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Weeping and Wailing

in Ancient China

Christoph Harbsmeier

In the paper that follows I wish to make the following fundamental points, many of which are interrelated:

1. kū 哭 is primarily a public action, while qi 哭 is primarily a private reaction.
2. kū 哭 focusses on sound, while qi 哭 focusses on tears.
3. kū 哭 focusses primarily on death and by extension on misfortune, while qi 哭 can express a wide range of heightened emotions directly or indirectly linked to pain.
4. kū 哭 is basically linked to adult ritual and limited to persons capable of ritual behaviour, while qi 哭 is common among children.
5. kū 哭 is designed to publicly express lasting ăi 疼 and is sometimes associated with bēi 悲, while qi 哭 is a symptom of more short-term and essentially private tòng 痛 “current physical pain” and shāng 傷 “current psychological pain.”
6. kū 哭 is limited to psychological distress while qi 哭 may be caused by physical pain.
7. kū 哭 is not especially associated with men or women while qi 哭 is regarded as especially linked to women.
8. kū 哭 is primarily used in public ritual or semi-ritualised contexts and involves a deliberate act, while qi 哭 always purports to be linked to sincere feeling and is an immediate emotional reaction.
9. qi 哭 is current as a noun meaning “tears” while kū 哭 is very rarely topicalised and only occasionally nominalised to mean “wailing, lamentation”.
10. kū 哭 is frequently associated with gē 歌, while qi 哭 is naturally associated with tī 涕 “tears”.
11. kū 哭 was cultivated as a ritual act for which one could become famous, while qi 哭 was regarded as basically non-deliberate (although there are a number of examples with false tears, and even one case
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In the paper that follows I wish to make the following fundamental points, many of which are interrelated:

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4. kū 哭 is basically linked to adult ritual and limited to persons capable of ritual behaviour, while qí 泣 is common among children.
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11. kū 哭 was cultivated as a ritual art for which one could become famous, while qí 泣 was regarded as basically non-deliberate (although there are a number of examples with false tears, and even one case
where a lady is ordered to make a request while shedding false tears. One will normally 泣 "weep" in spite of oneself, but one will only 悼 "lament" in spite of oneself when one feels a powerful urge for a public demonstration of grief.

12. the ability to appreciate the expressiveness of 哭 was cultivated as a proper subject for higher ritual spirituality, while 泣 was never so cultivated.

13. 哭 expresses a public sentiment for a feeling which is presupposed shared by the general public. 泣 may express a private personal sentiment. One may 泣 in spite of oneself.

14. 哭 may directly involve the use of language, while 泣 may only accompany speech.

Not all these points can be conveniently or definitively demonstrated by a coherent set of examples. But all of them grow upon one as one goes through the hundreds and hundreds of episodes of weeping and wailing reported in pre-Buddhist Chinese literature. In what follows there is of course space for only a fraction of the evidence that I have considered in detail in preparing this paper. Even so, I am afraid the paper is too long. My excuse is this: the more evidence I lay out conveniently for the reader, the better the patient reader will be in a position to make up his own mind on the exact nature of the distinction I am concerned with. For that there is such a distinction, and that it has been misunderstood by the tradition, that much seems to me to be clear beyond a shadow of doubt. It is the precise psychological nature of the distinction that is the problem.

Laughing and weeping belong together as central topics in the history of emotional concepts and of emotional responses to the world. Careful students of Xu Shen 許慎 (died 149 A.D.) may have noticed that there is no character 笑 “to laugh” in Shuowén jìzì 說文解字. In my view, this was a very serious omission. The Gǔ Hányǔ chǎngyōngzì 《古代漢語常用字典》 on the other hand (Peking: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1979, newest revised edition 1996), compiled by a high-powered group of scholars at Peking University, does not list the word 哭, presumably because students who understand modern Chinese will be in no danger of misunderstanding this ancient word. I find this a rather amusing omission. The notion of 哭 has not been felt to be problematic at all. That exactly is the problem.

The distribution of 哭 in our ancient texts turns out to be rather special. So I shall start off with some little statistical snippets. I have found no plausible precedents for the character 哭 in the oracle bones or in the bronze inscriptions, and it is absent in Shì 詩 as well as in the recognised gùwen 古文 parts of the Shāngshū 尚書. Moreover, in the Chèci 喪辭 which is full of tears, there is only one single occurrence of the character.

In Lìjī 禮記 there are 14 examples of 泣, of which 10 cases of 哭: the notion was ritually unimportant. 泣 does not occur in Yìlì 儀禮 at all. By comparison, my computer counts 257 cases of 哭 in the Lìjī 禮記, 187 in the Yìlì 儀禮. By contrast, I count 13 cases of 泣 in Lǎshīchāngqìu 吕氏春秋 versus 14 cases of 哭. The distribution of occurrences of 哭 (ca. 117) versus 泣 (ca. 98) is relatively even. These facts demand an explanation.

I have checked four modern dictionaries contrasting ancient and modern meanings of words: they all fail to discuss the character 哭, again, presumably, because the editors could not think of any significant change in meaning for this simple word. There appears to be a broad consensus that classical 哭 is semantically roughly the same as modern 哭.

Yuán Hui 袁輝 1985 is a recent commendable exception and marks a significant advance over the others. This work does single out 哭 for special attention and defines very precisely the etymological etymology which I propose to rectify in the present paper: gùin gǒngyi 古今同義: 因悲伤痛苦或情绪激动而流泪。"common meaning in ancient and modern Chinese: shed tears because of grief, pain or emotional agitation". It is my claim in this paper that the meaning of 哭 changes completely from pre-Buddhist usage to the language of the Buddhist biānwén 讀文 literature.

Shuòwén jìzì 的文獻傳 ad verbum 哭 follows Xu Shen 許慎 (died ca. A.D. 149) in not including tears in the semantics of 哭:

Wáng Kēzhòng 王克忠 et al., Gǔjīn cí yí biānwén cídàn 古今詞義辨析詞典 (Beijing: Huihugjezìguăn, 1993; Liú Qíng 劉慶 et al., Hányǔ chǎngyōngzì gǔnián duìbǐ cídàn 《古代漢語常用字古今對比字典》 (Shanghai: Shanghai chubanshe, 1992; Sūn Shāohuáng 孫樹煌, Gǔjīn yìbiānwén cídàn 古今異讀詞典 (Peking: Wúxué yàójì, 1989; Wáng Déhui 王德辉 et al., Gǔjīn cí yí biānwén cídàn 古今詞義辨析詞典 (Changsha: Hunan wènbì, 1995).

Making a loud noise (in connection with 愀) is called 哭.

Making a slight noise and shedding tears is called 哭.

Under the heading 哭 Duàn Yūcái p. 563 notes:

大聲曰哭，
Making a loud noise (in connection with 愀) is called 哭.

細聲出涕曰泣。
Making a slight noise and shedding tears is called 哭.

大聲曰啼. Duàn Yūcái p. 563 notes:

出涕應聲也。

The shedding of tears goes without saying.

哭泣之別也。
This is the difference between wailing and weeping.

I shall argue that Xū Shèn was right and that Duàn Yūcái 段玉裁 failed to grasp the elegant concise point in Xū Shèn’s gloss. Kū 哭 primarily refers to demonstrative audible and audience-directed wailing and lamentation: its basic core is acoustic, it not essentially linked to the water-radical. As I hope to show, there is no essential link to tears. Indeed, there are cases of 哭 explicitly without tears. The tears do not necessarily “go without saying” even when their absence is not mentioned. The point would need to be argued.

Undoubtedly, tears are a natural accompaniment to wailing lamentation. Séraphim Couvreur’s standard French gloss for 哭 ‘pousser des lamentations’ may or may not invite the same expectations among speakers of French: there may be likely to be tears in wailing, but pousser des lamentations itself is not for that reason a quintessentially tearful affair. We shall hear that one might 哭而無泣 哭而無泣 ‘wail without tears’, but there is never any talk of someone falling to 哭 哭 since no tears were produced. The ancient Chinese perception was that in such cases the 哭 哭 “wailing, lamentation” itself was performed, but the accompanying tears which are seen as a guarantee of honesty of such a display of intense feelings of grief and emotional distress are missing. This, at least, we must conclude, until we find a case where

someone is denied to have performed 哭 on the grounds that s/he has failed to produce tears.

Wailing and lamentation tend to be connected with death. Indeed, in the vast majority of cases of 哭 哭 in our standard pre-Han texts the context is one of death: there tends to be a dead (mostly unburied) body. Under these circumstances, the cases where there is no dead body to lament are of very special interest to us. In fact, I shall list up each and every one of these cases I have been able to discover in the primary sources I list in the bibliography.

The effect of 哭 is primarily acoustic, as Xū Shèn saw so clearly, and the cause of it tends to be quite different from that of weeping and crying.

The primarily acoustic feature of 哭 comes out very nicely in the following subtle and conspiratory dialogue. A certain Wūshè 暴涉 wants to hide in a well, and wants to be saved from that well by Shēnshū 沈舒.

Zuo Xuan 12.06; Yang 748

“if someone wails in the well it’s me.”

[Here 哭 must be taken to be a purely acoustic signal since the speaker imagines himself to be invisible in the well. There is no point shedding tears in the direction of or near the well. That is not the point. Hāo 脱 in this story would signify a louder version of 哭 哭, also without any tears.]

In a more theoretical vein we have the following passage:

Huainan 11, Chen Zhong 500, Chen Yiping 502, Wallacker 34

且喜怒哀樂有感而自然者也。

Now joy, anger, grief and pleasure are natural responses to stimuli.

Thus when lamentations come out from the mouth,

And when tears come out from the eyes,

these are all things that are pent up inside and take shape outside.

It is like water flowing downwards
Weeping and Wailing 323

有婦人哭於墓者而衰，
and there was a woman who was wailing mournfully at a tomb.

Liji 3 樸音上，Couvreur 1.159f; Sūn Xīdān 2.98

The son of a man from Biăng cried when his mother had died.

There is a late example of a (precocious?) child lamenting:

Sōushēnzi 搜神記 no. 266 (The parallel passage in Wū Yuè chuángqiā
4.77–78 does not have this passage).

When the boy heard this he went away.

He entered the mountains singing as he went.

A stranger ran into him and said to him:

You are so young,

why are you wailing with such great sadness?

This passage illustrates the connection between kū 哭 and other
vocal performance verbs like gē 歌. Compare also

Huaínán 14 end,

Liji 4 樸音下; Couvreur 1.243; Sūn Xīdān 3.46

Confucius was passing by the side of Tāishān,
Wailing, I argue, is a semantic act of cultural communication, not primarily a spontaneous emotional reaction. It would appear that Yán Shìgū 顏師古 (A.D. 581 - 645) supports this point of view.

_Hanshu_ 99C, ed. Zhōnghuáshūjú p. 4187-4188

In the _Zhōu_ icon, under the spring offices,

女性之職曰：

the official obligations of the female shamans are specified thus:

「凡邦之大災，

"Whenever there is a great disaster in the land

歌哭而請。」

they sing and wail to beg (for mercy from the gods and spirits)."

Wailing is a way of making known grief/distress.

The association of singing and wailing recurs in our early materials. Compare incidentally:

_Shi_ 204

呂子作歌，

A nobleman has made the song,

難以告哀！

in order to make known his woe.

Wailing properly is also an art:

_Huainan_ 6 順寧訓, Liu Wendian 6.3, Chen Zhong 274, Le Blanc 107

昔嘗門子

"Formerly Yōngménzǐ

以喪見於孟嘗君。"

gained audiences with the Lord of Měngcháng with his wailing.

已而陳辭通意，

In the end he put forward his speech and communicated his thoughts,

The old commentary explains:

 Yöngménzǐ was called Zhōu.

他善哭。...

He was good at plucking the hunte.

又善哭。...

and he was also good at wailing. ...

哭以告哀。

"Wailing" is like singing.

In mourning and grief there normally is a dead body to grieve about. The primary link of _ku_ 哭 with death comes out in a historical commentary:

告喪，五行書 3 commentary quotes 洪範，五行傳：

哭者死之表也。

Lamentation is an external manifestation in response to death.

_Ku_ 哭 is a public demonstration of _dài_ 哀 "grief, mourning; distress". There are extended uses of the classical Chinese _dài_ 哀 where the word is not connected with mourning. One may _dài_ 哀 "grieve" about the sorry state of one’s country, though not normally about a physical injury.

