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Animal Ethics Series

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD

ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM GREEK AND ROMAN TEXTS

Alastair Harden

The Palgrave Macmillan Animal Ethics Series

Series editors: **Andrew Linzey** and **Priscilla Cohn**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the ethics of our treatment of animals. Philosophers have led the way, and now a range of other scholars have followed from historians to social scientists. From being a marginal issue, animals have become an emerging issue in ethics and in multidisciplinary inquiry. This series explores the challenges that Animal Ethics poses, both conceptually and practically, to traditional understandings of human-animal relations.

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Ethical Perspectives from Greek and Roman Texts

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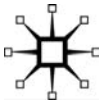

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For Sarah

'Already I have a sign of great profit – I do not complain. Greetings, lovely body, beater of the dance, companion of the feast, welcome sight! But from where did you get this beautiful toy, this glittering shell, o tortoise who dwells in the mountains? But I will take you and carry you into the house; you will be some benefit to me, nor will I dishonour you in return. But you will benefit me first. Inside the house is better, since there is harm outdoors. Alive, you will be an impediment to harmful spells: dead, however, then you will sing most beautifully'.

So he spoke; and lifting it in both hands, he went into the house carrying his lovely toy. There he mutilated it with a scoop of grey iron, scooping out the marrow of the mountain-dwelling tortoise.

Homeric Hymn to Hermes 30–42

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Series Editors' Preface

This is a new book series for a new field of inquiry: Animal Ethics.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the ethics of our treatment of animals. Philosophers have led the way, and now a range of other scholars has followed from historians to social scientists. From being a marginal issue, animals have become an emerging issue in ethics and in multidisciplinary inquiry.

In addition, a rethink of the status of animals has been fuelled by a range of scientific investigations which has revealed the complexity of animal sentiency, cognition and awareness. The ethical implications of this new knowledge have yet to be properly evaluated, but it is becoming clear that the old view that animals are mere things, tools, machines or commodities cannot be sustained ethically.

But it is not only philosophy and science that are putting animals on the agenda. Increasingly, in Europe and the United States, animals are becoming a political issue as political parties vie for the 'green' and 'animal' vote. In turn, political scientists are beginning to look again at the history of political thought in relation to animals, and historians are beginning to revisit the political history of animal protection.

As animals grow as an issue of importance, so there have been more collaborative academic ventures leading to conference volumes, special journal issues, indeed new academic animal journals as well. Moreover, we have witnessed the growth of academic courses, as well as university posts, in Animal Ethics, Animal Welfare, Animal Rights, Animal Law, Animals and Philosophy, Human–Animal Studies, Critical Animal Studies, Animals and Society, Animals in Literature, Animals and Religion – tangible signs that a new academic discipline is emerging.

'Animal Ethics' is the new term for the academic exploration of the moral status of the non-human – an exploration that explicitly involves a focus on what we owe animals morally, and which also helps us to understand the influences – social, legal, cultural, religious and political – that legitimate animal abuse. This series explores the challenges that Animal Ethics poses, both conceptually and practically, to traditional understandings of human-animal relations.

The series is needed for three reasons: (i) to provide the texts that will service the new university courses on animals; (ii) to support the increasing number of students studying and academics researching in

animal-related fields, and (iii) because there is currently no book series that is a focus for multidisciplinary research in the field.

Specifically, the Series will

- provide a range of key introductory and advanced texts that map out ethical positions on animals;
- publish pioneering work written by new, as well as accomplished, scholars, and
- produce texts from a variety of disciplines that are multidisciplinary in character or have multidisciplinary relevance.

The new Palgrave Macmillan Series on Animal Ethics is the result of a unique partnership between Palgrave Macmillan and the Ferrater Mora Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. The series is an integral part of the mission of the Centre to put animals on the intellectual agenda by facilitating academic research and publication. The series is also a natural complement to one of the Centre's other major projects, the *Journal of Animal Ethics*. The Centre is an independent 'think tank' for the advancement of progressive thought about animals, and is the first Centre of its kind in the world. It aims to demonstrate rigorous intellectual enquiry and the highest standards of scholarship. It strives to be a world-class centre of academic excellence in its field.

We invite academics to visit the Centre's website www.oxfordanimalethics.com and to contact us with new book proposals for the series.

Andrew Linzey and Priscilla N. Cohn
General Editors

Preface and Acknowledgements

This book has its genesis in the meetings of the Oxford University Animal Ethics Society, and was in discussion from around 2007: at one society meeting largely populated by Classics students, we noted that there were few resources for studying Greek and Roman attitudes to animals, and decided that a new book should compile a selection of readings from major Classical texts as a useful starting point for studying this topic, to service not only Classicists but anyone interested in animal ethics. (As such, I have been treating its composition almost as a society mandate.) It was compiled with three potential audiences in mind: classicists who may find something new and interesting among selected passages from well-known authors; philosophers who may like to consider the literary and 'practical ethics' dimensions of the ancient evidence; and finally, students and general readers researching the history of how humans treated and regarded animals. This ambitious tripartite aim has led to a work which I feel satisfies none of these readerships fully, and the Classicists least; however, it is my sincere hope that academics and students may be encouraged to pursue deeper research into some fruitful areas the surface of which here is barely scratched.

Many people have given me advice, support and encouragement for this and other projects over the past five years and I would like to take the opportunity to thank some of them now. While not wishing to implicate them, without the following teachers none of my work would be possible, and I take this opportunity to thank them all: John Reilly, Anna Clark, Verity Platt, Maria Stamatopoulou, Bert Smith, John Ma, Andrew Hobson and Peter Haarer; at the Beazley Archive, Donna Kurtz and Thomas Mannack; at the University of Reading, Amy Smith, Emma Aston and Peter Kruschwitz. Jas Elsner has given me much undeserved help and encouragement. Lucinda Moore has waited patiently for this book's completion. I hope she won't be disappointed. From the Oxford University Animal Ethics Society (OUAES), Martin Henig has been a constant source of inspiration and has generously supplied the illustrations; Sasha Cooper gave valuable practical advice at an early stage; Joseph Wolyniak and Liz Costello, Ash Bond and the legions of friends at the OUAES with whom I have discussed this project have helped the society thrive and have been a great source of encouragement and friendship. The society's senior member, Andrew Linzey, has given

more advice and support than this project or its author deserves, and I thank him deeply for the encouragement he has given me at every stage. I have tested the patience of my editors, Priyanka Gibbons and Brendan George, at Palgrave Macmillan – many thanks. Most importantly: without my brilliant wife, Sarah, who provided the translation for the book's epigraph, I would never have read a word of Greek, and this book literally would never have happened. It is dedicated to her. I also dedicate this book, particularly Chapter 11, to the memory of my grandmother Certhia Harden, *potnia therôn*.

Introduction

'Protagoras says somewhere, "Of all things, man is the measure: of things that are, that they are; of things that are not, that they are not". Have you ever read it?' – Socrates[1]

'This is the faith shared by deep ecologists, feminists, proponents of animal rights … [t]heir common task is to bury Protagoras once and for all'. – Tom Regan[2]

1 Animals, Classics and Animal Ethics

'Have you ever read it?' asks Socrates, and with his words Protagoras – a fifth-century BC philosopher none of whose writings survive intact – becomes an unwitting spokesman and byword in the centuries-long struggle to place non-human animals within the moral register of human beings. Buried in the corpus of Classical literature there is a diverse and enlightening narrative of man's opinions of animals and a history of man's interaction with the wider animal world. These works, in diverse genres from epic poetry and drama to rhetorical treatise and polemic, have been systematically mined and re-interpreted in the modern era and continue to provide historical parallels and insight into most areas of human behaviour, but until recent years only a few attempts had been made to synthesize their potential to shed light on the moral status of animals as expressed in this exceptionally well-documented period in human (or rather 'human') history. The best-known academic attempt to understand the nature of man's moral relationship with non-human animals is Richard Sorabji's 1993 *Animal minds and human morals: the origins of the Western debate*, and for all subsequent scholarship (including the present volume) the book remains a cornerstone in

the study of ancient and modern moral understanding and the history of theorizing non-human animals' mental faculties. The broader usefulness of this intricate and immaculately referenced book is, however, limited by the very detail of philosophical nuance which distinguishes it (see below) and the student of 'Animal Ethics' must also look elsewhere for a more satisfying picture of how the ancients actually regarded and treated animals. The present volume is an attempt at defining the *potential* for evidence from Greek and Roman literature to inform the modern student of animal ethics.

One loose ambition in the preparation of this sourcebook was to make available a single volume which would gather information of the same breadth and calibre as the data and opinions which inform the contemporary animal ethics debate, a range of evidence which is largely lacking in the available scholarship (though partly mitigated by Newmyer, 2011: see below). The student of ancient philosophy, thanks to vigorous scholarship in this field,[3] can research the detailed debates on matters such as sentience, contracts, justice, language and so forth (the stuff of modern moral philosophical discourse), and there have been studies of ancient vegetarianism, some specific[4] and some within wider discussions of diet, but Animal Ethics now properly encompasses areas of life to which ethical observations can be applied but which do not have their origins in the language of philosophical discourse. Modern animal ethics *Readers* contain contributions from a huge range of the subjects which constitute the social sciences as well as several special studies from other areas of 'real' life such as companion animals, zoos, hunting and animal experimentation (not to mention complementary areas such as ecology and gender studies). In these anthologies animal-human interaction is examined from many perspectives by a large cast of contemporary thinkers and 'doers', and the student is left with a introductory resource which will facilitate study in a wide range of fields towards fully accessing the range of perspectives on animal treatment as well as the 'on-the-ground' aspect of animal ethics. While the present volume cannot possibly present a complete picture from the huge body of evidence that is the Classical corpus, it is designed to open doors: there are plenty of ancient texts, some extraordinarily detailed, which inform topics such as hunting, farming and domestication, trade in animals and animal products, companion animals, sacrifice and public entertainment, in addition to more esoteric areas associated with animal ethics such as behaviour, perception, justice, wildness and anthropocentric/anthropomorphic reception of animal behaviour.

Animal themes have traditionally been a relatively quiet voice in Classical scholarship, though the twenty-first century has seen a surge of interest in the emerging 'animal studies' discipline with several American universities now running courses on animals in the Classics and an increasing number of British institutions following suit. The focus of Anglophone scholarship has traditionally been taxonomical in outlook, as well as producing studies on animal sacrifice, literary imagery and philosophy. For example, the most useful English-language book on animals in Roman spectacle and leisure is a dense and fascinating work written by the superintendent of a Manchester zoo first published in 1937 and remarkably still in print;[5] Jocelyn Toynbee's 1973 monograph *Animals in Roman life and art*, though still arranged species by species, has a rather more humane reach and is appended with some rather forward-looking essays;[6] however, a penetrating article by the late Stephen Lonsdale published in 1979 remains one of the only surveys of attitudes to animals in the field of Classical scholarship. The now-waning but once-pronounced elite background and outlook of Classical scholars has meant that there is no shortage of scholarship on, for example, horses in warfare and hunting with dogs, but progressive Classical scholars display a sensitivity for animal themes in Classical literature, and the elite flavour is diluting as Classics focuses more systematically on social themes: within 'animal studies', several recent collections, monographs and articles have re-considered animal issues from more sophisticated perspectives.[7] *A cultural history of animals in antiquity* (ed. L. Kalof, 2007) is the first of a multi-volume study of animals throughout human history, and the forthcoming *Oxford handbook of animals in Classical thought and life* (ed. G. Campbell) will similarly feature sections on art and literature, the economy, wild animals, civilization (including companion animals and warfare), religion, mythology, spectacle, medicine and zoology. Near Eastern studies is fortunate to have the collection *A history of the animal world in the ancient near east* (ed. B.J. Collins) comprising zooarchaeology and art history with literature and epigraphy; such works form a foundation encyclopaedia for the study of animal life in these cultures and are a good starting point for the study of animal ethics in other cultures. In Classics, French and German scholarship has been more attentive to the animal world: scholars such as Walter Burkert, Marcel Detienne, Jean-Louis Durand, Jean-Pierre Vernant and Alain Schnapp have produced important work on themes from sacrifice and the relationship between sacrifice and food to the erotics of hunting and pursuit. A 2001 study entitled *Les animaux dans l'antiquité grecque* by Jacques Dumont is a

monograph-cum-sourcebook which considers the place of the animal in Greek culture from a variety of illuminating perspectives.

2 Looking for an 'ancient Animal Ethics'

The passages presented in this volume are intended as small steps towards establishing a thorough and penetrating 'ancient Animal Ethics', and aims to cut across the corpus of Classical literature and present some evidence of ancient Greek and Roman attitudes to animals, differing from previous works in two fundamental ways. Firstly, notwithstanding the philosophical content of the first chapters, it pays rather more attention to literature beyond the genres of philosophical treatise and dialogue: there is as much (perhaps more) to be learned about how people treated animals – the very ethos of contemporary Animal Ethics – in popular genres of epic, drama, poetry and history (and so on) as in the highly wrought and often opaque genres which are the mainstay of the field of ancient philosophy. These literary texts will also have more relevance to undergraduate students of Classics, and have not undergone systematic analysis for their potential to inform animal themes. Although adequate systematic analysis is not possible in the present work, there would be great benefits from 'animal commentaries' on the Homeric Epics; on Greek tragedy and comedy;[8] the major and minor works of Xenophon; the literature of the cultural programme of the emperor Augustus (including Livy's voluminous history and the quasi-rustic poetry of Virgil and Horace); not to mention the *Liber Spectaculorum* of Martial and the encyclopaedic *Natural history* of Pliny the Elder, to name but a few. Secondly, and following on from this, in the present volume the focus is shifted more towards accounts of what people did, rather than what they thought (though with the usual caveats which apply when dealing with any ancient evidence). For example, we can profitably hypothesize about popular morality using the handful of accounts of Pompey's debacle with elephants in the Roman arena (see below, Chapter 12): in this particular case, what are the facts as presented, and what are the views of the authors? How can popular understanding of the intelligence of elephants, as documented by Pliny the Elder, be used to gauge the moral culpability of the Romans?

Although questions of 'real life' are notoriously difficult to address when dealing with ancient civilizations (even zealously literate ones such as Classical Greece and – more especially – Rome) the animal ethics debate may become better informed by turning to areas such as drama, poetry, history, agricultural handbooks and so forth[9] in order to try and

reconstruct something of the popular and elite opinions *on how it is morally acceptable to treat animals*, and perhaps also to examine some historical instances of how Classical societies acted on those opinions. But even to search for a consensus in Classical literature is extraordinarily reductive, and the sources presented here are chosen to illustrate the breadth of ancient opinions rather than trying to quantify what it was that 'the Greeks and Romans' thought of animals. It is important that we know how seriously, if at all, ancient writers thought about the ethical status of animals in order to better understand (to use the same example) the moral culpability of Romans in their mass slaughter of animals for public entertainment, or matters such as exploitation of animal resources, trade in and transportation of animals, or the extent of ancient animal experimentation and vivisection. The objective of this work is to select texts which allow the modern reader to evaluate the ethical perspectives of ancient writers and their subjects towards animals: how is it acceptable to treat animals, how is animal treatment used in literary and historical works and for what effect, and can we construct an ancient Animal Ethics which is as rounded – if not as thorough – as that which can be gained from consulting a modern animal ethics Reader?

In 1993, Sorabji's monograph became the first synoptic attempt to contextualize the modern animal rights debate within the broader history of western philosophy. It is, as its name suggests, a work of moral philosophy and hinges on the impact of Aristotle's denial of reason (*logos*) to animals. The impact of the book has been great within the field philosophy, but one of the major criticisms of the book is, in the words of Martha Nussbaum, its failure to consider 'philosophy's shifting cultural contexts',[10] and it can be charged with an academic neglect of on-the-ground ethics in favour of a rather cloistered study of what, at times, arguably comes down to minor points of language. Nussbaum also criticized Sorabji's perfunctory treatment of those biological works which form a large portion of the Aristotelian corpus (it is important to remain aware of Aristotle's goals and prejudices in these detailed books, and to consider Classical philosophy and biology hand in hand). In the opening paragraph of Part 2 ('Morals'), Sorabji identifies two key ethical questions. 'If animals lack reason, are they responsible for what they do (e.g. for attacking us), and the more important question: do we owe them justice, or are they not the sort of beings who can suffer injustice?' Unless historical instances of animals receiving or being denied justice in real courts of law are under scrutiny, both of these questions exist on, and are confined to, the page in a nexus of human moral considerations

debated among philosophers. In other matters Sorabji can be accused of unwittingly misreading the ancient evidence in a way which limits the work's potential usefulness for a historian: for example, he asserts the commonly held view that 'it was not allowed to pagans to eat unsacrificed meat' (p.171), although the reality is far from straightforward.[11] While not seeking to provide answers to these questions, this volume intends to give a more rounded impression of the variety of ethical responses to the interaction between humans and animals and to admit much more fluidity – and obscurity – in the potential usefulness of the ancient evidence.

The year 2011 saw the publication of Stephen T. Newmyer's sourcebook entitled *Animals in Greek and Roman thought*, a selection of primarily philosophical texts very much living up to the 'thought' part of its title and in many ways operating in the Sorabjian tradition, though owing more to recent philosophical works and with more consideration of how animals were actually treated, and also with greater sensitivity than Sorabji to other literary genres.[12] Like *Animal minds and human morals,* its usefulness to students of Animal Ethics is diminished by its regarding evidence for ancient attitudes to animals as belonging in a narrow subset of philosophy, instead of considering the broader *relevance* of Animal Ethics in its true social, moral and political function: on this matter Stephen Clark[13] recently highlighted the fact that it is easier to 'identify the real assumptions of the classical world' by looking at accounts of what people actually did and, importantly, how they measured their own treatment of animals against that of other cultures. Similarly when we do read an ancient philosophical text which seems to shed light on moral opinions of animals, we have no basis to believe either that the opinions were widely held outside of the immediate literary context of the remark or even that the words are truly the subjective opinions of a real person rather than, say, the product of an intellectual exercise by a philosopher or rhetorician. Nevertheless it is vitally important to understand what were the stated opinions of the ancient intelligentsia so that we may at least know the parameters in which moral opinions of animals were framed: this is the focus of the first chapters of the book.

3 Ancient authors, modern ethics

Ancient thinkers were deeply engaged in discussing and debating the nature of the world around them and in verbalizing to the greatest extent possible the aspects of life which are impossible to directly measure or account for, such as the creation and order of the world,

the nature of mind and the soul, the reasons for human behaviour, the distant past, and many more. Navigating the depth, complexity, quantity and sheer scale of the extant writings on such subjects requires some care on the part of the modern reader. Understanding ancient views of, for example, the mental capacities of animals is fraught with difficulty not least because of the linguistic gulf between English and Greek (the language in which most such discussions originated, and to which the Latin writers are consciously indebted) but compounded by the cultural and environmental differences which separate the modern world from the ancient. The language barrier has manifested itself in the study of the ancient philosophy of mind: for example Part 1 of *Animal minds and human morals* ('Mind') goes into great detail on this nuanced topic, with sections devoted to perception and perceptual appearance, concepts, memory, preparation, foresight, abstraction, skills and speech (among many others) and discussion covering mental processes such as will, pain, self-awareness and appetite. Newmyer[14] narrows the field to key areas such as understanding (*xunesis/synesis*), consciousness/perception (*aisthêsis*), mind/intellect (*nous*, *dianoia*), soul/spirit (*psychê*), and the key concepts of reason and rationality (*logos, logismos*, Latin *ratio*), this last being the principle focus of Aristotle's denial of rationality to animals. However none of these terms can be satisfactorily translated across the cultural divide without a significant leap on the modern reader's part, and the complexity of *logos* was understood even by ancient writers such as Sextus Empiricus (1.65, see below, §21)[15] and Porphyry (*On abstinence* 3.2f.).[16] In the case of *logos*, the major difficulty arises because its sense extends not only to 'word', 'speech' and 'reason' but, by extension, any sort of calculation, theory, narrative, law, and a wide range of further activity predicated on verbal articulation which, therefore, is understandably placed beyond the reach of largely inarticulate animals. Furthermore, Sorabji mentions that during the course of the Classical period '[o]n independent grounds, the concept of reason itself was itself repeatedly transformed',[17] a fact which complicates any assertion on animals' capacity for reason; in the third book of his treatise *On abstinence* Porphyry has an easy job of discrediting the Stoic denial of *logos* to animals by relating a simple series of self-evident arguments that animals can be credited with some forms of *logos*. This lexical complexity forms an important part of the scope of the ancient texts, and this – in practical terms, rather obfuscating – phenomenon was recognized in antiquity. For the modern animal ethics student in particular, a more limited remit may perhaps suffice in regard to mental capacities. In a recent discussion of capabilities, Nussbaum[18] cites Marc Hauser's opinion that, rather

than paying too much attention to 'thinking' as an abstract category when considering animals, we should instead focus on the phenomena produced by mental capacities: use of tools, problem solving, understanding of the self and others and so on – in other words, less focus on highly specific mental capacities, and more effort spent on engaging with those aspects of animal cognition which, in their turn, are encroached upon and misused through human domination of animals.

Modern readers must also consider the distinction between philosophers and scientists, two groups which have left separate marks on modern ethics but a distinction which was not nearly as polarized in the ancient world. Pythagoras, Democritus and Empedocles were as much medical theorists as they were philosophers, and the educational process was such that the major figures of ancient practical biology, particularly Aristotle, were regarded as much for their philosophical work as their anatomical studies (which evidently included much practical investigation, see Chapter 7). Following the succession of Aristotle by the equally experimental Theophrastus as head of the Lyceum (though the latter's focus was more on behaviour than anatomy) this integration lasted throughout the Classical period. Included in the works of Galen (writing after 150 AD) is the treatise *The best doctor is also a philosopher*, in which he writes of the integrated approach necessary for practitioners of any art to excel in their field: '[the doctor] must be practiced in logical theory in order to discover the nature of the body, the differences between diseases, and the indications as to treatment; he must despise money and cultivate temperance in order to stay the course. He must, therefore, know all the parts of philosophy: the logical, the physical and the ethical'.[19] This is clearly an ideal standard for Galen, rather than an indication of what was in practice at his time of writing, but the theoretical integration of biology and philosophy and the resultant tension between theory and practice complicates the ancient evidence and makes textual and cultural context particularly important when addressing the ancient texts. The holistic, integrated study exposes some hazardous looseness in the writing of, for example, Aristotle, a looseness which was exploited by subsequent writers who could simply choose which of Aristotle's conclusions to follow. As Newmyer observes: 'the findings of Aristotle the naturalist were at times at odds with those of Aristotle the political and ethical philosopher … [h]e fluctuated in his estimation of the intellectual capabilities of animals, attributing to them more highly developed mental faculties in his narrowly zoological treatises while stressing their intellectual inferiority to humans in his more anthropocentric works'[20] (that is, those on political and ethical

philosophy, and so forth). Incidental remarks in these 'anthropocentric' works, such as the notorious passages of the *Politics* and the *Nicomachian ethics* (see below, Chapter 2), might often be made by way of analogy or contrast in regard to a wider argument on a specific human social theme: the argument itself is the context of the remark and the purpose of the discussion, rather than being an inherently 'anti-animal' ethical policy statement (although there are examples of these from other, particularly Stoic, authors).

One major point which the modern reader also needs to consider, and one which demands a strenuous effort at empathetic imagination, is that they must re-imagine a scientific landscape before modern biology and, particularly, before Charles Darwin. Modern biology operates in the full knowledge that man is one of many animals which have evolved separately from common ancestors over a period of millions of years, and that many of the mental processes of humans are present or paralleled in other animals: pre-modern writers had simply no conception of this fact and no meaningful evidence on which to base their own theories either of origins or of animal capabilities. Notwithstanding the remarks of zoologist G.G. Simpson on the uselessness of attempts before Darwin to understand the origins of life,[21] these attempts are crucially important to understanding the ethical boundaries of the societies which postulated them. Having no uniting theory of the origins of the various species, and – more importantly – of the fundamental distinctions between humans and other animals, the outcome is a theoretical landscape defined by intellectual events such as the so-called Atomists' best attempts at understanding the fabrics of the world and the environmental conditions which allowed the world's flora and fauna to emerge from nothing (on which see Campbell, 2006, p.26f.). There was also ample and superficially logical scope to appeal to myth and divine agency, and to place humans in a teleological chain which extended (as, for example, the poet Hesiod would have it) from the personified Earth, Sea and Sky through successive generations of deities and consequent myths such as the Promethean origins of man and animals, and the various 'ages' of man. This in turn encouraged the notion that a strict qualitative hierarchy existed which ran from gods through humans and thence through animals of various levels of skill and ability: this hierarchy, on the measurable, terrestrial side, Aristotle was able to look for and confirm in his biological works, and it also serviced his philosophical treatises. However, this value chain makes the negotiation of distinctly 'animal' and 'human' qualities particularly difficult, and prevailing opinion was evidently in a constant state of flux which was greatly agitated by the

advent of Christianity in particular (Gilhus, 2006, p.161ff.). The question of species origins did exercise ancient thinkers, and understanding the nature of the ancient distinction is vitally important for understanding how ancient authors thought humans and animals should interrelate. This cannot be emphasized strongly enough: ancient writers exercised their imaginations trying to quantify the points of difference between human and non-human animals and to explain how these differences came about, processes which were shaped as much by ethical parameters and preconceptions as by empirical evidence; only with such figures as the semi-legendary Pythagoras, Empedocles, the sage-like Apollonius of Tyana, the unlikely Porphyry and the intellectually curious Plutarch do we see ancient thinkers working from a presumption of *not* harming animals in case they may be capable – or because they *are* capable – of suffering, and that inflicting suffering on them may not be morally justifiable.

4 Ethical perspectives; translations; texts

This book is not, regrettably, a complete history of animals in the ancient world; nor will it be felt that certain chapters are definitive in nature. The focus is generally on the 'micro' scale rather than the 'macro', and the reader will not find, for example, evidence for the broader economic significance of the trade in animal products or the extent of pastoral and agricultural economics: thankfully, such areas have been extensively studied by ancient historians and archaeologists since the 1980s. In the present pages animal sacrifice has not been dealt with as thoroughly as it might, partially because the best evidence for sacrifice is epigraphic and/or documentary in nature, and inclusion of such material would render this an impractically unwieldy volume; however, the selected passages include some important criticisms of sacrifice, so that the statement that, for example, there were mass sacrifices of hundreds of animals at a time in both Greece and Rome may be appropriately moderated by some contemporary ancient opinions.

By and large, throughout the volume the sources are left to speak for themselves, and introductory or linking passages are kept to a minimum: the 'Ethical Perspectives' of the title is the *potential* to gain such perspectives where they might not otherwise have been looked for (such as military manuals or agricultural handbooks). There is limited reference to the most helpful Classical scholarship for a student of Animal Ethics: in a discussion of Greek tragedy, for example, Charles Segal asserts that '[f]or the Greeks human civilization depends on preserving man's place

in the hierarchy between beast and god'[22] – an important reflection on the ethos of fifth-century Athens, but presented in a literary study of a dramatic work.

The book is divided into two parts: broadly, (1) animals in the mind, and (2) animals in 'real life', a fluid division with much overlap as we can really know very little about ancient 'real life'. Part I concerns philosophical and literary writers on animal nature, the philosophical sections of which cover areas already well serviced by Sorabji and Newmyer (among others). Some major texts on eating animal flesh are also included in this section, primarily because vegetarianism was as much an idea as a practice, and most of the evidence for it comes from intellectually oriented explorations of the topic itself. The first part also deals with animals in the cultural imagination: this can be broadly defined as literary and historical references which may or may not have a direct real-life referent, but which can draw upon the ethical preconceptions of the ancient reader through which we can build up a sense of those ethical dimensions. Literary accounts from epic, lyric and tragedy to the Greek novel and Roman historians record perceptions of animality and human moral behaviour within wider narratives and for a variety of purposes which hitherto may not have been taken seriously as evidence for the ancient view of the animal, but have often been the subject of study for their literary qualities within Classical scholarship. An important though underused source for this section is Apuleius' work the *Metamorphosis*, better known as the 'Golden Ass', which sees its protagonist transformed into a donkey. This novel is rather neglected as a resource for understanding ancient views of animality: Newmyer passes over the work, and it receives little attention from Sorabji (it is still not done justice in the present volume). This work contains extensive details of the hardship of the animal's life, which must have had considerable resonance with the ancient reader, who would have had a lot of exposure to draught animals in a world without cars, trains or heavy machinery. Also in this section, some of the more peculiar remarks by the Roman encyclopaedist Pliny the Elder on the habits of elephants may be found here as his fantastical account of their parliaments and religious ceremonies might at least betray a sense of humans' opinions of the *capacities* of animals to perform these actions.

Part II may be thought of as the more 'practical', with passages from Classical authors which might be conceived of as evidence for the mistreatment of animals in the Greek and Roman worlds, and should contain enough information to allow any reader to begin understanding the ethical parameters of Greek and Roman society in regard to animals.

Its scope ranges from Athenaeus's throwaway remark that 600 elephant tusks were exhibited in a parade in Alexandria to Aristotle's advice on how to dissect an animal to examine its circulatory system; chapters cover experimentation, warfare, agriculture, sacrifice, hunting and the use of animals for public entertainment.

All translations are the author's except where noted. A feature which may require some justification in a book aimed at non-Classicists is the frequency with which Greek and Latin terms appear in their untranslated forms: for example, this applies particularly with the Greek word *logos* and its cognates (*aloga, logismos, logizetai* etc., Latin *ratio*). A central thesis of this book – inasmuch as there is one – is that the polysemy of such words was problematic from the earliest stages, and ancient texts cannot be properly understood without a sense of the original meaning of the authors' own words: italicized words will usually be accompanied by a translation or are provided with basic definitions in the Index. In preparing the translations, specific linguistic decisions have been directed at best serving the purpose of the book (clarity over style, extrapolation over concision); unfortunately this approach can sometimes trump both elegance and nuance but is necessary in an introductory volume such as this. In a work of animal ethics the choice of English vocabulary must be justified: many in this field find terms like 'beasts' and 'wild animals' pejorative, and attempts are being made to influence language away from demeaning or devaluing terms for non-human animals; however, although sensitivity to the language of animal ethics has been attempted, the vocabulary used in the translations aims to reproduce accurately the register of the Greek and Latin writers, and words like the Greek *thêr* ('beast') and Latin *bestia* communicate an understandable sense of wildness and ferocity. (Similar caveats apply to gendered pronouns.)

For Greek texts I have followed the texts of the *Thesaurus Lingua Graecae* at www.tlg.uci.edu, for Latin I have largely relied on the Oxford Classical Texts; for both I have also leant heavily on the editions of the Loeb Classical Library, and where there is a textual or technical dispute (such as section numbering, particularly with Cassius Dio and Polybius) I have generally followed the Loeb editions as it is expected that the reader will turn to them first. Square brackets indicate a word or phrase which is not in the text itself but which is clearly referred to or meant; occasionally a summary of an excluded portion of text is also provided in square brackets. With the texts of the early Greek philosophers, I have had the fortune of utilizing the accessible new Cambridge edition of D.W. Graham (*The texts of early Greek philosophy : the complete fragments and selected testimonies of the major Presocratics*, 2010) which presents the

texts in clear Greek with English translations and commentary: consequently, and as a result of the introductory nature of the present work, reference will be made to this new anthology (with the abbreviation *TEGP*) rather than the usual German edition of Diels and Kranz (*DK*, to which there is a concordance in *TEGP*).

Part I

Defining 'Animal': Ancient Writers on Animal Nature

1
Animal Origins, Minds and Capacities

From the earliest stages of Classical literature, ancient writers were occupied with the origins of, and the differences between, men and animals. The Presocratic philosophers attempted some scientific explanations of the origins of the various species, from Anaximander in the early sixth century BC (with his puzzling but prescient statement that men owe their origins to fish)[1] to the fifth-century Archelaus's two-stage view on the emergence of short-lived versions of all species followed by the development of species which were able to reproduce, and his contemporary Empedocles's theory of the random spontaneous emergence of body parts which gradually joined together in a progressive series of extinctions and survivals, in which human and animal body parts occasionally (and unsuccessfully) mixed. These ideas come tantalizingly close to our privileged modern knowledge of evolution by natural selection, and it is no coincidence that the theory of common origins came from Empedocles, a philosopher who urged abstention from cruelty and sacrifice (see below, §§148–9), but unfortunately his position attracted continuous criticism throughout the Classical period and, as Gordon Campbell notes, it remained the case that 'Plato and Aristotle have been far more influential to the formation of modern thought'[2] with their ideas on animal behaviour and capabilities formulated in the sophisticated culture of philosophical debate in fifth-century Athens. Lacking our concrete knowledge of evolution, most Classical authors were able to write comfortably in terms of a rigid hierarchy of species, arranged in minute classifications between which species may not move. 'The different species had always been separate from each other: there was no point in history when their lines of development converged. Actually the different species had no lines of development. A lion had always

been a lion, and a pig had always been a pig'.[3] This in turn encouraged the notion of the separateness and superiority of humans: realistically, Aristotle is happy to include man as an example of a type of animal in his discussion of species classification in *Parts of animals* (642b; also §103 below), and Plato (*Statesman* 263d) noted the arbitrariness of separating out man on biological grounds, but man had something that animals did not and this difference formed the basis of the ethical horizons of the majority of ancient writers. Similarly, without the knowledge that the various domestic species had been selectively bred from wild ancestors over the course of millennia, writers like Cicero (§31 below) can be excused for thinking that sheep and cattle had been created by the gods for our benefit rather than gradually manipulated because of humans in the distant past.

Several accounts of the origin of life detail animals and men emerging together from a primitive beginning, with man then overtaking animals in intellectual development. Man, according to Aristotle, was absolutely separate from the other animals and was superior by virtue of his endowment with *logos* (that is, articulate speech and reason): one explanation for this, from the Prometheus myth, casts Prometheus and Epimetheus as divine agents responsible for these species differences. These differences, and the reasons for them, became a crucial factor in the debate over how animals were to be treated, and only occasionally do figures emerge who urge restraint from cruelty to animals. The following passage of Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound* contains a view of the graduated differentiating of man from animals at some time in the mythological past. The play was performed in Athens some time between 479 BC and the author's death in 456 BC: in this excerpt, the speaker Prometheus has been chained to a rock for bringing fire to mortals and is explaining to a chorus of nymphs how he has benefitted mankind.

