

Affections and Errors of the Soul

The *Affections and Errors of the Soul* has a prominent position among Galen's works on moral philosophy.¹ First of all, it is sufficiently extensive to illuminate the author's multifaceted moral agenda in what seems to be a popular philosophical treatise in the strict sense of the term. Moreover, it reveals a lot about the moral milieu of the second/third century AD, widening its scope from a particular ethical situation to cover such aspects as the sociology of moral passions and their aesthetic evaluation. In addition, it sheds light on the relationship between medicine and practical ethics through its focus on what I shall term 'ethical' case histories. Relatedly, it shows the intricate ways in which Galen, putting aside his medical role and assuming the persona of a moral practitioner, leverages standard ethical 'psychotherapeutics', at times simply pressing them into service and at others transforming them, to meet the moral needs of his audience and, of course, the principles of his ethical programme.

Previous discussions of this text have explored Galen's philosophical leanings or influences with reference to psychic affections and errors² or

¹ The conventional translation is a composite of the two separate titles of the two parts of the treatise, namely *The Diagnosis and Treatment of the Affections Peculiar to Each Person's Soul* (Book 1) (Περὶ διαγνώσεως καὶ θεραπείας τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐκάστου ψυχῇ ἰδίῳ παθῶν) and *The Diagnosis and Treatment of the Errors of Each Person's Soul* (Book 2) (Περὶ διαγνώσεως καὶ θεραπείας τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐκάστου ψυχῇ ἁμαρτημάτων). For a general overview of the work, see Riese in Harkins (1963: 111–131) and Singer (2013: 205–236).

² E.g. Gill (2010: 252–262) who, although he identifies some tropes common to Galen's *Affections and Errors of the Soul* and other writings on the therapy of the emotions, mainly discusses Galen's engagement with different intellectual traditions on ethical psychology. In Gill (2019: 137–138) he briefly turns to *Affections and Errors of the Soul* to address the question of coherence in Galen's philosophical approach to the therapy of emotions. Cf. Donini (2008: 194–202). Hankinson (1993) makes a philosophical analysis of Galen's concept of emotions in the context of other, especially Chrysippean, philosophical approaches. Donini (1988), on the other hand, focuses on Book 2 *On Errors*, exploring their typology and especially their relation to the ultimate goal of life (*telos*); while García Ballester (1988: esp. 137–147) deals with the concept of 'disease of the soul' partly in the light of the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*. Cf. Manuli (1988: 194–195), who briefly categorises passions

have used them as a springboard to a wider treatment of Galen's pathology of the soul.³ Little has been done to foreground the work's moralising weight as outlined above or the authorial strategies employed to encourage readers to cultivate an ethical approach to life. The aim of this Chapter is to situate *Affections and Errors of the Soul* in the larger picture of Galen's practical philosophy and cast light on the special characteristics of his moral practice.

Constructing the identity of a moral philosopher: Polemic, self-promotion and self-effacement in the proem

The *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, like the other extant moral pieces by Galen, was composed after 192 AD, the year marking Commodus's death, and it is divided into two books, the first one dealing with affections, the second with errors. This distinction reflects the text's main philosophical thesis that drives the argument from the outset, namely that errors (ἄμαρτήματα) result from the soul's rational part, being erroneous judgments, whereas affections (πάθη) spring from the non-rational part, every time it fails to subject itself to reason.⁴

in the same work and in relation to *PHP*, and Vegetti (1984) on Galen's soul theory particularly in connection with Platonic influences.

³ Singer (2018) and Singer (2013: 205–232). Cf. Singer (2013: 18–33). Another strand of research by Linden (1999: 10–27) has looked at the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* to analyse the methodological foundations of Galenic ethics.

⁴ In the *Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, Galen also concerns himself with this basic distinction and elucidates the concept of affection through a case study of Medea (following Chrysippus): although 'she understands how evil the acts are that she is about to perform, . . . her anger is stronger than her deliberations; that is, her affection has not been made to submit and does not obey and follow reason as it would a master, but throws off the reins and departs and disobeys the command, implying that it is the work or affection of some power other than the rational.' (*PHP* 4.2, 244.2–8 DL = V.372.7–15 K.); transl. De Lacy with minor alterations. On this passage and its philosophical context, see Gill (1998: 116–123). Even though the distinction between affections and errors has been made by Stoic theorists such as Chrysippus, as explained in *PHP* 4.2, 242.32–35 DL = V.371.15–372.3 K., Galen remains faithful to his Platonic and Aristotelian influences and does not essay any marrying between Stoic and Platonic/Aristotelian doctrines at this stage in the text. In his Book *On Errors*, he provides another good example of the distinction between affection and error: 'There, too, you may learn clearly in what way affection differs from error. One who takes it as a doctrine that human beings should perform good works, for example, on the grounds that performing such works for the benefit of others is a true goal, but then omits to undertake such assistance through sleep, laziness, love of pleasure or some such things, has made a mistake under the influence of affection. One who has decided only to provide pleasure or freedom from disturbance to himself, on the other hand, and for this reason refrains from coming to the assistance of fellow citizens or members of his household when they are being ill-treated, has committed an error which is due to faulty belief, not to affection', *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 52.13–53.8 DB = V.76.13–77.12 K.

One of the most salient features of the preface to the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* is the multiplicity of stages through which Galen builds up his authority in the realm of ethics. The work begins with a reference to the occasion for which the work was written. This takes the form of a micronarrative, whose components Galen tailors to present himself as an expert in the subject under investigation. Inspired by a common trope in writings on the therapy of the emotions, he introduces an anonymous, fictional addressee, who has supposedly requested a written note on the oral response Galen had made in public to his question about the *Control of One's Own Particular Affections* by Antonius the Epicurean. The constructed time and space in the micronarrative operate on two levels and suggest two interrelated things: the 'past moment' alongside the 'oral disquisition', on the one hand, imply that the addressee was a frequent participant in Galen's public lectures, thus inviting us to visualise Galen talking about ethics in front of large audiences. The 'present moment' and the 'written text', on the other hand, suggest Galen's success in the oral performance and hence justify the addressee's long-standing interest in Galen's ethical expositions, this time leading us to imagine Galen at his desk writing down⁵ the philosophical substance of his lecture that his followers so ardently demanded.

Two further elements in the preamble buttress Galen's self-legitimacy and self-promotion. First, the recipient of the essay is never given a name, which points to the fact that he might represent a wider readership, thereby corroborating the impression we get from the text regarding Galen's popularity as a moral specialist. Second, we know nothing about Antonius or this specific work by him,⁶ which might suggest that he was of lesser importance or reputation in antiquity than the successful Galen as delineated in the narrative so far.

In fact, Antonius's presence in the text is not without further significance. Galen sets up a critical dialogue with him, castigating in particular his inaccurate use of terminology: 'It would have been best if Antonius had himself stated clearly (εἰρηκέναι σαφῶς) what he means by the term "control"' (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 3.8-9 DB = V.I.5-7 K.) and further on 'It also became apparent, as you know (ὡς οἶσθα), that he [i.e. Antonius] was <confused> and unclear in his interpretations (ἄσαφῶς ἐρμηνεύων), <so

⁵ Or, as usual, commissioning others to do so.

⁶ On Antonius, see *PIR*² A798 and *EANS* A100. It has been mistakenly assumed (Harris, 2001: 121, n. 175) that this Antonius is the same person as the one mentioned in the title of the pseudo-Galenic *The Pulse, To Antonius (De Pulsibus ad Antonium)* (XIX.629-642 K.).

that > most of his statements are susceptible to conjecture rather than to clear understanding (νοῆσαι σαφῶς) (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 3.11-13 DB = V.2.3-5 K.).⁷ Here Galen enters the area of philosophical exegesis and takes on the role of a skilled commentator, whose duty is to decipher hidden meanings and provide clarity on philosophical notions of primary importance.⁸ That is indeed his main activity in his commentaries on Hippocratic works, but also a basic trait of his scientific methodology and medical writing more broadly, encapsulated in his motto ‘clarity of exposition/instruction’ (σαφῆς διδασκαλία). That explains why Galen goes on to carefully define affections and errors, and why he maintains a tendency throughout this work (as elsewhere) to offer well-defined terms and classifications. Galen’s implication in the statements cited above is that, unlike himself, Antonius is a philosopher of ill repute, who has dealt ineffectively with the mastery of the passions. Through the subtle use of the aside ‘as you know’ (ὡς οἶσθα) Galen projects onto his addressee and implied audience his own perspective on Antonius’s minimal abilities.⁹

Galen’s criticism of Antonius’s deficient methodology progresses into a more robust polemic as the text unfolds.¹⁰ Galen tells us that in the light of a primary reading of Antonius’s work, he thinks that by *ephedreia* Antonius might be referring to either surveillance (παράφυλακή) or diagnosis (διάγνωσις) or correction (ἐπιάνορθωσις), but ends up admitting to complete bafflement. He also explains that his main issue with Antonius is that within the context of the same work he sometimes urges his readers (προτρέπειν) to realise their errors, while elsewhere he focuses on the diagnosis of individual errors, and at other points advises on how to abstain from them (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 3.10-17 DB = V.2.1-9 K.). This division corresponds to some extent to the threefold typology of works of practical ethics, made up of proreptic, therapy and advice.¹¹ And, that being so, Galen’s condemnation of Antonius rests on the fact that the latter has made grand claims in the area of popular philosophy, which had led him

⁷ Words within angle brackets are editorial conjectures adopted by De Boer 1937.

⁸ E.g. Galen’s *Hipp. Epid.* VI, I, 8, 29.34-30.4 WP = XVIIA.844.4-9 K.; *Ind.* 6, 66.1-2 PX; *Dig. Puls.* 4.3, VIII.959.3-5 K.; *Musc. Diss.* 19.2, 159.4-7 Debru-Garofalo = XVIII B.979.3-5 K.; *SMT* I.34, XI.442.1-11 K.; *Plen.* 10, 68.25-27 Otte = VII.569.18-570.2 K.; *Gloss.* proem. 148.16-24 Perilli = XIX.68.7-69.2 K.; cf. *Soph.* I, 80.5-8 Schiaparelli = XIV.585.6-8 K. On Galen’s exegetical practices, see e.g. Snyder (2013).

⁹ In other works Galen is much more direct both in exposing the methodological flaw of his rival and in instructing readers to dismiss his claims to being an authority on the subject; see *Alim. Fac.* 2.59, 164.14-167.14 Wilkins = VI.645.1-648.11 K.

¹⁰ On the rhetoric of polemic in Galen, see recently Petit (2018: 90-111). On polemics in Hippocratic medicine, see Asper (2015: 31-37).

¹¹ Singer (2013: 2017 with n. 10). See also Chapter 4.

indiscriminately to include all subcategories of practical ethics within the same work, resulting in the lack of clarity Galen accuses him of above. We might wonder how reprehensible such cross-fertilisation really was, especially in an age in which we now know generic classification was not as rigid as we once believed it to be.¹² Still, according to Galen, in Antonius's case this counts as a fatal mistake, which sanctioned his own attempts at producing a proper work on ethics. This seems to be a common Galenic move, as in *Anatomical Procedures* our author declares that he has penned this work as a response to Marinus's incomplete and obscure treatment of anatomical observations, which no other author had yet managed to improve upon (*AA* 2.2, 73.18-22 Garofalo = II.283.7-12 K.; *AA* 4.10, 263.7-10 Garofalo = II.470.12-16 K.).¹³

Galen ends his series of attacks on Antonius by making a direct comparison between himself and his rival, in which, in the mode of self-praise, he congratulates himself on making a clear distinction between affections and errors, something that Antonius had so obviously failed to do (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 3.20-4.7 DB = V.2.11-3.5 K.). Antonius is out-matched, and so Galen now turns to the ancient philosophers who had composed therapeutic writings on moral passions (θεραπευτικὰ γράμματα τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 4.9 DB = V.3.6-7 K.), namely Chrysippus but also Aristotle, his followers and Plato before them.

Implying that Antonius was not well versed even in this long-standing psychotherapeutic tradition, Galen says that '[i]t would have been better to learn these things from these people [i.e. the earlier authorities], as I did' (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* I, 4.11-12 DB = V.3.9-10 K.). He therefore wins the day once more. However, this is the concluding section of the preface and, given its emphasis on his (progressively developed) egocentric image, I would argue that this final remark goes beyond Galen's antagonism to Antonius, in hinting at something crucial about his own relationship with his predecessors. Galen, in his usual mode of self-effacement, pretends to be merely a modest student of the ancients, whereas in reality he is himself producing a new ethical work to advance the ancient tradition. His close conversation with his precursors is not an open or fierce one as with Antonius, but it can still be suggestive of what he deemed to be his high philosophical achievements in the field of ethics.¹⁴

¹² van der Eijk (1997b: esp. 89-93).

¹³ Galen expresses similar views in connection with Lycus's and other authors' defective treatises on the dissection of the muscles, *AA* 4.10, 261.25-27 Garofalo = II.470.1-3 K.

¹⁴ Pace Rosen (2011: 170), who takes Galen's statements in the preface at face value, and therefore argues that our author, being 'modest', 'made no special claims to originality in this treatise'. This is

To support this argument, I shall turn to an intriguing section which happens to be the concluding part of the second book *On Errors*, hence forming a kind of ring composition in Galen's programmatic strategy (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 65.16-68.18 DB = V.98.9-103.16 K.). Here Galen professes to despise philosophers who make rash declarations without using logical demonstration and criticises them for pretending to know the truth of things, when they are actually ignorant. In this context, he introduces a brief embedded narrative, in which he is not just the author and narrator, but also the protagonist. The story stages a debate on whether water is heavier than wood, very reminiscent of a Platonic discussion or of Plutarch's sympotic episodes in his *Table Talk*, to give a more contemporary counterpart. The other participants are two philosophers and an architect, all of whom Galen has outshone in philosophical rigour by the end of the account, thus preserving his standing as the leading character. What seems to equip Galen with philosophical impact is his unique grasp of all major theories on the issue of the cosmic void, including Peripatetic, Stoic and Epicurean explanations, unlike his competitors who cannot measure up to Galen's wide-ranging knowledge. Consequently, Galen's self-presentation as a distinguished philosopher rests on his self-assertion that he is an active discussant with second-century rivals as well as past intellectual authorities, as suggested in the conclusion of the proem to the Book on *Affections*.¹⁵ That also ties in with Galen's independent views elsewhere that Second Sophistic authors should consider being heirs to a long tradition a great advantage (οὐ σμικρὸν ἦν πλεονέκτημα), as this puts them in a position to emulate that tradition and potentially surpass it.¹⁶

uncharacteristic of Galen's grandiose authorial personality, as evinced throughout his corpus. My argument also aligns with recent literature on Galen's self-effacing poses which are 'not incompatible with innovation'; see König (2017: 7) with further references in note 24.

¹⁵ On this general tactic elsewhere in Galen, see Lloyd (2008), who examines 'Galen's use of his contemporaries and predecessors as foils in constructing his own position by way of contrasting it with theirs'.

¹⁶ *Opt. Med.* 287.18-288.3 Boudon-Millot = I.57.3-9 K.: 'And yet the fact that we were born later than the ancients, and have inherited from them arts which they developed to such a high degree, should have been a considerable advantage (οὐ σμικρὸν ἦν πλεονέκτημα). It would be easy, for example, to learn thoroughly in a very few years what Hippocrates discovered over a very long period of time, and then to devote the rest of one's life to the discovery of what remains'; transl. Singer (1997). By the same token, in *Parv. Pil.* 1, I.1-7 Marquardt = V.899.4-9 K., very much like a modern scholar, Galen is determined to plug gaps in previous scholarship conducted by the best philosophers and doctors: 'Physical exercise, Epigenes, is of considerable importance for health. Its predominance over food was established in the past by the best philosophers and doctors; but the great superiority of the exercise with the small ball has not been sufficiently demonstrated by anyone. So it seems right to me to put down what I know on the subject'; transl. Singer (1997). Also in *Loc. Aff.* 1.1, 246.5-248.13 Gärtner = VIII.17.17-20.2 K., where Galen points out his predecessors' limited contributions to the diagnosis of affected parts and is determined to advance

The same credo shines through in an authoritative passage from *Therapeutic Method*, where Galen resolutely declares he has ironed out Hippocrates's shortcomings in analysis and exposition, comparing his feat to Trajan's impeccable road-building programme in Italy (*MM* 9.8, X.632.1-634.3 K.). Far from being a derivative replication of the past, antiquarianism provides serious opportunities for individual merit and impact.

The preface to the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, then, is intended to carve out a niche for Galen as a key figure in the area of popular philosophy. It reflects his 'anxiety of influence'¹⁷ in relation to both current and earlier philosophical writers. We have seen that our author strategically presents the recipient of his essay as a follower of his philosophical talks and attentive enough to deliberate on ethical matters that he needed Galen's scientific contribution to ethics. The recipient is even depicted as maintaining an interest in Galen's oral accounts and requesting written records thereof, hence confirming Galen's accomplishments as a moral authority by comparison with earlier and contemporary philosophers. This picture is created in two ways in the text: through explicit criticism of Antonius and blatant self-advertisement, and by means of a less direct dialogue with the ancients, this time realised through a rhetoric of modesty.

