
Book Section:
Dow, J orcid.org/0000-0002-8241-6880 (2021) Human and Animal Emotions in Aristotle. In: Sattler, B.M and Coope, U, (eds.) Ancient Ethics and the Natural World. Cambridge University Press , pp. 109-124. ISBN 9781108885133

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108885133.007

Human and Animal Emotions in Aristotle

Jamie Dow (University of Leeds) – j.dow@leeds.ac.uk

> *[The] sensitive, desiderative and emotional part of the human soul is not strictly rational; but Aristotle insists that it is not simply nonrational either. Its function, he says, is to 'listen to reason'. Thus it 'partakes of reason in a sense' (1102b13-14). ... He means that in human beings the functioning of the desiderative part is to be defined by reference to its relation to the strictly rational function. In this respect it differs from the human soul's nutritive part, and also from the desiderative part of nonrational animals. The human nutritive faculty is human only in the sense of being essential to all life, and therefore to human life. But it is not defined by its relation to any specifically human faculty, and so it may be said to be formally the same in human and subhuman organisms. Now in a sense desire, too, is common to a wider class of creatures than man, for according to Aristotle's biological classification, sense perception and desire are universal in animals. But according to the division of the Ethics, the fact that dogs, fishes and human beings may all be described as desiderative creatures does not entail that they share something formally the same. For the essence of human desideration is different, it being defined in terms of a functional relationship possible only for creatures rational in the strict sense.*
>
> Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle,* (New York: OUP, 1991) p.62.

Introduction

Thinkers in antiquity were not so constrained by the disciplinary boundaries that in more recent generations have tended to separate empirical scientific disciplines from those with normative and evaluative content. The erosion of such boundaries and the attempt to traverse them are welcome features of academic and scholarly life in these last few decades, and alongside that has come a resurgence of interest in the complex array of connections that ancient thinkers saw between what they studied in nature and their accounts of how humans should live, think, feel

and collaborate. These connections cover cosmology, physics, theology, geometry, biology, history, psychology and beyond, and have been studied by an array of outstanding scholars. The passage from Sarah Broadie's landmark work on Aristotle's ethical thinking indicates one strand of her contribution to making these connections. It highlights that human appetites and passions, the focus of this essay, are *both* closely connected to the corresponding responses in non-human animals, *and also* significantly different from them. It has been fashionable at different times to emphasise either their similarities or their differences. Following the lead of Sarah Broadie and others, I will attempt to chart the middle course, and offer an integrated account of how human and animal emotions are related that neglects neither emphasis.

Aristotle's comparative framework

In the opening chapter of *History of Animals* 8, Aristotle sets out a range of ways in which the parts, activities, ways of life and characters of different types of animals can be compared. In considering the relationship between the passions and passion-related character states of humans compared to non-human animals, we should expect to be able to use Aristotle's own framework for doing so.

> *In the great majority of animals there are traces of psychical qualities which are more markedly differentiated in the case of human beings. For just as we pointed out resemblances in the physical organs, so in a number of animals we observe gentleness or fierceness, mildness or cross temper, courage or timidity, fear or confidence, high spirit or low cunning, and, with regard to intelligence, something equivalent to sagacity. Some of these qualities in man, as compared with the corresponding qualities in animals, differ only quantitatively: that is to say, a man has more of this quality, and an animal has more of some other; other qualities in man are represented by analogous qualities: for instance, just as in man we find knowledge, wisdom, and sagacity, so in certain animals there exists some other natural capacity akin to these. The truth of this statement will be the more clearly apprehended if we have regard to the phenomena of childhood; for in children may be*

> *observed the traces and seeds of what will one day be settled habits, though psychologically a child hardly differs for the time being from an animal; so that one is quite justified in saying that, as regards man and animals, certain psychical qualities are identical with one another, whilst others resemble, and others are analogous to, each other.* (*HA* 8.1, 588a16-b3)[1]

On the face of things, this gives us a neat division, and – although it is not stated explicitly – it is reasonably clear where the passions and passions-related dispositions fit in. In Aristotle's list of animal psychological features that have similar counterparts in humans, it seems as though it is the feature similar to "intelligence in thinking" (τῆς περὶ τὴν διάνοιανας συνὲσεως, a23) and the longer list of "knowledge, wisdom and sagacity" (τέχνη καὶ σοφία καὶ σύνεσις, a29) that alone are related to their human counterparts "by analogy".[2] The other features, including animal counterparts to passions such as fear and confidence, and passion-related states such as courage and cowardice, seem reasonably clearly assigned to the category of animal features that differ by degree from the corresponding human states. Human passions might be thought to be psychologically more complex or more intelligent, and perhaps it is in this respect that we can imagine Aristotle thought they differed from their animal counterparts "by the more and the less" (a25).