1 Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 447–99

'Before I helped men, though they could hear, they heard not; and though they could see, they saw not. They rather resembled shapes of dreams, living out their long lives in a random jumble: they did not know how to set up brick-built houses against the sun, nor wood-working, but they lived underground like scurrying ants in the dark and deepest recesses of sunless caves. Nor did they have reliable markers of the onset of winter or blossoming spring or fruitful summer, but they carried on without knowledge (gnômê) *until I showed them the risings and settings of the stars, which are hard to interpret. Moreover, for them I discovered numbers, outstanding of all sciences, and the combination*

of letters [into words] which is the means of remembering all things and is the mother of the creative arts of the Muses. And I first brought wild creatures under the yoke, so that they became slaves (douleuô) *to the yoke-strap and saddle, so that they might relieve men of their heaviest burdens; and to the chariot I harnessed horses and made them love the rein, a luxurious delight for men of great wealth. It was I, and none other, who invented the sailor's linen-winged vessels that wander the sea. [...]*

'The greatest [thing I contrived] was this. If anyone became sick, there was no remedy for them, neither food nor ointment nor drink, but they withered for want of medicines before I showed them how to mix the healing remedies which they now use to ward off disease. I set out for them the many kinds of prophetic craft: I first interpreted from dreams what would happen in reality, and the difficult task of interpreting chance utterances or ominous occurrences on journeys. Of birds-of-prey I precisely defined their flights (which ones are auspicious, and which are sinister), their ways of life, and their hatreds, affections and companionships; I explained the smoothness of internal organs, what colour of bile will please the gods, the speckled texture and proper shape of the liver-lobe; I burned the thigh-bones and long spine wrapped in fat. I led mortals to this difficult skill and enabled them to see signs in the flames, signs to which they had hitherto been blind'.

Prometheus then goes on to claim responsibility for the discovery of metals. This picture of man's development is a sequential and progressive account of man's gradual separation from animals: man's successive endowments of shelter, the key skills for agriculture (awareness of the seasons) and the ability to martial words into language, precede the enslavement of animals (literally, the Greek *douleuô* from *doulos*, 'slave') and the subsequent use of horses as ostentatious luxury. It is noteworthy that in this account humans are imagined as having once existed without *gnômê* or, arguably, *logos*: humans acquire language in the stage before they enslave and exploit animals, and although the word *logos* is not itself used, even a century before Aristotle it is understood that the acquisition of words and language is the final differentiation between men and beasts.[4] The use of animals for prophecy and for sacrifice, which may be understood as standing *pars pro toto* for the practice of eating meat, can therefore be understood as the actions of 'man with *logos*'. This sort of history, particularly the picture of men living in caves before the intervention of gods, clearly had wide currency in the Greek imagination: the *Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus* (20.3ff.) uses the same language of a 'beast-like' existence preceding man's endowment with technical skills.

Writing a generation after Aeschylus, Protagoras of Adbera (c. 490–420 BC), the totemic subject of Tom Regan's proposed inhumation quoted in the epigraph to the introduction above and the man who devised the so-called *homo mensura*,[5] presented a view of the Prometheus myth which survives in a philosophical discussion documented by Plato. Protagoras was regarded as the first[6] of the Greek intellectuals known as *sophistai*, who were renowned for using clever language and complex reasoning, and who performed with flair in semi-public discussions such as dinner parties as well as providing instruction for those in the public realm where oratory was paramount (and making a very good living out of it, as Diogenes Laertius records in *Lives of the philosophers* 9.52). Protagoras wrote and operated in the time of the Presocratics and was probably a generation older than Socrates: although none of his work survives intact, some records of titles suggest that the focus of his work is not as cosmological or zöogonic as, for example, Archelaus or Empedocles (below). His discussion in Plato's dialogue is part of a larger argument on how mankind became acquainted with political skills: Protagoras begins his speech after asking his audience whether they would like to hear a story (*mythos*) or a reasoned argument (*logos*). They ask him to choose, so he settles on a *mythos*: this important distinction distances Protagoras from the details of the narrative; other fragments of Pratagoras's writing display a deep ambivalence over whether or not the gods existed,[7] which itself suggests that some Greeks did in fact believe the literal truth of these mythological creation stories.

2 Plato, *Protagoras* 320c–322b

'Once there was a time when there were gods, but there was no race of mortals. And when the time came for mortals too to receive creation, the gods moulded them within the earth from a mixture of earth and fire and of such materials as are made from mixing fire and earth. When they were about to bring their creations into the light, they commanded Prometheus and Epimetheus to equip them and deal out their capacities as befitted them. Epimetheus begged of Prometheus that he himself might do the dealing out faculties: "and when I have done it", he said, "you can look over it". Persuading him thus, Epimetheus dealt out faculties: to some he bestowed bodily strength without swiftness, and the weaker ones he furnished with speed; to some he provided armour, while to those given an unarmed nature he devised some other capacity to bring themselves to safety. To those he held down with smallness of size, he allotted winged flight or dwelling-places under the earth; to those he greatly increased in size, he had them preserve themselves by this same largeness; and thus he dealt

out everything else according to this balance. In constructing these matters he was careful that no race should be annihilated, and when he had so supplied them as to avoid mutual slaughter, he devised protection against the seasons ordered by Zeus, putting thick hair and hard skins around them sufficient to ward off winter and also burning heat, and so that when they went to their beds the same coverings could serve as a proper bed-spread for each species. For shoes he gave some hooves, and others fur with thick bloodless skin. Then he provided different sorts of food for each of them, for some the plants of the earth, for others the fruits of trees, for others roots. For the nourishment of some they had other animals as food, and so some animals he made less prolific while to those who were thus subject to destruction he attached greater fertility so that their races might be preserved.

'Now Epimetheus being not especially wise, he unwittingly used up all of the capacities on the irrational animals (aloga, "*without* logos")*; the race of men was left without any adornments, and Epimetheus did not know what to do. As he sat at a loss, Prometheus arrived to inspect the work and saw that all of the other animals were very well equipped with everything, whereas man was naked, unshod, without bedding and without armour.*[8] *Already the appointed day had come on which man as well should go forth out of the earth into the light. Then Prometheus, being at a loss as to how to find some way to save mankind, stole from Hephaestus and Athena skills in the arts together with fire (for without fire no-one would be able to have or make use of the skills) and thus he gave the gifts to man. Although man then had the wisdom needed for being alive, he did not have civic skills: for these things belong to Zeus. Prometheus could not go further and enter the acropolis where Zeus dwelled, and Zeus's guards were fearsome, but he entered undetected into the dwelling-place shared by Hephaestus and Athena in which they practiced their own skills and stole Hephaestus's skills with fire, and Athena's as well, as gifts for men. So this is how man acquired the faculties of living his life, but later Prometheus, because of Epimetheus (as they say), was to stand trial for theft.*

'Since man now had with him a share in divinity, in the first place because of the common origin of men and gods he was the only one of the animals to acknowledge the gods, and soon set his hand to building altars and images of the gods. Quickly thereafter through his skill he was able to join up speech and words, and to discover houses, clothes, shoes, beds, and food from the earth.

'Having been kitted out with these things, at this beginning man lived a scattered life and did not have cities: so, they were being destroyed by wild beasts since they were in every way weaker, and their technical skill, which was a

sufficient help in respect of food, was not sufficient in their war with the wild animals for they still had no skill in politics, of which warfare is a part. So they sought to gather themselves together and save themselves by founding cities …'

Fragments of other Presocratic philosophers including Empedocles (c. 490–430 BC) and Archelaus (fl. 450 BC) also address animal themes. These writers present the sort of scientific hypotheses which form alternatives to mythological explanation (and are the sort of bona fide philosophical investigation which Diodorus Siculus draws on in his *Library*, see below). Several extended fragments and quotations of Empedocles are extant,[9] although none of Archelaus's own works survives. Tradition connects Empedocles with Pythagoras,[10] and one excerpt from a treatise known as the *Refutation of all heresies*, a Christian work associated with Hippolytus of Rome (c. AD 170–235), quotes Empedocles as saying, 'I have been a boy and a girl, a bush, a bird, and a fish wandering the sea',[11] and explains that he is referring to the transmigration of souls. On the origins of the species, he is quoted by the later author Aelian.[12]

3 Empedocles, *Fragment* 75 (= Aelian, *On Animals* 16.299f.)

Many creatures were brought forth with faces and chests at the front and behind, races of cattle with human faces, and in their turn, men with the heads of cattle, mixed now from manly features, now from womanly, equipped with shadows of limbs.

Other fragments and testimonies give the rest of the process:[13] these malformed beings grew up and died; a subsequent generation was closer to the finished form; eventually the creatures were able to reproduce with one another. The key point is that even in the more scientific philosophical writing, men and animals are seen as having a common origin. A reference to Archelaus[14] is also preserved in the *Refutation of all heresies*, which was written to deal with the heretical adherence in the early Christian era to the beliefs of the earlier pagan philosophers.

4 Archelaus, quoted in Hippolytus, *Refutation of all heresies* 1.9.1

On the subject of animals, [Archelaus] says that in the beginning when the earth began to become warm in the lower parts, where the hot and the cold

started to mix, many animals and men began to appear; they all had the same way of life and all getting nourishment from the mud (though this didn't last for very long). Later it happened that they were born from one another. And men were separated from the other animals, and set up leaders, customs, arts, cities (and so on). Mind (nous)*, he says, is an integral part of all creatures alike. For each of the animals use mind, some rather slowly, others more quickly.*

The details are rather difficult to piece together, though it seems that rather than expressing the view that mankind occupies a naturally privileged state, 'Archelaus saw the development of culture and technologies as an inevitable result of the seemingly accidental human possession of *nous* to a greater degree than the other animals … there is no suggestion of any divine involvement',[15] an important point when considering the history of the schema 'animals < men < gods'.

Discussions such as this were not confined to the philosophical 'salon': public figures were involved in the discussions, and the influence of philosophers is frequently seen in Athenian tragedies and comedies. The fact that these philosophical questions were being discussed on the popular stage is good evidence for the wider consumption of these theories, and the fact itself is evident in the following passage concerning the origins of the species written by Diodorus Siculus after 60 BC in which he mentions that the tragedian Euripides was a 'pupil' of Anaxagoras. Diodorus's lengthy *Bibliothêkê* (Library) openly distils the work of earlier writers into one synthetic account and is ostensibly a complete history of the world up to the time of writing: a mid-level, scholarly but gentlemanly history of obvious significance to understanding the educated world view in the first century BC. Here he draws on the atomist theories of Presocratic philosophers Leucippus and, particularly, Democritus.

5 Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 1.7–8[16]

In the beginning, when the universe was being formed, both heaven and earth had the same form and were indistinguishable because their natures were intermingled; after that, when their bodies were separated from one another, the universe took on its present form and the extent of the order one can now see, taking on motion of the air and its fiery places raised high above the ground, such things being raised upwards by their lightness – for this reason the sun and all of the other host of stars were taken in their heavenly rotation, while that which was slimy and muddy, moist with condensation, sank downwards due to its weight. Its pressure condensed it: from the

moisture came the sea, and from the firm mass it made the land, soft and completely pliable. Then, first, by the fire of the sun shining upon it the mass became coagulated, and then, as it was fermenting due to the heat, certain wet parts swelled up at many places, around which swelling putrefactions appeared covered in fine membranes. (Such a thing can still be seen in marshes and stagnant pools when, after the land has already cooled, the air suddenly becomes very hot rather than changing little by little.) While the wet matter was making living creatures because of the warmth in the manner described, presently during the night the living things received nourishment from the descending mist and by day they were made firm by the burning heat; finally, when the gestating beings had fully developed, and the membranes had been burned and ripped open, creatures of every kind were brought forth. Of the creatures, those who had taken the most warmth went off to the highest places, as they had wings. Those as were earth-like were counted with the creeping creatures and others who lived on the land; those having an especially watery nature gathered in such places as was similar to them and are named as water creatures.

And as the earth was continuing to grow more firm through the sun's fire and the winds, it was no longer possible for the greater animals to gestate in the earth, but each type of creature created life by breeding with one another. And on the nature of the universe Euripides, a pupil of Anaxagoras the natural philosopher, does not disagree, as in his Melanippe *he wrote thus:*

'Thus Heaven and earth were one form,
But since they were separated – torn asunder from each other -
They beget and give forth every light of life,
Trees, birds, beasts, creatures nourished by the sea,
And the race of mortals…'

And concerning the first generation [of men] of the universe, this is the account which we have received. But he says that the first men to be born led an disorderly and bestial life, seeking pasture in a scattered way and taking as food the most pleasant herbs and wild fruit from the trees. Then, as they were attacked by wild beasts, they came to help each other, learning from mutual experiences, and when gathered together in this way through fear, they slowly came to recognize characteristics among one another. And although the sounds which they made were at first meaningless and confounding, little by little they made sense of the disjointed words and among themselves they gave symbols to each underlying thing and gave expression to every single well-known thing. […]

Now the first men led lives of toil, as no useful or necessary things had yet been discovered: they were naked, having no knowledge of clothes, nor of dwellings or fire, and were totally ignorant of cultivated food. Moreover, not knowing much about gathering wild food, they never laid up stores of food against times of hunger. As a result, many of them perished during winters because of cold and scarcity of food. Gradually, however, they learned through their tribulations to retreat into caves in winter and to set up stores of such fruits as they were able to preserve. And, slowly learning of fire and other useful things, they also discovered skills and other things which are able to help the common life of men. And on the whole, in all things necessity itself became the teacher to men, guiding them with suitable instruction to every aspect of a well-formed life; and having assistants in all this in the form of hands, speech (logos) *and sagacity of spirit* (psychê).

Again, the ability to join things together is noted as a key human skill. Campbell[17] notes that Diodorus's early humans effect 'the gradual development of culture over time in response to harsh necessity' and that Diodorus does not present early humans as hunters, in contrast to, for example, Lucretius (*On the nature of things* 5.925ff.), who vividly imagines early man living beast-like in the forest, an observation drawn by way of contrasting his warring contemporaries with the struggles of early man against lions and boars. In Diodorus's distilled account, man's aptitude for language is the result of accident, not design, and no Prometheus or Hephaestus singled out this species and endowed it with otherwise-unattainable skills.

A quite different philosophical view on the creation of animals survives in Plato's *Timaeus*. It starts with the assumption that men were created first, and that all other creatures (as well as women, mentioned in the lines before the opening of this passage) are debasements of the masculine form. The tone of the discussion is difficult to judge, particularly as the speaker, Timaeus of Locri, was known in antiquity as a Pythagorean philosopher. Described by a 1928 commentator as 'no more than friendly burlesque'[18] and continuing to confound interpretation in the twenty-first century,[19] at first glance the passage seems to suggest that men who do not live well become more and more animalistic, perhaps down the generations, until they are a totally different shape; or simply the comic notion that their own bodies changed according to their characters.[20] As a Pythagorean, Timaeus would have been familiar with the theory of the transmigration of souls (see below), and Campbell suggests that Plato may here be using Pythagorean structures to undermine and subvert Presocratic theories such as those given above in order to reinforce a

hierarchy of man above animals.[21] In any case, the tone is clearly one of hierarchy with man at the top.

6 Plato, *Timaeus* 91d–92a

The race of birds are also the result of transformation – growing feathers instead of hair – of men who are not wicked but light-headed, and students of lofty subjects; through their simplicity, they believe that the most secure proof about lofty things comes through seeing them. And again, the race of wild animals which go on foot came from those men who never make use of philosophy and are not at all observant of the nature of the heavens; because they stopped using the wanderings in their heads and instead followed the command of the parts of the soul (psychê) *which are in the chest. So as a result of these habits they dragged their forelimbs and heads on the ground, leaning on the ground because of what they have in common with it. They now have elongated heads of every shape, which was caused by the disuse of their mental orbits. Because of this their race also became four-footed and many-footed as the god puts more supports under the ones who are senseless* (aphrôn, '*without* phrên')[22] *so that they can be further dragged down to the ground. The most foolish* (aphrônestatoi) *of them also stretched their whole bodies over the earth as there was no use for their feet: from them were created the footless creatures who crawl on the earth.*

Lacking any scientific evidence for the origins of species, all of these accounts – even especially peculiar ones such as Timaeus's – inform the modern reader instead of the moral priorities of the society which generated them: the male human is the apex of these theories either because he became more fully developed, or because other animals are a modification of his physical and intellectual state. Beyond theorizing on the origins of animal life, the next best place to look for evidence for how humans positioned non-human animals on their moral compass may be found in the theoretical considerations of mental capacities based on observation of animal behaviour. Such accounts are far from straightforward as animals are enlisted for a wide variety of purposes particularly from the fifth century BC, when rhetorical flourish and sophisticated argument became urbane skills in their own right; nevertheless, these became the terms in which the discussion was framed in the Classical period, and the Socratic passages of Plato and Xenophon and the philosophical writing of Aristotle form the portfolio of evidence for animals' capacities which were developed by successive thinkers over the following centuries.

What sorts of mental capacities are attributed to animals, and what is denied of them? Ancient conceptions of non-human animals' mental capabilities should be central to understanding ancient ethics, and we would naturally turn to Socrates as the progenitor and figurehead of Classical philosophy, but unfortunately there is no one passage from Socratic texts which gives an unequivocal statement of what he thought on the matter. This is quite in keeping with Plato's Socrates, for whom the process of discussion was more important than conclusions reached:[23] indeed, it is perilous to take any Socratic quotation out of context as the dialogues are lengthy and highly complex logical arguments, and excerpted remarks may in fact have been made in pursuit of a particular logical conclusion. (Even quotations from authors who have left several coherent works, such as Aristotle, can be readily contradicted by passages elsewhere in the author's corpus.)[24] The clearest statements from the mouth of Socrates on the issue of the animal mind are provided by Xenophon in his *Memorabilia*, ostensibly eye-witness accounts of Socratic conversations. In the following passage Socrates apparently attributes to divinity such biological privileges as man's upright posture and use of hands (bypassing the fact that some animals have not only hands but sometimes much better postures than humans) and, most especially, a tongue which can articulate: *arthroun*, literally 'to join together', continuing the idea seen in the passages of Aeschylus and Diodorus Siculus that man became able to join disparate sounds together into words, a mental quality most often expressed as *sunesis*. Socrates also talks about the divinity of man's soul (*psychê*), which he says imparts greater wisdom to man in terms not only of bodily preservation and mental faculty, but more especially of being able to pay reverence to the gods.[25] A statement on man's *logismos* is given here and preceded by a particularly unequivocal summary of the species hierarchy 'animals < men < gods'. Socrates, discussing prudence and the care taken by the gods in furnishing mankind with everything he needs, has just described how the orbit of the sun is exactly right for the survival and comfort of mankind.

7 Xenophon, *Recollections of Socrates* 4.3.9–12

'Well personally', said Euthydemus, 'now that you've said that, I wonder if there is any other job for the gods other than looking after men. This one thing alone holds me back from such a view: that all other animals share these blessings as well'.

'And even still', Socrates said, 'isn't it clear that they too exist and are nourished for the sake of mankind? For what animal other than man enjoys the benefit of goats and sheep and cattle and horses, and the other animals? The benefit to me seems greater than that of plants; they benefit him at least as much in respect of nourishment and business life, and indeed many races of men do not use the plants of the earth for food, but instead live on milk and cheese and flesh of cattle; and all men make use of the tame and domesticated work-animals in war and as assistants in all other things'.

'Yes, I'm with you on this as well', Euthydemus replied. 'I see that even though they are stronger than us, in this way they end up under the hand of man and used by him in whatever way he wishes'.

'So, then, think of all of these good and beneficial things, and how diverse they are, and how mankind was endowed with perception (aisthêsis) *to piece together each thing, as a result of which we enjoy everything which is noble; also our endowment with reasoning* (logismos) *with which we rationalize the results of our perception and solidify memories and thus by which each thing is useful to us and we come up with many ways to enjoy good things and ward off bad things; and the gift of expression* (hermêneia),[26] *by which we can share everything good among each other, through teaching: things like partnerships, making laws and taking part in politics'.*

'Well, considering all that, Socrates, the gods do seem to take special care of men'.

However when it suits the didactic context, animals can instead be credited with such mental capacities as are desirable in humans and are held up as positive exemplars: a discussion from Plato's *Republic* between Socrates (speaking in the first person) and the interlocutor Glaucon is a practical consideration of the qualities necessary in the 'guardians' of the ideal state in the *Republic*. It may be legitimately accused of a certain anthropomorphism, crediting to dogs mental powers which are not necessarily based on observation of the animals, but on an ideal picture of canine qualities which may not equate either to popular perception of a dog's capacity for memory or to a reasoned observation of this quality. In this sense, the text belongs in a tradition of using *ideas* of animal behaviour to illustrate human qualities, a tradition which in the Greek record begins with Homer (see below, Chapter 4). In this case, the observations escalate into hyperbole when Socrates credits dogs with a philosophical nature: in any case, the focus is the quality of the guardians, not the dog.

8 Plato, *Republic* 375d–376b

'We neglected to consider that there are, then, natures of a sort which we did not think of, which have opposite qualities [of harshness to enemies and kindness to friends]'.

'Really? Where?'

'It can be seen in other animals, not least in the kind we likened to the guardian. For you have seen in some well-bred dogs that their natural disposition towards those whom they live with and whom they know to be exceedingly gentle, while the opposite is true of those whom they don't know'.

'Certainly'.

'Then', I said, 'this thing which we seek in the would-be guardian is possible, and not against nature'.

'Indeed, no'.

'So, then, is it clear to you that the potential guardian will also need, in addition to enthusiasm, to be of a philosophical nature?'

'Well, how do you mean?' he said.

'This also is observable in dogs', I said, 'and which it is appropriate to wonder about in this beast'.

'How so?'

'Well, that the sight of someone unknown is maddening to him even before any harm is done to him; on the other hand, he happily greets anyone he knows, though he may not have been treated to any kindness by him. Have you ever wondered at that?'

'Well not at all', he said, 'I've never once put my mind to it, but certainly this is the case'.

'But indeed that seems to be a perfectly ingenious behaviour of his, and one that is truly philosophical'.

'But how?'

'Because', I said, 'he has no other faculty to judge who is a friend and who is an enemy except by having learned (katamathein) *the one and being ignorant of the other. Do you see, how can he not be a lover of learning* (philomathês) *when comprehension* (sunesis) *and ignorance determine friend from foe?'*

'Of course', he said, 'I cannot deny that'.

Elsewhere, Socrates explicitly demonstrates that animals may be arranged in a qualitative hierarchy: the dialogue *Phaedo*, set in his prison cell and documenting his final hours, features a lengthy discussion of the soul. The dialogue turns to the transmigration of souls (81e–82b) and imagines the destinies of departing human souls. He argues that the soul from a human lover of learning (*philomathês*, like the dog above) passes on to the company of the gods; souls from people who are naturally good but 'devoid of philosophy as well as mind (*nous*)' become 'civic and tame' animals such as bees, wasps and ants; unjust and tyrannical people become wolves and birds of prey; gluttons, drunkards and violent people would become donkeys 'and other such beasts'. The usual caveats apply when dealing with such a text, namely that as a philosophical exercise it tells us more solidly about the qualitative hierarchy in which animals were placed rather than imparting any certain evidence for the belief in the transmigration of souls, and the important point here is that man is above all the other animals and that only the philosopher has a soul worthy of the company of divinity: the quality which divides animals from humans in the Socratic corpus is the joining of words into articulated speech, and although the dog in the *Republic* is described as philosophically inclined, its departing soul is presumably excluded from divine company.

A rather less monolithic view of the possession of *logos* is evident in the following Socratean aside concerning *logismos* ('reasoning'). The context of this passage is a discussion between Adeimantus (the opening speaker) and Socrates (the narrator) on the component parts of the soul, comparing ideas such as *thumos* ('spirit', in the sense of appetitive or passionate life force) and the rational (*logistika*) part, and the implication is not that animals are devoid of reason per se, but that many people do not subscribe to their rational soul. Note that Socrates's answering statement does not explicitly disqualify animals from obtaining *logismos*, described by Sorabji as 'a subject on which [Plato] wavers to the end'.[27]

9 Plato, *Republic* 441a–b

'…for one can see in children that as soon as they are born they are full of spirit (thumos)*, while some people (to me at least) seem never to get their share of reasoning* (logismos) *and most who do so only get it rather late in life'.*

'Yes, by Zeus', I said, 'indeed you speak well. One may see that what you have said applies to animals as well'.

Aristotle, though diverging from Plato on many important philosophical points, subscribes to similar principles of speciesism, and in a discussion from the closing sections of the *Nicomachian Ethics* he considers human qualities using a logical extension of Socrates's stratification between animals, humans and gods recorded by Xenophon above. Here Aristotle, drawing on a detailed discussion of actions and thoughts, gives serious consideration to the highest virtue and concludes that it is a state of *theôria* (contemplation) because of the closeness of *theôria* to divinity and its status as an activity undertaken by the divine: its particular relevance here is in Aristotle's explicit and definite exclusion of animals from this type of mental process, and this preconception stems ultimately from the fact that animals' apparent inability to articulate words precludes them from subsequent and specifically human mental processes. For the same reason, animals are also denied the ability to feel real happiness.[28]

10 Aristotle, *Nicomachian Ethics* 1178b

The following points will also reveal fully fledged happiness to be an activity of contemplation (theôria). *For we assume that the gods are especially happy and blissful: but what types of activity can we attribute to them? Ones concerning justice* (dikaios), *perhaps, but does it not seem ridiculous to give them actions such as making contracts and lodging money in trust? Brave ones, then, facing fear and danger for the cause of goodness? Causes of liberty or freedom? But to whom would they give it? And it would be rather out of place to think of them as having currency and that sort of thing. Temperance, then. What about that? But to praise the gods for not having tawdry desires would be rather vulgar. Going through all this, it would seem that these things are insignificant and unworthy of the gods. Yet they are always conceived of as living, and moreover as doing things (for indeed they are not sleeping, like Endymion). So for living things, if we remove actions, and, in fact, the capacity for action, what is left except contemplation? Thus the action of a god, bringing them to the highest bliss, is that of contemplation: so, among human activities, that which is most closely related to this is the best for happiness. It is also a sign of this that the rest of the animals cannot have this happiness as they are totally bereft of this faculty. For the gods their whole life is blissful, and also for men, as some part of their activity is like the divine: the other animals have no happiness, as there is no contemplation among them. Therefore contemplation and happiness extend along the same lines, and for those who are by nature more able*

to contemplate, they will also be more happy, not by happenstance but by the contemplation: the thing by itself is valuable.

But animals are not denied every metaphysical quality. In the Classical philosophers, the soul (*psychê*) is universally allowed to animals, as the following passage makes clear; what differentiates men from animals is qualitatively manifested in *nous* (mind) and *phronêsis*, a complex term which signifies purposeful thought and resolve. Quoting the Presocratic philosopher Anaxagoras, Aristotle here makes a qualitative distinction about the levels of *phronêsis* available to humans and to animals, concluding that *phronêsis* is not universal. His comment about intellect itself not being common to all human beings is intriguing, and prompts us to ask whether he was talking about humans of reduced capacity (such as infants and the disabled) or about people who conduct their lives without being mindful, a set of people which often features in in-group philosophical reasoning in a similar way to philosophers' use of non-human animals.

11 Aristotle, *on the Soul* 404b

Anaxagoras says less about [mind and soul]; in many places he says that the cause of beauty and good order is mind (nous)*, but elsewhere that it is the same as the soul; he says it is found in all animals, both great and small, both grand and lowly, but mind in the sense of intelligence* (phronêsis) *appears not to belong alike to all animals, and indeed not even to all human beings.*

Concerning *phronêsis*, Aristotle (apparently against Anaxagoras) mentions in the opening of the *Metaphysics* (980a) that all animals are born with it,[29] and elsewhere says that one can also find the sort of parental affection and love that is felt by humans 'in animals which have the greatest share of *phronêsis*' (*Generation of animals* 753a 11–13); some other animal uses of *phronêsis* are explored in the *History of animals* (for example, 608a 15–17), in addition to the fact that some animals can give and receive instructions from humans as well as from each other. Clearly this semantic fluidity of this one term – one of many Aristotle uses when discussing animal capacities – complicates the assumption that Aristotle straightforwardly denied reason to animals, as the word and its cognates can be used to describe a variety of mental processes.[30]

A key theme in philosophical texts concerning animals is the attempt to account for those qualities which are assumed only to be present in humans, but which manifest themselves in animals; the resolution

of this paradox is given in Aristotle's *History of animals* (588a): 'for in the majority of animals there are traces (*ichnê*, literally "tracks" in the sense of "footprints") of those qualities of spirit which appear more manifestly in humans', a phenomenon which, Aristotle explains, is based on observed similarities between human and animal physiognomies. Aristotle allows for true affinities in some areas and similarities in others, so 'just as skill (*technê*), wisdom (*sophia*) and comprehension (*sunesis*) exist in man, thus in the other animals there exists some other such natural power' – but whatever that power is, according to this text, it is definitely not *technê*, *sophia* or *sunesis*, the last conveying the same overarching sense of joining-up and articulation which is the preserve of humans alone.[31] This footprint/archetype relationship between animal and human capacities is demonstrated in a passage on friendship from the *Eudamian Ethics*, in which the mutual benefits derived from the plover's habit of cleaning crocodiles' teeth is implied as being beyond the perceptive abilities of each animal.

12 Aristotle, *Eudamian Ethics* 1236b

It is clear from this that the primary friendship (prôtê philia)*, that of good things, is mutual affection and mutual preferences among each other. For the receiver of friendship is dear to the giver, but also the giver is dear to the receiver. So, this friendship is only natural in man, for he alone perceives* (aisthanesthai) *the mutual preferences. But other things exist in the lower animals, and it seems to exist to a small degree in the certain usefulness between the tame animals and man, and also among themselves: such a thing can be seen, as Herodotus says, of the plover and the crocodile, and the prophets talk of their congregating and keeping apart from one another.*

Aristotle was succeeded as head of the Lyceum by Theophrastus, who presents the views of the Aristotelian school on the shortcomings of the great thinkers of the previous century in his treatise *On the senses*.[32] Theophrastus takes Empedocles to task for not properly distinguishing *aisthêsis* (perception) from *phronêsis* (directed purposeful thought); we saw above some late testimonies of Empedocles's belief in the common origin of animal and human life and in the transmigration of souls, which is concomitant with the belief that animal minds must be capable of the same thoughts as human minds. (Empedocles denounced animal sacrifice for the same reason: see below, Chapter 10). Theophrastus also provides, and presumably subscribes to, an early example of the denial of *sunesis* to animals from Alcmaeon of Croton, who was writing over a century before Aristotle.

13 Theophrastus, *On the senses* 25–26

One could also be in doubt about [Empedocles's] work on intellect (phronêsis), *if he puts it in the same category as perception (*aisthêsis*). For then all [animals] would be of a common level of understanding. [...] And indeed it is completely off the mark to think that that intellect is in the blood: for many animals are without blood, and of those that have blood the parts of the body that have the least share of it are those which concern perception. [...] It is also way off to suppose that the existence of the particular abilities [of men] are due to the composition of the blood in their particular parts, so as the tongue would be the cause of good speech* (legein, *from* logos) *or the hands the cause of workmanship, and not in fact in the rank of instruments. It may be better to give their shape as a cause, rather than the mixture of blood in them which is of a different nature from the process of thinking; for thus it is even with the other animals. Therefore Empedocles, it seems, often entirely misses the point. Of those people who do not give 'perception' as the same as 'similarity', Alcmaeon talks first of all about the differences between the animals. He says that man differs from the others in that 'man alone can understand* (suniemi, *"bring together", from which is derived* sunesis) *whereas the others perceive but do not understand', because to think* (phronein) *and to perceive* (aisthanesthai) *are different, and not the same as Empedocles would have it.*

Such conclusions, conveniently referred to as 'Aristotelian', were highly influential in antiquity, and few Classical writers recorded contrary opinions arguing for the rationality of animals: most passionately Porphyry, and the dialogues of Plutarch (see below), and a minor work by the Alexandrian intellectual Philo Judaeus[33] which includes the ostensible proof of a dog's reason in the well-known scenario of a dog chasing prey and arriving at a fork in the road.[34] Philo's treatise claims to be a record of a lecture given by his nephew Tiberius Julius Alexander, prefect of Egypt in AD 68, and contains Philo's own rebuttal: in this sense it is a typical philosophical exercise rather than a polemic, particularly as the author himself holds the contrary opinion, but it is evidence for the existence of a minority of prominent public figures who held alternative assumptions about the rationality of animals. Far more prevalent were the opinions of the Stoics. Following Aristotle, they were the most outspoken champions of the idea that none of man's supposedly unique qualities can ever really exist in animals, least of all *logos*: to them, animal appetites and anticipations are driven by something baser and fundamentally different from the cognitive complexity of human behaviour.[35] These

opinions are clearly articulated by Cicero, and although the following two passages do allow plenty of intellectual capabilities to animals, in accordance with the Stoic beliefs of the author (and the speaker, Quintus Lucilius Balbus), in the second passage below it subsequently runs to the anthropocentric conclusion that the universe was created only for the benefit of men and gods.