Genre and level of addressee

Before examining Galen's moralising approach in more detail, it would be helpful to briefly analyse the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* as a textual entity. I have already mentioned that this is a treatise belonging to the popular philosophical tradition of the Roman Imperial period, but the work itself provides further indications about its generic identity. First, it is made clear that the author is not interested in expounding the minutiae of an abstract psychopathology as in his *Character Traits*. This is obvious in chapter 6, where, in the context of a brief technical digression, Galen

this area, especially by clarifying the inaccuracies perpetrated by Archigenes's followers (e.g. *Loc. Aff.* 2.8, 330.25-336.13 Gärtner = VIII.92.7-96.19 K.). Similarly in *Caus. Symp.* 1.8, VII.145.17-146.8 K., Galen sets out to counterbalance the misinterpretations and inaccurate definitions of his forerunners, and in *Praes. Puls.* 2.1, IX.274.18-275.10 K. he claims to be marching into uncharted territory with his research on the diagnosis of the pulse. In *PHP* Galen asserts that unlike the ancients' brief and unclear work, he has authored lucid and full explanations of demonstration, *PHP* 2.3, 108.22-25 DL = V.219.2-6 K.

¹⁷ Asper (2005: 31-36).

cross-references *Character Traits* as a fuller account of the soul's constitution and especially of the method of disciplining its two non-rational capacities (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 19.8-20.19 DB = V.26.17-29.15 K.). In addition, the psychological 'jargon' that Galen uses here is consistently glossed for the addressee's sake,¹⁸ on the assumption that he has no prior familiarity with it. Galen does not even expect his recipient to be aware of the fact that the desiderative capacity, if uncontrolled, can turn into bodily lust (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 20.19-31 DB = V.29.15-30.3 K.). Consequently, the author is less concerned with communicating expert knowledge on ethics and more with offering moral admonition in order to incline his recipient towards a life of moderation. In view of the above, the scholarly argument about Galen's 'lexical poverty' in relation to the terminology of the *pathē*¹⁹ is not justifiable, at least as regards his popular philosophical essays, if one bears in mind that the aims and character of this group of texts were primarily pragmatic and accessible, rather than theoretical and jargon ridden.

Secondly, the text also suggests that the addressee seeks hands-on tips on how to become virtuous, once he has acknowledged his moral flaws. This is evinced in Galen's remarks that this work is not a protreptic seeking to exhort people to virtue (οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ προτρεπτικός ἐπ' ἀρετήν), but rather aims to show those who are already going in that direction the path by which they can attain it (ἀλλὰ τοῖς προτετραμμένοις ὑφηγητικός τῆς ὁδοῦ, καθ' ἣν ἄν τις αὐτὴν κτήσασατο, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 23.14-16 DB = V.34.5-7 K.). Galen's use of the sub-genre of the *hyphēgētikos* seems to conform both to the group of Platonic dialogues labelled as ὑφηγητικοί (useful for

¹⁸ E.g. the terms 'desiderative' or 'discipline' in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 19.13-14 DB = 27.12-14 K. and *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 19.20-21 DB = V.28.4-5 K. respectively.

¹⁹ Singer (2013: 8, 211) and Singer (2017: 188) following Manuli (1988): 'Galen seems uninterested in detailed description of emotions, considered in their own right, of the sort engaged in by some philosophers. Is his approach here in fact related to the phenomenon which we have been considering above, namely his insistence on physical correlates? In other words, is he only interested in soul affections that can . . . be analysed also in terms of what happens in the body?'. Galen might be indeed less vocal in his analysis of emotions in his moral and morally-themed corpus; however, as I have shown, it is not just the philosophical analysis of passions that needs to be considered, but the kind of discourse he employs to articulate his moral(ising) outlook. That he is not describing emotions at length does not necessarily mean that he is interested in their somatic correlates only, for this would effectively mean that he is sabotaging his entire production on moral philosophy. To my mind, the lack of analytical detail in the presentation of emotions *per se* in the moral works has to do with the character of the implied reader, and probably the actual reader as well – i.e. people who are themselves not very versed in a wide vocabulary for the emotions. See also n. 49 below. It could also stem from Galen's limited philosophical experience in this realm of study and writing. He is a newcomer in the intellectual market of practical philosophy. He wants to make his trademark in this field, though he is not always successful.

guidance), as opposed to ἀπορητικοί or ζητητικοί (i.e. enabling investigation);²⁰ and partly to the notion that the ὑφηγητικός can take the ἠθικός as its practical example.²¹ Galen's work is therefore targeted at those who are aware of their need for moral development and have consciously opted for it (τοῖς βουληθεῖσιν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 24.3-4 DB = V.35.1-2 K.).²² *Boulēsis* (volition) is of special interest, as it verges on prohairetic choice, indicating the agent's determination to achieve emotional equanimity. In this and similar contexts, however, it also points to Galen's conceptualisation of moral philosophy as being useful to and achievable by everybody who wishes to exercise it, a notion stressing the universal attainability of moral wellbeing proclaimed in *My Own Opinions*.²³ The necessity for self-knowledge on this self-conscious course is developed at length in chapter 2, to which I now turn.

Self-knowledge vs self-love

This section explores how the agents' self-love obstructs their self-knowledge, with Galen frowning upon egotists who are unable to understand what they are doing wrong. One way to persuade his readers of the importance of the point he is making is by introducing his personal experience of the phenomenon through the use of verbs of vision and observation (ὄρωμεν, 'we see'; παμπόλλην ἔσχηκα πείραν, 'I have had a great deal of experience'; ἔθεασάμην, 'I have observed', ἑώρακα, 'I have seen', all featuring in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 4.17-25 DB = V.3.16-4.7 K.). This recalls the stress Galen places on personal experience as a means of validating his ethical authority in other moral works (*Avoiding Distress*, chapter 4). But it also helps demonstrate Galen's individual input into the discussion of self-love compared with how the topic was conducted by other thinkers in earlier antiquity. In adopting the well-known quote from Plato 'the lover is blind regarding the loved one'²⁴ (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 6.7-9

²⁰ E.g. Proclus, *In Plat. Parmenidem*, Book 1, 631.3-4 Cousin.

²¹ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 3.49.

²² Menghi (1984: 14) is therefore right to speak of the propaedeutic character of the essay. This does not mean that Galen excludes any advice targeted at even less experienced moral agents. For example, he often distinguishes between admonishment appropriate to 'beginners' (τοῖς ἀρχομένοις) and 'those who are in training' (τοὺς ασκοῦντας), e.g. *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 23.19-23 DB = V.34.11-15 K. See also *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 21.19-22.2 DB = V.31.10-16 K.

²³ καὶ τὴν ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν, ἣν ἐγὼ φημι χρησίμην τε ἕμα καὶ δυνατὴν εἶναι πᾶσι τοῖς βουλομένοις ἀσκήσαι ('moral philosophy is both useful and attainable by all those who wish to practise it'), *Prop. Plac.* 14, 136.20-22 PX.

²⁴ τυφλοῦται γὰρ περὶ τὸ φιλούμενον ὁ φιλῶν, *Laws* 731e5-6. Galen also uses this quotation in his *Commentary on Hippocrates's Epidemics VI*, 4, 11, 217.19-218.2 Wenkebach = XVIIIB.166.5-8 K.:

DB = V.6.8-9 K.), which also often features in Plutarch's moral works²⁵ – Galen's most probable source, given that the quotation does not appear in any other earlier or (near)-contemporary author²⁶ – Galen departs from his intellectual antecedents and embarks on a revisionary understanding of self-love, which is no longer negatively loaded (as being an obstacle to moral improvement), but rather signifies a genuine love of the self, a self-determined desire to really be *kalos kagathos* and not just appear to be (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 37.19-21 DB = V.56.16-57.1 K.).

The most remarkable technique that Galen employs, however, in his discussion of self-knowledge and self-love is the use of reference groups to create a sort of 'class fraction', directing the reader's behaviour. The starting point of this is found in Galen's reproachful statement that many people are reluctant to accept criticism from others, which leads him to explain why readers should act differently. 'Class fraction' is then employed on three more levels:

- a) In the distinction between immature youth and wise adulthood. This is demonstrated in Galen's personal confession that, when he was young, he would question the validity of the Pythian motto 'Know yourself', but later, as he reached a state of maturity, he eventually embraced it (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.1-3 DB = V.4.8-10 K.). Galen here puts on the cloak of a role-model by revisiting his earlier views on issues of morality, hence inviting his audience to have the same degree of acumen, acceptance and flexibility in their moral judgments.²⁷ As we will see later on in this Chapter, Galen is keen to advertise his moral character to quite some extent, as this was an essential attribute of philosophical authority in the Imperial period,

ἀλλ' ἔπει τυφλώττει τὸ φιλοῦν περὶ τὸ φιλούμενον, διὰ τοῦτο ἡ φιλαυτία πολλάκις ἐργάζεται τυφλοῦς ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τοῖς ἡμετέροις μόνοις, εἰ καὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια βλέπομεν ἀκριβέστατα.

²⁵ *On Friends and Flatterers* 48F; *On How to Benefit from your Enemies* 90A, 92F; *Platonic Questions* 1000A. Plutarch's passage in *De Adul. et Am.* 48F specifically has a similar focus on self-love as a source of self-deception: 'Plato says, my dear Antiochus Philopappus, that everyone grants forgiveness to the man who avows that he dearly loves himself, but he also says that along with many other faults which are engendered thereby the most serious is that which makes it impossible for such a man to be an honest and unbiased judge of himself (οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ κριτὴν δίκαιον οὐδ' ἀδέκαστον εἶναι). "For Love is blind as regards the beloved," unless one, through study, has acquired the habit of respecting and pursuing what is honourable rather than what is inbred and familiar' (transl. Babbitt). See also the preface to Plutarch's *On the Control of Anger* 452F-453A, stressing that others are more objective judges than oneself.

²⁶ See, e.g. Olivieri (1910: 99–109).

²⁷ Rosen (2009: 159–171) views this passage, alongside others from the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, as evidence of the influence of Socratism on Galen in this work in terms of structure and narrative form.

especially through the philosopher's anticipated role as pioneer and champion.²⁸

- b) In the dichotomy between the wisest of men, who is the only one capable of knowing himself, and all the rest who are simply incompetent and unable to do so (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.3-5 DB = V.4.11-13 K.). Perhaps referring to the ideal of the Stoic sage, this dichotomy is not developed any further by Galen, because he does not as a rule offer models that are beyond the reach of most men.
- c) The divide between the common herd on the one hand and discerning or skilled men on the other, with the former making sense only of broad distinctions in life and art, whereas the latter grasp all the subtle differences therein (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.5-9 DB = V.4.13-17 K.).²⁹

I am using the term 'class fraction' in relation to Galen's moralising argumentation based on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'class fraction' or 'class distinction'. This theory holds that the way people present their social space determines their status in society and sets them apart from lower groups through clear-cut social separation. Bourdieu's theory rests predominantly on the aesthetic predilections that people (especially young ones) internalise to the point of making them deeply-rooted dispositions. However, his theory also covers other 'symbolic goods' that combine social, economic and cultural capital. As he posits, 'symbolic goods, especially those regarded as the attributes of excellence, constitute one of the key markers of "class" and also the ideal weapon in strategies of distinction . . .'.³⁰ Moral habitus, in the sense of developing and developed ethical patterns, may be seen as another such symbolic good in Galen, given that any moral tastes other than those embodied or proposed by him are presented as deviant and are thus likely to provoke rejection, and, as we will see, laughter, contempt or disgust.³¹

Indeed, 'class fraction' in Galen does not only encourage the audience to espouse proper morals, but also establishes his role as an expert in the study

²⁸ Trapp (2017: esp. 33-35). Barton (1994: 139, 143-147) explores how the construction of Galen's *ethos* and his foregrounding of the self, help to cement his authority. Cf. von Staden (1997a) on the connection between morality and professional competence in Greek medicine.

²⁹ Class fraction as a discursive technique is also in evidence in Book 2 *On Errors*, where it is used to more scathing effect, involving donkeys: 'Sometimes, when stating some argument, I notice this, and ask them to repeat what has just been said; for it is apparent that – just like the ass with the lyre – they too have actually failed to follow what I have said altogether'. (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 44.1-3 DB = V.64.12-15 K.). Galen is fond of donkey imagery, which he often contrasts to human rationality, see e.g. *San. Tu.* 1.10, 25.2-5 Ko. = VI.52.7-10 K.

³⁰ Bourdieu (1984: 66). ³¹ Bourdieu (1984: 56).

of the soul. There is an arcane mention in the ensuing text of someone who is depicted as being able to distinguish between obvious passions (e.g. irascibility, promiscuity) and less obvious ones (moderate perturbation, slight overeating) and perceive their intensity depending on the way they are acted out. This man's discerning abilities are said to rely on a preliminary understanding of issues relating to the soul (προμελετήσαντι τὴν ψυχὴν) and an associated aptitude to deal with the rectification of passions (ἐξοδιάσαντί <τε> ἀπάντων παθῶν ἐπανορθώσεως) (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.9-16 DB = V.4.17-5.10 K.). It is not unreasonable to see this as a veiled reference to Galen and his morally didactic role so far. This proposal is consistent with the way Galen goes on to advise specifically 'the person who wishes to be a decent human being' (ὁστις οὖν βούλεται καλὸς κάγαθὸς γενέσθαι, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.18 DB = V.5.10 K.), with καλὸς κάγαθός being a metatextual label, constituting the cornerstone of moral essays both as a specified topic under investigation and a philosophical desideratum in social and political life in the ancient world. The suggestion also accords with Galen's subsequent admission that he has already discovered himself and his individual mistakes, having thus transcended the passions he lectures on for others. As we have seen in *Avoiding Distress* (Chapter 4), it is Galen's positive experience with tormenting passions that puts him in a position to guide others on similar issues through his works.

In fact, even though Galen emphasises the need for moral knowledge and the exercise of the intellect in the regulation of passions,³² in what follows in this section he refrains for the present from giving a relevant account, because, as he explains, his book may at some point be transmitted to others and so he prefers to leave them 'first to be schooled in the discovery of the path to knowledge of their own errors' (ὅπως ἂν κακέϊνοι γυμνασθῶσι πρότερον ὁδὸν εὐρεῖν τῆς γνώσεως τῶν ἰδίων ἀμαρτημάτων, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.21-23 DB = V.5.13-16 K.). This has two implications: firstly, that the unnamed addressee indeed stands for a general readership, as previously argued; secondly, that Galen does not wish to provide processed material for immediate use, but rather to offer opportunities for moral gymnastics, as it were, pointing to the necessity for self-motivated ethical training. In addition, what is highlighted in the relationship between Galen and his audience is the discreet distance he chooses to

³² The issue of how moral knowledge has a bearing on moral action and how mistaken beliefs about ethics lead to mistaken moral decisions is discussed in Book 2 *On Errors*, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 1, 42.10-15 DB = V.60.6-12 K. Elsewhere, Galen stresses that mistaken beliefs about the goal of life generate unhappiness (Book 2, *Affections and Errors of the Soul* 3, 51.3-6 DB = V.74.8-11 K.).

keep as an ethical mentor, in order to allow the active involvement of the moral agent:

So, just as I suggested that you tell me, and listened in silence while you declared what seems to you to be the case, I will now do the same, exhorting the reader of this piece of writing to reflect on it and enquire how one may gain the ability to recognise when one is oneself committing error.³³ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 5.23-6.3 DB = V.5.16-6.3 K.

Moments of silence are always important for self-reflection in philosophical settings, especially in teacher-pupil dynamics.³⁴ Plutarch, for example, in his convivial dialogues argues that a lapse into silence can have two different responses in two different groups of attendees: idle and untalented participants (ἀργούς καὶ ἀφυσίς) feel relaxed and satisfied during a silent interval, whereas those who are ambitious and scholarly (τοῖς δὲ φιλοτίμοις καὶ φιλολόγοις) use it as an opportunity to make their own attempt to seek and track down the truth (ἀρχὴν ἐνδιδωσιν οἰκείαν καὶ τόλμαν ἐπὶ τὸ ζητεῖν καὶ ἀνιχνεύειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν) (*Quaest. Conv.* 694D). So, just as on a textual level, in the mode of a Socratic teacher, Galen propagates the idea of time for discreet self-contemplation, in the same way on a meta-level he allows time for an active, self-introspected reading of his piece.³⁵

Later in the work Galen stresses how tricky internal investigation can really be and so he asserts that, if each individual finds some other way of identifying personal mistakes, he may add it to Galen's method and benefit from having two ways of salvation instead of one; otherwise, he can stick to Galen's suggested method until he finds a better one (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 6.16-24 DB = V.6.17-7.9 K.). It is clear that Galen's aim is to encourage self-alertness and independent scrutiny in the area of ethics, so as to foster the agent's energetic participation in his moral overhaul. Interestingly, when it comes to the area of the intellect, Galen significantly restricts the reader's exploratory possibilities: in Book 2 *On Errors*, which is much

³³ ὥσπερ <οὖν> καὶ σέ μοι λέγειν ἤξιῶσα καί, μέχρι τὸ σαυτῷ δοκοῦν ἀπεφῆνω, διεισιώπησα, καὶ νῦν οὕτω πράξω, παρακαλέσας τὸν ὁμιλοῦντα τῷδε τῷ γράμματι καταθέμενον αὐτὸ ζητήσαι, ὅπως ἂν τις ἑαυτὸν δύναίτο [τὸ] γνωρίζειν ἀμαρτάνοντα.