One would say, I think, that _dài_ 哀 is an emotion. But it is an emotion or a mental state of a special kind. It is, as it were, a public emotion, at least an emotion designed for "publication", for making public through certain public acts, often but not necessarily ritual acts. It is naturally linked to manifestation in more or less public and more or less ritual acts. Unlike _yōu_ 忧 "worry" which is primarily personal or _yù_ 鬱 "depression" which is a private state of mind, _dài_ 哀 "mourning, grief" is primarily a prescribed, a ritually obligatory mental state: the state of sadness at the death of a person with whom one has been linked in certain ways. Derived from this basic meaning of _dài_ 哀 are such meanings as "deep and intense sympathy (for living persons)", "deep and profound emotional concern (for a state of affairs)". As we shall see, these secondary meanings of _dài_ 哀 also give rise to derived forms of _ku_ 哭 "wailing.
lamentation". One may kū 哭 for a son who is leaving home as part of a hopeless military campaign, or out of deep and intense sympathy for the plight of people in general. In all these cases, kū 哭 tends to be directed at an audience and it retains
1. its primarily acoustic feature linking it to lamentation;
2. its primarily extroverted aspect linking it to the public sphere;
3. the primary link to a socio-culturally sanctioned emotion linking it to public morality;
4. the non-ephemeral non-momentary emotion expressed by the public act;
5. however, its primary link to mourning the death of a person is explained to include more general grief.

What our ancient sources describe as occasions of kū 哭 are very predominantly, indeed almost invariably, public sphere occasions. There may be two reasons for this. One is that private lamentation and wailing went on, but unrecorded in the kind of literature we have from ancient China. The other is that kū 哭 is indeed the kind of wailing that is directly or indirectly designed for some kind of public sphere.

I shall claim that kū 哭 is an expression of what purports to be a lasting stable and non-momentary emotion whereas qí 泣 may express a current, possibly ephemeral or temporary feeling. The claim is that while kū 哭 is linked to the non-ephemeral āi 哀, qí 泣 is linked to more ephemeral verbs like shāng 傷 "feel currently hurt" and to tòng 痛 "pains". These describe a more momentary or temporary emotion than the āi 哀 which naturally finds expression in kū 哭.

Lunsheng 1.9.1, Liu Pansui 8
昔周人有仕
In ancient times there was a prospective official from Zhōu 司，
who had missed several opportunities.

年老白首，
He had grown old and his hair was white,
泣涕於途者。
he was weeping on the road.

人有問之：
Someone asked him:

何為泣之？
"Why are you weeping for this?"

對曰：
He replied:

吾仕數不遇，
"In seeking an official career, I have missed several opportunities.
自傷年老失時，
I am painfully aware that I am old and past my time.
是以泣也。
therefore I am weeping."

[The old man feels acute personal psychological pain. His qí 泣 is a direct expression of this feeling of pain, as he explains.]
Lunheng 22.7.1; Yuan Huazhong 385

It is reported: (in Hanfei)
When Zhuo made ivory chopsticks Jizi wept.
The reason why he was weeping at this was that he felt pain at the extremeness of this.

[The weeping is motivated by an feeling of tòng 痛 "acute mental pain".]

A focal point in the semantics of qi 泣 is the sincerity of the emotion which is supposed to be guaranteed by the basic assumption that weeping comes directly from the heart. Wáng Chōng discusses this aspect explicitly:

Lunheng 45, Liu Pansui 669; Beida p. 877

夫雨水在天地之間也。Rainwater between Heaven and Earth
猶夫涕泣在人形中也。is like tears in the human body.
若實爾食
If you give someone wine and food
贈於惠人之前
and make a request in front of a kind man
未（＝求）出其泣，asking him to shed tears,
惠人終不為之牴牾。
then that kind man will never shed those tears.
夫泣不能牴而出
Now tears will not come out by request,
雨安可求而得。
and how can rain be obtained by asking for it?
One can even send someone to kā 哭 on one's behalf: Huainan, 說林訓:
湯使人哭之。
Tang ordered someone to wail (on his behalf).

[The old commentary justly remarks: "哭猶弔也。" In such inductive contexts it would seem that verbs like qi 泣 are excluded, but words like ti 哭 "cry with long drawn-out sound" are not. In the same spirit, in later times, one could send someone out to chànghuì 懷悔 "show one's repentance".]

There is only one case of kā 哭 in all of Chuci:

Chuci, Xiāngér 慈往日, SBBY 248
思久故之親身兮。
45 When he thought of their former close companionship,
因織素而哭之。
He put on white weeds and wept for him.
[The demonstrative aspect of the act of kā 哭 comes out in the putting on of white mourning clothes.]

In Chuci I count 32 cases of ti 泣 "tears" and ten cases of qi 泣. In Shi there is no kā 哭 at all. But seven cases of qi 泣 and six occurrences of ti 泣 "tears". Kā 哭 is ubiquitous in all ritual texts, whereas qi 泣 is completely absent in some of them, notably Yili.

I must end this introduction with a warning. Not all examples in the literature can be explained convincingly by appeal to semantic differences between kā 哭 and qi 泣. There are overlaps in usage, especially as a result of variation within a context of parallelism. There are cases of rhetorical variatio where within parallel constructions a writer may move from one word to another mainly in order to avoid repetition and not at all for semantic reasons, as far as one can tell. Effects of this sort are common in poetry all over the world, and China is no exception. Surprisingly, there are few instances of this in connection with kā 哭 versus qi 泣, perhaps because the semantic distance was, in the end, felt to be too great to be overlooked for rhetorical effect.

Huainan 說林訓
揚子見途路而哭之。
"When Yangzi saw crossing roads he wailed at the sight,
為其可以南可以北。
and that was because one could go south and north;
泣 preserve a rich variety of features linked to the semantic contrasts illustrated in this paper.

At this stage, however, I wish to describe and illustrate in detail the meanings of these words in pre-Buddhist Chinese. The reader must decide for himself to what extent my interpretations are convincing.

THE MEANINGS OF WEEPING AND WAILING

Kū 哭

- vi: (of animals like dogs) howl

I start out with this meaning because on the one hand it nicely links up the presence of the dog-radical in the character, and because since dogs cannot weep, it indirectly means our claim on the specific meaning of the word.

Mo 19.34, Wu 194, tr. Mei p. 111
昔有三狗大亂。
In ancient times the Three Miao tribes were in great confusion,
天命殛之。
and Heaven ordered their destruction.
日妖宵出。
The sun shone irregularly during the night,
雨血三朝。
and three mornings in a row it was raining blood.
龍生於廟。
Dragons showed themselves in temples,
犬吠市市。
dogs howled in the markets.
[Note that the dogs were howling in a public place, and that they were not weeping. Indeed, the howling of dogs, like that of wolves, can perhaps give us an indication of how the ancient Chinese acoustically "visualised" lamentation. The presence of the dog radical in the character remains otherwise unexplained.]
If our interpretation is correct then this is about Confucius not singing on a day on which he has performed a ritual of wailing. The text is concerned with an observance of ritual: public wailing and the kind of joyful singing intended here are ritually incompatible. D.C. Lau misreads this "On a day he had wept, the master did not sing." But the point is not that the Master's emotions did not vary in the course of a day, that he could not be moved to tears by something and then be moved to a joyful song on the same day: D.C. Lau misses the point that this passage is not at all about weeping in general, it is about lamentation in connection with death. Compare Liji 4 檾弓下; Couvreur 1.191f, Sün Xitān 3.4 弔於人，
When one offers condolences 
是日不樂。 
one does not show joy on that same day.]

Zuo Xiang 23.5; Couvreur 2.399
孟孫卒 ...
Mengsūn died...

[If our interpretation is correct then this is about Confucius not singing on a day on which he has performed a ritual of wailing. The text is concerned with an observance of ritual: public wailing and the kind of joyful singing intended here are ritually incompatible. D.C. Lau misreads this "On a day he had wept, the master did not sing." But the point is not that the Master's emotions did not vary in the course of a day, that he could not be moved to tears by something and then be moved to a joyful song on the same day: D.C. Lau misses the point that this passage is not at all about weeping in general, it is about lamentation in connection with death. Compare Liji 4 檾弓下; Couvreur 1.191f, Sün Xitān 3.4 弔於人，
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Zuo Xiang 23.5; Couvreur 2.399
孟孫卒 ...
Mengsūn died...

[When his favourite disciple died the Master wailed in public, lamenting his death as prescribed. Huáng Kǎn 皇侃 (A.D. 488 - 545) explains: 謹按公 - 子往悼家哭之也。"This means that when Yǎn Yūn died the Master went to the home of Yǎn to lament/wail for him." D.C. Lau translates: "in weeping for him the Master showed undue sorrow" and misreads the public lamentation as possibly private weeping. But Confucius went further: he showed extreme grief tóng 傷. If he had qí zhì ér tóng 陷之而傷 he would have broken down into uncontrollable weeping. Confucius wails, as ritual desires, but he goes further than is generally acceptable in showing his grief. (Note incidentally the almost light-hearted humorous note in Confucius' response. When he is faced with this kind of extreme grief he is not willing to talk of petty rules of ritual.)]

Lunyu 7.10, Cheng Shude 449
子於斯是日哭
On the day the Master engaged in wailing/lamentation
則不歌
he would not engage in singing.

[If our interpretation is correct then this is about Confucius not singing on a day on which he has performed a ritual of wailing. The text is concerned with an observance of ritual: public wailing and the kind of joyful singing intended here are ritually incompatible. D.C. Lau misreads this "On a day he had wept, the master did not sing." But the point is not that the Master's emotions did not vary in the course of a day, that he could not be moved to tears by something and then be moved to a joyful song on the same day: D.C. Lau misses the point that this passage is not at all about weeping in general, it is about lamentation in connection with death. Compare Liji 4 檾弓下; Couvreur 1.191f, Sün Xitān 3.4 弔於人，
When one offers condolences 
是日不樂。 
one does not show joy on that same day.]

Zuo Xiang 23.5; Couvreur 2.399
孟孫卒 ...
Mengsūn died...

[When his favourite disciple died the Master wailed in public, lamenting his death as prescribed. Huáng Kǎn 皇侃 (A.D. 488 - 545) explains: 謹按公 - 子往悼家哭之也。"This means that when Yǎn Yūn died the Master went to the home of Yǎn to lament/wail for him." D.C. Lau translates: "in weeping for him the Master showed undue sorrow" and misreads the public lamentation as possibly private weeping. But Confucius went further: he showed extreme grief tóng 傷. If he had qí zhì ér tóng 陷之而傷 he would have broken down into uncontrollable weeping. Confucius wails, as ritual desires, but he goes further than is generally acceptable in showing his grief. (Note incidentally the almost light-hearted humorous note in Confucius' response. When he is faced with this kind of extreme grief he is not willing to talk of petty rules of ritual.)]

Lunyu 7.10, Cheng Shude 449
子於斯是日哭
On the day the Master engaged in wailing/lamentation
則不歌
he would not engage in singing.
Wuizi waited for three days outside the Military Gate.  
When he had announced this,  
he bared one arm, let down his hair,  
ascended the throne and wailed.  
He performed three ritual jumps and left.  
Then he led to Qi.  
[The elaborate ritualisation of the lamentation speaks for itself.]

Zuo Ai 14.05; Yang 870, Couvreur 2.113f

Winter, the tenth month,  
Duke Ding of Wei died.  
His wife Jiang saw that the heir was not grieving.  
Before she retired for drinks  
she sighed and said:  
"This fellow,  
will not only ruin the state of Wei...  
[The wailing here is purely ritual. Madam Jiang had been set aside  
by the Duke of Wei in favour of a secondary wife.]

Zuo Ai 10.03

The people of Qi assassinated Duke Dao  
and they announced the death to the army.

Cheng 11

One wails once in the morning and once in the evening, that is all.  
One could not hope for a clearer demonstration of the ritualised use  
of ku 了 than this example. On the other hand one must be aware  
that this ritual use is only one extreme of the uses of ku 了. Even the  
wailing of sympathy when faced with a person in a sorry state is  
often carefully counted, as in the case of Guanzheng 官仲 being  
mourned three times  
吴之三歔 (Guanzi 20) quoted below.