14 Cicero, *On the nature of the gods* 2.121–23

'But truly there is a great variety of types of animal, and every species is very well equipped to preserve its life. Some of them are covered with hides, others clothed with wool, and others with shaggy bristles; we see that others are covered in feathers, others scales; some are armed with horns, some have wings to make their escape. But nature has also, to a great and plentiful extent, united animals with appropriate food. I could at length list the ways in which the forms of the animals are well-suited to efficiently receiving and digesting their food, and describe how clever and subtle is the composition of their various parts and how wonderfully the parts of their body are made. For all of these parts (by which I mean the internal organs) are designed and positioned so that nothing about them might be superfluous: nothing is retained except that which is necessary for life. Nature has also given the beasts sense and appetite, in order that by the latter they will zealously endeavour to seek out their natural food, and that by the former they may distinguish the harmful food from the harmless. So, then, some animals come upon their food by walking, some by crawling on the ground, some by flying, some by swimming; and this group will take food with an open mouth and teeth, that group grasps it with claws, the other with hooked beaks; some suck, others graze, some gobble it, others chew it. Some are so low down that they can take any food that is found on the ground easily in their mouth; but those that are taller, like geese, swans, cranes, and camels, are assisted by the length of their necks. Moreover a hand [the trunk] was given to the elephant, as the sheer size of its body makes accessing food difficult. As for those beasts for whom food came in the form of eating other species, nature gave them strength or speed. Some animals are given artifice and ingenuity (sollertia)[36] *as is the case with the spider which weaves a sort of net in order to devour anything which falls into it; while others wait in ambush, watching, and quickly snatch and devour their captives'.*

Balbus then lists some of the more apparently ingenious behaviours of animals and relationships between predators and prey, including camouflage, symbiosis and bird flight patterns; he also mentions the remarkable

habits of animals which eat certain plants for medicinal effects (now known as zöopharmacognosy, for which see Sextus Empiricus below, §21), intrinsically crediting animals with a diverse range of advanced mental powers including memory and – tellingly – the ability to feel pain. He concludes:

15 Cicero, *On the nature of the gods* 2.133

'Someone might ask for whose sake this great work was performed: for the trees and plants, which are sustained by nature although they are without sensation? But that is an absurdity. The animals? It is no more likely that the gods worked as they did for the sake of mute animals of no intelligence. Therefore, for whose sake will anyone say that the world was made? Evidently for those beings which make use of reason (ratio)*: these are gods and men, than whom nothing is better-made; for reason surpasses all things, thus it is credible that the world and everything in it was made for the sake of gods and men'.*

The key point to note, as the second passage reveals, is that the Stoic is untroubled by animals' possessing advanced mental powers because all animals are created for the benefit of mankind. The gods have seen to it, Cicero states, that a diverse, vibrant and fertile ecology is maintained, consisting of the various species of animals and plants in order that mankind can eat as much as he likes and the earth's vegetation will always be renewed. Elsewhere in this treatise Cicero reports a dogmatically Stoic statement on the *scala natura* and makes it perfectly clear that the direction of moral responsibility is upwards, towards the gods. Cicero singles out man's *logos* (or its Latin equivalent, *ratio*) as an addition to the qualities of other animal species, and like other thinkers before him, he sees that it is *logos* that governs the order of the world.

16 Cicero, *On the nature of the gods* 2.33–6

'And therefore if we wish to proceed from the first unfinished natures to the ultimate and perfect ones, we must arrive at the nature of the gods. For first we consider that nature supports those things which are born from the earth [plants] and they are provided by nature with nothing more than is necessary to nourish them and make them grow. Secondly nature gave the animals sensation and motion and whatever inclines them to seek out what is beneficial for them and to avoid what is harmful to them. And thirdly, then, for men nature has gone further, adding reason (ratio) *by*

which the appetites of his soul are regulated: some relieved, some contained. And in the fourth and the highest of these degrees are those beings which by nature are born good and wise, who have an innate ratio *which is right and constant and which must be placed above humans and assigned to the gods: that is, of the world, in which perfect and absolute* ratio *must be considered inherent. And it isn't possible to say that there is no order in anything which is not in some way final and perfect. For just as in vines and in cattle, if no force intervenes in them we see that nature proceeds with its own plans to an ultimate goal; and similarly as painting and construction and other crafts have something of an absolute point of perfection, so too and more so in all of nature's works something must be moving towards absolute and perfect completion'.*

In his other writings Cicero himself may have more concertedly dealt with the mental capacities of animals: in a discussion of topics suitable for orators he proposes as a particular example the question 'Does *aegritudo* [grief] descend on men alone, or also on beasts?' (*On topics,* 22.83, a title which might well be found in the *Journal of animal ethics*, though doubtless with a different conclusion), and in this excerpt from his treatise *On friendship* he applies the idea of 'traces' of human qualities existing in other animals. He appeals to the uniquely human nature of true friendship based on reasoned reciprocal desires which cannot be found in animals: they have a natural care for their young, he says (*On friendship* 8), which it would be monstrous to be without, and the quality of seeking a mate is also evident in animals, but much superior in humans.

17 Cicero, *On friendship* 21

If it is seems that in animals, whether flying, swimming or on the land, whether tame or wild, first that they esteem themselves (for this feeling is born into every living creature equally) and then that they require and seek other animals of their own sort to attach themselves to (and they do this with a desire in some sense similar to human love) then how much more is this property in man, as nature made it? Man, who both esteems himself and seeks out another whose soul (anima) *he may mingle with his own, almost as if making one out of two.*

When faced with the issue of origins, although he does not mention the separation of man from other species in the following passage from a

treatise on rhetoric, the intrinsic division between man-with-*logos* and beast-without-*logos* is not, apparently, seen as absolute.

18 Cicero, *On rhetorical invention* 1.2

For there was once a time when man wandered around all over the countryside in the manner of beasts and sustained his life on their wild food, doing nothing according to the rationality in their soul but instead doing almost everything by the strength of their bodies, caring nothing for the observance of the divine nor the rational duties of humankind.

Cicero then explains that one wise human realized what mankind was capable of, and so instructed humans in the art of eloquence: like many such texts its function is inherently connected to its context, which in this case is within a treatise on teaching rhetoric, but the important point to note is that its function here is based on the assumption that human beings were not always endowed with *ratio*, and as the direction of the *scala natura* makes clear, man's acquisition of *ratio* allowed him to abrogate moral responsibility to irrational creatures in accordance with the governing principle of *logos*.

Many of Cicero's concerns are evident in the work of the highly influential Stoic Epictetus (c. AD 50–125): his perspectives seem rather startling to the modern reader, coming as they do from a philosopher and teacher who for part of his career was at the centre of the Roman cosmopolitan elite and whose influence was considerable (he is quoted several times in the *Meditations* of emperor Marcus Aurelius). Although he does not single out Epictetus, thinkers and opinions such as these would fuel the vehemence of Porphyry (particularly at *On abstinence* 3.2f.,[37] see also below): the point is forcefully made here that *logos* is what separates man from animals and unites man with the divine.

19 Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.16

Don't wonder that the other animals have at their convenience the things they need for their bodies – not only food and drink, but a bed, and no need of sandals nor of blankets nor clothing, while we are in need of these things. For as they were not created for themselves, but as servants, it would not have been good for them to have these as deficiencies. So think about how it would be for us to have a care not just for ourselves but also for sheep and donkeys, as to how they should be clothed and what shoes to wear, how to eat, how to

drink. But, just as soldiers are ready for their general, shod, clothed and armed (as if their commanders should go about putting their clothes and shoes on them – that would be dire) thus nature has also made those born for service ready, kitted-out, not needing any further care. Thus a small child with a crook can drive a flock of sheep. But having sent forth thanks, we now complain to the god for the fact that we don't have the same cares for them as for us. But look, by Zeus, even one of the things provided by the gods suffices to make this providence perceptible to a humble and grateful mind. Not even the greatest of these: that milk comes from the grass, and cheese from milk, and wool from skins: who is the provider and deviser of this? 'No-one is', you say. What ignorance and impudence! [...]

But since most people (hoi polloi) *are blind, is there not always a need for someone to fill the space and, on behalf of everyone, sing the hymn to the god? What else can I do, a limping old man, if not sing hymns to the god? At least if I were a nightingale, I would do as a nightingale does; if a swan, I would do as a swan. As it is, I am a man of reason* (logikos)*, and I am bound to sing to the god. This is my task: I do it, and I will never desert this position so long as it is given to me, and I call you to the same song.*

20 Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.10

First look carefully at who you are. First of all, you are a man, which means you do not put anything above your authority but arrange all things below it; in itself, this quality is un-enslaved and subject to no restraint. So now look further, to what you are separated from by reason (logos)*. You are separated from the beasts, and from the herds. Furthermore you are a citizen of natural order and you are a part of it, not just one of the subordinates but one of the rulers; for you are for understanding the administration of the gods, and are able to calculate* (epilogistikos) *successively.*

Such sentiments are staunchly Stoic: these, broadly, are the views of the Stoics inasmuch as they pertain to the moral consideration of animals, and other philosophical schools differed radically in their views on animal capabilities. In his *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, the Sceptic writer Sextus Empiricus goes into great detail on the views of his branch of Scepticism and exposes, as a Sceptic would, the flaws and inconsistencies of traditional views on animal intelligence. The Sceptic contribution to informing the ethical perspectives of Classical literature lies in the traditional Sceptic practice of questioning the basis for statements of the so-called 'dogmatists' (that is, anyone who holds a

dogmatic position on a given thesis, in practice often referring to the Stoics).[38] The debate among modern Classical philosophers regarding the Sceptics has hinged on the plausibility of living according to the Sceptic's principle of a life without any beliefs, but a reasoned argument undermining Stoics' denial of *logos* to animals is also an important part of the intellectual climate regarding the capacities of animals. Although Sextus Empiricus was writing in the second century AD, the 'Pyrrho' referred to in the title of his work died around 275 BC.[39] Sextus lengthily outlines the ten 'Tropes' of Pyrrhonism, the first of which concerns the differences between animals (the second Trope concerns differences between men; the third, the sense organs, and so on). The entire first Trope is a revealing essay on the unknowable diversity of animal forms, and Sextus emphasizes that the mental impressions of animals are something which cannot be commented on without evidence, of which there is none, concluding that as we cannot judge between the mental impressions (*phantasiai*) of men and of different animals, so we cannot automatically give preferential treatment to the *phantasiai* of men. Although Sextus is accustomed to referring to non-humans by distinguishing them with the common phrase *ta aloga zôa* ('the irrational animals', often just rendered *ta aloga*), the passage opens by describing them as *ta aloga kaloumena zôa* – 'the *so-called* irrational animals'.[40]

21 Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.62–78

So let us go even further and compare the so-called irrational animals with men in regard to their imaginations (phantasia)*, and also not reject as unworthy the ridicule – after the practicalities of our arguments – of the deluded and bragging dogmatists. So, some of us were accustomed simply to compare the host of irrational animals with man: but since the dogmatists, clever at coming up with arguments, say that the comparison is an unequal one, we can ridicule them more completely by choosing from a surplus of arguments just one of the animals on which to set up our argument: let us choose the dog, if that seems fitting, seen as the shabbiest of the animals. For thus we shall discover that animals, which this argument concerns, are not left far behind us when it comes to the trustworthiness of their perceptions. Now the dogmatics do concede that that this animal is superior to us in perception* (aisthêsis)*, for it perceives through the sense of smell better than we do, tracking this way the beasts which they cannot see, and seeing more sharply than us with their eyes, and also hearing more acutely. Let us now, then, turn to* logos*: on the one hand in the mind, and on the other concerned with speech.*

So we shall look first of all at the logos *of the mind. Now this kind, according to the dogmatists with whom we are most at loggerheads – the Stoics – seems to vacillate on the following matters: the choosing of things which are familiar;*[41] *knowledge of the skills which direct them to this choice; and the perception of the virtues which pertain to individual nature and to experience* (pathos). *So the dog, on which it was thought appropriate to base our argument as a paradigm, goes for things familiar to it, and runs from things which are harmful: he pursues food, and withdraws from the upraised whip. He also has a skill by which he is able to procure the things which are familiar to him, in respect of hunting. And he is not without virtue. Indeed, if having a virtuous nature means to give to each according to what he is worth, the dog at least wags his tail to those with whom he is familiar and guards them against strangers, and wards off those who would do wrong: the dog cannot be said to be beyond the sphere of justice.*

And if the dog does have this virtue, then seeing as the virtues are reciprocally implied he must have the other virtues also, which (as the wise men say) many men do not possess. We also see it being brave in warding off attacks, and intelligent (sunetos [*related to* sunesis]), *as Homer witnesses, writing that Odysseus, passing unknown by all in his house, was recognized only by Argus, because the transformations of his body did not deceive the dog, and he had not given up possession of the images of his imagination as he perceived them, which he was able to consult and which it seems he kept hold of better than the men.*

And even as Chrysippus [the Stoic] would have it – he who most of all attacked the aloga *animals – the dog also has a share of the famous matter of articulate speech. In any case, the aforementioned man says that the dog perceives by intuition through the fifth of many indemonstrable syllogisms, so that when hunting and coming to a junction of three roads, and seeking the scent on two of them through which his beast had passed, he rushes straight down the third without having sought the scent there. For the dog is able to reason* (logizesthai) *in this way, as ancient man said: 'the beast went either this way, or that way, or the other way; and as it neither went this or that way, so it went the other'. But the dog is also able to hold in his mind his own bad experiences and how to assuage them: when something sharp is stuck in him he starts to try and pluck it out by the means rubbing his foot on the ground and using his teeth. If he is wounded anywhere, since dirty wounds are deadly and clean ones easily curable, he gently wipes off the accumulated material. And he even takes especial care to follow the Hippocratic procedures: for example, since rest is a good cure for the foot, if he sustains an injury to the foot he raises it up and*

thus takes care that it doesn't get disturbed. When he is troubled by the juices of harmful plants he restores himself to health by eating grass, with which he vomits out the stuff.

Now, if it seems that the animal which we chose as a paradigm for the sake of argument does indeed choose the familiar and flee from the troublesome, and has skill through which he is able to supply himself with familiar things, and also hold in his mind his sufferings and his ways of assuaging them, and if he is not excluded from virtue, in which logos *resides fully fledged in the mind, in all this, then the dog may be regarded as perfect (*teleios, *'finished'). Because of this, it seems to me, certain philosophers have chosen to honour themselves with the name of this animal.*[42]

With regard to the logos *of speech, it is not necessary to look into this matter at this moment, for on this phenomenon even some of the dogmatics put it to one side as they consider it to act against the acquisition of virtue and for this reason they maintain silence while they study; besides, if a man were to be in this state [silent] no one would call him* alogos. *Leaving all this aside, we certainly see that animals – which are what this argument is about – also put forth human sounds, for example the jay and certain others. Even allowing for this, even if we do not understand the sounds of the animals we call* aloga, *it is not wholly unlikely that they talk amongst themselves and that we do not understand them. For when we hear the sounds coming from non-Greeks, we do not understand them, but rather they seem to us to be all one kind of noise.*

And we hear dogs letting out different sounds when warding off someone, when howling, when they are beaten, and differently again when they are wagging their tails. On the whole if one were to look into this they would find a great difference between the sound of this animal and the others in the varying circumstances so that it may reasonably be said that the so-called aloga *animals do partake in a share of the* logos *relating to speech. If then they are not wanting in the accuracy of their perceptions* (aisthêseis) *in comparison to humans, nor in* logos *relating to mind, nor in speech (as would be superfluous to go into), then they are no less trustworthy than we are regarding objects of imagination. And perhaps it is possible to demonstrate this if we direct the discussion*[43] *equally to each of the* aloga *animals. So at the very least, who would deny that birds are differentiated by their sagacity and use of the* logos *of speech? For they not only understand present things, but also what is to come, and this they make clear to those who understand them, showing the signs in other ways as well as making prophecies with their voices. I have made*

the comparison (which I said above is superfluous) as I think I have sufficiently shown that we cannot take our own imaginations more seriously than those which arise in the irrational animals. So, if the irrational animals are no less trustworthy than us in respect of the understanding of their imaginations, and the imaginations happen to differ according to the alternative choices of animal, then I shall only be able to relate how each sort of object suggests itself to me personally and shall be compelled to hold back what anything I could say about the nature of the object.

The philosophical school which had the greatest popular impact on matters concerning animals in Greece and Rome, though perhaps largely in a negative sense, was the Pythagorean school. Notorious in antiquity for its promotion of a vegetarian diet (see Chapter 3) and apparent opposition to animal sacrifice, accounts of the teachings and doctrines of Pythagoras have been transmitted piecemeal from antiquity and there is considerable doubt on what Pythagoras himself said or taught:[44] the collected *Lives of the philosophers*, written in the third century AD by Diogenes Laertius, contains much valuable information digested from the lost libraries of antiquity. Here Pythagoras's denial of *phrên* to animals may be considered alongside Empedocles's considering *phronêsis* and *aisthêsis* as a single phenomenon, and both opinions represent concerted efforts by thinkers in the early fifth century to determine the workings of the mind, with Alcmaeon (quoted by Theophrastus above) as the one to separate *sunesis* and deny it to animals.

22 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the philosophers* 8.30, 32

The soul of man is divided into three parts: wit (nous)*, mind* (phrên)*, and spirit* (thumos)*. Wit and spirit are also in the other animals, but mind is in humans alone. The place of the soul extends from the heart to the brain: the part which is in the heart is spirit, while the parts in the brain are wit and mind. Perceptions* (aisthêsieis) *are drops made from these things. And that which is of the mind is immortal, and the rest is mortal. The soul gets nourishment from the blood, and* logos *from the winds.* Logos *is invisible, since the divine aether is also invisible. [...]*

The whole air is filled with souls: and these are called daimônes *and* herôs*; by these entities men are sent dreams and signs of future sickness, and not only to men but also sheep and other cattle. And the purifications, the sacrifices for good fortune, all prophecy, omens and all such things are on account of them.*

The most dedicated surviving ancient account of *logos* in animals is to be found in the polemic treatise *On abstinence from animal flesh* written in the third century AD by the Neoplatonist philosopher Porphyry. The third book of *On abstinence* deals explicitly with the problem of denying animals *logos* in an extended passage which seeks to summarize and refute the position of his 'opponents' (primarily the Stoics: *On abstinence* 3.2ff.)[45] and to set out a more inclusive theory of *logos* with the resulting implications for justice and diet (on which see Chapters 2 and 3 below). Porphyry points to the fact that animals and men are of the same physical fabric, their bodies being of the same nature, and that the same phenomena which unite men with each other also unite them with animals: he also pays attention to animal sense-perceptions and draws conclusions on the injustice of using animals for food. His mention of the concept of alliance (*oikeiôsis*) refers to and undermines the Stoic principle of moral recognition between those who share *oikeiôsis*, a group from which the Stoics specifically exclude non-human animals: he also draws on the opinions of both Pythagoras and Euripides, again underlining the prominence of Greek tragedy in the philosophical dialogues of the Classical world.

23 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 3.25–26

Theophrastus uses such arguments as these: that those who are born from the same sources (I mean the same father and mother) are said to be allied (oikeios) *to each other by their nature. Moreover, we reckon that those who are descended from the same ancestors are also allied to each other, and further that this is the case with fellow-citizens as they both share the land and other associations with each other. For we do not judge that they are related to each other by coming from the same ancestors, unless indeed their first ancestors were also the founders of the human race. And thus, I think, we say that Greek is allied* (oikeios) *and kin to Greek, barbarian to barbarian, and all men among each other, for one of two reasons. Either because they are of the same ancestors, or because they have in common the same food, habits and race. Thus we can put it that all men are in common with and related to each other, and to all living things* (zôa), *for the principles (*archai, *'beginnings') of their bodies are of the same nature. I am not talking about the first primal elements, of which plants also are made, but the same skin, flesh and wet matter which are the natural matter among animals. They are moreover naturally much closer to one another in spirit* (psychê), *by which I mean in desires and anger, and especially in reasoning* (logismos) *and most especially of all, perception* (aisthêsis). *And as with bodies, so with souls* (psychai)*: some animals have*

*a highly finished nature, some less so, but there are by nature the same principles among them all. This is particularly evident in the relatedness of their feelings (*pathoi*). If what has been said is true, that such is the case with the origins of habits, then all races possess understanding but differ in the way they lead their lives and in their basest composition. Then, all other species of animal would be allied and kin to us in every respect. For all in common have the same nourishment and breath, as Euripides says, and a flow of blood, and evidently the same parents in heaven and earth. So, as they are related, if it should seem (as Pythagoras says) that they have been allotted the same* psychê *as us, anyone who acts unjustly towards his relatives may be justly considered impious. Furthermore the allegiance may not be thought broken as some creatures are of a fierce nature. Some humans are no less – but rather more – wicked to their neighbours and bring injury to anyone whom they happen to encounter, as if borne by their own nature and wickedness. So we do away with these men, but we do not break off our relationship with gentler beings. Therefore, although if some creatures are fierce and should be done away with just as one would with similarly disposed men, we should not break away from the remaining gentler creatures. And neither kind is to be eaten, as neither should we eat unjust men. But as it stands we do much injustice, both by destroying gentle and fierce beings and by eating the gentle ones. For we do injustice in two respects: that we destroy gentle creatures and that we eat them; and, simply, their death has reference to the act of devouring.*

2
Animal Justice and Morals

Like the nature of the animal mind, the issue of justice towards animals also prompted comment from the earliest era of Greek literature, and the effects of the relationship between humans and animals in agrarian and pastoral societies left a significant impression on Classical literature (and is closely related to the use of animals in sacrificial ritual). One of the earliest explicit distinctions between men and animals found in Greek literature is the remark of Hesiod, perhaps writing around 700 BC, that fish, beasts and birds eat each other 'since there is no justice (*dikê*) among them' (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 278).[1] Zeus, he says, gave justice to men, and Hesiod says that it is the best thing of all. On the surface, this would seem to be (and is often implicitly described as) a qualitative distinction,[2] that is, that human beings have the added benefit which is the capacity to recognize and enforce justice, and to punish injustice. However, a closer reading of the passage in its context is revealing: the gift of Zeus is not necessarily an inherent material improvement of human nature. Zeus did not simply infuse all mankind with this noble property; rather, he imposed a juridical system on mankind and watched as men chose whether or not to abide by *dikê*, punishing by proxy those who didn't. Even Hesiod's use of the word *dikê* is problematic here: as he is one of the earliest extant Greek authors, the semantics of the word are open to quite some interpretation, and scholars have argued that in this case '*dikê* is a narrowly juridical concept as opposed to a broadly ethical one':[3] the implication is that rather than man having dominion over animals through his inherent superiority, man is instead expected to abide by a restrictive social code, and it is this social code that Hesiod is referring to when he refers to there being no *dikê* among animals.

Animals feature in legal and ethical discussions throughout the whole of the Classical period. Best known as an Atomist philosopher, Democritus of Abdera (whose theory of the origins of life was drawn on by Diodorus Siculus, above §5) was another contemporary of Empedocles, and in addition to his physical theories, many fragments survive of his ethical writings. His support of capital punishment for animal as well as human transgressors is motivated primarily by the need to uphold *dikê*, and is unconcerned with the moral status of the proscribed animal: in the fragment immediately following these three, immunity from punishment is recommended for anyone who kills a 'highwayman or robber', who is presumably regarded as a moral agent in his own right: in Democritus's ethical fragments, 'there is no attempt to distinguish between those who do and those who don't possess a concept of justice, those who do and those who don't have the capacity to think in moral terms'.[4]

24 Democritus, *Fragments* 235–237[5]

Concerning the killing and non-killing of certain animals, the following holds: the killer of those animals which do wrong or wish to do harm goes unpunished, and it is beneficial to do this for the general well-being rather than not to.

It is necessary to kill absolutely everything which does harm against justice: and the doer of these deeds will find himself with a greater share of cheerfulness, justice, courage, and property in every form.

As has been written of enemies such as foxes and serpents, thus it seems to me necessary to do the same for men: in accordance with the ancestral customs, to kill the enemy in every form in so far as the law does not forbid. The sanctuaries of each country forbid it, and treaties, and oaths.

By the time of Plato, with the development and maturation of complex legal systems in Classical Greek *poleis* (particularly the famously litigious Athens) the *dikê* of men is made to extend into the animal realm – and beyond – in the imaginary city of Plato's dialogue *Laws*. In this case, however, bringing animals into a legal discussion may be of less relevance for the speaker's opinions on the moral culpability of animals (and thus their capacity to make reasoned decisions such as premeditating a murder) than for the speaker's keenness to extend *dikê* into all possible circumstances: after all, the discussion concerns the nature and reach of *dikê*.

25 Plato, *Laws* 873d–874a

'And if a draught animal or any other creature should kill anyone, excepting such cases as may happen to someone participating in a public competition, the kinsmen of the dead man shall pursue his killer for murder, and when the magistrates of the country (of a sort and number to be determined by the kinsmen) hold an enquiry, and the losing party [that is, the animal] shall be drawn out of the town's borders and killed.

'And if any inanimate object should take a man's life – except for lightning or some weapon coming from the gods – for anything else which kills a man, either through his falling on it or its falling on him, a relative shall appoint the nearest neighbour to pass judgement on it, purifying himself and all his relatives from guilt, and they shall draw the losing party outside the town's borders as was the case with the animals mentioned above'.

Several statements of Aristotle consider non-human animals in terms of justice within broader discussions, and each of the three passages below is redolent with the language of the Aristotelian *scala natura*: in particular, the mention of a 'just war' against animals and servile humans in §28 is an unequivocal statement of man's right to dominate those below him in the hierarchy of nature. Though not specifically touching on justice, of equal interest for our purposes is the detailed positioning of slaves and animals (and also women) in their respective positions within the spectrum of moral consideration in the passage of the *Politics* (§27), another stark illustration of the supposed *homo mensura* principle. In some cases, when taking individual statements out of context there is a risk that they may be treated as ethical pronouncements and evaluated as such, whereas they may be being deployed as a set of analogies appealing to the assumptions of the reader: understanding them in this respect potentially increases their value to the student of animal ethics. The passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics* containing the well-known statement regarding the impossibility of justice operating between men and animals is of more interest in regard to its drawing on the moral priorities of the reader than its status as a deictic statement of Aristotelian philosophy: the intended point of the passage is that democracies have more justice than tyrannies, not that there is no justice between men and animals – a fact which is taken for granted, and which operates simply as an illustrative analogy.

26 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1161a–b

Under the deviated [political systems], just as justice can only exist in a small degree, thus it is with friendship also, and least of all in the worst system: for in a tyranny there is little or no friendship. Where there is no common ground between the ruler and the ruled, there can be no friendship, for neither can there be justice. Just as a craftsman to his tool, or the soul to the body, or a master to his slave: for they all receive help from those who use them, but friendship does not exist for inanimate (apsycha, *'without* psychê*')* *things, nor does justice. Neither is there friendship or justice towards a horse or an ox, nor towards a slave in his capacity as a slave. For there is no common ground, for a slave is a living tool (and a tool is an inanimate slave). So, as a slave no friendship exists towards him, though there is insofar as he is a human being. For there seems to be a certain form of justice for every human being towards all things which are able to have common ground in custom and in terms of agreement; and, indeed, friendship exists among such as are human. So indeed in tyrannies, friendship and justice are small in measure, but plentiful in democracies, for as they are equals they have much in common.*

27 Aristotle, *Politics* 1254b

*So, as we were saying, it is first of all in a living creature that we first observe the rule of a master and of a citizen-statesman, for the soul rules the body as a master, and the mind (*nous*) rules the propensities as a statesman or a king; in these cases it is evident that for the body to be ruled by the soul is proper according to nature and usefulness, and for the emotional part to be ruled by the mind and the part which has* logos*; and if the two parts were equal it would, by contrast, always be harmful. Again, thus it is between man and animals: domesticated animals are better in their nature to wild ones, and it is better for all of the tame ones to be ruled by man, for in this way they are kept safe. Still the same applies to the natures of men and women: the one is better, the other worse; the one the ruler, the other the subject. And the same pattern is necessarily the case for the whole of mankind too, for in the same way as the soul differs from the body, thus men differ from animals (and this is the way for those who are given to use their bodies for work, and who are at their best this way), they are slaves by nature, and it is best for them to be ruled by this principle, just as was the case with the things we mentioned. For a slave is someone who by nature is subject to someone else (and because of this he is the property of another), and who takes part in* logos *such that he can perceive it but not possess it. But the other animals cannot even perceive*

reason, but are servants to their own instincts. And the usefulness of slaves and animals differs little: for both slaves and domesticated animals provide with their bodies help for the necessities of life.

28 Aristotle, *Politics* 1256a–b

But furthermore there are indeed many types of food, because of which both animals and men have many ways of life; for without food they are unable to live. In this way the differences in food have made ways of life differ among animals. Among wild animals some spend their lives in herds, and others live in a scattered way, according to whichever habit is most useful for their food because some of them eat other animals, others fruits, and others eat everything; thus with an aim to increased ease and better choice, nature has differentiated their ways of life. And since each of the different kinds of animal have different preferences by nature, rather than the same for each, even among the flesh-eating and fruit-eating animals their ways of life are distinct from one another. And similarly in the human race also, for there are great differences of lifestyle. Some men, the laziest, are pastoral nomads, for to get food from domesticated animals involves no hard work or skill in agriculture, but they need to move the flocks around continually looking for pastures, and they are forced to follow them closely, as if they were farming on a living field. Other men live from hunting animals, different people from different animals: for instance some from robbery, others from fishing – such fish as dwell in marshy lakes or meadows, and rivers or such seawater as is suitable – and others live on birds or wild animals. But the most numerous of the race of men live from the land and from cultivated fruits. These then are roughly the ways of life, at least those that have their work provided by themselves and do not gather their food through barter and retail – the pastoral nomad, the robber, the fisherman, the hunter, the farmer. And others also live happily by mixing some of these pursuits, adding to the more deficient lifestyle where it happens to lack self-sufficing, such as pastoral nomads also robbing; and farmers also hunting, and so on with the others. Thus they join together the various businesses, going through their lives in this manner.

So this sort of acquisition seems to be given by nature to all things, as if it were there straightaway from their first coming-to-be, and thus it is there when they arrive at their finished forms. For even from the beginning, at birth, some animals produce both their young and such food as is enough for them to get by on while the young is not able to provide for itself. Such is the case with animals that produce their young as grubs or in eggs. With such animals as bear live young, they have food for their offspring inside themselves for a

certain time, of a nature we describe as 'milky'. Nature also provides for them in a similar way when grown up: clearly we must suppose that plants exist for the sake of animals, and the other animals for use by humans, both domestic animals for food and labour, and wild animals (though not all of them, but certainly the greater part) for the sake of food and other assistance, as both clothing and other tools come from them.

So if nature does not make anything without an end in mind or in vain, nature must have made them all for the sake of mankind. Because of this, even the art of war is by nature somehow a skill to acquire (for matters of hunting are a part of war), which must be used against both wild animals and those men who don't want to acquire it and are made to be subjugated, as war by nature is just.

Alternative ethical systems did exist, and perhaps unsurprisingly they can be traced back to the writings of transmigrationist philosophers Empedocles and Pythagoras. Quite apart from Empedocles's opposition to sacrifice and meat eating on the grounds that a sacrificial animal may contain the soul of a deceased loved one (see below, §§148–9), there is good evidence for these thinkers' promoting a general philosophy of non-violence to animals and to plants. The anecdote of Pythagoras and the dog is well known: when kicked, the dog began to howl, prompting Pythagoras to demand that the kicker desist because he heard in the howling the voice of 'a friend' (or 'dear man',[6] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the philosophers* 8.36), and one commentator interprets the communication of the dog as a sort of moral command: 'Pythagoras acknowledged the dog's howling as a *complaint*, and so as a communication that placed an obligation (an experienced command) on those who heard it'.[7] Also recorded in Diogenes Laertius is an order from Pythagoras to his followers 'not to destroy or injure a cultivated plant, nor an animal that does not injure man' (8.23); some Pythagorean ideas on diet are given below (Chapter 3), and Aristotle here gives Empedocles's position on justice towards animals.

29 Aristotle, *On rhetoric* 1373b

Let us now distinguish all the unjust actions from just ones, starting first of all with the following. Indeed, justice and injustice have been marked out with the two kinds of social customs and in two ways relating to persons. So I speak of personal laws and of ones held in common. Personal laws are marked out by each person in relation to themselves, and these are divided into unwritten and written; laws held in common are made according to

nature. For, as all people are in touch with divination, there is a certain commonality to this naturally ordered justice and injustice even if there may be no instance of commonality or terms of agreement between people. Such is the case with the argument of Sophocles's Antigone, that it was a matter of justice to bury Polynices, and this justice is of the naturally ordained sort [...] and as Empedocles says regarding the prohibition of killing of creatures with souls (empsychon)*, that it is not something which is right for some but not right for others, 'but a law for everything, stretching throughout the wide-ruling aether and bearing onwards across the boundless reach of the sun'.*

Justice and nature are examined in Cicero's treatise *On the ends of good and evil*, a text which forms a thorough ancient dissertation on ethics up to that time and which digests opinions from several philosophical schools including Epicureanism and Stoicism. The text makes reference to animals several times as it proceeds through the various philosophical positions: here the speaker Marcus Portius Cato outlines the Stoic position on justice, quoting arch-Stoic Chrysippus (c. 280–205 BC), who also features in the subsequent excerpts from Cicero's *On the nature of the gods* in a series of reflections on the purpose of the things found in the world. The Stoic position is clear: everything was ultimately made by Providence for the sake of mankind, and man himself was made for the gods. (However, context is everything, and the dividing line between principle and practicality reveals itself elsewhere in Cicero's writing: despite the absolute rejection of animals from the sphere of justice in the philosophical school with which Cicero most closely associates himself, and revealed in his philosophical writings, when the context suits him Cicero will happily credit beasts with some facility for justice. In his role as an instructor of legal orators he encourages the prospective prosecutor to describe a crime as 'foreign to the nature of even wild men, of barbarous peoples, and even of savage beasts', *On rhetorical invention* 1.103).

30 Cicero, *On the ends of good and evil* 3.65–678

'And that no-one would care to pass his life alone in a desert, even if supplied with an infinite abundance of pleasures, easily shows that man is born for relationships and society, and for a sort of naturally ordained community. Moreover we are urged on by nature so that we want to be useful to as many people as possible, and first of all by the teaching of ratio *and the imparting of prudence. [...] And so just as bulls are given by nature the instinct to fight for their calves against lions with all their strength and force, so men who*

are of great worth and resource, such as we hear of Hercules and Liber, are incited by nature to defend the human race. Also when we speak of Jupiter as Optimus and Maximus, and Saviour, Protector of Guests and Supporter, what we mean to say is that the safety of mankind is in his protection. But it hardly follows that while we ourselves feel meanness and neglect towards one another, we then expect the immortal gods will care for us and protect us. Therefore, in the same way as we use our limbs before we have learnt what use they are to us, so we are related and social on account of nature for the community of the state. If we weren't, there would be no space for any justice or benevolence. But just as [the Stoics] believe that man is bound to man with justice, so they consider that for men there is no justice towards beasts. For Chrysippus eminently said that things were created for the sake of man, and gods, and for their own community and society, so that men can use beasts for their own advantage without injustice'.