³⁴ The importance of silence and of the proper use of speech is a cardinal feature of Greek philosophical writings, e.g. Plato, *Phdr.* 272a, 275e; (ps-)Isocrates, *Ad Dem.* 41, *Bus.* 28; Philostratus, *VA* 1.15. On the didactic role of silence in Plutarch, see Xenophon (2016a: 64–65, 117, 191–193). Cf. Auberger (1993), Montiglio (2000: 9–45), van Nuffelen (2007).

³⁵ In Galen's *Affections and Errors of the Soul* silence also equips people with the tolerance they need to withstand moral criticism (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 9.20-10.14 DB = V.12.2-13.2 K.). Cf. Plutarch, *De Prof. in Virt.* 81F-82F, 84B-85E.

more self-assertive in tone than Book 1 on *Affections*, he proclaims that he has found just one way of investigating truth and that he is convinced that this is indeed the only way (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 45.20-23 DB = V.66.1-4 K.).

The figure of the moral supervisor

In the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, Galen devotes a significant amount of space in the text to the figure of the moral supervisor, who is tasked with providing candid critique and exposing any moral frailties escaping the notice of those who commit them.³⁶ The personal advisor as psychagogue helps overcome any such barriers to a good life and is therefore a strategic instrument of moral improvement in Galen's text. Though treated by other thinkers as a general principle appreciated by philosophical learners in the Graeco-Roman world, Galen specifies some of this figure's defining features: he should be someone to whom the agents are emotionally indifferent (viz. someone who is neither hated nor loved by them) and should act mainly when self-love clouds self-knowledge, as seen in the previous section.³⁷

Before turning to the actual relationship between advisor and advisee, however, Galen inserts a short theoretical precis on passions, in order to show why it is important to free ourselves from them. Here he conceptualises passions as arising from non-rational impulses, but to some extent he also connects them to mistaken beliefs. This most likely points to a blending of the Platonic/Aristotelian stance on the dual constitution of the soul on the one hand, whereby the non-rational faculty unduly prevails

³⁶ On the figure of the moral critic/guide in Galen, see Singer (2013: 212), Lee (2014: 55-62), Schlange-Schöninggen (2015: 655-657), Gill (2010: 253), Lee (2020: 155-169). Harris (2001: 385-386) ponders the question of whether the moral critic was occupationally labelled (a physician, a philosopher or otherwise) and brings in textual evidence showing that elite Romans sometimes maintained household philosophers, who were responsible for their psychic health. See Hadot (1986) for an exploration of the spiritual guide in Graeco-Roman antiquity.

³⁷ In Clement of Alexandria's oration *Who Is the Rich Man that Shall be Saved?* 41.1, a figure acting as a moral physician is described in terms similar to Galen's moral advisor: 'Hence it is necessary that you who are pompous and powerful and rich (τὸν σοβαρὸν καὶ δυνατὸν καὶ πλούσιον) should appoint for yourselves some man of God as a trainer and pilot (καθάπερ ἀλείπτῃν καὶ κυβερνήτην). Let it be one whom you respect, one whom you fear, one whom you condition yourself to heed when he is frank and severe in his speech, while at the same time tending to your cure (αἰδοῦ κἀν ἔνα, φοβοῦ κἀν ἕνα, μελέτησον ἀκούειν κἀν ἐνὸς παρρησιαζομένου καὶ στυφοντος ἄμα καὶ θεραπεύοντος).' Havrda (2011) has shown that Galen's logic has exercised an influence on Clement of Alexandria, which might strengthen the possibility of his having had an influence in the area of ethics too.

over the rational, giving rise to passions,³⁸ and the Stoic understanding of emotion theory, relying on monism, on the other, whereby the soul is entirely rational and passions are therefore seen as misguided judgments.³⁹ The Stoic influence is further attested in Galen's ensuing listing of passions, namely rage (θυμός), anger (ὀργή), fear (φόβος), distress (λύπη), envy (φθόνος) and vehement desire (ἐπιθυμία σφοδρά),⁴⁰ which is by no means far removed from the Stoic taxonomy of four cardinal passions: desire (ἐπιθυμία), fear (φόβος), delight (ἡδονή) and distress (λύπη).⁴¹ Indeed, the language Galen attaches to freedom from emotions, especially the verb 'excise' (ἐκκόψειε, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 7.7 DB = V.8.1 K.), suggests Stoic eradication.⁴² Yet it should be noted that the theoretical account is rounded off by Galen's critical modification that loving and hating too much can also be a form of affection, therefore arguing that Aristotelian moderation should also be taken into account as a principle in a regulated emotional life (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 6.25-7.6 DB = V.7.10-8.1 K.). This shows that, although the semantics of eradication is at play here, Galen, as we have noted in other Chapters, does not favour avoiding all kinds of affectivity, but only its more severe and destructive manifestations. In the case of anger, for example, in *Character Traits* Galen accepts a

³⁸ This Galenic approach is also dealt with in *Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, Books 4–5, *Character Traits* and to some extent in *Avoiding Distress*.

³⁹ It is true that Galen does not explain how exactly moral passions interrelate with reason, nonetheless this is a notion he is keen to repeat elsewhere in ethical settings, e.g. in Book 2 *On Errors*, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 44.11-14 DB = V.63.10-14 K. Here he argues that moral passions such as self-love, self-regard, conceitedness and love of esteem give rise to intellectual errors regarding matters of good and bad in human life. It is important to note that when Galen refers to mental disturbances such as mania, melancholia or phrenitis affecting the brain, he is much more explicit that these passions relate to the rational faculty of the soul, e.g. *Loc. Aff.* 3.6 VIII.164.6-7 K.; cf. *Loc. Aff.* 3.5 VIII.159.7-160.7 K. On the idea that Galen does indeed mix Stoic-Epicurean and Platonic-Aristotelian moral standpoints, see Gill (2010: 251).

⁴⁰ See also Galen's similar list of passions in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 17.8-10 DB = V.24.4-7 K., from which envy has been dropped. Cf. the lists in *De Mor.* 26 Kr. (anger, desire, fear, love, pleasure, grief), *Hipp. Epid.* VI, 5, 6, 275.30-32 WP = XVIIIB.256.2-3 K. (anger, love of money, superstition, sexual desire), *MM* 13.5, X.841.8-11 K. (sudden and strong fears and extreme pleasures), *Ars Med.* 24, 351.3-5 Boudon-Millot = I.371.11-12 K. (anger, grief, joy, outburst, fear, envy); cf. Manuli (1988: 194).

⁴¹ E.g. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 7.110-111 (= *SVF* III.412): Τῶν δὲ παθῶν τὰ ἀνωτάτω, καθὰ φησιν Ἐκάτων ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ Περὶ παθῶν καὶ Ζήνων ἐν τῷ Περὶ παθῶν, εἶνα γένη τέτταρα, λύπην, φόβον, ἐπιθυμίαν, ἡδονήν. Also in Anonymus Londiniensis 2.34-41 (5.34-41 Manetti): τῶν τε παθῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν δύο ἐστὶν τὰ γενικώτατα κατὰ τοὺς ἀρχαίους· ἡδονὴ τε γὰρ καὶ δόξασις [...] κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Στωϊκοὺς τέσσαρα ἐστὶν τὰ γενικώτατα τῆς ψυχῆς πάθη· ἡδονὴ γὰρ καὶ ἐπιθυμία, φόβος τε καὶ λύπη. On Stoic emotions, see e.g. Nussbaum (2001), Brennan (2003), Tieleman (2003a: 114-122), Becker (2004).

⁴² Harris (2001: 121). Other Stoic influences in the text are explored by Gill (2010: 253-255).

rationalised type of that passion, such as that performed in battle by a courageous agent (*De Mor.* 31–32 Kr.).⁴³

In setting out, for the reader's convenience, a number of criteria for identifying the impartial advocate then, Galen differentiates the latter from the generic type of the flatterer, a repulsive stock character in moral writings. This is the starting point for a sustained argumentation, which makes the flatterer's way of life repellent to readers through 'class fraction'. In Galen's vivid description, the person who opts for money, power, esteem and reputation, conversing and dining on a regular basis with high-profile acquaintances in the city, will hardly be a lover of truth; he will be a dissimulating, self-interested liar. Conversely, the man who dismisses worldly needs and embraces a disciplined daily regime is more likely to speak the truth and be a genuine friend (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 7.11–8.1 DB = V.8.6–9.7 K.). It is not entirely clear whether Galen believes that a philosophically minded person should be unaffected by the concerns or aspirations of this world, but, as we will see below, he does seem inclined to suggest, as in his *Recognising the Best Physician* or *Prognosis*, that pre-philosophical engagements present numerous moral challenges.

More importantly, the description of the addressee's interaction with his moral director has something significant to say about the nature of Galen's ethics. It shows that it is very hands-on and deeply rooted within a broader social context, while problematising human behaviour on a macrocosmic level:

If you find that he [i.e. a potential moral advisor] is that kind of person [i.e. one who speaks the truth], take some opportunity to talk to him in private. Ask him to make evident to you directly which of the above-mentioned affections he sees in you, emphasising the gratitude you will feel towards him: he will be your saviour, even more so than the man who saves you when you have a bodily sickness. And if he promises that whenever he sees you in the grip of one of these affections he will make it evident to you, but after an interval of several days – days when he has spent time with you, of course – he has still said nothing, take him to task, and again ask him (even more persistently than before) to make known to you directly any act of yours which he observes to have been committed under the influence of affection. If he replies that his silence was due to his having observed no such action in you in the intervening period, do not readily believe him. Do not imagine that you have suddenly become free of error. There are two possible explanations. Either the friend that you have asked has been lazy in

⁴³ E.g. 'Whoever employs anger with thought displays steadiness, and whoever employs it without thought displays rashness', *De Mor.* 31 Kr. On anger in general, see Thumiger (2017: 345–352).

his attention to you, or his silence is due to shyness to criticise – or indeed reluctance to incur your hatred, because he realises that it is an almost universal human habit to hate those who speak the truth. Otherwise, the reason may be a reluctance to help you – or some other cause which I do not regard as praiseworthy. If you trust me, for the moment, when I say that it is impossible that you committed no error at all, you will subsequently praise me, when you see that all human beings commit countless errors every day, and act under the influence of countless affections, but are not themselves aware of it. So you should not imagine that you are anything other than human, either.⁴⁴ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 8.1-21 DB = V.9.7-10.13 K.

Several aspects are worth commenting on here. First of all, Galen's sequence of tips on how the addressee should act under specific circumstances shows that the latter is not yet an independent personality, but rather needs systematic guidance on their way to moral growth. We see Galen offering him all the necessary advice in a step-by-step process. Secondly, the interaction with the advisor is not just meant to guide the addressee in this specific situation, but to enable him to get to grips with patterns of social conduct more generally. The passage quoted above represents part of a book on social manners. In particular, the advisor's posited a) indifference, b) reluctance to criticise or c) attract the other party's disapproval, or, even worse, d) potential resentment of a fellow-man's ethical progress, are all marked out as universal features of human conduct. Galen is in essence encouraging his audience to look out for the truth among any mendacities and sensitises them to the dissimulation and hypocrisy that can arise in the context of social etiquette. He warns them not to be deterred by the social conventions that hinder the revelation of truth; it is only when his audience is comfortable with exhibiting sincerity in social relations that they will be at ease with it on a personal level too.

⁴⁴ κὰν εὐρύης τοιοῦτον, ἰδίᾳ ποτὲ μόνῳ διαλέχθητι παρακαλέσας ὁ τι ἂν <ἐν> σοὶ βλέπη τῶν εἰρημένων παθῶν, εὐθέως δηλοῦν, ὡς χάριν ἔξοντι τούτου μεγίστην ἡγησομένῳ τε σωτήρα μᾶλλον ἢ εἰ νοσοῦντα τὸ σῶμα διέσωσε. κὰν ὑπόσχηται δηλώσει, ὅταν ἴδῃ τι τῶν εἰρημένων πάσχοντά σε, κάπειτα πλείονων ἡμερῶν μεταξύ γιγνομένων μηδὲν εἶπη συνδιατρίβων δηλονότι, μέμψαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, αὐθὶς τε παρακάλεσον ἔτι λιπαρέστερον ἢ ὡς πρόσθεν, ὁ τι ἂν ὑπὸ σοῦ βλέπη κατὰ πάθος πραττόμενον, εὐθέως μηνύειν. ἐὰν δ' εἶπη σοι, διὰ τὸ μηδὲν ἐωρακέναι περὶ σέ τοιοῦτον ἐν τῷ μεταξύ, διὰ τοῦτο μηδ' αὐτὸς εἰρηκέναι, μὴ πεισθῆς εὐθέως μηδ' οἰηθῆς ἀναμάρτητος ἐξαίφνης γεγενῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ δυσὶν θάτερον, ἢ διὰ βραθυμίαν οὐ προσεσχηκέναι σοι τὸν παρακληθέντα φίλον ἢ ἐλέγχειν αἰδοῦμενον σιωπᾶν ἢ καὶ μισθηθῆναι μὴ βουλόμενον διὰ τὸ γινώσκειν ἅπασιν ὡς ἔπος εἶπεῖν ἀνθρώποις ἔθος εἶναι μισεῖν τοὺς τάληθῃ λέγοντας, ἢ εἰ μὴ διὰ ταῦτα, ἴσως <μὴ> βουλόμενον αὐτὸν ὠφελεῖν σε διὰ τοῦτο σιωπᾶν, ἢ καὶ <δὶ> ἄλλην τιὰ [ἴσως] αἰτίαν, ἣν οὐκ ἐπαινοῦμεν ἡμεῖς. ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἶναι τὸ μηδὲν ἡμαρτησθῆαι σοι, πιστεύσας ἐμοὶ τοῦτο νῦν ἐπαινέσεις <μ'> ὕστερον, θεώμενος ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν μυρία μὲν ἁμαρτάνοντας καὶ κατὰ πάθος πράττοντας, οὐ μὴν αὐτοῦς γε παρακολουθοῦντας. ὥστε μηδὲ σὺ νόμιζε σαυτὸν ἄλλο τι καὶ μὴ ἄνθρωπον εἶναι.

Consequently, the episode with the supervisor is not just a narrative of prescriptive moralism or a manual for a one-off incident. It is a moralising act of broader application with regard to how to regulate your behaviour in the quest for truth and virtue, what to expect from others while you do so, how to judge the quality of what they offer you and how to stick to your own moral priorities in what could prove tricky social relations. In that sense, Galen seems in tune with common standards in popular philosophical works of the later Roman period. For example, Seneca, in his *Letter* 94 'On the value of advice', explains that, since precepts are context-specific and appropriate to individual cases,⁴⁵ the aim of the philosophical area dealing with advice should rather be to equip a person with the necessary discernment to apply the rules appropriate to the situation at hand by himself. Put differently, the aim is to habituate oneself to the general tenor of life and a critical state of mind, and not just provide oneself with tailor-made instructions for certain occasions.⁴⁶

A third point that is central to this same passage is that, with a view to pragmatic moralising, Galen shows compassion for the weaknesses of human nature and impresses the reader with a firm realisation that he should accept his wrongdoings, since he is neither perfect nor superhuman. Assuming that he was superhuman, would result in boastfulness and erroneous judgment. Indeed, a bit further down in the same context Galen reproves any tendency on the reader's part to assume that he is a perfect god, since he does not believe in any radical moral conversions, only in long-term practice (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 9.11-14 DB = V.11.8-12 K.).⁴⁷ This is in accordance with what has been suggested above, namely that Galen's point is not so much about finding the right advisor, but more about how to develop a proper mindset by which to conduct oneself in life.

Politics and ethics: Free speech (*parrhēsia*) in context

Galen's emphasis on accepting moral criticism, as discussed above, moves onto a description of what seems to be a gloomy socio-political reality of his day. The author declares that both well-off men on the one hand and men of political standing on the other hand are in a disadvantageous ethical position compared with their fellow citizens, because any potential

⁴⁵ See also Seneca, *Letter* 71.1.

