

***Pathos* in Jung's *Answer to Job*: anger as a mode of cognition and as a faculty of understanding**

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Jung applies the classical rhetorical strategy of *pathos* in his long essay to drive his controversial arguments. In doing so, his innovative ideas about the faculty of emotion as an instrument of cognition are revealed. After a discussion of the reception of this work and Jung's intentions, I will follow with a brief history of emotion in persuasion. First I will outline how passion as a credible ploy of argumentation developed, shifting from pre-Socratic to Aristotelian concepts. I make reference to the traditional presence of anger in religious persuasion and its appearance in the Old Testament. Using rhetorical analysis, I trace Jung's specific and justifiable use of passional techniques in *Answer to Job* to make his case.

Keywords: pathos; rhetoric; Jung; anger; cognition; passion

Anger and sarcasm dominate *Answer to Job*. Anger is the prevailing theme of the content of the essay, and it also impacted on the event of its writing and its publication. Jung prefaces the essay by saying that personal anger stimulated him to write it, and also that he was compelled by his patients' anger to write it. They were angry, as he was, at a God who allows evil to befall them undeservedly. Indeed, the chief protagonist in his book is Yahweh, the angry god of the Old Testament.

The controversial essay famously caused anger on its publication. He lost his Thomist friend and long-time correspondent, Fr Victor White, who was furious at Jung's insistence on proffering a God who seemed to incorporate evil in His nature. Martin Buber and his associates were also infuriated by Jung's straying onto theologians' turf with what they called his 'psychologisms'. This was, after all, a psychologist who had written a pseudo-document of Gnosticism in his earlier days. Jung was a crank and his infuriating new book ought to be dismissed (Buber, 1988). Jung was bruised by these reactions, but I will focus here on his use of passion, especially anger, in writing the book.

From the earliest days of his scientific career, emotion was a marker of meaning for Jung and it was also a faculty of apprehension. Reactions in the word association test not only indicated deeper significance, but also revealed universal meaningful patterns, the underlying 'givens' of perception. Anger among potentially guilty suspects he was asked to assess as consultant for court proceedings factored into his making difficult judgments about criminal behaviour. Anger was fact in his analyses because it was a fact in personality. Emotion shaped action, as he learned repeatedly in his analytical sessions. He believes he has uncovered a murder: a mother's

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perception of her culpability in giving her colicky baby contaminated water which she says killed him, emerges in her suffering a psychosomatic illness. Her guilt affects her perceptions, organizing the evidence, the facts, to her apprehension. Jung seems to have taken it on face value without further examination (Jung, 1910).

Jung's anger in this essay is built in deliberately, a ploy to show he empathises with his audience with the goal of obtaining adhesion by making common cause. He also engages emotion to burst open prevailing assumptions about what God is about in his audience.

Writing in *Aion*, immediately previous to his book on Job, Jung explored emotional conflict situated in the individual psyche:

The feeling-value is a very important criterion which psychology cannot do without, because it determines in large measure the role which the content will play in the psychic economy. That is to say, the affective value gives the measure of the intensity of an idea, and the intensity in its turn expresses that idea's energetic [*sic*] tension, its effective potential. (Jung, 1951, para. 53)

In his discussion years later in *Emotions*, Hillman elaborates on the pervasiveness of emotion in this mode. Emotional life is personal, he says, in a way intellectual life can not be, 'in that it alone contains the motives from which our conduct springs' (Hillman, 1960, p. 191). For Jung, Hillman says, 'emotion is a kind of reason' (*ibid.*, p. 193). We sift reactions and judgments, and organize perceptions founded on emotion.