Guoyu Jin 5, 11.13, ed. Shanghaiguji 2.405

The state conducted three days of public lamentation  
in order to show respect for the man.  
[This example brings out the public character of ku 了. Not only did  
the state not weep, neither did its inhabitants. There were three days  
of public lamenting in which only the most eager would shed honest  
 tears.]
Mo 70, ed. Zhonghua 924, tr. Forke 626

飲食不時。

He who drinks or eats at other than the proper time

其罪鈍：
shall be punished by the piercing of the ears with an arrow.

if one does the punishment is the piercing of the ears with an arrow.

[Ge 歌 “singing” goes naturally with kū 哭 “wailing because both are primarily public displays. One may indeed sing in private, but ordinarily one sings to be heard. One may also wail or lament in private, but ordinarily one wails or laments in order to be heard wailing and lamenting. There is no such thing as a quiet mode of kū 哭 “wailing”. That would be qì 泣.]

Meng 5A10, Yang Bojun tr. p. 129, DC Lau 109, Couvreur 427, Jiao Xun 394

昔者孔子沒，

When Confucius had died

三年之外，

and the three-year period (of obligatory mourning) had passed,

門人治任將歸，

his adherents were packing their backs and were about to return home.

入捐於子産，

They went in and bowed to Zigòng 相濡而歌，

facing each other they wailed.

皆失聲，

Only after they had all lost their voices

然後歸。

did they return home.

[D.C. Lau mistranslates “they wept until they lost their voices before setting out for home.” It is not the weeping but the loud and demonstrative wailing that causes all the adherents to lose their voices. Couvreur has it right: invicem obversi et plorantes, omnes amiserunt vocem lamentando. Implausibly, Jiào Xùn 焦循 (1763 - 1820) takes

shī shēng 失聲 to mean fāngshēng 放聲 “at a high pitch”. Yáng Bojun 楊伯峻 mistranslates by simply confusing or conflating the meanings of the words kū 哭 and qì 泣 with each other: 相對而哭・

都泣不成聲. We must translate with Guò Xiàolìng 郭錫良 (personal communication): 哭驚了才走. The confusion among interpreters of this passage seems worth dwelling on because it illustrates the acuteness of the philological problem the present semantic investigation sets out to solve.]

Meng 6B6, Jiao Xun p. 831, D.C. Lau 251, compare SY 17.8,

昔者王豹處於淇，

Formerly, when Wáng Bāo lived on the Qi river

而河西善譜；

the region west of the River was famous for its ditties.

緯織處於高唐，

When Máijiān lived in Gāotáng

而齊右善歌，

the right-hand part of Qi was famous for its songs.

華車紀乘之妻，

The wives of Huázhōu and Qīliáng

善哭其夫而變國俗。

were good at lamenting their husbands and they changed the customs in their states.

[Wailing is something of a public display, often artistic, something one can be good at, a specialist in, as professional mourners would be expected to be. Note the association of kū 哭 and gē 歌.]

Zhuāng 6, Wang Shumin 271f

至子桑之門，

When he reached Zi Sāng’s gate,

則若歌若哭。

It was as if they were singing and as if they were wailing.

鼓琴曰：

Strumming a qín-lute they sang:

[This passage almost suggests that kū 哭 may involve the use of words. The pair kū 哭 versus gē 歌 is significant in several ways: both are primarily public acts (although - as we shall see - there is nothing, in ancient China, to prevent one in principle from occasionally
singing or even wailing entirely in private). One can be shàn rèn "good at singing" just as one can be shàn kū "good at wailing". Indeed some people are professional wailers employed at funeral services. Remember the modern kǎfù 嘗哭 "wailing women" in various parts of China. They continue an important aspect the ancient tradition of kū 嘗 although they do not represent the essential condition of kū 嘗 in ancient China which is the presumption that kū 嘗 is a public display of genuinely felt personal grief. The strumming of the lute fits naturally into the context.

Zhuang 33, Wang Shumin 1304f

然，

 Nevertheless, 

people will sing, yet he rejected singing; 

且而非歌, 

people will wail, yet he rejected wailing; 

且而非歌, 

people will make music, yet he rejected music.

是果兼乎?

Does this really seem human?

[Again we have the natural juxtaposition of kū 嘗 "wail (for others to hear)" with gē 歌 "sing (for others to hear).]

Zhuang 18, Wang Shumin 645, see tr. Mair

莊子妻死，

Zhuāngzǐ's wife died. 

子吊之。 

Huizi went to offer his condolences. 

Zhuāngzǐ was lolling on the floor with his legs sprawled out, beating a basin 

而歌。 

and singing. 

曰: "She lived together with you." 

when the heart: mind is joyful one's songs will not be joyful; 

Huizi said. 

故哀而歌不樂。 

and when the heart: mind is mournful one's lamentations will not be mournful. 

This brings out the natural pairing of (public) singing gē 歌 (for an audience) and (public) wailing kū 嘗 (for an audience).


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Huainan 11, Chen Zhong 487, Wallacker 29

In ancient times, the people were stupid and could not tell east from
west...

Their wailing was mournful but lacked voice (was inarticulate).

their singing was joyful but lacked (sophisticated) modulation.

HSWZ 1.19, I quote the translation by James R. Hightower

When Kung-fu Wenppo of Lu died,

his mother did not weep.

Chi-sun, hearing of this said,

"Kung-fu Wen-po's mother is a virtuous woman.

子死不哭，

If she does not weep at her son's death,

there must be a reason."

He sent a man to make inquiries.

[The mother] replied,

"Formerly

I had this son of mine serve Chung-ni.

When Chung-ni left Lu

in sending him off [my son] did not go beyond the suburbs of the
capital of Lu;

in making him presents, he did not give him the family's precious
objects.

When [my son] was sick I did not see any gentleman come to visit
him.

and when he died I did not see any shed tears for him.

But on the day of his death there were ten of his female attendants
who, putting on sackcloth and white mourning clothes followed him
to the grave.

This shows that towards gentlemen he was lacking
and toward women too generous.

This is why I did not weep."

In this story an inexperienced reader might still feel that the mother
in this story was not moved to tears by the death of her profligate
son, and that the reasons she gives when asked are reasons why she
was not moved to tears by her son's death. But the ZGC 233 version
of this same story might seem to suggest that this is a serious
misunderstanding.

ZGC DC Lau no. 233, translation quoted from Crump 1979, no. 265.

Kung-fu Wen-po died of a distemper while holding a post in Lu.

Twice eight women in his household killed themselves.

but his mother, when she heard of his death,

did not even weep.

"How can one who has borne a son not weep at his death?"

asked Wen-po's nurse.
By insisting on mistranslating kū 哭 as "to weep" both these eminent scholars seriously distort the passages in question. Note that Crump even has to omit the overt kēn 肯 "we willingly to, be prepared to" in order to maintain his misinterpretation. It seems clear that both Hightower and Crump have misunderstood the force of kū 哭.

Compare:

Hanshu 063/2751-2752
太子立，
The heir apparent was established as ruler,
是為孝昭帝，
and this was Emperor Zhāo the Filial.
赐諸侯王璽書，
He presented the feudal lords with seals and writings.
且得書，
When Dān got his writing
不肯哭... he refused to engage in (the ritually required) lamentations.]

HSWZ 9.3, Xu Weiyu p. 307
孔子出行，
Confucius went out for a walk
聞哭聲甚悲，
and he heard the sound of very sad wailing.
孔子曰：
Confucius said:
「厲之！厲之！
"Hurry up! Hurry up!" 前有賢者。"

There is a a person of talent ahead of us."
至則舉魚也，
When they got there it was Gāoyú. 被褐擁鎬，
Wearing coarse clothes and carrying a sickle 哭於道傍。 
he was wailing by the road-side. 孔子辟車與之言，
Confucius got off his carriage to talk to him 日：
and he said:
「子非有喪，
"You are not in mourning,
何哭之悲也？"
why are you crying so sadly?"
皋魚曰：
Gāoyú said:
「吾失之三矣；
"I have lost out on three things: 
少而好學，
When I was small I was fond of learning
周游諸侯，
and I travelled to all the feudal lords，
以負吾親，
thereby endangering my parents.
失之二也：
This was the second thing I missed out on.
高尚吾志，
I held my own ambitions in high esteem
簡吾事，
and I was shoddy in the performance of my duties，
不事庸君，
I did not serve my prince properly，
而晚事無成，
delayed tasks never get done.
失之三也：
This was the third thing I missed out on.
與友厚而中絕之，
I had solid relations with my friends，but I broke them off，
失之三矣。 
That was the third thing I missed out on.
疾風欲靜而風不止，
The tree wants peace but the wind will not stop，
子欲養而親不待。 
the son wants to take care of them，but the parents do not linger on，
往而不可追者，
What passes and cannot be caught up with again，
年也：
that is the years (of one's life);
去而不可得見者，
what leaves and what one cannot get to see again，
親也。
that is one's parents.
吾請從此辭矣。]
From this time onwards, I am taking my leave.
立摘而死。
As he stood he dried up and died.
孔子曰：
Confucius said:
「弟子諺之，
"You note this my disciples:
足以訖矣。」
it can serve as a warning."
於是門人辭歸而喪親者
Among the disciples those who left to look after their parents
十有三人。
were three out of ten.

[The story which illustrates Confucian preoccupations with the performance of 小哭，especially in the context of bereavement. The Master heard the sound of wailing. The real psychological sadness of this sound was not a foregone conclusion. Real sadness is commonly documented through 哭 "sobbing, weeping", but it may be shown in other ways. The 小哭 "wailing" makes the Master think of a case of mourning for a person who has died recently. But it turns out that the problem is of a more philosophical nature, a more generalised nature than that. The story illustrates well an inner dynamic of Confucian thought.]

SY 18.29
孔子異立堂上，
Confucius was in the hall one morning
聞哭者
and he heard someone wailing.
聲音甚悲。
The sound was very sad.

孔子授琴而鼓之。
Confucius took up his lute and strummed it.
其音悽也。
The sound he produced was the same.

... 回曰：
Yän Hui said:
「今者有哭者，
"The person who was wailing just now，
其音甚悲。
her voice was very sad.
非獨哭死，
She was not just wailing for a deceased person，
又哭生離者。」
she was also wailing for separation in life."

[In this story, Confucius associates 小哭 with music, just as elsewhere 小哭 is associated with 哭 "singing".]

Shi ji 9.399
發喪，太后哭，泣不下。
the empress cried but the tears would not fall;
[Perhaps she was desperately trying to produce genuine tears, but in vain. Wailing is an act in which one will usually succeed. Weeping or crying is not: the obligatory tears may fail to come.]

Shi ji 8.370
漢王聞之，
The the King of Han heard about this
祖而大哭。
he stripped to the waist and broke into loud wailing.

[Liü Bang was not reduced to hulking, sobbing, weeping, or crying; he demonstratively bared his chest and made a loud display of extreme grief. The difference is important.]

vi: wail (out of profound worry and sympathy for someone's plight)
Even when the wailing is out of sympathy it is not a spontaneous reaction so much as a demonstration of sympathy.
Zuo Xi 15.3, Yang 359f, Wang 256
He also advised the Duke to say:
[孤喪緇]
'Even if I return home
辱社稷矣。
I have disgraced the altars of the land and grain.
其卜貳國也。]
Let divination be made to see whether (my son) Yú should replace me.'
眾皆哭...
The crowd all started lamenting (when they heard this latter announcement).
[Another speech points out the possibility of showing support for the ruler by supporting the son, and then the reaction is similar:
眾皆悅]
The crowd all started showing signs of approval.
There is no dead body to lament in this context. What induces the wailing is the prospect of a ruler abdicating. The people did not weep quietly or privately: they made a show of their distress and their sympathy with their beloved leader. Their kū 哭 is a demonstrative and public display of ái 哀 “profound sympathy”, not a private psychological reaction to any bereavement.
Watson p. 34/5 translates: "When the people of Chin heard this last announcement, they all wept..." "The people were pleased."
The speech has not necessarily reduced the listeners to tears: for all we know there may have been only the sound of lamentation, no tears. The listeners did not react by weeping, they responded by demonstrative wailing, if my present understanding of the word kū 哭 is correct. This example is not evidence in favour of this interpretation, but neither is it evidence against such an interpretation. (I have discussed the specific force of yue 愧 in a separate paper on classical notions of pleasure.]
Zuo Zhao 4.8, Yang 1256, Wang 1144
遇婦人，
(Mützl) met a married woman.

He told her to make him a private meal and spent the night with her.
問其行，
She asked what had happened.
告之故，
He told her the background (to his flight from home).
哭而送之。
Wailing (in sympathy for his plight, and love) she sent him on his way.