⁴⁶ See also Seneca, *Letter* 94.1-3 and Aristotle's similar emphasis on perceptivity in Book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

⁴⁷ Also in *De Mor.* 28 Kr.: 'I think, [however], that someone who is, by nature, extremely cowardly and greedy will not, by means of education, become extremely brave and abstemious.'

critics will steer clear of revealing their passions, due to the hope of monetary gain (διὰ κέρδος) when it comes to well-off men, and due to fear (διὰ φόβον) when it comes to politicians (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 10.19-21 DB = V.13.6-10 K.). This observation leads Galen to go as far as to say that, if someone of great wealth desires to become a decent human being (γενέσθαι καλὸς καγαθός), he will have to put aside any worldly privileges, especially now that there is no Diogenes (of Sinope) with the courage to speak frankly to him (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 10.22-11.3 DB = V.13.11-15 K.). How to interpret this? Are we to take these utterances at face value, as if they are suggesting that state offices and riches preclude any chance of moral excellence? This is not very likely, given that just a few lines later in the text Galen's own father is presented as both politically active and virtuous. In the same vein, elsewhere Galen posits that statesmanship is in practice driven by love of humanity and justice (*De Mor.* 36 Kr., *De Mor.* 51 Kr.) and in another instance he tells a story that has his fellow citizens in Pergamum pushing a Platonist professor into politics on the grounds that he was 'just, indifferent to money, approachable and mild'.⁴⁸ Nor is abstention from politics what Galen is proposing here, since he considers participation in political affairs and showing concern for people (τὸ πολιτεύεσθαι καὶ προνοεῖν ἀνθρώπων) the responsibility of noble and good men (ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν σπουδῆς, *Ind.* 14, 82.16-18 PX). In this context, it would be more reasonable to argue that, on a first level, this statement is used to reassure Galen's addressee, who is not said to be politically or financially powerful,⁴⁹ that he has better

⁴⁸ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 28.12-15 DB = V.41.13-17 K. Cf. the work *Theriac, To Piso* attributed to Galen, at 1.1-2, 2.1-8 Boudon-Millot = XIV.210.3-211.1 K., where people who combine the administration of public affairs with the study of ancient philosophy are admired by the contemporary pseudo-Galenic author.

⁴⁹ In a subsequent section of the text, we will see that Galen describes his addressee as having more money and property than himself, being one of the richest men among the 120,000 citizens of his hometown. Such internal inconsistencies should not be regarded as self-contradictory statements, but rather examples of nuanced retexturing according to the individual emphasis within different conceptual frameworks each time. In the earlier section of the essay in which wealth and power are described as morally pernicious (ch. 3), it is rhetorically meaningful to discourage his addressee from such engagements and set him apart from others who have yielded to such vices, as argued in the main text; whereas in the ensuing section treating insatiability (ch. 9) it makes more sense for Galen to cast the addressee as extremely wealthy, to make him fit the credentials of so many of Galen's upper-class readers, whom he warns against insatiability, as we will see. *Pace Singer* (2013: 218-219), who claims that there are two distinct individuals whom Galen addresses in the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*. See also *Gill* (2019: 137), who situates the change of addressee just after the beginning of chapter 6. This is intriguing, because that is probably where the reworked section of the text was interpolated. Hence, it is not unlikely that, in inserting the revised section, Galen no longer remembered the credentials of his addressee in the earlier part very exactly, and so proceeded to tailor them according to the needs of his new exposition where they would make more

chances of moral success than other reference groups who are truly sunk in vice, devoid of any hope of salvation (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 11.4-7 DB = V.13.16-14.1 K.). On another level, the statement may also function as a warning that worldly engagements can have challenging moral consequences. This squares with the earlier delineation of the flatterers who associate themselves with rich people, politicians and monarchs, and all the dark realities involved in those cases. To Galen's mind, political life and wealth are potentially vicious moral climates, whereas philosophy is seen as a path towards introspection and an affect-moderated life. In another section of this Chapter, I will discuss how Galen, in a similar fashion, presents insatiability as the main cause of grief, thus once again arguing for a worldly explanation for destructive passions.

Galen's emphasis on frank criticism of error is also interesting, because it relates to its use as a professed psychagogic approach in ancient philosophy. We know, for example, that the Epicurean Philodemus (1st c. BC) produced a work entitled *On Frank Criticism* (*Περί παρησίας, De Libertate Dicendi*) to explore the concept of openness as the cornerstone of moral reform.⁵⁰ Michel Foucault, in developing the modern concept of *parrhēsia* as a mode of discourse, relies heavily on the ancient Greek understanding of the term, which meets certain prerequisites, all of which feature in Galen's own account of *parrhēsia*:

[T]he *parrhēsiastēs* is someone who takes a risk . . . When, for example, you see a friend doing something wrong and you risk incurring his anger by telling him he is wrong, you are acting as a *parrhēsiastēs*. In such a case, you do not risk your life, but you may hurt him by your remarks, and your friendship may consequently suffer for it. If, in a political debate, an orator risks losing his popularity because his opinions are contrary to the majority's

sense. For similar reconfigurings as clever argumentative strategies in Plutarch, see Xenophontos (2016a). In any case, if Galen really wanted to introduce another addressee into the work (not a very common thing to do in similar texts by other authors), he could have found a way to mark the change of addressee more explicitly and avoid appearing self-contradictory. See, e.g. Curtis's pertinent remarks (2014: 57) on Galen's use of the 'interlocutory-you', which 'is never specifically identified': 'The "you" here is not an actual addressee but a convention of logical discourse'. Cf. Tieleman (2015: 170), who coins the term 'prevailing coherence' in Galen to account for inconsistencies across a corpus produced over a timespan of fifty years. See also van der Eijk (1997b: 85-86), who appositely discusses a number of communicative parameters such as authorial intention, targeted audience and the occasion that gives rise to a work, which help us explain textual 'inconsistencies' in the context of ancient scientific and philosophical literature.

⁵⁰ On which see Tsouna (2009: 252-254). Besides being a 'mode of ethical self-definition' (Fields 2020: 168), free speech was also a central Greek ideal in political and social settings in the Imperial period; see e.g. Fields's chapter on authorising frankness in Lucian (2020: 162-190) or Peterson (2019: 82-116), who discusses the hero of Lucian's *Fisherman Parrhesiades* ('Frankness') in the context of satiric and comic *parrhēsia*.

opinion, or his opinions may usher in a political scandal, he uses *parrhēsia*. *Parrhēsia*, then, is linked to courage in the face of danger . . . And in its extreme form, telling the truth takes place in the ‘game’ of life or death.⁵¹

As per Foucault’s description, the moral advisor in Galen is a *parrhēsiastēs*, who has an unnegotiable commitment to truth and opts for sincerity rather than falsehood, flattery or self-interest. He is also a person ‘who has the moral qualities which are required, first, to know the truth, and secondly, to convey such truth to others’.⁵² This puts him in a position of risk, either with regard to his own social growth or his relationship with the recipient of his criticism. Still the moral advisor/*parrhēsiastēs* does not succumb to social pressure or fear, but prefers to remain faithful to truth, which he considers his moral duty, as a means of helping improve other people. Key examples mentioned by Foucault are Plato’s exchange with Dionysius of Syracuse, as described in Plutarch’s *Life of Dion*, or Socrates’s didactic role in the Platonic dialogues more generally,⁵³ although *parrhēsia* becomes part and parcel of the self-presentation of later moral philosophers, such as Seneca and Epictetus. Moreover, in line with Foucault’s understanding of the parrhesiastic enterprise, Galen’s own use of *parrhēsia* also points to a ‘speech or verbal activity’ ‘linked to a certain social situation’,⁵⁴ and, especially in Galen’s philosophical programme, it is associated with ‘the care of the self’ and ‘the education of the soul’.⁵⁵

The Foucauldian characteristics of the *parrhēsiastēs* also align with Galen’s description of his fellow student Teuthras, an example *par excellence* of a frank person, who in *Bloodletting, Against the Erasistrateans at Rome* becomes Galen’s guide in his encounter with a group of senior Erasistratean physicians. In this episode, Galen refers to Teuthras as exceedingly frank in his ways (ἦν δὲ πάνυ τὸν τρόπον ἐλεύθερος) and reveals the hallmarks of his activity: he addresses problematics with riveting honesty, urges reconsideration, affords ample evidence of phenomena not yet perceived by people in a disadvantageous position and resorts to bodily language to signify his contempt for those hiding the truth (*Ven. Sect. Er. Rom.* 1, 29.6–31.3 Kotrc = XI.193.6–195.3 K.). It is in the same light that we should imagine the activity of the moral advisor in *Affections and Errors*

⁵¹ Foucault (1985: 4) (available at <https://foucault.info/parrhesia/>, last accessed 3 February 2020).

⁵² Foucault (1985: 3). Likewise, in *Semen* Galen asserts that being aware of a problem and deliberately saying nothing (σιωπᾶν ἐκόντας) is not an act associated with good men (οὐκ ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἔργον ἐστὶ), while to think that it is not even worth looking into the problem is a sign of dull-witted men (νωθρῶν τὴν διάνοιαν ἀνθρώπων), *Sem.* 2.1, 152.24–16 De Lacy = IV.602.6–9 K.

⁵³ Foucault (1985: 4 and 8, 35–42 respectively). ⁵⁴ Foucault (1985: 2–3).

⁵⁵ Foucault (1985: 8).

of the Soul, who is mentioned in the text as an exponent of openness mostly on a theoretical level, with his actual duties remaining unspecified.

Galen's delineation of the moral advisor may be further illuminated by comparing it with Plutarch's *On Friends and Flatterers*. This work presents key affinities with Galen's *Affections and Errors of the Soul* in the way the advisor is seen as a true friend, although this connection is never explicitly made in Galen, because his advisor, unlike Plutarch's friend, was not supposed to be acquainted with the recipient of his moral advice.⁵⁶ The concept of *parrhēsia* is pre-eminent in Plutarch's essay,⁵⁷ sometimes in its deceptive version, which the flatterer adopts to mislead the agent (*De Adul. et Amic.* 51B-C; *De Adul. et Amic.* 59B-60C), and at other times in its sincere variety, the one used by the true friend. The latter is often combined with reprehension and stinging words, which render it therapeutic (θεραπευτική παρρησία, *De Adul. et Amic.* 73A-E); it also shows genuine care for one's fellow man (κηδεμονική, *De Adul. et Amic.* 55B-C) and should thus be mixed with seriousness and candour (σπουδῆν ἐχέτω καὶ ἦθος, *De Adul. et Amic.* 68C).⁵⁸ We see, therefore, that Galen's basic distinctions in his account of *parrhēsia* conform to Plutarch's own, although it is also remarkable that whereas Plutarch's text is full of metaphors and analogies from medicine that illustrate the therapeutic action of openness (e.g. *De Adul. et Amic.* 55A-B, 63C-D),⁵⁹ there is almost nothing of this sort in Galen.⁶⁰ True, we do get some terminology

⁵⁶ In Seneca, as in Plutarch, someone who passes judgment and speaks openly is a friend rather than someone unknown to the moral agent (*Letter* 3, 'On True and False Friendship'). Overall, Seneca's moral advisor is more of a guardian offering admonitions to help the person rectify mistaken opinions and beliefs, *Letter* 94.55, 94.59-74. The advisor's role is based on strong philosophical foundations that teach that advice clarifies right conduct, thus ensuring probity. See, e.g. *Letter* 94.45-46.

⁵⁷ O'Neil (1997) discusses Plutarch's notion of friendship that considered frankness the most important defining characteristic of a true friend, along with the other criteria of true friendship.

⁵⁸ Clement of Alexandria had developed a wide spectrum of forms of rebuke in his *Paedagogus* 1.9 (76.1-81.3).

⁵⁹ The same applies to Seneca's *Letters*, e.g. *Letter* 75 'On the Diseases of the Soul', which includes references to the physician called upon to attend the sick, and to medicine more broadly (75.6-14). These are used as metaphors for or parallels to the workings and treatment of the soul. See also, *Letter* 94.17-20.

⁶⁰ The *topos* juxtaposing flattery and straight talking was key to the encomiastic genre in the Second Sophistic, in which the metaphor of the frank philosopher as an efficient doctor of the soul played an integral part, e.g. Seneca, *Letter* 75.5-7: 'Our words should aim not to please, but to help . . . A sick man does not call in a physician who is eloquent . . . [instead the patient should say to the eloquent doctor:] Why do you tickle my ears? Why do you entertain me? There is other business at hand; I am to be cauterized, operated upon, or put on a diet. That is why you were summoned to treat me!'. Cf. Dio of Prusa, *Oration* 33.2-8, where again the doctor should not declaim eloquently but take drastic measures to eliminate sickness, just as the philosopher should rebuke to remedy

that might have medical connotations (e.g. the excision of moral passions mentioned above), or very brief references to analogies from medicine (e.g. the ethical monitor is seen as a more important ‘saviour’ than the one who saves someone from bodily sickness, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 3, 8.3-4 DB = V.9.9-11 K.), yet we hardly find anything more extensive or specific to the medical art, as in other moralists.⁶¹ This aligns with Galen’s general practice of concealing his medical identity in the ethical contexts, most likely as a way of making his contribution to this quite different area of intellectual activity more visible and robust.⁶² This is not to say, however, that there is nothing pertaining to the body, because Galen exploits the medically-inspired trope of the body as an analogy for the soul, as we will now see.

Body and soul: Moral aesthetics and the therapy of anger

In underscoring the importance of life-long training (*askēsis*) as a prerequisite for moral progress, Galen contends that the care of the soul, irrespective of its condition, should never be neglected, just as the body is never abandoned when in a bad state. The author’s implication is that both soul and body are essential to our preservation as human beings, which leads him to advise that we should not allow our soul to become ‘utterly disgusting’ (πάναισχρον), comparing it to Thersites’s body (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 11.15-25 DB = V.14.11-15.7 K.). The reference to Thersites here is quite effective, since he is the typical case of physical ugliness in Homer (αἴσχιστος, *Iliad* 2.216-19). Interestingly, in the Iliadic intertext Thersites comes off as ‘most hateful’ (ἔχθιστος, *Iliad* 2.220) not so much

moral infelicities (quote from 33.6-7): ‘Well then, the sort of recitation of which I speak, being a kind of spectacle or parade, has some resemblance to the exhibitions of the so-called physicians, who seat themselves conspicuously before us and give a detailed account of the union of joints, the combination and juxtaposition of bones, and other topics of that sort, such as pores and respirations and excretions. And the crowd is all agape with admiration and more enchanted than a swarm of children. But the genuine physician is not like that, nor does he discourse in that fashion for the benefit of those who actually need medical attention – of course not – but instead he prescribes what should be done, and if a man wants to eat or drink, he stops him, or he takes his scalpel and lances some abscess of the body. Just as, therefore, if the sick were to assemble and then proceed to serenade the physician and call for a drinking-bout, the outcome would not meet their expectation, nay, they might well be annoyed at their reception, such it seems to me, is the situation of the masses when they gather before a man like me and bid him make a speech, obviously never having sampled the words of truth and consequently expecting to hear something sweet and pleasant.’

⁶¹ The only exception that validates the general rule is *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 31.1-12 DB = V.45.8-46.5 K., where Galen refers to the theory of digestion to explain what kind of passion insatiability is. Despite the technical background of the description, the ethical associations of this section are exceedingly important for Galen’s moral discourse in this context, as will be shown later on in this Chapter.

⁶² And not to avoid trivialising the science in which he is an expert, i.e. medicine, as has been suggested by Singer (2013: 215–216).

for his abhorrent appearance as for his objectionable moral qualities: his immoderate speech, disorderly words, utter reviling of the kings and his overall abusive behaviour (*Iliad*, 2.212-216, 2.220-223, 2.274-277), which eventually excited the Greeks' indignation, leading Odysseus to strike him (*Iliad*, 2.265-271). This Homeric episode which underlies Galen's account is far from frivolous, given that Thersites's free speech is not based on healthy criticism but on ill-favoured obscenity, and is therefore not a proper manifestation of *parrhēsia* as advocated by Galen. The social response to Thersites's sordid behaviour is also important, since he is bitten, mocked and humiliated in front of others, thus ushering in the social evaluation of moral ugliness, which strategically discourages Galen's audience from disregarding their own psychic condition. According to this view, Thersites's vulgarity, unlike the *parrhēsia* Galen espouses, could be linked to the modern notion of 'Thersitism', initially coined by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and then taken up by Friedrich Nietzsche and above all the American literary theorist Kenneth Burke, among others. This is a literary device according to which the author of a work generates objection, contradiction or protest in his work but does so not in any explicit fashion, but through subsidiary characters who could be easily dismissed by the majority of readers.⁶³ In Galen's case, his moralising narrative up to this point would have easily persuaded his readership neither to identify with the morally abominable Thersites nor adopt any of his social attitudes. This is what we have seen happening in *Against Julian*, where Galen also employs the antitype of Thersites for his general promotion of moral edification (Chapter 3).

The connection between body and soul takes on a more sophisticated form through the explicit association between bodily and psychic excellence:

For it is desirable, if one cannot have the body of Hercules, to have that of Achilles; or, failing that, the body of Ajax, Diomedes, or Agamemnon or Patroclus; or, failing those, the body of some other admirable heroes. So too with the soul: someone who is unable to have the perfect sort of good condition would, I believe, settle for being second, third or fourth from top. And this is not impossible for one who has decided to exert himself for a long period in a process of constant training.⁶⁴ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 12.3-10 DB = V.15.11-16.3 K.

⁶³ Burke (1966: 110-111). See also, Furedi (2013: 16-30), Ch. 1 on 'Thersites and the personification of anti-authority'.

⁶⁴ ἀγαπητόν γάρ εἰ καὶ μὴ τὸ τοῦ Ἡρακλέους, ἀλλὰ τὸ γε τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως σχεῖν, ἢ εἰ μὴδὲ τούτου, τὸ γε τοῦ Αἴαντος ἢ Διομήδους ἢ Ἀγαμέμνονος ἢ Πατρόκλου, εἰ δὲ μὴ τούτων, ἄλλων γέ τινων ἀγαστῶν ἡρώων. οὕτως οὖν, εἰ καὶ μὴ τὴν τελείαν εὐεξίαν τις οἶός τ' ἐστὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἔχειν, δέξαιτ' ἂν οἶμαι δεῦτερος ἢ τρίτος ἢ τέταρτος γενέσθαι μετὰ τὸν ἄκρον. οὐκ ἀδύνατον δὲ τοῦτο τῷ βουλευθέντι κατεργάσασθαι χρόνῳ πλείονι συνεχῶς τῆς ἀσκήσεως γενομένης.