The picture, I will suggest, is not nearly so simple. Some features of this passage should immediately put us on our guard against this simple interpretation. Aristotle's list bears very little resemblance to either his famous "chart" of the virtues,[3] or any of his slightly-varying lists of the passions.[4] And in the survey of animal activities, lives and characters that it introduces, through this and the following book, it is striking how rarely Aristotle's focus rests on their emotions or emotional dispositions (such as virtue- or vice-like states). I want to propose that, for

1 Translations are from (Barnes, 1984).

2 It might be more accurate to say "by analogy alone", since – as Roger White has pointed out, things related by the more and the less are also related by analogy (my hands may be bigger than yours, but it is still the case that as my hands are to me, so yours are to you). Cf. (White, 2010) ch.2.

3 *EE* 2.4, 1220b36-1221a12, with 2.5, 1221a13-b3. Cf. *EN* 2.7, 1107a28-1108b10.

4 Cf. *DA* 1.1, 403a16-18; *EN* 2.5, 1105b21-3; *EE* 2.2, 1220b12-14; *MM* 1.7, 1186a12-14; *Rhet* 1.1, 1354a16-17; 2.1, 1378a20-23.

Aristotle, animals had a repertoire of types of passions that is substantially different from that of humans. There are many types of human passions that animals simply don't share, including some obvious cases (e.g. emulation, indignation) but also others (e.g. pity and shame) where this may seem more surprising. There are in fact rather few clear-cut cases where Aristotle sees humans and non-human animals as sharing the same type of passion: I defend the assimilation of human and animal passions in the cases of fear and jealousy, including resisting a possible objection, and also – albeit more cautiously – in the case of anger / spirit. This emphasis overall on the differences between human and animal passions might seem to reinstate a sharp boundary between the human and non-human realm. But in fact it does no such thing. Rather it locates the continuity between human and animal passions in a different place: that is, in the shared capacity for pleasure and pain. Both human and animal passions are fundamentally exercises of capacities to respond with pleasure and pain to the subject's apparent good or harm. Their functioning well or badly is a matter of both how well or badly they discern the subject's good or harm and also of how successfully or otherwise they motivate the subject to actions that will avoid that harm or attain that good. Doubtless in the human case, the subject's good will involve the successful exercise of capacities for reason, and reason will play a vital role in guiding pleasure and pain to discern and respond to the various forms that human good and human harm can take. Through their exercise of reason, humans can understand and analyse the world in vastly more complex ways than is possible without reason. As a consequence of this, humans and animals will have quite different repertoires of types of passions, because of widely differing arrays of goods and harms that apply to them, meriting responses of pleasure and pain. But these differences do not imply that the passions collectively are playing a different role for humans and non-human animals in the life of the organism. In both, the passions are pleasures and pains at perceived goods and harms, motivating appropriate pursuit and avoidance, subject to assessment for the accuracy with which those goods and harms are discerned and for the success with which those motivations promote the attainment of the goods and the avoidance of the harms.

Differing "by the more and the less" and "by analogy"

As we trace the connections and the differences between the passions of humans and non-human animals, it will be helpful to have as clear as possible a view of Aristotle's distinction between things' differing by degree (or "by the more and the less", as he puts it) and being related only "by analogy". It is too rarely noted how one of these categories falls within the other. Parts, character traits, and other features of animals that in different species are identical or differ by degree are *also* related by analogy (as my blood is to me, so your blood is to you; as the larger lungs of the bison are to it, so my daughter's smaller lungs are to her). So, we have two questions. One is what is required for the features of living things to be related by analogy. And the other is what kinds of similarities between features in distinct species are required if those features are fall within the narrower sub-category of things that differ by degree, i.e. if they are to be variants of essentially the same feature, with differences in the degree to which some attribute applies to them. The most helpful passage is in *PA* 1.5.

> *Many groups, as already noticed, present common attributes, that is to say, in some cases absolutely identical—feet, feathers, scales, and the like; while in other groups the affections and organs are analogous. For instance, some groups have lungs, others have no lung, but an organ analogous to a lung in its place (τοῖς δὲ πλεύμων μὲν οὔ, ὃ δὲ τοῖς ἔχουσι πλεύμονα, ἐκείνοις ἕτερον ἀντὶ τούτου·); some have blood, others have no blood, but a fluid analogous to blood, and with the same capacity (τοῖς δὲ τὸ ἀνάλογον τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον δύναμιν ἥνπερ τοῖς ἐναίμοις τὸ αἷμα). To treat of the common attributes separately in connexion with each individual group would involve, as already suggested, useless iteration. For many groups have common attributes. So much for this topic. As every instrument and every bodily member is for the sake of something, viz. some action (τὸ δ' οὗ ἕνεκα πρᾶξίς τις), so the whole body must evidently be for the sake of some complex action (πράξεώς τινος ἕνεκα πολυμεροῦς). Thus the saw is made for sawing, for sawing is a function (χρῆσις), and not sawing for the saw. Similarly, the body too must somehow or other be made for the*

soul, and each part of it for some function (καὶ τὰ μόρια τῶν ἔργων), to which it is adapted.

