The Passions of Achilles and Aeneas: Translating Greece into Rome

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The great critic I.A. Richards produced an abridged translation of Homer's *Iliad* under the title, *The Wrath of Achilles* (1950), and to most scholars, the title will seem well chosen (cf. Robert Graves' translation of the entire poem under the title, *The Anger of Achilles* [1959]; also Muellner 1996). The poem begins, famously, with the word *mênis*, an elevated term that, like wrath, is often associated with divine anger:[1] the anger is that of Achilles, who, enraged by the demeaning treatment he has received at the hands of Agamemnon, withdraws from the war and nurses his resentment until his dearest friend, Patroclus, is slain by the Trojan leader Hector; at this point, overcome by grief, he returns to battle to avenge the death by killing Hector. In his anguish, Achilles abuses the corpse of his enemy, until even the gods are appalled at his inhumanity; in the end, he accepts a ransom from Hector's father, Priam, and the poem concludes on a note of reconciliation, though it is mixed with mourning among the Trojans over the loss of their champion.

Virgil's *Aeneid*, which is modelled on both Homeric epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in almost obsessive detail and yet transforms them at

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[1] See Considine 1986: 54; Muellner 1996: 31, who describes *mênis* as "the irrevocable cosmic sanction that prohibits some characters from taking their superiors for equals and others from taking their equals for inferiors."

every turn, begins and ends with anger. Instead of the mutual regard between Achilles and Priam that characterizes the final scene of the *Iliad*, Virgil chose to conclude with a duel between the champions on either side, Trojan and Latin: Aeneas slaughters Turnus in an access of fury brought on by an accidental reminder of the death of his young ally, Pallas, at Turnus' hands. The scene has shocked and disturbed many readers, for the chilling violence with which Virgil elected to end his poem.[2] Turnus indeed bids Aeneas to have pity on his father -- as a great warrior he would not beg for mercy for himself -- and to give back his body for burial. These words are clearly meant to recall the end of the *Iliad*, and Virgil's decision not to grant Turnus an answer to his prayer, but rather to cut the poem off at the moment that corresponds to Achilles' brutal and pitiless slaying of Hector in Book 22 of the *Iliad*, two books short of the finale, makes the *Aeneid* seem somehow unresolved, even unfinished. Why has Virgil outdone Homer in the ferocity of the ending?

Virgil too opens his poem with a reference to anger, though it is not mentioned explicitly in the first line (*arma* is not quite the same thing as *ira*). Virgil explains that Aeneas is being driven across the seas by fate, and also by the unforgetting wrath of cruel Juno (*saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*, 4), motives which, to be sure, serve the ultimate objective of the founding of Rome. Nevertheless, Virgil wonders aloud: "can there be such great anger among the gods?" (*tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*, 11). Now, at the beginning of the *Iliad* too the poet poses a question to the Muse who has inspired him: "Which of the gods first brought these two [Agamemnon and Achilles] to contend in strife?" (8). But Homer at once provides the answer: "It was the son of Leto and Zeus," that is, Apollo. There is nothing here of the metaphysical doubt or angst that resonates in Virgil's rhetorical question: Homer asks about the cause of the quarrel, and his Muse provides him with the answer. Virgil's question hangs in the air, and seems suspended over the entire poem, inviting the reader to evaluate the role of the gods, and the nature of anger, at each turn of events.

The difference in the trajectory of anger in the two poems is notable: in the *Iliad*, the hero's wrath gives way to grief for his friend two thirds the way through the poem, and the vengeful fury provoked by this grief is finally assuaged; in the *Aeneid*, divine resentment sets the story in

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[2] For discussion, see Polleichtner 2009: 223-76; bibliography on views concerning the nature of the ending on p. 227 n. 17. See also my review of Polleichtner in Konstan 2011.