What the passage cited above conjures up is a feeling of assessment, competition and social classification, which develops into the aesthetic assessment of emotions. Specifically, Galen recalls a series of incidents he has experienced personally, all of which negotiate the pathology of anger, i.e. its causes and effects, as well as its 'staging', (i.e. how the passion is rhetorically shaped and performed),⁶⁵ using them as literary techniques to warn readers against falling victim to such damaging psychological conditions.

The first episode adumbrates how a person rushing to open a door did not succeed in the task, and so, in the grip of extreme anger, he began 'biting the key (δάκνοντα τὴν κλεῖν), kicking the door (λακτίζοντα τὴν θύραν), cursing the gods (λοιδορούμενον τοῖς θεοῖς), rolling his eyes wildly as madmen do (ἡγριωμένον τε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὥσπερ οἱ μαινόμενοι), and all but frothing at the mouth like a boar (καὶ μικροῦ δεῖν αὐτὸν ἀφρὸν ὡς οἱ κάπροι προϊέμενον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος)' (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 12.11-15 DB = V.16.3-9 K.).⁶⁶ The link Galen makes between behavioural ferocity and impropriety, on the one hand, and elements of mental disturbance⁶⁷ together with bodily disfigurement on the other, underpins and helps to justify his evaluative response to the spectacle: 'I hated this rage so much that I would never be seen thus disfigured by it' (ἐμίσησα τὸν θυμὸν οὕτως, ὥστε μηκέτ' ὀφθῆναι δι' αὐτὸν ἀσχημονοῦντά με, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 12.11-15 DB = V.16.3-9 K.). An extreme emotion (hatred) arises from the observation of another (truly revolutive) extreme emotion (anger); while the language of behaving in an unseemly fashion and disgracing oneself, represented by the participle ἀσχημονοῦντα, flags up the social perception of anger in terms of its aesthetic evaluation, as with the Thersites example above. The interrelation between moral and aesthetic ugliness was pervasive in ancient moral works, as noted (Chapter 2),⁶⁸ but in Galen's text this is taken further in the author's direct prescription to readers that the ugly displays of this passion should be restrained by all possible means and concealed from public view (ἀλλ' ἐν σαυτῷ κατέχειν τε καὶ κρύπτειν τὴν ὀργὴν . . . κατασχεῖν δὲ τὸ τοῦ πάθους ἀσχημον δύναται, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 12.19-21 DB = V.16.13-16 K.).

⁶⁵ In using the term 'staging', I am following Zurcher's study on the staging of the emotions, which stipulates that 'dramaturgically considered, emotion, or more accurately the performance of emotion, is enacted by the individual in terms of his or her understanding of appropriate emotional behaviors in a particular situation'; see Zurcher (1982: 2).

⁶⁶ Rabbow (1914: 97-100) pins down some of the traditional elements in Galen's presentation of passions, especially borrowings from Plato, Chrysippus, Seneca and Plutarch.

⁶⁷ Devinant (2018: 204). ⁶⁸ See also Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1127b9-13.

William Harris sees this episode as mere fiction, citing striking parallels from Chrysippus and Philodemus (*SVF* III.478; cf. Philodemus, *On Anger* fragm. 8 Indelli) to substantiate his claim that biting the key when the door fails to open is pretty much a trope with an instructive aim.⁶⁹ To endorse Harris's view that the episode could be constructive, one could also add that the 'rolling eyes' Galen assigns to the enraged man fits the symptomatology of the raging patient and also the examination of a patient's eyes as a diagnostic tool for the presence of severe rage.⁷⁰ In Galen's case, the 'staged' display of this passion, as argued in this Chapter, augments the image's impact on the audience and therefore renders the mastery of the passion even more pressing, in the mode of an 'aversion therapy'.⁷¹ Spectacularised fiction is put at the service of moral didacticism.

To return to the Galenic episode, direct counselling is superseded by four further types of moralising discourse:

- a) influencing the reader by means of personal example, and more specifically through a brief story about how, as a boy, Galen was trained by his father not to strike any household servants, thus stressing how early discipline can produce proper habits for adult life (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 13.1-4 DB = V.17.3-6 K.).
- b) Embedded within the above narrative is the exemplum of Galen's father as a moral monitor for other people, whom he reprimanded for having bitten their servants when in a state of uncontrollable anger (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 13.4-8 DB = V.17.6-12 K.).
- c) An anecdote involving the emperor Hadrian stages his irascibility, which led to the physical maltreatment of an enslaved person, causing him to lose an eye (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 13.12-18 DB = V.17.16-18.4 K.).⁷² This anecdote is attached to an episode

⁶⁹ Harris (2001: 12-13).

⁷⁰ 'That which arises from rage, too, occurs with vehemence, and should not be otherwise impossible for an intelligent person to spot, if he observes the eyes and the whole face too' (καὶ μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ θυμοῦ μετὰ σφοδρότητος γίνεται, καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἄλλως λάθοι τὸν γὰρ συνετὸν εἰς τε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ τὸ σὺμπαν πρόσωπον ἀποβλέποντα), *Praes. Puls.* 1.1, IX.214.16-215.1 K. See also Thumiger (2017: 79-97), who suggests that the eyes are 'the organ or locus where the mental state is displayed and even takes place, and which can be adequately interpreted as embodied mental experience' (p. 86).

⁷¹ Alexander (2008: 176) defines 'aversion therapy' 'as a way of displaying the full awfulness of uncontrolled passion and the depths to which sufferers will sink under its sway'.

⁷² For several interpretations of this anecdote, see Schlange-Schöningen (2015: 657-658) and especially his own view that this anecdote betokens Galen's opposition to Hadrian's monarchic rule: 'Denn man sollte auch berücksichtigen, dass Hadrian in Galens Heimatstadt Pergamon als νέος Ἀσκληπιός verehrt worden ist, und der damit verbundene Anspruch auf göttliche Ehren wird

involving one of Galen's friends from Crete who was also irascible, thus suggesting that anger is a universal trait of human behaviour, irrespective of ethnic identity and socio-political standing.

- d) This incident with Galen's friend from Gortyn in Crete is framed as an ethical case history.⁷³ The protagonist is a patient with a moral affection, in this case excessive anger, and a close acquaintance of Galen. The narrative is initially focused on an overall description of the patient's ethical condition: despite being straightforward, admirable, friendly, kind and liberal, he was also exceedingly hot-tempered so that he often inflicted corporal punishment on his servants. After that, the aetiology of the passion is described, illustrated by a trip this friend made outside Rome with Galen when, in the grip of extreme rage, he brutally attacked his two servants using a knife.⁷⁴ The realisation of what he has done led him to repent and ask Galen to flog him as punishment for his 'accursed rage', as he called it. Galen responds to his friend's remorse with amused contempt (he laughs in disapproval) in emulation of Socratic jesting (παιδιό)⁷⁵ and accordingly invites his audience to distance themselves from a similar display of this emotion.⁷⁶

mit der von Galen erzählten Anekdote zurückgewiesen. Ein Kaiser, der sich von seinem Zorn dazu verleiten lässt, einen seiner Sklaven auf nicht wieder gut zu machende Weise zu verletzen, ist in seinem Machtmissbrauch das krasse Gegenteil eines fürsorglichen, Asklepios-ähnlichen Herrschers.' Although this specific anecdote is not found in any other surviving source, Hadrian's tendency to lose his temper is extensively dealt with in hagiography, and more specifically in the narration of the martyrdom of St Sophia and her three daughters, Love, Faith and Hope, 7.7-10, 7.36-38, 10.32-34, 13.1-2; ed. Halkin. Hadrian's wrath in this context reflects the hagiological convention which often presents the Roman torturers of Christian martyrs as uncontrollably angry, as opposed to the calm and almost passionless martyrs. Cf. Birley (1997: 167 with n. 13 on p. 337).

⁷³ García Ballester (1988: 143-144) referred to this story as a 'clinical history' of anger, though he did not explore it at any length. In her Appendix B of Galenic case histories, Mattern (2008a: 174-175; Case nos. 17-23) lists this story together with other incidents of heightened anger and/or grief, but does not differentiate them in any particular sense from the purely medical case histories.

⁷⁴ This is another instance which could have allowed Galen to give medical details on the description of the wound or his contribution to treating it. There is nothing of the sort, however, which suggests that Galen distinguishes medicine from moral philosophy, being conscious that he is writing in the context of a separate discipline and genre.

⁷⁵ See e.g. *UP* 1.9, 18.7-17 Helmreich = III.25.4-13 K., where we find Galen's interpretation of Socrates's role: 'Of course it is characteristic of the Socratic muse constantly to mingle grave and gay' (αὐτῆ γὰρ ἡ Σωκράτους μούσα, μίγνυειν αἰεὶ τὴν σπουδῆν ἐν μέρει παιδιᾶς).

⁷⁶ Both Stoics and Epicureans refer frequently to the ludicrous and grotesque effects of unchecked passions, as Hankinson (1993: 200) argues. However, as I note in this study, in Galen laughter is a strong response to cognitive or moral incompetency; e.g. in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 45.3-7 DB = V.64.15-65.3 K., less educated people are being laughed at (καταγελάωμενοι) by literate ones. Cf. Harris's perfunctory interpretation (2001: 333): 'Galen kept laughing (an odd-seeming reaction, explicable by the absolute unimaginability of a [*sic*] applying a whip to one's friend), and gave him a good talking-to.'

The objectification of the Cretan friend in the narrative therefore may be seen as:

‘a kind of moral voyeurism in which only the “I” and the “you” of the discourse have real choices; the many other characters introduced as examples of the passions simply provide a kind of ethical peep show, eternally cranking through their despicable – or pitiable – behavior patterns at the behest of the philosopher and his pupil’.⁷⁷

After the patient’s description of emotional symptoms comes Galen’s therapeutic enterprise. This encompasses a lengthy discussion between Galen and the patient, clarifying to the latter how the thymoeidic (spirited) part of the soul is schooled not through flogging, but through the power of reason (*logos*), involving verbal communication (in the form of Socratic dialectics) to remedy someone’s behaviour and establish well-founded, long-term moral habits (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 13.19–15.5 DB = V.18.4–20.9 K.). This is also known as the ‘therapy of the word’.⁷⁸ It should be noted that Galen’s actual therapeutic lesson is never amplified in the text, only implied, and that the only thing that matters for the purposes of the narrative is to stress the positive outcome of Galen’s therapy.

Indeed, this moral clinical encounter is rounded off with a dedicated section on prognosticating how the moral affection improved in the space of a year, with Galen extrapolating the prognostic time-plan of moral progress and attaching it to the addressee of the essay this time, so as to inform him what kind of progress he could expect to have in years to come (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 4, 15.6–15 DB = V.20.9–21.5 K.). This and the other case histories that I describe as ethical share the majority of the formal and structural criteria of Galen’s medical case histories as analysed by Susan Mattern, which are: a) the three-stage medical process of diagnosis, cure, prognosis and the corresponding three-stage narrative process of background (a patient’s history before Galen’s intervention), crisis (encounter with Galen) and resolution (recovery); b) the demarcation of medical time; c) the use of a recollected narrative form in the aorist tense and indicative voice; d) their identification as stories that derive from Galen’s experience

⁷⁷ Alexander (2008: 180).

⁷⁸ E.g. Singer (2018: 394–395), García Ballester (1988: 144–145). More generally, see recently, Thumiger (2019), whose definition of the term rightly extends to include not just ‘forms of talking and communication’ but also ‘occupational aspects, travels and activities; distractions of the mind – emotional, artistic, intellectual, interpersonal diversions; and in general, any remedy acting within the personal and private sphere . . .’ (at p. 742). On the therapy of the word in classical antiquity, see Laín Entralgo (1970). Verbal interaction with the patient was also suggested by doctors such as Celsus and Caelius Aurelianus. See Gill (1985: 318–319).

and which he himself acknowledges as distinct units of discourse; e) their use not just to substantiate a medical point but also to transmit medical knowledge through examples (παράδειγματα), while f) simultaneously promoting the author and establishing his relationship with his audience.⁷⁹ These affinities show that, in producing his own version of a widely-used and adaptable form of moral preaching and specifically employing ethically troubling cases or stories, what I have called ethical case-histories, Galen is inspired by his medical knowledge and experience of clinical encounters with patients (see also Chapter 4).

Despite the low social status of household slaves in classical antiquity (e.g. Plato in the *Laws*, Book 6, 777e-778a, favours punishing them when they err, while Aristotle in *Politics* 1253b.32 regards a slave as merely a live article of property), in the post-Hellenistic ethical-philosophical legacy, the relation between master and servant became a *Leitmotif* when proposing the control of anger. Epictetus, for example, in discussing the treatment of slaves, asserts that masters could stop themselves exploding with rage when slaves were disobedient or mistaken, by bearing in mind the natural brotherhood that connects the master and the slave (*Discourses* 1.13). Seneca proceeded along similar lines in his *On the Control of Anger* (e.g. 1.15, 2.25, 3.12; cf. *Letter* 47 'On master and slave'), while comparable moral attitudes are espoused by Plutarch in his own *On the Control of Anger*.⁸⁰ Strikingly enough, this Plutarchan text shows important thematic resemblances with Galen's mini script on the pathology of anger cited above: a) specifically the proem to Plutarch's text presents the dialogue between two close friends, Sulla and Fundanus, who have been reunited in Rome for five months now, after Sulla's annual absence from the city. This daily association, which is also important in Galen's rapport with his Cretan friend, makes Sulla realise the moral progress Fundanus has made in controlling his anger. b) The text suggests that this was made possible by the use of therapeutic words – what Galen calls 'the power of *logos*' in his own text – and the fact that Fundanus's thymoeidic part has been willingly subjected to the power of reason (*De Coh. Ira* 453B-F). c) Plutarch, like Galen, also emphasises the display of this emotion (*De Coh. Ira* 455B), the social reaction to it, which generates laughter, hatred and scorn in spectators (*De Coh. Ira* 455E), the observation of the passion in other people who suffer from it, especially their facial and bodily deformity, as a way of distancing oneself from it (*De Coh. Ira* 455E-456E, *De Coh. Ira* 458D), and its aesthetic assessment (*De Coh. Ira* 456C-D). d) More importantly,

⁷⁹ Mattern (2008a: 41–46, 65–66).

⁸⁰ Trapp (2007: 208–210).

the Plutarchan intertext also includes an extensive account of the arousal of anger particularly in interactions with slaves (*De Coh. Ira* 459C–460C; cf. *De Coh. Ira* 460F–462B). The above evidence makes it probable that Galen positioned himself, alongside other luminaries, in a long-standing tradition of practical ethics that offered practical tips for the regulation of anger.⁸¹

Although ancient moralists as a rule acknowledged that anger was an affection of the soul, Plutarch and Seneca put significant emphasis on its display as mental illness and described its physicality as madness, highlighting its medical associations, especially its aetiology and mostly its physiological symptoms. Seneca *On the Control of Anger* 1.1 is informative:

Some of the wisest of men have in consequence of this called anger a short madness: for it is equally devoid of self-control, regardless of decorum, forgetful of kinship, obstinately engrossed in whatever it begins to do, deaf to reason and advice, excited by trifling causes, awkward at perceiving what is true and just, and very like a falling rock which breaks itself to pieces upon the very thing which it crushes. That you may know that they whom anger possesses are not sane, look at their appearance; for as there are distinct symptoms which mark madmen, such as a bold and menacing air, a gloomy brow, a stern face, a hurried walk, restless hands, changed colour, quick and strongly-drawn breathing, so too the signs of angry men are the same: their eyes blaze and sparkle, their whole face is a deep red with the blood which boils up from the bottom of their heart, their lips quiver, their teeth are set, their hair bristles and stands on end, their breath is laboured and hissing, their joints crack as they twist them about, they groan, bellow, and burst into scarcely intelligible talk, they often clap their hands together and stamp on the ground with their feet, and their whole body is highly-strung and plays those tricks which mark a distraught mind, so as to furnish an ugly and shocking picture of self-perversion and excitement.

This is the kind of (quasi-)scientific material one would expect to find in Galen, yet it is simply never there, at least not in any refined or detailed exposition.⁸² What Galen does instead is to add classical commonplaces from popular philosophy relating to anger, while minimising any medically-oriented associations or connotations that explain the passion. For example, he employs the philosophical motif according to which one should postpone punishment of servants while one is still angry (*Aff. Pecc.*

⁸¹ A useful overview of anger and its role in the relationship between slave-owners and slaves may be found in Harris (2001: 317–336).

⁸² Cf. Plutarch's *De Coh. Ira* 455E–F.