31 Cicero, *On the nature of the gods* 2.37–39

*'For as Chrysippus cleverly put it, just as the shield case is for the shield, and the sheath is for the sword, so everything except the world was made for something else; thus the crops and fruits which the earth produces were made for animals (*animantes*), and animals for man; as the horse is for carrying, the ox for ploughing, the dog for hunting and for guarding. So man himself was made for the contemplation of the world, and its imitation: though he is not perfect in any way, but a sort of particle of perfection. But the world, as it embraces everything, and as nothing exists which is not contained in it, is entirely perfect. How then can it be lacking in the best qualities? For nothing is better than mind and* ratio*; therefore, the world cannot be lacking in them. Chrysippus also observes well by the use of similarities that everything in its kind, when arrived at maturity and perfection, is superior to its imperfect form: as a horse to a colt, a dog to a puppy, and a man to a boy; and that similarly a perfect and complete being is bound to possess that which is best in all the world [including mind and* ratio*], but nothing is more perfect than the world, and nothing is better than virtue: therefore virtue is proper to the world. And really man is not perfect by nature, and virtue may be seen in man and therefore more readily in the world, so the world itself does possess virtue. It is therefore wise, and for that reason it is divine (*deus*)'.*

32 Cicero, *On the nature of the gods* 2.151–62

'In truth, by our works, that is, by our hands, a variety of food is provided, and in abundance. For much is brought forth from the field by the working

of the hand which can be eaten right away or preserved and put away for a long time; and we are also fed by beasts, from the land and from the sea and skies, some caught and killed right away, and some reared. We tame our domestic quadrupeds for transport; their speed and strength we make into our own speed and strength. On the backs of beasts we put loads or yokes; we put to our own uses the keen senses of the elephant and the craftiness of the dog; from the caverns of the earth we take the iron we need to plough our soil; we discover the deep and hidden veins of copper and silver and gold, and use them for our utility and decorative ornaments. We cut down trees both managed and wild in the forests, and can do all sorts of things with them: some we burn for the warmth of our bodies and to prepare our food, some we use for buildings so that we are roofed and sheltered from the cold and the heat. Wood is truly put to great use building ships, whose routes supply much sustenance from all ends of the earth, and we alone have the power to tame the most violent thing which nature has produced, the sea and winds, through nautical science: a great many things from the sea are used and enjoyed by us. Similarly, all of the advantages of the earth are in the domain of men: we enjoy the produce of the fields and the mountains; ours are the rivers, ours the lakes; we sow grain and plant trees; we give the soil fertility by leading in water; we can stop, guide and divert the flow of rivers. In short, we undertake with our hands to effect a sort of alternate nature within the natural world. Moreover, hasn't man's reason (ratio) *penetrated even to the heavens? We alone of animals know the rising and setting and the courses of the stars; the race of men limited the day, month and year, learned the eclipses of the sun and the moon, and predicted for all posterity their magnitudes and dates. And in this contemplation, the soul arrives at knowledge of the gods, from which piety arises, and with it justice and the rest of the virtues which are the source of a happy life on a par with and similar to that of the gods, and yielding in comparison with the heavenly life in respect of nothing except immortality, which has nothing to do with a good life. In these matters, I have now shown clearly enough the extent of the pre-eminence of man's nature over that of all other animals, and from this it must be a given that neither the form and position of man's bodily parts nor his genius and strength of mind could have been made by chance.*

'It remains for me to show, by way of conclusion, that everything in this world which men use was made and provided for men. First of all, the world itself was made for the gods and men, and those things in it were provided for our service and also created for that reason. For the world is the common dwelling place, or city, of the gods and men: for they alone have the use of ratio *and live by justice and law. As, therefore, it must be thought that the*

cities of Athens and Lacedaemon were built for the sake of the Athenians and Lacedaemonians, and everything there is said to belong to the people of those cities, so everything in the world may with propriety be said to belong to the gods and men, and to them alone. Then indeed, although the revolutions of the sun and moon and all the stars are properly for the cohesion of the world, yet may they also be considered objects designed as a spectacle for man, for there is no sight of which the eye could get tired, none more beautiful, or more stimulating of our ratio *and* sollertia. *In measuring their trajectories we find the different seasons and their durations and changes: if they are only known to men, we must believe that they were made only for their sake. And the earth, bearing fruits and grain in such variety and excessive abundance: is this made for men or for beasts? What use are the plentiful and delightful vines and olive trees to beasts? They know nothing of either sowing or tilling, or reaping and gathering the fruits of the earth in their seasons and laying them up in stores. Of all these things man has the use and the responsibility.*

Figure 2.1 Squirrel or mouse with an acorn; the tail resembles an ear of wheat. Nicolo gemstone found at Woodeaton, Oxfordshire. Photo: the late Robert Wilkins

'Just as we say that the lute and the pipe were made only for those who can use them, so it must be allowed that all the things I mentioned were designed for only those who make use of them, and although some beasts steal a part of it from us, we cannot say that the earth produced them for the beasts as well. Men do not store up corn for mice and ants, but for their wives and children and their families. So beasts, as I said, acquire it by stealth, but their masters openly and freely. So this abundance was provided for the sake of men, unless we question whether the abundance and variety of apples, which delight not only by taste but by smell and sight, was intended by nature for men only? Beasts are so far from being recipients of these fruits that we can even see that they themselves were made for the use of man: for what use are sheep unless we use their wool, dressed and woven into clothing? For they are unable sustain themselves or procure their own food without the care and assistance of man. The dog, with his loyalty and affectionate fawning towards his master, his aversion to strangers, his sharp senses in finding game with his nose and alacrity in his pursuit, what do these qualities suggest other than that he was created for our use? Why should I even mention cattle? Although their backs were not made for carrying heavy loads, their necks were made for the yoke, and their shoulders – both strong and broad – were made to draw the plough. They were so useful in their ploughing of earth from the times of the Golden Age, as poets tell us, that no violence was ever done to them. [...][9] The usefulness provided by cattle was so great that to eat their flesh was even held as a crime.

'It would take a long time to tell of the advantages which we receive from mules and donkeys, which were undoubtedly designed for our use. Really, what is the pig for, but for us to eat? Their soul (anima)*, as Chrysippus says, was given to it like salt, to keep the meat from putrefying; and as it was made so suitable for man's food, no animal is more fertile than the pig. Why should I speak of the multitude and deliciousness of fish, and of birds, which give us so much pleasure that we might suppose that the very Providence which cares for us was an Epicurean? And these can only be caught through the* ratio *and* sollertia *of man; although there are some birds, called* alites *and* oscines *by our augurs, which we suppose were made for the purposes of augury. And furthermore, the great and wild beasts which we take by hunting, sometimes for food; sometimes to exercise ourselves in imitation of the discipline of combat; and to tame and train them for our use, as we do with elephants; or to extract remedies from their bodies for our illnesses and wounds just as we do from certain roots and plants, the usefulness of which we know through long use and experiments.*

'Experience the sight of the whole earth and the sea with your anima *as if with your eyes: You will see vast and fruitful plains, huge hills thickly covered*

with forests, and pasture land for herds of cattle, and the incredible sight of the paths of ships; in fact, not only on the surface of the earth but many useful things lie in its darkest caves, which were made for man and by man alone are discovered'.

Epictetus, who forcefully made the case for *logos* existing in man alone, uses similar imagery to that which Cicero's speaker in §31 attributes to Chrysippus. Rather than focussing on animal minds and their difference from human ones, Epictetus here presents a Stoic animal ethics which is a consequence of observing the extent to which divine Providence has provided benefits for mankind: as the entire physical world was created for man's benefit and enjoyment, why would animals need to have intelligence and understanding when they were created to serve? The specific target of Epictetus's ire is not the irrational animals, but philosophically unobservant humans who do not appreciate their fortunate place in the scheme of divine providence.

33 Epictetus, *Discourse* 1.6

*From looking at everything which exists in the world, it is easy to praise the providence of nature if someone should have these two things: the ability to see everything that happens all together, and thankfulness. Without these, one person will not see the great usefulness of things which are in existence; another will not be thankful for them even if he may be aware. If the god had made colours, but had not made the ability to look at them, what use would that have been? None whatsoever. Contrariwise: if he had made the ability to see, but had not made such things as to come under the faculty of observation, then what use is that? None whatsoever. What, then, if he had made both of these things, but not made light? That would have been no use either. Who then has joined together this thing to that thing, and that thing to this? Who has joined the knife with the sheath, and the sheath with the knife? No one? And indeed, from beholding the construction of these things which are now in their perfect forms, we are used to supposing that all of the work is something made by a craftsman, and not constructed at random. So does each of these things not display evidence of the craftsman, and do visible things and vision and light not also display evidence of him? And the male and the female, and the desire of each to join together and the very knowledge of how to make use of the pieces which are constructed for this purpose: do these not display evidence of the craftsman? If not: [consider] the construction of our intelligent thought (*dianoia*), according to which we are not simply stamped with the impressions of the things we come across with our perception, but rather we lift*

things out of them, and subtract this and add that and put this together with that, and through this, by Zeus!, we move on to something else, which is thus somehow a citation of the object observed: is this *not enough to move some men and turn them away from discounting the craftsman? So let them lay out to us in no uncertain terms what it is that makes each of these things, and how such things, which are so amazing and like works of art, should emerge spontaneously.*

What then? Are these things done in us alone? Much indeed is in us alone, things which can be singled out as being needed by the logikos *animal, but you will also find much that is common to us and the* aloga *animals. So do those ones also understand what is going on? Certainly not. For use is one thing, and understanding is another. The god had a need for the animals to be able to make use of the things that they see* (phantasia)*, but for humans to understand their usefulness. Because of this, it is sufficient for them to eat and drink, sleep, mate, and to do the such other things as fulfil each of them. But for us, to whom the god gave the ability to understand, these things are not enough: and if we act according to proper custom, and in an orderly way, and in accordance with the nature of each thing, and according to our proper state, we ourselves shall not ever end up at our perfect state.*

For as the proper states of beings may differ, so too differ the actions and end results. So for that animal whose proper state is only set up for utility, the limits of utility are sufficient; for the animal who understands utility, if he doesn't accept it, then he will never attain his proper destiny. So, what then? Each living thing is set up as follows: this one to be eaten, that one to do service on the fields, the other to provide cheese, others still for some other use. For which of these uses must they be able to understand and deconstruct the images of their imagination? But man has been brought further so that he may contemplate the god and his deeds – and not only to contemplate them, but to explain them as well. Because of this it is shameful for man to begin and end where the aloga *do: it is better to begin from their position and to end up where our nature also ends. For this is a place of both contemplation and understanding, a harmonious way of life. So see that you don't perish without contemplating these things.*

Stoic writings are not inherently incapable of sympathy towards animals: the very idea of animals each having a rôle in the divinely ordained world paradoxically implies that there are natural behaviours and properties to animals which, despite their ultimate trajectory towards human utility, should not be violated. Again, however, context is everything:

in discourse 4 entitled *On freedom*, Epictetus presents a vivid account of the inherent natures of birds and there is an implicit condemnation of those who deprive animals of their freedom, but the passage is intended to say more about freedom than it does about birds. The bird, the traditional example of an animal which comes closest to the literal definition of *logos* as 'word' through the speech imitations of some species, is depicted as trying hard to escape and even fancifully permitted *logos* to articulate its unhappiness. Epictetus's remarks on the captive lion are also valuable not only because of their function as historical evidence of the ancient practice of keeping lions as companion animals, but more especially for their featuring the off-the-cuff remark that if animals were to acquire the mental faculties of *aisthêsis* and *logismos* they would then resent their captivity: the lions are incidentally assumed to be without either perception or reason, and their *aloga* status permits and legitimizes their captivity. There is sufficient evidence to be certain that plenty of lions also died in captivity, not least because Epictetus was writing as the height of the Roman games (see below, Chapter 12).

34 Epictetus, *Discourses* 4.1

*Look at the animals, and how we use the idea of 'freedom'. Men can rear lions to be tame, shutting them in cages and feeding them up with grain, and some people bring them around with them. And who would say 'that lion is free?' Isn't it the case that the softer he is treated, the more slave-like he is? And what lion, if he got hold of perception and reason (*aisthêsis *and* logismos*), would want to be a lion like that? Look at those birds – captured, and reared in confinement – and the lengths they go in seeking to escape. Indeed, some of them starve themselves to death rather than submit to such a life: and then the ones that that are preserved hardly live at all, miserably wasting away and barely staying alive; and, on the whole, should they find the slightest opening in their cages they burst out. Thus they grasp at their natural freedom, to be independent and unrestrained.*

'So what's wrong with you in there, bird?'

'What do you mean! I was born to fly wherever I want, to spend my life in the clear sky, to sing whenever I like: you take all of this away from me and say, "What's wrong with you?"!'

Because of this, we shall only call 'free' the kind of animal that does not bear capture, but escapes by dying whenever it is caught.

Returning to explicit examinations of justice, in a fragmentary portion of his fictional dialogue *De republica* (3.19), Cicero transmits a tantalizing glimpse of the opinions of Empedocles and Pythagoras regarding justice towards animals: ostensibly spoken by the Roman senator Furius Philus, who was regarded as an expert in Greek philosophical matters, the text unfortunately breaks off just as Philus reports that Empedocles and Pythagoras explicitly extend the reach of justice to protect animals from injury rather than encompassing them within the sphere of legal responsibility for their own actions.

35 Cicero, *On the republic* 3.18–19

'Great teachers and philosophers such as Pythagoras and Empedocles state that all living things have a right to justice, and declare that inexpiable penalties apply to those who have done violence to any animal. It is therefore a crime to injure an animal, and the perpetrator of such a crime …'

The most thorough ancient digest of opinions on animals and the law is contained within Porphyry's treatise *On abstinence* (also known as *De abstinentia*, Greek *Peri apochês empsychôn*, literally 'on abstinence from living things'). Here he summarizes the position of the Epicureans: the speaker is Hermarchus, the successor to Epicurus as the leader of the Epicurean school of philosophy, and Porphyry draws on one of Hermarchus's lost treatises. The passage comes at the end of a long discussion on the legal status of killing animals, finding its origins in the times when laws were developed to prevent men from killing each other and to protect their community by killing animals which threatened their community's safety (see below): the context is therefore one of the development of human contracts and the origins of contemporary legal practice, rather than an examination of whether or not humans and animals can make contracts (as common sense dictates that they are not).

36 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 1.12

'Some people do not have a clear sense of those laws which apply to all men: some leave them out, thinking that they make no difference, while others hold the opposite opinion on these matters and consider profitable that which is not generally profitable. Whence this causes them to cling to things which aren't suitable, even if sometimes they discover what is both advantageous to themselves and also benefits people in common. And numbering among these types of laws are the ones on animals and their destruction, laws set up by most of

the races of men according to the characteristics of their countries. There is no compulsion for us to retain these laws, as we don't live in the same places as them. So if it were possible to make the sort of contract with the rest of the animals as one makes among men, about not killing or being indiscriminately killed by us, it would be well to extend justice to this extent: for being stretched out like this would be in the interest of safety. But since it is an impossible thing that animals who receive no logos *can share in a law, then such a practice could not grant us any advantage from entities which are alive any more than from entities which aren't, and from this we see that the only way we can take security for ourselves is to hold on to the power we now exercise by killing them'. Such are the opinions of the Epicureans.*[10]

The paragraphs preceding the opening of the above passage include a discussion of communities' finding ways to secure themselves first against destructive people within them, then against destructive forces in general (on which see Democritus above, §24). The discussion is centred on man's creation of laws, and the reasons that it was legal (or even compulsory) to kill destructive and violent humans and illegal to kill kinsmen; still speaking in Hermarchus's voice, the text turns to whether the law has the same parameters for animal life.

37 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 1.11

'Two things which contribute equally to a life without fear are the merciless killing of all destructive creatures, and the preservation of creatures useful for this destruction. From this it is reasonable to infer that the one act was prohibited and the other was not. That is not to say that the law permits us the destruction of animals which are not destructive to men by nature or bring ruin on any other way of life. For there isn't an animal, so to speak, of those species for whom it has been agreed lawful to kill as would not become harmful to us if they attained excess in numbers: but maintained in their present abundance they provide great usefulness to [man's] life. For the sheep and the ox and all such animals, when they are moderate in number, bring great benefit to the necessities of our lives, but if they run to excess in total abundance and attain great surplus they would bring ruin to our lives, the one species by turning to their strength as they are well endowed by nature in that department, the other by eating the food which is provided from the earth solely for our benefit.

'So for this reason the slaughter of animals is not prohibited, in order that their abundance should be managed for our benefit and so that we are able to easily rule over them. For it is not the same with lions and wolves and, frankly, all

the other animals which are called "wild": for them both in large numbers and small, there is not any multitude of them which, if left unchecked, would make our lives any easier (as with oxen, horses, sheep and the other animals which are called "tame"). From this position, then, the wild animals we utterly destroy, while we manage the numbers of the tame'.

Despite the survival of ethical statements like those given so far in this chapter, the position of animals in 'real' law in the ancient world is an area for which there is little hard evidence in the literary record; as the fragmentary statements attributed to Empedocles and the Pythagoreans in Cicero's *On the republic* show, there are two separate considerations when dealing with animals and the law: punishment for crimes committed against animals (such as theft, unlawful killing or other cruelty), and crimes conducted by animals (such as killing of persons or other animals and damage to property). Of the former, few accounts survive, although Plutarch (*On the eating of flesh* 996a–b) relates a remark of the fourth-century BC philosopher Xenocrates on the punishment of an Athenian man for flaying a live ram. Animal protection per se, as opposed to the protection of property, was never a major concern in the Classical legal systems, and there is rather better textual evidence for the latter category in surviving Roman legal texts: the first chapter of the ninth book of the *Digest of Justinian* preserves several texts (including the work of jurist Ulpian from the early third century AD) on actions to be taken if a four-footed animal commits damage. The chapter contains some revealing assumptions on the nature of animals and their moral culpability; it properly concerns *pauperies*, defined as 'damage done without any legal wrong on the part of the wrongdoer; and, of course, an animal is incapable of committing a legal wrong because it is devoid of reasoning' (9.1.3).[11]

38 *Digest of Justinian* 9.1.7–8, 10–11[12]

The general rule is that this action lies whenever an animal commits pauperies *when moved by some wildness contrary to the nature of its kind. Therefore, if a horse kicks out because it is upset by pain, this action will not lie, but he who hit or wounded the horse will be liable to an* actio in factum *under the* lex Aquilia *because and to the extent that he did not do the damage with his own body. But if the horse kicked someone who was stroking it or someone who was patting it, this action will be available. And if one animal provokes another into doing damage, action must be brought on account of the one which did the provoking. [...]*

[The pauperies action*] does not lie in the case of beasts which are wild by nature: therefore, if a bear breaks loose and so causes harm, its former owner cannot be sued because he ceased to be the owner as soon as the wild animal escaped. Accordingly, if I kill the bear, the corpse is mine. When two rams or two bulls fight, and one kills the other, Quintus Mucius draws the distinction that if it was the aggressor which is killed, no action lies, but if it is the one which did not start the fight, the action is available, on which account the owner must either pay for the mischief or surrender the animal noxially.*

3
The Ancient Idea of Vegetarianism

Modern notions and substrata of vegetarianism cannot be easily grafted onto ancient theories of diet, but the social, environmental and moral pathways which lead to these dietary choices have some broad antecedents in ancient literature (as do the negative stereotypes: see the passage of Euripides's *Hippolytus* below, §52); the arguments of Porphyry in particular prefigure many modern arguments against eating meat. Meat eating was generally associated with sacrifice, although the question of whether 'it was not allowed to Pagans to eat unsacrificed meat'[1] cannot be satisfactorily answered by any ancient text.[2] The potential for ethical distinction between different types of meat is also diminished by such generalizing statements: for the ancient Greeks and Romans there were important differences in status between flesh from animals which were hunted and trapped versus domestic pigs, sheep, goats and cattle; birds and fish were also widely caught and eaten (see Chapter 9). From the Hippocratic Corpus, the second of four essays entitled 'On regimen' (*Peri diaitês*) gives some idea of the range of meats available to the Classical gourmand, listing the digestive qualities of the flesh of cows and veal calves, goats and kids, sheep and lambs, pigs and piglets, donkeys, horses and foals, dogs and puppies, wild boars, hares, and foxes and hedgehogs, as well as several birds, fish and crustaceans (rather aptly, the work is widely considered the earliest classification of animals in Classical literature).[3] The appendix (*notha*) to the Hippocratic treatise *Peri Diaites Oxoethoni* (On regimen in acute diseases) also discusses the digestive merits of beef, goat and pork. In the case of pork, the author mentions the sort of animal from which the meat can be taken, and the choice of vocabulary is revealing: the Greek word is *hiereion*, from *hieros*, 'sacred' (given below as 'slaughter animal'). Young animals, including piglets, were regularly sacrificed: is the implication of this text that the

animal to be eaten should not be a sacrificial animal, or should just not be the usual age of a sacrificial animal?

39 Hippocrates, *On regimen in acute diseases Appendix* 18[4]

The meat of young pig is injurious when it is either underdone or burnt: it may lead to cholera and upset the bowels. Pork is the best of all meats: the most beneficial is that which is neither excessively fatty nor, on the other hand, excessively lean; nor should it have the age of a slaughter animal. Eat without the skin, and let it cool a little.

The notorious excesses of Roman dining (such as the goose and fish carved from pork, described by Petronius, *Satyricon* 69–70) made ample provision for the elaborate preparation of various meats, which illustrates the key principle of vegetarianism in the Greek and Roman world: that meat-eating is a symptom of an elaborate lifestyle which is unhealthy for body and mind, and anyone seriously interested in a philosophical life should abstain from meat regardless of whether or not he/she thinks it is morally right to use animals for food. The association between philosophers and vegetarianism was strong and lasted throughout the Classical period: Porphyry's *On abstinence from animal flesh* was written many centuries after the fourth-century BC comic poet Alexis wrote that 'the one who first said that "no-one is a wise man unless he eats no living (*empsychos*) thing" was a wise man himself'. (Being a comedy, the speaker goes on to remark that all the lamb and fish he eats is dead: 'I bought a baked liver, and it certainly had no *psychê*' etc.).[5] Although generalizations are always haphazard, by and large in the Classical world 'vegetarianism was intended to be a radical statement that marked out the committed philosopher from the cultural norm'.[6]

An early mention of a meat-free life is given in Plato's *Republic*, where Socrates sets out the hypothetical diet for the citizens of the ideal state. While often cited as evidence for Plato or Socrates being sympathetic to – or even advocating – a vegetarian lifestyle, the central point is one of luxury and its impact on individual and social health, rather than an ethical stance on the taking of life for food (and this is also the case for most ancient discussions of meat eating). After discussing at length the various types of citizens which would constitute an ideal state (merchants, craftsmen, farmers, sailors, hired labourers etc.) with the interlocutors Adeimantus and Glaucon, Socrates asks where justice would come from. This instigates a description of the lifestyles of the state's citizens.

40 Plato, *Republic* 372a–e; 373c–e

'Won't they make grain-based food and wine, and cloaks and shoes? [...] They will nourish themselves on barley meal and wheat flour, baking the one and kneading the other into the best barley cakes and loaves to be served up on reeds or clean leaves, while they recline upon straw beds spread with branches of yew or myrtle; they and their children will eat sumptuously, drinking their wine, garlanded and singing hymns to the gods in a joyous community with one another, not having children beyond their means, being cautious about poverty and war'.

And Glaucon interjected. 'It seems', he said, 'that you would have these men dine without relishes'.

'You speak the truth', I said. 'I forgot that they should also have relishes: clearly salt, and olives, and cheese, and bulb onions and herbs, such as they boil up in the countryside. And for dessert we shall give them figs and chickpeas and beans, and they will roast myrtleberries and acorns in the fire, drinking sensibly. And thus, spending their lives in peace and with health, they will end their days in old age and leave this sort of life to their descendants'.

'That's how you would do it if you were setting up a city for pigs, Socrates!' he said. 'For what other way is there to fatten them?'

'So how would you do it, Glaucon?' I said.

'With our customary conveniences', he said. 'I suppose people should lie down on couches, eat off tables and have relishes and the sorts of desserts which we enjoy at the moment'.

'Ah, now I understand', I said. 'We're not looking at how to form just any state, but a luxurious *one. Well, perhaps there is no harm here: for when we look at that we may more quickly find out how justice and injustice come about within states. So, it seems to me that the true state is the one we have just talked about: a sort of "healthy" state, if you like...' [In the 'unhealthy' state, Socrates explains, many people will prefer lots of furniture, finer food and more choice, and more and richer materials. This will lead to a larger population of professionals and artists, and also hunters, fishermen, butchers and cooks among many others; all of this will necessitate enlarging the state.] '...and there will be a need of swineherds, for there was no need, and thus no swineherds, in our earlier city, but there will be a need in this city. There will also be a need of all other sorts of fatted beasts, if people are to eat them'.*

'Yes, why not'.

'And won't the need for doctors be greater living this way of life, than the previous?'

'Indeed, much greater'.

'And the countryside around the city, which before was sufficient to feed the inhabitants, will of course be too small. Is this not so?'

'It is so', he said.

'Therefore we would have to take some land from our neighbours, if we are to have enough land for pasture and plough; and won't they want the same from us, if they should also set themselves on the pursuit of endless possessions, going beyond the ways of mere necessity?'

'Most necessarily, Socrates', he said.

'And the next stage is that we shall have to go to war, Glaucon. Do you agree?'

'Indeed', he said.

'So truly', I said, 'without having thought about whether war might do harm or good, only this much can we say: that we have discovered that the origin of war is in the things which also cause evil in cities, on an individual and on a social level'.[7]

Many of Socrates's observations are now keenly fought corners of the modern animal rights debate. From an ecological perspective, the very fact of more land being required for animal pasturage is one of the dominant debates of the modern era, and the link between a diet of meat (and by extension a luxurious lifestyle) with a land grab resulting in armed conflict is a key doctrine of modern environmental activism. Similarly, although Socrates's frugal description of a 'healthy city' may be idyllic to the point of hyperbole (let alone comedy), the health analogy and mention of the need for more doctors in a meat-eating society is also a highly portentous remark. The association was clearly a close one with ancient thinkers: a similar ecological argument, if not for vegetarianism, then for its Classical equivalent, moderation, is passionately advocated in a letter of Seneca, writing some 450 years after the death of Socrates and coming from the perspective of the elite Roman Imperial intelligentsia. Seneca himself had participated in Pythagorean vegetarianism (see below, §44), and in this impassioned letter he writes in his own

voice: in its opening line the letter 'instantly thunders out: *Queror, litigo, irascor*... I grouch, sue, rage'.[8]

41 Seneca, *Letters* 60.2–4[9]

How long shall we go on making demands upon the gods, as if we were still unable to support ourselves? How long shall we continue to fill with grain the marketplaces of our great cities? How long must the people gather it in for us? How long shall a multitude of ships convey the requisites for a single meal, bringing them from no single sea? The bull is filled when he feeds over a few acres; and one forest is large enough for a herd of elephants. Man, however, draws sustenance both from the earth and from the sea. What, then? Did nature give us bellies so insatiable, when she gave us these puny bodies, that we should outdo the hugest and most voracious animals in greed? Not at all. How small is the amount which will satisfy nature? A very little will send her away contented. It is not the natural hunger of our bellies that costs us dear, but our solicitous cravings. Therefore those who, as Sallust puts it, 'hearken to their bellies', should be numbered among the animals, and not among men; and certain men, indeed, should be numbered, not even among the animals, but among the dead. He really lives who is made use of by many; he really lives who makes use of himself.

The association of meat with luxury was a commonplace throughout the Classical period, although even this was not an absolute: in a discussion of the merits of city and country life, Horace allows himself a little bacon to flavour his cabbage and beans (which he calls 'Pythagoras's kinsmen', *Satire* 2.6). However, excessive meat consumption is discussed in depth in Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* ('Wise men at dinner'), an invaluable text which is ostensibly a record of a dinner held at the house of an intellectual, and a rich source of fragments from lost writings. After remarking on the archetypical glutton Heracles, the chapter[10] turns to athletes such as Theagenes, Titormos and the famous Milon of Croton, all of whom consume vast quantities of meat; athletes' meat eating was apparently proverbial, and Porphyry hints that athletes should be allowed meat (below §62 and *On abstinence* 2.4). The following excerpt is typical of the chapter: the speaker has just discussed one passage of the comic poet Theophilus (fl. 330–310 BC) and turns to another.

42 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 417b

'In his Prankratist, *introducing an athlete as someone who eats an awful lot, he says:*

– *There were nearly three* minas *of boiled dishes.*

– *Tell us: what else?*

– *A pig's snout, ham, and four trotters.*

– *By Heracles!*

– *Three [hooves] of oxen, and a bird.*

– *By Apollo! Anything else?*

– *Two* minas *of figs.*

– *And how much to drink?*

– *Twelve mugs of unmixed wine.*

– *Apollo, Horus and Sabazius!'*

The excerpt is from a comedy, and is typical of the bluster and exaggeration which characterize comic stereotypes; however, serious discussion of diet were also taking place within philosophical circles, and philosophers were able to influence the moral landscape of the Classical world in several ways. Within the intellectual community, many titles have survived of well-known tracts written by influential members or founders of particular philosophical schools (as with Chrysippus and the Stoics), and on a more popular level some philosophers became known from biographical details and anecdotes (as in the case of the Cynic philosopher Diogenes and his encounter with Alexander the Great). One of these latter figures, and one who left no writings at all, was the 'freelance' philosopher Menedemus of Eretria (c. 350–265 BC), who was notorious in his own lifetime for his frugality: his lifestyle enjoyed some popular exposure as his diet was lampooned by a contemporary tragedian, Lycophron of Chalcis. The following unconnected quotations from Diogenes Laertius's biography of Menedemus (written perhaps around AD 250) are cited as evidence of his vegetarianism,[11] and the second passage in particular shows a disgust for meat which exceeds the usual distaste for sumptuous living.

43 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the philosophers* 2.129; 2.132

As [Menedemus] was once unable to strip away the ostentation of a certain man who used often to invite him to dinner, on one occasion when he was invited he didn't speak once: instead he chastised his host with silence and touched nothing but olives. [...]

There was an extent to which he was also very superstitious. So once, when he was at an inn with Asclepiades, he unknowingly ate some meat which had been thrown out; and when he learned what had happened he became nauseated and went very pale until Asclepiades told him off, saying that he hadn't been disturbed by the meat itself, but by its connotations.

To writers such as Seneca, the frugality of the 'Pythagorean' lifestyle is a prerequisite for any serious philosopher, although as an elite Roman and a Stoic he admits that he hadn't the inclination to pursue that path permanently. His *Letter 108* contains his recollections of his teacher in Stoicism, Attalus, on several aspects of life; contained within the letter is what might be considered the Stoic position on diet followed by a lengthy digression on Seneca's ultimately unsuccessful attempt at a Pythagorean lifestyle: despite claiming that he felt his mind was more active and that he very much enjoyed his spell of vegetarianism, the revealing reasons he details for giving up his vegetarianism are described as both a response to social stigma through unwitting association with 'foreign' religious practices, and family pressure to give up the frugal 'philosophical' lifestyle.

44 Seneca, *Letters* 108.14–23[12]

*And actually when he [Attalus] began to recommend poverty and to show what a useless and dangerous burden was everything that passed the measure of our need, it often seemed the best course to leave his lectures as a poor man. When he castigated our pleasure-seeking lives and praised personal purity, a moderate table and a mind pure of not only unlawful but also superfluous pleasures, the desire came upon me to limit my food and drink. And that is why some of these habits have stayed with me, Lucilius: for I planned everything with great zeal, and later, when I returned to the life of a citizen, I did indeed keep up some of these good practices. That is why I renounced oysters and fancy mushrooms for life, for they are not really food but are amusements to cajole the stuffed diner into eating some more, as is the fancy of gourmands and those who stuff themselves beyond their powers of digestion – easy down, easy up again! That is why I have abstained from perfumes all my life, because the best scent for the body is no scent at all. That is why wine has never met my stomach. That is why throughout my life I have fled the baths and believed that to emaciate the body and sweat it into thinness is at once useless and effete. I have given up on other schemes, but after all in such a way that, in cases where I ceased to practice abstinence, I have observed a limit which is indeed next door to abstinence; perhaps it is even a little more difficult, because it is easier for the soul (*anima*) to abstain rather than restrain.*

As I have now begun to explain to you how much greater was my impulse to approach philosophy in my youth than to follow it as an old man, I shall not be ashamed to tell you of the love Pythagoras roused in me. Sotion used to talk about why that man abstained from animal food, and why Sextius also did so later. In each case the reason was different, but in each case noble. The latter believed that man had enough food without needing blood, and that a habit of cruelty is formed when butchery (laceratio) *is practised in pursuit of pleasure. Moreover, he thought we should curtail the sources of our luxury; he argued that a varied diet was contrary to our well-being and unsuitable for our bodies. But Pythagoras said that everything was related to everything else, and that there was an exchange of souls which transmigrated from one form into another. If you believe him, no soul perishes or ceases from its functions at any time except when it flows into another body. We may question at what time and after what changes and in many places it returns to man; but meantime, he made men anxious that they were guilty of parricide since they might be, without knowing it, attacking the soul of a parent and injuring it with knife or with teeth – if, as is possible, the related spirit be dwelling temporarily in this body. When Sotion had set forth this doctrine, supplementing it with his own proofs, he would say: 'You do not believe that souls are assigned, first to one body and then to another, and that our so-called death is merely a change of abode? You do not believe that in cattle, or in wild beasts, or in creatures of the water, the soul of him who was once a man may linger? You do not believe that nothing on this earth is annihilated, but only changes its location? And that animals also have cycles of progress and have a sort of orbit for their souls, like the stars which revolve in fixed circuits? Great men have believed in this idea. Therefore, hold onto your judgement and keep the whole question open in your mind: if the theory is true, then to abstain from eating flesh is an act of purity; if it be false, it is still frugality. And what is the harm in believing this? I'm only saving you from the food of lions and vultures'.*

*Inspired by this, I began to abstain from meat, and after a year the habit was not just easy but pleasant. I started to believe that my mind (*anima*) was more active, though I would not reaffirm today whether it actually was. You ask how I desisted from this diet? The time of my youth was the early part of the principate of Tiberius Caesar. Some foreign rites were then being established, and abstinence from certain kinds of meat was put forward as a proof of interest in the strange cult. So at the request of my father, who did not fear trouble but who hated philosophy, I returned to my previous habits (and it was not difficult to induce me to starting eating better).*

The Stoic-Pythagorean tension dominated the ancient discussion of using animals for food: as a Stoic, Seneca would have been aware of

the following problem posited by Plutarch (c. AD 45–125), namely that animals are useful for us in life, and the view of Pythagoreans holds that for this reason they should not be killed; this is related to the problem of sacrificing cattle, which were domestic animals and servants of humans. In this passage Plutarch questions Chrysippus's opinions on the gods caring for men – the divine providence which is a key theme in Stoic thought as demonstrated in the writings of Cicero above – and presents a self-contradiction in another of Chrysippus's positions, that of the human right to eat animals.