motion, and the poem ends with the hero himself acting in anger. In itself, this divergence in the course of anger in the two narratives is no cause for surprise, for they are very different kinds of poems: Homer's is a tale of the falling out between a king and his greatest fighter, a frequent motif in epic worldwide (e.g., *El Cid*, the Persian epic *Shahnameh* by Ferdawsi), whereas Virgil relates the founding of a nation, a genre well developed in earlier Greek literature and which Virgil grafted onto the models of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[3] In addition, Virgil was heir to a tradition that invited the reader's intervention in the text, as it were, deliberately working moral conundrums into his poem, like the famous riddle, exactly halfway through the poem, of the two gates to hell, and Aeneas' puzzling exit from the underworld through the portal of false dreams.[4] But I wish to explore here the possibility of another reason, in addition to the above, for the differential treatment of anger in the two epics: that the very concept of this emotion differed for the Greek and the Roman poet, or rather, that the Greek and Latin terms that we translate as "anger" did not precisely coincide in meaning. I do not mean that such a conceptual distinction by itself explains the dissimilar structures of the two poems, but recognizing the contrast, if it exists, should contribute to our understanding of how anger functions in them.

Why should we imagine that Greek and Latin terms that we commonly render as "anger" should have differed from each other, or from our own conception of that emotion? By way of an answer to this question, which will at the same time serve as a commentary on how anger was conceived by the two poets under consideration, I shall examine some texts concerning anger, or what we take to be anger, by representatives of three of the major philosophical schools in classical

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[3] For epics narrating the founding of cities, see Dougherty 1994; Marincola 2001: 11-12.

[4] Scholars have long puzzled over why Aeneas, after the future of Rome has been revealed to him by his father in the underworld, should not have emerged to the upper world through the gate of horn, through which true shades (*verae umbrae*) pass, rather than that of ivory (*Aeneid* 6.893-99); some have found here evidence of an implicit criticism of Augustus' rule. In my own view, Virgil planted this conundrum midway through the poem just in order to tease his readers, and thereby stimulate them to enter into conversation, as it were, with the text; at the very end of the poem (discussed below), he posed another such dilemma concerning Aeneas' decision to kill the suppliant Turnus. For the idea of the "active reader," who is invited to respond critically to the text, see Konstan 2004, 2006a; Johnson 2010.

antiquity: the Aristotelian, the Stoic, and the Epicurean.[5] Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, has provided the most detailed analysis of the emotions, or rather *pathê*, that survives from ancient Greece, and the *pathos* that he treats first, and in greatest depth, is *orgê*, commonly rendered as "anger."[6] I quote his definition of this affect: "Let anger be a desire, accompanied by pain, for a perceived revenge, on account of a perceived slight on the part of people who are not fit to slight one or one's own" (*Rhetoric* 2.2, 1378a31-33). Let me highlight three elements in this definition: first, anger involves, or indeed is reducible to, a desire for revenge; second, the desire for revenge is caused by a slight or diminishment, and by this only; and third, that some people, but only some, are not fit to slight another, with the implication that others are indeed fit to do so. Aristotle himself alludes to the opening quarrel in the *Iliad* in illustration of his analysis, and in fact it fits his conception rather well. In depriving Achilles of his war prize -- the girl Briseis -- in order to be compensated for having to surrender his own, at the behest of Apollo, Agamemnon has insulted a man who regards himself as a peer of the king, not a subordinate. As Achilles says to his mother, the sea-nymph Thetis, "wide-ruling Agamemnon has dishonored me [*êtimêsen*]" (1.356; cf. 1.244: Agamemnon "failed to honor the best of the Achaeans"). Enraged by this treatment, Achilles seeks revenge, asking his mother to intercede with Zeus so that the Greeks may suffer losses and thereby realize how great a warrior they have offended. One third the way through the poem, Agamemnon comes to perceive his error, and seeks to appease Achilles' wrath by offering him a huge reparation, thereby restoring his honor among the Greeks. Though Achilles recognizes the meaning of the gesture, he is still too irate to accept it. As he says: "My heart swells with anger when I recall those things, how Agamemnon treated me shamefully before the Achaeans as if I were some vagabond without honor" (9.646-48). Here it is clear that public humiliation is the cause of Achilles' anger, as is also the way in which status, or, in Aristotle's expression, a person's "fitness" to offer an insult, conditions Achilles' response. For if Achilles had really been a "vagabond without honor," then he would not -- could not -- have taken

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[5] For a review of classical theories of emotion, see now Polleichtner 2009: 38-52.

[6] For a comprehensive discussion of Aristotle's analysis of *orgê* and its application to the interpretation of classical Greek literature, see Konstan 2006b: 41-76; the discussion of Aristotle's view here is based on that chapter.

offense, since it is no belittlement to be treated as an inferior when you in fact are one.