The Đụ commentary says:
婦人聞之而哭。
When the woman heard about it she wailed.
[Here the woman with whom Mútzi has had illicit sexual intercourse is moved by his story about the sad state of affairs in his family which has caused him to leave his family; wailing she sends him on his way. Her distress is not about any death: there is no dead body. Her distress is not primarily about the politics in Mútzi's family: she is not a politician, and she has no business complaining about whatever the state of affairs in that clan may be. Her display of distress has strong elements of deep sympathy for the suffering of a person to whom she has just made love. In this instance one might even doubt that her display was more than personal and under four eyes, considering public values at the time. But when the text says that she kū ér sòng zhā 哭而送之 "sent him on his way, wailing" this is a standard description. A departure for a hazardous journey could become an occasion for public wailing or lamentation in ancient China. Such lamentation is neither ritualised nor obligatory, but it remains firmly in the public sphere.

In sending her lover off, the promiscuous woman in this story would appear to have boldly entered this public sphere. Perhaps she lost emotional control and did such a most improper thing. Or should we rather think of an atypical private farewell inside the house? But that does not go well with the word sòng 送 which essentially involves following a person who is leaving some of the way. One remains doubtful.

In any case, the connection of the larmoyant wailing farewell with the notion of ái 哀 "feeling of distress, deep sympathy, commiseration"
is very much maintained. The lady in our story appears to be making a display of her deep sympathy for the plight of her lover.

Everything considered, this episode is furthest removed of all the evidence I have found from the world of mourning rituals where kù哭 has its core applications, which is why I have wanted to comment on it in such detail. The episode is atypical. None the less, the classical definition āi shēng yè哀聲 also still holds.

vi: wail (not for the death of a person but because of some calamitous situation)

When the occasion for lamentation is some unfortunate physical event, the act of lamentation remains demonstrative:

_LSCQ_, Cheng 3.04; Yang 811

甲子。
On the day jiāzì

新宮災。
the New Palace met disaster.

三日哭。
There were three days of ritual wailing.

[Note that the Spring and Autumn Annals does not mention spontaneous reactions, it mentions a state measure rather like modern official mourning. It is a ritual public expression of āi哀 on the occasion of the disaster at the New Palace.]

_Zuo Xuan_ 12.01.0718, Wang 521, Guji 582

十二年春。
In the twelfth year, in spring

楚子圍鄭。
The ruler of Chu surrounded Zhèng

旬有七日。
for a period of seventeen days.

鄭人卜行成。
The people of divined on whether to sue for peace,

吉：
but the reply was negative.

_Dù_ commentary:

皆哭：所以告楚窮也。

"They all wept": this was a way of showing that Chú楚 was finished.

[The defenders know that they have no hope. They have been encircled for seven days, and divination indicates that public lamentation is in place. Their wailing is in anticipation of their certain death. Their kù哭 is part of the ritual of _lin_靈 "communal wailing." At the same time it is perhaps also intended as a sign of desperate ultimate determination to die for their just cause. The connection with āi哀 is still clear enough, the public display of distress is there, but there is no dead body, no ritual mourning of any sort. And the commentary by Dù Yù杜預 (A.D. 222 - 284 A.D) shows clearly that he took the action of kù哭 as a demonstrative act.]

_Zuo Zhao_ 21.6end, Yang 1440, Wang 1313; Guji 1476; Couvreur 3.342;

食於殤上。
He had a meal with him on the river Suī,

哭而送之，
and wailing he sent him off.

[The wailing, in this instance, is no part of any mourning ritual. There is no dead body. The āi哀 "deep sympathetic concern" expressed through kù哭 is connected with the anticipation of mortal danger.]
Hanfei 32.29.6, Zhang Jue 617; Chen Qitian 500; Zhu Shouliang 1120; Chen Qiyou 500; tr. Liao 2.47
文公反国至河，
Duke Wén reached the Yellow river on his way home to his state.
令繒舜之。
He gave orders for bamboo and earthenware vessels to be discarded.
手足胼胝，
Those who had chapped hands and feet,
Those who had dark faces he ordered to the back.
答犯闕之而哭
When Jiǔ Fán heard about this he started wailing at night.
公曰：
The Duke said:
"I have been abroad for twenty years，
and first now I return to my state.
How unhappy I am to hear that you are not pleased, and he (even) wailed:
意不欲寡人反國耶？
Could it be that he is not hoping for me to return to my state?...
...今臣有與在後，
... Now I am (or: have associates) among those who follow behind，
中不勝其哀，
and inside me I cannot overcome my feelings of distress.
故哭。
That is why I was wailing. ..."
[There is no dead body in this context. The occasion of this wailing was the injustice of Duke Wén's decision to command those who had worked hardest to the back.}
Surely it was not by chance that the Duke heard the wailing or heard about the wailing at night. It was surely performed as a political signal for the Duke. This demonstrative character of the wailing does not preclude that it was, at the same time an honest expression for
strongly felt emotions concerning the injustice of the Duke. Not all emotion that is publicly displayed for a political or ritual purpose is false; on the contrary, it may be genuine most of the time.
If Jiǔ Fán had been weeping with a fairly low noise level in his bedroom, it is very unlikely that the Duke would have heard about this, even if Jiǔ Fán had hoped that the news about the weeping got out.
The link between kū 哭 and āi 哀 is made explicitly at the end of this text.]

Hanfei 13.1 and Xinxu 5.30
武王崩，共王即位，
When King Wū died and King Gōng ascended the throne
和乃奉玉璞
Hé offered up his piece of jade
而哭於山中，
and wailed in the Jing mountains.
三日三夜，
He did this for three days and three nights.
泣盡而繼之以血
When his tears were used up he continued to weep blood.
共王聞之，
King Gōng heard about this
使人問之曰；
and he asked someone to question Hé;
天下聞者眾矣。
"There are plenty of people in the world who have been mutilated.
子獨何哭之悲也。
"Why do you wail with so much sadness?"
和曰：
He said:
"吾非悲刖也，
"I am not sad about mutilation，
刖夫寶玉而題之以石，
I am sad because the precious jade was called a (vulgar) stone，
貞士而名之以刖，
and that an honest man was called a madman.
That is why I was sad.

In this very complex case the lamentations were clearly accompanied by the shedding of tears. These tears are exactly a demonstration of the earnestness and genuineness of the wailing. There is no suggestion whatsoever that these are in any way artificial tears, but it is striking that it is on the occasion of the accession of the new Duke that Mr Hê suddenly feels impelled to this public display of emotional distress. He was not impelled to this kind of exacting ku 哭 by the injustice suffered as such. It was the change in the political situation that brought about his public act.

Hiding in the mountains of Chû only increases the effectiveness of the demonstration. Hê clearly wanted it to be known by the new ruler that he was wailing away in the mountains.

The unfortunate Mr Hê engages in a demonstrative public act of lamentation which expresses the dâi 哀 "distress" which he feels so about the injustices he has suffered. But this dâi 哀 is not the subject of his explanations. Indeed, his ku 哭 is expressive not of dâi 哀 "grief, distress" but an inner sadness. Hê stages his demonstration after the death of King Wû. By his demonstration Mr Hê is determined to draw government attention to the treasure he has handed up.

Mr Hê is certainly not said to have ku 哭 "lamented" as he is having his left and his right legs amputated. He laments when he wants to draw attention to his treasure, and to his deep inner sense of injustice.

Note that in Lunhêng 43.8.20, Yuan Huazhong 917, Forke 1.113 we have qî 泣 "tears" rather than lamentations, as we should expect, given our interpretation of these terms:

Hê 去 and his jade
Biân Hê offerend up his precious jade

and they cut off his two feet.

No tears, 血

Holding the precious jade in his hands tears came to his eyes, 血

and when the tears went dry he went on weeping blood.

Biân Hê makes a show of his wailing.

---

HSWZ 9.13, Xu Weiyu p. 317
孔子出遊少源之野，
Confucius went out for a walk in the Shàoquán meadows.

有婦人中澤而哭，
There was a woman wailing in the middle of the marsh,

其音甚哀。
and her sound was very full of grief.

孔子怪之
Confucius found this strange.

使弟子問焉。
and sent a disciple to ask her about this.

曰：夫人何哭之哀？
He said: "Madam why is your wailing so full of grief?"

婦人曰：
The woman said:

鄉者刈薪薪，
"Just now I was cutting milfoil for firewood

而亡薪薪。
and I lost my milfoil hairpin.

吾是以哀也。
That is why I was full of grief."

弟子曰：
The disciple said:

刈薪薪而亡薪薪
In cutting milfoil for firewood and losing a milfoil hairpin,

有何悲焉。
what is there so sad about that?"

婦人曰：
The woman said:

非傷薪也。
"It isn’t that I am upset about losing the hairpin.

蓋不見故也。
I must be that I will not forget the story behind it."

[Note that the wailing is appraised in terms of its yín 音 "sound".
The sudden intense mourning, presumably, is because the hairpin was the gift of the deceased husband of this woman.]
v: mourn (for a deceased person)

Zuo Ding 9end, Yang 1575; Couvreur 3.557

Zhao Zai said,
He made those who pulled the carriage with the coffin kneel down (sic!)
and using his army he conducted lamentations for the deceased.

Personally he pushed the funeral carriage so the wheels turned thrice.

The fascinating phrase is 以師 "with the help of the army": how can the army assist in weeping? The solution of this problem is again that the army assisted in the ritual lamentations for the deceased. One is reminded of other passages in which the ruler leads his ministers in lamentations.

Zuo Zhao 21.5, Yang 1427, Wang 1311

Then Shizhê waited at the eclipse of the sun.
昭子曰：
Zhao Zai said:
[子叔將死，]
"The fact that Zizhê is about to die
非所哭也。"
is not something to lament about/wail at."

Zuo Xi 15.4, Yang 608

聲已不視，
(Madam) Shengji did not look at the coffin (of her estranged husband),
帷堂而哭。
behind a screen in the hall she made her formal lamentations.

Xiangzhong (who had lost his wife to the deceased) wanted to refuse to offer lamentations.

The Earl of Hu said:
子無失道，
Do not go against the proper Way.

What grievance do you have against this man."}

Xiangzhong was satisfied (with this argument).

He led his brothers in a display of lamentations.

Compare HSWZ 8.18, the translation of which is taken from Hightower 272:

There was a landslide on Mt. Liang.

The Prince of Chîn summoned the Great Officer Po-tsung,

who on the way [to court] ran into a man pulling a cart ...

Po-tsung took him aside and interrogated him.

曰：
He said:

君其命群臣
"Let the prince lead his assembled ministers

in donning plain mourning clothes and weeping.

After that, perform sacrifices [to the spirits of the River and the mountain]

Then the River will flow.

But he would not tell.

When Po-tsung arrived,

the prince asked him [for advice],
以其言對。
and he replied in the man's words.
於是君素服
Whereupon the prince put on plain mourning
率群臣而哭之，
and led the assembled ministers in weeping.
既而羽篤，
After that he performed the sacrifices,
河斯流矣。
and the River flowed.
[The ruler of Jin is dressing up and leading his ministers not in private and personal weeping but in a ritual show of loud lamentation. Indeed, one could not lead ministers in an involuntary reaction like "weeping". The fact that one can learn to weep artificially is not relevant to this point. The ruler is leading a loud public display of sorrow. For ritual lamentation directed at inanimate objects see .

Hanshu 27.1456
連續三日不流，
The river Yong did not flow for three days.
晳君帥群臣而哭之，
The Duke of Jin lead his ministers in a public display of wailing
乃流。
and as a result the Yellow River started to flow (again).

Guoju Lu 2, 5.17, ed. Shânhâigûji 1.212
公父文伯之母朝哭穆伯，
The mother of Gông-fū Wenbo waited for Lord Mù in the morning
而暮哭文伯。
and in the evening for Wénbo.
仲尼聞之曰：
When Confucius heard about this he said:
「季氏之婦可謂知禮矣…」
"Madam Ji may be said to understand ritual..."
[Confucius is judging public acts. The mother goes to court to perform her public act of lamenting a death, waiting for the deceased at court.]