Dig. 5, 15.21-16.4 DB = V.21.12-22.3 K.) – familiar from other moralists,⁸³ and then he inserts a passing reference to the way he theorises anger as a kind of mental disturbance (μανία and its cognates are used four times) with its accompanying outward expressions (kicking, biting, tearing of clothes, *Aff. Pecc. Dig. 5*, 16.5-15 DB = V.22.4-18 K.). The closest Galen gets to a more scientific understanding of the affection is through his reference to it as a ‘boiling’ of the thymoeidic component of the soul (*Aff. Pecc. Dig. 5*, 16.4 DB = V.22.4 K.). We know that anger as the boiling of the blood in the heart has a strong scientific grounding in more technical Galenic works,⁸⁴ yet in the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* Galen does not give any further details on any of these physical correlates of affections of the soul. He remains sharply focused on philosophical themes that would have been pretty much conventional in the genre of the therapy of emotions. Galen persists in not sacrificing his claims to being taken seriously in the area of ethics. His ethical works will not be judged by medics anyway, so he sees no point in saturating them with medical terminology. To that end, he also broaches the theme of human rationality versus animality and uses it as a moralising mechanism to deter his readers from demonstrating uncontrollable rage in real-life situations, especially in their relations with less powerful people.⁸⁵ Similarly in Chapter 5, which focused on the *Exhortation to the Study of Medicine*, we have seen that Galen taps into the topic of bestiality, in order to commend the monitoring of damaging passions through the medium of rational judgment. This he sees as morally edifying for the Graeco-Roman elite to whom his works are addressed. In the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, however, he links irrationality with bestiality specifically in order to arouse his audience’s sense of shame.

⁸³ E.g. Seneca *On the Control of Anger* 1.8: ‘The best plan is to reject straightway the first incentives to anger, to resist its very beginnings, and to take care not to be betrayed into it’; see also 1.15: ‘This is why Socrates said to the slave, “I would strike you, were I not angry.” He put off the correction of the slave to a calmer season; at the moment, he corrected himself. Who can boast that he has his passions under control, when Socrates did not dare to trust himself to his anger?’ See also Plutarch, *De Cob. Ira* 455B-D.

⁸⁴ E.g. *PHP* 6.8, 422.20-424.8 DL = 581.11-582.16 K.; *San. Tu.* 2.9, 61.20-34 Ko. = VI.138.2-139.1 K.; *Diff. Feb.* 1.4, VII.283.7-15 K.; *Hipp. Epid.* VI, 4, 26, 242.7-9 Wenkebach = XVIIIB.209.9-11 K. See Singer (2017) on the physical consequences of the affections of the soul and von Staden (2011) specifically on the physiology and therapy of anger from a physical point of view. Cf. van der Eijk (2013: 327–332) on the limits of physical and moral curability in Galen.

⁸⁵ ‘For, since human beings have, uniquely among animals, the faculty of reason, if they cast this aside and gratify their rage – that is the life of an animal, not a human being’ (<δπ>ου γάρ μόνος ἀνθρώπος ἐξείρετον ἔχει παρά τὰ ἄλλα τὸ λογίζεσθαι, τοῦτ’ ἐάν ἀπορρίψας τῷ θυμῷ χαρίζηται, ζῶου, οὐκ ἀνθρώπου βίος), *Aff. Pecc. Dig. 5*, 16.15-18 DB = V.22.18-23.3 K.

The shame of others and self-shame

In assigning to humans alone the gift of rationality, Galen hammers home the idea that, by achieving gratification through anger, his readers were lowering themselves to the level of animals. The animal imagery is structured around the divide between a reflective human being (φρόνιμον ἄνθρωπον), who attempts to become noble and decent (ἄνθρωπος γενέσθαι καλὸς κἀγαθός), and a wild beast, an image that crops up very frequently in this context. Beyond the actual philosophical overtones here (the desiderative is traditionally seen as an untameable animal), assimilation to a wild beast rhetorically denotes foolishness, and so Galen goes on to label the agent a 'slave of anger', which he defines as not being sufficiently free of the affection as to act on the basis of mature consideration (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 16.19-17.1 DB = V.23.3-13 K.). The associations with animality create derogatory innuendos in readers' minds as a way of discouraging them from embracing what Galen regards as manners unsuitable to humans.

Galen also plays on his addressees' sense of social esteem by arguing in a rhetorical fashion that they will demonstrate their superiority over everyone else (ἑαυτὸν ἐπιδείξει πάντων ἀνθρώπων βελτίονα) and achieve the greatest honour (τιμήσαντός σου τιμῆς σεαυτὸν μεγίστης), if they manage to stay free from anger (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 17.2-4 DB = V.23.14-17 K.). Here the author seems on a first level to be espousing the Stoic model of *apatheia*, complete abstention from passions. However, in the context of his exposition what he really wants to emphasise is not the strict application of a theoretical doctrine on the eradication of emotions, but rather the ability of the moral agent to contain unrelenting affections, as we have seen in Chapter 4. In my reading, Galen does not go on to talk about the moderation of passions in this section of the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* (though he does that slightly later in the work),⁸⁶ because he tailors the content and style of his narrative to the credentials of his readers, who are depicted as having a rather crude sense of moral consciousness and falling short of the philosophical mindset required to have a full grasp of the workings of passions. So for Galen it is more vital to address such readers in a very direct way ('Abstain from the passion!'), without taking

⁸⁶ This occurs in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 19.1-7 DB = V.6, 26.17-27.6 K. Here Galen refers explicitly to the taming of the non-rational capacity of the spirited, which is meant to co-exist with the rational principle of the soul, staying under constant check. This attests to Galen's adoption of Platonic bipartition. Indeed, a few lines below he explicitly says that the non-rational capacity should not be eliminated, referring to his *Character Traits*; *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 19.8-10 DB = V.6.27.6-9 K.

into account the niceties of complex philosophical differentiation in the use of affect-related terms.

That Galen's advice is very pragmatic rather than speculative is seen in the fact that he then proceeds to distinguish between *appearing* to be morally superior and *actually* being so, which flags up the issue of false reputation as opposed to reality in social interactions in Galen's time (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 17.5-6 DB = V.23.17-24.3 K.; see also Chapter 8). For Galen it is absolutely fundamental that the person should remain faithful to his decision to practise self-honour, a course which is genuine and self-determined, and avoid giving false impressions to others and above all to oneself (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 18.3-4 DB = V.25.7-8 K.). In fact, the issue of social affectation and moral genuineness seems to form the core of Galen's ensuing recommendation that the addressee should leave the door of his house constantly open and allow free entrance to all acquaintances, which underscores the notion of moral exposure and therefore alertness (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 5, 18.14-25 DB = V.26.2-16 K.). The rationale behind this admonition is that, just as agents protect their image in the public space, they should also be mindful of their inner condition in the private sphere as well. In other words, social shame should have a counterpart in a person's relation to the self too. Exposing oneself to public scrutiny as a sign of moral propriety especially in private affairs features in other popular philosophical works, such as Plutarch's *Political Precepts* 800F-801A, but in the passage from Galen referred to above it is directly used as a moralising device to help the reader keep the non-rational principle of the soul in constant check.

Situational ethics: Dietetics as a moralising space

Somewhere half-way through the essay, Galen cross-references his work on *Character Traits* to substantiate his discussion of the proper monitoring of the desiderative faculty of the soul (*epithymētikon*), that is the one connected with bodily pleasures, impulses and desires (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 19.8ff DB = V.27.6 ff K.).⁸⁷ The considerable length of this section and its technical character, which is at odds with the popular philosophical nature of what comes before and indeed after it, leads us to assume that this is a non-functional detour and presumably represents a later addition to the text by Galen during the revision stage of the oral version.⁸⁸ This

⁸⁷ Specifically on the desiderative soul in Galen, see De Lacy (1988).

⁸⁸ In line with Singer (2013: 261, n. 136); cf. Gill (2010: 268).

suggestion is backed up by a) the awkward recapitulation of the role of the candid critic and other psychotherapeutic tactics already sufficiently covered in the work (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 20.32-21.10 DB = V.30.3-18 K.), b) the almost complete absence of popular philosophical components, such as edifying stories (*exempla*) and proverbs, which are now replaced by a relatively processed theoretical account, and c) the fact that the Galenic moralism is now strictly hortatory, communicated in the second-person singular, and focuses on the author's (conceited) notion of himself as a moral philosopher for all men (e.g. *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 20.16-17 DB = V.29.11-13 K.), having dropped the dynamics it previously employed that were based on a range of strategies aiming at bringing about ethical reform.

That said, the discussion of the desiderative soon gets linked to a number of guidelines on how one should eat and drink especially in the context of a dinner party. Galen now amply spells out what he expounds less explicitly in the naturalistic accounts of *The Capacities of the Soul Follow the Mixtures of the Body* and *Matters of Health* regarding dietetics as a site of moral education (Chapter 2), with a notable degree of conceptual coherence between what he says in the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* and these two works. As I will go on to show, his thematic turn towards dietetics in *Affections and Errors of the Soul* points to Galen's interest in situational ethics, i.e. social or cultural occasions that provide opportunities for behavioural training, habituation to a specific form of conduct, and therefore moral progress. From *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 21.11 DB = V.31.18 K. onwards the discussion centres on how to cure oneself of gluttony and drunkenness, among other things, just as one should become accustomed to practising freedom from anger. So, with the focus firmly on passions that affect the desiderative soul, Galen proceeds to show that daily events such as meals and eating in the company of others, which were deeply entrenched in the realities and social habits of his Graeco-Roman wealthy addressees, can be morally challenging:

And therefore another person must watch over us, to ensure that we do not make the same spectacle of insatiable gobbling of food as dogs, or gulp down a cold drink like someone in the throes of continuous fever, in a way unbecoming a man of dignity. Even when one is hungry, it is not appropriate to gobble in a violent and insatiable manner; nor, if one is thirsty, should one drink down a whole goblet in one go. How much less should a luxurious appetite lead one to indulge more than all one's fellow diners in cake or any other rich food. In all these situations, when beginning the process we should call upon others to observe any errors we make, and tell them to us; later on, let us conduct the observation upon ourselves, even

without tutors, and let us take care that we take less food than all our fellow diners, and that we abstain from the rich foods, and take a moderate amount of the healthy ones.⁸⁹ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 21.12-22.2 DB = V.31.2-16 K.

Regulation by others and afterwards self-discipline at the table is what is advocated, with a number of moral ploys that Galen uses elsewhere being in evidence here as well: e.g. the animal analogy of the covetous dog, which is designed to discourage readers from insatiability as a reprehensible form of eating behaviour, or the notion of public appearance that conditions the way the moral agent is perceived and evaluated by his fellow-citizens in the context of the dinner party. Later on, Galen helps readers internalise appropriate ethical attitudes by warning them not to succumb to unnecessary competition with or envy of their fellow diners in respect of the self-restrained consumption of food and drink: 'And after a while I would say that you should not even consider the amount consumed by your fellow diners; for it is no great achievement to be more restrained than they with regard to food and drink (μέγα γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκείνων ἐσθίειν τε καὶ πίνειν ἐγκρατέστερον)' (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 22.3-5 DB = V.31.16-32.1 K.). The idea is to stay focused on one's eating behaviour, minimising any self-centred pride that might arise from practising moderation. Indeed, self-understanding and self-examination form the basis of Galen's moralising programme here:

If you have learnt truly to esteem yourself, consider whether you are more restrained in your daily regime yesterday or today. Following this practice you will become conscious each day that it is easier to abstain from the foods that I have mentioned; and conscious of a greater joy of the soul, if you really are a lover of self-control. *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 22.5-9 DB = V.32.1-6 K.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ ἕτερος οὖν ἡμᾶς ἐπιτηρείτω, μή τί που, καθάπερ οἱ κύνες, ἀπλήστως ὥφθημεν ἐμφορούμενοι σιτίων ἢ ὡς οἱ διακαιόμενοι πυρετῶ συνεχεῖ ψυχρὸν ἐπεσπασάμεθα τὸ πόμα λαβρότερον ἢ ἀνδρὶ σεμνῶ πρέπει. οὔτε γὰρ διὰ πείναν ἐμφορεῖσθαι προσήκει σφοδρῶς καὶ ἀπλήστως, οὔτε διὰ δίψας ὀλην τὴν κύλικα χανδὸν ἐκπίνει, ἔτι δὲ μάλλον οὐδὲ διὰ λιχνείαν ἀπάντων τῶν παρόντων πλέον ἤτοι πλακοῦντος ἢ τινος ἄλλου τῶν λίχνων ὄψων ἀπολαύειν, ἀλλ' ἐν ἅπασιν τούτοις ἀρχομένοις μὲν ἐπι παρακλητέον ἐστὶν ἐτέρους ὁ τι <ἀν> ἀμάρτωμεν ἐπιτηρεῖν τε καὶ λέγειν ἡμῖν, ὕστερον δὲ καὶ χωρὶς παιδαγωγῶν ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐπιτηρώμεν αὐτοὶ καὶ παραφυλάττωμεν, ὅπως ἀπάντων τε τῶν συνδειπνούστων ἑλαττον ὄψου προσεγκώμεθα καὶ τῶν λίχνων ἐδεσμάτων ἀποσχώμεθα, σύμμετρα τῶν ὑγιεινῶν προσαράμενοι.

⁹⁰ εἰ δὲ περ ὄντως αὐτὸν ἐγνωκας τιμᾶν, ἐπισκέπτου, <πότερον> μάλλον [ποτε] ἐγκρατῶς διήττησα χθὲς ἢ τήμερον· ἐὰν γὰρ τοῦτο ποιῆς, αἰσθήση καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν εὐκολώτερον, ὧν εἶπον, ἀπεχόμενος, αἰσθήση τε μεγάλη εὐφρανθησόμενος τὴν ψυχὴν, ἐὰν γε σωφροσύνης ὄντως ἐραστής ὑπάρχῃς.

The introduction of the suggested reflective exercises by Galen is associated with his self-positioning as a moral authority, which provides assurance that the beliefs he commends to his addressee, and by implication to society at large, are morally edifying.

Another remarkable feature of Galen's moral advice in this section is that he attaches positive connotations to what might be seen as morally ambiguous terms. Specifically, he compares the extremes (ἀκρότητα) of drinking too much, overeating and having too much sex, to the peak of self-control (σωφροσύνης ἀκρότητα, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 22.15-17 DB = V.32.13-15 K.).⁹¹ It is interesting that, even though the primary meaning of ἀκρότης (*akrotēs*) as 'extreme' might seem to be opposed to the Aristotelian μεσότης (*mesotēs*, moderation), its metaphorical meaning can be linked to excellence, perfection or the summit of a thing or an activity,⁹² so it is positively loaded in a text on ethics. For example, in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1107a6-8, we read 'That is why virtue, as far as its essence and the account stating what it is are concerned, is a mean, but, as far as the best condition and the good result are concerned, it is an extreme'.⁹³ Similarly, Galen is in favour of a positive, productive kind of competitiveness, the sort that takes place when trainees in philosophy surpass those who are engaged in the same endeavours as them or one that has to do with surpassing oneself (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 6, 22.17-20 DB = V.32.15-33.2 K.). The term used is φιλονεικία (*philoneikia*), which in Galen, as in other Imperial-period authors, predominantly denotes 'love of strife', 'contentiousness', but in this case he opts for the less common meaning, that of 'emulation' and so he is using it in a positive sense.⁹⁴ Galen therefore plays with the lexical flexibility of morally-loaded terms. He is happy to harness negative phraseology and transform it into something positive in order to problematise certain moral situations and justify moral disapprobation.

One final point must be discussed in this context. Galen makes a strong case that long-established habit (*ēthos*) will make healthy eating easy and

⁹¹ On sex in the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, with comparison to the *Character Traits*, see Ahonen (2017: esp. 465-469).

⁹² LSJ, s.v.

⁹³ διὸ κατὰ μὲν τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι λέγοντα μεσότης ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἄριστον καὶ τὸ εὖ ἀκρότης.

⁹⁴ LSJ, s.v. On the different uses of the term in Galen, see Singer (2013: 266, n. 168). It is interesting that even in the context of the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, a bit further down in the text, Galen dwells on the derogatory overtones of φιλονεικία, grouping it together with φιλοδοξία ('love of reputation') and φιλαρχία ('love of offices') as serious affections of the soul (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 24.10-11 DB = V.35.10-11 K.).

pleasant, and therefore renders the latter an indispensable part of one's daily regimen. The author is also adamant in his view that the example of a controlled diet can provide a basis for an analogous approach to remedying psychic insatiability. Dietetics was an essential part of ancient medicine, which compared with the other two branches of therapeutics, namely pharmacology and surgery, was the most conspicuous and socially acceptable (e.g. Scribonius Largus, *epistula dedicatoria* 2; Plutarch, *On Friends and Flatterers* 73D). Galen gives us good reasons why this might have been the case by showing that dietetics was indeed an area liable to promote individual and social righteousness. Such opinions crop up time and again in Galen's *Matters of Health*, his dedicated work on the importance of dietetics, a term that includes not just foodstuffs, but, as seen in Chapter 2, a wider range of environmental aspects affecting the body such as exercise, sleep, baths, massage, sexual activity and so on, which the agent ought to enjoy in moderation.⁹⁵ So Galen develops the idea that the human being will be happiest, if he is brought up from birth in a regime that prizes the art of hygiene; 'for he will thus gain some benefit for his soul too (εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ὀνίναίτο), since a good daily regime paves the way for good character traits (τῆς χρηστῆς διαίτης ἥθη χρηστὰ παρασκευαζούσης)' (*San. Tu.* 7, 16.2-5 Ko. = VI.31.18-32.5 K.). Elsewhere, it is underlined that the character of the soul is corrupted by bad habits in respect of food, drink or physical exercise, and therefore it is not only the business of the philosopher to shape the character of the soul (πλάττειν ἦθος ψυχῆς) but somehow that of the doctor too, who is often called upon to prevent or correct the deleterious effects that moral affections have on the body (*San. Tu.* 8, 19.24-20.3 Ko. = VI.40.4-17 K.). Galen's identity as a doctor is not involved in the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* (cf. the last section of this Chapter), but his contention that bodily and psychic health are interdependent certainly is, as we have seen. This is in tune with Plutarch's *Precepts of Health Care*, a work that combines the demands of health care and the expectations of moral decorum at dinner parties and other outings (e.g. 123D-E) in highly sophisticated ways, as has recently been shown.⁹⁶

Galen's wider image of the physician who infiltrates into the territory of ethics also features in *The Capacities of the Soul Follow the Mixtures of the*

⁹⁵ On dietetics in early Greek medicine, see Lonie (1977). For a brief history of dietetics in antiquity, see Edelstein (1967: 303-316). On Galen's dietetics, see Romano (2000).

