

**ANGER AND ANGER MANAGEMENT:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ACHILLES' MENIS/CHOLoS IN
HOMER'S *ILIAD* AND *KODHA* IN THERAVADA BUDDHIST
SCRIPTURES**

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The destructive nature of anger has been known to the ancients and modern alike. Even though anger has been a subject of discussion and study throughout the history of Eastern and Western human civilizations, the management of anger continues to challenge the outraged and anger management specialists alike. In this context, a revisit of ancient literature will yield time-tested practical wisdom on the topic that will be useful in current manifestations of the phenomenon. In Homer's epic *Iliad* (9th-8th Century BCE), the *Menis/Cholos* of Achilles is explored at different stages - onset, progression, full-blown development, and resolution. Achilles' wrath (*Menis*) – for which he and his fellow Greeks pay dearly - is unheroic and inhuman (*Cholos*) and results from perceived personal injury at the hands of his superior Agamemnon. Achilles' wrath is tested against King Priam's generosity towards him - the man who killed his heroic son and denied a funeral – leading to the turning point in Achilles' life in coming to terms with life's realities and leading to the acceptance of good and bad with equanimity. From a didactic perspective, references to anger (*Kodha*) in Theravada Buddhist scripture inevitably focus on the self-destructive nature of anger and the need to avoid both anger and pride to eliminate suffering. It is indeed pride and resultant anger that drive Achilles to insanity. The Theravada scriptures focus on overcoming anger by non-anger and the importance of loving-kindness in soothing it, as is exemplified by King Priam in the Homeric poem. The objective of this study is to highlight the similarity between *Menis/Cholos* and *Kodha*. It adopts as its methodology a comparison of Achilles' wrath and references to anger in Theravada Buddhist Scripture. The study reveals that the anger of Achilles in the Homeric poem resembles the references to the causes and the nature of anger and the loving-kindness path to its resolution in Theravada Buddhist scripture. The study recommends using the story of Achilles' wrath to illustrate the Theravada Buddhist concept of anger to non-Buddhist audiences.

Keywords: Anger management, *Cholos*, *Kodha*, *Menis*