The problematic here is passion's reputation for unreliability. Dourley gives a standard and not completely unfounded response to Jung's display of anger in his discussion of *Answer to Job* that makes this point. It seems to Dourley that his passion is a sign of Jung's lack of self-confidence:

Given the irritable tone of Jung's reply there can be little doubt, in the face of Buber's evenness of writing and self-assurance, who won the debate in terms of literary style and suavity. Nor does the exchange leave much doubt that Jung, on his part, was deeply emotionally engaged in the issues at stake. Buber had touched a tender spot. (Dourley, 1994, pp. 125–145)

Of course, offstage we learn that Buber was livid, shooting off daily angry letters to his friends, who could barely contain him (Buber, 1988, p. 10). However Jung can justify his use of anger in this essay.

As an argumentative ploy, anger can unbalance listeners or readers who are closed off to appreciating what may seem to be offensive ideas. Throughout history, it has taken individual and group political rage in its most extreme forms of propaganda, bullying and blackmail for governments to be overturned or great wrongs to be righted. Jung is here tackling another very sensitive issue, religious belief. He might have expected that there would be bruised egos and more severe reactions, both logical and emotive, than he had anticipated.

In *Answer to Job*, *pathos* provides the bridge to help convey Jung's offensive, or at least controversial, conceptual points about what God is for humankind, and about God's relationship to evil. In any case, emotion, especially anger, is traditionally associated with religious themes:

although our whole world of religious ideas consists of anthropomorphic images that could never stand up to rational criticism we should never forget that they are based on

numinous archetypes, i.e. on an emotional foundation which is unassailable by reason. (Jung, 2002, p. xiv)

Driving a shift in the meaning of God, which is Jung's substantive purpose in *Answer to Job*, requires strong dealing with an audience. Jung intends to alter psychic perception by both reflecting and projecting significance, first of all by locating significance in the psyche rather than in a subjectively projected God-idea, and secondly by bursting the Old Testament notion of the omnipotence of God. In place of that God-image is a transparently responsive and collective figure whose presence is a spiritual given in the psyche.

In *Answer to Job*, the public element of personal judgment reaches out into the collective, adhering to community mores, and deriving substantiation there. Job's anger at Yahweh reflects an underlying assumption of the interplay between the personal and communal that is already a feature of the Old Testament. In another instance of human anger at God, Abraham calls the Lord to a reckoning about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. He negotiates with the angry Lord, beating Him down by increments, and, finally:

'What if there is one less than five innocent people? Will you destroy the whole city because of those four?' 'I will not destroy it', the Lord answered, 'if I find even one there'. (Genesis X, 21–33)

The Lord's anger is allayed and Abraham's more tolerant ethic prevails. Jung's offensive remarks about the Lord's perceived weaknesses fuel the emotive argument that runs through his book about Job even as Jung reflects a conventional interplay in the Bible. Biblical authority is here an important reference for Jung's case.

Emotion is powerful in persuasion but it is unreliable. How can it therefore be a gateway to knowledge, or credibly an aspect of cognition? If a rhetor is too passionate, she cannot control her communication. Also if passion is not aroused most adeptly in an audience, reactions can swerve in unplanned directions. Is that not what Jung suffered in reactions to his book? The importance of the connection of emotion to communal values, however, and, conversely, the impact of collective emotion on message and rhetor, have never been overlooked by theorists of rhetoric. However, its legitimacy as a ploy has always been under discussion. It will be useful here to set the backdrop to the historical rhetorical use of *pathos* (which I equate to emotion and passion) before looking specifically at Jung's techniques.

By emphasizing the instrumental use of emotion in persuasion in his *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, Aristotle began the movement away from earlier distaste in exerting the allure of emotion in argument, with its historical association with irrationality and enchantment. Aristotle advanced the notion that emotion is cognitive and that it is of equal status to reason as a criterion of cognition.