As I have said, Achilles does give over his rage at Agamemnon after his friend Patroclus is killed by Hector, two thirds the way through the poem; from this point on, Achilles' attention is focussed entirely on avenging this latter hurt, which is only assuaged at the very end, with the ransoming of Hector's body. Many critics have interpreted this shift on Achilles' part as a displacement of his rage onto a new object; thus, the *Iliad* remains throughout a poem about anger, directed first at Agamemnon, and subsequently at Hector.[7] Although this is perhaps satisfying as providing an ostensible thematic unity to the work, it is hard to see how Achilles' emotion in the final segment of the poem conforms to Aristotle's understanding of anger or *orgê*: the slaying of Patroclus scarcely constitutes a slight against Achilles. I have argued elsewhere that the final third of the *Iliad* in fact centers on a different sentiment, namely grief.[8] Grief too, when one can assign a human cause to the loss, invites vengeance, but it is not precisely the same passion as anger, which, as we have seen, consists -- at least according to Aristotle -- in a diminishment of one's honor. Since we do not live in a society where honor plays so central a role, we may not be as conscious as the Greeks were of the difference between the reaction to an affront or put-down, like what Agamemnon did to Achilles, and the berserk rage inspired by the death of a friend in combat, but I believe that for Homer and his audience, the distinction was significant. Indeed, there is a marginal note in some of the manuscripts of the *Iliad*, going back to ancient commentators, that states: "of the two emotions besetting Achilles' soul, anger [*orgê*] and grief [*lupê*], one wins out.... For the emotion involving Patroclus is strongest of all, and so it is necessary to abandon his wrath [*mênis*] and avenge himself on his enemies" (schol. bT ad *Il.* 18.112-13). I believe that this ancient scholar got it right.

Now, things are never so simple. To begin with, Homer's language is in important respects different from Aristotle's -- it's a bit like Chaucer's in comparison with modern English -- and the word *orgê* does not occur in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*; rather, the epic term most commonly rendered as "anger" is *kholos*, literally a kind of biliousness -- the root survives in the English word "choleric," for example. This term suggests a more generalized kind of bitterness than *orgê*, and can be used, for example, of

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[7] See, for example, Taplin 1992: 193-202.
[8] See Konstan 2006b: 49-53.

animals as well as of human beings in the epic. Even so, it is employed principally of Achilles' feelings about Agamemnon, and relatively rarely in connection with the desire for vengeance that possesses him upon the death of Patroclus. Corresponding to this uneven distribution of the term *kholos* in the two parts of the epic (if I may so label them), there is a difference in the nature of the intended revenge. What Achilles wants from Agamemnon is the restoration of his dignity among the Greeks, which requires that Agamemnon be humbled; with Hector, it is more a matter of giving satisfaction to his friend Patroclus, as well as of appeasing his own guilt at having sent him into battle, and indeed, when he is prepared to give back the corpse of Hector to his father, Achilles begs the pardon of Patroclus' shade (24.591-95).

Moving now to Rome, in the third book of his *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero enters upon a discussion of the emotions by inquiring whether the sage is subject to distress (*aegritudo*) and other disturbances of the mind, such as fears, passionate desires, and bouts of anger (*formidines*, *libidines*, *iracundiae*, 3.7). Cicero affirms that these feelings, along with pity, envy, and the like, are called *pathê* in Greek, which, he says, would be literally rendered as *morbi* or "sicknesses" in Latin, as being movements of the mind that do not heed reasoned arguments; but because calling the passions "sicknesses" sounds odd in Latin, he prefers *perturbationes*. But Cicero immediately proceeds to dub such sentiments a form of madness (*insania*, 3.8), which, being no less rare a usage, provokes an expression of surprise on the part of his interlocutor. Cicero explains that *insania* basically signifies a lack of *sanitas* or health in the mind, just as *morbus* indicates the absence of health in the body; the emotions deprive us of tranquillity of spirit, and this is just what mental illness is. Since wisdom is the health of the mind, it is incompatible with the passions. Thus, ancient Latin usage (as Cicero interprets it) confirms the Stoic claim that all emotions are a form of madness or mental instability (3.9-10).