Meng 7B33, Jiao Xun
哭死而哀，
Wailing for the dead and showing grief
非為生者也。
is not for the sake of the living.
絶德不回，
Taking virtue as one's guideline and not swerving from it
非以多禄也。
that is not in order to go after emoluments.
言語必信，
When one's words are invariably in good faith
非以正行也。
this is not in order to show one's actions to be correct.
君子行法，
When the gentleman acts according to the model
以僕命而已矣。
it is simply in expectation of his fate (without ulterior motives).
[D.C. Lau 2.301 translates: "When one mourns sorrowfully over the dead it is not to impress the living."]

Zhuang 3, Wang Shumin 111
老聃死秦失弔之
When Lâo-tzu died, Qin Yi went to offer his condolences.
三號而出
He waited loud thrice and left.
弟子曰
"Weren't you a friend of the master?"
非夫子之友邪
a disciple asked him.
曰然
"Yes."
然則弔焉若此可乎
"Well, is it proper to offer your condolences to him like this?"
曰然
"Yes.
始也吾以為至人也
At first, I used to think of him as a man,
火傳也，不知其盡也
but fire continues forever.

[Hào 燃 is clearly not the same as kū 哭: the precise contrast being, that kū 哭 is more ritualised and hào 燃 is louder and often tends to expresses anguish and perhaps even anger in addition to grief.]

Chuci, Xiwangzi: 惜往日
思久故之親兮，
45 When he thought of their former close companionship,
因緬素而哭之。
He put on white weeds and wept for him.
[We have a ritual act marked by the wearing of white clothes. This is the only example of kū 哭 in Chuci.]

Liji 3 : 竹弓上, Couvreur 1.167f; Sün Xiidan 2.105
且臣聞之，
Moreover, I have heard it said
哭有二道:
that there are two modes of lamenting:
有愛而哭之,
there are those who lament because they feel love,
有親而哭之。
and there are those who lament because they feel awe/fear.

Liji 3 : 竹弓上, Couvreur 1.187; Sün Xiidan 2.124
孔子惡野哭者。
Confucius disliked those who lamented in the open air.
[Acquaintances were supposed to be waited for in the open countryside, as the next passage explains.]

Liji 3 : 竹弓上, Couvreur 1.136f; Sün Xiidan 2.79f
伯高死於衞，
Bó Gāo had died in Wèi,
赴於孔子，
and someone reported this to Confucius.
孔子曰：
Confucius said;
[吾哭乎我諸?  
Where shall I wail for him?  
兄弟,  
For brothers  
吾哭諸廟門之外;  
for my father's friends  
吾哭諸廟門之外;  
I wait for them outside the gate to the ancestral temple;  
朋友,  
For friends  
吾哭諸廟門之外;  
I wait for them outside the door to the bedchamber;  
所知,  
For acquaintances,  
吾哭諸野。  
I wait for them in the open countryside.  
於野,  
Now wailing for Bò Gāo in the countryside,  
則已疏;  
that would be treating him as too distant.  
於室,  
Wailing for him in the bedchamber,  
則已重。  
that would be treating him as too important.  
夫由諸也見我,  
Since Zīgōng has come to see me on this matter  
吾哭諸廟氏。  
I shall wait for him at Zīgōng's place."  
遂命子賓為之主,  
And he ordered Zīgōng to take charge of the proceedings,  
曰:  
saying:

[為爾哭也來者,  
"If someone comes to wail on your behalf,  
拜之;  
then bow to him as a sign of gratitude;  
知伯喜来者。  
if someone comes because he is acquainted with Bò Gāo,  
勿拜也。"  
then do not bow to him as a sign of gratitude.  

Liji 4; 懲弓下 Couvreur 1.193f; Sūn Xitān 3.5  
妻之兄弟為父後者死,  
When the wife's brother, who succeeded his father, dies,  
哭之廟堂,  
one should bewail him in front of the main buildings.  
[Tōng 順 "jumping up and down" naturally belonged together with  
kū 哭 "wailing". The rules where and when to kū 哭 were evidently  
evidently elaborate.]  

Liji 4; 懲弓下; Couvreur 1.243; Sūn Xitān 3.46  
孔子過泰山側,  
Confucius was passing by the side of Tāishān,  
有婦人長於墓者而哀,  
and there was a woman who was crying by a grave, with proper  
 grief.  
夫子式而聽之。  
Confucius leaned over the cross-bar on his chariot and listened to her.  
使子路問之曰:  
He sent Ziū to ask her:  
「子之哭也,  
"As for your wailing,  
壹似重有憂者。"  
it is as if your troubles weigh heavily."  
而曰:  
And she said:  
「然,  
"Yes.  
昔者吾舅死於虎,  
Some time ago my father-in-law was killed by a tiger;
吾夫又死焉，
my husband was also killed by him;

今吾子又死焉。
and now my son again was killed by him."

夫子曰：
The Master said:

「何為不去也？」
"Why don't you leave the place?"
曰：
She said:

「無苛政。」
"Ah, but there is no cruel government (in this place)!"

夫子曰：
The Master said:

「小子識之，
"My little ones, take note:
苛政猛於虎。」
cruel government is more ferocious than a tiger."

[Wailing was, of course, music in Confucius' ears. The lady was paying her respect to her beloved ones through wailing. In this instance there is no element of demonstrativeness.]

SY 18.29, Zhao Shanyi 556, 473
孔子晨立堂上，
Confucius was standing up in the hall one morning,
聞哭者聲甚悲。
and he heard wailing, the sound of which was full of inner sadness.

孔子援琴而鼓之，
Confucius picked up his lute and strummed on it,
其音同也。
his sound chimed in well.
孔子出，
Confucius left,
而弟子有叱（從）者。
and there was a student who expressed sympathy (zhā) (at the
lamentation).

問：
Confucius asked:

「誰也？」
Who was that?
曰：
They said:

「回也。」
"Hui."

Yán Huì.
孔子曰：
Confucius said:

「回何為而叱（叱）也？」
"Why did Hui express sympathy?"
曰：
Yán Huì replied:

「今者有哭者，
Just now there was someone who was wailing,
其音甚悲，
and the sound was very sad.
非獨哭死，
That person was not only wailing for a dead person,
又哭生離者。」
s/he was also bewailing separation during one's lifetime."

孔子曰：
Confucius said:

「何以知之？」
"How did you know that?"
曰：
Yán Huì said:

「似完山之鳥。」
"It reminds one of the birds of Mount Wán."

孔子曰：
Confucius said:

「何如？」
"How's that?"
曰：
Huí replied:

「完山之鳥，
"The birds of Mount Wán
生四子，
they get five fledglings,
羽翼已成，
and after their plumage has been formed
乃離四海，
when they leave for the four seas，
哀鳴送之，
then the parents send them off with grieving songs:
為是往而不復返也。
this is because they go off never to return.
孔子使人問哭者，
Confucius sent someone to ask about the person who was wailing，
哭者曰：
and the wailing person replied:
父死家貧，
When my father died my family was poor，
賣子以葬之，
I sold my children to get him buried，
將與其別也。]
and am about to part with them。”
孔子曰：
Confucius said：
善哉，
"Very good，
聖人也！
Yán Hūi is a sage.”
[It is clear from this kind of example that kū 哭 does not always involve the use of explicit words - if indeed it ever does.

Jiayu 18, Xue Anqin 126, Wanyouwenku 125
孔子在衛，
Confucius was in Wēi，
昧旦晨舞，
At dawn, in the morning，he had risen，
顏回侍側，
and Yán Hūi was in attendance by his side.
聞哭者之聲甚哀，
He heard the sound of wailing which was very much full of proper grief.

子曰：
The Master said：
"回，
"Hūi，
汝知此何所哭乎？
do you know who this person is wailing for?
對曰：
Yán Hūi replied：
"回以此哭聲，
I hold the opinion regarding this sound of wailing
非但為死者而已，
that it is not only a matter of just death，
又將有生離別者也。]
it is likely to be a matter of being separated during one’s lifetime.
子曰：
The Master said：
"何以知之？]
"How do you know this?
對曰：
Hūi replied：
"回聞桓山之鳥，
"I have heard it said that on Mount Huán the birds
生四子焉，
give birth to four fledglings.
羽翼既成，
When the wings have been formed
將分於四海，
they desire to spread out over the four seas，
其母悲鳴而送之。]
and the mother sends them off with a sad song.
悲聲有似於此，
The sound of mourning has similarity with this，
講其往而不返也，
for it refers to the leaving never to come back.
回聞以音類知之。]
I humbly understood this because of the kind of sound that was made.”
孔子使人問哭者。
Confucius send someone to ask the person who was wailing.
果日：
and indeed that person said:
吾父死家屢，
"My father has died and my family are poor.
子以葬。
I sold my son to pay for the funeral.
與之長決。]
I am taking my leave from him forever."
子曰：
The Master said:
「何也，
"As for Huī，
善於識音矣。]
he is good at recognising sounds."

Finally, for comparison, a passage in Liji where we do have weeping:

Liji 3 樓之成，Couvreur 1.113f; Sūn Xīdān 2.59f
孔子見得合葬於其，
When Confucius was to bury his father and mother together at
Mount Fang
日：
he said:
「吾聞之，
"I have heard it said
古也墓而不墳；
that in ancient times one made flat tombs and not funeral mounds;
今丘也，
Now as for me
東西南北人也，
I am at home everywhere，
不可以弗識也。]
and I cannot fail to be aware of this."
於是封之，
So he made a funeral mound for them，

崇高四尺。
and this was four chi high.
孔子先反，
Confucius returned home first，
門人後，
his followers came afterwards，
雨甚，
and there was heavy rain.
至，
When they arrived
孔子問焉曰：
Confucius asked them:
「將來何逮也？
"Why are you so late?"
曰：
They said：
「防墓崩。」
"The area of the tomb has collapsed."
孔子不應三。 Confucius said nothing after having the reply repeated three times.
孔子泫然流涕日：
Confucius broke into bitter tears and said：
「吾聞之，
"I have heard it said：
古不修墓。」
in ancient times they did not make elaborate tomb areas."

vt: wail or cry out in profound distress over and/or sympathy for (a living person)，or for the plight or the impending death of (a living person)

Guoyu Jin 2, 8.1, ed. Shànghǎigū jī 1.292
驅軀見申生而哭之日：
When Lǐ Ji saw Shēn Shēng she lamented in front of him and said： ...
[The mother is furious with Shēn Shēng. She makes a very long speech attacking his behaviour towards his father. Her reproach is strengthened by demonstrative lamentation which is a public expression of her deep grief and distress ãi 哀 in view of Shēn Shēng's behaviour. There is no element of mourning or of sympathy
in this instance. The dominant feature is public demonstration of sheer distress. This example is very special.

Guanzi 29. 1.98.12
於是魯君乃不殺。Then the ruler of Lü did not kill (Guänzhōng).
遂生繫而柙
Subsequently he tied him up alive, put him in a cage
以與齊。
and handed him over to Qi.
鲍叔受而哭之，
Bāoshù received (Guänzhōng) and waited in front of him,
三舉。
and he did this three times.
施伯從而笑之。
Shìbó then laughed at this.
注：笑其僞也。
Commentary: Laughed at the pretence.
[Rickett 321 translates: "Bao Shu, receiving him, cried out three times." Guänzhōng had fought against Duke Huán of Qi and was handed over, as we are told in this passage, by the state of Lü. Seeing Guänzhōng in this sorry state Bāoshù offers three bursts of ritual public lamentations. The number is also the number of usual state mourning. If Bāoshù had broken into spontaneous tears on this occasion, he would not have been so careful to stage-manage three bursts of wailing. His lamentation is in sympathy with the plight of the future great advisor of Duke Huán of Qi. Courveur might have translated convincingly poussait trois lamentations.]

LSCQ 16.4
臣不知其可也
"...I am not sure that this is right.
君其重圖之
You, my ruler, should think about this again."
繆公不聽也
Duke Mù did not listen to this advice.
謙叔送師於門外
Jiānshū sent off the army beyond the city gate

而哭曰
and wailing he said:
師乎
"Oh this army!
見其出
We see it going out,
而不見其入也
but we won't see it coming back!"
謙叔有子
Jiānshū had two sons,
日與覽
called Shēn and Shì.
呼而偕行
These went along with the army.
謙叔謂其子曰
Jiānshū said to his sons:
昔君遇爾
"If Jin opposes our army,
必於殺
this is bound to be at Xiāo.
女死不於南方之岸
If you die, make sure it is not on the southern shore.
必於北方之岸
be sure to die on the northern shore.
為吾尸女之易
In that way I can dispose of your bodies more conveniently."
繆公聞之
When Duke Mù heard about his
使人諷謙叔曰
he sent someone to criticise Jiānshū:
讒人興師
"I have raised this army,
未知何如
and I still do not know how it will go.
今幸而及之
If you now send off the army, wailing,
是哭吾師也
this is to bewail my army."
WEEPING AND WAILING 371

vt: give oneself over to lamentation when faced with

LSCQ 22.3, 289.05

故墨子見歧路而哭之
Thus Mózǐ, when he saw a crossroads, broke into lamentations at the sight.
[It wasn't that Mózǐ burst into uncontrollable tears at the crossroads.
He was staging a little philosophical happening, a little public philosophical demonstration. The act of crying is a deliberate act based on reflection. Cf. Xinshu, Shenwei.