(*PA* 1.5, 645b3-20)[5]

For Aristotle, analogous parts provide the organism with the same *capacity* as each other, as Leunissen insists, against those who see the "by analogy" relation as resting on shared *function*.[6] But it is also clear that parts are for the sake of something, and here what they are for the sake of are activities (πράξεις), and that the whole body is for the sake of a complex activity, named here as "the soul", which is presumably a way of referring to the animal's whole life. Aristotle then refers to the goal of each part in a different way: as its "function" (ἔργον), with the likely implication that the function of the whole animal is its life (as Aristotle, of course, explicitly says in *EN* 1.7). Here, then, the "function" of parts is their actually achieving their contribution to the animal's life.[7] The parts are for the sake of this in the sense that they provide the capacity for making such a contribution. That is to say that their "function" is simply the (successful) activation of the capacity they supply to the animal. If this is correct, not much (for our purposes here, at the very least) turns on whether it is the same capacity or the same function[8] in the life of the animal that those analogous features must share.

There is a more tricky debate about what is required for differences between features to be "by the more and the less". Devin Henry argues that this requires that the features be instantiated by "the same underlying material substratum".[9] Mariska Leunissen rejects this view in favour of saying that the kinds of similarity that ground classifying animals and parts together as differing only by degree are similarities of shape or form that are available (in principle) to observation.[10] A

5 Transl. W. Ogle in (Barnes, 1984), adapted.

6 (Leunissen, 2014) 172.

7 The interpretation here is thus compatible with (although it does not require) the understanding of ἔργον as achievement defended in (Baker, 2015).

8 Cf. e.g. (White, 2010) ch. 2; (Henry, 2014).

9 (Henry, 2014) 163.

10 (Leunissen, 2014) 178-80. The use of the disagreement between Henry and Leunissen is complicated by (1) the fact that issues of Aristotle's classification of animals into species and genera are at issue for them in this debate; and (2) the fact that the debate is for them, as for others, framed as being about the conditions for parts being related by analogy, rather than (as I would prefer) the issue of when, among analogously-related parts, those

key text is Aristotle's assertion that animals in the same kind (whose differences he will go on to say are only by the more and the less (b15)) "have a common nature and contain closely allied subordinate forms" (*PA* 1.4, 644b3-4: ἔχει τε μίαν φύσιν κοινὴν καὶ εἴδη ἐν αὐτῷ μὴ πολὺ διεστῶτα). Although the debate is hard to adjudicate, one of Aristotle's examples of parts related only by analogy, and thus whose differences extend beyond the bounds of "the more and the less", is bone in human and spine in fish (b12-13). It seems far from obvious that Aristotle would have thought those differences were observable differences of shape and form, whereas it seems much clearer that he knew that human bones and fish bones were composed of different underlying material. To that extent, my sympathies on this point lie with Henry. But the point may matter little for our purposes. When it comes to the passions, the passions all tend to involve the temperature of the body in general and the blood in particular; and all of the animals under discussion will be blooded animals. The material substratum for the passions seems to be shared. Conversely, the observable differences in (shape or) form relevant to the passions all seem to be either very small (so as to suggest either that the states involved are identical between species or differ only by degree) or so large as to rule out their being related by analogy. The task now is to investigate in more detail how this will apply to particular kinds of passions as experienced by humans and non-human animals.

Humans' and animals' differing repertoire of passions.

The key claim in this section, then, is that there are very significant differences in how humans and animals sub-divide the realm of the pleasant and particularly the painful, and hence in the *types* of passions they can experience.

It has been recognised in a number of discussions of the passions in Aristotle that many of the human passions he explores in the *Rhetoric* and the ethical works involve recognising their objects in ways that are possible for humans but not for animals.[11] Pity, indignation and

parts are similar enough to differ only by the more and the less.

11 Cf. (Dow, 2009) 170-2; (Fortenbaugh, 1971) 148-50; and differences of this kind are the basis for the conclusion drawn in (Fortenbaugh, 2002) 69, that animal emotions are merely analogous to human emotions.

emulation, for example, involve discriminating between the deserved and the undeserved; it is a matter of some controversy whether there are distinctive passions involved in the virtue of justice, but if there are, they would seem to involve conceptual abilities (discernment of what is just, lawful, equal, and the like) that are beyond non-human animals.[12] This fits with how Aristotle contrasts the cognitive (and expressive) capacities of humans and animals near the start of the *Politics*.

