods tend to restrain the anger of mortals. See Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 137.

There is a sense in which we may still categorize certain types of political anger as more other-regarding than others. If what determines whether one's anger is self-regarding or other-regarding is one's aim, then political anger always is in the spectrum of other-regarding anger. This would even be true of Agamemnon's case. He uses anger as a performance of his kingly authority. Telemachos and Agamemnon are in the same category: anger is a show of worth and necessary for authority; whereas anger for Achilles is a sincere expression of one's values regardless of the consequences. Ultimately, Achilles' anger is condemnable not because it failed at fellow-feeling, but because political anger is interested in efficacy, it must navigate order to avoid strife.

A further topic to bolster my argument would be an exploration of Odysseus's anger as politically instrumental–meaning that it is worth expressing or acting on anger if it will bring forth the desired result. The anger of Odysseus is always presented as navigating the instrumental value of anger, as opposed to being an end in itself or a demonstration of esteem. The anger of Odysseus has not received much scholarly attention despite the fact that he is unlike other heroes. Part of the neglect is that, as Harris points out, the poet himself appears to avoid ascribing anger to Odysseus even when it clearly is there.[83] A second reason might be that we have not perceived his anger in any way as problematic, even if it is unique among the Homeric heroes, and even though the end of the poem itself presents Odysseus' entire enterprise of *tisis* (retributive justice) as problematic albeit necessary. Despite the fact that at each turn Odysseus will

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[83] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 134n10.

ponder with his spirit how to act out of anger (ὀχθέω), meaning what course of action will be most beneficial for his actual goals, instead of always being guided by honor, Zeus still needs to intervene by giving the people of Ithaka amnesia.

Odysseus is most well known as a hero of *mētis*, and so like Athena he is not often associated with anger.[84] However, as I showed with the case of Telemachos, Athena finds anger of instrumental value, and so does Odysseus. He is outwardly angry twice and neither of them are occasions where his honor is an immediate or primary concern. Odysseus's relationship to Homeric honor norms as a hero of cunning are not uncomplicated. His cunning is seen as different from the cunning of negative figures.[85] Much like Athena, what guides his deceptions is socially constructive. Athena does not feel the need to sincerely express her anger against Zeus as proof of her status, there is always something else guiding the decision of whether or not to express or restrain anger.

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[84] *Mētis* problematizes the argument that anger's primary role is an epistemic one given that metis-anger works though disguise and deceit. That is not to say we cannot learn something from *metis*-anger, rather that *metis*-anger's primary aim is efficacy, not signaling wrongdoing. For a discussion of Odysseus as a hero of *mētis* see Lisa Raphals, *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Tradition of China and Greece* (Cornell University Press, 1992), pp.188-225. See also Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 2.

[85] Raphals, *Knowing*, 191.

Chapter V

Kill me then, dear girl, with the pitiless bronze: Penelope, Clytemnestra, and Female Alternatives to Anger

It is true that women have always lived in a world created by men
and governed by men's rules. But it is also true that
men have always lived alongside women who have contested these rules.
For much of human history their dissent has been
private and unsystematic: flinching, struggling, leaving, quitting.
–Amia Srinivasan[1]

σκιδναμένας ἐν στήθεσιν ὄργας
πεφύλαχθαι γλῶσσαν μαψυλάκαν
When anger is spreading through your breast,
It is best to keep your yapping tongue in check.
–Sappho, Fr.158

Abstract

Female anger in Greek texts has received little attention largely due to the fact that examples are hard to find. For that reason this chapter explores female alternatives to anger: how are female characters represented in situations where their male counterparts would have been expected to show anger? It begins with a brief account of female *nemesis*, a type of pseudo-anger, and how it is used. Second is a close examination of Penelope's alternatives to anger in the *Odyssey*. Third is an analysis of Clytemnestra's in the *Oresteia*.

Introduction

There appears to be general reluctance to explicitly attribute anger to women. Harris argues that Greek men simply did not want women to complain as a justification for why there appears to be no ultimately positive portrayals of female anger in the Greek evidence.[2] The link between complaining and anger arises from the fact that anger demonstrates displeasure and seeks change. However, the reluctance extends to

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[1] Amia Srinivasan, *The Right to Sex: Feminism in the Twenty-First Century* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021), 21.

[2] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 264-284.

depictions of female vice as well. Penelope and Clytemnestra are contrasted with one another as the two paradigmatic cases of virtue and vice, respectively. Anger is attributed to neither.

In this chapter I explore female alternatives to anger in the *Odyssey* and the *Oresteia*.[3] What do women's emotional landscapes consist of? How are female characters represented in situations where their male counterparts would have been expected to show anger? What does this tell us about anger? I begin by giving an account of the pseudo-anger we do find in female characters, *nemesis*.[4] I then focus on the characters of Penelope and Clytemnestra. Penelope represents virtuous female alternatives to anger, Clytemnestra vicious ones. The two women are directly contrasted with one another in Penelope's "song of grace" and Clytemnestra's "song of hate" in the *Odyssey* (24.194 and 24.200, respectively).[5]

I focus on Aeschylus' representations of Clytemnestra in the *Oresteia* in particular in part because it has received more attention in terms of the relationship between anger

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[3] Out of length considerations, I here restrict myself to characters who appear both in tragic dramas and Homeric epic. This also allows for a neater comparison between the two. This explains, for example, the absence of Medea in the chapter. A further reason is the *Odyssey'* explicit mentions of the myth of the *Oresteia*.

[4] See Introduction for a discussion of the term, in the Semantic field analysis, and the emotion, in the Taxonomy section.

[5] For another contrast between the two women see Simon Goldhill, *Language, Sexuality, Narrative: the Oresteia* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), 74-75.

and justice.[6] The *Oresteia,* as an exploration of social order and transgression, is markedly constructed in terms of gender.[7] Anger features prominently in relation to social order, to transgression, and is gendered. And yet, while scholarship focusing on gender often equivocates the *Oresteia*'s portrayal of anger–for it is far from a systematic treatment of actual anger, scholarship focusing on the role of anger at the end of the *Oresteia* often forgets gender. Vannesa Friedman in "Over His Dead Body: Female Murderers, Female Rage, and Western Culture," reads Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon as female rage, as a "dramatic expression of her repulsion towards and violent rejection of the social order of patriarchal abuse, the phallocentric culture which has succesfully muted her and made her an invisible human being."[8] Harris and

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[6] Like the Homeric epics, Aeschylus's *Oresteia* enjoys a long intellectual and literary after-life. Aeschylus was born in Eleusis just after Hippias succeeded Peisistratus (528/7 BCE) in 525/4 BCE. He died at Gela in Sicily. Why he left Athens is uncertain although Aristophanes says that he did not get along with the Athenians (*Frogs* 807). The *Oresteia* is often understood in terms of Ephialter's reforms in Athens and subsequent assasination. For the political relevance of Aeshylus' tragedy see Anthony J. Podlecki, *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy* (*University of Michigan Press*, 1966). For a discussion of three key moments it the literary and intellectual history of the *Oresteia* see Simon Goldhill, "Greek Drama and Political Theory," in Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield, eds., *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 60-88.

[7] Already in the 1830's, J. J. Bachofen, a swiss jurist, wrote an influential book called *Das Mutterrecht*, "Mother-Right," in which he outlined a universal pattern of social development away from a supposed original matriarchy to the present patriarchal order. The *Oresteia*'s trial scene, given its devaluation of the cause of the female and its support of the cause of the male, became a key piece of evidence for the overthrow of women's original rights. See Johann Jakob Bachofen, and Ralph Manheim, trs., *Myth, Religion, and Mother Right* (Princeton University Press, 1992). Froma I. Zeitlin argues that for Aeschylus, who draws upon his mythopoetic powers in the service of world-building, "civilization is the ultimate product of conflict between opposing forces, achieved not through a *coincidentia oppositorum* but through a hierarchization of values." In the *Oresteia* every issue, every action stems from the female. She serves simultaneously as the catalyst of events and is the main object of inquiry. "The Dynamics of Misogyny: Myth and Mythmaking in the *Oresteia*," in Harold Bloom, ed., *Modern Critical Interpretations: The Oresteia* (Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), 47-8.

[8] Vanessa Friedman, "Over His Dead Body: Female Murderers, Female Rage, and Western Culture" in Renée R. Curry and Terry L. Allison (eds.), *States of Rage: Emotional Eruption, Violence, and Social Change* (New York Press, 1996), 63.

Nussbaum, on the other hand, divorce gender from their interpretation of the *Oresteia* as an aetiology of Athenian justice which restrains or eliminates, respectively, anger in a just society.[9]

The *Oresteia* is a trilogy that starts with a humble watchman of one house asking the gods for release from tol and waiting for a beacon light ends with a massive torch-lit procession in the center of the *polis* itself, led by divinities. A major theme of the *Oresteia* is *Dikē,* the cosmic principle of order.[10] It is a narrative of revenge and reversal: the very act of taking revenge repeatedly turns the revenger into an object of revenge (*Cho*. 313). It involves the tragic 'double-bind:' the conflict of competing and necessary obligations.[11] Orestes puts it best as "you killed who you ought not, now you suffer what you ought not." To punish wrong leads to doing wrong; not to punish wrong is also doing wrong.[12] This concern with revenge, as Goldhill puts it, "opens a vista of violence, obligation, punishment and justice–the very widest dynamics of social order."[13]But this

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[9] Of the two readings, Nussbaum's seems to me to be the most problematic. Nussbaum uses the conclusion of the *Oresteia* with normative force. Harris simply ignores genre. Harris, *Restraining*, 161-62. Nussbaum, *Anger*, 1-14.

[10] *Dikē* is one of the most important and prevalent words of 5th century Greek. Its range of meaning runs from 'justice' or 'right' to 'retribution,' 'punishment' to the particular legal senses of 'law court' and 'law case'. Simon Goldhill, *Aeschylus: The Oresteia* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 31. See also Goldhill, *Language*, 208-283.

[11] For example, Agamemnon faces the choice between failing his military alliance or his *oikos* (*Aga*. 206-11).

[12] This double-bind is echoed in Agnes Callard, "On Anger," *Boston Review* Forum 13 (45.1)(2020), 9-30. She argues that it is impossible for humans to respond rightly to being treated wrongly. One cannot be good in a bad world.

[13] Goldhill, *Aeschylus: The Oresteia*, 27.

cannot be understood outside of gender. The revenge of Clytemnestra is a sign of the monstrousness of the female–as the long ode in the *Choephoroe* shows (585-652). Orestes does not speak for his entire gender, nor does Agamemnon, Clytemnestra does.

For the purposes of this chapter I leave to one side the question of the anger of the gods. There are some clear distinctions between mortal and divine anger. The appropriateness of the anger of the gods appears to me determined based on their relative status to other gods (both Hera and Poseidon appeal to their status with regards to Zeus when justifying their anger), they also at times justify their anger based on their circle of concern or who they see as their dependents. For example, Hera justifies her anger at Zeus and the Trojans based on who she sees herself as protecting; Aphrodite gets angry with Helen out of love (*philia*) and threatens to turn that into hatred (*Il*. 3.413). How the gods choose to express (or hide) their anger is also determined by whether or not it is deemed efficacious, which is in turn based on their status. Zeus angers both Athena and Hera, and yet Athena chooses to stay quiet both times (e.g., 4.20-25). Another crucial difference is that female goddesses are often portrayed as unproblematically angry, whereas mortal women are not.

Women and *nemesis*

There is one type of anger that is predominantly female and is by definition appropriate, namely *nemesis*. I mentioned in the section on semantic fields that *nemesis* is often the response of a bystander, even a disinterested one. In such cases *nemesis* is a

response to an action or state of affairs one deems inappropriate by society's general standards of what's honorable, as opposed to something which directly wrongs one. Moreover, *nemesis* "characterizes the response of the offended party as the sort of response that others, in accordance with the general norms of society, would endorse." In other words, *nemesis* is a justified anger.[14]

Nemesis is most prominently used by women in the *Odyssey.* It is what Penelope uses to justify her actions and inactions to the suitors:

> κοῦροι, ἐμοὶ μνηστῆρες, ἐπεὶ θάνε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
> μίμνετ' ἐπειγόμενοι τὸν ἐμὸν γάμον, εἰς ὅ κε φᾶρος
> ἐκτελέσω, μή μοι μεταμώνια νήματ' ὄληται,
> Λαέρτῃ ἥρωϊ ταφήϊον, εἰς ὅτε κέν μιν
> μοῖρ' ὀλοὴ καθέλῃσι τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο,
> μή τίς μοι κατὰ δῆμον Ἀχαιϊάδων νεμεσήσῃ,
> αἴ κεν ἄτερ σπείρου κεῖται πολλὰ κτεατίσσας.
>
> Young men, my suitors now that the great Odysseus has perished,
> Wait, though you are eager to marry me, until I finish
> This web, so that my weaving will not be useless and wasted.
> This is a shroud for the hero Laertes, for when the destructive
> doom of death which lays men low shall take him, lest any
> Achaian woman in this neighborhood *hold it against me*
> That a man of many conquests lies with no sheet to wind him. (2.96-102)

[14] Of course *nemesis* can still be deemed inappropriate if the agent, for example, misunderstands an encounter between a man and a woman as being a situation of adultery when it is not.

The hypothetical *nemesis* of the Achaian women holds power over Penelope, and the suitors accept it as a compelling reason (ἡμῖν δ’ αὖτ’ ἐπεπείθετο θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ, 2.103).[15]

Nemesis is often used as a hypothetical. For example, When Nausikaa, daughter of the Phaiakian king Alkinoös, finds Odysseus she uses her own hypothetical *nemesis* to decide how she ought to act. She imagines how she would react if it were another girl that brought a strange man into town:

> καὶ δ’ ἄλλῃ νεμεσῶ, ἥ τις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι,
> ἥ τ’ ἀέκητι φίλων πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς ἐόντων
> ἀνδράσι μίσγηται πρίν γ’ ἀμφάδιον γάμον ἐλθεῖν.
> ξεῖνε, σὺ δ’ ὦκ’ ἐμέθεν ξυνίει ἔπος, ὄφρα τάχιστα
> πομπῆς καὶ νόστοιο τύχῃς παρὰ πατρὸς ἐμοῖο.
>
> And I myself would disapprove of a girl who acted
> So, that is, without the good will of her dear father
> And mother making friends with a man, before being formally
> Married. Then stranger, understand what I say, in order
> Soon to win escort and voyage home from my father. (6.286-290)

Again not only is female *nemesis* action-guiding for women, but it holds justificatory power over men. The justificatory power is not unique to women but it does stand in stark contrast to the complete negative portrayal of other types of female anger:

> ἀλλὰ τί ἢ ἔριδας καὶ νείκεα νῶϊν ἀνάγκη
> νεικεῖν ἀλλήλοισιν ἐναντίον ὥς τε γυναῖκας,
> αἵ τε χολωσάμεναι ἔριδος πέρι θυμοβόροιο

[15] The formula “μή τίς μοι κατὰ δῆμον Ἀχαιϊάδων νεμεσήσῃ, αἴ κεν ἄτερ σπείρου κεῖται πολλὰ κτεατίσσας.” is use by Penelope two more times: 19.121, 19.146, 24.136.