45 Plutarch, *On the contradictions of the Stoics* 1049a–b

Some Pythagoreans accuse [Chrysippus] for writing in his book On justice *that cocks 'are usefully bred: for they wake us up, they seek out scorpions and they make us think of combat, imbuing us with a zeal for bravery. At the same time, we are bound to eat them, lest the great number of birds should surpass their usefulness'. But in this manner he laughs off those who criticize him for these things. He says that he has written in his third book,* On the gods, *concerning Zeus, the Saviour and Creator and the father of Justice, Order and Peace: 'just as overpopulated cities disgorge masses of citizens into settlements and make war against certain cities, thus the god gives the beginning of destruction'; and he summons Euripides as witness, and others, who say that the Trojan War was brought about by the gods to deplete the masses of the race men.*

For a thinker whose name became so closely associated with abstention from eating meat, remarkably little is known about Pythagoras, and his ethical views have been transmitted in a piecemeal fashion. The Roman-era biographer Diogenes Laertius gives some details on his life and opinions, but even these contain contradictions or surprising details, and Diogenes comments on the unlikelihood of some of the anecdotes: that he fed athletes on meat, and that on discovering his famous Theorem he sacrificed a traditional offering of a hecatomb (literally 100 oxen, though in practice referring to an unspecified number); the tussle between abstention on the grounds of spiritual belief on the one hand and frugality of lifestyle on the other is also revealing. In the second excerpt below, Pythagoras's prohibition of meat is understood as belonging in a litany of spiritual dietary prohibitions, given in a longer list of reverential and noble behaviour (including worshipping the gods while wearing white robes, and not picking crumbs from the floor) which became the stuff of ridicule in the comic poets. Written in the

third century AD, the texts reveal the later reputation and associations of Pythagoreanism as much as (or rather more than) the ethical principles of Pythagoras himself, and associations such as these may have informed the distaste of Seneca's father for philosophers, as well as the ridicule of many Roman writers.[13]

46 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the philosophers* 8.13–14[14]

Apollodorus the logician says that [Pythagoras] sacrificed a hecatomb when he discovered that the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the remaining sides. And there is an epigram which runs thus: 'When the far-famed Pythagoras discovered his rule/the famous man brought a great sacrifice of oxen'. He is said to have been the first to work athletes with a diet of meat, first with one Eurymenes according to Favorinus in his third book of Memoires*; before that, men used dried figs and soft cheese and also bread in their training regimes, according to the same Favorinus in the eighth book of* Miscellanea. *But some state that it was a certain trainer called Pythagoras who fed his athletes this way, not our Pythagoras. For he also did not allow the killing, much less the eating, of animals, as they have souls* (psychai) *in common with mankind. And that was a pretext, though in truth he prohibited the eating of creatures with souls to train and accustom his men to a life of satisfaction with a simple diet, inasmuch as their food should be easy to come by and prepared raw, and they should drink simple water: for out of this they would become superior both in bodily health and sharpness of soul. Of course, the only altar at which he was reverent was on Delos, to Apollo 'the giver of life', which is behind the 'Keratinos', because only wheat, barley and cakes were placed on it, without fire, and there were no victims there as Aristotle says in his* Constitution of the Delians. *It is also said that he was the first to declare that the soul changes in a cycle of necessity, bound at different times to different animals.*

47 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the philosophers* 8.33

Purification is by cleansing, bathing and lustration and by keeping clean from all funerals and births and all pollution, and abstinence from flesh and carcasses of mortal animals, and mullets and black tails, and eggs and oviparous animals, and beans, and the other things which they recommended, as well by those who discharge the sacred rites in the sacred places.

As is the case with Diogenes Laertius, the 800 years separating Pythagoras and his Neoplatonist biographer Iamblichus (c. AD 240–325) means that

the following passage may also reveal more about ethical ideas in the ageing Roman Empire than anything Pythagoras himself taught, but the link between killing animals and a greater propensity for killing humans (that is, in war) was noted as a good thing by Xenophon in the fourth century BC when he approvingly linked the skills learned when hunting with those of warfare (see below, Chapter 11), and in Plato's *Republic*.[15] Iamblichus described Pythagoras's theory that vegetarians are more likely to be pacifist.

48 Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean life* 30.186

He also ordered abstinence from [eating] creatures for a number of reasons, and especially because this way of life produces peace. For those who are accustomed to be disgusted by the killing of living creatures as unlawful and against nature, regard the killing of a human even more unlawful and no longer go to war. And war orchestrates and legitimizes murder, for war embodies these things.

The view that 'philosophical vegetarianism' is more a matter of frugality rather than of principled objection to killing animals for food is suggested in another passage of Athenaeus's *Deipnisophistae*. The speaker had expressed the view that Pythagoras was not a vegetarian, giving the lines reproduced by Diogenes Laertius above regarding his sacrifice on discovering his mathematical Theorem, and goes on to say that despite this fact he was frugal in his lifestyle; the message of the anecdote about the republican-era general Manius Curius Dentatus is similar to that of the legend of Cincinnatus, and again says less about moral opposition to meat eating than it does about notions of virtuous frugality of which vegetarianism is a symptom.

49 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 419a

Pythagoras was also a man who drank little, and he lived in a most thrifty way, so as often to be satisfied with honey alone. Almost the same thing is recorded of the generals Aristeides, Epaminondas, Phocion and Phormion. And the Roman general Manius Curius lived on turnips all his life; and when the Sabines sent him a large amount of gold, he said he had no need of gold while he ate such a diet.

Pythagoreans were the butt of jokes throughout the Classical period: writing in the third century BC, Theocritus in his fourteenth *Idyll* pokes fun at a lovesick, scruffy, unshod character as looking like a Pythagorean

pining for his oatmeal – a reference either to the fact that he was hungry through frugal living, or to his meat-free diet – and the comic poet Alexis (see above) poked fun at the vegetarian philosopher; other such remarks are well attested.[16] A more sincere reception of Pythagorean ideas is presented in an extended passage of the final book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses:* Pythagoras's appearance here is one of the most thoroughly discussed episodes in Classical literature,[17] primarily for its relevance to other literature of the Augustan period. It is especially interesting given the cultural context of the poem, as ridicule was thrown at Pythagoreanism by Roman poets (particularly Horace, another Augustan-era poet).[18]

50 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.72–103[19]

…and he was the first man to forbid the use of any animal food on our tables, the first to speak with learned lips, although not believed, with these words: 'Stop, mortals, do not allow pollution of your bodies with such food! There are fruits, apples which bend down the branches by their weight and ripened grapes upon the vine, and sweet vegetables and those which will grow soft and mellow with fire; and flowing milk is not denied to you, nor honey, fragrant with blossoming thyme. The lavish Earth supplies your sweet food, giving you dishes without slaughter and blood. Wild beasts delight in flesh, though not all of them: horses, sheep and cattle live on grass. But all the wild and untamed animals, the Armenian tigers, raging lions, wolves and bears enjoy this bloody food. Oh, what a crime, for guts to be stuffed with guts, one greedy body full of the flesh of another, a living animal living on the life of another! Still in this abundance which Earth, the best of mothers, has brought forth, have you no pleasure beyond your savage teeth chomping down on some poor wounded thing, repeating the deeds of the Cyclops? And are you unable to placate your hungry stomach without destroying another's life?

'But that age which we have given the name of "golden" was blessed in the fruit of trees and in the good plants which the soil produced that it never would pollute the mouth with blood. The birds safely moved their wings in air, the hares would wander in the fields without fear, and their own credulity had not suspended fishes on the hook. All things were safe from treacherous wiles, fearing no injury and full of peace'.

The character of Pythagoras then explains the history of meat eating: one debased individual who envied the habits of predatory carnivores ate some meat and 'made way for the crimes'; in an interesting reflection of Democritus (§24 above), he states that he is not opposed to the

slaughter of animals who threaten man's way of life, but to the fact that this was extended to the pigs and goats who ate man's crops, and then unjustly to sheep and, most evocatively, to cattle who are portrayed as the innocent victims, born to work and to serve man and undeserving of slaughter. He continues:

51 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.165–75

'All things change, but nothing dies. The spirit moves, coming from that place to this, and occupies whatever form it likes, moving across from animal to human, from human to animal, but never dying at any time: just as the pliant wax is stamped with new forms, not remaining as it was or keeping the same form, yet is the same wax, so the soul is always the same soul though I teach that it moves into different forms. Therefore, in order that piety may not be driven out by appetite, I warn you: stop driving out kindred souls with wicked slaughter: let blood not feed on blood!'

The 'luxury' debate was not the only way to discuss a meat-free diet, and the other major branch of vegetarian thinking stemmed from the mythological figure of Orpheus and the mysterious Orphic sect: connected with Dionysian religion and associated with eschatological beliefs, in the following passage from a tragedy of Euripides we see that fifth-century BC Athens was already familiar with the connection between 'Orphic' stylings and vegetarianism. Here the legendary Athenian king Theseus upbraids his son Hippolytus for his deviant ways, wrongly convinced that Hippolytus had raped Theseus's wife Phaedra, and in the same way as Seneca would distance himself from vegetarianism because of its illicit cult associations, so Theseus associates Hippolytus's supposedly deviant behaviour with a vegetarian cult. 'Hippolytus is of course no Orphic at all, nor does Theseus imagine that he is. The lines are a mere gibe: the Orphics, with their peculiar beliefs and practices, are the notorious ascetics of the fifth century',[20] and it would be easy to imagine a modern parallel for an intended pejorative association derived from a supposedly perverse dietary choice. A section from Plato's *Laws* goes into a little more detail on the supposed Orphic ethos, which imagines a past in which humans and animals did not kill each other.

52 Euripides, *Hippolytus* 946–57

'Then show your face before your father, since I have stumbled upon your pollution! So do you associate with the gods, being a superior sort of man?

Are you chaste and without the taint of wickedness? I shall not be taken in by your boasts, not so ignorant as to think ill of the gods. Come now, with your boasting and peddling your diet of lifeless foodstuffs: take Orpheus as your master, play the Bacchic initiate revering the smoke of so many writings. For you have been found out! I call upon everyone to flee from men like this: they hunt you with holy words while contriving shameful acts.

53 Plato, *Laws* 782b[21]

ATHENIAN*: And do we not believe that vines appeared, which formerly did not exist? Similarly olives and the gifts of Demeter and Kore? And did a certain Triptolemus become an official in that regard? And in the time before they existed, don't we surely suppose that animals turned to [eating] each other for food, as they do now?*

CLEINIAS*: Well then, so what?*

ATHENIAN*: So, although we see that men sacrifice each other still among many peoples, conversely we hear of others who do not dare to taste the flesh of cattle and do not sacrifice animals to the gods but offer cakes and fruits dipped in honey, and other such blameless offerings: and, thinking it contrary to divine law, they abstain from eating flesh and from defiling the altars of the gods with blood. For at that time we men are said to have lived an Orphic life, to have dominion of all lifeless things and conversely to abstain from all living things.*

The cloud of mysticism which surrounds Pythagoras and Orphism similarly covers the shady figure of Apollonius of Tyana, a Pythagorean of the first century AD whose miraculous deeds earned him a reputation akin to semi-divinity in the Roman period. His emphasis was apparently on the more metaphysical elements of Pythagorean wisdom rather than simple earthly purification, and much of what is known about his life comes from the hagiographic *Life of Apollonius* commissioned by the Severan dynasty who ruled Rome in AD 193–235 and who held Apollonius in high regard. Like Seneca, Apollonius makes a link between meat and mental sluggishness.

54 Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 1.1; 1.8

Those who commend Pythagoras of Samos say this of him: that he was not Ionian at all, but at one time in Troy he had been [the ancient Trojan hero] Euphorbus, and that he came back to life after death (dying as the songs of Homer relate); and that he refused both to wear clothes made from dead animals

and also, as a matter of cleanliness, to eat meat and to sacrifice. For he would not let blood near the altars, but used honey cakes and frankincense and singing: these were the offerings made to the gods by this man, as the gods receive such things more gladly than hecatombs and the dagger upon the basket. [...]

Euxenos [a Pythagorean teacher of dubious commitment] realized that he was fixed to a great purpose, and asked Apollonius from what point he would start. 'Where doctors do', he said, 'for they, by cleansing people's stomachs, prevent some from being sick and cure others'. And having said this, he refused meat from living creatures as being unclean, and also as it made the mind dull; and he ate only dried fruits and vegetables, saying that whatever is provided by the earth is clean, and he also said that wine was a clean drink because it is given to men by a noble cultivated plant, but that it was adverse to the constitution of the mind and darkened the aether in the soul. After cleansing his stomach in this way, he began both to make bare feet his adornment and to keep to linen clothing, refusing animal products; and he let his hair grow long, and lived in the temple.

Even further from the philosophical notions of abstention, in his description of the emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus (reigned AD 218–222) – known as Elagabalus after the Syrian god whose worship he introduced to Rome – Cassius Dio mentions diet and deviant religion as some of his many dangerous eccentricities; in this case they probably stem from legitimate religious practice, although they are mingled in a familiar case of the sensationaised narrative of a 'bad' emperor.

55 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 80.11

One of his transgressions also concerns [the god] Elagabalus: it was not that the emperor introduced some foreign god into Rome, nor that he exalted him in most peculiar ways, but that he placed him in preference to Jupiter. And he contrived to have himself voted his priest, and became circumcised and abstained from the flesh of pigs, as a way of making his religious observation cleaner. (Regarding the circumcision: he wanted to cut everything off, but that was an idea prompted by his moral weakness; the deed which he actually accomplished was for the priesthood of Elagabalus, and for this reason he actually inflicted the same treatment on many of his associates as well.)

The most strident discussions of diet come from the writings of Porphyry and Plutarch, both of whom argue for a vegetarian diet on the basis of morality. Plutarch's large corpus contains several dietary discussions

including two treatises *On the eating of flesh*. The text from which the following passage is excerpted is entitled *Whether land or sea animals are better to eat*, as opposed to his better known *Whether land or sea animals are cleverer* (on which see below). This dialogue is one of a collection of Plutarch's light-hearted rhetorical discussions of popular curiosities under the title *Sympotica* ('Table talk', known in Latin as the *Quaestiones conviviales*): other titles in the series include 'Whether mushrooms are caused by thunder', 'Why women never eat the middle part of a lettuce' (sadly this text is missing) and 'Whether the bird or the egg came first'. In this discussion, after the guests generally proclaim that land creatures are better food, three speakers pipe up in defence of sea food: they argue that fish are referred to by the word *opson* (literally 'delicacy'); that gluttons such as Heracles eat beef; that fish is more expensive and therefore more highly prized, and that fish sit more lightly on the stomach and are prescribed for ill people. Another speaker provides the following argument, which evocatively appeals to emotive arguments against the slaughter of mammals.

56 Plutarch, *Table talk* 669c–e

*'My grandfather often used to say in derision of the Jews that they do not eat the most lawful sorts of meat; but we shall assert that the most lawful dishes are those from the sea. For we have no great right over these land creatures, but rather they are nourished in the same way, take the same air, and wash and drink the same way as we do; and when slaughtered, they make us ashamed by letting out a distressed voice (*phônê*); and especially in our shared ways of life, we are accustomed to and brought up together with them. But the race of sea creatures is wholly alien to us, and are born and live as if in another world: neither their appearance, voice, or anything they have for us appeal for their benefit. For there is no use for this kind of creature, which lives totally separately from us, and there is no obligation for us to feel affection towards them. And the kind of place where we live is like hell for them: they quickly die when they enter it'.*

This prompts the party to discuss Judaism, with two following sections on the Jews' abstention from pork and on the identity of the god they worship. This discussion segues into a dismissive survey of the various animals curiously held in honour by foreigners, interesting for the detail that the Jews abstain from pork because a pig originally taught them how to plough, which recalls the plea from Ovid's Pythagoras above that draught animals are particularly undeserving of their slaughter by

humans.[22] Among Plutarch's other surviving works are the two treatises most often enlisted as early advocacies of vegetarianism, one entitled *On the eating of flesh*,[23] the other *On the cleverness of animals* (also known as *Whether land or sea animals are cleverer*). The former work opens with an inquiry into why humans first starting eating meat and the motives for contemporary meat eating, and includes compelling arguments for abandoning meat eating, including graphic descriptions of extreme cruelty to farm animals: 'Plutarch notes that humans thrust red hot irons down the throats of pigs to make their flesh more tender, and jump on the udders of pregnant sows, kicking them to mingle blood and milk in order to enable themselves to eat the most inflamed part of the poor beasts… other humans sew up the eyes of cranes and swans, and lock them in darkness while fattening them for pâtés'.[24] The text also contains a memorable and evocative passage on the status quo which pre-empts several parameters of the modern animal ethics debate: 'for the sake of a little meat we deprive them of life, of the light of the sun, of the lifetime into which they were born and come into existence', and a plea articulated from an animal's point of view asks humans to eat them if they must, but not for gastronomic reasons.[25] Eating meat occasionally, through poverty or extreme circumstances, is not strongly condemned by Plutarch, whose focus is on systematic and cruel large-scale animal farming for excessive meat consumption (one might compare modern Freegans, who allow consumption of meat which would otherwise be thrown away,[26] or the practice of normally vegetarian Buddhist monks not refusing meat which has been given to them while begging).

In Plutarch's *On the cleverness of animals* there is a clear sense of the negotiation of conflicting moral positions on human-animal interaction of the sort which lead many modern vegans to have as little as possible to do with animals. In the following passage humans and non-human animals are permitted interaction: while condemning cruelty, it is clear that humans may reasonably exploit animal resources. The speaker, Plutarch's father, Autobulus, has just related some rather ruthless theories of justice from Empedocles and Heraclitus.

57 Plutarch, *On the cleverness of animals* 964e–965b[27]

'Well all of that seems deeply absolutist and harsh, but there is another, harmonious argument which does not deprive animals of logos *while salvaging justice for those who make use of the concept, as the argument is related to justice. When the wise men long ago brought in this idea, gluttony along with luxury threw it out and buried it. But Pythagoras brought it back again, teaching*

how to derive benefit without committing injustice. For it is not exactly an act of injustice to punish and kill animals that are unsociable and cause harm while at the same time taming gentle and sociable animals, making them our comrades, with each one working according to their natural strengths, "the offspring of horse and donkey, and seed of bulls" which Prometheus (according to Aeschylus) says he gave us "as servants, to relieve toil".

'And so we use dogs as guards, and we herd goats and sheep for milking and shearing. For life is not snatched away, men's lives aren't ruined, if they should have no more plates of fish or foie-gras[28] *or beef or kids' flesh slaughtered for the banquets; nor when he no longer (neither lounging in the theatre nor enjoying the beast -hunt) forces some unwilling beasts to show their daring and fight each other or murder others which don't have the instinct to defend themselves. For I think that to enjoy sport must be to play happily together, and not as Bion remarked about the little boys who were "playing" by throwing stones at frogs: the frogs aren't "playing", but are actually dying. Similarly, when hunting or fishing, men kill and cause suffering for their enjoyment, piteously taking away cubs and other young. For it is not an injustice merely to make use of animals, but rather to use them in a way that is harmful, contemptuous and cruel'.*

Written in the years before 300 AD, by which time the major philosophical texts had become entrenched classics, the stated aim of Porphyry's *On abstinence from living things* is to present the history of philosophical positions on eating meat and other matters regarding animals, and to advocate a meat-free diet for all those who are philosophically inclined. The work is addressed to a philosophical colleague named Firmus, whose vegetarianism, Porphyry heard, had lapsed: after paraphrasing and detailing the opinions of past anti-vegetarian thinkers and philosophical schools in the first of the four books, Porphyry advances his own arguments at length, quoting and excerpting from a variety of philosophical sources. The following excerpt is an unattributed paraphrase[29] perhaps related to Heracleides Ponticus, a student of Plato and contemporary of Aristotle: it is presented as part of a litany of ostensibly flawed thinking on animal matters introduced with the intention of presenting the views of 'ordinary people' (1.13). The tone of Porphyry's unnamed source is scornful and intended to label as hypocrites those who do not eat meat, demonstrating the anthropocentric and classically Stoic view that nature's providence is intended for man. In the paragraphs before the following passage, the source had made a number of specious suggestions in favour of meat eating (1.13–20): that some animals intentionally

attack humans, so our 'war' on animals is justified; that harmful animals such as snakes are killed routinely so that they may not harm humans; that flesh-eating animals are skilled and strong because of hunting (and that athletes eat meat); that some animals have large litters that would eat all of man's crops and fill the earth with corpses if left unchecked; that some animal products are vital for medicine; that some people say plants have souls and we are compelled to eat them, so we may eat animals as well; and that if souls migrate, humans do animals a favour by killing them and hastening their souls' return to human bodies. The argument also contains the view that if animal souls are irrational, then killing them would cause no harm to rational souls (that is, to human souls), and just before this passage opens, the speaker asserts that the truly 'just' position is to kill all animals which encroach on human life. In linking meat eating (or rather, animal killing) with the wider exploitation of animal resources, the text does suggest that a prototypical form of veganism was active at least in the imaginations of philosophers and perhaps in the popular consciousness as well; but it is important to bear in mind that rather than advocating veganism, the passage is a specious *reductio ad absurdum* aimed at vegetarians.

58 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 1.21

'But if some one should think it is unjust [to kill these animals], they shouldn't use milk, wool, eggs or honey. For just as you act unjustly to a human by taking away his clothes, so it is when shearing a sheep because this is the sheep's clothing. Milk also was not made for you, but for the newly born young of the animal that bears it. The bee also gathers food for itself which you take away to provide for your own pleasure. I have kept quiet about the opinion of the Egyptians, that we act unjustly to plants when we pull them up. But if these things were made for us, then the bee as our servant[30] makes honey for us, and the wool grows on sheep as a source of adornment and warmth for us'.

Porphyry also quotes at length from Hermarchus the Epicurean (at *On abstinence* 1.7ff.) on the history of justice and how it came to be that the killing of animals was not contrary to justice, but the loose connection between philosophical dogma and real-life habits can be seen in the following passage where Porphyry reveals details of the diet of Epicurus and his early followers. Again, the point is that the vegetarian lifestyle per se is not regarded as a distinct moral choice, but is one of a number of elements of a parsimonious and frugal lifestyle which qualify the participant for the status of 'philosopher'. (Epicurus himself ostensibly

expresses these same sentiments, though without reference to meat, in a letter transmitted by Diogenes Laertius, 10.130).

59 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 1.48

For most of the Epicureans, beginning with their leader, appear to suffice with bread and fruits, and have filled their writings with assertions of how scanty the demands of nature are, and that its necessities may be sufficiently met by simple and easily procurable food.

Porphyry's third book contain his own arguments and those of other writers against the Stoic and Epicurean ethical positions with special reference to their views on justice and *logos* in a detailed attempt to prove the immorality of killing animals for food: later he also draws on Stoics' own reasoning to disprove their theories. (One example runs that if pigs were created by divine providence in order to be sacrificed, and dogs in order that we can use them to hunt, and leopards to be hunted, then surely humans were created in order to be attacked by their own natural predators, such as crocodiles and snakes etc.; *On abstinence* 3.20). Before the passage opens, Porphyry gives a number of self-evident proofs that animals have a form of *logos*, including that they can learn commands and that they are held in high esteem by divinities, finally stating that Scythians who eat their ancestors would not say that their food is without *logos*.[31]

60 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 3.18–19

*Through these arguments and others, which we shall go on to remind ourselves of when running through the opinions of the ancients, it is shown that animals are rational (*logika*), reason in most of them being imperfect, but nevertheless they are not absolutely deprived of it. And so, as justice pertains to rational beings (as our disputants say), how could it be that justice does not apply for men towards animals? For we do not extend matters of justice to plants, because many things about them appear to be disconnected from reason: and yet indeed from them we are accustomed to using the fruits, not to taking the whole tree along with the fruits. We do collect grain and pulses when they are dried out and have fallen to the ground, and are dead, but no one makes use of animals who have died [naturally] except fish, which have also been taken by an act of violence. So there is much injustice in these matters. To start with, as Plutarch also says, since it does not follow that because our nature needs some things, and we make use of these things, we must carry out injustice to its*

fullest extent in every respect and towards all things. For our nature grants and allows for harm up to a certain point, for necessity (if indeed it is a harm to take something from plants even while they remain alive) but to lay waste and destroy other things out of excess and for pleasure is utter savagery and injustice: and abstinence from these things weakens neither our life nor our enjoyment of life. For if, perchance, the murder of animals and the eating of meat were as necessary for life as air, water, plants and fruits, then our nature would be inextricably bound up with injustice; but if many priests of the gods, and many kings of the barbarians, who make a point of their religious purity, and the many species of animal which absolutely never touch food of this kind, all live and fulfil their destiny according to nature, isn't he wrong who proclaims 'if we are forced to make war with some people, we shouldn't be friends with those with whom we are able to be: either we live, and don't use justice for anything, or we don't live, and we use justice for everything'? Therefore, in the same way as among men, where we have on the one hand the man who, for the sake of his own preservation, or that of his children or fatherland, either seizes the wealth from someone or destroys some countryside or city, and has necessity as a pretext for his injustice; and on the other hand the man who does these things for wealth or satisfaction or luxurious pleasure and to bring about fulfilment of desires which are not necessary appears to be unsociable, out of control, and wicked; in the same way, then, the god grants pardon for the harm done to plants, the use of fire and running water, sheep shearing and milking, taming and yoking of oxen, for the preservation and continuance of those that use them. But to subject animals to slaughter and cook them, and be filled with murder, not for nourishment or grateful satisfaction, but for the fulfilment of pleasure and gluttony, is terrible and lawless beyond nature. For it is enough that, despite their having no need of toil, we use for hard work and labour 'the offspring of horse and donkey, and seed of bulls', as Aeschylus says, 'as servants, to relieve toil'[32] *by being tamed and yoked.*

*But for him who thinks we ought not make dishes from the ox, nor destroy or corrupt breath and life for the relish of repletion and adornments of the table, what does he take away from our life which is necessity for our preservation or good for our virtue? And indeed, to compare plants with animals is quite forced. For one group, by its very nature, is able to perceive (*aisthanesthai*) and feel pain and fear, and to be hurt, and consequently to be the subject of injustice. But the other group can perceive nothing; therefore, nothing is alienating or bad or harmful or unjust. For perception is the beginning of all kinship (*oikeiôsis*) and alienation. And the followers of Zeno [that is, the Stoics] put kinship as the origin of justice. But isn't it irrational that many men live by perception alone, not having mind (*nous*) or reason (*logos*), conversely*

surpassing the most fearsome of beasts in terms of savagery and spirit and greed, infanticides and patricides, tyrants and underlings of kings; indeed, to think that we must act justly to these people, but not to the ploughing ox and our companion dogs and animals that nourish us with milk and adorn us with their wool – how is that not utterly beyond rationality?

61 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 3.26

So then, if some animals are fierce, then for this reason we must put them to death (as with such men as are fierce), but we should not lose sight of the remainder, who are of a tamer disposition; and neither kind is to be thought of as food (just as with wicked humans). But as it stands, we do great injustice by destroying both tame animals and wild ones, and by eating the tame ones: thus we commit a double injustice to tame animals, because even though they are tame, we destroy them, and because we then eat them: in short, their death pertains to food. We can add the following things too. For when someone says that the man who extends the practice of justice to animals thereby destroys justice, they do not know that they don't actually maintain justice, but increase their own pleasure, which is at odds with justice. As pleasure is their aim, therefore, justice is evidently destroyed. Since is it not clear that justice is increased by abstinence? For he who abstains from [killing/eating] anything which has a soul, even those animals which don't have some contractual role in common with him, will be more likely to refrain from injuring those of his own species. The one who is a friend to his wider race will not hate the species, and as the race of animals is so much larger; instead, he will safeguard his part of the wider race and also those with whom he feels an affinity. So, then, that man who forms an affinity to the animals will not harm any one creature, but the one who draws his lines of justice only around mankind is quite prepared, as if backed into a corner, to throw out his restraint from injustice. […]

To leave behind the practice of eating living things is to leave behind food injustice. For the god certainly did not make it so that we couldn't preserve ourselves without causing harm to others, since if this had indeed been the case, then it follows that he would have imposed on us a nature which was unjust in principle. And don't they appear ignorant of the particular property of justice, those who think that it was brought about from the affinity of men to each other? For this would be nothing more than a kind of human-centred benevolence,[33] whereas justice consists in abstemiousness and restraint from injuring anything which does not cause injury. And in this way the just man thinks, not in the above-mentioned way [of justice only among men]: that is, that justice, as it lies in not doing injury, extends as far as the furthest creature

which has a soul. And because it is this way, the rational part rules over the irrational, and the irrational follows. Because the rational part rules in this way, and the irrational follows, so it must be that man does absolutely no injury to anything.

It must be remembered that Porphyry was writing from inside the ascetic, frugal and broadly 'Pythagorean' tradition, a stance to be adopted with the ultimate aim of making oneself a pure and worthy being: Sorabji remarks of Porphyry that 'if he spared animals, that was not, of course, out of concern for them',[34] and one problem with regarding Porphyry as the voice of ancient vegetarianism is that unlike many modern animal rights apologists, he considers that his advice only pertains to those of a philosophical nature, as the following passage makes very clear. Furthermore, 'Porphyry has no time for, and no interest in, those who have no time for, and no interest in, waking up to intellectual life and philosophy … [and] is not engaged in converting society as a whole to a vegetarian economy'.[35]

62 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 1.27

Firstly, then, one must know that my discourse does not bring with it an exhortation to all of men's lifestyles: for it is not for workmen engaged in crafts, nor bodily athletes, soldiers, sailors, orators, nor those who make their living in public affairs, but for him who has used logos *to consider what he is, where he has come from, where he ought to strive to go; and on the issues relating to food; and for those who have a sense of duty, as apart from those people who have other concerns in life. I should not grumble at such people as these, for neither in this life that we have in common, surely, does the same exhortation apply both to the man who sleeps, who is eager to be this way throughout his life, equipping himself with the objects of sleepfulness, and the man who is eager to ward off sleep and arranges everything for the pursuit of wakefulness.*

4
Observing and Imagining Animal Behaviour

Using animals as a means of measuring and describing human behaviour was one of their earliest functions in Classical literature, with the most enduring example from Classical antiquity being the fables of Aesop, traditionally assumed to stem from the sixth century BC;[1] similarly in the Homeric epics, long before Greek writers began the process of seriously investigating the nature of animal and human life, the actions of warriors during the Trojan War and its aftermath were effectively illustrated with similes drawn from the animal world (a literary use characterized by Newmyer as 'philosophical reflection'),[2] and these observations range from pastoral or domestic scenes to vivid descriptions of hunting and imaginary accounts of animals in the wild. Animal imagery is used particularly in moments of heightened tension in the Homeric epics to illustrate moments of extreme violence or emotion, and because of this their animal subjects are credited with a wide range of emotional faculties such as the following example of a lion robbed of his cubs. The context in the *Iliad* is the aftermath of the death of Patroclus, the emotional crux of the entire poem as it rouses Achilles to re-enter the war and pursue Hector: the type of animal emotion described is the deep maternal love often described in later discussions of animal capabilities and which went undisputed among later writers. The description reveals something about the idea of the emotional effects that hunting might have on animals, particularly by describing an emotional episode which takes place after the hunter has departed and one which focuses not on the parental love of the lion, but rather his grief at the loss of his cubs.

63 Homer, *Iliad* 18.314–22

Meanwhile the Achaeans mourned and lamented for Patroclus all through the night. Achilles led them in their loud lament, laying his man-killing hands on the breast of his companion, ceaselessly groaning, just as a beautifully bearded lion when a man out hunting deer has taken away his cubs from a thick forest: coming back too late, he grieves, and following the track of the man, he goes out and searches the mountains to find him, for a bitter anger has seized him.

Although Homeric hunting similes (if not original products of the poets' imagination) were probably transmitted through the medium of poetry itself rather than observation, particularly with similes written from the animal's point of view, the extent to which Homeric descriptions of lion hunting might be based on 'real life' episodes, perhaps stemming perhaps from palatial or elite hunting activity in Asia or Greece in the distant past, is not an easy question to answer.[3] Although the poetic tradition of such similes may stem from an elite hunting society, other animal similes have a reference point rather closer to the lives of ordinary Greeks and are drawn from the world of pastoral farmers or from more readily observable parts of the animal world: Odysseus likened to a ram among ewes (*Iliad* 3.197), or Odysseus and Diomedes likened to guard dogs watching penned sheep and listening out for wild animals (*Iliad* 10.183). A passage from the *Odyssey* (10.410) imagines the joy felt by Odysseus's men when he returns from a dangerous mission to save his crewmen who had been transformed into animals by the witch Circe[4] and describes them as calves pushing their way out of their pens as their mothers return from pasturing. The following passage is typical of the animal illustrations to Iliadic battle scenes.

64 Homer, *Iliad* 5.136–43

He was now three times as fierce, like a lion which some shepherd, watching over his fleecy sheep on some pasture land, has wounded but not overcome as he springs over a wall: he has increased the animal's strength, but now cannot put up a defence, so he slinks under the sheep pens, leaving the abandoned sheep terrified. The ewes gather in heaps on top of each other, while the determined lion leaps out over the high wall. With just this determination Diomedes went mightily amidst the Trojans.

In these instances lions and sheep are anthropomorphically credited with a range of emotional responses which were presumably not actually associated with them:[5] the Greek audience of these poems would more readily identify with a grieving friend than with a robbed lion, and the terrified sheep are reflexively imagined as experiencing the sorts of emotion which are found on the battlefield, but for farming similes to have currency they probably relate to real problems of livestock and predation among the archaic Greeks, and even so, their ontological distortions do not put similes beyond usefulness as evidence for ancient conceptions of animal emotion. The joy of a horse breaking out of its stable is used to illustrate the enthusiasm for the Trojan prince Paris to join the battle, and vividly imagines the yearning for freedom of captive animals, which Empedocles would later put into the mouth of a caged bird (see above, §34).

65 Homer, *Iliad* 6.506–11

As when some stabled horse, sick of barley at the manger and breaking free of his fetters, gallops with stamping hooves to his accustomed bathing place in a beautifully flowing river, triumphant; he holds his head high, his mane blowing about his shoulders, he knows his strength, and his knees carry him to the usual place and pasture of horses.