⁹⁶ van Hoof (2010: 214-254).

Body, as already argued in Chapter 2. Here the same core idea is put forward: since a deficient bodily condition (*krasis*) causes a bad state of the soul, by restoring bodily mixtures, the doctor can achieve psychic stability. Earlier literature has explained this thesis as reflecting Galen's physicalist approach to the therapy of the passions (see Chapter 2). But beyond that, the ethical layer with which Galen invests these texts hints at his claims to be seen as a moralist, independently of or in conjunction with his authoritative expertise in medicine for which he was best known. An interesting passage in Plutarch's *Precepts of Health Care* 122B-E dramatises a contemporary discussion as to whether the two groups (physicians and philosophers) should have distinct areas of specialisation and knowledge or whether some 'blurring of boundaries' (σύγχυσις ὄρων, 122C) could be permissible. Galen seems to be responding to the ongoing debate over the demarcation of the duties of doctors and philosophers, and suggesting that his medical role should not (and does not) preclude his competence in the field of ethics. In this way he also bolsters his general self-image of the physician-cum-philosopher, specifically disposed to ethics as much as to logic and physics. We will see that this holds true for *Prognosis* (Chapter 8) too, where once again Galen casts himself as a moral authority, notwithstanding his more developed medical image in this text.

This proposal is consistent with Galen's ideas about specialisation, which he endorsed in an inclusive way, i.e. not excluding contributions from specialists in other disciplines. He often argues that specific topics need, ideally, to be discussed by professionals from the corresponding field. However, he does welcome the input of other professional groups on given topics, provided that their approach is rational and methodologically sound, thus acknowledging the advantages of an interdisciplinary approach to specialisation. So, for example, in *Matters of Health* he states that hygiene should ideally be discussed by physicians and gymnastic trainers, though it was often dealt with by philosophers too. In the *Construction of the Embryo* he says that this topic should be tackled by physicians, though philosophers have attempted to give an opinion on it too. In *Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* he mentions that the powers that govern animals should be examined by both philosophers and physicians. And the same emphases obtain in the introduction to the *Diagnosis by the Pulse* (*Dig. Puls.* 1.1, VIII.766.3-767.7 K.). This shows that Galen does not favour rigid segregation of areas of expertise, which at any rate did not form part of the public perception of the doctor's identity in antiquity either. As Nutton remarks: 'The boundary between the self-acknowledged doctor and the educated layman was very narrow. The distance that separated a

Galen from a Cornelius Celsus or a Seneca is far less than that between a modern cardiologist and the average G.P.⁹⁷

Moral emulation

In another section of the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, Galen turns to a detailed analysis of the passion of distress or grief (*lypē*), having re-confirmed his status as an expert in matters ethical. Specifically, by means of self-effacement – a favourite technique in the proem to the text and an enduring authorising gesture in the knowledge-ordering culture of the Imperial period –⁹⁸ he claims in feigned ignorance that if there is any other way by which one could become a noble man, he would be happy to accept it, but otherwise his addressee(s) should stick to his own method of diagnosis and treatment of passions, until a better one is discovered (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 24.4-10 DB = V.35.3-10 K.). This passage resembles an earlier one, i.e. *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 2, 6.16-24 DB = V.6.17-7.9 K. (see part 3 of this Chapter), which it revisits. As I have argued above, the gist of this passage was to urge readers to actively explore other possible therapeutic methods. However, here Galen's method is specifically called 'common to all', suggesting that its application is universally acceptable and efficient, thus potentially restricting any unnecessary searching on the reader's part. Moreover, Galen's affectation is also evinced in his ostentatious pretence of humility, when he says that he expects people whom he has benefitted morally to 'return the favour, with some reciprocal benefit and teaching' (παρακαλῶν ἀντιδιδόναι τε καὶ ἀντοινάναι τι καὶ ἀντιδιδάσκειν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 24.7-8 DB = V.35.6-7 K.), a statement that is at odds with the way Galen goes on in the text to present himself as a didactic paradigm of firm resistance to distress. It seems he barely needs any help from others. This image of him occurs in the context of a story about a young man who used to easily get upset over minor issues and therefore visited Galen for advice.

A number of components in this story cast light on the primary features of Galenic moralism:

- a. The young age of the person who approaches Galen is linked to the intensity of the passion. This squares with Galen's – and other

⁹⁷ G.P. stands for 'General Practitioner'. Nutton (1985: 38). Cf. König (2005: 254–300).

⁹⁸ König (2017: 8).

moralists' – view that there are affections that are especially predictable in young men.⁹⁹

- b. The story is acted out as a narrative with dramatic time and space within which the characters operate, as well as a determinant event, a turning point in the plot, as it were. In this case, the young man has a sudden realisation of his condition (κατανοήσας τοῦτο, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 25.16 DB = V.37.6 K.), which leads him to stay awake all night and visit Galen first thing in the morning to find out the reason for Galen's own immunity to distress.
- c. From what we learn from this brief story, the young man is an acquaintance of Galen's, who must have known him very well, as he remembered (εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἀφικέσθαι, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 25.18 DB = V.37.8 K.) the general pattern of Galen's response to grief. This ties in with the close rapport Galen sets up between himself as moral advisor and his actual and intended readership in general, and the role of moral anamnesis in ethical progress (Chapter 4).

This ethical case history is not as fully fleshed-out as the one with Galen's Cretan friend, but it does include two of the basic features of a unified 'conversion narrative',¹⁰⁰ i.e. background (description of the passion) and crisis (self-realisation of the condition). The resolution, or the outcome of the young man's encounter with Galen, is not explicitly addressed, though the amplification of Galen's therapeutic advice may be assumed to have steered the young man towards restraining his grief.

The elements of the story outlined above stress Galen's impact as a moral teacher and lead him to make a firm declaration that natural inclinations are important in childhood as is emulation of fine exemplars, whereas at a later stage the important factors are doctrines and training (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 25.21-24 DB = V.37.12-14 K.). I have discussed in Chapter 4 above the educational triad Galen envisages here as well as any discrepancies observed between this text and *Avoiding Distress*. For present purposes, I would like to touch briefly on the role of moral emulation here, which has important ramifications for Galen's moralising role and the function of emulation as a staple of his moral agenda.

The relevant passage focuses on the portrayal of Galen's parents' characters, pointedly contrasting the two as role models for Galen during his formative period:

⁹⁹ See, e.g. *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 7, 26.12-13 DB = V.38.11-13 K., where young men are described as naturally prone to becoming easily distressed, enraged and luxury-loving.

¹⁰⁰ Mattern (2008a: 67).

I did have the great good fortune to have a father who was to an extraordinary degree free from anger, just, good and generous; but I had a mother whose irascibility was so extreme that she would sometimes bite her maids. She was perpetually shouting and fighting with my father, even more so than Xanthippe with Socrates. Thus, as I saw alongside each other the fine qualities of my father's deeds and the ugly affections to which my mother was subject, I was moved to warmth and love for the former, and avoidance and hatred of the latter. I observed a very great difference between my parents in this respect; and so too in the fact that my father never appeared distressed at any setback, while my mother would suffer grief at the smallest occurrence. You probably realise yourself the way in which children imitate those things in which they take pleasure, but avoid what they do not enjoy watching.¹⁰¹ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 27.22-28.8 DB = V.40.15-41.9 K.

The superlatives used to refer to the character traits of the father and the mother emphasise the extreme nature of each one's behaviour, in a positive and a negative light respectively. Above all, the graphic description of the mother's conduct, with its focus on the way her passions are enacted through biting, shouting and fighting, is suitably linked to the disapprobation of her attitude on Galen's part, who aesthetically calls her affections 'ugly', as opposed to his father's 'fine' deeds. Jim Hankinson has emphasised the pointed use of the ethically-related terminology assigned to the two parents, referring to the father's deeds (*erga*) as opposed to the mother's affections (*pathe*), to highlight that the power of voluntary action in Galen is specific to the rational soul.¹⁰² The same, I think, can be said about another key element in the above passage, namely that Galen, from the standpoint of a moral recipient this time (and not a moral leader), is cast as able to embrace or avoid a pattern of behaviour only after careful observation and critical parallelism of moral positions he encounters in others (παράλληλά τε ὁρῶντί μοι).¹⁰³ Therefore, deliberate individual

¹⁰¹ Ἐγὼ τοίνυν, ὅπως μὲν τὴν φύσιν εἶχον, οὐκ ἔχω φάναι (τὸ γὰρ ἑαυτὸν γινῶναι χαλεπὸν ἔστι καὶ τοῖς τελείοις ἀνδράσι, μὴ τί γε δὴ τοῖς παισίν), εὐτύχησα δὲ μεγάλην εὐτυχίαν, ἀοργητότατον μὲν καὶ δικαιοτάτον καὶ χρηστότατον καὶ φιλανθρωπότατον ἔχων πατέρα, μητέρα δ' ὀργιλωτάτην, ὡς δάκνειν μὲν ἐνίοτε τὰς θεραπαίνας, αἰεὶ δὲ κεκραγένας τε καὶ μάχεσθαι τῷ πατρὶ μᾶλλον ἢ Ξανθίππῃ Σωκράτει. παράλληλά τε ὁρῶντί μοι τὰ καλὰ τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς ἔργων τοῖς αἰσχροῖς πάθεσι τῆς μητρὸς ἔπρηι τὰ μὲν ἀσπάζεσθαι τε καὶ φιλεῖν, τὰ δὲ φεύγειν καὶ μισεῖν. ὥσπερ δ' ἐν τούτοις ἑώρων παμπόλλην διαφορὰν τῶν γονέων, οὕτω κὰν τῷ <φαίνεσθαι> τὸν μὲν ἐπὶ μηδεμιᾷ ζημίᾳ λυπούμενον, ἀνωμένην <δ'> ἐπὶ σμικροτάτοις τὴν μητέρα. γινώσκεις δὲ δῆπου καὶ σὺ τοὺς παῖδας, οἷς μὲν ἂν ἡσθῶσι, ταῦτα μιμουμένους, ἃ δ' ἂν ἀηδῶς ὁρῶσι φεύγοντας.

¹⁰² Hankinson (1993: 207–209). Cf. Harris (2001: 271–272), who suggests that in this episode too Galen shows a proclivity to fictionalise his mother's rage.

¹⁰³ The use of verbs of vision in the quoted extract in particular speak to Galen's firm belief that 'Those things of which we are eyewitnesses are better than paradigmatic examples' (ἀμείνω δὲ τῶν παραδειγμάτων ἔστιν ὧν αὐτόπται γεγόναμεν, *MM* 9.4, X.608.15–16 K.). Cf. Seneca, *Letter* 6.5,

decision-making, especially by closely examining opposing morals, is a crucial part of sober philosophical teaching and learning (see also Chapter 3).

Critical thinking is indeed presented as a constant in the process of moral education. This is demonstrated both by the fact that Galen's father conducted, on his son's behalf, a scrutiny of the lifestyle and doctrines of Galen's teachers (τοῦ τε βίου καὶ τῶν δογμάτων ἐξέτασιν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 28.17-19 DB = V.42.3-4 K.) and by the fact that in a speech put into the mouth of Galen's father in this context, the paternal figure advocates cautious study and judgment of philosophical approaches that will help Galen increase his virtues of justice, self-control, courage and independent thinking (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 28.25-29.6 DB = V.42.11-18 K.). The combined ethical and intellectual excellence of Galen's father squares with the traditional way a philosopher would normally be identified in the Imperial period.¹⁰⁴ This explains why Galen is eager to reproduce his father's distinctive features also in *Good Humour and Bad Humour*, where this time the emphasis is on the extent to which his father, in fact, exceeds the traditional philosophical model: 'My father reached the point at which he was extremely competent in geometry, architecture, arithmetic, mathematics and astronomy, and admired by everybody who knew him for his justice, goodness and temperance – like none of the philosophers.'¹⁰⁵

The beneficial impact of Galen's father on him is given some prominence as the text proceeds, through a description of the moralising

who also underscores the importance of living examples to look up to. See also Philodemus, *On Anger* col. 1.20-27 Indelli.

¹⁰⁴ E.g. Alcinous, *Manual of Platonic Doctrine (Didaskalikos)* 1.2-3: 'The term "philosopher" is derived from "philosophy" in the same way as "musician" from "music". The first necessity is that he be naturally apt at those branches of learning which have the capacity to fit him for, and lead him towards, the knowledge of intelligible being, which is not subject to error or change. Next, he must be enamoured of the truth, and in no way tolerate falsehood. Furthermore, he must also be endowed with a temperate nature, and, in relation to the passionate part of the soul, he must be naturally restrained. For he who devotes himself to the study of reality and turns his desires in that direction would not be impressed by (bodily) pleasures. The prospective philosopher must also be endowed with liberality of mind, for nothing is so inimical as small-mindedness to a soul which is proposing to contemplate things divine and human. He must also possess natural affinity for justice, just as he must towards truth and liberality and temperance; and he should also be endowed with a ready capacity to learn and a good memory, for these too contribute to the formation of the philosopher.' (trans. Dillon 1993); with Trapp (2017).

¹⁰⁵ *Bon. Mal. Suc.* 1.15, 69 Ieraci Bio = VI.755.12-16 K.: ἔμοι μὲν γὰρ πατὴρ ἐγένετο γεωμετρίας μὲν καὶ ἀρχιτεκτονικῆς καὶ λογιστικῆς ἀριθμητικῆς τε καὶ ἀστρονομίας εἰς ἄκρον ἤκων, ὑπὸ πάντων δὲ τῶν γνόντων αὐτὸν ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ χρηστότητι καὶ σωφροσύνη θαυμασθεὶς ὡς οὐδεὶς τῶν φιλοσόφων. Pace Singer (2014: 10), who interprets the passage from *Good Humour and Bad Humour* cited above as an act of 'self-exclusion' on Galen's part. Cf. [Gal.], *Ther. Pis.* 1, 4.4-18 Boudon-Millot = XIV.212.10-213.5 K.

dynamics between the two parties. We read that Galen took *specific instructions* (my emphasis) from his father which he still observed (ἐγὼ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς λαβὼν τὰς ἐντολὰς ἄχρι δεῦρο διαφυλάττω, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 29.13-14 DB = V.43.6-8 K.), that (like his father) he is fond of making *a vigorous and thorough examination* of philosophical material (σπουδῆ πάσῃ ἀκριβῆ τὴν ἐξέτασιν ἔχω, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 29.15 DB = V.43.9 K.), he follows the moral principles of despising reputation and esteem which his father *accustomed him to* (δόξης τε καὶ τιμῆς ὁ πατήρ εἶθισέ με καταφρονεῖν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 29.18-19 DB = V.43.13-14 K.), remains unshaken by sudden events because this is the quality *he observed in his father* (ἀνέκπληκτός τε πρὸς τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον ὁσημέραι συμπίπτοντα διαμένων, ὥσπερ ἐώρων τὸν πατέρα, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 29.15-16 DB = V.43.9-11 K.), always *recalls the paternal counsels* handed down to him (μεμνημένον ὦν ὁ πατήρ ὑπέθετο, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 30.10 DB = V.44.10-11 K.) and was influenced in his decision-making concerning moral issues by how his father *would define* things, in this case as regards the primary point of material possessions (τοῦτον γὰρ ἐτίθετο πρῶτον ὅρον ἐκεῖνος κτημάτων, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 30.12-13 DB = V.44.13-15 K.). I have gone into some detail about the textual evidence relating to the educational role of Galen's father (italics mine), because I see interesting connections with the way Galen depicts himself throughout the text but also in this context as practising precisely those qualities that shaped his character and contributed to his ethical advancement. Towards the end of the section on his father, Galen addresses the recipient of the essay thus:

Therefore cultivate the argument that I have stated, to this end; remember it, and practise it constantly, investigating whether or not I have spoken the truth, until finally you are as completely convinced of it as of the proposition that two times two is four.¹⁰⁶ *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 30.18-21 DB = V.45.4-6 K.