νεικεῦσ᾽ ἀλλήλῃσι μέσην ἐς ἄγυιαν ἰοῦσαι
πόλλ᾽ ἐτεά τε καὶ οὐκί· χόλος δέ τε καὶ τὰ κελεύει.

But what have you and I to do with the need for squabbling
And hurling insults at each other, as if we were two wives
Who when they have fallen upon a heart-perishing quarrel
Go out in the street and say abusive things to each other,
Much true, and much that is not, and it is their anger that drives them. (*Il*. 20.251-255)

Achilles is here being urged by Aeneas to stop his anger. The argument relies on a contrast with what women do, not men. Achilles should stop his anger else he faces being like a woman who causes strife and quarreling because her anger compels her to.

Odysseus himself appeals to the hypothetical *nemesis* of Penelope's maids (or perhaps even her own):

μάλα δ᾽ εἰμὶ πολύστονος· οὐδέ τί με χρὴ
οἴκῳ ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ γοόωντά τε μυρόμενόν τε
ἧσθαι, ἐπεὶ κάκιον πενθήμεναι ἄκριτον αἰεί·
μή τίς μοι δμῳῶν νεμεσήσεται ἠὲ σύ γ᾽ αὐτή,
φῇ δὲ δάκρυ πλώειν βεβαρηότα με φρένας οἴνῳ.

I am very full of grief, and I should not
Sit in the house of somebody else in my lamentation
And wailing. It is not good to go on mourning forever.
Some of your maids, or you yourself, might find fault with me
And say I swam in tears because my brain drowned in liquor. (19.118-22)

In fact, the *nemesis* of women appears to have more relative power than male *nemesis*. Appeals to the *nemesis* of women is usually made before the infraction has occurred, and its persuasive nature is always made explicit. They are a source of what I called *tradition*

policing. The *nemesis* of men, on the other hand, tends to appear *after* the infraction has been committed, and therefore further action is required. Telemachos as a young man needs to develop his *nemesis* into something anger proper (such as *mēnis*, *cholos*, *skuzesthai*, *chōesthai*, or *kotos*). *nemesis* on its own, because of its disinterested nature, leads to nothing further aside from an implied societal disapproval.[16] It is precisely for that reason that it is the only appropriate form of female anger, and why it is insufficient for adult men. I say that the *nemesis* of women may seem to have more relative power because it is enough to *prevent* people from doing things.[17] However, it is then a man's job to act once the infraction has been committed. Women acting on anger only leads to strife.[18]

A Virtuous Female Landscape

In this next section I analyze three instances in which Penelope (1) would have been expected to show anger, (2) expresses hatred instead of anger, hence she is still able

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[16] In the *Odyssey*, there is an example of the *nemesis* of Zeus (ὅς τε μάλιστα νεμεσσᾶται κακὰ ἔργα, 14.284), but it is used as a justification for his anger (*mēnis*) as Zeus Protector of Strangers (14.283).

[17] Although exploring this is beyond the scope of this chapter it seems to me that this phenomenon may rest on the fact that women are both those who maintain order but also seen as those who can bring about disorder. In other words, they are best at maintaining order because they come with a treat of disorder. For example, Zeitlin mentions that attitudes and representations of women in ancient Greece demonstrate "anxiety towards her persistent but normally dormant power which may always erupt into open violence." "Dynamics," 50.

[18] There is one exception in the *Odyssey* of a man listening to a woman's anger (*cholos*). We are told that Odysseus' father, Laertes, never slept with the maid Eurykleia to avoid his wife's anger (χόλον δ' ἀλέεινε γυναικός· 1.433). It is hard to know what this might mean. It seems to me that this is evidence of the concern that men had regarding the threat of female anger. Odysseus and his family are contrasted to Agamenon and his family throughout the Odyssey. Agamenon ignored the threat of his own wife's anger.

to virtuously show her displeasure, and (3) is said to express *nemesis* by her son Telemachos.

Penelope's Prayer

Penelope, in Book IV, learns that her trusted maid Eurykleia has concealed from her Telemachos's departure to find news of Odysseus, and that the suitors are planning to kill Telemachos on his journey back to Ithaka. Penelope is described as being so struck by worry that she has no strength left to sit down on a chair, instead she is weeping on the floor with all her maids weeping with her. She laments that had she known of Telemachos' plan she would have stopped him, and he would have been safe from the suitors. Hearing this Eurykleia confesses that she knew about his departure, but that she took an oath not to tell. Eurykeia's answer suggests that she expects anger from Penelope: "Kill me then, dear girl, with the pitiless bronze, or else let me be in the halls." (νύμφα φίλη, σὺ μὲν ἄρ με κατάκτανε νηλέϊ χαλκῷ, ἢ ἔα ἐν μεγάρῳ, 4.742). A homeric hero would have been expected to at least have the impulse to strike the patient of their anger with their sword. Instead, Eurycleia's confession and following advice have a soothing effect: Penelope stops crying as Eurycleia suggests. Penelope's alternative to anger is to pray to Athena that she protects Telemachos on behalf of Odysseus. Athena listens (762-67).[19]

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[19] Of course, Penelope is a hero of *mētis* and thus is more concerned with efficacy. See Raphals, *Knowing*, 221.

This passage allows both characters to show their virtue as women: Penelope shows her care for her household obeying ultimately Telemachos' wishes that Eurycleia conceal the truth from her, and then even appeals to Athena on behalf of Odysseus, not herself.[20]

Eurykleia remains faithful to Telemachos, while at the same time by acknowledging Penelope's right to be angry towards her she shows her relative status to Penelope.[21] Ultimately what the two women want is the safety of Telemachos, not claims to honor or status. For that reason, the focus for Eurykleia is on getting Penelope to stop feeling helpless by offering a path to action–and potentially by first igniting some degree of anger speaking to her as if she were a hero. Telemachos would gain nothing by Penelope being angry at Eurikleia.

Penelope's Hatred

This occasion is not the closest that Penelope gets to anger. In Book 17, Penelope curses the suitor Antinoös for having struck disguised Odysseus: "Thus, I pray, may the archer Apollo strike at the striker" (αἴθ' οὕτως αὐτόν σε βάλοι κλυτότοξος Ἀπόλλων, 17.492). Her curse is reminiscent of the one said by the priest Chryses in the *Iliad* where

[20] The poet's description of Penelope is also different from that of Odysseus, two heroes of *metis*. Harris points out that the poet appears to go through great lengths to avoid describing Odysseus as angry. Furthermore, the poet makes a point of describing Odysseus's inner struggle at the beginning of book 20, but there is no sign of Penelope's.

[21] Although in some senses Eurykleia might be seen as subordinate to Penelope she is also older, she is addressed as a *maia*, a good mother, which is a form of addressing old women, not just nurses. The social hierarchy also includes modes of respecting other kinds of status, such as age/wisdom. It is also a comment on Penelope that she treats Eurykleia in this way.

he also prays to Apollo that he avenge his misfortune with his arrows, except that most often the emotion behind a curse is specified.[22] Penelope is not described as feeling anything when stating her curse. Furthermore, she does not curse at Antinoös, but in the company of her maid Eurynome.

Anger is not the only emotion attributed to curses. Briefly, some curses are meant to prevent someone from doing something. If an emotion ought to be attributed as the motivation behind a curse of that kind, it would be fear.[23] Other courses would more precisely be described as being the result of envy, or jealousy.[24] Penelope is expressing a desire for direct retribution, which would fit anger, or hatred.[25] Penelope describes all the suitors as hateful (*echthros*) immediately after her curse. Therefore, it is more likely the result of hatred than anger.

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[22] The significance of Apollo in the case of the *Odyssey* is also to foreshadow the archery competition and Odysseus' revenge.

[23] For example, one could say "may Apollo strike you if you steal from me." In that case my fear that you might steal is the motivation for my curse. Given that you have not yet stolen from me I cannot be angry. There is a classical epigraphic formulation that (prospectively) curses anyone who disturbs X object. At the same time, it is the source of some debate whether or not judicial curse tablets were commissioned as preventative measures or not, see Christopher A. Faraone, "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells," in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink, *eds*., *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-32, no.67. See also Esther Eidinow, *Oracles, Curses, And Risk Among The Ancient Greeks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[24] The case of envy (*phthonos*) is very interesting. Curse tablets not only sought to harm the object of one's envy but in fact some curse tablets would command three chthonic deities (Hecate, Artemis, and Hermes, each in a sub-earthly guise) to envy or begrudge (*epiphthonēson*) the named targets. Jessica Lamont, "Crafting Curses in Classical Athens: A New Cache of Hexametric *Katadesmoi*," C*lassical Antiquity* 40, No.1 (2021), pp. 76–117, 101.

[25] If we were following Aristotle and we think Penelope is expressing anger her aim would be retribution, whereas if we think she is expressing hatred her wish would be the death of Antinoös. In the Homeric world anger often results in death. Aristotle, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, would attribute that to the pain of anger clouding one's ability to calculate.

Hatred, as counterintuitive as it might seem to a contemporary audience, presented fewer gender-based limitations than anger. Of course, the exact reasons would require a careful study of female hatred that are beyond the scope of the present chapter.[26] However, in this particular case, Penelope can use hatred to showcase her virtue without having to right the wrong herself. In calling the suitors hateful, and specifying that Antinoös is the most hateful of them all, like the black death, she condemns what they are doing to Odysseus's household. The suitors are not only eating away Odyseeus's property, they are now also abusing guests. Hatred is a way for Penelope to communicate that she is not complicit.

Penelope's curse echoes the curse offered by Odysseus a few moments before: "if there are any gods or any furies for beggars, Antinoös may find his death before he is married," (ἀλλ' εἴ που πτωχῶν γε θεοὶ καὶ ἐρινύες εἰσίν, Ἀντίνοον πρὸ γάμοιο τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη, 475-6). The shared condemnation of Antinoös by Penelope and Odysseus also demonstrates their like-mindedness (*homophron*) since Penelope curses Antinoös without knowing that the man he had hit was Odysseus.[27]

Communicating hatred is, thus, a way of circumventing the gender-based obstacles of anger. Penelope expresses hatred because hatred is not as associated with the

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[26] See also 18.165 where Penelope says to Eurynome that she wishes to show herself to the suitors, although she still hates (*apechthanomai*) them.

[27] Cf. Euripides, *Andromache* 205-27. Andromache explains to Hermione what is entailed in female virtue. Andromache explains that a woman should not give into bitterness (*pikros*)–which Aristotle considers a type of anger (*orgē*). It's possible that the female virtue that Andromache is describing is one of being 'like-minded' which would entail not being bitter, at least towards one's husband.

motivation to right and wrong, which would transgress into a male role. Nor is hatred about self-esteem.[28] Her hatred is in the service of her household.[29]

Penelope's *nemesis*

Lastly, on one occasion, Penelope herself publicly expresses what Telemachos describes as *nemesis*. Athena has just inspired Penelope to show herself to the suitors, so that she might look more precious in the eyes of the suitors, Odysseus (who is now in disguise), and Telemachos (18.158-62). Penelope wishes at the same time to tell her son that it would be better if he were not around the arrogant suitors who plot to kill him despite pretending otherwise (167-68). Having made her descent from her room, she publicly criticizes her son Telemachos for not acting righteously. The basis of her criticism is that he allowed the stranger (disguised Odysseus) to be mistreated by the suitors. Penelope compares who Telemachos used to be as a child with who he seems to have become as an adult. Young Telemachos would recognize the outrageousness of how

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[28] In the way described by Cairns regarding (male) anger. Vanesse Friedman argues that what is horrifying about female anger is the rupturing of the patriarchal order that has attempted to render her mute. Her act of anger may be interpreted as "a statement of the deepest need, a declaration of Self ("I'm here–I matter!") in a social order where she perceives herself as unseen, or at most a reflection of her male partner," "Over His Dead Body: Female Murderers, Female Rage, and Western Culture," in Renée R. Curry and Terry L. Allison, eds., *States of Rage: Emotional Eruption, Violence, and Social Change* (*New York University Press*, 1996), 63.

[29] That female hatred is not condemned shows that female emotions were not restricted to sadness or grief, as has been suggested. Moreover, it shows that the problem with female anger is not that men did not like women complaining, as Harris suggests, since both anger and hatred are about condemning. I am not arguing against Seth L. Schein's point that Penelope can be seen to have her own motivation quite apart from her loyalty to Odysseus and his *oikos*. I take it that Schein's point is not that Penelope's agency is unbound. My point is merely that not expressing anger is one such constraint. See "Female Representations and Interpreting the Odyssey, 17" in Beth Cohen, ed., *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 24.

the stranger was treated. This situation must be Telemachos' outrage and shame (σοί κ' αἶσχος λώβη τε μετ' ἀνθρώποισι πέλοιτο, 225).

Telemachos agrees with his mother's reprimand, which he attributes to *nemesis*:

> μῆτερ ἐμή, τὸ μὲν οὔ σε νεμεσσῶμαι κεχολῶσθαι·
> αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ θυμῷ νοέω καὶ οἶδα ἕκαστα,
> ἐσθλά τε καὶ τὰ χέρεια· πάρος δ' ἔτι νήπιος ἦα.
> ἀλλά τοι οὐ δύναμαι πεπνυμένα πάντα νοῆσαι·
> ἐκ γάρ με πλήσσουσι παρήμενοι ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος
> οἵδε κακὰ φρονέοντες, ἐμοὶ δ' οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀρωγοί.
>
> My mother, I cannot complain of your anger. I myself
> notice all these things in my heart and know of them, better
> and worse alike, but before now I was only an infant;
> but still I cannot see my way to the wise course always,
> for these men come from one place or another, and sit beside me
> with their terrible thoughts, and distract me, and there are none here to help me. (18.227-32)

Penelope's use of *nemesis* is akin to didactic anger. It both serves to showcase Penelope's female virtue, and to reprimand Telemachos. He himself admits that he needs help and guidance.