Aristotle includes a full discussion of passion in *Rhetoric* because he wants to prepare the rhetor for reactions to his arguments. His grasp of *pathos* had to do with the collectivity of the audience, not in individual reaction – but examples he uses in *Rhetoric* refer to individuals. This was a new approach. It is not only that his predecessors, the pre-Socratics, found emotion unstable, but that they did not recognize its ubiquity or its status. It was an irrelevant and irritating side-effect of the occasion. Fortenbaugh, in his book on Aristotle and emotion, however, explores the new awareness: emotion had been viewed

as an affliction divorced from cognition ... considered in opposition to reason and hostile to thoughtful judgment. It was Aristotle's contribution ... that emotional appeal would no longer be viewed as an extra-rational enchantment. Once Aristotle focused on the cognitive side of emotional responses and made clear that an emotion can be altered by argument, because beliefs can be altered in this way, it was possible to adopt a positive attitude towards emotional appeal. (Fortenbaugh, 1975, p.18)

The first important issue here is that Aristotle concentrates on passion in the collective audience; passion is finally located in the communal sense for him. For example, passions among the dramatic players onstage are not characteristics of specific individualized personalities in the tragedy; they are instead a reflection of a public, communal awareness of emotional reactions to important events. When we witness the expiation of emotion in a tragedy by Aeschylus, i.e. the *catharsis*, we are observing an emotional cleansing that is not only a sign, or marker, of tragedy, but also a means of *transformation*. We have chosen to go to see a tragedy to participate in an event whose specific purpose is expiation:

A tragedy ... is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself ... with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions. (Aristotle, 1961, 6.1)

The tragedy onstage was constructed from the outside in; the desired cathartic emotional 'release' was constructed back into the action, and shaped the tragic poem. The *catharsis* was the 'given', the constructive guide and drive of the event. (It comes close to what we would call 'melodrama' on television today, only then it had a status-raising religious value.) In that sense emotion or passion was the end goal. It was not merely instrumental in achieving transformation, it was itself significant transformative experience, a healing process of meaningful sensation.

There is another feature of *pathos* that shifted over time. Emotion in formal, poetic Greek tragedies was a public expression associated only with ruling families. Emotions of ordinary people had no significance since they were not participants in public life. In Aristotle's analysis too, emotion was never a democratic faculty. Rage was for kings, sentimental quibbles for the chorus or females in a play (D.M. Gross, 2006; Fortenbaugh, 1975). Emotion was ceremonial and elevated, ripe with religious and emblematic value. It was a sign of such public matters, not part of personal communication.

Anger especially was a 'social passion provoked by perceived, unjustified slights, and it presupposes a public stage, where social status is always insecure ... anger is constituted not in the biology nor even in the dignity that all humans are supposed to share equally, but rather in relationships of inequity' (D.M. Gross, 2006, pp. 15–16).

Anger is a 'psychosocial' event for Aristotle (to use Gross's word). By recognizing that *pathos* is 'productive of an emotion in the audience' (Gill, 1984, p. 155), Aristotle recognizes the 'intelligence' and effectiveness of emotion. And, if passionate tactics are deemed to be effective in changing human beliefs in an audience, then it must be that all humans will be affected and further that they share emotion's cognitive function. Therefore the move is to the individual.

Passion is biological in Aristotle. He sets out character types which display emotional characteristics based on physiology, i.e. biological fluids or 'humours'. In the famous passage in Aristotle's *Problems X*, he describes the melancholic figure who suffers an imbalance of bile and whose behaviour is demoralized and full of rage.

From this position began contemporary ideas of emotion's 'psychophysiology' (ibid., p. 18), i.e. passion as a biological feature in humans. Indeed, centuries later Descartes will locate emotion in the pineal gland in *Les passions* (1629) based on evidence in his pedagogic and personal letters to the Swedish monarch. The physical disposition of emotion influences apprehensions of reality and thereby impacts on personality. At the same time, our sensual perceptions filter but also create emotion (James, 1997).

Aristotle distinguished another aspect of passion's influence with a pertinent stylistic indication:

"emotional" style [which] is typified by the presence of compound words and many epithets, and unusual words' (see Aristotle in *Rhetoric* (1408b), is opposed to "ethical style" which is related to external features of "character" – age, sex, nationality or degree of education ... features that can be conspicuously brought out in vocabulary or phrasing' but have no emotion attached to them. (Gill, 1984, p. 155)

However, these two styles merged soon enough when exercised in epideictic speech of praise or blame of a citizen of the community.