Regular practice, a good memory, study and careful examination are all recommendations appended to Galen's educational profile, derived from his father's pedagogy, as he himself described it above. The concluding sentence almost coerces the recipient into believing that his moral success is guaranteed only if he follows Galen's advice, just as Galen managed to become the perfect exemplum through his apprenticeship to his father, his

¹⁰⁶ πρὸς ταύτην οὖν ἄσκησον <τὸν> λόγον, ὃν εἶπον ἐγώ, διὰ μνήμης ἔχω καὶ μελετῶν ἀεὶ καὶ σκοπούμενος, εἰ ἀληθεύω, μέχρι περ ἂν τούτῳ πεισθῆς ὡς τῷ τὰ δις δύο τέτταρα εἶναι.

own paradigm. Although traditional in other works of self-improvement (e.g. Plutarch, *De Prof. in Virt.* 84E; Seneca, *Letter* 52.2–3), moral emulation in this Galenic context transcends the textual limits of his work, reflecting the author's anticipated or envisaged role as a moral teacher within his society.

Insatiability as the aetiology of grief

We have seen in Chapter 4 that in his *Avoiding Distress*, Galen negotiates the passion of grief (*lypē*) that arises from the loss of significant material or other possessions. In the *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, he turns his attention to another factor that triggers grief, one that is most appropriate to the upper-class inhabitants of the Roman Empire that he has in mind, i.e. insatiably coveting material possessions.

To begin with, we should note that in this context Galen conceptualises insatiability as 'the most wretched affection of the soul' (ὀρθῶς εἰρησθαι πάθος εἶναι ψυχῆς μοχθηρότατον ἀπληστίαν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 34.16–18 DB = V.51.13–14 K.) and the foundation stone of a series of interrelated moral vices, such as love of money, love of reputation, love of esteem, love of power and love of quarrelling (κρηπίς γάρ τις αὕτη φιλοχρηματίας ἐστὶ καὶ φιλοδοξίας καὶ φιλοτιμίας καὶ φιλαρχίας καὶ φιλονεικίας, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 34.18–19 DB = V.51.14–15 K.). This definition of insatiability, which implicates moral condemnation, reflected in the ethically loaded term μοχθηρότατον, progresses into an associated explanation of the passion, which is calculated to arouse even stronger feelings of revulsion in ancient readers: Galen defines the synonym acquisitiveness (πλεονεξίαν) as the foundation (κρηπίδα) of 'shameless, wanton, tyrannical mistresses' (αἰσχροῖς καὶ ἀσελγέσι καὶ τυραννικαῖς δεσποίνοις), referring to love of money, meanness, love of reputation, love of power and love of esteem; and emphasises how socially repellent (αἰσχροὺν) it is to care for our legal freedom, yet neglect our genuine, natural freedom by turning ourselves into slaves to the above mentioned vices (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 35.15–20 DB = V.53.7–13 K.).

Beyond the theoretical definitions of insatiability provided by Galen and the way they are meant to create feelings of revulsion against this vice by stimulating the readers' self-esteem, as we have seen, there is another tactic at play here, i.e. seeking to prompt Galen's audience to visualise the destructive effects of insatiably feeding the body. This is used as a parallel to the insatiability of the soul. The relatively long physiological description of digestion offered here (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 31.1–12

DB = V.45.8-46.5 K.)¹⁰⁷ is probably the most scientific Galen can get in this essay, giving us for the first time some sort of a glimpse into his identity as a physician.¹⁰⁸ In particular the level of technical detail and the provision of bodily symptoms of indigestion such as diarrhoea or the creation of bad humours in the veins are a window on the author's medical theory of nutrition, as expounded elsewhere in his corpus.¹⁰⁹ This is not to say that Galen breaks the philosophical illusion of his *Affections and Errors of the Soul*, for he is still conscious that he is addressing an audience only some of whom would perhaps have had some tangential knowledge of medicine. That explains his insertion of explanatory asides such as 'the symptom is known as diarrhoea', which shows that Galen makes this technical section reader-friendly to non-experts in physiology or medicine, keeping up with the readership conventions of popular philosophy targeting a wider elite audience.

Yet, what makes the section on nutrition important from a moral point of view is that it gives prominence to two key notions relating to the function of nutrition, which are transferable to the understanding of the proper function of the soul: viz. attention should be paid to a) 'what is moderate' (τὸ σύμμετρον), which is defined on the basis of b) what is necessary (χρεια) or useful (ὠφέλεια) for the body/soul.¹¹⁰ Overloading the

¹⁰⁷ 'The beginning of our investigation will be provided by the insatiable appetite for nourishment. For consumption of amounts of food beyond what is moderate is described in this way. And the judgment as to what is moderate is derived from the function of nourishment. Its function is to nourish the body; this will be accomplished if it is well digested; and it will be well digested if the amount is moderate – great amounts, as we know, remain undigested. And if this ever happens, then the function of the nourishment is necessarily lost. Also, if the stomach evacuates everything because it has been hurt by the biting qualities of undigested food substances, the symptom is known as diarrhoea, and here too the function of the food is destroyed. For we do not take food in order to pass it through the intestines, but so that it may be added to each part of the body. And if it is distributed through the body without having been digested properly, this causes bad humour in the veins.' Philosophical 'digestion' is used in moral works to emphasise the need for proper internalising of philosophical principles leading to the transformation of one's character. See Sellars (2009: 121–122).

¹⁰⁸ Which is still concealed however, for he could have made a cross-reference to a technical work, for example, if he really wanted to disclose his medical identity.

¹⁰⁹ *Nat. Fac.* 1.8-13, III.114.6-122.16 Helmreich = II.18.15-30.5 K. (generally on nutrition); *Nat. Fac.* 3.5, III.215.6-216.8 Helmreich = II.157.15-159.6 K. (on the eliminative quality, bringing about diarrhoea and vomiting).

¹¹⁰ *Symmetron* is a central notion in Galen's understanding of the proper functioning of the body with wider applicability to other areas. In the *Exercise with the Small Ball*, he states: 'For I censure lack of proportion in all cases (τὴν γὰρ ἀμετρίαν ἐγὼ πανταχοῦ ψέγω). Proportion is the aim to be cultivated in every art (καὶ πᾶσαν τέχνην ἀσκεῖν φημι χρῆναι τὸ σύμμετρον); any loss in this respect is a defect (κἂν εἴ τι μέτρον στερεῖται, τοῦτ' οὐκ εἶναι καλόν)', *Parv. Pil.* 3, I.98.18-21 Marquardt = V.906.1-3 K. Cf. *San. Tu.* 5.2, 138.16-139.4 = VI.313.3-314.13 K., where *symmetra* (balanced) is coupled with moderate (*metria*) to refer to a mean between excess and deficiency, and

body with unnecessary foodstuffs is likened to lusting after possessions such as pearls, pieces of sardonyx and other precious stones, garments interwoven with gold or made of silk. Galen is here insinuating that these material goods are not conducive to one's psychic health, because they promote uncontrollable greed, and so he provides another inventory that groups together possessions beneficial to the body, to help readers understand the kind of thing they should really be after in taking care of their soul: i.e. objects by which we are nourished, clothed or shod, houses, and things which are of use to the sick such as olive oil (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 31.12-26 DB = V.46.5-47.5 K.). By establishing, through this parallelism, the quantitative principle in the possession of goods, just like his father had done in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 8, 30.12-13 DB = V.44.13-15 K. as noted above, Galen also draws a line between things we should opt for, if we are wise, and others we should not. So while the possession of one pair of shoes is necessary and useful, the possession of another five or ten pairs is superfluous and useless (περιττόν τε καὶ ἄχρηστον, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 32.2-3 DB = V.47.7-8 K.), and the same goes for clothing, servants and utensils. This distinction in a sense echoes the Stoic demarcation between preferred and dispreferred indifferents, which I think makes more sense in a subsequent passage, where Galen defines the opposite of covetousness, i.e. self-sufficiency, as being really 'up to us' (ὅπερ ἔστιν ἐπὶ σοί), a factor we can control in Stoic theory, unlike wealth which is the result of luck and not virtue (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 33.20-22 DB = V.50.1-4 K.). Galen's moral advice in favour of self-sufficiency, however, is not unpragmatic by recommending, for example, an ascetic attitude to external goods. It is noteworthy that, because he himself, as well as his immediate and implied audience, comes from the aristocratic echelons of Imperial society, it would have been paradoxical to propose eliminating externals in line with an Epicurean or Cynic perspective. What he suggests instead is staying within certain boundaries in line with the criterion of usefulness.¹¹¹

The text makes it clear that Galen is a practical man in the society in which he lives and writes. He appreciates the high standards and

where *symmetria* (moderation) is contrasted to *ametria* (excess). In similar vein, in *Ars Med.* 2, 278.10-279.13 Boudon-Millot = I.309.16-311.3 K. *symmetron* and *symmetria* are coupled with *eukraton* and *eukrasia* in the definition of a healthy body, just as *asymmetron* and *asymmetria* go with *dyskrasia* with reference to disease. In *Opt. Sect.* 26, I.180.13-14 K. *symmetron* is useful whereas *ametron* is harmful.

¹¹¹ Cf. Gill (2018: 140), who sees the stance of Galen's father in being in favour of self-sufficiency as 'neutral between philosophical theories, and ... presented as a kind of "consensus-position", shared also by non-philosophers'.

expectations people from his class have, namely the possession of additional wealth and their aspirations for social and political recognition, and advises accordingly. His teaching is also enmeshed in social critique of his class (a common feature of his moralism, as we will see in the next two Chapters), targeted especially against those who have embraced a life of indulgence (τὸν ἀπολαυστικὸν . . . βίον, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 32.9-10 DB = V.47.15-16 K.), spending up to thirty times more than necessary.

Self-projection also shines through in this section, as Galen again becomes a paragon for the addressee. Although both parties are described as having equal opportunities as regards the possession of and access to material wealth (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 32.5-8 DB = V.47.10-15 K.),¹¹² the author sets up a glaring contrast between them: Galen is not distressed when he spends his inheritance discharging other people's debts, nor when he does not put aside any surplus amount, whereas the addressee does suffer distress, despite his property growing and his not spending any money on good works or investing in the purchase of books or the training of scribes (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 32.12-33.2 DB = V.48.1-16 K.). Perhaps one reason for Galen's cheerfulness is that he indulges in 'moral' investment, notable euergetism, unlike his addressee, as the text makes clear. That is consistent with Galen's ensuing reprimanding of the addressee with the remark that the latter's insatiability is out of control, since he is not content with being even richer than 120,000 other people, but wishes to be the wealthiest person of all. Galen concludes that by adopting this attitude, the addressee will be perpetually 'poor' because of his boundless desires. So what he proposes is that the addressee should persuade himself that he is rich and so he need not be distressed over any financial losses. The same result will come about if the addressee rationalises his greed for esteem (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 33.28-34.16 DB = V.50.10-51.13 K.).

The psychotherapeutic training proposed by Galen rests primarily on the use of doctrines concerning the importance of self-sufficiency as opposed to the dangers resulting from greed. Galen considers the application of such doctrines a secure pathway to freedom from distress, as he regards this technique as being 'entirely up to us' (πᾶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν, *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 34.23-24 DB = V.52.3-4 K.). On another level, however, the use of suitable doctrines also has implications for the way Galenic psychotherapy

¹¹² Singer (2013: 276, n. 213) remarks that the first-person plural pronoun ἡμῖν in this section is too vague to allow us to determine whether Galen is referring to himself or to a group of people including his addressee. Nonetheless, in the light of Galen's ensuing statement 'But, in your case, I observe that you follow a similar way of life to my own' (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 32.11-12 DB = V.47.18-48.1 K.), it is more reasonable to argue in favour of the latter possibility.

is presented as simple, optimistic and accessible to all. Galen is clear that people who had not had the chance to be trained in similar doctrines in their early education should not despair, because now they could follow Galen's suggested path (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 9, 34.26-35.2 DB = V.52.7-9 K.). Therefore, Galen's pedagogical burden is presented as a decent counterpart to early training for any late comers. His moral agenda is also reachable to a wide group of people because, as the text suggests, Galen developed his ethical discourse not just to his addressee but also to many others on subsequent occasions, persuading them and bringing long-term moral benefits (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 35.5-7 DB = V.52.13-16 K.).

A short story is inserted here to drive home the point. It concerns a man prone to luxury, sex, love of reputation and esteem who suffers from grief because he cannot satisfy his desires, given that he is not wealthy. Having observed Galen's cheerfulness, he asks him to teach him how to overcome grief. But the story makes clear that Galen is unable to help this person, since it takes a lot of time to heal deeply rooted passions (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 35.26-36.9 DB = V.54.3-14 K.). Although Galen sympathises with people who have moral failings, in his suggested psychotherapy sudden character change is not an option (as it is not elsewhere, e.g. in Plutarch).¹¹³ This substantiates Galen's warning about maintaining moral alertness and proactiveness. Finally, this story also points to what Galen sees as a desirable social response to ethical progress in other people. The emphasis is on it being in everyone's interests to have healthy companions to associate with, since these will become beneficial friends (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 36.10-13 DB = V.54.15-55.1 K.), therefore providing a humanistic perspective through which to approach moral development.

Conclusion

The *Affections and Errors of the Soul* is the longest of Galen's surviving ethical works and therefore provides us with unprecedented insights into the author's moralising endeavour. Compared with other ancient moral works treating the well-being of the soul and especially the therapy of anger and greed, it might seem unsophisticated to modern tastes: its psychotherapeutic discourse is not as refined as that developed by Seneca or Plutarch, for example. The essay has far fewer quotations and proverbs from popular or high philosophy and therefore seems to be lacking the

¹¹³ Xenophontos (2016a: 22-41).

necessary trademark of a popular philosophical treatise; it shows signs of sloppy repetitions of the practical rules one should follow to achieve self-mastery, and the author's moral outlook in this respect might look hard to understand in terms of its overall structure and occasionally its content. Having said that, it is likewise important to note that this work is a serious attempt on Galen's part to enter the realm of practical ethics without being a professional luminary in this area. He is the first doctor to offer a systematic psychotherapy by means of popular philosophical essays and to occupy himself with the wider area of practical and not just medical ethics. Consequently, any modern scholarly approach that assesses the work only on its form and register is unlikely to be helpful or, for that matter, conducive to an overall appreciation of the Galenic moral ontology.¹¹⁴ Indeed, it is the idiosyncratic character that Galen brings to the essay and which is an integral part of a distinctively Galenic moral discourse that should be at the centre of modern scholarly appreciations.

In this Chapter we have encountered a wide range of moralising devices utilised by Galen in a kind of life coaching aimed at restraining wild passions. This is the sort of teaching an upper-class member of society was expected to benefit from through the contemporary Hellenic literary culture (*paideia*), which equipped them with the capacity for rational, philosophical self-management. As we have seen, for Galen it is not simply important to list what the moral agent can or should do to achieve happiness, but also to engage their good will, encourage critical thinking and learning through imitation of model persons and attitudes, even if, on occasion, that meant using rhetorical manipulation, evoking an over-inflated sense of self-authorisation or a cynical approach to expose moral defects. These are all part and parcel of Galen's project of philosophical therapy, which catered to an audience with a highly developed awareness of social honour/shame, as we have seen. This puts him in a position to play with the social expectations of his elite audience by inculcating in them appropriate moral patterns so as to regulate their character. For example, we have seen that overreacting in anger or being greedy are key pieces of moral advice for the educated audience of Galen's era, who were expected to be self-composed instead.

The very last section of Book 1 of the *Affections and Errors of the Soul* is enlightening in bringing out the staples of Galen's ethical programme: given that self-absorption extinguishes discernment and good decision-making, it is necessary to consult judicious councillors on important issues.

¹¹⁴ E.g. Singer (2013: 216).

These people should be fearless in expressing their criticism openly, which the moral agents should be willing to accept with gratitude. However, it is in the end up to the agent to reach a state of self-realisation and to use the power of reason to monitor any bewildering passions. Although in other parts of the work, Galen highlights the destructive effects of self-love, in the conclusion love of self is exonerated from blame as being a crucial step towards truly becoming a noble person and not just appearing to be one. A significant element of Galen's moral perspective is that the agent should never lose hope in the process of moral correction, which ties in with the optimism we have observed elsewhere in the text (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 36.14-37.23 DB = V.55.1-57.3 K.), despite the fact that advanced age or other factors are sometimes seen as an impediment to moral improvement.¹¹⁵

Even more interesting is that the concluding section re-introduces some key moralising means Galen has stressed just before the end of the essay: anamnesis, in the sense of recollection of critical moral advice, chastisement, encouragement and setting up moral models are all components which Galen has exploited in his text. He has reminded his addressee of autobiographical incidents from his own youth, scolded him for being greedy, advised him to place himself under the guidance of an advisor and later encouraged him to develop self-understanding. And all this Galen did while setting himself up as a paradigm for his readers. The depth and breadth of Galenic moral geography and his creative adoption and adaptation of traditional popular philosophy is what marks it out as an important contribution to the history of Graeco-Roman practical ethics.

¹¹⁵ See the incident with the young man susceptible to luxury, sex, reputation and esteem whom Galen could not heal due to the advanced state of his passions in *Aff. Pecc. Dig.* 10, 35.26-36.9 DB = V.54.3-14 K. Likewise, see Book 2 of *Aff. Pecc. Dig.*, 3, 51.16-22 DB = V.75.5-12 K.