Monstrous "anger": Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*

As I briefly mentioned above, the *Oresteia* enjoys a long scholastic history. It has been the subject to multiple discussions of gender dynamics. I here limit myself to contrasting how Clytemnestra's emotional make-up is represented to that of Penelope's. I explore how anger features in the delegitimization of what Clytemnestra deems just on

two occasions: her murdering of Agamemnon, and her own matricide. I focus on three aspects: in the *Agamemnon,* (1) Clytemnestra, like Penelope, is never called angry albeit for different reasons;[30] (2) in fact Clytemnestra is depicted as devoid of all human emotion. Her 'rage' is best understood as animal ferociousness; in the subsequent plays of the trilogy, (3) even as she is about to become a victim her anger is expressed via the authority of the Furies, archaic beings who themselves undergo a civilizing process at the end of the play.[31] In other words, the Furies themselves must become agents of *nemesis*, instead of anger proper. Therefore, while exploring the *Oresteia* in terms of gender is certainly not new, my contribution is showing how gender illuminates the conceptualization of anger.

The theme of the excesses of female emotion is clear through the *Oresteia*. Female passions that stop at nothing and are partners in human ruin is the main theme of the ode on the monstrousness of female transgression found in the *Choephoroe* (586-652). Anger is not mentioned. In fact, no emotion is mentioned by name. Despite

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[30] Orestes on the other hand is. However, he is distanced from his anger in different ways. For example, the chorus understands him murdering Aegistus and Clytmenstra in terms of Revenge (*Poina*) which is "breathing deathly anger against the enemy" (*Cho*. 946-52). However, 'Revenge' is anthropomorphised as a female. Furthermore, it is Electra that says of herself and Orestes that they have an 'ungentle *thumos'* caused by their mother "λύκος γὰρ ὥστ' ὠμόφρων ἄσαντος ἐκ ματρός ἐστι θυμός" (*Cho*. 421-22). This does not contradict my argument. Clytemnestra is the catalyst for what Orestes has to go through which means he can, in a sense, enjoy the benefits of anger, without being seen as responsible for its drawbacks. Furthermore, Orestes is the victim of the tragic double-bing. Clytemnestra is not. She did not have to kill Agamemnon (nor Cassandra). A further reason why Orestes is more distanced from his anger than other male characters is that like Telemachos he is a young adult becoming a man.

[31] At the same time the Furies represent the archaic, the primitive, and regressive. They are set in opposition to the young god Apollo who champions conjugality, society, and progress. Zeitlin, "Dynamics," 49.

women's daring hearts being deemed responsible for the ruin of men.[32] No single emotion motivates female cruel plans contrived by forethought. Narratively speaking, Clytemnestra receives the same rhetorical treatment monsters do. Her actions cannot be the result of emotions because then her actions can have some justification. Homer only shows Polyphemus in a sympathetic way *after* Odysseus has successfully escaped, for Polyphemus must be seen as a cruel monster, far removed from anything recognizably human.[33]

Clytemnestra, like Penelope, is never explicitly described as angry.[34] It is difficult to argue what the significance of this may be. It is striking that Aeschylus is quick to describe men as angry but is very reluctant to do so to women.[35] My hypothesis is that attributing anger to Clytemnestra would entail a stronger validation of her stance and behavior than the play requires. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the *Agamemnon* contains the most unambiguous depiction of anger as justice.[36] The second

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[32] The heart is the seat of emotions. See Shirley Darcus Sullivan, *Aeschylus' Use of Psychological Terminology: Traditional and New* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 108.

[33] This rhetorical trope is very well illustrated in Paul Murgatroyd, *Mythical Monsters in Classical Literature* (Bristol Classical Press, 2012), especially 165-183. Female monsters do not tend to be humanized even to the smallest degree.

[34] Not even at Agamemnon's deception and the sacrifice of her daughter. To us she is clearly angry, but she is not said to be angry. What I am highlighting is that the poet appears to carefully avoid ascribing anger to her because he readily ascribes anger to others. What I am highlighting is merely the contrast.

[35] For example, Aegisthus threatens the Elders with his anger/exasperation (*exorinō* ἐξορίνω) after being called a woman (*Aga*. 1631).

[36] Harris points out that the *Agamemnon* has the most clear statement of anger as justice Harris, *Restraining*, 161. Also Apollo criticizes the Furies for only being angry at matricide and not Agamemnon's murder (*Eu*. 220).

is that the play rests on the ambiguity of Clytemnestra's reasons and motivations.[37] She is never supposed to be redeemable. She is equated to a monster which entails acting on aggression for aggression's sake. So while Clytemnestra herself attributes and justifies her murdering of Agamemnon to the sacrifice of Iphigenea, the chorus never acknowledges it.[38] In other words, the chorus never acknowledges that Clytemnestra murdered Agamenon because of the loss of her daughter.

Friedman is correct, in more ways than one, that female anger is 'unspeakable,' for whatever Clytemnestra may be said to be feeling it is not named even though her emotional capacities clearly matter. Clytemnestra is simultaneously accused of having too many feelings, of lacking the appropriate feelings, and of concealment.

Clytemnestra herself shows awareness of the higher barrier to entry into the world of reason that she faces. When she first finds out of Agamemnon's victory at Troy and imminent arrival, the Elders are reluctant to believe her because she is a woman. Clytemnestra sums up the resistance she received when she correctly interpreted the nocturnal fire-messenger as a sign of the capture of Troy as "How very like a woman, to let her heart take flight!" (ἦ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς αἴρεσθαι κέαρ. *Aga*. 592). She likens the basis of their rebukes as perceiving her to be deranged (*plagktos* πλαγκτός).[39]

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[37] Aside from mentioning Clytemnestra's adultery, the only other explanation the chorus finds plausible is the curse on the house of Agamemnon which renders Agamemnon a victim of circumstance.

[38] Revenge is conceptualized as the result of anger in Homer, in Aeschylus, and in Aristotle. For a clear example in the *Oresteia* see *Cho*. 945-52.

[39] They also later claim that her mind is driven mad by her experience of flowing blood (ὥσπερ οὖν φονολιβεῖ τύχᾳ φρὴν ἐπιμαίνεται· 1427-8).

At the same time, Clytemnestra is aware that she appears to lack the appropriate feelings of a wife and mother. She feels compelled to explain to the Elders her feelings (Agamemon also happens to have just arrived, with Cassandra, and is about to descend the carriage). However, it is interesting that she chooses this opportunity to declare her love for her husband by explaining why she may not come across as having experienced fear, or grief.[40] No doubt part of the reason is to conceal her true feelings and intentions– that she is about to murder him. Clytemntestra explains that constantly hearing many dire reports has left her numb. She explains that she had to be stopped from committing suicide many times (874-76).[41] She also explains why she had Orestes sent away, to protect him. Unlike Penelope, who even after twenty years is still often described as crying herself to sleep, Clytemnestra's tears have dried up, and there is not a drop left (888-89). She has a heart no longer grieving (ἀπενθήτῳ φρενὶ, 895).

In the middle of her public speech she assures us that in an explanation like one she is giving there can be no deception. The Elders have already hinted that Clytemnestra's words should be seen with some suspicion (615-16). The Elders describe her as cunning (*megalomētis*) after having successfully murdered Agamemnon (1426). Cassandra likens Clytemnestra's deception to the underworld monster Cerberus, who like her fawns to deceive (1228-9). This is because an important theme through the

[40] She says, "fear dies away in the human mind" (ἐν χρόνῳ δ' ἀποφθίνει τὸ τάρβος ἀνθρώποισιν. 855-58).

[41] Interestingly Aristotle attributes anger as the cause for suicide, no doubt because of its relation to shame (*NE* 1138a9). In contemporary literature, Germaine Greer has also argued that suicide is the result of rage. She explores the topic in relation to Aboriginal dispossession in Australia. *On Rage* (Melbourne University Press, 2018).

Agamemnon is concealment.[42]The Elders are not just suspicious of Clytemnestra, they are concerned with the citizens too. They are imagined snarling, under their breath, because they went to war 'because of someone else's wife. The worry of citizens concealing their emotions against Agamemnon prompts the Elders to say, "The talk of citizens, mixed with anger, is a dangerous thing: It is the equivalent of a publicly ordained curse" (βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις ξὺν κότῳ·δημοκράτου δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος. 456-57). Therefore, although one could argue that Clytemnestra is not described as angry because of her concealment, the anger (*kotos*) of the people is recorded.[43]

In stark contrast to Penelope, there is no emotional language used to describe Clytemnestra–whether positive or negative.[44] When we speak of Clytemnestra's 'rage,' we are not talking about a form of extreme anger. She is described as an animal, a monster, and a witch by Cassandra. We are talking about the ferociousness of beasts and

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[42] Particularly at the hands of women. Orestes also commits a double murder via trickery but it is not a result of his gender. The fact that in this case it is Clytemnestra prompts even Aegisthus, his lover, to say, "the entrapment was obviously a job for a woman" (τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς, 1636). Clytemnestra points out to Agamemnon that he himself had also murdered via trickery in 1524. Women having great and sinister skills in deception is a common trope in Greek literature. For examples see *Odyssey* 11.456; Hesiod, *Works and Days* 67, 373-5; Euripedes, *Medea* 421-2.

[43] In that sense the *Oresteia* shows a dual concern for the transgressive nature of the anger of women and citizens. In the *Agamemnon*, the anger of citizens can be explicitly mention despite not being the real, imminent threat, but not that of Clytemnestra; and yet in the *Eumenides* the introduction of the trial, the new home of the Furies, and the procession at the end shows that what was at stake all along was redefining whose justice, and therefore whose anger, is legitimate.

[44] The closest Clytemnestra gets to emotional descriptions is when the chorus of Elders speaks of the vengeful spirit of the house of Atreus as *bārumēnis*, "heavy with *mēnis*" (1481).

monsters. It is not akin to the rage of Achilles.[45] She is one who is hated,[46] like an amphisbaena, and Scylla, she is a hellish mother who tears victims into pieces.[47] What is emphasized as monstrous is not only the audacity of the female killing the male ("θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεύς· ἔστιν—τί νιν καλοῦσα δυσφιλὲς δάκος τύχοιμ' ἄν;" 1231-33),[48] but also that she wages war against her nearest and dearest (1235-36). Hence, she must lack the appropriate emotions.[49]

That Clytemnestra's lack of anger, lack of emotions, is tied to irredeemable female viciousness is confirmed when she is murdered by her son Orestes, who must also be subjected to the tragic 'double bind,' and the Furies are angry on her behalf (*Cho*. 924, 1054). Orestes has not just slayed a murderer, he has commited matricide. For the Furies killing one's own blood is worse than killing one's husband (*Eu*. 211).

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[45] Greer points out that a woman who expresses rage is "a man-woman, a virago, because rage is masculine." She is speaking of rage today. She highlights how even in the acclaimed British legal system men have a right to rage, whereas women do not. *On Rage*, 22.

[46] In this case by Casssandra.

[47] "ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἢ Σκύλλαν τινὰ οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλων βλάβην, θύουσαν Ἅιδου μητέρ'" (1233-5). An amphisbaena is a fabulous serpent with a head at each end. Scylla is a monster who had once been a human being, and had been transformed after killing her father. See *Cho*. 613-622. See also *Odyssey* 12.73-126; 201-259, 445-6.

[48] This is tied to the way she wrests political power from her husband. Clytemnestra is depicted as androgynous and thus transgressive. She shows her awares of this in *Aga*. 613-14. Because she is seen as androgynous, she is compared to a monstrous hybrid. Athena is also angrogynous but as I mentioned at the beginning the same rules do not apply in the immortal realm.

[49] Except, she finds pleasure in murdering Agamemnon (*Aga*. 1391-92; 1394). She also rejoices in having killed Cassandra in 1446-47.

Concluding Remarks

The fact that neither Penelope nor Clytemnestra are ever said to be angry, where their male counterparts would be, shows that anger is understood to have a privileged position, albeit a complex one, with regards to male interests. In the Homeric epics and Aeschylus anger is closely tied to violence but a justified violence, or at least understood violence. It is also self-interested in a way that does not necessarily preclude the interests of others. A virtuous woman like Penelope must act in the interests of her household, she must also do so non-violently. Virtuous women's alternatives to anger are not just sadness, or grief, but also hatred, and *nemesis* which is akin to didactic anger.[50] On the other hand, were Clytemnestra to be represented as angry, she would still be acting on recognizably human values. Instead she acts on animal-like self-interest.

It would be worth exploring the possible further consequences of relating Athena's assimilation of the Furies into the city of Athens as guardians of order and justice and female *nemesis*. Athena uses the newly founded altar to the Furies to resolve conflict without transgressive destructiveness. They act as strong reminders of chaos and violence that comes from female anger. They remind us *before* a wrong is committed. In other words, they act as *nemesis* acts. Consequently, the way female anger has been written in these texts makes female anger take on an apotropaic function.

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[50] Except that *nemesis* being tied to customs appears to be restricted to *tradition policing*, it acts in the service of already established norms. Didactic anger has no such restriction.

Chapter VI

To Kill a Tyrant: Anger in Aristotle

Further, no one feels pain when he commits wanton aggression;
But whatever someone does from anger, he feels pain when he does it,
whereas the wanton aggressor does what he does with pleasure.
–Aristotle, *NE* 1149b2123

The talk of citizens, mixed with anger, is a dangerous thing:
It is the equivalent of a publicly ordained curse.
–Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 456-57

Abstract

Aristotle's writings provide a largely systematic account of anger with regards to what I am calling personal and political virtue. The aim of personal virtue is *eudaimonia* whereas the aim of political virtue is the safety of the community. Previous scholarship focuses on how anger is an element of personal virtue but the role of anger in political virtue has largely been ignored. My contribution is to argue that anger in terms of political emotion is instrumental for political stability, but not primarily because of its conative role for citizens. According to Aristotle, the burden of whether anger is politically virtuous does not fall on the citizen. Instead, Aristotle emphasizes the epistemic value of anger for anyone who studies political science and, most crucially, for rulers. Aristotle's solution to the anger of citizens is not to crush it, rather for rulers not to trigger that anger through their actions to begin with. In other words, anger is only an issue if the ruler is incompetent.