Cicero concludes that Latin is indeed more precise than Greek in this respect, since it separates out the mental and the physical. He goes on to explain that in Latin one says that people are "out of control" (*ex potestate*) when they are carried away by desire or anger, "although anger itself is a part of desire; for the definition runs: anger is a desire for revenge" (3.11) -- a point on which the Stoics were in agreement with Aristotle. Aristotle, however, held that anger is a perfectly legitimate response to a slight: whether it is appropriate in a given situation depends on a correct appraisal of the stimulus and a suitably measured reaction.

To be wholly insusceptible to anger, in turn, he regarded as the sign of a servile disposition (cf. *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.5, 1126a3; 2.7, 1108a8; *Magna Moralia* 1.2, 1191b25). For the Stoics, anger, like all other *pathê*, was on the contrary by definition excessive and insubordinate to reason, and thus incompatible with the serenity of the wise. Cicero now professes to be puzzled as to why the Greeks should call a condition such as anger *mania* ("madness"), and claims that Latin speakers do better in distinguishing between *insania*, which involves a lack of wisdom, and *furor*, or real craziness. The Greeks too, he says, mean to say something of the sort, but they miss the mark by employing the term *melankholia* for the latter condition, as though it were merely a matter of bile and not often a consequence of intense anger, fear, or grief, as happened, for example, to Ajax and Orestes. Someone afflicted by *insania*, according to Cicero, can still manage his own life, more or less -- as indeed a person subject to ordinary anger can; but a person in the grip of *furor* is prohibited from doing so by law. *Furor* is thus a greater thing (*maius*) than *insania*, and yet, Cicero says, the sage is susceptible to it, though not to *insania*. This is in line with the Stoic view that even sages may suffer a physiological or physical trauma which would rob them of their mental faculties (cf. Graver 2002: 83), but of course they would not, like Ajax, arrive at such a state as a result of an excess of passion.[9]

Cicero, then, distinguishes among three categories -- physical sickness (*morbus*) and two types of mental disorder, which we might render as loss of control or hysteria (*insania*) and wholly delusional or raving psychosis of the sort that leaves a person unable to function (*furor*). Anger is an instance of *insania*, and may in extreme cases lead to *furor*, though *furor* may also be produced in other, more organic ways -- and with regard to these, not even the sage is invulnerable.

Christopher Gill, in a study of anger in the *Aeneid* (2004), wisely cautions against expecting to find a systematic attitude toward anger in an epic poem, reflecting the influence of one or another of the philosophical schools, and he offers some illustrations of how anger is treated differently even within a single episode in the poem. As I have suggested, the opening question -- "can there be such great anger among the gods?" -- invites the reader to consider various perspectives on the nature of the emotion. On an Aristotelian approach to anger, it might be

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[9] For the distinction between madness as a result of physical illness, and madness as a consequence of poor character or upbringing, cf. Plato *Laws* 934D-E.

reasonable to suppose that the gods can, and indeed should, harbor anger when they have been offended, since not to do so would be inconsistent with their dignity. For example, Athena is said to have instructed Nautes, alone of all mortals, on "what the great anger of the gods or the arrangement of the fates portends" (5.706-07); the parallelism beween the two phrases suggests that the gods' anger works in concert with the divine order, and so is entirely legitimate (cf. 5.781 on Juno's anger; 7.305-06 on Diana's; 11.233, 443 on the *ira deum*).[10] On the Stoic view, on the contrary, divinities are no more capable of experiencing a *pathos* like anger than the sage is. The negative quality of the passion is exhibited by its association with the demonic figure of Allecto (7.326), and the madness that she inspires in Amata, the mother of Turnus' would-be bride (7.345, 445). And yet, the Stoics did have a means of rescuing the text, if they wished: for they were the leading exponents of allegorical reading. Juno's resentment, for example, takes the form of inducing Aeolus, the god of the winds, to stir up a fierce storm that interrupts Aeneas' progress to Italy and forces him to land in Carthage. Juno is the Roman equivalent of Hera, and Hera was, by an easy etymological trick, frequently associated with the air, the Greek *Hêra* being an anagram of *aêr*; so the angry goddess is really just a way of describing a natural phenomenon.[11] It is less easy to allegorize Aeneas' wrath in the finale, when he slays Turnus in a fit of passion; the multiple interpretations that the passage has elicited -- some condemning the act as pitiless, others defending it on grounds of political expediency -- suggest, as I indicated above, that Virgil may deliberately have left the question open. And yet, there were lines of defense available to the ancient critic, as we shall see.