> *It is also clear why a human being is more of a political animal than a bee or any other gregarious animal. Nature makes nothing pointlessly, as we say, and no animal has speech except a human being. A voice (φωνή) is a signifier of what is pleasant or painful (τοῦ λυπηροῦ καὶ ἡδέος), which is why it is also possessed by the other animals (for their nature goes this far: they not only perceive what is pleasant or painful but signify it to each other). But speech (λόγος) is for making clear what is beneficial or harmful (τὸ συμφέρον καὶ τὸ βλαβερόν), and hence also what is just and unjust. For it is peculiar to human beings, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of what is good and bad, just or unjust (ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ καὶ δικαίου καὶ ἀδίκου), and the rest.*
>
> (*Politics* 1.2, 1253a7-18)

The absence of a capacity for reason limits the conceptual reach of animals, and it is uncontroversial that the undeservedness of good or bad fortune can be painful to humans in a way that is not possible for animals. For this reason, and following Aristotle's own cues, we should be cautious about ascribing pity to non-human animals. He comes close to ascribing pity to dolphins in *HA* 9.48, describing the behaviour of some adult dolphins in bearing up a dead juvenile to prevent its being eaten by predators thus: "as though out of pity" (οἷον κατελεοῦντες,

12 Friendship is a more complex case because of the varieties of friendship in Aristotle. Certainly the kinds of friendly feelings that involve the recognition of goodness and virtue, and wishing one's friend good for their own sake, will be beyond animals. The same will apply to friendship based on recognition of usefulness. Perhaps friendly feelings of the type based on pleasure are a possibility for animals. But in any event, in Aristotle's use of "friend" (*philos*) and "enemy" (*polemios*) terminology in the *HA,* esp. 9.1-2, he gives no trace of interest in the *feelings* associated with friendship. He is concerned solely with perceptions among animals of threats and cooperation, and especially with tracing patterns of cooperation and conflict between species. We should be very cautious about drawing any conclusions from these passages about animal passions in Aristotle.

631a20). But it is not actually pity, presumably because it does not involve the recognition of the undeservedness of suffering that pity requires.[13] Likewise, Aristotle does not seem to ascribe shame to animals, and this seems most naturally explained by the fact that reputation-affecting badness is not something they are capable as perceiving as painful.[14] Aristotle relays without comment stories of male horses' distress at realising they had mated with their own mother: the horse in one story bites its keeper to death, and in another throws itself off a precipice.[15] But in neither case is this labelled with any passion-related term (such as αἰσχύνη), nor does he even refer to shame-like behaviour in the presence of other horses, and it is easy to see why he would be reluctant to do so, given the sophisticated kind of recognition with which he associates shame in his own analysis of it. We should conclude that for Aristotle, non-human animals do not feel pity or shame.

On the other hand, we can be reasonably confident that Aristotle thought that animals experienced real fear and jealousy, the differences between these and their human counterparts being somehow differences "of degree" in how a state with essentially the same functional role was instantiated. Aristotle cites the peacock (*HA* 1.1, 488b23-4) as representative of animals that tend to jealousy (φθονερά), within his catalogue of animal states of character. His discussion of eyebrows in animals generally includes the remark that eyebrows pointing down indicate jealousy (*HA* 1.9, 491b17-18). These general remarks suggest he is happy to attribute jealousy to a reasonably wide variety of animals. He comments specifically on the jealousy of the eagle, grabbing its food in large chunks and ejecting and attacking its young as they approach maturity (*HA* 9.34, 619b26-34), as contrasted with the eagle known as the 'black eagle' (μελανάετος) or 'hare-killer' (λαγωφόνος) (*HA* 9.32, 618b29-31). Jealousy among animals seems to be a matter of having the kind of awareness of competitors for good things such as food or territory, that

13 *Rhet* 2.8, 1385b13-14.

14 *Rhet* 2.6, 1383b12-14. The remark about animals such as geese being 'modest' (αἰσχυντηλὰ) in *HA* 1.1, 488b22-3 is probably best interpreted as proneness to caution – Aristotle does not use 'shame' terminology in his discussions of specific animals elsewhere in the biological works; so if we are to see this remark as developed elsewhere, it would have to be in the discussions of various animals' cowardice and proneness to fear.

15 Cf. *HA* 9.47.

involves a distress at the competitor's possible acquisition of those things, and that generates a motivation to competitive or aggressive behaviour to prevent the competitor from doing so. This is very close to how Aristotle describes human jealousy in the *Rhetoric*, as "a certain kind of distress felt in connection with those similar to us, at their apparent success with respect to the goods previously discussed [in the preceding section on indignation, e.g. wealth, power], not to get those things for oneself, but because they have them" (2.10, 1387b23-25). Of course, the goods that different creatures compete for are different, and there are complexities for humans about whether jealousy (φθόνος) is something that humans *should* feel, but these do not count against our supposing that the human and animal passions are essentially versions of the same thing.