However, there is also another important perspective on the reliability of emotion. While a rhetor does not want to appear possessed by emotion which may undermine audience confidence in her control, the experience of such passion, as one of Jung's favourite rhetoricians, Longinus (1969), says in his essay 'On the sublime', can have a startling, numinous and salutary quality. As Quintilian also points out years later, the rhetor most easily conveys the sheer intensity of passion to an audience while in its grip (Quintilian, 2001, pp. 161,164). In this case, *pathos* originates in the rhetor, driving and empowering the writing or oration. Rhetor and audience are 'taken out of themselves' by the emotional power of the sublime, which overcomes them all. Rhetors are seen here as inspired creators, transported out of themselves and capable of communicating this transcendent power. We are close here to Jung's idea of the authority of affect in the personality and in cognition.

Nussbaum adds another element, introducing a further dimension to what I propose here is Jung's conception of *pathos*. She establishes a link between affective feeling-tone and judgment, which Jung explores in his *Psychological types*, among other writings:

Judgment, or some intentional activity very like judgment, is necessary for emotion; and emotions can be individuated only with reference to their characteristic cognitive/intentional content. (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 261)

Nussbaum broadens the problematical implications of the universality of passion, citing an example in *Upheavals of thought* (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 139). She tells of a young Balinese woman who smiled brightly as she reported her fiancé's death to colleagues. Although this was bewildering and offensive to her American associates, it emerges that, in her own culture, she had emoted appropriately. Her effort was to ward off the debilitating evils of depression in this way. Here Nussbaum establishes the direct link between communal cultural associations and displays of emotion which reflect cognition.

Having established briefly the rhetorical backdrop to passion, I will now turn to *Answer to Job* to pick out its communicative techniques.

There are several identifiable emotive or 'passional' devices Jung uses. I will discuss five passional strategies here: (1) sincerity; (2) defensiveness – justification of

the emotive foundation of rational psychological discourse; (3) definition – use of biased vocabulary; (4) evocation of the physicality of passion for better effect; and (5) reference to the tangibility of passion.

(1) The display of sincerity (*insinuato*) is very persuasive, although it can be a cheat – it is indirect and disarming in its appeal. Jung's essay is introduced with pronouncements of his anger, which he says he shares with his patients. This technique must be used with care; it can be overdone – it puts an audience on guard; the message seems to be: 'this argument is so shaky, I must appeal to you on emotional grounds to obtain adherence'. However, for a psychologist who deals in shifting emotion, it is a tool of communication that he relies on and which he seeks to legitimize here. He is using 'sincerity' to draw us in.

This attitude has correlatives in style. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca echo Aristotle, enumerating the types of display of sincerity: 'hesitation, hyperbaton or inversion in which an order brought about by emotion is substituted for natural order of the phrase . . . The absence of conjunction and mixing of figures' (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 456). Concocted, pretended passion is a standard mechanism of persuasion, pretending to confusion to indicate loss of self-control. (See Richard Burton's classic *The anatomy of melancholy* for many examples.) In *Job*, Jung craftily writes in a great rush, listing examples, mixing up grammatical form, etc., as in the closing pages of *Job*:

He needs the help of an 'advocate' in heaven, that is, of the child who was caught up to God and who brings the 'healing' and making whole of the hitherto fragmentary man. Whatever man's wholeness, of the self, may mean *per se*, empirically it is an image of the goal of life spontaneously produced by the unconscious, irrespective of the wishes and fears of the conscious man.' (Jung, 2002, p. 161)

And he goes on, piling up phrases and sentences that amount to lists, gushing out of him as he relieves himself to get to the final conclusion.