Introduction

According to Aristotle (384-322 BCE) the end of the tyrannies of the Peisistratids was the result of anger:

> μόριον δέ τι τοῦ μίσους καὶ τὴν ὀργὴν δεῖ τιθέναι: τρόπον γάρ τινα τῶν αὐτῶν αἰτία γίνεται πράξεων. πολλάκις δὲ καὶ πρακτικώτερον τοῦ μίσους: συντονώτερον γὰρ ἐπιτίθενται διὰ τὸ μὴ χρῆσθαι λογισμῷ τὸ πάθος (μάλιστα δὲ συμβαίνει τοῖς θυμοῖς ἀκολουθεῖν διὰ τὴν ὕβριν, δι᾽ ἣν αἰτίαν ἥ τε τῶν Πεισιστρατιδῶν κατελύθη τυραννὶς καὶ πολλαὶ τῶν ἄλλων) ,

> ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ μῖσος: ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὀργὴ μετὰ λύπης πάρεστιν, ὥστε οὐ ῥᾴδιον λογίζεσθαι, ἡ δ᾽ ἔχθρα ἄνευ λύπης.
>
> Anger must also be set down as part of hatred, since in a way it causes the same deeds. It is often in fact more a cause of action than hatred is. For the angry attack in a more impetuous way because their passion does not pause to calculate (they follow their spiritedness principally on account of insolent treatment, and insolence is why the tyrannies of the Peisistratids and of many others were destroyed). But hatred makes more use of calculation. For anger is accompanied by pain, so that calculating is not easy, but hatred is without pain. (*Pol.* 1312b26-34)[1]

Aristotle is probably referring to the murder of Hipparcus in 514 BCE, brother of Hippias, son of Peisistratos.[2] After the death of Peisitratos in 528/7 BCE, Hippias took over Athens with the assistance of his brother. According to Aristotle, Hipparchus made sexual advances to Harmodious, member of the Gephyraioi family. Hipparchus then publicly humiliated Harmodious's sister on account of having been rejected. Harmodius and his lover, Aristogeiton, decided to kill him (which meant killing his brother first).[3] Something went wrong and they only killed Hipparchus, Harmodius was killed in the spot, and Aristogeiton was arrested and tortured to death. Whilst this led Hippias to become a more oppressive ruler who was eventually driven from Athens by the Spartan

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[1] For all the Greek texts I have consulted the Loeb Classical Library editions. All translations of the *Politics* are from Peter L. Philip Simpson, *The Politics of Aristotle* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1997) with my own modifications, and are identified by Bekker number. I follow Simpson's ordering of the *Politics* but I write the standard chapter number after his in brackets when needed (e.g., 4 (7)). For his justification see Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Simpson, xvi-xx.

[2] Peisistratus became tyrant of Athens in 560, being the leader of the popular faction against the rich (the men of the plain), cf. *Pol*. 1305a15-23.

[3] On the exact nature of the insult to Harmodius' sister, see B.M. Lavelle, 'The Nature of Hipparchus' Insult to Harmodius', *American Journal of Philology*, 107, no.3 (1986): 318– 331. For an exploration of how the nature of the concept of *hubris* (here 'insolent treatment') relates to the regulation of sexual misconduct whether in heterosexual or homoerotic contexts see David Cohen, "Sexuality, Violence, and the Athenian Law of *Hubris,*" Greece & Rome 38, no.2 (1991): 171-188.

Cleomenes I in 510 BCE, and who later attempted to return to reestablish his tyranny in Athens, in the public imagination the main version of these events saw Harmodius and Aristogeiton as the “tyrant slayers” and the institutors of democracy.[4]

Presumably by anger ‘causing the same deeds’ as hatred, Aristotle means the destruction of tyrannies,[5] which is the subject of his fifth and final question in Book 7 (5) of the *Politics*.[6] Aristotle is interested in a systematic treatment of the number and kinds of things that originate change in a regime (*politeia*), the ways in which each regime is destroyed, and into what regime each tends to alter into most; how regimes are preserved,

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[4] There are conflicting and concurrent accounts of the same incident. Thucydides spends a long digression pointing out the falsity of Athenian civic memory in the *Peloponnesian War*, 6.53.3-59.2. Herodotus refers briefly to it (5.55-57). The episode also appears in Pseudo Plato’s *Hipparchus*, 229B-229D and in Aristotle’s *Athenian Constitution*, 17.3-91. What they all have in common is that they distrust the account made by democratic sympathizers. Janet Lloyd and Vincent Azoulay argue that the two main points of disagreement are firstly the nature of the power held by Hipparchus, and secondly, the consequences of the attack. See *The Tyrant Slayers of Ancient Athens: A Tale of Two Statues* (Oxford University Press, 2017),19. For some contemporary scholarship see: Robert K. Fleck and F. Andrew Hanssen, "How Tyranny Paved The Way To Democracy: The Democratic Transition In Ancient Greece," *The Journal Of Law And Economics*, vol 56, no. 2 (2013), pp. 389-416; and James F. McGlew, *Tyranny And Political Culture In Ancient Greece* (Cornell University Press, 1993).

[5] The word ‘tyranny’ is a loaded term in English, and while for Aristotle tyrannies are deviant regimes the original meaning of the term *turannis* is neutral. Alexander Uchitel argues that the word ‘tyrant’ (*turannos*) was not Greek. It was an innovation that emerged in Greece no later than the seventh century BCE. The word was probably first found in Asia Minor and it was used (among other meanings) as self-denomination for people with royal ties through marriage. It retained that meaning when it was introduced to Greece. “The Earliest Tyrants: From Luwian *Tarwanis* To Greek τύραννος?,” in Gabriel Herman and Israel Shatzman (ed.), *Greeks Between East And West : Essays In Greek Literature in Memory of David Asheri* (Israel Academy Of Sciences And Humanities, 2007), 13. Victor Parker, on the other hand, argues that word *turannos* developed in Greek from a synonym for the word *basileus* (king) to a negatively charged word for an autocrat. With the passage of time *basileus* was more nearly defined as a good or legitimate absolute monarch, whereas *turannos* came to imply a wicked or illegitimate absolute monarch. It came to be applied to popular anti-aristocratic dictatorship. It is in this sense that Plato uses the word. Towards the end of the *Republic* he differentiated between the *turannos* and *basiseus* as the unhappiest and happiest persons imaginable. For Plato, the *turannos* represents the archetype of evil lusts run rampant, whereas the *basileus* lives his life according to the good. “Τύραννος. The Semantics of a Political Concept From Archilochus to Aristotle,” *Hermes* 126, no. 2 (1998): 145-172. Although tyrannies are deviant regimes for Aristotle, he uses the term in its technical sense.

[6] All of which are mentioned in 1289b22-26.

both in general and in particular, and what are the means whereby each regime can most especially be preserved.[7] The fact that for him tyranny is least of all a regime suggests that the fact that anger and hatred are 'destroyers' is no bad thing here. What about anger makes it a main cause for the destruction of tyrannies? What does that tell us about Aristotle's understanding of anger and how is it connected to his conception of *eudaimonia* (happiness)? In other words, what does this tell us about what anger is and what its normative status is in ethical, and political spheres?

Aristotle's writings stand out from the previous texts examined here in that he provides several lengthy explicit discussions regarding the role of anger in politics and *eudaimonia*, whose relationship with one another is not uncomplicated. Aristotle's views on anger are only recently beginning to be explored.[8] Harris gives an overview of the seemingly diverse views found in his writings.[9] Konstan has written more extensively on

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[7] Aristotle defines a regime (also translated as 'polity') as a way of organizing a city (*polis*), a pattern of rule and legislation (*Pol*. Book 3). There is some difficulty in Aristotle because in Book 1 he states that the city, or whatever the political community is called, consists of households (*oikiā*) but in Book 3 he claims a city is made out of citizens (*politēs*). Simpson, however, points out that "the citizens are in a way the households and the households in a way the citizens. For the households enter the city and its rule through the man who is their head, and the citizen is part of the city as a man who leads a household (the man, in other words, is not a citizen as a mere individual but as representing a household)." Peter L. Simpson, *A Philosophical Commentary on the Politics by Aristotle* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 133. It is also worth noting that Aristotle's definition identifies regime with a body of people, not with a body of laws or a certain document.

[8] Aristotle's views on emotion have been the subject of interest for longer. A seminal text is W.W. Fontenbaugh, *Aristotle on Emotion* (Duckworth, 1975). For a comparison between Plato and Aristotle's views see A.W. Price, "Emotions in Plato and Aristotle," in Peter Goldie (*ed*.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotions* (*Oxford*, 2013), 121-142.

[9] Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 56-60, 93-98.

Aristotle's understanding of anger in the *Rhetoric*.[10] In political science, Marlene K. Sokolon argues for the value of Aristotle's views on what are being called 'political emotions,' anger being one of them, which have long since been ignored in Western political philosophy and theory.[11] Along similar lines but trying to put Aristotle's political emotions with feminist theories of care ethics, Barbara Koziak explores the concept of *thumos* (often translated as 'spiritness' or 'spirit') in Aristotle as the seat for political emotions which she argues that contrary to the predominant interpretation it should not be rendered simply as either 'spiritedness' or 'anger.'[12]

In what follows I offer an analysis of the status of anger in Aristotle's *Politics*, and how it fits in with Aristotle's overall understanding of *eudaimonia.* Although I am interested in Aristotle's overall views on anger, often that approach ends up with dissatisfactory piecemeal results (e.g., "in the *NE* Aristotle says this, but in the *Rhetoric* he says that") that does little to systematically explain Aristotle's understanding of anger let alone his normative stance. Most scholarship on anger in Aristotle focuses on what is his longest treatment of the subject, the *Rhetoric*. While the *Rhetoric* expansively discusses what anger is according to Aristotle, what interests me is an evaluation of

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[10] David Konstan, "Aristotle on Anger and the Emotions: the Strategies of Status," in Susana Braund and Glen W. Most, eds., *Ancient Anger,* 99-120.

[11] Marlene K. Sokolon, *Political Emotions: Aristotle and the Symphony of Reason and Emotion* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2006).

[12] Barbara Koziak, *Retrieving Political Emotion:* Thumos*, Aristotle, and Gender* (The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000). See also "Tragedy, Citizens, and Strangers. The Configuration of Aristotelian Political Emotion," in Cynthia A. Freeland, ed., *Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle* (The Pensylvania State University Press, 1998), 260-288.

anger's broader role within the community given that most criticisms of anger tend to come from that direction. For that reason this chapter focuses on the *Politics* without losing sight of Aristotle's overall project. I argue that we have reasons to be skeptical of readings that either too quickly celebrate anger's involvement in overthrowing tyrants, and readings that emphasize only the parts of Aristotle that minimize the anger of the virtuous person.

It is true that by Aristotle's time tyrannies were viewed negatively. It is also true that if something was thought to be worse than tyranny, it was *stasis*–variously translated as "civil war," "sedition," "faction," "revolution," or "civil discord."[13] For Aristotle, human beings are political animals therefore a state of political discord is the most unnatural.

For these reasons, I begin by briefly sketching the theoretical context that anger is a part of in Aristotle, namely his views of *eudaimonia,* and the best regime. There is a tension in Aristotle between what we would call morality today, issues of good and bad or right and wrong, and the necessities of political normativity. Having done that, I return to the above passage exploring two roles of anger in Aristotle's understanding of politics: (1) its potential conative value; and (2) its epistemic value. While Aristotle certainly understands the conative value of anger, he understands it as a double-edged sword. I argue that, in the political context, we should not understand Aristotle's political anger in

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[13] Kostas Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease: An Inquiry into Stasis* (State University of New York Press, 2000), xiii.

terms of its ability to overthrow tyranny because for Aristotle political virtue takes primacy (without a stable community there is no hope for *eudaimonia*). Instead, anger's political value lies in what legislators and tyrants stand to learn from its existence. By understanding the anger of citizens, and working to ensure one does not elicit it to begin with, one can enjoy ruling longer even as a tyrant. A second not negligible benefit is that the tyrant himself might become half decent.

Eudaimonia, Political Science, and Anger

In order to understand anger in Aristotle, both his descriptive and normative account, we must first take a detour. In the previous chapter I explored the heuristic advantages of understanding anger as a political emotion in the Homeric epics, in order to capture the type of normativity that is often at play in terms of condemning or commending anger. Aristotle in some ways makes the distinction between the personal and the political explicit.[14] What I mean by that is that the personal is constrained by the political–and yet the political is at the service of the personal.

[14] I am here using 'personal' to capture any goals one might have for oneself, as well as the project of ideally achieving *eudaimonia*. The political at its most basic aims for the safety and stability of the community (more on this later), at best it promotes the achievement of *eudaimonia*.

Aristotle conceives of ethics (*ēthika*) as a part of political science (*politikē*);[15] he treats the *NE* and the *Politics* as parts of a single inquiry (*NE* 10.9).[16] Ethics is the part of political science that studies *eudaimonia*.[17] In fact, Aristotle's *Politics* begin where the *NE* ends. It is in *NE* Book 10.9 where he states the transition from ethics to politics and articulates the purpose of the *Politics*:[18]

> ἆρ᾽ οὖν εἰ περί τε τούτων καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φιλίας καὶ ἡδονῆς, ἱκανῶς εἴρηται τοῖς τύποις, τέλος ἔχειν οἰητέον τὴν προαίρεσιν; ἢ καθάπερ λέγεται, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς πρακτοῖς τέλος τὸ θεωρῆσαι ἕκαστα καὶ γνῶναι, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ πράττειν αὐτά: οὐδὲ δὴ περὶ ἀρετῆς ἱκανὸν τὸ εἰδέναι, ἀλλ᾽ ἔχειν καὶ χρῆσθαι πειρατέον, ἢ εἴ πως ἄλλως ἀγαθοὶ γινόμεθα;
>
> We have now said enough in outlines about happiness and the virtues, and about friendship and pleasure also. Should we, then, think that our decision [to study these] has achieved its end? On the contrary, the aim of studies about action, as we saw, is surely not to study and know about a given thing, but rather to act on our knowledge. Hence knowing about virtue is not enough, but we must try and possess and exercise virtue, or become good in any other way.[19] (1179a34-1179b4)

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[15] 'Political science' translates the adjective *politikē*; the noun understood with it is not usually expressed. For a discussion on how to understand political science as a science for Aristotle given that political science is concerned with action, and hence with the usual (*hōs epi to polu*), and thus is not strictly a science see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Hackett Publishing Company, 2014), trans. C.D.C Reeve, xix-lxiii.

[16] In the *NE* he calls this discipline 'political science' not 'ethics' (see also *Rhet*. 1356a26-7; but 'ethics' is used at *Pol*. 1261a31).

[17] It is beyond the scope of the present chapter to offer a full interpretation of the concept of *eudaimonia*, I restrict myself to articulating anger's relevance to the apparent or potential tension between the individual and the community. For an excellent account of *eudaimonia* see Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle* (Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-57.