It would also be wrong to suppose that Virgil strictly observed the distinction between *ira* or *iracundia* and *furor* that Cicero stipulates: it is under the impulse of a combination of the two, or more precisely, of *ira* and *furiae*, "furies" or "furious passions," that Aeneas plunges his sword into the breast of the defenseless Turnus (*furiis accensus et ira terribilis*, 12.946-47). Elsewhere in the poem too *ira* is associated with *furor*, for example when Aeneas realizes that Troy has been penetrated by the Greeks (2.314-17): "Maddened [*amens*], I grab my weapons. There is not much logic in weapons, but my soul burns to gather a band for battle and race to the citadel with friends. *Furor* and *ira* propel my mind, and I feel

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[10] For an Aristotelian account of anger in the *Aeneid*, see Wright 1994.
[11] On Stoic allegoresis, see Ramelli 2004.

it is beautiful to die in arms" (cf. 2.355). It seems that Aeneas, who is the internal narrator at this point, is describing what he considers to be an abnormal state of mind, compounded of legitimate rage and battle fury, and this may be a clue to his sentiments in his final act of vengeance. So too, when Allecto plants the torch of madness in the bosom of Turnus, he wakes up in terror, covered in sweat, demands weapons in his madness (*amens*), an evil folly (*scelerata insania*) rages within him, and on top of this there is anger (*ira super*, 7.458-62).

In episodes where either *furor* or *ira* occurs alone, however, the two terms are not necessarily synonymous, and it would sometimes be unnatural to substitute one for the other. For example, in describing the behavior of a seething, rebellious mob, Virgil says (1.150), "torches and stones start flying -- *furor* provides the weapons": he means "frenzy" here, not a justifiable anger; *ira* might have given the wrong idea, as though the rabble had a legitimate grievance. So too, a little later, Jupiter, imagining a far distant future, predicts that unholy (*impius*) Furor will be bound in chains, growling inside the sealed portals of War (1.294-96); a personification of Ira would not give the same sense, since decent people would still, one expects, be properly incensed at evil (cf. also 1.348; 2.244 where *furor* is used of the Trojans' decision to receive the wooden horse within their city: *ira* here would be impossible). Dido's passion for Aeneas, despite her responsibilities as queen of Carthage, is several times described as *furor* (4.91, 101, 433, 501, 697); true, at night, as she contemplates her fate, she "tosses on surges of anger" (*irarum fluctuat aestu*, 4.532; cf. 564), but the cause here is her resentment, justified in her mind, at Aeneas' betrayal -- the perfidy (*periuria*), as she puts it, of the Trojan race (4.542).

In war, *ira* is often associated with courage and battle fervor (cf. 5.454, 461 on *ira* in a boxing match). When the Trojans catch sight of Aeneas as he returns from his voyage up the Tiber to Evander's kingdom, they raise a shout, and "new hope rouses their anger" (*spes addita suscitat iras*, 263). Military fury may be justifiable, when it responds to a wrong on the part of the enemy; but it may also be a sign of barbarity: which is the case depends on the context, for it is up to the poet to disambiguate the idea. There is a telling scene at the beginning of the final book, in which Turnus and Aeneas prepare for combat. First, we are told that Turnus is impelled by furies (*furiis*): sparks fly from his visage as he burns (*ardentis*), fire flashes from his fierce eyes, and he is compared to a bull bellowing on the point of battle; Aeneas, in turn, whets his martial temper and rouses himself in rage (*acuit Martem et se*

suscitat ira, 12.101-08), happy at last to be able to engage with his opponent. Whereas Turnus seems driven by brute energy, as the simile of the bull suggests, Aeneas' behavior is more deliberate and strategic. When a truce between the two sides is threatened, Aeneas calls upon his men to repress their ire (*o cohibete iras!*, 12.314). But when Turnus' divine sister Juturna directs his chariot away from a direct confrontation with Aeneas, Aeneas' wrath truly surges at last (*tum uero adsurgunt irae*, 12.494): exasperated by the treachery of Turnus, he calls upon Jupiter as witness to the broken treaty and, embarking upon an indiscriminate slaughter of the enemy, "he gives free rein to his anger" (*irarumque omnis effundit habenas*, 12.499). Aeneas' rage is thus given a rational motivation -- violating a compact is a sign of contempt for the other and a legitimate reason for indignation -- even as it serves to enhance his ferocity. The two dimensions of anger, as berserker fury and rightful revenge, are thus neatly combined.