Homeric similes also contain within them some evidence for attitudes to farming. The historian might try and decipher the historicity of these remarks and what kind of culture they refer to, but for the purposes of the animal ethicist they are important evidence of the intellectual response to the concepts of exploitation of animal resources: a major concern of modern animal rights advocates is the nature and extent of the cruelty involved in the dairy industry, and Homeric similes demonstrate that even from the earliest era of western literature humans were conscious of the distress caused by separating newborn animals from their lactating mothers. The likening of Odysseus's men to calves was mentioned above, although sheep and goats were the more usual sources of milk, and the passage below specifically refers to the distress of ewes. It is also used to illustrate the sheer scale of Trojans standing around like sheep 'in countless numbers', and the idea of victimhood is also detectable in this excerpt: before this passage opens, the opposing Greek forces are described in a dynamic simile likening them to crashing waves, and the view of the Trojan ranks is here somewhat less heroic; in the ensuing battle, they will come off rather worse.

66 Homer, *Iliad* 4.433–6

But the Trojans, like sheep standing in countless numbers in a wealthy man's yard about to yield their white milk – they bleat incessantly as they hear the voices of their lambs – so the babbling of the Trojans went up through the great army.

Other examples of capacities credited to animals in Homer include the evocative recognition scene where Odysseus's dog, Argus, is the only one to recognize his disguised master and, having loyally waited for his return, wanders away and dies[6] (and in another memorable episode the horses of Achilles are momentarily endowed with speech by Hera, *Iliad* 19.404–17). Similar uses of animals are found in Athenian drama: in the chorus of Euripides's *Bacchae* a celebrating bacchant is described as being 'like a foal with its grazing mother' (164–5), and in Sophocles's *Women of Trachis* (529–30) a pathetic description likens a bride as a calf now gone from her mother. The themes of animal similes can also be more intricately connected with the imagery and narrative of the wider play, as in this simile also from the *Bacchae*, where the Chorus, in the voice of bacchic revellers, evokes the image of the fawn (a Dionysian animal):[7] this technique draws a close connection between the human characters and the animals they describe, particularly in the *Bacchae* with its powerful descriptions of divine theriomorphism and humans driven to acts of bestial violence.

67 Euripides, *Bacchae* 862–76

Shall I ever, in the night-long dances, put my white foot in bacchic revel, flinging my throat to the dewy aether, like a fawn playing in the green joys of a meadow just as it escapes the fearful hunt, past the guards and over the well-woven nets: while the hunter yells and pushes his dogs harder on the chase, it runs hard in a storm of swift feet to a plain by the river, rejoicing in the wild away from mortals, in the young shoots of a shady forest?

Aeschylus's description of a lion, which is not explicitly presented as a simile but which does analogize a mythological character, was so well known in Classical Athens that it was used by the comic poet Aristophanes as a description of the capricious politician Alcibiades, and it has attracted much attention in modern scholarship in regard to the identity of the human against whom the comparison is made. In any

case, its message is that the nature of the lion is innate and cannot be modified through rearing in luxurious captivity.

68 Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 716–36

In the same way a man reared a baby lion in his house, taken away from its mother's milk yet still desiring the breast. It was gentle in the prelude of its life, it loved children and was a joy for the old. It got much attention, was held in the crook of the arm like a nursing child, with bright eyes turned toward the man's hand, and fawning under the needs of its belly. But matured by time it showed the nature of its parents: for, giving thanks for those who nurtured it, it made a feast, unbidden, with ruinous slaughter of the sheep: the house was spoiled with blood, and for the household there was pain without defence and the great ruin of multiple murder. A priest of Strife, by the will of the gods it was raised as one of the household.

Perhaps the best-known passage of Greek tragedy on the nature of humans and the non-human animal is the so-called 'Ode on man' from the *Antigone* of Sophocles, performed around 440 BC: here, like Aeschylus's *Prometheus* in Chapter 1 above, the Athenian dramatic stage becomes a forum for discussing ideas of human and animal nature born out of the intellectual landscape of the fifth century BC. In the opening sentence the Greek word given as 'wondrous and mighty' is *deinon*, a versatile word which encompasses everything that is marvellous, awesome, terrible and dangerous, and the ambiguous use of the word has attracted comment,[8] with one editor noting that 'the ambiguous moral character of "technology" and of human ingenuity in general is emphasized: culture is presented as an aggressive process of "defeating" and "mastering" nature. So while the "wonderful" benefits of architecture, medicine, language and law are acknowledged, so is mankind's "terrible" urge to dominate and push beyond acceptable limits'.[9]

69 Sophocles, *Antigone* 332–60

Many things are wondrous and mighty, and nothing more so than mankind. Man's power traverses the sea, driven by the wintry south wind, passing under engulfing swells; and the Earth – foremost of the gods, the immortal, the unwearied – he wears away for his own sake, winding the plough around year on year, turning up the soil with the offspring of horses. The carefree tribe of

*birds he captures in woven nets, and the clans of savage beasts and the watery creatures of the sea, most skilful man. Through his skills he rules over the beast who lives in the open and roams the mountains; he subdues the shaggy-maned horse, putting the yoke about its neck, and the tireless mountain bull. And man has taught himself language and wind-speed thought (*phronêma*), the tempers which give law to cities, how to escape inhospitable frosts and stormy lashes under the sky: ever-resourceful man.*

Observations of animal capabilities are found in a large number of texts across all genres in the Classical period. These occasionally go into detail on specific species qualities with the focus on illustrating human traits through commonplace assumptions of animal behaviour, but there are some ostensibly objective accounts, particularly from the Roman period, of animal behaviour and mental capacities which reveal a surprisingly in-depth attempt at understanding the animal mind. In the first century BC Lucretius, whose didactic poem 'On the nature of things' presents an Epicurean view of the natural physics (though not Epicurean ethics, for which see Chapters 2–3 above), here gives an emotive reflection on the same natural maternal love identified in the Homeric epics, again in a bovine context, though much more urgent and empathetic in tone. This was clearly a concern of ancient thinkers: strident statements on parental love in animals are also put in the mouth of the Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana by his biographer Philostratus (*Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 2.14).

70 Lucretius, *On the nature of things* 2.342–80

Moreover the race of humankind, and the mute flocks of swimming scaly creatures, and joyous herds, and all the wild animals, and the varieties of birds: those that frequent the joyous watery places, about the riverbanks and springs and lakes, and those that haunt the pathless woods, flittering about: go on then, take any of these diverse creatures; still you will find that it differs from others in shape. And in no other manner would an offspring know its mother, nor a mother her offspring, though we see that they can do this, they distinguish between themselves no less clearly than humans do. For often the slain calf, before the fine sanctuary of the gods, is felled near the incense-burning altars, breathing out a stream of warm blood from its breast; the bereaved mother wandering green woodlands has sought the familiar hoof prints in the soil, her eyes scanning around every place trying to find her lost young one, and, coming to a halt she fills the leafy woodland with her plaintive voice; often she returns to the stall pierced by the longing for her young

one. And neither tender willows, nor grass lively with dew, nor the delightful streams flowing high along their banks – none of these can turn her mind from this sudden worry. And neither can the sight of other calves grazing happily distract her mind or lighten her pain. To these lengths she will search for something which is her own and which she knows.

Other remarks on animal behaviours are appended to straightforward descriptions of animals, primarily in the *Natural history* of Pliny the Elder (see below). Writing in the first century BC, the observations of Diodorus Siculus on the rhinoceros and baboon are an interesting and urbane witness to the kinds of exotic animals which were becoming common in the Roman arena (for which see Chapter 12): the author lived in Rome during the turbulent years at the end of the Republic and the beginning of the Principate, which saw an increase in the lavishness of the Roman games, though in this context he is describing the animals of distant lands as part of his complete 'library' of world history. Diodorus accurately observes the rhinoceros's habit of sharpening its horn and attempting to gore elephants from beneath, as well as the propensity for baboons to submit to training, incidentally crediting them with the faculties of learning and memory.

71 Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 3.35

There is an animal which is named after its appendage, the horn-nose (rhinoceros)*; in courage and strength it is similar to the elephant but in height rather lower. […] So as it is always fighting with the elephant over pasture land it sharpens its horn on certain stones, and when it enters the fight with this animal it slips under its abdomen and tears open the flesh with its horn, just like a sword. […] [Baboon] sphinxes are found both in the Troglodyte lands and in Aethiopia; in shape, they are in reality not dissimilar from the ones in drawings, except they differ in the roughness of their hair. And as their spirits* (psychai) *are gentle and disposed to trickery, they will also take methodical teaching.*

Other anecdotes of inspiring animal behaviour are scattered throughout the Classical corpus: the tale of a publically pensioned mule from the Periclean building programme had wide currency in Greek literature[10] and was known to Aristotle only a hundred years after the fact, although Aristotle reports that a public order merely forbade bakers from shooing the animal away from their trays.[11] The story may well be true, although like many anecdotes born from a politically charged era this legend of

the hard worker extraordinarily supported by the public in his retirement may simply allegorize the public-spiritedness of the Athenian democracy in the age of Pericles.

72 Plutarch, *On the cleverness of animals* 970a–b

For when Pericles built the hundred-foot-long temple [the Parthenon] on the Acropolis, as is the normal practice the stones were brought up by many teams of draught animals every day. So it happened that one of the mules who had been a very enthusiastic member of the team was discharged because of his old age, but still took himself down to the Kerameikos and met the teams of animals as they brought up stones, turning back with them and trekking alongside them as if to encourage and jolly them along. And the people, because of their amazement at his honourable conduct, called for him to be pensioned as a public expense just as they once voted a decree to feed an athlete in his old age.

The most enlightening descriptions of animal faculties are found in the four zoological books of Pliny the Elder's *Natural history*, written in the first century AD and containing a vast array of animal descriptions; from an ethical perspective, the programme of Pliny's investigations follow the principles of 'small "s" Stoicism', that is to say, divine providence and an overarching principle operate with their focus on the benefit to mankind; in practice, although the zoological books are replete with evidence of animals' advanced mental faculties, the descriptions of individual species are often accompanied by the dates in which they were first exhibited in the Roman arena. Pliny's eighth book, on land animals, begins with a description of the elephant, and it says something about the tone of Pliny's work: while undoubtedly containing much valuable evidence for how animals were regarded and treated, there is also much information which is patently untrue, and it is a matter of judgement to decide whether or not the more fanciful details reflect commonly held opinions on the advanced capabilities of animals. (Pliny provides many more numerous and fanciful details of the intelligence of the elephant than those given below.) Although he makes no specific reference to how he encountered each anecdote, they may have been told to him by traders and elephant 'mahouts' whom he would have met on his travels as a Roman provincial administrator and military commander, and in his preface he cites several specific Latin and Greek authors for his eighth book including Aristotle, Democritus, Theophrastus and Herodotus. Pliny talks of the

elephant's knowledge of the value of its tusks (see below, p.131); its fear of hunters and ability to plan against ambush; the shame and suicide of a military elephant who had refused to ford a river; instances of elephants falling in love with humans, and several more tales. For the student of animal ethics, the mere fact of these tales' fancifulness is of less importance than whether or not they were actually believable either to Pliny, or more generally to his Roman readers and his sources: when Roman audiences saw one (or twenty) of these animals being slaughtered in the arena, did they know of the supposed mental qualities described here?

73 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 8.1; 8.3[12]

Let us now go on to describe the rest of the animals, and first of all the land animals. The elephant is the largest of these, and in perceptions (sensa) *is nearest to man for it understands the speech of its country and obeys commands, it remembers the duties which were taught to it, the pleasures of love and renown, indeed to an extent that is even rare among men, honesty, prudence, and fairness* (aequitas)*; it also has religious regard for the stars and venerates the sun and the moon. Some authors say that in the forests of Mauretania when the new moon begins to shine herds of them come down to a river called the Amilo and there they purify themselves solemnly by sprinkling water around, and thus having saluted the stars, they return to the woods carrying their tired calves before them. They are also believed to understand the differences of religion, and when they are about to cross the sea they will not board the ship until their keeper has sworn an oath promising return; and – because even these huge creatures are in danger of disease – they have been seen, when tired with sickness, lying on their back throwing plants up towards heaven just as if they were asking the earth to act for them with prayers. [...][13]*

It is known that one elephant who was slower in learning the things he had been taught, after being punished often with blows was found carefully studying what he had been taught during the night. [...] The Mucianus who was consul three times is the source of a story that one of them, after he had been taught the Greek alphabet, used to write in that language the words 'I myself have written this and dedicated the Celtic spoils'.

The later writer Aelian (in whose *On animals* can be found an even more glittering array of tall tales, see below) also relates the entirely believable story that he himself saw an elephant writing Roman letters

with its trunk, although 'the hand of the trainer was leading it to the shape of the letters' (*On animals* 2.11); rather less believably, he reports that elephants understand the Indian language (*On animals* 11.14). Pliny credits other species with a startling amount of mental capacity, including that a lion is merciful to its suppliants ('*clementia in supplices*', 8.19) when approached with an appropriate speech. Here he displays sensible reserve when relating a belief about the mimicry habits of the hyena and its hybrid offspring, although he does not explicitly dismiss the notion that they 'also learn the name' ('*nomenque addiscere*'), thereby purposefully calling their victims out, rather than simply mimicking the sounds made by voices.

74 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 8.44–5

Many more fanciful things are also related of the hyena, but the strangest is that it copies human speech, and when it is among the stalls of shepherds learns the name of a certain one of them, whom it then calls outside and tears to pieces. [...] When she mates with one of this race of animals the Aethiopian lioness gives birth to the corocotta*, and it similarly imitates the voices* (voces) *of men and cattle.*

The supposed intelligence of elephants appears to have impressed the Greek novelist Achilles Tatius, writing in the century after Pliny. Here he embroiders an account of a common (and real) circus trick[14] with an explanatory narrative which may stem from a popular notion of the elephant's sense of fairness (*aequitas*), mentioned by Pliny as an elephantine characteristic in §73 above: in the modern era, fairness and inequity continue to be the subject of behavioural experimentation and public interest.[15]

75 Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon* 4.4.7–8

'Once I saw an very novel thing. A Greek man put his head totally inside the head of one of these animals: the elephant who had opened up his mouth and was breathing its heavy breath around the human "stopper". So both things were amazing, both the undeniable daring of the man and the gentleness (philanthrôpia) *of the elephant. And the man said that he had given a fee to the animal, for its breath is almost like the aromatic spices of India, and is a medicine for headaches. Now the elephant knows of this healing property and does not open his mouth as a free gift, but he is like a charlatan doctor and insists on payment first. And if you give it to him he consents, and keeps his*

word: he opens up his jaws and keeps them open for as long as the man wants, for he knows that he has sold his fragrance'.[16]

(The text also explains that the Indian elephant has such sweet breath through its eating 'fragrant plants', that is, spices, as part of its diet.) Another description of this trick survives in Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius*, in a lengthy and fascinating section on the intelligence of elephants and the strength of parental love of animals for their offspring. From the point of view of animal ethics, Apollonius's comments on elephants offer a relieving counterpart to the views of his contemporaries: here he has just discussed at length, in a rather Socratic fashion, the nature of breaking elephants in and the connection between the elephant and his young rider. Apollonius concludes that it is not the rider who should be admired, but the elephant.

76 Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 2.11

'This animal', Apollonius said, 'is docile beyond all others; and whenever he is once broken in for the sake of man, he will put up with anything at the hands of man, and he makes it his business to be tractable and obedient to him, and he is pleased to eat out of his hand, just like a little dog; and when his master approaches he fondles him with his trunk, and he will allow him to thrust his head into his jaws, and he holds them as wide open as his master likes, as we have seen among the nomads. But at night the elephant is said to lament his state of slavery, yes by Zeus, not by trumpeting in his ordinary way, but by wailing mournfully and piteously. And if a man comes upon him when he is lamenting in this way, the elephant stops his dirge at once just as if he were ashamed. Such control, Damis, has he over himself, and it is his natural obedience which leads him rather than the man who sits on him and drives him'.

Besides the encyclopaedic *Natural history* of Pliny, the other major repository of animal anecdotes is the substantial text of Claudius Aelianus (Aelian, c. AD 165–230) entitled *Peri zôôn idiotêtos* ('On the particular characteristics of animals'). In the prologue he commends that animals have good qualities despite their having neither *logos* nor man's ability to worship the gods. The ethos behind the work, he states himself, is to present his findings on these good qualities, gleaned from examining the dense technical works, in an accessible form for the non-specialist reader. The treatise reads like a miscellany of tall tales and spurious facts,

and credits animals with a wide array of faculties; several passages like the following detail animals falling in love with humans. (Similar anecdotes appear at 4.56, a seal in love with an ugly sponge diver; 6.15, a dolphin and a boy, a long tale with a tragic ending; and 8.11, a snake and a shepherd.)[17]

77 Aelian, *On animals* 1.6

I heard that a dog fell in love with Glauce the kithara player; some say it wasn't a dog, but a ram; others, a goose. And in Soloi, in Cilicia, a dog loved a boy who was called Xenophon; in Sparta a jackdaw became sick because of the beauty of another handsome young boy.

This curious remark, like most of Aelian's, comes apropos of nothing, and is a good example of a passage which characterizes his work somewhere between whimsical curiosity and useless hodgepodge: the peculiar anecdotes are generally delivered in an isolated and staccato form, and it is very difficult to interpret their meaning or context without resorting to charges of flippant novelty. Perhaps by coincidence, other snippets contain instances of animal behaviour which now form the basis of advanced biological theory: a passage mentions altruistic behaviour among a species of fish (the unidentifiable 'anthias') said to go to great lengths in attempting to rescue its colleagues caught on a fishing line (1.4), and the parrotfish is commended for similarly altruistic behaviour. 'This, o men, is how these creatures act: their love is not learned, but inborn'.

78 Aelian, *On animals* 1.13

Fish are also good models of temperate minds. Indeed, whenever the aitnaios *(as it is called) finds a partner and joins with it as if in marriage, it does not couple with another female; and it does not need to vow faithfulness, or a dowry, neither indeed does it fear a lawsuit for ill-treatment, nor does it stand in fear of Solon the lawgiver. O what noble and venerable laws, which licentious man is not ashamed of disobeying!*

Other morally upstanding and admirable animals populate Aelian's work: he discusses the lengths a mother dolphin will go to in order to protect her young (1.18) sometimes dying in the process, and in an updated take on the idea of Arion's mythological rescue by dolphins,[18] Aelian also reports that a hunter named Nicias once fell into a charcoal

burner's furnace, and his dogs, after standing in distress for a few moments, found help by gently biting the clothes of passersby and leading them to the scene of the accident (1.8), rather like the modern commonplace of heroic rescue dogs, but without the usual happy ending (the unfortunate Nicias perishes in the furnace). The objective of these passages is to allegorize in order to highlight immoral behaviour by humans rather than to observe a natural trait in an animal. Regardless of the relationship of the text to nature, the important point is again that these traits exist in the imaginations at least of Aelian and his sources, and perhaps also a wider section of the educated populace. The real value of Aelian's work lies in the stated motivations of the author and the intellectual climate in which he wrote. He insists in his epilogue that he has attempted to be as thorough as possible through his own love of wisdom (*sophia*) and that he did not leave anything out 'as though the herd, being without reason or speech, were beneath my notice or to be dishonoured': unlike other Stoics, Aelian's philosophical nature demands respect towards animals even though they are *alogos*. Aelian underlines his enterprise with a passage contrasting his pursuit of knowledge with the hunter's pursuit of an animal:

79 Aelian, *On animals, epilogue*

And if the discovery of even one animal seems like good luck to hunters, I say that there is nothing noble either in tracking them or in the capture of their bodies: but it is a great thing to hunt out the many things nature has given to them and the marvellous abilities they have.

(Compare, or contrast, the remarks of [Lord] Kenneth Clark in *Animals and men*, written in 1977 in support of the World Wildlife Fund: 'Hunting is still with us, and paradoxically can coexist with a sort of love of the animal hunted'.) In a similar vein, in a discussion of the nobler qualities of the mind in the fifth book of *On the ends of good and evil*, Cicero uses an example from the Roman games to illustrate the human urge for mental and physical stimulation using similar reasoning to that of animal rights activists today, imploring the public to consider the injustice of keeping wild animals in captivity. However, Cicero's aims are quite different: as we would expect of a Stoic, he has no interest in stirring the reader's indignation about the animals' mistreatment, but rather he employs an animal example to reinforce and legitimize the human quality. It is not the simple fact of restlessness in captivity which

Cicero emphasizes: man's thirst for 'learning and knowledge' (5.48) is the product of a natural urge which is present even in idle men, *even* in animals. The observation demonstrates a clear understanding of the hardships imposed on animals in captivity, and is doubly relevant for its incidental and illustrative nature.

80 Cicero, *On the ends of good and evil* 5.56

Indeed, we see that even the most lazy men, those endowed with an extraordinary inertia, are constantly moved in body and in spirit (anima) *and, when no necessary job stops them they either demand a dice board, or look for a game of some kind, or some conversation; or, as they have none of the noble pleasures which come from having an education, they follow some social circles or meetings. And even the animals which we imprison for the purposes of our amusement, though they are better fed than if they were free, they unquestionably suffer in their confinement: they miss the free movement to wander, which is conferred upon them by nature.*

The texts which most vividly re-imagine life from the animal's perspective, particularly in terms of hardships, are those which feature a metamorphosis of a human into an animal. Again, this phenomenon is known from the Homeric epics: the episode of Odysseus's comrades transformed into animals by the witch Circe was well known in antiquity, and inspired several surviving artistic representations as well as providing the basis for Plutarch's dialogue *Whether animals are rational* (literally 'On the use of *logos* by the *aloga*'). In this text the transformed speaker Gryllus argues that he'd rather remain a pig, and speaks in advanced philosophical terms about the superiority of animal nature, which is free from the vices and wasteful pursuits of humans.[19] The single most detailed narrative from the animal's perspective is the *Metamorphosis* of Apuleius (commonly known as *The golden ass*), written in the mid/late second century AD, but drawing on an earlier work. The novel's protagonist Lucius falls for a slave girl in his host's house, and after seeing her mistress transform herself into a bird with a magic ointment, he romantically imagines undergoing the transformation himself: he asks the slave girl Fotis to get some ointment and enthusiastically applies it.

81 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 3.24

At this point I started to flap each arm, poised and ready just like a bird, but neither feathers nor the hint of a wing appeared: rather my hair clearly

thickened into bristles, my delicate skin became a tough hide, and my palms and feet lost the number of their digits into single hooves, and a great tail stuck out from the end of my spine. My face became enormous, my mouth widened, my nostrils opened, my lips hung down and my ears also grew hugely long and bristly. And neither could I take any consolation for this miserable metamorphosis except that my generative organ was now so large that not even Fotis was able to take it.

The significance of Lucius's transformation into a donkey can be considered in the context of the place of the donkey in the Greek and Roman imagination: '[h]igh literature, proverbs and fables alike tend to characterize donkeys, insofar as they mention them at all, as lazy, obstinate, lascivious, greedy and stupid'[20] (and the idea of 'donkey' persists as an insult in the modern world). Once transformed, Lucius reluctantly spends the night in the stables, but is stolen the same evening and embarks on an odyssey of banditry and sexual escapades in search of a rose, the antidote which will transform him back into a human. Though the journey is a litany of comic adventures generally resulting in a beating (or worse), the narrative often demonstrates some understanding of the hardships of draught animals as the author puts himself in the position of the worn-out donkey. Re-imagining a society without cars or automotive overland freight, a worn-out or dead draught animal by the side of a road or at the foot of a cliff was probably a familiar sight particularly to those as well travelled as Apuleius is known to have been.

82 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 4.4–5

Without delay, with it now close to midday, the bandits ordered us to be loaded up (giving me the heavier load) and led us out of the stables. We'd made a good part of the journey, and what with my fatigue of the long road, the heavy load weighing me down, worn out by beatings with their sticks, and most of all with chafing hooves making me limp and stagger, when we came to a certain river with gently winding water I thought that I'd reached a fine opportunity: 'I will let my legs collapse completely and hurl myself down, stubborn and determined that no blows will make me get up and go on, well prepared even for death under their sticks or even the thrusts of their swords'.

By then I'd judged that I had earned dismissal, being so utterly half-dead and lame: surely the bandits (partly as they wouldn't want to stop, and partly in eagerness to hurry on their escape) would divide the load on my back onto the two others, and in my turn as a greater punishment they could abandon me to

wolves and vultures. But my great plan was halted by some miserable luck. For the other donkey, sensing and anticipating my plan, suddenly feigned weariness and flung himself and all his things on the ground: lying there as if dead, after some beatings and goading, and after being pulled around by the tail and ears and legs, he still did not try and pick himself back up. As they were giving up hope of succeeding, they regrouped and asked themselves if they could be bothered trying any longer, or if they were just delaying their escape by delivering blows to a donkey that was practically dead or as good as made of stone. They redistributed his load to me and the horse, then drew swords and severed his hamstrings: dragging him a little off the road, while he was yet breathing they threw him headlong off a high cliff into the valley below.

5
Animals and Cultural Identity

Greek and Roman societies developed, in their separate ways and at different times, a very refined sense of their own identity and could articulate a clear sense of where the borders of their geographical and conceptual worlds were positioned (although in practice there was a large and diverse set of cultures and communities within these boundaries). A major concern particularly of Greek writers in the fifth century BC, after the Persian wars, was understanding what united the Greeks and what separated them from barbarians: aside from the language barrier, which defines the notion of the *barbaros*, religious customs were seen as something which all Greeks had in common. Similarly, Roman writers at times of conquest, when the borders of the Roman Empire were being pushed back, were constantly re-evaluating the identity of the people who lived at and beyond the frontiers of the empire. Writing within living memory of the Persian wars, Herodotus spends much of his nine-book history describing the geography and people outside the Greek world. His accounts of their treatment of animals – however reliable the details – again tell us as much or more about the sensibilities of the writer's own society and that of his readership as it does about the exotic practices he describes. Egypt was a source of constant fascination for Greek and Roman writers. Herodotus describes Egyptian sacrificial ritual, and its details were presumably intended to be compared with the Greek practice with which his audience would have been very familiar.

83 Herodotus, *Histories* 2.38–9; 2.41; 2.47–8

Male cattle are considered to belong to Epaphus, and therefore the priests test them in this way: one of them looks at the animal's hair, and if he comes across a single black one the animal is considered unclean. Then one of the

priests examines the animal all over, both with the beast standing upright on his legs, and then on his back, and he takes the tongue out of the mouth, to see if it is clean of the given marks (which I will talk about in another passage); and he looks down at hairs of the tail, to observe if they grow in the natural manner. If in all these ways the animal is clean, the priest marks him by twisting papyrus around his horns and putting some clay on it, which he then stamps with his signet ring; in this manner the animal is led away. Sacrificing an animal which has not been stamped in this way is punishable by death.

So, in that way they test their sacrificial animals; this is the way they sacrifice them. They lead out the victim, marked with the sign, towards the altar where they are going to make the sacrifice, and they light a fire; then they pour a libation of wine upon it, and after calling on the god they slay the animal. After they kill, it they cut off the head, then skin the animal's body; and, piling curses onto the head, if there is a marketplace and a body of Greek merchants among the people there, they carry the head to the marketplace and sell it. But if there should be no Greeks around, they throw it into the river.[1] *For this reason they curse the head: if any evil is about to befall those who perform the sacrifice, or anyone in Egypt, the evil should be diverted to the head. [...]*

So the clean male cattle and the male calves are used for sacrifice by all of the Egyptians, but it is not permitted to sacrifice the females since they are sacred to Isis. The image of Isis has the form of a woman with cattle's horns, like the Greek drawings of Io; and all of the Egyptians alike worship female cattle especially highly, above any other animal. For this reason neither an Egyptian man nor woman will kiss a Greek on the mouth, nor use a Greek's knife or spits or basin, and will not taste meat even from clean cattle if it has been cut up with a Greek knife. When cattle die, this is the sort of funeral they are given: the females are thrown into the river, but the males are buried in the town's outskirts, and one or both of their horns stick up as a marker for each burial. [...]

Egyptians consider the pig an unclean animal, for example if a man touches a pig when passing by one, he runs to the river and dips himself in, cloak and all; so too the swineherds, though they are born Egyptians, are the only ones of the Egyptians who may not enter any sanctuary. And no man is willing to give away his daughter to one, or marry one of them, so that the swineherds marry among each other. So it is not thought right to sacrifice pigs to the gods, only to Selene [the moon] and Dionysus at the same time, sacrificing pigs to them at the same full moon and eating the flesh. As to the reason they hate to use pigs at other festivals, and their use of them at this festival, there is an

explanation discussed among the Egyptians which is well known to me, but which is not seemly to discuss here. And they perform the sacrifice to Selene in this way: when the sacrifice is made they put the end of the tail and the spleen and peritoneum together and cover them with all the fat found around the animal's stomach, then they burn it all in the fire. The rest of the meat is eaten on the same full moon day on which they made the sacrifice: they would not even taste it on any other day. For the poor among the Egyptians, because of their impoverished life, they mould pigs from dough which they sacrifice after baking. At the evening of the festival of Dionysus, each Egyptian slays a young pig before their front doors; they then give the pigs back to the same swineherds who provided them in the first place, and the swineherds remove them.

Other cultures' superstitions towards pigs were well known to the Greeks, as the passage from Plutarch above (§56) concerning the Jews makes clear, and Aelian (16.37) offers the interesting insight on Indians that they do not raise or eat porcine animals and 'never use the flesh of this animal, as they would regard the use of it with as much horror as of human flesh'. Several other accounts exist of different cultures performing unusual animal sacrifices: the Greeks were especially familiar with their Egyptian neighbours, and some of Herodotus's details are verifiable;[2] horse sacrifices are also a particular curiosity mentioned by several ancient writers. A horse sacrifice, the 'October Equus', took place annually at Rome, and is mentioned by the Greek historian Polybius (12.4b–c) who – as a Greek – explains that the Romans are descended from a barbarian people and that barbarians sacrifice horses. Herodotus's descriptions of the Iranian nomadic tribe the Massagetae (1.216) list their peculiarities: he mentions that their wives are communal, that when a man is very old he is given a party and sacrificed along with his cattle, and that they sacrifice horses to the sun; and the later writer Pausanias (1.21.6) also recalls seeing a breastplate dedicated on the Athenian acropolis which came from another horse-sacrificing Iranian tribe, the Sarmatae. In a description of neighbouring Scythians, Herodotus details a practice of animal sacrifice which differs more substantially from the Greek practice than does the Egyptian.

84 Herodotus, *Histories* 4.60–1

The manner of their sacrifices is the same everywhere and in every respect: the victim stands with its forefeet tied together while the sacrificer, from behind the victim, pulls on the end of the rope which throws the animal to the floor. As the victim falls, the sacrificer calls on whichever god he is sacrificing to, and then

he puts a noose around the animal's neck and inserts a small stick which he twists, strangling him. No fire is lit, there is no consecration or libation; when the animal is suffocated it is skinned, and the process turns to boiling. But as the land of the Scythians is utterly without wood, they have had to work out this plan for boiling the flesh: after they have skinned the victims they strip the bones of flesh; then they put the flesh into one of their local cauldrons, if they happen to have one (they are rather like the mixing bowls on Lesbos, except that they are much larger), and when they have put the flesh in, they burn the bones beneath and so boil the flesh of the animals. If they do not have a cauldron handy, they put all the flesh into the stomach of the animal, mix it up with water and then burn the bones beneath. The bones burn very well, and the stomachs easily have room for the flesh when it is stripped away from the bones: thus your cattle boils itself, and it is the same with each of the other victims. Whenever the meat is cooked, the sacrificer throws some of the flesh and the entrails in front of him as an offering. They also sacrifice all sorts of other animals, and especially horses.

Notwithstanding Polybius's remarks on Roman horse sacrifice, the traditional Roman practice was quite different (see Chapter 10) and traditionally consisted of a *suovetaurilia* (the sacrifice of a boar, a ram and a bull). The two practices are directly confronted in a description from Tacitus's *Annals*: in AD 35, the Parthian king Artabanus attracted the enmity of Rome for his attempts to extend his power into Armenia, and here the Roman governor of Syria meets with a Parthian ally.

85 Tacitus, *Annals* 6.37

But Vitellius, as Artabanus had fled and the mind of his people turned to a new king, urged Tiridates to seize upon his preparations, and then led the strongest part of his legions and allies to the banks of the Euphrates. As they were sacrificing – one part was offering a suovetaurilia*, as is the Roman custom, and the other adorned a horse to placate the river god – the locals announced that the Euphrates, without any heavy rains, was spontaneously rising to an immense height, and the white foam was coiling into circles like a diadem, an omen of a prosperous crossing.*

More general descriptions of treatment of, and attitudes to, animals form a part of Greek and Roman enquiries into other cultures, of which many extant texts and fragments exist in addition to Herodotus's *Histories*. Closely linked to sacrifice, diet was seen as an important cultural index: Homer's *Odyssey* has the Greek crew encounter the *Lotophagoi* (known as the 'Lotus eaters'), a mythical people who live on nothing but the

lotos plant; and the Cyclopes of book 9 (on which see Chapter 6 below) are wild and 'primitive' people who subsist on meat and milk. A work entitled 'Customs of the barbarians' is among the lost works of the fifth-century BC Greek historian Hellanicus, a fragment of whose *Histories* refers to the mythical 'Hyperboreans' as eating no meat but subsisting on acorns,[3] and Herodotus has similar ethnographic motives in his description of North African nomads.

86 Herodotus, *Histories* 4.186

In the area from Egypt to Lake Tritonis there are Libyan pastoral nomads, who are meat eaters and milk drinkers. They don't eat female cattle, for the same reason as the Egyptians, nor do they rear pigs. Now even the women of Cyrene think it wrong to eat female cattle, because of the Egyptian Isis for whom they undertake fasts and festivals; the women of Barca don't eat pigs or cattle.

More purposefully 'global' in purpose, the *Geography* of Strabo was written in the mid-to-late first century BC and authored at least partially in Rome: Strabo draws on his personal knowledge as well as the libraries of Rome and perhaps Alexandria, where he also lived, and the extensive surviving text is full of information on the geography and people of the entire known world. Before the opening of the first excerpt below on the Lusitanians he describes their grizzly and brutal habits, using prisoners of war for divination and inspecting the organs of sacrificed animals *in situ* after slaughter rather than lifting them out as Greeks and Romans do. (The Lusitani were fierce opponents of Rome and only came under Roman rule with Julius Caesar's conquest of Iberia.) The second excerpt describes the nomadic people of the Crimea.[4]

87 Strabo, *Geography* 3.3.7

All the mountain-dwelling [Lusitanians] are frugal, drinking water and sleeping on the ground, and they let their hair grow long like women: they bind it around the forehead when they fight. They mostly eat goat meat (they also sacrifice the goat to Ares) as well as prisoners and horses, and they also offer hecatombs in the Greek manner.