[18] Aristotle conceives ethics as a part of political science. Ethics seeks to discover the good for an individual and a community (*NE* I.2).

[19] All translations of the NE are by Terence Irwin, *Nicomachean Ethics*, (Hackett Publishing Company, 1999) with my own modifications.

Given that the goal is to act well, that arguments are insufficient when it comes to making people decent, and that what the many naturally obey is fear (i.e. penalties), not shame, we require legislators:

> διόπερ οἴονταί τινες τοὺς νομοθετοῦντας δεῖν μὲν παρακαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ προτρέπεσθαι τοῦ καλοῦ χάριν, ὡς ἐπακουσομένων τῶν ἐπιεικῶς τοῖς ἔθεσι προηγμένων, ἀπειθοῦσι δὲ καὶ ἀφυεστέροις οὖσι κολάσεις τε καὶ τιμωρίας ἐπιτιθέναι, τοὺς δ’ ἀνιάτους ὅλως ἐξορίζειν:
>
> That is why legislators must, in some people’s views, urge people toward virtue and exhort them to aim at the fine–on the assumption that anyone whose good habits have prepared him decently will listen to them–but must impose corrective treatments and penalties on anyone who disobeys or lacks the right nature, and must completely expel an incurable. (*NE* 1180a6-1180a10)

In other words, the *NE* lays out what *eudaimonia* consists of, and the *Politics* explores ‘legislative science’ (*nomothetikē* 1180a33) which is necessary to make upbringing part of the responsibility of the community by examining political systems in general.[20] Aristotle’s goal in the *Politics* is to find the best regime in order to make people decent; and how each political system can be made into the best it can be (*NE* 1181b22-24).

Aristotle distinguishes a good regime (*orthos politeia*) form a despotic (*despotikos*) one in terms of their goals:

> φανερὸν τοίνυν ὡς ὅσαι μὲν πολιτεῖαι τὸ κοινῇ συμφέρον σκοποῦσιν, αὗται μὲν ὀρθαὶ τυγχάνουσιν οὖσαι κατὰ τὸ ἁπλῶς δίκαιον, ὅσαι δὲ τὸ σφέτερον μόνον τῶν ἀρχόντων, ἡμαρτημέναι πᾶσαι καὶ παρεκβάσεις τῶν ὀρθῶν πολιτειῶν: δεσποτικαὶ γάρ, ἡ δὲ πόλις κοινωνία τῶν ἐλευθέρων ἐστίν.

[20] See also *NE* 1180b24-26.

> So it is manifest that all regimes that look to the common advantage turn out, according to what is simply just, to be correct ones, while those that look only to the advantage of the rulers are mistaken and are all deviations from the correct regimes. For they are despotic, but the city is a community of the free. (*Pol*. 1279b17-21)

By 'common advantage' Aristotle means the political good, which is justice (1282b12).[21] A correct regime is one that rules for noble life, a city's true end (*Pol.* 1.2, 3.6).

More specifically, for Aristotle correct regimes are kingship (*basileia*), aristocracy (*aristokratia*), and polity,[22] in which the one, few, or many virtuous rule for the common advantage; three deviations from these are tyranny (*turannis*), oligarchy (*oligarchia*), and democracy (*demokratia*), in which the one, the well-off, or the needy rule for their own advantage (*Pol*. 1279a22-31). Correct regimes can only rule for the common advantage if they are in the hands of the virtuous, which is why Aristotle believes kingship and aristocracy to be better. Perfect virtue can only be found in one or few.[23]

It should now be clear exactly why tyranny is the worst kind of regime for Aristotle: it is for the advantage of one, not even a few. Unlike for oligarchy and

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[21] Briefly, justice is equality for equals (and conversely inequality for unequals). For Aristotle's discussion of justice see *Pol*. 3.6, 3.9, and 3.11.

[22] The Greek is *politeia*, just like the term for 'regime'. See Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Simpson, xxvii.

[23] Aristotle discusses the problems with polities in *Pol*. 3.11. He does not believe it theoretically impossible that the many can be perfectly virtuous; he believes it to be highly unlikely given how difficult becoming perfectly virtuous is. Ultimately, Aristotle concludes that an aristocracy is the best regime (Pol. 1293b3-6; cf. *NE* 1135a5). A main reason is that a regime ruled by one (i.e., kingship) is susceptible to certain things that the few of an aristocracy are not. For example he says, "A single person's judgment must necessarily be corrupted when he is overcome by anger or some other such passion, but getting everyone in the other case to become angry and go wrong at the same time takes a lot of doing." (*Pol*. 1286a34-37)

democracy, Aristotle for the most part takes for granted the undesirability of tyranny.[24] However, simply because tyranny is the worst of all possible regimes does not entail that the anger behind their destruction is necessarily virtuous.

Political Anger I: The conative value of anger

Returning to the beginning passage, what hatred (*misos*), anger, and contempt (*kataphronēsis*) have in common is that they are the principal causes of the destruction of tyrannies because they are emotional responses attached to notions of justice.[25] For Aristotle, it is the combination of justice and injustice that is the engine of change and revolution (*Pol*.1301a35-b4). Justice, says Aristotle, is proportional equality, or the distribution of equal shares to equals and of unequal shares to unequals. What people disagree about is what the criterion of worth or merit is (1301a25-34). It is this disagreement that generates regime change (3.9, 12-13; cf. *NE* 1131a18-29). For example, oligarchs take wealth as the criterion and suppose that those who are unequal in worth are unequal simply, and should have unequal shares. Democrats, on the other hand, take freedom as the criterion and suppose that, because all are equal in freedom, all are

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[24] In fact, tyrannies are barely regimes. He contrasts monarchies and tyrannies with regimes (*Pol*. 1310a39-b2).

[25] Compared to other emotions, Aristotle does not give a systematic treatment of contempt. In the *Rhetoric*, *kataphronēsis* is one of three kinds (*eidos*) of slight (*oligōria*) together with spite (*epēreasmos*), insolence (*hubris*) (1378b10-18). Although it is beyond the scope of the present chapter to give a full account of contempt in Aristotle, two things are worth making note of: (1) contempt and anger are hierarchical emotions (to experience contempt is to perceive the patient to be beneath oneself with respect to something someone values); (2) for Aristotle anger is a response to one of those three kinds of slights, insolence, but not a response to someone that feels contempt for us. For an excellent contemporary defense of contempt see Bell, *Hard Feelings;* for her discussion of Aristotle see 137-146.

equal simply and thus should have equal shares. Thus oligarchs set up oligarchy (rule by the well-off) believing this to be the inequality demanded by justice, and democrats set up democracy believing that rule by the populace is the equality demanded by justice.

These regimes, although they are mistaken, are just in a way. It is this combination of justice and injustice that is the engine or change and revolution according to Aristotle. The element of justice leads the partisans of the regime to believe that they have justice on their side and so, if their share in rule is not in agreement with their understanding of justice, they resort to faction to put themselves in charge and change the regime. Consequently, the genesis, change, and revolution of different regimes[26] can also be understood in terms of human desires. Rule is distributed in the city according to what the city, or part of the city, wants or can be persuaded to want in terms of justice. The populace or their leaders must want to act, and what will make them act is the desire to act which is fueled by the conviction that their action would be good or just.

In what follows I focus on how the general causes for the destruction of regimes relate to anger's privileged position as a particular and predominant cause for the destruction of tyrannies. I argue that although Aristotle emphasizes primarily the relative conative strength of anger, which he treats with some ambivalence, what is clearly of value to Aristotle is anger's epistemic value.

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[26] Aristotle treats change (*metabolē*) and faction (*stasis*) as one. See Simpson, *Commentary*, 363.

Aristotle highlights four different aspects of anger (*orgē*) that make it unique among the other emotions that he sees as particular causes for the destruction of tyrannies:[27]

(1) Anger is accompanied by pain, hatred is not.

(2) It is more often a cause for action than hatred is.

(3) The angry attack in a more impetuous way because their passion does not pause to calculate, hatred makes more use of calculation.

(4) The angry follow their spiritness (*thumos*) principally on account of insolent treatment.[28]

Aristotle defines the emotions as "those things due to which people, by undergoing a change, differ in their judgments, and that entail pain and pleasure" (ἔστι δὲ τὰ πάθη δι' ὅσα μεταβάλλοντες διαφέρουσι πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις οἷς ἕπεται λύπη καὶ ἡδονή, *Rhet*. 1378a19-20). Hatred for Aristotle is an emotion, and yet he claims it is not accompanied by pain (*Rhet*. 1382a12-13).

Kostan notes that hatred and love (*philia*) posed classificatory difficulties for Aristotle's psychology, although they are plainly included among the emotions (see *Rhet.* Book 2; *NE* 1105b21-3).[29] He suggests that hatred and love are to be understood as pleasurable emotions and that the main purpose of Aristotle's claim that emotions are

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[27] As opposed to *general* causes which he discusses in Book 7.1.

[28] When compared to the LNZ's passage of "The Mother of Juan Buyi" use of anger against tyrannical rule we can see just how vastly different Aristotle's conceptualization of anger is.

[29] Konstan, "Aristotle on Anger," 111.

accompanied by pain and pleasure is perhaps best understood as a way for Aristotle to highlight "the effect of the emotions on judgment (*kriseis*) [...]. The introduction of pain and pleasure here may be a succinct way of distinguishing emotional responses from those based exclusively on reason or enthymemes, a topic which Aristotle treated with particular pride in the first book of the *Rhetoric*."[30]

Anger and Hatred

> Anger for Aristotle is:
>
> Ἔστω δὴ ὀργὴ ὄρεξις μετὰ λύπης τιμωρίας [φαινομένης] διὰ φαινομένην ὀλιγωρίαν εἰς αὐτὸν ἤ <τι> τῶν αὐτοῦ, τοῦ ὀλιγωρεῖν μὴ προσήκοντος.
>
> Let anger be desire, involving pain, for apparent retribution, because of a perceived slight on the part of people who are not fit to slight one or one's own. (*Rhet.*1378a29-31)[31]

In order for anger to arise one must experience pain as a result of a perceived slight. Clearly it cannot simply be the "perceived slight" that is the source of the pain since it would make the expression "accompanied by pain" redundant.[32] The implication must be that one can perceive to have been slighted, and yet not experience pain, which would mean one is not angry. In other words, not every offense is necessarily a source of anger.

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[30] Konstan, "Aristotle on Anger," 100.

[31] All translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are indebted to C.D.C. Reeve, Aristotle *Rhetoric* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2018), often modified. See Reeve, *Rhetoric*, 251 n426, for comments on the modification of the Greek.

[32] Konstan also notes this. "Aristotle on Anger," 102.

Hatred is not accompanied by pain because it is a response to what is harmful or vicious (*kakon*) in general.[33] Anger is about particulars, whereas hatred is directed against kinds (*genos*). We are not only angry towards a particular person but for a particular action, whereas we can hate a group of people for being of such-and-such sort. Part of the reason Aristotle gives for why hatred is not necessarily accompanied by pain is that "the greatest evils are the least perceptible ones, [for example] injustice, and lack of practical wisdom" (τὰ δὲ μάλιστα κακὰ ἥκιστα αἰσθητά, ἀδικία καὶ ἀφροσύνη· *Rhet.*1382a9-12). Konstan, for example, describes the difference saying that for Aristotle "*to misein* [hatred] signifies rather a settled and principled antagonism that is lasting and not subject, as anger is, to being healed by the passage of time (*Rhet.*1382a7–8)."[34]

Secondly, part of the reason anger might be more of a cause for action than hatred is the fact that the angry person for Aristotle seeks pain for its patient, whereas the one who hates seeks evil; a further difference being that the angry person wishes to be perceived whereas to the one who hates it makes no difference (*Rhet*.1382a7-9). Pain by definition is always perceived, whereas as I already mentioned Aristotle thinks many evils are imperceptible. A possible interpretation is that the combination of anger being about particulars, and that for Aristotle the angry person wishes that the patient of her anger to suffer in turn, whereas the agent of hatred wishes for the patient not to exist,

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[33] Aristotle's main discussion of hatred is in the *Rhetoric* 2.4 where he contrasts it with its opposite, love.

[34] Konstan, "Aristotle on Anger," 111.

makes anger a more actionable emotion–especially given the fact that the pain associated with anger ceases to exist if there was appropriate retribution.[35]

Anger being "more a cause of action" explains Aristotle's more general use of anger as a paradigmatic emotion.[36] Most often in the *NE*, anger (*orgē*) stands as a metonymy for emotion (*pathē*). In so doing he invokes anger to make a general point about the emotions, while at the same time showing that for him anger stands in a privileged position. In general, anger is used as an example for things going wrong in one way or another with regard to the emotion, most often in relation to how one acts–as the example above of the dangers of having a rule of one.[37]

What (3) and (4) show is that the difference between hatred and anger in terms of its conative force is one of degree, although they arise from different perceptions, and their objects (*ephesis*) differ. The object of anger is to cause pain to the other, while that of hatred is to inflict harm (*Rhet*. 1382a8). Hatred, or enmity (*echtra*),[38] is the opposite of friendship or affection.[39] As Konstan points out, "Aristotle takes a robust view of *to philein*: to love someone entails wishing good things (or what one believes to be good

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[35] For Aristotle the angry person is capable of feeling pity for the patient of their initial anger if too many things happen to them as a result of retribution. The agent of hatred is incapable of pity (*Rhet*.1382a13-14).

[36] Aristotle explicitly mentions fear as a cause of aggression and violence. It is one of the main particular causes for the destruction of tyrannies (*Pol.* 1302b21).

[37] That anger is more tied to action also explains why *thumos*, spirit, can often mean anger.

[38] See *Rhet*, 82a1, versus anger 82a3

[39] Aristotle discusses hatred and enmity together with love in Book 2 Chapter 2.4 of the *Rhetoric* (1380b34-1382a18) where he also discusses it with reference to anger.

things) for his sake and his only–not one's own–and to act accordingly to the best of one's ability. [...] An enemy, in turn, is identified by the reverse: wishing bad or harmful (*kaka*) for the other."[40] Further, for Aristotle for the agent of hate it is not important that the other perceive (*aisthesthai*) the response, the damage caused. For these reasons, Aristotle makes a sharp distinction between the result of hatred and anger. The person who hates is willing to inflict the extreme instance of harm, death. When we hate someone, says Aristotle, we wish that they did not exist, but when we are angry we desire that the other feel in turn (*antipathein*) the (painful) thing that has provoked our anger (*Rhet*.2.4.1382a14–15).