故墨子見歧路而哭之悲
Thus when Mózǐ saw the crossroads he wailed, full of sadness.]

Xun 11, Liang 152

楊朱哭歧涂
Yang Zhū was lamenting: wailing at a (Y-shaped?) crossroads,

and he said:

「此夫過舉顚步，
“At this point if one takes half a step in the wrong direction,
而觀千里者失！]
then one (already) is aware of 1000 lǐ’s consequences, isn’t one?”

哀哭之。

With proper grief he wailed: lamented at this.

[Yang Zhū is bewailing what he sees as a tragic situation. His is a demonstrative act. It would be very different if he had been standing there liú tì 流涕 “shedding tears”: then he would have been struck passively. Indeed, it is in this psychologising mood that Ruán Jī interprets the episode:

Ruán Jī 魯簡 (A.D. 210 - 263), 詠懷詩 no. 22

楊朱泣歧路，
Yang Zhū wept at the crossroads,

墨子悲染紗。

Mózǐ was saddened by the dyeing of silk.]
n: wailing, lamentation 表示悲痛哀號的過程
Zuo Xi 13.11, Yang 504; Wang 376, Couvreur 1.440
凡其薨，
Whenever a ruler dies
卒哭而祔。
one puts an end to lamentations to make sacrifices.
[There is no question of kâ 哭 meaning "tears" here or anywhere else. But one could translate "the sound of lamentation" without misrepresenting the text.]

Zhuang 33, Wang Shumin 1304f
顯然，
Nevertheless，
歌而非歌，
people will sing, yet he (Mòzī) rejected singing;
哭而非哭，
people will wail, yet he rejected wailing;
樂而非樂，
people will make music, yet he rejected music.
是果類乎？
Does this really seem human?
[Again we have the natural juxtaposition of kâ 哭 "wail (for others to hear)" with gē 歌 "sing (for others to hear)."

Hanji 38.12, Zhang Jue 856; Zhu Shouliang 1436;
鄭子產晨出，
Zichàn of Zhèng went out in the morning，
過東匠之閰，
and as he passed through the Eastern Craftsmen's settlement
聞婦人之哭，
he heard the wailing of a woman.
撫其哀之手而問之。
He touched the driver's hand (to stop him) and listened to her.
有聞，
After a while
遣吏執而問之，
he sent an official to arrest and interrogate her，

則手紋其夫者也。
and it turned out she had personally strangled the husband (she was wailing over).

是日，
On another day
其妻問曰：
the driver asked:
子何以知之？
"Master, how did you know this?"

子產曰：
Zichàn said：
其憂懼。
"The sound she was making was fearful.
凡人於其親愛也，
Generally, as for men's reactions concerning those whom they love dearly
始病而憂，
when these begin to get ill they are worried (about the distant future);
臨死而懼，
when these get close to death, they are afraid.
已死而哀，
when they have died they feel mournful.
今哭已死，
Now she was wailing for a person who was already dead，
不哀而懼，
she was not mournful, but fearful.
是以知其有憂也。
That is how I knew that she had done something wrong.
[This is one of a set of stories concerning the fine nuances and the aesthetics of moaning in classical China. Confucius was another person who had an almost supernatural sensitivity to the subtle messages in wailing.]

Huainan 19, Chen Zhong 918
故楚燕魏之歌也，
Now the songs of Qin, Chù, Yān and Wèi，
臭轉而皆樂。
they have different modulations, but they are all joyful.
九夷八狄之哭也，
The laments of the Nine Yi Barbarians and the Eight Di barbarians,
they have different sounds but they are all sad.

also.
In this they are all the same.
夫歌者樂之徵也。
Now song is a demonstration of joyfulness;
哭者悲之徵也。
wailing is a manifestation of sadness.
[The opposition between ge 歌 and the equally public kū 哭 comes out beautifully in this thoughtful passage.]

Huairen 8, Lau p. 66.3
哭踊有節。
For wailing and for jumping up and down (in mourning) there are fixed rules.

Xinyu, 11, Wang Liqi 157, tr. Ku Mei-kao 127
樂則歌，
When they feel joy they sing,
哀則哭，
when they feel grief they wail.

蓋聖人之所齊一也。
This probably is what the sages have in common.

Qì泣

• v: (as of small children) cry, howl

Shi 189 Ruan 437, tr. Karlgren

乃生男子，
8. And so he bears sons;

載養之床，
they lay them on a bed,

載衣之裳，
they dress them in skirts,

載弄之壇。
they give them as toys (chang-jades:) jade insignia;

其哭唏唏，
they cry shrilly;

朱芾斯蔽，
their red knee-covers will be brilliant,

室家君王。
(they will be) rulers of hereditary houses.

[The sons cry properly which proves that they are healthy. The qi 泣 here involves the making of properly audible healthy sounds.
One may wish to argue about the nominality or verbosity of this case of qi 泣. Perhaps one can say that the verb is here temporarily nominalised. In any case the issue is not semantically important.]

Shu, Gaoyinmo 17, tr. Karlgren cf. also Lienü 1.4
敢呱呱而泣
when (my son) Qi wailed and wept,

子弗子
I did not treat him as a son (sc. I had no leisure to attend to him)

惟荒度工
I planned the extensive landworks.

厥成五服
I assisted in establishing the five dependencies,

至于五千
as far as 5000 (jiu); [The child did not kū 哭 "lament": his was a spontaneous (and probably quite noisy) reaction, he cried. Compare

Lunheng 28.13.34, Forke 1.404f
禹曰：
Yū said:

子娶若時，
"I conducted my marriage

辛、壬、癸、甲，
on the xin, rén, guì and jiǎu days,

開呱呱而泣，
and when my children cried noisily

子弗子。]
I did not treat them as my children."
We conclude that when used of children, qí 泣 can involve the use of a fair amount of noise. In any case it is compatible with a fair amount of noise.

Liji 樓記, Couvreur 1.159f; Sün Xiàn 2.98

[The man who had died cried like a child.

Confucius said:

As for ritual,

the point is that it can be transmitted,

that it can be followed as a tradition.

But it is difficult to follow his tradition.

For the mother to cheat the son,

and such behaviour constitutes teaching a son to cheat.

Now you are cheating him,

is not in accordance with the jie 稽 "prescribed forms" of mourning behaviour including the jumping up and down as a demonstration of one's unbearable grief. This is a very important passage for the understanding of the contrast between kū 哭 and qí 泣.

Hanfei 32.56, Chén Qiúchú 陳奇猷 (1963) p. 665:

曾子之妻之市

Zêngzi’s wife was going to the market.

其子隨之而泣。

Her son who was going along with her, was crying.

其母曰：女 (=汝) 何?

The mother said: You turn back.

願反為女殺彘。

When you get back we shall kill a pig for you.

When the wife had got to the market and came [home],

曾子欲捕彘殺之。

Zêngzi wanted to catch the pig and kill it.

妻止之曰：特與兒慰爾。 The wife stopped him and said: "I was only joking with the child."

曾子曰：兒非可與諷也。 Zêngzi said: "But a child can by no means be joked with.

嬰兒非有知也。

It isn't as if a child had proper knowledge.

特父母之教也。

It is the sort of creature that relies on its parents to learn this.

今子欺之。

Now you are cheating him,

is teaching him.

and such behaviour constitutes teaching a son to cheat.

母欺子，

For the mother to cheat the son,

子而不信其母

and then for a son not to trust his mother,

非所以成教也。

This is not a way to bring about [proper] education.

遂寂寥。

Then he boiled the pig.

[There is no question of the child performing kū 哭 in any of the established senses of that word.]

SY 3.8

伯母有過，

Bôyî had done something wrong.

其母笞之。

His mother caned him.

泣，

cried.

其母曰：

His mother said:
Xinshu 8, 春秋 end
When IlSün Shüão was a small child
he went out and came back home.
He was worried and did not eat. 
His mother asked why. 
He cried and said: 

今日吾見兩頭蛇
"Today I saw a snake with two heads.
I am afraid the day of my death is not far off."

Wenxuan 23.15B, Wäng Cän 王粲, Yǒngshí 詠史詩

On the road there are famished women, 
taking their children they throw them away in the undergrowth.

He cried and said: 

今日吾見兩頭蛇
"Today I saw a snake with two heads.
I am afraid the day of my death is not far off."

Why did the little Sünshü Ao not kà 哭 "wait"? Because he was moved to tears, not displaying mourning or grief. The dominant emotion is fear.}

Xinshu 1.2, Lienü 3.5,

When Shüao was a little boy
he went out and saw two snakes.
He killed them and buried them.

Upon his return, when he saw his mother, he cried in front of her.

His mother asked why he was weeping/crying...

The little boy has heard that he who has seen a snake will die. The boy is well beyond the baby stage. Conceivably he might join a ritual of kà 哭 "lamentation". But this is not a ritual occasion of that sort. He is crying out of fear. He cannot help crying. There is no telling how much noise the little boy was making.

Hanshu 097A/3954-3955-(6)

Shīqū says:
In the Korean region,

when a child will not stop crying

that is called xuān.

vi: start crying because of physical pain

Zhuang 8, Wang Shumun 313

Moreover, as for someone with webbed toes,

he who has a sixth finger,

if you were to try to bite or he would cry.

[Needless to say, kū 哭 is impossible in this connection. Ti 哭 "cry miserably" is primarily acoustic and very often designed to elicit sympathy with the agent's suffering. One strongly suspects that in this instance the qi 變 is not of the quiet type, but rather like the crying of children.]

vi: weep, be moved to tears, as a direct expression of strong emotion

Shu, Jinteng 18, Ruan 197, Yang Renzhi 201

The king held the document and wept, he said:

Let us not solemnly take the tortoise oracle (as it is not needed).

[The point is that the king was moved to tears by the contents of the letter and by the virtue of the Duke of Zhou.]

In Shi Jing the weeping is on the occasion of the separation between men

and women or between rulers and ministers.

Shi 28

1. The swallows go flying,

2. The swallows go flying,

the tears are like rain.

燕燕于飛.

uneven-looking are their wings;

之子于歸,

this young lady goes to her new home,

遙望弗及.

I gaze after (her), (do not reach her), can no longer see her,

泣涕如雨.

the tears are like rain.

燕燕于飛.

2. The swallows go flying,

頤之願之.

they straighten their necks, they stretch their necks;

之子于歸,

this young lady goes to her new home,

遙望弗及.

I gaze after her, can no longer see her,

佇立以泣.

I stand still and weep.

These are tears of joy on behalf of the girl who is married off, and

at the same time tears of sorrow that the time of togetherness is past.

The word kū 哭 would be completely out of the question.]
where *dúi yuè* 對曰 is followed by a reply that does not directly and openly address the issues raised. I therefore submit my unconventional reading as a possible alternative.

The ruler had just proposed the murder of another contender for his position as a ruler to Xīzǐ, very subtly but unmistakably. Xīzǐ turns away and does not want the ruler to see the tears in his eyes. He is not willing demonstratively. He cannot stop tears coming to his eyes at the immorality of the project. Indeed, when the ruler is told of this reaction he is said to have regretted his proposal: *huí zhì* 恢之.

Demonstrative wailing or lamentation *kū* 哭 at this point would have been nothing less than scandalous behaviour by Xīzǐ (also known as Chén Qì 陳乞).

*Mö* 70.29, Wu p. 752

敵人卒而至，...

When the enemy suddenly arrives,...

相視坐泣，...

Those who (during an enemy attack) look at each other and sit and *weep* 斬。...

...are to be executed.

[During an enemy attack one would not dare to *kū* 哭 "openly lament": presumably one would risk being summarily executed for such overt opposition.]