Likewise, with fear, it is clear that Aristotle thinks animals experience fear, and that this passion and human fear are alike varieties of fear. We have seen already how fear features prominently in Aristotle's survey of human and animal passions and character states at the start of *HA* 8.1. There is an earlier survey of animal character traits at *HA* 1.1 (488b12-26) in which likewise he mentions fear- and confidence-related dispositions such as being cowardly (δειλά, b15), courageous (b17) and watchful (φυλακτικά, b23). In the introductory chapter to *HA* 9, Aristotle discusses how differences in character traits among animals are correlated with the distinction between male and female. Among the passion-related dispositions mentioned is courage, i.e. in relation to fear. But there is an interesting passage which suggests that when Aristotle in various places discusses the "spiritedness" (τὸ θυμώδες) of animals, he has in view their proneness to fear and confidence as much as to anything like anger.

> *In all cases, excepting those of the bear and leopard, the female is less spirited (ἀθυμότερα) than the male; in regard to the two exceptional cases, the superiority in courage (ἀνδρειοτέρα) rests with the female. With all other animals the female is softer in disposition, is more mischievous, less simple, more impulsive, and more attentive to the nurture of the young; the male, on the other hand, is more*

spirited (θυμωδέστερα), more savage (ἀγριώτερα), more simple and less cunning.

(*HA* 9.1, 608a33-b4)

It is clear that courage stands in contrast to being "less spirited", with the clear implication that the courageous female bear and leopard, being less prone to fear than the male, is *ipso facto* more spirited. Spirit must be, at least in part, a disposition to fearlessness, which makes relevant to fear in animals the various passages about "spiritedness" discussed below. Various particular creatures are noted as being prone to fear. The cuckoo is "cowardly" (*HA* 9.29, 618a29). Other birds fear eagles (9.34, 620a8-10). Little birds are frightened of the hawks used by hunters (9.36, 620a33-b4). Cephalopods discharge their ink due to fear (9.37, 621b28-31). Lions vary, as other animals do, regarding how courageous or cowardly they are (9.44, 629b5-7, b33-5), but are afraid of fire (629b21-3). In all of this, there seems no trace of any reservation from Aristotle about attributing fear to animals. His description of human fear in the *Rhetoric* as "a certain kind of pain or disturbance from the appearance of future destructive or painful harm" (2.5, 1382a21-2) may perhaps suggest that humans can discriminate the objects of their fear in more sophisticated ways,[16] but also makes clear that this is substantially the same kind of state as can be felt by animals – a painful recognition of a threat of harm that motivates the animal to avoid it.

The case of anger is more complex. It is at once a very natural candidate for a passion that Aristotle would have seen as common to humans and animals, and a case where the differences between the relevant human and animal passions are significant enough to raise doubts about whether the same kind of passion is involved. When speaking of human anger, Aristotle more

16 One might worry that *DA* 3.10, 433b5-10 suggests that for Aristotle those without the capacity of reason will be unable to register harms as "future" harms (as I did, in (Dow, 2009), p.171). There is a difficulty here regarding how we understand Aristotle's views on how things can be registered as past or future or possible, without the use of reason. But this must be possible, for at least two kinds of reasons. One is that the fear attributed in the biological works to non-human animals serves to motivate in those animals the avoidance of harms that have not yet occurred and cannot therefore be experienced by the animal as occurrently painful. The other is that any theory of animal locomotion in Aristotle will need to attribute to the animal the ability to discriminate the goal (e.g. eating the stag) for the sake of which it (the lion) moves, where that goal is something that is not the case now (when the animal initiates movement) and that the animal moves to realise. Cf. e.g. (Lorenz, 2006) ch.9; (Moss, 2012) ch.1.

often uses the term ὀργή, but never uses this term in connection with animals in the biological works. He defines anger in the *Rhetoric* as "a desire-cum-pain for what one takes to be revenge, on account of what one takes to be a slight against oneself or one's own, when slighting is not fitting".[17] And one might worry that it is beyond the cognitive capacities of non-human animals to represent the circumstances of anger as involving "slights", or to assess things as "not fitting", or to have "revenge" as an object of desire. These provide the grounds on which some conclude that Aristotle's considered view was that animals do not share the human passion of anger.[18] But the difficulties can, I think, be resolved. And there are reasons for treating human anger and animal "spirit" as variants of the same type of passion. One reason is that Aristotle does, in fact, seem to apply both terms on occasions to both humans and animals. In the discussion of calmness in *Rhetoric* 2.3, Aristotle cites the behaviour of dogs as evidence of his claim that if the object of anger (ὀργή) humbles themselves before the angry person, their anger subsides (*Rhet.* 2.3, 1380a25-6). Conversely, the discussions of the virtuous disposition in relation to anger in both the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics* use both ὀργή and θυμός. The discussion in the *EE* seems to use language that invites the connection between human ὀργή and animal θυμός.