Why does Aristotle specify that the cause of the end of the tyrannies of the Peisistratids was anger? Aristotle thinks that (1) anger seeks for its pain to be recognized by the patient of the anger, hence it does not aim at death, since death renders one unable to experience pain, and yet (2) he ascribed anger to Harmodius and Aristogeiton who plotted to kill the tyrants Hippias and Hipparchus. Consequently there appears to be a contradiction. Perhaps one solution is to highlight that this is partly why Aristotle explains that anger tends to miscalculate, due to its close connection with 'spiritedness.'

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[40] Konstan, *Aristotle on Anger*, 110.

Another possibility is that given that Aristotle is here interested in causes, what he wishes to emphasize is the particular injustice behind tyranny, namely insolence.[41]

Anger and Insolence

The scope of anger for Aristotle appears to be extraordinarily narrow. It arises specifically and indeed exclusively from a perceived slight, that is from being the recipient of contemptuous behavior. Aristotle defines a slight (*oligōria*) as an activation of belief concerned with what seems to be worth nothing" (ἐνέργεια δόξης περὶ τὸ μηδενὸς ἄξιον φαινόμενον, *Rh*. 1378b10-11). To receive contemptuous behavior is to be perceived to be worth little or nothing. For Aristotle, we regard good and bad things, and what contributes significantly towards them, to be worthy of effort (*spoudē*), to be slighted is to be thought to contribute nothing. As Konstan points out "a slight is a complex social event, and requires a considerable measure of judgment in order to be recognized or perceived as such."[42]

Aristotle enumerates three types of slights. The first is contempt or despising (*kataphronēsis*) which is simply to deem the patient of one's *kataphronēsis* worthless. The second is spite (*epēreasmos*), which consists of the gratuitous frustration of another's

[41] In this particular instance there is a wide gap between the victims of insolence and the perpetrators in terms of power. We could argue that mere retribution would only lead to Hipparchus and Hippias killing Harmodius and Aristogeiton. Therefore, just as they calculated that in order to be able to kill Hipparchus they would have to kill Hippias, they also calculated that their retribution would have to be extreme. This shows that given that what anger responds to is insolence it is not just about the perpetrator knowing they were not actually in a position to be insolent, but also communicating that to everyone else.

[42] Konstan, "Aristotle on Anger," 103.

aims not in order to have something oneself but rather so that the other not have it (*Rh.*1378b18-19). The slight lies precisely in that the offender seeks no personal advantage. That the offender supposes that he will neither suffer harm nor acquire gain from his offense shows for Aristotle that the victim is deemed worthless. For Aristotle, impeding the fulfillment of another's projects out of self-interest is not a reason for anger.

The third category of slighting is insolence or arrogant abuse (*hubris*).[43] Like the second category, it involves causing shame to another for the sheer pleasure of it. Insolence derives from a sense of superiority, not gain. For Aristotle, if the abuse is in return for an injury it does not count as insolence or *hubris*, but as retribution (*Rh.*1378b23-30). Konstan also notes that Aristotle "excludes revenge or retribution as a cause of anger on the grounds that the victim is aware that he has earned it."[44] We do not respond with anger when we have done wrong and are suffering justly (1380b16-18). Instead, what is characteristic of insolence is dishonor meaning that when one is insolent one to another one is dishonoring another because they are deeming them worthless. As Aristotle says, "what is worth nothing receives no honor, whether for good or bad" (τὸ γὰρ μηδενὸς ἄξιον οὐδεμίαν ἔχει τιμήν, οὔτε ἀγαθοῦ οὔτε κακοῦ, 1378b29-30).[45] Aristotle uses Achilles's anger as an example of this phenomenon: Achilles is angry with

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[43] For a monumental study of *hubris* see N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris: a study in the values of honour and shame in Ancient Greece* (Aris & Phillips, 1992). For a discussion of Fisher's work in the context of other interpretations see Cairns, "Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 116, no.1 (1996): 1–32.

[44] Konstan, *"Aristotle on Anger,"* 109.

[45] Reeves points out that what Aristotle means here by 'whether for good or bad' is that one may be honored for doing something bad to an enemy (*Rh.*1362b30-32), *Rhetoric*, 253n432.

Agamemnon because he perceives Agamemnon to be motivated by a feeling of superiority not gain or retribution.[46] For Aristotle anger only arises out of thinking one is deemed worthless, which is why anger does not arise if we are wronged for the sake of personal advantage since that would signal one's worth. Nor, importantly, do we return anger for anger (1380a34-5). Anger is not merely a response to harm, even if the harm is intentional.[47] It is only a response to being treated as worthless.[48]

The narrowness of Aristotle's conception of anger can be deceptive. The above discussion might leave one thinking that Aristotle restricts anger to 'merely' feeling insulted. However, not only was *hubris* a powerful term of moral condemnation in ancient Greece; but also in Athens, and perhaps elsewhere, it was also treated as a serious

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[46] He quotes Homer, *Il*.1.135, 9.648.

[47] Philosophers are sometimes puzzled by the fact that we seem to get angry at inanimate objects when we get hurt by them (think when you bash your toes against a table). Aristotle's view seems to better accommodate this phenomenon than others. A table after all gains nothing by hurting you.

[48] I agree with Konstan that for Aristotle the emotion that would arise as result of suffering a deliberate and unmerited injury would be hatred or enmity, *Aristotle on Anger*, 109. For an analysis of hatred in Aristotle see Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (University of Toronto Press, 2006), 185-200.

crime.[49] Moreover, as I mentioned above, Aristotle understands justice as equality for equals and inequality for unequals showing the crucial importance of one's worth.[50]

Insolence characterizes the behavior of the tyrant.[51] Anger signals the type of injustice that tyrannies tend towards. Tyrants deem themselves superior and act for the sake of their own pleasure. Hence, tyranny mistakes status categories–as well obviously not striving for the common advantage, but that is itself the result of the mistaken perception of the tyrant as superior. Tyrannies are least of all regimes because "tyranny is, as was said, a monarchy that rules the political community despotically [like a master]" (ἔστι δὲ τυραννὶς μὲν μοναρχία, καθάπερ εἴρηται, δεσποτικὴ τῆς πολιτικῆς κοινωνίας *Pol*. 1279b15-16). Deviant regimes behave as the despotic rule of the master over the a slave: A master rules for his own advantage and for the slave only incidentaly–mastery

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[49] For a discussion of *hubris* in the legal context in both Archaic Greece and Classical Greece see Nick Fisher, "The law of *hubris* in Athens," 123-138, and Oswyn Murray, "The Solonian law of *hubris*," 139-148, in Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Stephen Todd, eds., *Nomos: Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society* (Cambridge University Press, 1990). See also D.M. MacDowell, "'Hybris' in Athens," *Greece & Rome* 23, no.1 (1976): 14–31. For how the law also protected slaves as victims of punishable hubris see Mirko Canevaro, "The Public Charge for Hubris Against Slaves: The Honor of the Victim and the Honor of the Hubristēs,"*Journal of Hellenic Studies* 138 (2018): 100-126. For an analysis of the contemporary dangers of *hubris* in democratic societies see Mark E. Button, ""Hubris Breeds the Tyrant": The Anti-Politics of Hubris from Thebes to Abu Ghraib," *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 8, no.2 (2011): 305-332.

[50] It does not seem entirely clear whether being intentionally harmed is essential for Aristotle's conception of anger. If it is truly accidental, the perpetrator of the harm was unaware that they were harming you, then one should not be angry. The perpetrator did not deem you worthless. But let's say you are seen as collateral damage, that means the perpetrator is aware that you will be harmed but does not find it problematic. In other words, they are happy for you to be collateral damage. In that sense, yes they have something to gain by letting you get hurt, but their gain is not the direct result of you getting hurt. It seems to me Aristotle would still see that as an instance that would trigger anger. You deemed me worthless enough to not care about whether I was harmed or not.

[51] Aristotle sees insolence as an obvious and general cause for the destruction of regimes (*Pol*.1302b5). Tyrannies just excel at insolence, but every regime (except the best regime) can start a faction because of insolence.

cannot be preserved if the slave is destroyed (*Pol*. 1278b30-36). Hence the particular injustice is one of mistaken status, mistaken worth.

More specifically, Aristotle notices that the injustice of insolence leads one to attack the body (or person) of the ruler, as opposed to against his rule:[52]

> τῶν δ᾽ ἐπιθέσεων αἱ μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ σῶμα γίγνονται τῶν ἀρχόντων, αἱ δ᾽ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρχήν. αἱ μὲν οὖν δι᾽ ὕβριν ἐπὶ τὸ σῶμα. τῆς δ᾽ ὕβρεως οὔσης πολυμεροῦς, ἕκαστον αὐτῶν αἴτιον γίγνεται τῆς ὀργῆς: τῶν δ᾽ ὀργιζομένων σχεδὸν οἱ πλεῖστοι τιμωρίας χάριν ἐπιτίθενται, ἀλλ᾽ οὐχ ὑπεροχῆς.
>
> Of attacks, some are against the rulers' body and some against their rule. Those made because of insolence are against the body, and though insolence is manifold, each form of it is a cause of anger and pretty well most of those who are angry attack to get retribution, not to get superiority. (*Pol.*1311a31-35)

If anger aimed at superiority, the angry agent would strike at his rule. Instead honor is aimed at here, not as something for attackers to get by getting rule, but as something to *get back* by avenging a dishonor inflicted on them or their friends by their ruler (cf. 1302a31-34). Of course, as Simpson points, depending on the nature of the attack, the rule might change too.[53] For example, if the attack ends in the death of the ruler there can be a change of ruler–as was the case of Hipparchus being substituted by his brother

[52] Aristotle treats monarchies and tyrannies as the same when it comes to what leads to their destruction (*Pol.*1310a39). Of the original eleven beginnings of change (wealth and honor, insolence, fear, superiority, contempt, disproportionate increase, campaigning for votes, disregard, small things, and dissimilarity) he only mentions weath, insolence, fear, and contempt as causes for the destruction of monarchies and tyrannies.

[53] Simpson assumes that an attack out of anger is successful if it leads to the death of the ruler. However, as I mentioned above Aristotle does not think that anger aims at death, for the dead cannot recognize their attacker. However, more than this pointing to something that Simpson missed, what this points to is an apparent difficulty in Aristotle's conceptualization of anger. Simpson, *Commentary*, 406.

Hippias. Consequently, despite Sokolon wanting to champion anger as a destroyer of tyrannies,[54] for Aristotle anger as a political emotion may be of limited use. Anger only incidentally destroys tyrannies. Whether that is in fact a limitation or a strength is what I turn to next.

Mildness: Personal Virtue versus Political Virtue

In order to understand more precisely Aristotle's normative stance towards anger there are two key things to take into account: (1) how anger relates to personal virtue;[55] and, furthermore, (2) whether the same applies to political virtue since for Aristotle they are not one and the same.[56] I am using 'personal virtue' to refer to the project Aristotle has in the *NE*, and 'political virtue' to denote the type of excellence he is after in the *Politics*. Here I explain what each of them are, why Aristotle introduces the distinction, and what that means for appropriate anger, which Aristotle calls the virtue of mildness (*praotes*).[57]

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[54] Sokolon, *Political Emotions*, 51.

[55] Aristotle distinguishes between the virtue of men and the virtue of women. Thus when I speak of personal virtue in terms of Aristotle it is restricted to men. Aristotle does not offer a systematic account of the virtue of women. For passages that comment on the differences between men and women see *EE* 1237a; *Pol.* 1252a, 1254b, 1259b1-2.

[56] Whether or not they are the same is the beginning question of Book 3.4 of the *Politics* (1276b16). Personal virtue is generally characterized as 'good' (*agathos*); political virtue is characterized as 'serious' (*spoudaios*).

[57] The word for virtue is *aretē*, which in its most basic sense means 'excellence.' When Aristotle talks about the virtue of X he is talking about how to do X best. It may seem strange to us to talk about the virtue of sailing, but for Aristotle it is completely natural to talk about the best way to sail. Hence, political virtue is how to engage in issues involving politics best. Personal virtue is how to live best, that is how to achieve happiness (*eudaimonia*).

Anger and Virtue of Character

In terms of personal virtue, Aristotle distinguishes two types of virtue: virtue of thought and virtue of character (*NE* 1103a-15).[58] Briefly, for Aristotle the excellent and virtuous condition of the soul (*psychē*) includes virtues of both the rational and the nonrational aspects of the soul. Virtues of thought are the virtues of the rational aspect of the soul. The virtue in charge of appropriate anger, mildness (*praotes*), belongs to the nonrational aspect, to the virtues of character. Aristotle describes anger as part of the other emotions (*pathē*) in his discussion of the genus of virtue of character (*NE* 1105b20-1106a14). For Aristotle, virtue must be one of the conditions arising from the soul which are: emotions (*pathē*), capacities (*dunamis*), and states (*hexis*). He concludes that although emotions are involved in virtuous character they are not themselves virtues.[59] We do not praise the angry or the freighted person, and do not blame the person who is simply (*haplōs*) angry, but only the person who is angry *in a particular way*. The fact that we only praise or blame one's anger under certain circumstances signals there is

[58] He discusses the former in *NE* Book 6, and the latter in Book 2.

[59] The emotions and appetites (*epithumia*) belong to the category of sensations (*aisthēsis*) and which are an aspect of the nonrational (*alogos*) aspect of the soul (*psychē*). I say 'aspect' and not 'part' because Aristotle famously makes 'a distinction without a difference' between the rational (*logos*) and nonrational (*alogos*) aspects of *psychē* (*NE* 1102a25-b15; *OS* 432a145-433a10). Notice too that it is a non-rational aspect, as opposed to an irrational one. For Aristotle *aisthēsis* are not antagonistic or in opposition to logos. In *On the Soul*, Aristotle also departs from the Platonic idea that the soul can be divided into separate and determinate parts. Certain nonrational aspects, such as desire, can be found in all functions of the soul.

a virtue.[60] By process of elimination, for Aristotle, virtues must be states (1106a12-14). Aristotle assumes that it is up to us to modify our emotions so that they are virtuous; that is why we are praised for being angry appropriately.