(2) Secondly, also to pick up Nussbaum's point, intertwining judgment and emotion determines the goals and methods of argument even in scientific discourse, which Jung insists he is doing even here. Emotion drives Jung's inquiry, yet his argument is empirically based, he would contend, and 'scientific'. Many commentators claim in any case that argumentation in any form rests on emotive propositions:

the general freedom of scientific prose from emotional appeal must be understood not as neutrality but as a deliberate abstinence: the assertion of a value. The objectivity of scientific prose is a carefully crafted rhetorical invention, a non-rational appeal to the authority of reason . . . it embodies a convenient myth, a myth in which, apparently, reason has subjugated the passions. But the disciplined denial of emotion in science is only a tribute to our passionate investment in its methods and goals. (A. Gross, 1990, p. 15)

(3) In fact, 'persuasive' vocabulary invokes and applies emotion to reflect an argument. At the crux of his plea, Jung uses the made-up adjective, 'Godlikeness', sarcastically. The definition of the adjective refers to a transmutation of something 'objective' and alien to human ken 'God', and is brought to define humankind. The sarcasm stretches the word to make a transition to new meaning. It manages to sneak in an alternative, i.e. that there is a god-like quality that is part of human make-up despite Yahweh's prohibitions. Definitional ambivalence exploits core passions. It is a frequent technique of Jung's throughout his *oeuvre*.

(4) Fourth, in Jung's psychological scheme, judgment is also visceral, expressed in the feeling function. The body is the site of emotion, a crucial location for effective argument. In Jung's essay, I would point to his critique of Job's friends, who seek the commensurate associations of Job's physical symptoms to his moral relationship to God. Job suffers bodily illness because he has either been too proud of his own goodness, or of his sons' uprightness. These physical trials are meant to remind Job of his lowliness and of his mortality.

(5) Related to this is the fifth point: tangibility. Hillman points out that concrete terms rather than abstract ones make the best specific impact. Abstractions are laden with associations outside the control of the rhetor. 'Patriotism' evokes anyone's home, anyone's family, etc. So nothing specific is invoked and therefore there is no impact. A rhetor can implant symbolic tangibles of the community – for example, a country's flag or mascot – to get most effect. Jung exploits tangibility in *Answer to Job* in his discussion of Sophia's transformation into the Virgin Mary when he expresses his happiness at the empowerment of female presence in the new ruling of the Catholic church.

Jung has common cause with his patients in making defensive suppositions about what the reality of the God-image is. Their discouragement is with the abusive anger of an overwhelming power supposed to be benevolent. As Paul Bishop (1999) suggests, there is a projection of cultural ethic onto a being created subjectively that purportedly now has objective status. Jung proposes that we recognize the psychic status of this God-image and that we recognize at the same time that psychic reality is valid. And it is here that Jung attracts his audience's anger. Not only is the anger about a painful transformation in cultural mores and in personal expectation. He can empathize with us in our rage at a God who foists evil on his disciples and on humankind. Yet Jung also attracts our anger in his repudiation of our notion of who this God is.

Jung pleads with us to sustain his definitions and his perspectives in tracking the cultural evolution of a God who is outmoded and who is lethal. He asks us to see the reality in what may seem a betrayal of our fury at what evil God allows into the world. Jung looks to the future, from the Old Testament, past Christ, and ahead to the Holy Spirit. His betrayals are his redefinitions of who God is; he shifts the ground under our feet. There is no longer this Old Testament angry and abusive God; our anger at the ways of the world he created is misplaced, and he hopes he has altered perceptions, sneaking in the new God-image as a plausible alternative.

I would propose that Jung uses passion in *Answer to Job* to cause real transformation in his readers to bring meaning to Job's dilemma, and to demonstrate the place of passion in propelling history forward.

Notes on contributor

Leslie Gardner's PhD (2008), gained at the University of Essex, is entitled 'C.G. Jung and G.B. Vico: an exploration in rhetoric'. Upcoming publications will include co-editing volumes on 'Narration and individuation' and a collection on 'House, the wounded healer on TV', both to come from Routledge.

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