88 Strabo, *Geography* 7.4.6

These people in particular were also called georgoi *('farmers') because the* nomades *('pastoralists') are found in the country above them and eat the flesh*

of different sorts of animals and also horses, and they eat horse-milk cheese as well as milk and sour milk (this, prepared somehow, is a delicacy among them); because of this, the poet speaks of all of these people as galaktophagoi *('milk eaters').*

Strabo's *Geography* bookishly describes these places and peoples for a lay audience, but the military writings of Julius Caesar contain information ostensibly gathered on campaign (though this fact by no means ensures their historical objectivity as descriptions of enemy barbarians). In book 4 of his *Gallic War* Caesar introduces the Suevi and mentions that they are pastoralists: they also forbid themselves from settling on any land for more than one year, and were in hostilities with other German tribes whom Caesar describes as frustrated by the Suevi's attempts to prevent them engaging in agriculture. His remarks on the great size of their bodies recall the stories of Greek athletes, preserved in Athenaeus (see above, §42), who attained enormous bulk through a meat-only diet.

89 Caesar, *Gallic War* 4.1

They do not live much on grain, but mostly on milk and cattle [meat], and they are often hunting; this has to do with their type of food, their daily practices and the freedom of their life – as since childhood they are used to neither duty nor discipline, so they do absolutely nothing against their own wishes – and this feeds their vitality and effects the immense growth of their men's bodies. And they have led themselves into such hardy habits that in the coldest places they wear no sort of clothing except for animal skins. These, because of their scanty size and shape, leave much of their body open to the elements; they also bathe in rivers.

Shortly before the following passage on the habits of the Germans, Caesar documents the customs of the Gauls including the fact that during funerals they throw everything dear to the deceased, 'including living things', into the fire (and a separate mention that slaves and clients are also burnt confirms that animals are meant by this). His description of the Germans shares many characteristics with that of the Suevi above and may say more about Roman stereotypes than about actual Germanic customs. Here again, a meat- and dairy-rich diet is a barbarian characteristic; in his *Civil War* (5.12, 5.14) Caesar also mentions of Britons that they consider it unlawful to eat hares, cockerels and geese, and like the other 'wild men' of northern Europe they wear animal skins, don't have agriculture and mainly eat milk, cheese and meat.

90 Caesar, *Gallic War* 6.21–2

Their whole life consists of hunting and in assiduous attention to the military art: from earliest childhood they immerse themselves in work and hardship. Those who have persevered with chastity for the longest are praised the most among them: they believe that this aids growth and vitality, and strengthens the muscles. They consider it disgraceful to have had sex with a woman before the age of twenty: on this subject nothing is hidden, as they also wash together in the rivers and they wear skins or little deer-skin covers which leave the greater part of the body naked. They do not busy themselves with agriculture, and the larger portion of their food consists of milk, cheese and meat.

Accounts and anecdotes describing the treatment of animals by individuals can also form a picture of a society's ethical parameters and offer an interesting but limited insight into their boundaries of moral acceptability. In Plutarch's biography of Alcibiades he mentions that this notorious figure cut off the tail of his hugely expensive dog (*Alcibiades* 9), earning him condemnation from the Athenians: Alcibiades reportedly remarked that he would rather be talked about because of this incident than for his other crimes. Conversely, implicit condemnation is offered in the *Characters* of Theophrastus to those who offer excessive luxury to their companion animals: in the twenty-first of these essays, entitled the *Microphilotimias* ('On enjoying pride in small things'), Theophrastus describes such a person buying a little ladder and shield for his jackdaw, setting up a lavish tombstone for his deceased lapdog, and owning monkeys and doves (21.6–7, 14–15) in addition to the rest of his lavish possessions. Several funerary epigrams for animals do survive in the *Greek anthology*,[5] including one to a lapdog (7.211) and another to a leveret that died from being fed too richly (7.207). But the most systematic and notorious attempt to define Greek human characteristics according to animal stereotypes is a very early text, written by the seventh-century BC Semonides, linking supposed animal characteristics to the behaviour and demeanour of women. The poem says as much about the priorities and prejudices of men as it does about either women or animals, and includes the revealing detail that the dog-like woman cannot be subdued 'even by knocking out her teeth with a stone'.[6]

6
Bucolic Ideals and the Golden Age

In imagined accounts of the world at peace, animals are enlisted for a variety of roles, and their use in these contexts constitutes important evidence for the concept of the place of animals in an 'ideal world'. Several accounts and references inform the modern reader of the ancient conception of the 'golden age', and other evocations of a peaceful world (often made specifically from the point of view of an unpeaceful world) can be examined with reference to animal treatment to try and establish a coherent account of the ideal place of animals.[1] The *Works and days* of Hesiod systematically describes a past golden age, written from the point of view of a present life of toil as the end result of progressive moral disintegration. The agricultural nature of the *Works and days*, which directly occupies much of its content, makes the following description of a past provident land overflowing with fruit particularly poignant, and there is no specific mention here of the animal husbandry or draught animals which occupy the life of Hesiod's farmer elsewhere in the poem.

91 Hesiod, *Works and days* 109–119

First of all, the immoral gods who have Olympus as their home made a golden race of men endowed with speech. They lived in the time of Kronos, when he was king of the vault of heaven: and they spent their lives as gods, with no troubles in their heart, far from hardship and without pains. Wretched old age did not burden them, rather their feet and hands danced in the same perpetual cheer far from every conceivable wickedness. Death fell upon them just like sleep, and for them there was every good thing. Of its own accord the provident land bore abundant fruit without complaint, and gladly and peacefully did they live off their fields with many good things.

Some manuscripts end this passage with a line stating that the golden race was 'rich in sheep and beloved of the blessed gods', but this line is often deleted in modern editions as a later interpolation:[2] the fact that this golden age enjoys such a harmonious relationship with the land, and that animals are not mentioned as being a part of their lives, does at least suggest (if not directly indicate) that a vegetarian beginning was imagined. Centuries later, Empedocles, as might be expected of him (see above), also imagines an early world of peace: 'they were all tame and gentle towards men, both beasts and fowl, and friendly feelings radiated'.[3]

Aratus, writing in the third century BC, digresses from the astronomical theme of his poem *Phaenomena* to describe these past eras in an explanation of the appearance of the constellation Virgo, whom he describes as the *Dikê* ('justice') which fled from men when they began fighting with weaponry and eating meat.

92 Aratus, *Phaenomena* 108–117; 129–134

Men did not yet know of wretched feuding, nor of blaming condemnations, nor the roar of battle. They simply lived, situated far from the harsh sea, before the ships from afar brought them their livelihoods; rather, cattle and ploughs and she herself, Dikê, master of the people, bringer of justice: these things provided all and sundry. She was even there during the time that the earth still nourished the Golden race. But less so with the Silver race, and only a little longer was she ready to keep their company, yearning for the ways of their ancestors. But she was yet on earth during the time of the Silver race. [...]

But when that race also died the Bronze race came into being, more destructive than the last, the first to forge the lethal dagger and, along the way, the first to eat the ploughing cattle. And then Dikê hated that race of men and flew up towards heaven.

Other descriptions of the peaceful past are not explicitly articulated in terms of the golden age, but consciously recall the primitive conditions which existed before the advent of the current era; the best-known example of this also derives from early Greek literature in the Homeric descriptions of the land of the Cyclopes and an unsullied adjoining island. The evocative extended description can be set in contrast to the world in which the Greek sailors currently live (hence their curiosity) and the perspective of the speaker Odysseus. As the Cyclops Polyphemus is a son of Poseidon, the conditions on the Cyclopes' island may be

imagined as similar to an earlier time when the earth still bore fruit without tillage, and mortals of the earth had not developed their agricultural existence.

93 Homer, *Odyssey* 9.106–35

'We came to the land of the arrogant and lawless Cyclopes, who just trust in the immortal gods and don't plant crops with their hands or plough, but everything appears without sowing or ploughing: wheat, and barley, and grapevines which bring forth wine of the finest grapes, and which the rain of Zeus helps to grow. They have no council assemblies or laws (themistes)*: rather they dwell on the peaks of high mountains in hollow caves, and each makes his own laws for his children and bedfellows, and no one is heedful of any other.*

'Then there is a fertile wooded island that stretches along outside the harbour, neither near nor very far from the land of the Cyclopes. Huge numbers of wild goats can be found there, for there is no beaten path of man to keep their number down; nor do any hunters enter the place, those men who suffer hardships in the woodland as they trek the mountaintops. No flocks of sheep occupy it, nor is the land ploughed but day by day it does without being sown and ploughed by men, and instead it feeds all the bleating goats. For there are no red-painted ships for the Cyclopes, nor men skilled at ship building who might toil over the well-decked ships which could bring the place its fulfilment, sailing around the cities of men in the way that many sailors travel across the sea to each other: they could have worked to improve the island with the crafts of men. For it is not in any way a bad island, and could bear fruit in all seasons: there are soft and dewy meadows there by the shores of the grey sea, very good for keeping vines and ensuring their success; there is level cropland, especially good for always reaping an abundant harvest throughout the seasons as the earth beneath it is very rich'.

This episode inspired Euripides's satyr play *Cyclops*, which has Odysseus arrive on the Cyclopes' island to be greeted by a chorus of satyrs: the satyr Silenus tells Odysseus about the Cyclopes' lack of agriculture and their milk-and-meat diet (and laments their lack of wine, 122–4). In the Greek imagination the Cyclopes occupy a conceptual space somewhere between animals and nomads: they obey no laws, kill strangers and hunt for their food (Euripides's Polyphemus is hungry for lion meat at 248), but they are careful and diligent pastoralists – a touching passage of the *Odyssey* has the blinded Polyphemus lovingly address

his favoured ram in a vibrant description of the animal's pasturing (9.446–60).

Non-mythological descriptions of the idyllic life also shed light on the uses to which animal bodies and products are put in an ideal world: a large part of Hesiod's *Works and days* is devoted to instructing its purported addressee (the speaker's brother Perses) on the best way to run a farm; the narrative describes a year, and here the poet has reached the summer.

94 Hesiod, *Works and days* 582–92

But when the golden thistle flowers and the chirping cicada sitting in a tree often pours his bright song down from under his wings, in the season of wearisome heat: then goats are at their fattest and wine its best, women their lustiest, but men are at their feeblest because Sirius parches the head and knees, and their skin is also dry through heat. But at this time let there be a shady rock, some Biblian wine, milk cakes and the last of the fresh milk from the goats, and meat from a pastured cow that has never calved, and from first-born kids.

Bucolic poetry would become an important genre of Classical literature: the third-century BC poet Theocritus's first *Idyll* is a flagship for the Theocritean collection and the bucolic genre. The poem imagines animals as prizes for divine music contests (1.1–10) and describes a goatherd giving a goat and some cheese to a sailor in return for a beautiful cup (1.75–8); animals can form a backdrop for the human action, as in *Idyll* 3, where the speaker is a goatherd who leaves his goats with a friend so that he can serenade a sweetheart, with the goats used in the opening lines as a natural and impartial backdrop for the tumultuous ardour of the herdsman. (This is well-attested device: depictions of the Judgement of Paris in Classical art[4] similarly include an audience of goats which belong to the Trojan prince as he decides the winner in the contest which will begin the Trojan War, and in these cases the animals act as a stable landscape for the capricious activities of humans.) Elsewhere in Theocritus's *Idylls* goats produce more milk than their kids can drink (*Idyll* 1.25–26), cows are lowing for their absent masters (*Idyll* 4.12), and herdsmen wearing goatskin cloaks antagonize each other, wagering an animal each while their flocks misbehave (*Idyll* 5). The Cyclops Polyphemus is also the subject of two poems, milking ewes as he pines for the love of the nymph Galateia (whose name is a pun on the Greek *gala*, 'milk') in *Idylls* 6 and 11. The closeness of the natural world to song and poetry is made explicit

in the following hyperbolic description of the death of Daphnis, the legendary cowherd and mythical founder of the bucolic genre.

95 Theocritus, *Idylls* 1.70–74

'Lead the herdsman's song, dear Muses: lead the song'.
The very jackals, the very wolves howled for him,
And the lion in the forest lamented his passing.
'Lead the herdsman's song, dear Muses: lead the song'.

At his feet many oxen, many bulls,
Many heifers and many calves also howled.
'Lead the herdsman's song, dear Muses: lead the song'.

The Greek novels are similarly bucolic in tone. In Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe* the two eponymous protagonists start life as babies suckled by animals after being exposed: they herd goats and sheep respectively as they get older, and their eyes frequently meet over their animals (for example, 2.39); their romance is played out among the flocks, conjuring up an ideal pastoral image of love among the bleating animals. The following description of a hunting party is supposed to evoke the wholesome leisure which can take place in such a setting, with young men engaged in honest and wholesome animal hunting typified by their eating the animals they catch.

96 Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.12

A group of rich young men from Methymna wanted some fun, so they arranged to spend the harvest season away from home and launched a little boat with one of their house slaves as an oarsman.[...]They sailed along and made some landings, doing no harm and enjoying various larks: sometimes fishing, perched on some rocky outcrop dangling fine strings to catch fish among the rocks; sometimes chasing hares with dogs and nets as they fled the racket into the vines; and sometimes spending their time hunting birds, catching wild geese, ducks and bustards in their snares. So in this way their amusements also provided rich pickings for their table.

In times of civil unrest and warfare, the spoils of peace are wistfully described by authors keen to incite their audience to desist from their martial activities. This device is used in the peace plays of Aristophanes:

Acharnians features a comic market scene dealing in piglets and eels (750ff.), enabled by the protagonist Dicaeopolis's negotiation of a private peace with Sparta, against whom Athens had been fighting for several years when the play was performed in 425 BC. (Actually the 'piglets' turn out to be a trader's daughters dressed up as pigs, as the war-impoverished trader desperately tries to sell them in an undeniably comic scene which is also uncomfortably laden with sexual innuendo and pre-empts the work of Carol Adams; see also below §134). In Aristophanes's *Peace,* the protagonist Trygaeus has flown to heaven to retrieve the goddess Peace in order to end the war; here we see a sacrifice to the goddess and Trygaeus's prayer for a return to pre-war plenty. Note that an animal sacrifice to the goddess Peace is preferred, and moreover that a meat-free sacrifice is dismissed outright, but the joke in the final lines does suggest the paradox of performing a blood sacrifice to Peace.

97 Aristophanes, *Peace* 922–38; 987–1022

SLAVE: *Come on then, what should we do now?*
TRYGAEUS: *What else but to set up an offering of pots?*
SLAVE: Pots? *Like for a grumbling little Hermes?*
TRYGAEUS: *What do you suggest? Would you like it to be a fattened bullock?*
SLAVE: *No, we must have no more bellowing bullocks.*
TRYGAEUS: *A great big fat pig then?*
SLAVE: *No, no.*
TRYGAEUS: *Why not?*
SLAVE: *We don't want any of Theogenes's porking.*
TRYGAEUS: *Well what's left that you would be happy with?*
SLAVE: *'Baa'.*
TRYGAEUS: *'Baa'?*
SLAVE: *Yes by Zeus.*
TRYGAEUS: *Is that some Ionian word?*
SLAVE: *Yes indeed, on purpose: so that if anyone in the Assembly says that we must go to war, the assemblymen can use the Ionian form and say in alarm that it's a 'baad' idea …*
TRYGAEUS: *Good thinking!*
SLAVE: *… and that they will also be more gentle in other ways. For we shall adopt the ways of lambs towards one other, yea, and be milder towards our allied states.*
TRYGAEUS: *Go then, go as fast as you can and fetch a sheep: I'll provide an altar so that we can sacrifice at it.*

[The preparations are made, and after some knockabout action Trygaeus says a prayer to the goddess Peace.]

'…no [don't be coy] but, like a noble woman,
fully show yourself to us, your lovers:
we're shagged out waiting through these thirteen years.
Please stop the fighting and the tumult
so we may call on you: 'Lysimache' ('battle-dissolver').
Stop all the whispering suspicions
which fuel the vacant babbling amongst ourselves:
mix up the Greeks anew, in the juice of friendship,
and in our mind, blend a gentler fellow feeling.
And grant that our markets shall be filled
with good things: Megarian garlic,[5]
early cucumbers, apples, pomegranates,
little cloaks for the slaves; that we should see
geese, ducks, pigeons and wrens brought from Boeotia,
and large basketsful of eels coming from Lake Copais.
And that in the midst of these we shall crowd around
and buy them, jostling with Morychus, Teleas, Glauketes
and many other foodies; and that later Melanthius
should come to the market after the eels are sold,
and then wail about his misfortune,
singing from the Medea:

> *"Ruined, I am lost!*
> *Sadly bereft of her who lay*
> *Wrapt in wild spinach!"*

and that men should rejoice at this.
We pray you grant these things to us, o highly honoured one'.
Right, take the sacrificial knife and slaughter the sheep just like a proper butcher.

SLAVE: *But it's not lawful.*
TRYGAEUS: *Why ever not?*
SLAVE: *Because Peace doesn't like slaughter: there's no blood on* her *altar.*
TRYGAEUS: *Well bring it inside then, and when it's sacrificed and you cut off the thigh-bones, bring them out here (and that saves our producer the cost of a sheep!).*

Nowhere are the spoils of peace more boldly proclaimed than in the cultural programme of the emperor Augustus, manifested in the poetry of Virgil and Horace as well as in the surviving visual media. The sculpted decoration of the Ara Pacis in Rome is teeming with animal life, and commenting on the iconography of a set of reliefs from a public fountain in Praeneste showing a wild sow, a ewe and a lioness each sucking their young, Paul Zanker notes that their theme is mammalian motherhood and natural parental love in the animal world: a theme which, as we have seen, stimulated the imagination of writers throughout the Classical period. 'Thanks to their generalized and universal character, such peaceful scenes of animal life could always be used to invoke the myth of the new age. These symbols of motherhood could be juxtaposed with tokens of *pietas*, with a paean to the simple rustic life, or with allusions to Augustus – the combination was always right'.[6] The literature is similar in tone, with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* offering 'the most detailed evocation of the golden age'.[7]

Virgil treats bucolic themes rather more practically. His first *Eclogue* is a conversation between two herdsmen: Meliboeus, who is forever driving his flocks around the harsh countryside while Tityrus has been to Rome to plea for the return of his land. The experiences of the two characters reflect Virgil's own: his land, like many others', had been requisitioned as a pension for veterans of the civil war which Augustus had ended. This *Eclogue* is replete with the language of bucolic plenty, in keeping with the broader visual programme of the Augustan peace with the new emperor at its core: 'A god gave us this leisure, o Meliboeus: for he will forever be a god to me' (1.6–7); 'he was the first to give an answer to my petition. "Feed your oxen, boys, just as in old times: rear your bulls"' (1.45). In the following passage, written in 40 BC, all the colours of the promised Augustan peace are displayed, literally flowing with milk and honey. The poem begins with the return of the same 'Virgo' that Aratus described as *Dikê* (§92 above), the goddess of justice who left the earth in disgust at man's depravity when he began to eat draught animals: addressed to a princely child whose identity is disputed, the image Virgil presents is that of a mythological new beginning so that the golden age and the age of heroes will be repeated in the new age of Roman glory. As in the visual programme, animals are enlisted as co-conspirators in the natural continuum which signals, in its entirety, its approval of the new political order.

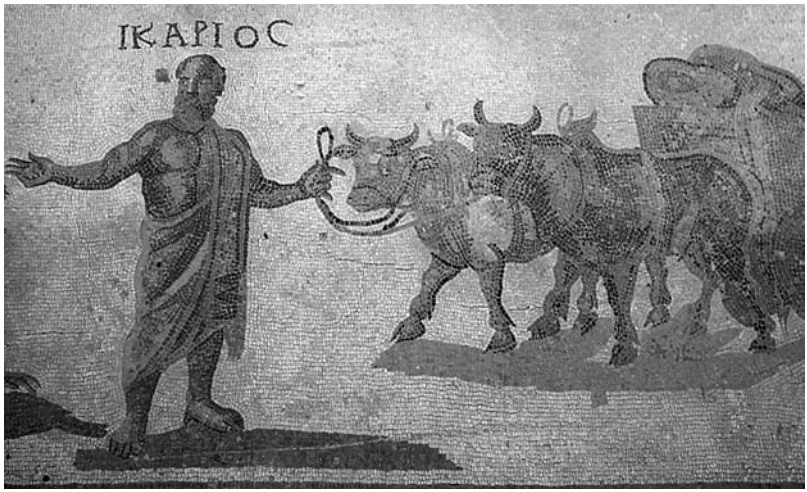

Figure 6.1 Icarius leading an ox-drawn cart full of wine given to him by Dionysus: mosaic from Nea Paphos, Cyprus, late-second/early-third century AD. Photo: the late Leon Henig

98 Virgil, *Eclogues* 4.4–8; 18–45

The last age of the Cumaean song has already arrived: the great order of the ages has been freshly born. And Virgo has returned, and the reign of Saturn has returned. [...] But to you, child, the earth uncultivated pours out its first little gifts: wandering ivy everywhere, and wild fragrant roots, and a mix of Egyptian bean lilies and smiling acanthus. Of their own accord the goats will bring home their udders swollen with milk, and the herds will not fear great lions. Fragrant flowers will pour to your cradle, and the serpent will perish, as will the deceitful poisonous plants. Soothing Assyrian spices will arise from everyone's soil. And then, when you can read the praise of heroes and the deeds of your father and when you are able to understand virtue, so gradually the fields will turn golden with ears of corn; blushing-red grapes will hang on wild brambles; and the hard oak will drip with dewy honey. Though a few traces of the ancient crimes will linger: to attempt the sea in ships, to surround towns with walls, and to cut furrows into the earth; and there will be a second Tiphys and a second Argo to carry chosen heroes; there will be a second war in Troy and great Achilles will be sent again. And then, by the time the strengthened years have made you a man even the merchant will decide to abandon the sea, and neither will the pine-wood ship exchange goods as every land will bear

all produce. The soil will not suffer the mattock, nor the vine the sickle; the hardy plough man too will now untie his bulls from the yoke. Nor will wool be taught to assume many colours, but of his own accord the ram in the meadows will change his fleece, at once to sweetly blushing purple, or now to saffron yellow, and vermilion will spontaneously clothe the pasturing lambs.

However, no political programme would sensibly advocate a life free of labour, and the toil of the farmer is romantically described by Virgil in the second of his *Georgics*. These four lengthy poems go into great detail in describing the animal world, and Virgil displays a great sensitivity to animal matters in his minute descriptions of their habits. Virgil's long third *Georgic* is entirely devoted to animal themes,[8] and in addition to offering practical advice on how to pasture sheep for the best wool (3.384f.) or milk (3.394f.) he goes so far as to vividly describe the diseases and injuries of animals and recount a catastrophic plague which killed every animal it touched (*Georgics* 3.488ff.). The following excerpt focuses instead on the rewards of a hardworking farmer, with his loyal cattle and happy pigs.

99 Virgil, *Georgics* 2.513–26

[Meanwhile] the farmer has turned the soil with a crooked plough: from this comes his year's work, from this he supports his country and his little grandsons, from this his herds of cows and loyal bullocks. Nor is there any relief, except that the year overflows either with fruits or with breeding cattle or with the stalks of wheat, weighing down the furrows with produce and overloading the granaries. Winter comes: Sicyon's fruit is trodden in the olive mill, the pigs come home happily full with acorns, the woods give wild strawberries; autumn serves up its varied produce, and the mellow vintage basks high on sunny rocks. All the while his dear children hang around his kisses, his chaste household guards its modesty, the cows' udders hang heavy with milk, and on the happy grass the plump kids wrestle with each other horn-to-horn.

Rather less optimistically, in his sixteenth *Epode* Horace encourages all noble and forward-thinking Romans to flee the city because of the hardships of the civil war. 'Rome is falling … wild beasts will soon take back the land' (16.1, 16.10): so let us leave for the blessed islands, where the untilled land produces grain and the untrained vines bring forth grapes. 'There, the goats come unbidden to the milk pail, and the friendly flock

returns with stretching udders' (16. 49–50); the sheep are untroubled by bears, and the flocks are free from disease. Low level urban discontent also provokes bucolic nostalgia, and in his second *Epode*, given here in its entirety, Horace describes the Roman 'good life' in detail through the mouth of an urban moneylender who wistfully dreams of escaping to the country.

100 Horace, *Epode 2*

'Happy is he who, far away from his business, like the ancient race of mortals, works his ancestral fields with his own oxen, spared from financial matters: he's not a soldier startled by the fierce trumpet, nor does he fear the angry sea, and he avoids both the forum and the proud doorways of the more powerful citizens. So he either weds the lofty poplars to the well-grown vines; or he seeks his lowing flocks, wandering in a secluded valley and, cutting off useless branches with his sickle, grafts in better ones; or he stores his pressed honey in clean amphorae; or he shaves his feeble sheep. Or when, in the fields, Autumn has lifted up his head adorned with ripe fruits, how the farmer rejoices as he picks the grafted pears and the grapes that challenge the purple-fish in colour – grapes with which he will honour you, Priapus, and you, father Silvanus, protector of his territory. It is pleasant to lie sometimes under an old holm-oak tree, or sometimes on the clumped grass; and meanwhile the waters flow in their deep channels, birds chatter in the woods, and the flowing springs make a gentle noise as invitation to soft sleep. But when the wintery season of thundering Jove brings rains and snows, he either drives the fierce boars from here and there with a pack of dogs into waiting misfortune, or stretches his thin nets with a smooth pole to trap the greedy thrushes, and captures in his snare the sweet prizes: the timid hare and the migrant crane. With all these things, who does not forget the destructive worries which love brings about? But if a chaste wife, helping with the house and the sweet children (like a Sabine woman, or the sun-blushed wife of a hardy Apulian) should pile up the sacred hearth with seasoned firewood for the return of her weary husband, and, shutting in the fat cattle in woven pens and draining their swelling udders, and drawing this year's wine newly out of the jar, prepares an unpurchased feast, then not even Lucrine oysters would please me more, nor the turbot or the parrotfish (should the stormy winter drive any from Eastern tides to this sea), nor could I eat the African fowl or Ionian meadow birds with more pleasure than the olive selected from the richest branches of the trees, the sorrel that loves the meadows, the mallow that restores an unwell body, or a lamb slaughtered at the Terminalia or a kid saved from

a wolf. Amid such feasts, how wonderful to see the well-fed sheep hurrying home, to see the wearied oxen dragging the upturned ploughshare with stooped neck, and the home-born slaves – the hallmark of a wealthy household – set all around the smiling Lares!' After he said all this Alfius, the man of finance, just about to embark on his future as a farmer, collected his money on the Ides. He'll put it out again on the Kalends.

Part II

The Treatment of Animals in the Classical World

7
Animal Study and Experimentation

The study of animals as accounted for in Classical texts takes two forms, which are broadly similar to the ways they are studied in the modern era: there is some evidence for bodily experimentation in the forms of dissection and vivisection; and several texts describe animal behaviour (some of which were seen above, Chapter 4). The evidence for bodily experimentation is quite fragmentary, but there is no doubt that dissection took place on a large scale, particularly in the Roman period: several anatomical treatises survive, most notably those of Aristotle, but other works are preserved in the Galenic corpus.[1] Evidence from Galen confirms that vivisection took place (see below), and although the extent of ancient vivisection is not clear, it seems likely that vivisection was widespread, and the promotion of vivisection by seventeenth-century doctors and philosophers including Descartes probably offers a parallel for the sort of intellectual and ethical boundaries of their ancient counterparts.

A small number of texts, principally the biological works of Aristotle, discuss the principles and motivations for studying animals: Aristotle's biological works represent a systematic attempt at understanding how biological organisms function, and in a discussion of spurious popular beliefs about the violent gestation of lions, Pliny the Elder gives the following incidental information about the regal sponsorship of Aristotle's intellectual feat, linking animal experimentation with an imperialist ideology. Although Pliny's comment indicates that Aristotle's sponsored research was more 'field based', much anatomical detail derived from dissection is to be found in the Aristotelian biological works.

101 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 8.17

As King Alexander the Great was inflamed with a desire to become informed about the natures of animals, and delegating directorship of this study to Aristotle (a man of the highest learning in all fields), orders were given out to thousands of men throughout the whole of Asia and Greece – all those who were hunters, fowlers, fishermen, custodians of game parks and those concerned with herds of cattle, apiaries, fisheries and aviaries, so that no creature born anywhere might be unknown to him. His enquiries about them led to his renowned works on animals, numbering nearly 50 volumes.

The idea of the violent gestation of lions also appears in a passage of the *Histories* of Herodotus, with lionesses paradoxically assumed to be capable of producing only one cub apiece: written long before the extensive studies of Aristotle, the following text suggests the sort of popular context in which biological theories could appear. The sort of natural determinism which fuels Aristotle's enquiry into the forms of animals is traced in Herodotus to the relative fertility of predators and prey, and touches on the subject of superfetation in hares (a subject which was mentioned by Aristotle and continues to puzzle modern biologists).[2]

102 Herodotus, *Histories* 3.108

Divine providence being wise (as seems likely), it made those sorts of animal which are prey and of a timid spirit particularly good at reproducing, so that some may remain despite being constantly devoured; and those sorts which are tough and fierce, it made to reproduce less. So the hare, hunted by beasts, by birds and by men, is consequently a good reproducer: it superfetates alone of all the wild animals, and of the young in the mother's stomach some may be found covered in fur, some bald, some as they were first formed in the womb, and some just conceived. Such is the gestation of the hare: conversely the lioness, being the strongest and boldest, gives birth to only one cub in her life because when she gives birth she expels her womb at the same time. The reason is this: whenever the cub begins to move around inside the womb, because it has claws which are sharper than those of any other wild animal it scratches the womb; and growing larger, it scratches ever more, and as the time of birth approaches there is absolutely no healthy part of the womb left.

Several times in Aristotle's biological works he discusses the principles behind his enquiries, and in these passages there is a clear sense that the philosophical position that man is endowed with *logos* influences the

resulting studies. Before discussing the in-depth details which form his *Parts of animals*, Aristotle reveals the close connection between biology and the sorts of mental capabilities discussed in the first chapters above: man's endowment with *logos*, as Aristotle (and Socrates before him)[3] points out, is caused by biology not only in respect of the tongue and lips but also of the mind.

103 Aristotle, *Parts of animals* 656a

So as the nature of plants is stationary, it does not consist of many types of forms in relation to varying parts: for their few functions use few organs. Thus their nature must be studied on its own. But the nature of animals which have perception (aisthêsis) *has its own greater multiformity, some more markedly than others, and to the greatest extent among those who have by nature not only life but good life. Such a one is the race of men: for of all the animals which are known to us, man alone – or most of all – has a share of the divine. So, then, because of this, and because the shapes of his external parts are especially familiar, we must speak of man first. For a start, in man alone do the natural parts appear according to nature, and his upper parts are situated upwards in the higher universe; for of all animals, man is the only one which is upright.*

104 Aristotle, *Parts of animals* 641a–b

Having said this, the question may now be raised of whether natural science should treat all of the soul (psychê) *or just a part of it. For if we are to consider all of it, there would be nothing left for any philosophy besides the study of natural science: for it would encompass both the mind and the things which are of the mind. Just as knowledge of natural science should be for investigating all aspects of a thing – for the study of both the mind and the effects of the mind each in relation to the other, the same study also applies to all things in relation to each other, exactly as with perception* (aisthêsis) *and the objects of perception. But it is not the whole of the soul which is responsible for kinetic movement, nor all its parts, but a part like that found in plants may govern growth, another variation in quality of perception, and a different part may be responsible for the power of movement – though not a part connected with the mind: the power of movement is found in other animals, but intelligent thought* (dianoia) *is not. So it is clear that we do not have to talk about the entire soul, for a being's nature* (physis) *is not the entire soul, but just some part (or more) of it.*

Aristotle outlines the principles and values of animal experimentation, and like his assertion that man is endowed with *logos*, his description of his biological mission is also linked to his teleological theory: everything in nature is designed with specific ends, and the components of nature lead us closer to understanding what the ends are; the enquiry is ultimately a philosophical one which helps the philosopher understand the order of the world, a substantial difference from the motivations of contemporary medical or cosmetic animal experimentation which proclaim their necessity for practical human safety.

105 Aristotle, *Parts of animals* 645a

Since we have gone through the arguments about the way [divine things] appear to us, it is left to us to speak about the nature of living things, leaving out nothing in our power, whether apparently ignoble or held in great esteem. For even with those creatures which aren't perceived favourably, nevertheless under scientific study the nature that crafted them provides enormous pleasures to those able to know their causes and also to those of a philosophical nature. And it would also be unreasonable and paradoxical if we enjoyed viewing images of animals, in that we also marvel at the skill of the image makers, whether painters or sculptors, and yet do not prize more highly the study of the nature which put them together (or at least those persons who are able to perceive their causes). For this reason, we must not feel childish aversion to the examination of less esteemed animals. For there is something wonderful in all aspects of the natural world: this according to Heraclitus, who is said to have spoken thus to some strangers who wanted to meet him. (When they came to a halt, seeing him in his kitchen warming himself by the oven, he called out to them not to be afraid to enter, for there were also gods in there.) Thus we must not be ashamed to go ahead with the examination of each of the animals, as in all of them there is something natural and beautiful. For especially in natural works, things are not random, but are for the sake of something: the ends (telos) *for the sake of which these things have been arranged or have come into being have assumed a beautiful place. If anyone thought that the study of the other animals was a lowly task, he should also think the same thing about himself: one cannot look at the things out of which the race of men is made (such as blood, flesh, bones, blood vessels, and that sort of thing) without considerable disgust.*

With this in mind Aristotle goes into more detail on the specific biological differences between humans and non-human animals, and his reasoning in the following passage is again revealing, that is, 'if

human lips and tongues weren't designed as they are, then the letters would be unpronounceable: humans were biologically designed to make use of the divine principle of *logos*', rather than the modern view which might be expressed: 'because our lips and tongue are the way they are, we were able to create the letters, and consequently become beings with *logos*'.