Both emotions (and actions) admit excess (*huperbolē*), deficiency (*elleipsis*), and an intermediate condition (*mesotēs*) (1106b17-29).[61] Anger also admits of an excess, a deficiency, and a mean. He points out that given that these are all practically nameless he will call the person of excessive anger irascible, the deficient person inirascible, and intermediate person mild. The virtue he calls 'mildness' (*praotes*), the vice either 'irascibility' (*orgilotēs*) or 'inirascibility' (*aorgēsia*) (*NE* 1108a5-9).[62]

Although emotions are without decision, meaning that we cannot help having an emotion, to Aristotle that does not mean that they cannot be habituated:

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[60] The implication is also that Aristotle understands virtuous emotions as voluntary (*hekousios*) actions. Virtue requires voluntary action, since only voluntary actions may be praised and blamed. It also requires a decision which is narrower than the voluntary, *NE* 1111b8. Not only is virtue praiseworthy (1101b14, 1106a2), but the praise must be justified. Aristotle makes decision essential to virtue, 1107a1; in 3.2-3 he discusses its nature and its relation to the voluntary. Aristotle has assumed that if happiness consists of virtuous activity, it will, to this extent, be up to us, not dependent on fortune, 1099b13-25. He needs to show that virtue is up to us; he turns to this task in 3.5. Actions caused by spirit (*thumos*) or appetite are for Aristotle not involuntary (1111a25-1111b4). The subject of voluntary action is complex and I cannot pursue it here. For some noteworthy scholarship on the topic see Broadie, *Ethics*, 124-178; Michael Pakaluk, and Giles Pearson (eds.), *Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle* (Oxford University Press, 2012); Richard Sorabji, *Necessity, Cause, and Blame: Perspectives on Aristotle's Theory* (University of Chicago Press, 2006); and Susan Sauvé Meyer, *Aristotle on Moral Responsibility: Character and Cause* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

[61] Aristotle does not treat virtues as simply means to virtuous action. Actions may be virtuous even though they are not done for the virtuous person's reasons (*NE* 1105a26-b9, 1144a11-20). On the other hand, agents are not virtuous unless they do not do the virtuous action for its own sake. For Aristotle we do not praise the virtuous person because of their reliable tendency to to produce virtuous actions, we also value the state of character they demonstrate in their actions.

[62] There is a completely separate virtue that navigates the excesses and deficiencies of honor which he discusses in *NE* 1107b22-1108a3.

μὲν δίκαια πράττοντες δίκαιοι γινόμεθα, τὰ δὲ σώφρονα σώφρονες, τὰ δ' ἀνδρεῖα ἀνδρεῖοι. μαρτυρεῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ γινόμενον ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν· οἱ γὰρ νομοθέται τοὺς πολίτας ἐθίζοντες ποιοῦσιν ἀγαθούς, καὶ τὸ μὲν βούλημα παντὸς νομοθέτου τοῦτ' ἐστίν, ὅσοι δὲ μὴ εὖ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν ἁμαρτάνουσιν, καὶ διαφέρει τούτῳ πολιτεία πολιτείας ἀγαθὴ φαύλης.

We become just by doing just things, temperate by doing temperate actions, and brave by doing brave actions. What goes on in cities is evidence for this. For legislators make the citizens good by habituating them, and this is the intention of every legislator; if they fail to do it well they miss their goal. Correct habituation distinguishes a good political system from a bad one. (*NE* 1103b1-7)

It is what we do in situations involving appetites and anger will either make us temperate and mild/gentle or intemperate and irascible.[63]

For Aristotle the mild person is:

ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐφ' οἷς δεῖ καὶ οἷς δεῖ ὀργιζόμενος, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὡς δεῖ καὶ ὅτε καὶ ὅσον χρόνον, ἐπαινεῖται

The person who is angry at the right things and toward the right people, and also in the right way, at the right time, and for the right length of time, is praised. (*NE* 1125b31-32)

Immediately after, he emphasizes that although the virtue is called 'mildness,' if we are to use 'mild' in a favorable sense, we must understand it in precisely this way and not the extreme state of deficient anger. People who are not angered by the right things, toward the right people, in the right way, at the right time, and for the right length of time are foolish. They are insensible and feel no pain, and since they are not angered they are not the sort to defend themselves. Furthermore, their willingness to accept insults to oneself and to overlook insults to one's family and friends is slavish (*andrapodōdēs*). For

[63] It is in this context that the first mention of anger (*orgē*) appears in the *NE* (1103b18).

Aristotle, it is just as important to be angry for oneself as it is to be angry on behalf of others (1126a5-10).[64]

Aristotle is skeptical that true extreme anger exists. Someone who deals with everything in the extreme would have to be angry at all the wrong people, at the wrong times, more than is right, more hastily than is right, and for a longer time. Aristotle seems to believe that either this person would not live long or anger does not tend to get all of these things wrong at the same time. Instead he offers four types of excessive anger: 'irascible.' 'choleric' (*akrocholos*), 'harsh' (*chalepos*), and 'bitter' (*pikros*) (1126a14-26).

Arguments against anger often quote Aristotle saying that "since, therefore, it is hard to hit the intermediate extremely accurately, the second-best tack, as they say, is to take the lesser of two evils" (*NE* 1109a33-35).[65] However, he immediately after says:

> σκοπεῖν δὲ δεῖ πρὸς ἃ καὶ αὐτοὶ εὐκατάφοροί ἐσμεν: ἄλλοι γὰρ πρὸς ἄλλα πεφύκαμεν: τοῦτο δ᾽ ἔσται γνώριμον ἐκ τῆς ἡδονῆς καὶ τῆς λύπης τῆς γινομένης περὶ ἡμᾶς. εἰς τοὐναντίον δ᾽ ἑαυτοὺς ἀφέλκειν δεῖ: πολὺ γὰρ ἀπάγοντες τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν εἰς τὸ μέσον ἥξομεν, ὅπερ οἱ τὰ διεστραμμένα τῶν ξύλων ὀρθοῦντες ποιοῦσιν.
>
> We must examine what we ourselves drift into easily. For different people have different natural tendencies toward different goals, and we shall come to know our own tendencies from pleasure or pain that arises in us. We must drag ourselves off in the contrary direction; for if we pull away from error, as they do in straightening bent wood, we shall reach the intermediate condition." (1109b1-8).

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[64] Given that for Aristotle anger is tied to our conception of worth, which in turn is tied to his understanding of justice, not defending one's worth is potentially understood as not understanding justice.

[65] "ἐπεὶ οὖν τοῦ μέσου τυχεῖν ἄκρως χαλεπόν, κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον, φασί, πλοῦν τὰ ἐλάχιστα ληπτέον τῶν κακῶν."

One cannot simply use ‘the lesser of two evils’ as action guiding because in the case of certain people they would do well to be more angry if they are already on the deficient side of the spectrum. Part of the reason aiming at the mean is that “it is not easy to define the way we should be angry, with whom, about what, for how long. For sometimes, indeed, we ourselves praise deficient people and call them mild, and sometimes praise quarrelsome people and call them manly.”[66]

To sum up, Aristotle sees mildness as a virtue of character, therefore a personal virtue. While his discussion in the *NE* helps us see the parameters involved in virtuous anger it does not help us understand anger’s larger role within the community.

Anger and the Virtue of the Citizen

Aristotle gives three arguments in *Politics* 3.4 for why personal virtue and political virtue cannot be the same.[67] Personal virtue is always the same, whereas political virtue is multiple.[68]

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[66] “Οὐ γὰρ ῥᾴδιον διορίσαι καὶ πῶς καὶ τίσι καὶ ἐπὶ ποίοις καὶ πόσον χρόνον ὀργιστέον· καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ὁτὲ μὲν τοὺς ἐλλείποντας ἐπαινοῦμεν καὶ πράους φαμέν, ὁτὲ δὲ τοὺς χαλεπαίνοντας ἀνδρώδεις ἀποκαλοῦντες,” (*NE* 1109b16-18).

[67] I restrict myself here to two of his arguments, since they all aim to prove the same thing. Briefly, Aristotle’s third argument rests on the idea that different citizens have different virtues. He likens the city to an animal which is made up of soul and body, the soul in turn is made up of reason and appetites, the household of man and woman, and so on. Given that the city is made up of dissimilars then it follows that the virtues of citizens must also be dissimilar.

[68] The virtue talked about here in both cases must be understood as virtue in their complete senses. Personal virtue involves a set of virtues that one must have, so does political virtue. The particular virtues involved in personal virtue are always the same.

To explain what political virtue is and why it is multiple he takes an analogy from virtue in members in another sort of community, sailors. Their virtue is both relative to their individual capacity and work and to their common work to ensure a safe trip:

> ὥσπερ οὖν ὁ πλωτὴρ εἷς τις τῶν κοινωνῶν ἐστιν, οὕτω
> καὶ τὸν πολίτην φαμέν. τῶν δὲ πλωτήρων καίπερ ἀν-
> ομοίων ὄντων τὴν δύναμιν (ὁ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἐρέτης, ὁ δὲ
> κυβερνήτης, ὁ δὲ πρῳρεύς, ὁ δ' ἄλλην τιν' ἔχων τοιαύτην
> ἐπωνυμίαν) δῆλον ὡς ὁ μὲν ἀκριβέστατος ἑκάστου λόγος
> ἴδιος ἔσται τῆς ἀρετῆς, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κοινός τις ἐφαρμόσει
> πᾶσιν. ἡ γὰρ σωτηρία τῆς ναυτιλίας ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτῶν
> πάντων· τούτου γὰρ ἕκαστος ὀρέγεται τῶν πλωτήρων.
>
> We say, therefore, that, like a sailor, a citizen is someone who shares in community with others. And although sailors are unlike in their capacities (for one is a rower), another a helmsman, another a lookout man, and another has some other such title), it is clear both that the most accurate account of their virtue will be peculiar to each, and similarly that there will be some common account that fits them all. For they all have as their work the safety of the voyage (for that is what each sailor desires). (*Pol.* 1276b20-27)

Similarly, although citizens are different from each other they have "the safety of the community as their work, and this community is the regime. Hence the virtue of the citizen must be relative to the regime."[69]

His second argument rests on the idea that political virtue is also relative to the citizen–each citizen, like each sailor, has a different role to play in ensuring the safety of their respective communities.[70] Essentially, Aristotle says, if (1) it is highly unlikely for

[69] ἡ σωτηρία τῆς κοινωνίας ἔργον ἐστί, κοινωνία δ' ἐστὶν ἡ πολιτεία·διὸ τὴν ἀρετὴν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τοῦ πολίτου πρὸς τὴν πολιτείαν (*Pol.* 1276b29-30).

[70] For what a citizen is for Aristotle see *Pol.* 3.1-5.

everyone in a city to be a good man, but (2) it is necessary for each person to do their work well, that is, virtuously, then (3) since all citizens cannot be alike, it follows that (4) there cannot be one one virtue for both citizen and man. This is because (5) the city cannot be best unless all have citizen virtue, however (6) citizens cannot all have the virtue of the man unless everyone in the serious city must be good men–which is impossible (1276b35-1277a4). Simpson comments that the last proposition (6) makes explicit how it is that (3) is meant to prove (1). Unlike citizens have unlike virtues, and therefore not be good in the same way. All morally virtuous people, on the other hand, will be good in the same way.[71]

We can already see that Aristotle is making a crucial distinction. The attainment of personal virtue aims at happiness *eudaimonia*. To be a virtuous citizen, that is to have political virtue, is to aim at the safety of the community. These two may overlap,and Aristotle certainly believes that the material resources that a stable society can provide are crucial, but not essential, to becoming morally virtuous.[72] The details of Aristotle's arguments for when the two virtues are the same is not relevant to our discussion here. Essentially, personal virtue and political virtue are the same in the sense that they both consist in ruling virtue (i.e., excellence in being able to rule). They are also different because personal virtue consists simply in ruling virtue (which is women are not virtuous

[71] Aristotle's second argument applies to the best city only. I follow Simpson's outline. *Commentary*, 141.

[72] For although Aristotle thinks that one generally acquires the virtue of prudence by being ruled as a citizen, which is necessarily for personal virtue, it could also be achieved in the family for example. See *NE* 10.9.1179b20-23; 1180a30-32.

since their role is to obey, according to Aristotle), whereas political virtue consists also in ruled virtue. In other words, the virtue by which he is a good man will only be the same by which he is a good citizen when he is actually ruling.[73]

Most crucially, for Aristotle, someone with personal virtue can be politically virtuous in a defective regime.[74] Ruling and preserving a defective regime involves moderating and controlling its defects, which presupposes the virtue of prudence.[75] A ruler can have personal virtue and have political virtue in a defective regime, for it is a ruler who needs prudence. But what of the mere citizen? It would seem to logically follow that if a ruler can have both virtues in a defective regime, and if anyone has to do something about the defective regime it is him, the statesman, then surely a citizen can also have both virtues in a defective regime. Part of the reason for this is that Aristotle is not reticent about acknowledging that the best regime is impossible for most people, and

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[73] See *Pol*. 1277a13-b32.

[74] As Simpson points out, An example would be the statesman Theramenes. In the *Athenian Constitution*, Theramenes is described as a 'good citizen' (*agathos polites*) and among the best Athenian statesmen of the post-Periclean period. The text defends the figure of Theramenes against the controversial opinions of him: "the view of writers not making mere incidental references is that he was not a destroyer of all governments, as critics charge him with being, but guided them all forward into a fully law-abiding course, since he was capable of serving the state under all of them, which is the duty of a good citizen, but did not give in to them when they acted illegally, but faced their enmity," (δοκεῖ μέντοι μὴ παρέργως ἀποφαινομένοις οὐχ ὥσπερ αὐτὸν διαβάλλουσι πάσας τὰς πολιτείας καταλύειν, ἀλλὰ πάσας προάγειν ἕως μηδὲν παρανομοῖεν, ὡς δυνάμενος πολιτεύεσθαι κατὰ πάσας, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀγαθοῦ πολίτου ἔργον, παρανομούσαις δὲ οὐ συγχωρῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀπεχθανόμενος. 28.5) Translated by Harris Rackham. Simpson, *Commentary,* 145 n29.

[75] Prudence (*phonēsis*) is one of the intellectual virtues. It permits one to always choose the correct action in any given circumstance, to perform it well, and for the right reason. It is inseparable from moral virtue. See *NE* 6.

the aim of political science (i.e. the study of political virtue) is to rule and *preserve* the regime (*Pol*. 6(4).1).[76]

Aristotle does not mention anger in his short explicit examination of political virtue. We can surmise that anger's involvement in political virtue is determined by how the safety of the community is to be interpreted in a deviant regime. However, as I already explored, due to Aristotle's narrow conceptualization of anger, an anger that is only elicited by slights, anger's role in overthrowing an unsafe regime would only be accidental.