> *In the same way we must ascertain what is gentleness and irascibility (περὶ πραότητος καὶ χαλεπότητος). For we see that the gentle is concerned with the pain that arises from anger (ἀπὸ θυμοῦ), being characterized by a certain attitude towards this. We have given in our list as opposed to the passionate, irascible, and savage (τῷ ὀργίλῳ καὶ χαλεπῷ καὶ ἀγρίῳ)—all such being names for the same state—the slavish and the stupid (τὸν ἀνδραποδώδη καὶ τὸν ἀνόητον). For these are pretty much the names we apply to those who are not moved to anger even when they ought, but take insults easily and are tolerant of contempt.* (*EE* 3.3, 1231b5-13)

Two of the terms used here for excessive proneness to anger, "irascibility" (χαλεπότης, or "cross-temper") and "savageness" (ἀγριότης, "fierceness" or "wildness") are used regularly in the

17 *Rhet*. 2.2, 1378a30-32. There is a textual difficulty, nicely discussed in (Trivigno, 2011). None of the points made above depends on a particular resolution of those difficulties.

18 Cf. e.g. (Fortenbaugh, 1971) esp. 150.

biological works to apply to non-human animals. And "slavishness" has been shown to have a connection with the kind of lack of spirit that Aristotle associates with colder and thinner blood, and attributes to Southerners.[19] The virtue of "gentleness" described in this passage issues in the correct exercise of the passion that in humans is anger:[20] the incorrect exercise of this passion can constitute states such as "cross-temper" and "fierceness" that can clearly be possessed by animals such as bulls, and "slavishness" that, in Aristotle's view, approximates the character of Southerners to that of deer.

This all supports the view that anger and "spirit" share the same core functional role in humans and in animals, that is as a "desire-cum-pain" (ὄρεξις μετὰ λύπης, *Rhet* 2.2, 1378a30) – distress at hostile infractions of the social structure, motivating the animal to take corrective action.[21] Not only that, the similar biological mechanisms (or underlying material substratum, to use Devin Henry's terminology) – particularly hot blood around the heart[22] – by which this role is discharged support the contention that differences between human anger and its animal counterparts are differences of degree (of complexity, of understanding) among varieties of the same passion.

<u>An objection: human and animal passions are functionally different.</u>

There is, however, an objection that might be brought against this assimilation of human and animal passions in the cases of jealousy, fear and anger. The objection is that (say) human fear plays a different functional role in the life of the organism than animal fear does. It rests on the observation made by Sarah Broadie quoted at the start of the chapter. Human fear is subject to regulation by reason, such that humans should fear only "at the right time, in the right circumstances, at the right objects, with the right motive, and in the right way" (*EN* 2.6, 1106b21-

19 Cf. (Leunissen, 2012) 520-24).

20 Aristotle also assigns to *thumos* an indirect role in supporting the virtue of courage in humans (*EN* 3.8, 1116b23-1117a9).

21 Cf. (Heath, 2008) 255-6.

22 Cf. *DA* 1.1, 403a25-b1 with e.g. *PA* 2.4, 650b33-651a4, and discussion of the biological texts in (Leunissen, 2012) 513-24.

2), as defined by right reason (1107a1-2). Animal fear is not subject to regulation in that way. And if human and animal fear play different functional roles, they cannot be analogous to one another (it would not be the case that as human-fear is to the human, so animal-fear is to the animal), and *a fortiori* cannot differ only by degree. The functional role of human passions, i.e. their successful functioning, involves their being guided by correct reason. It also involves their being felt in such a way as to help motivate action that is undertaken, "for the sake of the fine" (e.g. *EN* 3.7, 1115b23-4). This suggests that their purpose is one that cannot be shared by non-human animals.

In order to respond to this objection, we need to distinguish, as Aristotle does, capacities for passionate responses, passionate responses themselves, and dispositions to make those responses in particular ways (*EN* 2.5, 1105b19-28). For Aristotle, the relevant capacity would, in the case of fear, be the capacity to respond to appearances of danger with distress at it so as to motivate avoidance. The passionate response itself – in this case fear – would be that distress at apparent danger.[23] The disposition to make responses of fear in the right way is, in humans, a disposition to respond in ways guided, above all, by the deliverances of correct reason about danger, and about how its painfulness should be set, in an integrated way, alongside the pleasantness and painfulness of other features of the subject's situation. These deliverances are the result of the subject's reasoned deliberations about how to live well.[24] Clearly the disposition to make fear responses in the right way is different in animals: Aristotle does not offer us an account of what it involves, but we might surmise that it is a disposition to identify danger correctly and to motivate the animal to successful avoidance behaviour.[25] No integration with reason is involved for animals, because none is possible. The differences in this regard are set out by Aristotle in his discussion of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

23 This presupposes the view that in humans as well as in non-human animals, the passions are made at appearances. Cf. (Moss, 2012) ch. 4; (Dow, 2013); and the related discussions of how in humans reason can be a source of such appearances in e.g. (Lorenz, 2006) ch. 13, esp. 189-90; and (Grönroos, 2007).