*Zhuàng* 24, *Wang Shilun* 968

這也將與群君同食

"Kūn will eat together with the ruler of a state

以終其身。

his whole life."

子綦無言出涕曰:

Ziqi said, despondently, with tears (of commiseration?) in his eyes:

吾子何為以至於是極也！

"Why should my son arrive at such an extremity?"

九方歌曰:

Jüfângyân said:

夫（原讀大）與國君同食，

"The benefits of one who eats together with the ruler of a state...

澤及三族，

will reach to the three clans of his relatives，

而況父母乎！

how much more to his father and mother！

今夫子聞之而泣，

Now, Master, for you to *weep* upon hearing this

是蓼福也。...

that is to stand in the way of good fortune。...

殆乎，

"Perilous!—

非我與吾子之罪，

but it’s not through any fault of my son and me.

幾天與之也！

Heaven must be visiting this upon us.

吾是以泣也。

That is why I was moved to tears.”

[Note first that, quite properly, qi 檀 is the resumptive word used to refer to what was described above as chū ti 出涕. Ziqi is moved to tears when he thinks of his son reduced to a courtier’s life. On this occasion loud wailing or lamentation of the *kū* 哭 sort would have been entirely out of place. The mood of this dialogue is personal and intimate, not public and ritual.]

*Hanfei* 35.5.11, *Chen Qiyou* 761

欲父遺之為之泣也。

When Zaozī was passed by he was moved to tears by this.

[The famous charioteer Zaozī was moved to tears in sympathy with the inept handling of the horses, but also because the handling of the horses reminded him of a very grave general political problem. There is another expanded version of this with qiti 泣涕:]

*Hanfei* 35.26.13

欲父遺之為之泣涕曰:

Zaozī passed by and wept and wailed on account of this, saying:

古之治人亦然矣。

"When people in ancient times ruled others it was also like this.

Qiti 疟涕 became an extremely common general combination for "to cry" in Han times.]
HSWZ 2.2
Ying, the daughter of a gatekeeper at Lù was weeping with someone.
In the middle of the night she was sobbing and weeping.
Her (girl)friend said: "What are you weeping for?"
Ying replied: "I have heard that the Heir Apparent of Wèi is unworthy."
That is why I weep."
Her friend said: "The unworthiness of the Heir Apparent of Wèi is the worry of the feudal lords."
Why are you weeping for this?..."
Now the Heir Apparent of Wèi is highly unworthy, he is fond of warfare.
I have three brothers (of relevant age for the military).
Can I fail to be worried?"

HSWZ 7.8, Xu Weiyou 248; see also Xinju 1.10
After a short while
Zhōu Shè died.
Jiānzǐ behaved as if he had lost a son.
Afterwards he arranged a drinking party with his grandees at the Broad Wave Terrace.
When he had drunk a fair amount
Jiānzǐ started to weep.
All the grandees ran out and said:
"I must be guilty of something that I am not aware of."
Jiānzǐ said: "...Now since the death of Zhōu Shè onwards I have heard nothing about my own faults/mistakes.
I am bound to be ruined within a short time.
That is why I was weeping."
If he had been in formal mourning, Jiānzǐ should never have arranged a feast, and he should even less have got drunk. His weeping is not part of any formal mourning. The thought of his friend moves him to tears, especially the thought that since his death he has no one to draw his attention to his own faults. The grandees in attendance realise that Jiānzǐ is upset but do not know why. They do not misunderstand this qi泣 as if it were formal kū哭 "lamentation" for
his dead friend, which would not have caused them to worry about having committed some faux pas.

The word *ka* 哭 would have been acceptable here, but then Jiānzǐ 季子 would have been wailing aloud in some kind of demonstration. His weeping may also be a demonstration, but if so, of a more subtle kind. Alcohol has simply made him prone to tears. Part of the reason why he is so upset is not mourning for his friend but fear for his own future.]

• vi: weep in deep personal outrage and/or as a sign of determination

*Zuo* Ai 11.1, Yang 1659, Couvrer 3.664f; Watson 193

公叔畏人言ου而泣曰：

When Gōngsün Wūrén saw the defenders of the city he *wept* and said:

「事完，政重，

"Military assignments are irksome, taxes are heavy,

上不能謀，

our superiors do not know how to plan,

士不能死，

our officers do not know how to die for a cause.

何以治民？

How can we give the people good order?

吾既言之矣，

Since I have (now publicly) spoken like this,

能不勉乎？

how can I fail to make a proper effort?"

[Gōngsün Wūrén cannot hold back his tears when he sees the band of fellow defenders. His tears are an expression of his desperate determination to do his loyal best in a pretty hopeless situation. At the same time he is moved by the loyalty of those defenders.]

*Zuo* Xiang 23.3, Yang 1074; Wang 920;

對曰：

(The people of Qūwò) replied:

「得生而為之死，

"To get this ruler and die for him,

猶不死也。"

that is like not dying."

皆歎。

Everyone heaved sighs (of heightened emotion),

有泣者。...*

and there were those who were moved to tears.

皆曰：

They all said:

「得主何貳之有。」

"If we get this ruler, what disloyalty will there be?!"

This example is important because it shows how *qi* 泣 is a heightened form of *tān* 泣. But the decisive point is that the tears and the sighs are demonstrations not at all of *ān* 哭 "mourning, grief, distress", but of desperate political determination to fight with their leader, of genuine and sincere emotional loyalty. Instances of this kind, where weeping is a sign of sincere loyalty are many in our sources. I have not yet found *ka* 哭 in such contexts.]

*Hanfei 34.25.11*

太子怒，

The heir apparent got angry.

入為王泣曰：

He went and *weeping in front of the king* he said...

[These are tears of anger.]

*Hanfei 34.25.49*

太子入為王泣曰

The heir apparent went in and *weeping in front of the king* he said...

Note again the current form 為 *xi* （而）泣 “weep in front of” which remains frequent in Han literature:

*Hanfu* 93, ed. Zhonghua 3724-3725

為太子泣，

...he *wept* in front of the Empress Dowager

諦得歸國

and asked to be allowed to return to his state.

[Note the explicit link between *qi* 泣 and *nù* 怒, but the anger is because of an injustice 愛問. There is a temptation, however, to take
the *wèi* 謂 in these constructions as an indication that qi 泣 is in this syntactic context transformed into a deliberate gesture.]

- *vi:* weep in false pretence of intense emotions

Such pretence is perfectly possible with *kū* 哭, but the emotions at which pretence is made are different in this case. With *kū* 哭 the emotion is lasting grief and deep indignation. With *qi* 泣 it is current mental pain.

Zuo Xi 4.6, Yang 297

姬泣曰：

"The mischief comes from the heir apparent."

[The famous beauty, here as so often, is using her tears to strengthen the emotional effect of what she is saying.

Zuo Xiang 28.9, Yang 1147, Wang 1015; Couvreur 2.510

慶季卜之，

Qingji made a prognostication.

示之兆，

He showed the resulting sign

曰：

and (Chén Wúyu) said:

(死。) "(It indicates) death."

奉龜而泣

As he picked up the tortoise (shell) he was in tears.

-Qingji pretended to be genuinely moved to tears by the apparent prediction of the death of his mother, but he did not there and then engage in any ritual lamentation. This was not an occasion for demonstrative mourning *kū* 哭 but it was an occasion for a show of genuine inner emotion. He was hoping that as a result of this pretense he would be allowed to return home to look after the affairs of his mother.]

Hanfei 14.6.1030, Zhu Shouliang 487

余欲君之棄其妻也。

Yü wanted the ruler to discard his wife.

因自傷其身，

So she injured her own body,

以示君而泣曰：...

showed the ruler (the wounds) and said, tearfully:...

余又欲殺甲，

Yü also wanted to kill (the regular wife) Jiă, and to make her own son successor.

而以其子為後，

So she tore up her inner underwear

以示君而泣曰：...

showed it to the ruler and said, tearfully: ...

[The scheming concubine could have wailed *kū* 哭, but her appeal is characteristically private, intimate, and emotional. She is claiming extremely unjust maltreatment.]

- *vi:* (come to) weep in emotional protest against perceived grave and insufferable injustice

LSCQ 22.3, Zhang 799

夫人歸

When the man returned

酒醒

and he had recovered from the wine

而消其子曰

he criticised his son and said:

吾為汝父也

"I am your father.

豈庸不慈哉

How could you say that I am not loving?

我醉

I was drunk

汝悞苦我

and on the way you were rude to me.

何故

Why did you do that?"
vi: come to weep because of deep sympathy, pity

Zuo Zhao 25.6, Couvreur 3.386

公若泣而隅之，
Gongnù was moved to tears and took pity on him,

曰：
and he said:

［殺是，
Killing such a person,

是殺余也。］
such an action is killing myself.
[Again we have the show of affection accompanied with qi泣。]

vi: weep as sign of a state of heightened emotional excitement

Meng 4B33

與其妾訕其良人
Together with the concubine she made fun of her husband,

而相泣於中庭，
and they wept on each other’s shoulders within the courtyard;

而良人未之知也...
the husband never knew about this.

其妻妾不羞也
The cases where wives and concubines are not ashamed

而不相泣者，
and do not weep on each other’s shoulders

幾希矣。
are very few.

[The ladies are not wailing or demonstratively crying. They are overcome with a common emotion relating to the depressing behaviour of their husband and master. Their weeping is not for effect, and it is not encouraged by any rule of etiquette. Characteristically, there is sympathy between the two weeping ladies. Indeed, the form xiàngqi相泣 "weep on each other’s shoulders" became standard in pre-Buddhist classical Chinese. Moreover, the motive, xiàng羞 "shame" is made explicit in the context. The motive of this kind of sympathetic common weeping may vary. Examples are many. There are no cases of xiàngkù相哭 in the literature I have surveyed.]
Zuo Xuan zhuan 4.03, Yang 679, Couvreur 1.584f

Ziwen was greatly distressed.

When he was about to die,
he collected his extended clan around him

曰:

且泣曰:

And, breaking into tears, he went on:

Even ghosts need food.

I hope that the ghosts in your clan will not go hungry.

[Thinking about his own death the speaker breaks into tears in mid-speech. This has nothing to do with qi "lamentation"].

Hanshu 097A/3957

Before Jie had finished speaking


.


.


Tears were flowing in several streams.

The Emperor considered him loyal

and from this point on kept him close to himself.

[Breaking into tears within a sentence is always described in terms of qi "in the texts I have seen. Given the nominal meaning of qi "one might be tempted to translate "shed tears"][LSCQ 9.3, Chen Qiyou 791, Zhang 309]

宜王自迎鮮郭於郊

King Xuán personally went out to meet the ruler of Jingguó in the suburbs.

王之而泣

and as he saw him in the distance he broke into tears.

[Note that there is no element of grief, or of longing for someone. It is as if qi "expresses some kind of general excitement in this instance. There is no doubt that kū "would have been entirely out of place in this context. The qi "expresses a heightened state of emotional excitement and attachment, although it is not clear that there is personal friendship involved.]

Chuci, Zhibi 自悲, Huang 218, tr. Hawkes

過故郷而一顧兮,

As I passed by my old home, I took one look back at it,

泣懷悲而感事。

And I sobbed until my coat-front was all wet with my tears.

頗白玉以為面兮,

35 But I must become as one made of hard white jade on the outside,

懷琬琰以懷心。

Having a wànyán jewel inside him for a heart.

[Longing for home induces no kū "lamentation. It reduces a man to tears. As we have mentioned before, there is only one case of kū "in Chuci, and that involves ritual white clothes and formal lamentation.]

LSCQ 25.1

以臣觀之,

"...From my point of view

國必安矣。“

the state will be safe."

完子行。

And Wànzǐ went off to battle.

田成子位而還之。

Tián Chéngzǐ sent him off in tears.

[Tián Chéngzǐ has just been mortally offended by Wànzǐ, who is determined to die in the battle against the army of Yùè rather than be
associated with the wicked government of Tián. Tián's emotions are extremely complex and quite unresolved. He is literally moved to tears and does not know what to do or say. There is no sense of demonstration in his weeping. There is a strong sense of不由自主. It seems that any use of kū 哭 would have been out of place.

Yan 1.17, Wu Zeyu 63; Li Wanshou 43; Wang Liansheng 40; Lan Xinlin 27;

景公游於山之。 Duke Jing of Qi was wandering about on Ox Mountain
北臨其麗而流涕曰：
In the north he went to the ramparts of the capital, shed tears and said:

若何涕滂，
"Such a luxurious place!
Go to this place and die."