Seneca, in his treatise *De ira*, notes that, according to some -- he has Aristotle particularly in mind (1.9.2) -- anger might be justified on the basis of utility, precisely because it excites the spirit to action, and courage in war can accomplish nothing without a dose of rage (1.7.1). He replies, as a good Stoic, that virtue must never find assistance in vice (1.9.1), not even against an enemy -- indeed, least of all then, where "attacks should not be flung about but be controlled and disciplined" (1.11.1). The Roman advantage over barbarians resides precisely in their proneness to anger, just as "it is skill that protects gladiators, whereas anger leaves them exposed" (ibid.). On such a strict and consistent view of anger, Aeneas is really no better than Turnus: both are moved by what Seneca regards as vice. Indeed, to the extent that Aeneas intentionally stirs up his own frenzy, he is perhaps the worse offender against Stoic rationality.

But *furor*, we recall, can suggest a mental infirmity so grave as to render an individual legally incompetent, and hence not responsible for his acts -- something like the insanity plea in modern courts. Taking this view rather literally, one might defend Aeneas' conduct in the final scene on the grounds that he was not so much angry as *non compos mentis*, beside himself or under an overpowering influence. Just such an excuse was proposed by ancient commentators, who were trained in judicial arguments. Thus, the ancient commentator Donatus (on *Aen*. 1.347-48) explains that in cases in which *furor*, that is, love or madness (*insania*) or mental sickness (*animi dolor*), drives people to commit grave crimes, they may be pardoned for the deed (*possunt habere veniam*

facti), since such a person has sinned not voluntarily but on account of psychosis (*non voluntate sed furore peccavit*).[12] Though Donatus does not himself apply this reasoning to Aeneas' action, it was in theory available as a way of exculpating him -- though at the cost of calling his sanity into question.

The Epicureans took a more nuanced view of anger, or at least Philodemus did -- an older contemporary of Virgil's who lived in Rome, worked in Naples, and may well have been Virgil's teacher: he dedicated to Virgil, among others, his treatise on flattery (Armstrong 2004: 2-3). In his essay *On Anger*, written like all his works in Greek, Philodemus distinguishes sharply between *orgê*, which he, like Aristotle, considers a rational response to harm or insult, and the excessive emotion he calls *thumos* or "temper." The difference has to do with the assessment of the reasons for anger: for *thumos* is equivalent to what Philodemus calls "empty *orgê*," that is, anger based on false opinion. As Giovanni Indelli (2004: 105) puts it: "for the Epicureans, then, the difference was quite clear ... between *orgê*, natural anger, springing from motives that are justified, moderate in its duration and its intensity, and *thymos*..., blind and uncontrolled rage, to which the wise man certainly is unable to fall prey." Here, indeed, is a theory that might support the distinction -- always in danger of collapsing -- that Virgil seems to draw between the rightful wrath of his hero and the frantic fury of his opponent. If Jeffrey Fish (2004: 121) is right that "there is reason to believe that only in Philodemus' school, even among the Epicureans, was any theory of anger like this taught" (cf. Ranocchia 2007: 157), then the connection between Philodemus' view and the portrayal of anger in the *Aeneid* may be more than casual. *Ira* might, on this interpretation, represent two different emotions, a justifiable wrath and an unreasoning rage, and it would be the reader's responsibility to discern which of the senses was relevant in a given passage.[13]

Indeed, Vanessa Berger has shown in a study of anger in Livy -- another contemporary of Virgil -- that in his text too *ira* assumes a range of values, both positive and negative.[14] Thus, Livy praises the Sabines for

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[12] On Donatus' treatment of the *status venialis* or defense on the basis of non-responsibility, see the excellent account in Pirovano 2006: 93-146.

[13] On the relevance of philosophical views of anger to the conclusion of the *Aeneid*, see Polleichtner 2009: 258-71.