Despite that, anger is most capable in letting us know that we are in a deviant regime to begin with. Anger is tied to our conceptions of worth, both of ourselves and others. To be angry, is to perceive a grave injustice. Remember that justice is equality for equals and inequality for unequals. A tyrant, perhaps by definition, runs the most risks of triggering the anger of others. Hence, for Aristotle, the tyrant ought to understand and avoid insolence most. For that reason, I turn next to Aristotle's discussion of the preservation of tyrannies and the epistemic value of anger.

Political Anger II: The epistemic value of anger

Whether or not Aristotle would commend Harmodius and Aristogeiton for ending a tyranny, anger does serve an epistemic purpose. The value of anger is showing the

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[76] Since when Aristotle says to do something virtuously, he means to do it best.

agent, the patient, and third party observers injustice. Aristotle spends the end of the *Politics* 7 on how understanding the anger of others helps to preserve tyrannies.[77]

For Aristotle, there are two opposite ways to preserve tyrannies. The first is the 'traditional way,' which involves doing away with superior people and those of high thoughts, not allowing club gatherings and education, or in fact anything that will contribute to high thoughts and trust, not allowing places of leisure whereby people will come to know of each other, and encouraging behavior what will make them think small (1313a34-b10). The traditional way also makes use of spies throughout the community to instill fear of speaking freely, turning people against one another through slander and other means, ensuring people are poor so that they cannot think of anything other than trying to provide for themselves. The traditional tyrant is also a wager of war so that the ruled are in constant need of a leader and have no time for leisure.

The second way is to make tyranny more kingly–which is the preferred method for Aristotle.[78] Instead of controlling the multitude of things in the traditional way, Aristotle suggests watching over only one thing, the tyrant's power. The tyrant must preserve his power when the people are willing and unwilling. Aristotle suggests a number of things the tyrant must do, and what is interesting is that the tyranny must avoid

[77] Aristotle is far from a tyrant sympathizer, but what he cares most about is preserving the political community. He is following to its logical conclusion what political virtue entails. Aristotle can be said to have both philosophical and historical reasons for prioritizing stability over a blind or ruthless pursuit of eudaimonia. Philosophically speaking, human beings are political animals. We need a community most. Historically, Aristotle lived through constant war, political instability, and even the liberation of Messenian helots in Sparta (369 BCE).

[78] Aristotle only very slightly prefers monarchies to tyrannies. For his arguments against total kingship see *Pol*. 3.14-17.

the anger (*chalepainō*) of the multitude (*Pol*. 1314b40). He must also avoid treating his subjects insolently for that same reason. It is indispensable that the tyrant should refrain from every sort of insolence (1315a14).

Aristotle spends a great deal of time explaining the importance of not slighting. He specifies being particularly careful of slighting the youth, and of slighting those who love honor. The tyrant should only engage in sexual relations out of love, not because he has the power to. He even specifies that when it comes to insolent treatment the tyrant must be most careful of those who attempt assasination willing to die themselves after they succeed. For "they who are driven by *thumos*-anger are not sparing of themselves," (ἀφειδῶς γὰρ ἑαυτῶν ἔχουσιν οἱ διὰ θυμὸν ἐπιχειροῦντες, 1315a29).

It should now be clear that Aristotle finds anger to be of critical political importance. He takes the political emotions of the multitude seriously. They serve, if nothing else, an essential epistemic role. There is nothing in Aristotle's discussion that suggests that the multitude is wrong in having these emotions. For example, when he talks about not slighting those who love honor he calls them the decent among human beings. Aristotle could have also recommended that the tyrant rely on fear, since one cannot both be afraid and angry towards the same person.[79]

Furthermore, for Aristotle, the strength of the second approach to preserving tyrannies is that by paying attention to the emotions of the multitude, the tyrant will not

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[79] Aristotle's recommendations to the tyrant might seem surprising given his views in NE 10.9 that what people naturally obey is fear, hence why they need legislators.

only enjoy a longer lasting rule, but he himself, will be either be "nobly disposed for virtue or half serviceable for the purpose, and not wicked but half wicked."[80] Not only do political scientists learn something from observing and legislating in accordance to what elicits anger from the multitude, the tyrant himself may become more virtuous.

The anger of citizens, because it does have the power to destabilize the community, determines how a community ought to be legislated. Aristotle does not suggest that their potential for anger be suppressed, but learned from.

Concluding remarks

What the *Politics* shows is the broader importance and significance of what at first might strike us as an exceptionally narrow conceptualization of anger. Today, we might think that slighting is unimportant, that is because at least in the United States people tend to conceptualize themselves as a society of dignity and equality, as opposed to honor.[81] Therefore, in theory, we do not need to police our worth.[82] In a liberal

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[80] "ἔτι δ᾽ αὐτὸν διακεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸ ἦθος ἤτοι καλῶς πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἢ ἡμίχρηστον ὄντα,καὶ μὴ πονηρὸν ἀλλ᾽ ἡμιπόνηρον," 1315b7-10.

[81] For an account of contemporary communities of honor in the United States and the distinction between honor and dignity see Sommers, *Honor*. For the historical background and conceptual analysis of dignity see Michael Rosen, *Dignity: Its History and Meaning* (Harvard University Press, 2012).

[82] This claim is not without complications. I am here speaking about how people tend to conceptualize themselves as well as how the legal and political systems are set up to work in theory. If one is asked whether an insult warrants physical violence of any kind, their answer is most likely "no." Will they later be found attacking someone after being insulted? Perhaps. Part of the reason in theory we are not supposed to be affected by insults is that our status is not affected by insults. Dignity is something one has by definition by virtue of being a human being, so unless one suddenly becomes non-human, one is worth as much as everyone else. It is under this rubric that Nussbaum argues against anger. If anger is largely about status, and we are a society where one's status remains unaffected, then we do not need anger.

democracy our worth is tied to our status as human beings. One's worth was not definitional in Aristotle's time, it needed to be constantly policed and protected.

However, Aristotle goes beyond the value of anger for the individual. He is in more ways than one quite radical, not only in his time, but even compared to our own. Aristotle's writings provide the most systematic account of anger with regards to what I have called personal, and political virtue. Appropriate anger is part of personal virtue. Anger is also part political virtue. In both cases, Aristotle acknowledges anger's strengths and weaknesses. Where he stands out is in not seeing the anger of citizens as a curse. Citizens do not need to be criticized or manipulated out of their anger. The burden of whether one's anger is politically virtuous or not does not fall on the citizen. Instead, Aristotle emphasizes the epistemic value of anger for anyone who studies political science, but most crucially for rulers. Aristotle's solution to the anger of citizens is not to crush it, rather for rulers not to act in such a way so as to elicit it to begin with. In other words, anger is only an issue if the ruler is incompetent.

Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation has been twofold. As an apologia, my first goal has been to show how contemporary debates would benefit from a cross-cultural conceptual analysis of anger. As often as Aristotle is quoted, he is not *the* authority on anger. Anger is not limited to a status error. Aristotle's conception of anger arises out of a very specific society, with its own way of dealing with how to live together whilst still holding one's own. Simultaneously, my second goal has been to show how anger helps clarify our values. Anger, because it tracks the values of each society, each group, and thinkers, is an invaluable resource for understanding even the unspoken, implicit, or even abject values and fears.

I have argued, by way of showing how anger, far from being a personal emotion, often signals a breakdown in existing societal structures. Anger helps reveal and clarify our values in three ways: (1) it signals to the agent of the anger, the angry person, that she perceives a wrong to have been done to her; (2) it signals to the patient of the anger—the person perceived to have committed the wrong deed and towards whom the anger is now directed—what the agent values as right or wrong; and (3) it lays bare the relationships between the agent, the patient, and their society and its values. This does not mean we should uncritically submit to our angry impulses, but it does mean that anger can reveal larger issues in the world worthy of attention. If we banish anger from the political landscape, we risk losing its insights. Therefore it ought to be a part of our moral and

political toolkit. To defend that claim, I have turned to a range of sources from early China and ancient Greece. These sources show how ancient Chinese and Greek texts challenge, contribute, illuminate and offer alternatives to much of the contemporary philosophical discussions on anger by focusing on two specific problems that have been raised in contemporary philosophy.

My normative account of anger is embedded in and informed by careful examinations of the rhetoric and dynamics of anger in Chinese and Greek sources. I take seriously the charge that anger is often delegitimized because it does not benefit a particular group or narrative. For that reason I have attempted a more honest conceptual analysis, one that is in conversation with several disciplines. One that looks at anger through a philosophical lens that is sensitive to the rhetoric and historical context of each text as well as questions of gender, and status.

A main conclusion from this cross-cultural analysis of anger is that anger does not conceptually involve payback. Other-regarding anger signals wrongdoing, and aims at change. It is not necessarily followed by violence. Moreover, given that all the texts I have studied are weary of anger and yet still make room for it suggests that anger's role is not easily replaced.

Chapters One, Two, and Three turned to specific Chinese sources. Chapter One focused on the *Mozi* and the *Mencius* starting from their shared treatment of anger as a tool for establishing social and moral harmony. For Mozi, anger plays two crucial roles: (1) it is epistemically invaluable given that it tracks its agent's values; (2) it performs a

didactic function. Second is an analysis of anger in Mencius, for whom anger is a natural disposition we cannot eradicate and which must therefore be managed depending on the circumstances. He distinguishes between two realms: (1) anger in politics and war; (2) anger in the family. Both thinkers limit appropriate anger to other-regarding anger.

Chapter Two turned from anger in the socio-political realm in Mozi and Mencius to a consideration of anger and human nature in Xunzi and Zhuangzi. The *Zhuangzi*'s authors so limit the space for appropriate anger that the anger might not even be recognizable as such. Xunzi approaches the constraints of appropriate anger from the dual perspective of rulers and ministers: a ruler's anger inspires awe in his subjects, and an effective minister must restrain his anger in order to remonstrate effectively with his ruler. I showed two rhetorical problems: (1) both texts have a general negative stance regarding emotions, which tends to subsume anger, often using anger as a catchall for all emotions; (2) in Xunzi, when anger is appropriate or valuable, it often goes by another name entirely.

Chapter Three explored gendered representations of anger in the *Lienüzhuan*. I focused on the two important themes: (1) gendered differences in the didactic role of anger; and (2) women's strategies against the anger of others. I ended with a discussion of anger and female vice. In conclusion, the gendered representations of anger in the LNZ provides an important alternative to views of anger as motivated by the desire for payback and status. The LNZ, like other pre-Qin texts, understands anger very differently, and focuses on other-regarding anger, based on perceptions of wrongdoing and injustice.

The LNZ also provides an important focus on the role of didactic anger by women and others. It also showed how female anger that does not serve the desired status-quo is demonized.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six drew from the Greek material. Chapter Four showed the different guises of political anger in the Homeric epics. I argued that anger is predominantly a political emotion, due to the needs of the honor culture represented in the epics. Homeric anger performs different political functions: it is used as a sign of power and authority in the figure of Agamemnon; it is constrained by political normativity in Achilles; and it performs an important function in Telemachos's political initiation and coming of age.

Chapter Five reintroduced issues of gender through a comparison of the figures of Penelope and Clytemnestra. Because examples of female anger are hard to find, this chapter explored female alternatives to anger: how female characters are represented in situations where their male counterparts would have been expected to show anger. I first gave an account of female *nemesis*, and how it is used in both the *Odyssey* and the *Oresteia*. Second, I explored the female virtuous emotional landscape through a close examination of Penelope's alternatives to anger in the *Odyssey*. Female virtue is not restricted to sadness or grief, it also encompases hatred. Lastly, an analysis of Clytemnestra's in the *Oresteia* shows that her viciousness is represented through a lack of emotions. Anger is nowhere to be found in her vicinity.

Chapter Six returned to socio-political theories of human emotion, this time in Aristotle. Aristotle's writings provide a largely systematic account of anger with regards to what I called personal and political virtue. The aim of personal virtue is eudaimonia whereas the aim of political virtue is the safety of the community. I argued that anger in terms of political emotion is instrumental for political stability, but not primarily because of its conative role for citizens. According to Aristotle, the burden of whether anger is politically virtuous does not fall on the citizen. Instead, Aristotle emphasizes the epistemic value of anger for anyone who studies political science and, most crucially, for rulers. Aristotle's solution to the anger of citizens is not to crush it, rather for rulers not to trigger that anger through their actions to begin with. In other words, anger is only an issue if the ruler is incompetent.

There are four main findings that emerged from this comparative endeavor which would merit further study. One is the seemingly stark divergence between Chinese understandings of anger and Aristotle´s in particular. Many of the Chinese texts emphasize the value of other-regarding anger, and vilify self-regarding anger. Aristotle's anger, whether personal or political, falls more comfortably within self-regarding anger. However, in the Greek texts self-regarding anger can still encompass others, insofar as anything that befalls one's dependents is a reflection of one's own worth. There seems to be an intuitive explanation for this stark difference. The tacit nature of Greek hierarchy required the constant policing of status, whereas the overly hierarchical Chinese society represented in these texts used other strategies (i.e. the rites, etc.).

Second, it is not entirely obvious that our contemporary understanding of the personal, applies to ancient Greece. When we call our anger personal what do we mean? I do not have the answer, although it is of philosophical significance. It seems to me that we tend to use the notion of personal emotion to mean subjective, unique to oneself. It angers me personally that you did not invite me to your party, but it may not have angered someone else. If this is what we mean by 'personal,' then anger appears to be only ethically problematic. Whereas if anger is about normativity beyond the individual, then anger has an important role to play. Aristotle did not think that the anger of the tyrant slayers of Athens was *merely* personal, even though he was under no pretense that they had killed Hipparchus due to a slight.

Third is that the political has explanatory force in the present, in Early China, and Ancient Greece. It would be worth further comparing the political moralism of the Mozi, the Mencius, and the Xunzi with what I argued would more comfortably be called today the political realism of the Homeric epics, and to a lesser extent Aristotle. A more granular understanding of the political would illuminate the normative role of not just political anger, but political emotion in general. This has not been satisfactorily conceptualized here. Understanding political anger seems to me to be of particular importance given that political anger in these texts is in the business of tradition policing, as opposed to the disruptions and revolutions that contemporary arguments for political anger are invested in.

Lastly, while there is a huge divergence in terms of how anger is gendered in the *Lienüzhuan* and the Greek sources, anger is gendered in both. At an abstract level, the normative relationship between women and anger can be understood in Manne's phrase of "women as human *givers* as opposed to human *beings*." The women of the *Lienüzhuan* can be virtuously angry only if it serves others, Greek women because of Greek understandings of anger could instead express *nemesis*, which is in the business of policing tradition and thus also at the service of others.

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