艾提，景丘相見而泣。 Al Kóng and Liáng Qiūjù all came to weep with him.

[The Duke is moved to tears by the scenery and the associations this evokes: who would be so mad as to leave such a place to face death abroad? The scenery evokes sentimentality and tears for which, of course, Yānzǐ immediately takes the Duke to task. Again, the liú ti 流涕 is resumed by qī 泣. Is it ever resumed by kū 哭?]

HSWZ 10.11, I follow Lai Yanyuan 419; Xu Weiyu 350; Hightower 333 is no help; cf. Lie 6, Xian Dingshu 592 which does not have our important bowing of the head;

齊景公遊於山之。 Duke Jing of Qi wandering about on Ox Mountain
而北望齊曰：
and looking north towards Qi he said:

美哉國乎。
"What a beautiful country!"

鬱鬱泰山。

Luxurious is Mount Tàishān.

使古無死者，
If from ancient times there was no death (i.e. I was immortal)

則寡人將去此而何之？
then where would I go, leaving this place (i.e. I would stay forever)."

俯而泣絫。 ...
He bowed his head and tears wetted his lapel.

箇子、箇子曰： ...
Guózi and Gāozǐ said: "..."

俯泣。

They (also) bowed their heads and wept.
[As we have seen before the gesture of bowing the head in connection with qī 泣 (as opposed to kū 哭) is regular. The Duke is simply moved to tears by the scene. He is not excessively sad about anything. Just moved to tears which he tries to hide by bowing his head. There is no doubt that kū 哭 would have been out of place in this context.]

Hanshu 07C1/1449

魯相孫昭子聘于宋,
Shūsūn Zhāōzǐ of Liǔ was an official guest in Sòng.

元公與燕，
Yuāngōng (of Sòng) was at an official feast together with him.

飲酒樂,
When they had drunk wine and were feeling happy,

語相泣也。

they started talking (informally) and weeping on each other's shoulders.

樂相佐，
Leü was the toastmaster

告人曰：
and he told people:

「今茲君與叔孫其皆死乎！
"Now our ruler and Shūsūn will probably die (soon)."

吾聞之，
I have heard it said,

哀樂而樂哀，
to grieve about joys and to enjoy grief,

皆喪心也。

this is all to lose one's heart.

心之精爽，
The subtle and bright elements of the heart,
is 謂魂魄：
these are called the male and female souls.
魂魄去之，
When the male and female souls have left men,
何以能久？
how can they last?"
[Crying on each other's shoulders could never be 哭 “lament”.]

• vi: weep to show sincere desperation
It is hard to be sure of when weeping is deliberate and how deliberate any instance of weeping is. I just present one case for consideration.

Shiji 041/1745-1746
吳使者泣而去。
The envoy from Wú left in tears,
句縵懺之。
and Gōujiān felt pity for him.
[The dictionary here reminds us that 泣 is very often asking for 涇 "taking pity on". And yet, there is a deep contrast between this case and the other cases where 泣 is a deliberate, often female, ploy.]

• vt: break into tears at the sight of, break into tears when confronted with, by moved to tears by

Lunheng 55.4.10, Liu Pansui 789; Beida 3.1052
當雷霆時
When there was a thunderstorm
成王懼，
King Cheng was moved to fear.
開金縢之書，
He opened the book in the golden casket (handed down from the Duke of Zhōu)
見周公之功，
and saw the achievements of the Duke of Zhōu.
執書泣過。
Holding the book in his hands he wept over his mistakes.
自責之深。
He made profound accusations against himself.

[He is not staging a demonstration against his own faults: he is weeping as a spontaneous reaction to reading the book in the golden casket.]

• vt: be moved to tears (of sympathy) by someone.
Zuo Ding 10.6, Yang 1582, Couveur 3.567
公閉門而泣之，
The Duke closed the gates (of his home) and wept for him
目盡腫。
so that his eyes became swollen.

Guoyu Jin 8, 14.9, ed. Shānhāigǔ 2.462, Dong Līzhāng 546
叔向見司馬侯之子，
Shūxiāng visited the son of Sīmă Hóu (who had died),
撫而泣之，曰：
He stroked him kindly and weeping in front of him he said:
[自其父之死：
"Since your father has died
吾族興 شمال in front of him]
I have no one with whom to serve the ruler..."
[This is not an occasion for loud and public lamentation. What follows is a rather private and general discussion.]

Lào 31
救人之眾，
When one has taken many lives,
以悲哀泣之，
one weeps over these in sadness and grief;
戰勝
when one has won a battle,
以喪禮處之。
one treats this according to the ritual of mourning.
[The text is problematic. Mawangdui reads 哭 “lament”. Emendation to 哭 has been commonly proposed. However, as our examples for transitive 泣 show, there is no need to change the textus receptus. In fact, that text makes natural sense with its parallelism between 泣 and the funeral rituals. With 哭 the text would become repetitive.]
Zhuang Wang Shumin 246
Before long, Zilai fell ill.
Gaspng and on the verge of death,
其子傑而分之之。
his wife and children who were weeping over him.

LSCQ 16.1, Chen Qiyu 945,
夏太史令終出南。
Zhonggou, the archivist of the Xia, took out the maps and laws of the land
执而泣之
holding them in his hands he broke into tears over them.

But Ji of Xia was deluded and confused,
暴風乾甚
and his violent irregularity became worse and worse.

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This is not ordinary grief for a dead person. Yuelyang is moved to unspeakable grief beyond ritual expression. He expresses his grief through qi 泣. No loud lamentation, but quiet weeping.

Shiji 7, Zhonghua 337ff
項王已死，...
When Xiangyu was dead...

SY 1.9
他出見罪人。
Yù went out to see a criminal.

Huanian 18, Chen Zhong 845
中山與其子
Then the Zhongshun boiled Yuelyang's son
而適之鼎與其首。
and they sent Yuelyang a tripod with soup, and the son's head.

Yü回答曰：
Yü answered:

"The people of Yào and Shùn
皆以義、信之民為心。"
all took the attitudes of Yào and Shùn as their own.
Now in my way of government
the people each take their own attitudes as their attitudes.

That is why I feel acute pain at this.

Yü is moved to tears by these criminals, in spite of himself. Kū 哭 is not used for situations like this. There are a fair number of cases of kū 哭 in SY which should be checked for this. The relevant occasion for qi 泣 is momentary tòng 痛 "acute pain:"

Han shu 027C1, Zhonghua 1468-1469

Tu got frightened and was about to leave.
Behind closed doors the Duke gave himself over to tears.

his eyes got all swollen.

This illustrates nicely the "private" character of qi 泣 "weeping."

On the other hand, qi 泣 in this case seems quite deliberate.

vt: weep (e.g. blood)

Shi 194, Ruan 448

When I tell you to remove to the king's capital,

if you say: "we still have no chamber and house;"

I grieved I brood over it and weep blood;

there is no word (of mine) which is not urgent;

It seems that even weeping blood expresses a private grief, is a private act involving deep sadness caused by separation. 君臣思念之情

Chuci, Miujian 謝眺, SBBY 432

Bō Yá broke the strings of his zither

WEEPING AND WAILING 401

無錘子期而聽之。
50 Because there was no Zhōng Zǐ-qí to hear him play.

It's like tears of blood.

Bian (?): He clasps his block of jade and weeps tears of blood:

An adequate work of art?

Where can he find a craftsman good enough to shape it?

Like sounds harmonize together;

同音者相和兮. 4

Creatures mate with their own kind.

Chuci, Xixian 慕賢, SBBY 511

岩由夷之純美兮,

25 He was like Xu (?): You and Bo (?): Yi in unspotted goodness,

Or Jié Zi-tui who hid himself in the mountain,

Or Shēn Shéng of Jin who met a hapless end,

Or Jing Hé who wept tears of blood.

Or Shēn Wú who had his eyes gouged out,

30 Or Prince Bì Gān who was wrongfully rejected.

Liji 3 楚弓, Couvreur 1.140; Sün Xidàn 2.82

高子昏之執親之喪也,

When Gào Zīgào conducted the funeral for his parents,

he wept tears of blood for three years

and never (smiled so as to) show his teeth.

3 The variant 楚 is the correct reading, rhyming with 醴 in I. 25.

4 The variant Hz ‘match’, ‘pair with’ is the correct reading.

伯牙之絃兮,

Bō Yá broke the strings of his zither
*n: tears

Shi 189, Ruan 437
中谷有 trọng，
3. In the midst of the valley there are motherworts,
喚其泪矣。
scorched are the dry ones;
有女仳離，
there is a girl who has been rejected,
喚其泣矣。
(gulping is her weeping =)
喚其泣矣，
she sobs and weeps，
何嗟及矣！
but what does lament avail?
[We prefer to translate: "She swallows her tears".]

Shi 69
有女仳離，
there is a girl who has been rejected，
喚其泣矣。
(gulping is her weeping =)
喚其泣矣，
she sobs and weeps，
何嗟及矣！
but what does lament avail？
[We prefer to translate: "she swallows her tears". The point is that she is moved to tears by her situation.]

Chuci, Sigü 思古
曾哀悼逝客離兮，
Sadly I sigh, with mounting grief; my heart is reft and torn.
還顧高丘泣如瀝兮，
I look back at Gao-qiu and my tears fall in a shower.

Chuci, Yóukū 悼苦 Huang 275
思念郢路兮，
53 Homesick, he thinks of the road to Ying,

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And turns his head back with longing glances.
涟漪交集兮，
The streams of snivel join in one channel，
泣下涟漪。
And the tears run down his face like rain.

Chuci, Yóukū 悼苦, Huang 275, SBBY 520
敟曰：
Lament
登山長望中心悲兮，
57 I climbed a mountain and long stood gazing, grieving in my inmost heart.
茲彼青青泣如張兮，
Verdant were the greens of the landscape, but I wept as though my heart would break.

Chuci, Sigü 思古, Huang 280; SBBY 528
悲余心之惆悵兮，
5 Alas! my heart is in despair，
目眇眇而憀泣。
And my eyes are blinded with brimming tears.

Chuci, Sigü 思古, Huang 280, SBBY 530
髮披披以憀懣兮，
13 My hair hangs dishevelled and tangled on my shoulders，
躬勤勞而瘞悴。
My body is sick and spent with toil；
魂詭詭而南行兮，
My soul in wild haste goes fleeing southwards;
泣霆霆而憀袂。
Tears soak my bosom and wet my sleeves.

Chuci, Sigü 思古 end
曾哀悼逝客離兮，
Sadly I sigh, with mounting grief; my heart is reft and torn.
還顧高丘泣如瀝兮，
I look back at Gao-qiu and my tears fall in a shower.
n: weeping

Zhuang 2, Wang Shumin 87

When the state of Chin first got Pretty Li,

the daughter of the border warden of Ai,

she wept till her robe was soaked with tears.

But after she arrived at the king's residence,

shared his fine bed,

and could eat the tender meats of his table,

she regretted that she had ever wept.

[Perhaps what she regrets are not her tears but her weeping. There is no way of knowing whether this particular distinction was of any interest to the writers of classical Chinese. The lady's tears are tears connected with her intimate erotic emotions.]

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ABBREVIATIONS

Chuci: Chūcī

Guanzi: Guānzǐ

Guoyu: Guóyǔ

Hanfei: Hānfiěi

Hanshu: Hǎnsū

HSWZ: Hànsūwàizhuàn

Huainan: Huàinànzì

Jiayu: Kōngzǐ jiāyǔ

Lao: Lǎozǐ

Lie: Lìězǐ

Lien: Liènzhúān

Liji: Lìjī

LSCQ: Lūshíchūnqū

Lunheng: Lúnhēng

Lunyu: Lún yü

Meng: Mèngfēi

Mo: Mòfēi

SBBY: Slībǎiyào 四部備要, Shanghai: Zhōngguóshūjū 1936

Shi: Shījīng

Shiji: Shǐjī

Shu: Shāngshū

SY: Shùyùān

Wenxuan: Wènxuān

Xinshu: Xinshū

Xinxu: Xīnxù

Xinyu: Xīnyǔ

Xun: Xānzǐ

Yan: Yǎnzhīchūnqū

Yili: Yìlī

ZGC: Zhāngguōcè

Zhuang: Zhuāngzì

Zuo: Zèzhūān

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