[14] An earlier version of Berger's paper was presented at a graduate students conference on "Anger in the Classical World," held at the University of Western

launching a war in which they acted not out of anger or passion (*nihil enim per iram aut cupiditatem actum est*), but deliberately and indeed craftily (*consilio etiam additus dolus*, 1.11.5). The Gauls, on the contrary, are, as so often, portrayed as burning with uncontrolled rage (*flagrantes ira cuius impotens est gens*, 5.37.4). At the same time, anger is often said to enhance efficiency in combat. Thus, in the battle at Lake Regillus, when the Romans learn that the Tarquins are among the enemy, their anger cannot be contained, and they rush to engage the opposing army, despite the efforts of their leaders to impose order; the conflict is exceptionally fierce, but in the end the Romans are victorious (2.19.4-5); so too, the Roman exiles on the other side fight the more fiercely because of their resentment at having lost their possessions (2.19.10). Again, Livy reports that during the second Punic war, Marcellus' soldiers were so angry because of a violation of a truce that they stormed the city of Leontium on the first attack (24.30.1). Moreover, anger is sometimes qualified explicitly as *iusta* or just. For example after Scipio's soldiers have mutinied -- their own behavior is characterized as *furor* -- they realize that they must submit to the general's righteous anger while trusting in his clemency (28.25.12-13). Similarly, Roman anger against the Gauls is qualified as *iusta* (23.25.6).[15]

Roman anger was a field of contention (as anger should be, I suppose), above all at the time when Virgil was composing his epic. Its meaning was shaped by currents of philosophical speculation as well as by recent historical experience of fierce civil wars driven by rage and the desire for vengeance (Augustus had styled himself as Julius Caesar's avenger or *ultor*), and new hopes for peace in which war's fury would be forever bound in chains. Anger was often justified, even as the need to subject it to strict control was felt to be ever more urgent.[16] Language was developed, as in Philodemus, by which to distinguish legitimate resentment, such as Aristotle recognized, from frenzied rage; frenzy itself was subdivided into episodic madness under the influence of passion and true psychosis that rendered a person *non compos mentis* and irresponsible before the law. Virgil's *ira* runs the gamut of these

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Ontario in March 2007. The following examples are borrowed from her study; I am most grateful to her for permission to cite her work.

[15] On just anger in the *Aeneid*, see Wright 1994.

[16] On the need to restrain anger, see especially Harris 2001; Harris argues that the control of anger was perceived as ever more important as civil society increased in scale, culminating in the vast state apparatus of the Roman empire.

meanings, and his poem invites readers, even teases them, to enter into the debate over anger's role on the human plane and the divine.

For Homer, as for Aristotle, anger was also equivocal, and could run to extremes; but it operated largely in the domain of status relations, as a response to slights and perceived injustices against one's honor or due regard, and it was contrasted less with outright madness than with such moral values as indignation (*nemesis*) and respect (*aidôs*).[17] Centuries later, a novelist who made a descendant of Achilles the hero of his romance could compare him to his ancestor as follows: "He traces his lineage back to Achilles as his forebear, and I think he is telling the truth, if one may judge by the stature and beauty of the young man, which bear witness to a nobility worthy of Achilles; except that he is not so arrogant or headstrong as he was, but he mitigates his proud temper with gentleness" (Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 4.5.5). From the standpoint of the novelist, Achilles seemed unduly prone to rage. In Homer, it was taken for granted that a great warrior would respond furiously to an insult, and Agamemnon's apology proves that he was in the right. In grief too Achilles was extravagant: but I do not read the *Iliad* as a lesson in the avoidance of immoderate anger,[18] but as the story of human passions as they naturally and inevitably arise. Achilles may utter the wish, when he finally rejoins the battle and makes his peace with Agamemnon, that "strife [*eris*] might perish from among gods and mortals, and also anger [*kholos*]..., which is far sweeter than dripping honey in the breasts of men" (*Iliad* 18.107-10). But *kholos*, like *orgê*, was a guarantee of a person's dignity. As Danielle Allen (2000: 129) has written in connection with the classical city-state, anger was obligatory, "insofar as the individual citizen who was sensitive to his honor and guarded it with anger was also guarding his personal independence, greatness, and equality." Roman *ira* too might serve this end, but in Virgil's poem it embraces also the self-destructive passions that motivate civil war, and which blurred the boundary between anger and insanity.

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[17] On *nemesis*, see Konstan 2006: 111-28; on *aidôs*, see Cairns 1993.
[18] Contra Harris 2001: 131-56.

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