24 This view is in its essentials that of (Lennox, 1999).

25 Animals can fail to possess such a disposition. The fear of the mullet in *HA* 8.2, 591b3-4, for example, seems to show the absence of an optimal fear-related disposition, since the behaviour motivated by fear (hiding its head, "as though" hiding its whole body) is ineffective avoidance behaviour.

> *Those creatures are not brave, then, which are driven on to danger by pain or spirit (*δι΄ ἀλγηδόνος ἢ θυμοῦ*). The 'courage' that is due to spirit seems to be the most natural, and to be courage if choice (*προαίρεσιν*) and motive (*τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα*) be added. Humans, then, as well as beasts, suffer pain when they are angry, and are pleased when they exact their revenge; those who fight for these reasons, however, are pugnacious but not courageous; for they do not act for the sake of the fine nor as reason directs, but from strength of feeling (*διὰ πάθος*); they have, however, something akin to courage.* (3.8, 1117a2-9)[26]

It seems plausible to suppose that Aristotle's rationale here will generalise across all the dispositions related to the passions. The motivation for human virtuous actions, to which the dispositions for exercising the passions contribute, involves a distinctive goal – "the fine" – and a way of determining how to respond – through deliberated "choice" and "as reason directs", both of which depend on reason. They are dispositions to exercise the passions in a way that is integrated with the exercise of reason, and are therefore not present in animals. Clearly, then, the optimal dispositions[27] in relation to fear in humans and non-human animals are rather different. Perhaps Aristotle might have thought they were analogous to one another; but there is no evidence that he did.[28]

This still leaves open the possibility that in the relevant range of cases (e.g. fear, jealousy and anger), what Aristotle sees as the same between humans and animals is either the *capacity* for

26 Translation adapted from (Brown, 2009).

27 Animal dispositions are never called "virtues" (ἀρεταί) in the *HA*, as noted in (Lennox, 1999) 25, surprisingly perhaps, given that optimal dispositions of the kind I am discussing are excellences of animal capacities. The reason may be that in the *HA,* terms like "courage" and "cowardice" seem to be used not to identify animal dispositions as optimal or defective, but simply as a shorthand for dispositions to behave in certain ways: "cowardice" might in fact be the optimal disposition for deer, given that it will almost always be better for the deer to flee than to fight.

28 Regarding as analogous optimal dispositions to feel (say) fear in humans and animals would require identifying some common function they discharged ((White, 2010) ch. 2; (Henry, 2014)) or capacity they enabled (Leunissen, 2014) in both types of animal. But this is not straightforward, even in the case of fear. Disposing the animal to respond with fear to all and only fearsome things, to the extent that they are fearsome (such an account would allow for the difference in cognitive capacities between species), might be optimal for animals, but this would not be sufficient for human courage as Aristotle understood it (cf. *EN* 3.7).

making passionate responses of that type or the *responses* themselves, or both. Once the distinction between emotional capacities, responses and dispositions is applied to it, the objection canvassed above seems most plausibly construed as requiring a clear distinction between animal and human *dispositions* to make passionate responses correctly. Thus construed, it seems to leave untouched the claim argued for in the preceding sections, i.e. that human and animal fear, jealousy and anger are varieties of the same kind of passionate response, issuing from the same kind of capacity of soul.

Human and Animal Passions

Where does that leave the relationship between the passions of humans and of non-human animals? If the above arguments are successful, they establish that there are a few types of passion (e.g. fear, jealousy and anger) that are common to humans and animals. Even in these cases, though, it is conceded that the dispositions to exercise these passionate responses well are very substantially different in humans from their counterparts in non-human animals. And in fact, such dispositions will be different in relation to *every* type of passion. Moreover, to set alongside these shared passions, there are many others (e.g. pity, shame, emulation, indignation, *schadenfreude,* plus whatever passions are involved in justice and virtue- or utility- based friendship) that are simply not part of the passionate repertoire of animals at all. As such, the view I'm recommending traces some significant but limited lines of continuity between human and animal passion types, whilst stressing how substantial for Aristotle are the differences and discontinuities between human and animal passionate experience (bucking perhaps a recent trend to emphasise continuity).

Does this reinstate a sharp boundary between the human and non-human realm? The answer is: no. This answer rests on a view I have canvassed previously that Aristotle's general "theory" of the passions (in humans) is that they are pleasures and pains.[29] Considered in this way, the human capacities for passionate response are (collectively) exactly the same as those of animals: they are

29 (Dow, 2011) and (Dow, 2015) ch. 9.

simply these core capacities of the sensitive soul to respond to perceptual (and post-perceptual) inputs with pleasure and pain. The commonalities and the differences between the types of human and animal passions are built on this shared foundation. Both human and non-human animals are able to find things pleasurable and painful, in ways that variously involve the heating (e.g. anger/spirit) and chilling (e.g. fear) of the body and particularly the blood of the animal. The bodily mechanisms for making such responses are common to many species.

