**Gender and Sexuality in Ancient Greece**

**Pomona College — Spring 2021**

**Workshop Four**

**μῆνις: Anger in the *Iliad* and You**

**60 minutes**

**General Instructions**

For this workshop, you’ll be organized in a Zoom Breakout Room with a group of approximately four students. Once you have landed in your Breakout Room, please begin by reading over the workshop and familiarizing yourself with the schedule and roles for today. Please call the faculty in for support or guidance as needed.

**Part I. Somatics of Anger Exercise. (30 minutes)**

For this exercise, one group member will volunteer to be the **Leader**, a second to be the **Experiencer**, and a third to be **Timekeeper**. Other members will be friendly observers. The **Leader** will direct the exercise. The **Experiencer** will explore how anger feels in their body. The observer(s) will watch and provide support. To start, you’ll need to decide who is going to take which role. Be sure that you’ve read through the instructions below and that everyone understands their role, including the Leader, the Experiencer, the timekeeper, and the observer(s).

The next few instructions are for the Leader to guide the experience.

1. Please invite the Experiencer to describe an experience of anger. Please remind the Experiencer to choose something relatively minor — we’re not looking for major, dramatic rage here. The idea is to explore a real but manageable experience of anger. The narrative should last about 5 minutes.

2. Encourage the Experiencer to track and describe how they are sensing anger in their body. Support the Experiencer to pay attention to the body rather than the narrative itself. Allow 3-5 minutes for Experiencer to track their sensation.

- Ask: How do you know that you are angry?

- Ask: does the sensation have a color, temperature, movement, rhythm?

3. Ask the Experiencer how they feel now. Bring the student out of the somatic experience and back into connection with you and the group.

4. Invite the Experiencer to reflect on their experience. What did they notice about their experience of anger? What was familiar? What surprised them?

5. The observer(s) are now invited to join in the conversation. All participants -- Leader, Experiencer, and Observers -- please discuss what observing and experiencing this exercise revealed to you about anger in the body.

6. Discuss:

1. Do you experience anger similarly or differently than the Experiencer?
2. Do you believe that gender norms or expectations impact how you experience anger?
3. Do you think our society *expects* people to experience anger differently depending on their gender?
4. And what about in how we express our anger? Does gender inform that?

**Please take a 10-minute break now.**

**Part II. μῆνις in the *Iliad*. (20 minutes)**

Please select a scene from the poem in which one or more characters experiences anger. Some options to consider include, but are not limited to:

 1. Achilles and/or Agamemnon in Book 1

 2. Helen and/or Aphrodite (& Alexandros) in Book 3, lines 380 ff.

First, discuss the way anger is portrayed in your selected scene. Second, consider whether gender shapes the contours of the character’s experience (expression) of anger. Does the way anger is experienced and/or gendered in the poem resonate with how you described it in your own experience? Or is it different in significant ways?