The differences stem from the different lives of humans and animals, and from the consequent fact that the human good and the good for other animals therefore diverge. The human good is more complex than animals' good, in ways that are tied to the presence of reason, and the apprehension of this good is correspondingly therefore more complex, requiring the exercise of reason. As a result, humans have a significantly different repertoire of ways in which to find things painful or pleasant, and the ability to distinguish between (say) the painfulness of others' success because of one's own failure to attain similar success (emulation) and the painfulness of others' success because they don't deserve it (indignation). The human good involves the active exercise of reason, including developing an understanding of how exercising the virtues and acting for the sake of the fine contributes to the overall goal of living well. Humans, even those whose understanding of the human good is deeply faulty, find things pleasant and painful because of their connection to (what they take to be) the human good. It should not be at all surprising that the passionate repertoire of humans therefore differs significantly from that of animals.

Conclusion

We set out to trace how human passions were connected to, but also different from, those of non-human animals. Our conclusion is that the capacity for the passions, on which all of the particular types of passions are built, is the same for humans and animals. It consists in the same material

conditions (especially the temperature of various parts of the body, and especially of the blood), and the same broad capacity. That is the capacity is to respond with pain and pleasure to features of the animal's environment. With some types of passion (such as fear, jealousy and anger), those responses can be identified as of the same kind in humans and animals, differing, if at all, only in degree (of complexity, perhaps). Other types of passion (e.g. indignation, emulation, pity) can only be experienced by humans – they inherently involve a level of sophistication in how their objects are apprehended that is impossible for creatures that lack reason. There is thus a considerable difference between the repertoire of types of passion available to humans and to animals. As regards the dispositions to feel the passions that in humans Aristotle calls virtues, these are so closely connected with the regulation of the passions by reason that they cannot be identified with (nor even considered analogous to) states available to non-human animals. Though some of these natural states provide the foundation in young humans for the subsequent development of virtue, and though Aristotle sometimes uses terms such as "courage" to describe the dispositions of animals, it is clear that Aristotle does not think that the optimal passion-related dispositions in humans are capable of being shared by non-human animals. Thus, while we have found a number of passions and passion-related features in humans and in animals that are either identical or differ only by degree, we have found none that differ only by analogy, and many that are not shared at all.

Bibliography:

Baker, S. H. (2015) 'The Concept of Ergon: Towards An Achievement Interpretation of Aristotle's "Function Argument"', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 48, pp. 227–266.

Barnes, J. (ed.) (1984) *The Complete Works of Aristotle – The Revised Oxford Translation*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Brown, L. (ed.) (2009) *The Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. D. Ross), New edition., Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Dow, J. (2009) 'Feeling Fantastic? – Emotions and Appearances in Aristotle', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 37, pp. 143–175.

Dow, J. (2011) 'Aristotle's Theory of the Emotions – Emotions as Pleasures and Pains', in Pakaluk, M. and Pearson, G. (eds), *Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 47–74.

Dow, J. (2013) 'Feeling Fantastic Again: Passions, Appearances and Beliefs in Aristotle'', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 46, pp. 213–251.

Dow, J. (2015) *Passions and Persuasion in Aristotle's Rhetoric*, Oxford Aristotle Studies, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Fortenbaugh, W. W. (1971) 'Aristotle: Animals, Emotion and Moral Virtue', *Arethusa*, vol. 4, pp. 137–65.

Fortenbaugh, W. W. (2002) *Aristotle on Emotion*, 2nd edn., London, Duckworth.

Grönroos, G. (2007) 'Listening to reason in Aristotle's Moral Psychology', Sedley, D. J. (ed), *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy: Summer 2007*, Clarendon Press, vol. 32, pp. 251–271.

Heath, M. (2008) 'Aristotle on natural slavery', *Phronesis*, Brill, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 243–270.

Henry, D. (2014) 'The Birds and the Bees: Aristotle on the Biologcial Concept of ἀνάλογον', *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 145–169.

Lennox, J. G. (1999) 'Aristotle on the Biological Roots of Virtue: The Natural History of Natural Virtue', in Maienschein, J. and Ruse, M. (eds), *Biology and the Foundation of Ethics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 10–31.

Leunissen, M. (2012) 'Aristotle on natural character and its implications for moral development', *Journal of the history of philosophy*, vol. 50, no. 4, pp. 507–530 [Online]. DOI: 10.1353/hph.2012.0062.

Leunissen, M. (2014) 'Commentary on Henry', *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 170–181.

Lorenz, H. (2006) *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Moss, J. (2012) *Aristotle on the Apparent Good: Perception, Phantasia, Thought, and Desire*, Oxford Aristotle Studies, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Trivigno, F. (2011) 'Aristotle's definition of Anger', Preus, A. (ed), *The Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy Newsletter*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 20–27.

White, R. M. (2010) *Talking about God: the concept of analogy and the problem of religious language*, Transcending boundaries in philosophy and theology, Farnham, Ashgate.