106 Aristotle, *Parts of animals* 659b–660a

In all other animals [except man] the nature of the lips is as protector and guard of the teeth, thus they have a share in the way they are divided because of the precision and perfection with which the teeth are made. In men the lips are soft and fleshy and can be separated, and they are for guarding the teeth, as in other animals, yet they also have a noble (eu) *function: for they, and other things, are for the use of* logos. *Just as nature has made this tongue differently from that of other animals, being used for two functions (according to what we have said is nature's way with many things), namely for flavours and for speech* (logos), *so the lips are for this and for the protection of the teeth. For* logos, *which is made with the voice, is compounded from letters: were the tongue not the way it is, and the lips not moist, most of the letters would be unpronounceable.*

The discussion goes on to consider human teeth in the same capacity. Much of Aristotle's anatomical details evidently come from dissection, which had been practised in Greece for at least a century before he was writing. Active in the fifth century BC, and considered a pupil of Pythagoras in antiquity, Alcmaeon of Croton was mentioned above by Theophrastus as denying of animals the mental property *sunesis* (intelligence in respect of articulation, see above, §13); the same Alcmaeon is also cited as the first dissectionist,[4] based on his having identified that there is a 'path' between the eye and the brain, generally considered the result of his having dissected an eyeball. Later philosophical and medical writings further theorized on anatomical matters and were probably based on experience of dissection:[5] these studies are sometimes referred to and criticized by Aristotle, and perhaps because of his probable remit from Alexander the Great, or because of the fact that he was head of the Lyceum, Aristotle was able to go further and systematically describe animal bodies, righting the wrongs of earlier thinkers as he goes. He occasionally gives indications of how he gathered his evidence, and after discussing the shortcomings of earlier work on the circulatory system, he here details the best way to proceed.

107 Aristotle, *History of animals* 513a

Because the observation is so difficult, as people have previously described, if anyone particularly cares about this topic, the best way to properly study it is to strangle animals that have been starved thin in advance.

Aristotle's *Parts of animals* shows a close and systematic familiarity with, among other things, blood (650b14), marrow, including that of embryos and brains (652a24, 655b28ff.), as well as detailed descriptions of the internal organs of a variety of creatures *passim*, information which constitutes the bulk of the work, and although he does not often explicitly detail his use of dissection his *Generation of animals* (719a), he does refer to drawings from dissections. Vivisection is not particularly well attested in Aristotle's biological works, but was doubtless widespread: it is unlikely that the practice prompted the same moral questions which it does today (though human vivisection prompted comment: see below), and one wonders how Aristotle knew that 'when [the brain] is touched, no sensation is produced' (*Parts of animals* 652b); *Generation of animals* 779a mentions embryos waking up during the mothers' dissection. Again, the differences between men and animals are noted in this work, and discussions of human embryos such as the first extract below were perhaps facilitated by a high infant mortality rate. The obscure sources for Aristotle's data make it difficult to judge whether observations such as those in the second passage relate to performed experiments or are a logical deduction based on hearsay and augmented by Aristotle's own conclusions and observations. Aristotle describes the regeneration of the eyes of swallow chicks, and English translator Arthur Platt supplies much information on the veracity of this remark, quoting from the seventeenth-century Italian physician Francisco Redi, who 'made the experiment himself on many birds'.[6]

108 Aristotle, *Generation of animals* 744a

From the beginning, the head [of a foetus] is very large because of the brain, and the eyes appear large because of the fluid in them. They take their final form last because the brain is only scarcely formed, for only at length does it lose its coldness and wetness: this is the case for all creatures which have one, but especially humans. Because of this the bregma *is the last of the bones to be formed: for by the time embryos are brought forth, this bone is soft in infants. The reason that this is especially the case with humans is that they have more moisture in the brain, and it is larger than in other animals; the reason for this*

is that the heat in their heart is purest. His intelligence (dianoia) *demonstrates his mild nature: for humans are the wisest* (phronimôtatos) *of animals.*

109 Aristotle, *Generation of animals* 774b

Some birds too hatch young which are unfinished and blind, such birds as lay a lot of eggs but are not large in the body: crows, jays, sparrows, and swallows, and birds which lay few eggs but do not provide too much food [in the form of yolk] for their young when they lay their eggs, like the ringdove, the turtle-dove and the pigeon. For this reason, if ever someone should prick out the eyes of swallows while they are still young, they will heal: for they are still being formed and are not fully developed when destroyed, because of which they bud and grow from the start again.

110 Aristotle, *On youth and old age* 468a–b

It seems to be the case – both from perception (aisthêsis) *and reason* (logos) *– that the origin of the soul which causes growth is in the middle of three parts:*[7] *in many animals, after each part is separated – both the part called the head, and the part which receives the food – life remains with whatever part contains the middle. This clearly happens with insects such as wasps and bees; and many of the non-insects are able to survive when cut into pieces by means of the growth-causing part [of the soul]. [...]*

Such animals [as survive being cut up] resemble many animals which have grown together, but it does not occur in those animals which are put together best, as they are of a higher nature. And because of this, it can be seen that when divided up, some of their parts retain some physical sensation: they continue to move after some of their innards have been separated, such as with tortoises after their hearts have been removed.

In the early first century AD the Roman writer Aulus Celsus provides an uncharacteristically negative moral insight to the practice of vivisection, all the more unusual for its chronology when the Roman games were in full swing. He described the practice as carried out on humans in that other great society of literary and scientific curiosity, Ptolemaic Alexandria: in the preface to his *De medicina* Celsus describes the Alexandrian scientists Herophilus and Erasistratus practicing vivisection on criminals (*De medicina*, preface 23–4). The context is broadly one of a dispute between theorists on one side (among whom Celsus ranks Pythagoras, Democritus and Empedocles as the earliest) and the *Empirici*, who separated medicine from philosophy and focused instead

on experiment and practice. Celsus remarks that 'to lay open living bodies (*corpora vivorum*) is as cruel as it is needless; that of the dead is a necessity for the learner, who should know positions and relations, which the dead body exhibits better than does a living and wounded man' (*De medicina,* preface, 74).[8] The Latin *corpora vivorum* may literally refer to any living thing, and the passage was even translated as 'to dissect the bodies of living animals is both cruel and superfluous' in Alexander Lee's 1831 edition (p.23), but Celsus's text in general makes few references to animals and, significantly, gives no indication of the supposed usefulness – or otherwise – of animal dissection or vivisection for human medical study. As far as the evidence from Celsus is concerned, two conclusions may be drawn: either animal dissection and vivisection was not regarded as medically useful or – much more likely – it was so commonplace as to be beneath the notice of most writers.

More solid evidence for animal dissection and vivisection may be found in the writings associated with Galen, the Pergamene doctor who enjoyed the patronage of the Roman emperors in the late second century AD. There are many references to vivisection in his surviving *On anatomical procedures*:[9] a notorious chapter on 'exposure of the brain in the living animal', for example, instructs that 'for this purpose you must procure either a pig or a goat, in order to combine two requirements. In the first place, you avoid seeing the unpleasant face of the ape while being vivisected. The other reason is that the animal on which the dissection takes place should cry out with a really loud voice, a thing one does not find with apes'.[10] The implications of this passage are revealing: for example it is known that the ape, when being vivisected, does not cry out. At several other points Galen refers to dissecting apes (usually dead ones) which are preferred for their resemblance to humans.

In addition to the 'philosophical' experiments on animal bodies, the use of animal bodies and products for medical purposes is graphically described in Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historiae* ('Natural history'). The twenty-eighth book contains detailed information concerning remedies derived from 'living creatures' (*animalibus*, here meaning non-human animals), which follow several books on remedies derived from plants, trees and humans. As is the case with the animal work of Aelian (see above), the modern reader cannot be sure of the seriousness of Pliny's intentions or his concern for the veracity of the facts he relates: at the beginning of the first of his books on remedies he explains that diamonds are impervious to all force and materials, but can be shattered with the blood of a goat

(*Natural history* 20.1), and his remedies using human hair and saliva border on the absurd, but may conceivably have been used in practice. Unlike Aelian, Pliny was widely travelled, and it may be sensible to regard such remedies as folk medicine. In addition to the remedies described below, he includes details of the use of camel's brain and urine, a lengthy section on hyenas, including their scalps, teeth and genitals, and much more: the book on animal remedies is in fact an encyclopaedic account of the uses of the viscera and excreta of most living things, in addition to the scattered references in books 8 and 9, such as the use of hedgehog spines (see below §132) and lizard venom (*Natural history* 8.38). To take the section on hyenas: the work's translator remarks that 'perhaps none of the seventy-nine "remedies" in chapter 28 can be considered rational',[11] but there is every reason to believe that despite the fanciful nature of Pliny's remedies the trade in exotic animal products was vigorous, particularly at this point in Roman history when the games were at their height. The numbers of exotic animals involved in the games, allowing generous margins for those which died in transportation, probably resulted in a robust economy of exotic animal farming and products (see below), and it is easy to suppose that the physical bodies of the animals were subject to this sort of afterlife. The supposed aphrodisiac properties of the elephant's trunk foreshadow the catastrophic modern myth of the effects of rhinoceros horn, the modern trade in which may offer a plausible parallel for the remedial theories described by Pliny, though the evidence indicates that the ancient trade was apparently unfettered by legal regulation.

111 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 28.24–25

The blood of the elephant, particularly males, quietens all fluxes which are known as rheumatisms. Ivory scrapings mixed with Attic honey, as they say, are good for facial blemishes, and mixed with sawdust for infections of the cuticle. Touching an elephant's trunk relieves pain in the head, especially if the elephant sneezes. The right side of the trunk, attached with red Lemnian earth, stimulates passionate desire. The blood is good for consumptives, and the liver for epilepsy. The fat of the lion mixed with oil of roses protects the skin of the face from blemishes and maintains a lustrous complexion; it also heals burns from the freezing snow, and is good for swelling. According to the falsehoods of magicians, he who anoints himself with lion fat will be elevated in the favour of the people and of kings, especially when the fat comes from 'between the eyebrows' – where there is no fat – and similarly with lions' teeth, more so with

those from the right side, and the coarse hair from beneath the mouth. The lion's bile, mixed with water and used as an ointment, clears the eyes; and, with its fat, dispels epilepsy, though it must be only slightly tasted, and immediately the taster must start to run in order to dissipate it. The lion's heart, as food, cures fourth-day fevers; the fat with rose oil cures daily fevers…

8
Animals and Warfare

In a world without heavy automated machinery and where day-to-day economics depended as much on pasture land as anything else, animals were unwitting perpetrators and inevitable victims of ancient warfare. Animals were crucially important for the execution of all military activity, most especially as draught animals, and the detailed descriptions of campaigns which occupy much space in the Greek and Latin historical texts are laid against an animal backdrop which included horses and baggage animals in their thousands, in addition to more exotic fighting animals such as elephants. Horses formed the backbone of military charges, and were evidently used in very large numbers;[1] and these war animals even had their own heroic rôle model in Alexander the Great's legendary horse Bucephalus. Animals were also valuable resources to be fought over: cattle and other herds were a major factor in the accumulation and storage of wealth. Although the narrative of the Trojan War is of one exceptional campaign waged on behalf of a slighted husband whose wife had been abducted, in the Homeric epics which became the bibles of ancient warfare, other stories of cattle plundering are common in tangential narratives and in the story of Odysseus's journey back to Ithaca. Here the older Greek warrior Nestor relates a former exploit, and his description of the number of animals seized is a formula which occurs four times in the Homeric corpus in other accounts of cattle raids.[2]

112 Homer, *Iliad* 11.670–81

'If only I were still in my prime and my strength was as sure as when strife arose between us and the Eleans because of cattle raiding, when I killed Itymoneus, the noble son of Hypeirochus who used to live in Elis, as I was driving off the

reprisal booty [the cattle]: warding us off the cattle in the front ranks, he was felled by a spear thrown from my hand, and the country men fled. We drove out a huge amount of booty from the plain: 50 herds of cattle; as many flocks of sheep; as many herds of pigs; as many widespread herds of goats; and 150 chestnut horses, all mares, many with foals under them.

However, the Homeric texts relate to a society which is shrouded in the distant past, and although such brigandage was doubtless common in the ancient Mediterranean, several later accounts more directly explain the hardships of animals in war. Thucydides, in his history of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC), wrote within living memory of the events he described and was himself an Athenian general: his voice is one of immediate recollection of the events he narrates, and the impact of the Peloponnesian war on the animal world was considerable according to his account. In the second book of his *History* Thucydides reports a speech of Pericles in which he urges the Athenians to come inside the walls of the city and bring all their property in from the countryside (2.13–14): this famous and controversial decision involved the relocation of flocks and draught animals to the nearby island of Euboea and other islands, and Thucydides explains the extreme hardship of the Athenians' having to surrender their agrarian lifestyle. A century later, the military writer Aeneas Tacticus spells out the procedure in his *Polyorketika*, a manual on how to survive a siege.

113 Aeneas Tacticus, *Poliorcetica* 10.1–2

Also one must announce to citizens who have possession of draught animals or farm slaves that they should evacuate them to neighbours [in nearby towns] as they cannot be brought into the [walled] city. For those who may not have the foreign contacts to whom to evacuate, they are to be deposited with neighbours by the public authority, and preparations made for the safety of the evacuated [goods].

The Peloponnesian War, in common with many other military narratives, documents episodes of hardship and cruelty to the animals involved: this takes the form not only of overwork and neglectful treatment, but incidents of intentional slaughter as destruction of enemy resources as well as wanton massacre. The seventh book of Thucydides's *History* details the most difficult and harrowing part of the war for his Athenian readership, with the Spartans then-recently encamped less than fifteen miles' distance from an Athens preparing for a mission to Sicily which

was to become one of the most traumatic episodes of the whole war; in the second passage below, a Thracian force whom the Athenians could no longer afford to pay are being escorted through enemy Boeotia, and take out their frustration on a village.

114 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 7.27

[The Athenians] were robbed of their whole countryside and more than 20,000 slaves had deserted – and the greater part of them skilled workers. They lost all of their sheep and draught animals; and as for their horses, as the cavalry rode out every day making inroads against Decelea and guarding the countryside, some were made lame by being constantly worked upon hard ground and suffering from their heavy work, and some were wounded [by the enemy].

115 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian* 7.29

Charging into Mycalessus, the Thracians laid waste both to houses and to temples, and they started killing people, sparing neither the elderly nor the very young, but killed all in turn, both women and children; and moreover they killed draught animals and any other living thing (empsycha) *that they saw. For the race of Thracians are like the worst of the barbarians in their boldness; they are the most murderous. And there was no less mayhem in other areas, and all kinds of abominable death were meted out: they also fell upon a children's school, which was the biggest there, and the children there had just then entered the place – the Thracians cut them all down.*

Disgruntled Spartan soldiers take out their anger on draught animals by killing a herd of oxen after the unexpected departure of their Macedonian allies in the following excerpt. Such wholesale slaughter of animal bystanders has many parallels in modern conflicts, and there is a wealth of contemporary evidence for soldiers abusing and mistreating animals in war zones:[3] this narrative has extra strategic force as the brutal atrocity inspires the Macedonian king Perdiccas to switch allegiances from Sparta to Athens.

116 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian* 4.128

As the Spartan soldiers were angry at the premature departure of the Macedonians, they took it out on whatever yokes of oxen or discarded equipment they happened to find on the road (after a panicked nighttime departure it would be likely to find such things) by unyoking and killing the oxen, and

commandeering the equipment. After this, for the first time Perdiccas began to consider Brasidas an enemy and to feel a hatred towards the rest of the Peloponnesians which did not accord with his judgement as an enemy of the Athenians; so, departing from his security plan he started to effect a quick reversal in order to form an allegiance with the Athenians and break off relations with the Peloponnesians.

Perdiccas' reaction and the noteworthiness of the event suggest that such murderous behaviour is clearly disapproved of – similarly in Cicero's condemnatory *Philippics* (3.31, written around AD 44/43) he accuses Mark Antony of wanton destruction of farm animals – but this disapproval may best be interpreted as a failure on the part of the aggressors to utilize the considerable and valuable resources which the enemies' animals represent, rather than there being any sense that the animals have any right not to be slaughtered.

Several evocative texts describe graphic assaults featuring animals set on fire, with attacks by Hannibal during the Second Punic War (218–201 BC) earning comment from Greek historian Polybius less than a century later (Polybius 3.93), mentioning 2,000 oxen set alight and charging against the Romans; a separate incident perpetrated by Hannibal was narrated in the histories of Cassius Dio.

117 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* (epitome) 8.26[4]

When it was getting towards winter and Hannibal could neither spend the winter in that place because of a lack of the necessities, nor escape, as several times his attempts to exit Campania had been thwarted, he devised a plan of this kind. He slaughtered all of his prisoners in order that no one of them might escape and provide the Romans with intelligence; then he gathered the cattle which were in camp, tied torches to their horns, and, when night fell, he went to the hills of the Samnites, lit the torches and startled the cattle. Made frantic by the fire and by being driven on, they set fires all over the forest and because of this it was easy for him to cross the mountain. The Romans in the plain and those in the heights, fearing an ambush, did not move at all; and thus Hannibal went across and got back into Samnium.

The Punic wars are most famous for the elephants which Hannibal used to cross the Alps: perhaps because of their associations with the defeated Hannibal, elephants were to become a staple of the Roman arena (see below) and an object of Roman curiosity in addition to fascinating modern historians.[5] The war elephant had a long pedigree in

the Hellenistic period, when the successors of Alexander the Great controlled substantial kingdoms in Asia and Africa; an account by Polyaenus of a siege waged by the Macedonian king Antigonus II (319–239 BC) on the Greek mainland features both animal burning and war elephants. (Aelian, habitually anecdotal and often unreliable, draws on this account in his own version of the story at 16.36.) The battle of Raphia, an episode of which is described by Polybius below, took place in 217 BC, around the same time Hannibal was fighting the Romans: the opposing forces are those of the Hellenistic kings Ptolemy IV of Egypt and Antiochus III of the Seleucid kingdom, encompassing much of the modern Middle East; Polybius's description of the animals' fighting method in the second passage is very accurate.

118 Polyaenus, *Stratagems* 4.6.3

Antigonus brought elephants into battle during the siege of Megara. But the Megarians smeared some pigs with tar and, setting fire to it, let them loose. Screaming under the burning fire, they fell hard upon the elephants: maddened and thrown into disorder, the elephants ran off in all directions. Thereafter Antigonus ordered the Indians to rear pigs with the elephants, in order that that the elephants might get used to the appearance and cries of these animals.

119 Polybius, *Histories* 5.84.4; 5.86.6

The way these animals fight is like this. With tusks locked together and jammed firmly in, they push each other with great force, leaning into one another for ground, until the one who is powerful enough to gain victory pushes away the other's trunk: whenever he has made his opponent turn around once to the side, he wounds him with his tusks like bulls do with their horns. But the most part of Ptolemy's animals were afraid of the battle, as is the way with Libyan [that is, African] elephants, for they cannot be near the smell and voice – and I for one think that they are panicked by the size and power – of Indian elephants, so they flee their vicinity with all speed. [...]

Three of [Antiochus's] elephants died on the spot, and two more of their wounds. Ptolemy had lost about 1,500 foot soldiers and 700 horsemen; of his elephants, 16 were killed and the most part of them were captured.

Further routine mistreatment of animals in times of war is documented in other ancient military texts: Aeneas Tacticus, who gave advice on the

removal of livestock above, here describes how to affect a total blackout as cover for a night raid by a besieged city.

120 Aeneas Tacticus, *Polyorcetica* 23.1–2

When making a secret excursion at night against an enemy force camped outside, take the following precautions. Take care first that no one deserts, then that there are no exposed lights lest a fiery glow in the air above the city sheds light on your intentions. Take any measure to silence dogs' barking or cocks' crowing, by cauterizing some part of their bodies: for the noises they make before the excursion give away the plan.[6]

Further advice from Aeneas Tacticus includes the rather less cruel strategy of getting animals drunk (rather than setting them on fire) and tying bells to them before driving them into the enemy's camp (27.14). In his *Gallic war*, Julius Caesar describes blocking a besieged town's water supply so that the townspeople could not go for water without putting themselves in danger, with the result that 'not only the cattle and the draught animals, but also a great number of the enemy died of thirst' (*Gallic war* 8.41); the needs of cattle are also manipulated by Caesar to affect a victory in his *Civil war* (1.81–84), and in his contemporary account of the emperor Septimius Severus's campaigns in Scotland, Cassius Dio mentions the enemy putting out sheep and cattle before advancing soldiers in order to lure them on.

9
The Economic Animal: Farming, Food and Trade

> *'Every walking animal is driven to pasture with blows'.*
>
> Heraclitus, TEGP 5.127

> *'It is an art, to rear and feed cattle in order to get the maximum profit out of them, from which our word for money is derived: for all money* (pecunia) *is derived from the cattle* (pecus)*'.*
>
> Varro, On farming 2.1.11

Animals were at the centre of all agricultural activity in the pre-modern world, and the complex economies of the Classical period were especially predicated on animal life owing to the diversity of the Mediterranean climate and terrain.[1] From the earliest Greek art and literature, domesticated animals symbolized the wealth of a person or household, and so entirely did cattle equal wealth that in a description of the mythical garment worn by the goddess Athena, Homer's *Iliad* mentions that 'each tassel was worth a hundred head of cattle' (*Iliad* 2.450), and no greater insult to the house of the absent Odysseus is possible than the constant wanton depletion of his herds through the appetite of his wife's suitors, rarely depicted far from a meat feast in the *Odyssey*. From early Greece to late Rome the *boukranion/bucranium* (bull-head) symbolized wealth, as well as being a physical remainder from the act of sacrifice, and animal sacrifice itself was a financial gesture as well as just an appropriate offering. The idea of the 'monetised animal' abstractly saturates many genres of Classical literature: the major theme of all the texts discussed in Chapters 6 and 8 above is that animals are manifestations of wealth, and even in the bucolic genres, the animal plays this rôle. In Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe*, featured above for its

depiction of the idyllic pastoral life, the value of animals as gifts is evident in two different contexts: firstly in the rivalry between Daphnis and Dorcon to impress Chloe, and secondly in the provision of gifts to her foster father. The first section opens with the suffering of the love-struck Chloe.

121 Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 1.15; 1.19

So thus Chloe suffered and spoke to herself, seeking the name of 'Eros'. But Dorcon the herdsman, who pulled Daphnis and the goat out of the pit, was a young man with beard newly sprouting and he knew all about 'Eros' – both the name and the deeds – and straightaway from that day forward he felt he was reduced to helpless love of Chloe. [...] From that point, though he was considered a friend by them both, he paid less attention to Daphnis, but every day he would bring Chloe either soft cheese, garlands of flowers or a ripe apple; once he brought her a newborn calf, an ivy cup with gold decoration, and chicks of mountain birds [...]

[Daphnis approaches Dryas and explains his ardour.] But Dorcon the cowherd, who was in love with Chloe, waited for Dryas to plant out some saplings, and approached him with some fine little cheeses, giving them to him as gifts (as they were old friends, from the time when he himself went to pasture); from then, he began to make moves regarding his marrying Chloe. If he were to take Chloe as his wife, he said that he could give many and greater gifts as he was a cowherd: a yoke of oxen for ploughing, four beehives, 50 apple trees, a bull's skin for cutting up into sandals and, every year, a calf which was weaned of milk. Dryas was a little cozened by these gifts, and nearly agreed to the marriage ...

Several surviving Roman-era texts feature in-depth discussions of the practicalities of animal rearing: the earliest is the practical manual *De agri cultura* written by Marcus Portius Cato (the elder) in the early decades of the second century BC; the *De re rustica* ('On farming') of Columella was written in the first century AD and devotes four of its ten books to animal themes. In the preface to a substantial section on animal husbandry in his own *De re rustica*, Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BC) digests the history of the world as it pertains to animal rearing: the idea that humans once lived a vegetarian life is also hinted at here, as learning to catch wild animals comes in the 'second phase' of man's distant past at the same time as learning to eat acorns and mulberries.

122 Varro, *On farming* 2.1

Therefore, I say, man and cattle have lived with each other according to the necessities of nature: whether there was some 'principle of the generation of animals', as argued by Thales of Miletus and Zeno of Citium, or there was no such principle, as Pythagoras of Samos and Aristotle of Stagira would have it, it is necessary for human life to have descended gradually from the earliest time to this era, as Dicaearchus writes. At the earliest time, men lived in a more natural way on whatever the untilled earth provided of its own accord. Then from this way of life they descended to the second stage, and pastoral ways, picking acorns, arbutes and mulberries from wild and woodland trees and shrubs, and storing them for later use. And they used wild animals for similar reasons: they captured whatever they could in the forests so that they could put them in enclosures and tame them. It is thought, not without good reason, that sheep were the first of the animals adopted this way because of their usefulness and placid temper: they are by nature extremely peaceful, and very well suited for the life of humans, for their range of food now extended to sheep's milk and cheese, and their bodies now bore wool garments and sheepskins. Finally they descended to the third stage, from the pastoral life to the agricultural, retaining much of the two higher stages; and though humans had taken these steps, some things persist into our own era from these stages. Still now in many places there are several wild species of flocks (pecus)*: of sheep, as in Phrygia where many flocks can be seen, and the goats of Samothrace, which in Latin are called* rotae. *Indeed there are many in Italy, around the neighbourhood of the Fiscellum and Tetrica mountains.*

Varro continues and discusses the precedence which cattle signs have in the zodiac; that the major historical myths involve the movement of cattle such as the Golden Fleece and the golden apples of the Hesperides (with a linguistic digression on these 'apples' actually referring to sheep); that the Aegean sea is named after the goat (Greek *aix*) and the country of Italy named after the bull (Latin *vitulus*), and he notes the agrarian origins of the *suovetaurilia* sacrifice.

The descriptions of animals in the Roman agrarian handbooks cover all aspects of animal life as it pertains to agriculture, with details of breeding and rearing draught animals, sheep for wool and milk, and pigs for meat, as well as several more esoteric practices. A well-known quotation from Varro is notorious for its blunt placing of slaves into their place in the value hierarchy of the Roman farmer, but is equally revealing for its

treatment of animals; Cato's advice similarly situates animals and slaves squarely within their place in the moral and practical economy.

123 Varro, *On farming* 1.17

Now I shall speak about the ways in which the fields are tilled. This area is divided by some into two parts: men; and those who support men and without which it is not possible to work the land. Others divide it into three parts: instruments that are vocal, semivocal and mute. The vocal instruments include slaves; the semivocal, oxen; the mute, wagons.

124 Cato, *On agriculture* 2.7

Look over the cattle. Hold a sale: sell your oil, if you can get the price; sell whatever wine and corn is surplus; sell the old oxen, the sick cattle and sheep, wool, skins, old tools, an old slave, a sick slave and anything else is superfluous.

The details from the agrarian handbooks shed remarkable light on ancient practices and the treatment of animals on ancient farms; in addition to the sometimes appalling conditions of animals raised for meat (see below), Columella describes the procedure for taming oxen taken from the wild and intended for the plough. They should be tied to a post, he says, so that their heads cannot move, and then approached from the front by the oxherd, who should touch them all over their legs and bellies and speak to them, to accustom them to being handled by humans:

125 Columella, *On farming* 6.2.7

After this, pull the tongue out of the animal's open jaws and rub the whole mouth and palate with salt, and put a pound of flour moistened with well-salted fat down its throat, and, using a horn, pour single pints of wine into their mouths: for after three days of this bribery they become manageable and will take the yoke on the fourth day.

Columella's casual remarks on how robustly donkeys can tolerate abuse and neglect is vividly illustrated in the second passage below from Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* (see above, §81–82). The hero Lucius, in the form of a donkey, finds himself at work in a flour mill and takes a look around the stables: the description recalls nineteenth-century accounts of the hardships of the labouring class (and accurately describes the utter

grey-whiteness of life in a flour mill); non-human animals and slaves are also located on an equal footing in Apuleius's eyes.

126 Columella, *On farming* 7.1.1–2

So, Publius Silvinus, we now come to the lesser cattle; and first we have this cheap and common creature, the lesser ass[2] found in the vicinity of Arcadia. [The animal tolerates little food and actually thrives on chaff.] And it bears with fortitude the negligence of an inconsiderate master: it is especially tolerant of beatings and hardship, and because of this it is slower to fail than any other plough animal. It is rarely affected by disease, which also exemplifies its great endurance of hard work and hunger.

127 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 9.11; 12–13

There was a large number of animals in that place, turning various millstones around. Not just by day, but truly all through the night: they worked by lamplight, on and on, these unsleeping flour-milling machines. […] Most of the day had now passed and I was almost worn out when my yoke was undone; I was freed from my device, and tied to the stall. But although I was exhausted and very much in need of getting my strength back, nearly dead through hunger, still my natural curiosity (and no little anxiety) struck me; postponing the plentiful food which was now available, I started to observe the workings of this dreadful place with something approaching delight. Good gods! Such feeble men with skin covered in livid welts and whipped backs, their torn and patched shirts shading them rather than covering them up, and such scanty clothes as hardly covered their loins, so that all of their body – though they were wearing clothes – was on display through the rags; with letters branded on their foreheads, half-shaved heads and fetters around their feet, their faces were misshapen and sallow, their eyelids consumed by the dark and smoky, vaporous mist so that they could hardly see; and like boxers, who dust themselves with powder when they fight, they were dirty white with ashy flour.

Now, as for my stabled comrades – how can I describe them? Such elderly mules and clapped-out donkeys! Their heads were all down around the stalls making short work of the chaff, the loose skin on their necks covered in rotting sores, and their nostrils periodically gaping with their weak coughs, chests chafed by the continual rubbing of their harness ropes, ribs exposed through ceaseless beating, hooves greatly deformed from their constant walking around, and skin covered in dirt and roughened with mange from their malnourishment.

Dairy production was widespread throughout the Classical period, although excessive milk drinking was treated with suspicion by urbane Romans, as access to fresh milk meant living close to animals (see Chapter 5); milk found its way into the Classical diet in the form of cheese, which was widely used and of considerable economic importance. Sheep's and goats' milk were much more economically significant than cow's milk, and sheep in particular were bred for their wool and their milk,[3] with plenty of advice surviving in the agrarian handbooks on the care and management of the flocks with both of these industries in mind. The modern ethical concerns regarding the dairy industry centre on a number of key problems:[4] the treatment of the animal from which the milk is taken, the mental damage inflicted on mothers and offspring when the two are separated, and the intractable problem of surplus offspring resulting in the widespread slaughter of those calves which are a byproduct of bovine dairy production;[5] ancient writers show a keen sense of the maternal bond which exists in farm animals (see above, pp.37, 92), and the welfare of the milk-producing animals is mentioned by agrarian writers; a few texts explicitly refer to dealing with surplus offspring. Here Aristotle gives a biological account of milk production with a peculiarly cruel detail of a Thessalian tribes's technique for forcing milk production.

128 Aristotle, *History of animals* 522a

Milk does not occur to animals before such times as they are pregnant. Whenever an animal is pregnant, milk occurs and at first it is of no use, and later it becomes useless again. For animals not pregnant, they have a small amount of milk when certain foods are administered: and not only that, but some can be milked into old age and sometimes in such great quantities as to be able to raise a child.

The people who live around Mount Oeta take any of the she-goats which don't submit to stud goats, and taking some nettles they rub their udders with some force to produce pain; so when milked, first a bloody liquid is produced, then a suppurating liquid, and finally milk, even then no less than from animals who have mated. [...]

So, some animals have a lot of milk, enough to rear their young, as well as for general use, for cheese and for putting aside: especially so with sheep and goats, then cows.

The subsequent sections of Aristotle's biological work deal with rennet, and give a comparison of the qualities of various species' rennet: in the Roman record, Columella (7.8.1) says that cheese should be made with very fresh milk and rennet either from a kid or a lamb, and offers some additional plant-based rennets. The following passages on sheep breeding from Columella address such issues as maternal attachment and offspring surplus, demonstrating the same practically utilitarian attitude of modern farmers.

129 Columella, *On farming* 7.3

After lambing, in remote areas the steward in charge of sheep reserves almost all the offspring for pasture; near a town, he hands over the tender lambs to the butcher before they have anything to do with grass, because it costs only a little expense to carry them there, and also when they have been removed, no less profit is made from their mothers' milk. But even in the vicinity of a town, every fifth lamb must be left under its mother. For a home-born animal is more useful than one brought from a distance. [...]

The delivery of a pregnant ewe should be watched over with as much care as midwives exercise; for this animal produces its offspring just in the same way as a woman, and its labour is often even more painful since it is ignorant of all ratio. *Hence the owner of a flock ought to have some knowledge of veterinary medicine, so that, if circumstances require it, when the foetus becomes stuck crosswise in the genital organs, he may either extract it whole or be able to remove it from the womb, after dividing it with a knife without causing the mother's death – a procedure which the Greeks call* embryoulkein *('embryo removal'). The lamb, when it has been brought out, should be set upright and moved to its mother's udder; then its mouth should be opened and moistened by pressing the mother's teats, so that it may learn to derive its nourishment from her. But before this is done, a little milk should be drawn off, which shepherds call* colostra *for, if this is not to some extent extracted, it does harm to the lamb, which for the first two days after its birth should be shut up with its mother so that she may cherish her offspring and that it may learn to know her. Then, as long as it has not begun to play, it should be shut up in a dark and warm enclosure; afterwards, when it begins to be sportive, it will have to be shut in a brushwood pen with lambs of its own age so that it does not become thin through excitement.*

Slightly later in the text Columella describes the unprofitable nature of some breeds of sheep which are prized for their wool – their surplus

lambs are slaughtered, and there is no surplus of milk as surviving lambs are suckled by two ewes so that they can quickly grow to maturity; castrated males are reared for two years and then slaughtered for their skins. Varro gives practical advice on sheep shearing (including treating any nicks with liquid tar), and in a discussion of the relationship between the words for 'wool' (*vellus*) and 'pluck' *(vello*) no particular comment is passed on the sheep's presumably excruciating experience of old-fashioned wool production.

130 Varro, *On farming* 2.11

When [the wool] has been removed and gathered together it is called by some vellus*, by others* vellimnum*; and from these words we are alerted to the fact that in the case of wool, plucking was practiced before shearing. Some pluck the wool even now: after starving [the sheep] for three days because when the sheep are weakened the roots of the wool hold on less tightly.*

Several other revealing texts give evidence for more far-flung animal by-products, in addition to the medical uses noted by Pliny the Elder in §111 above. Ivory has a long history of use in the Greek and Roman worlds: the great chryselephantine cult statues of the Parthenon and the Temple of Zeus at Olympia used large amounts of ivory, and Ptolemy II is said to have displayed great quantities of elephant tusks during his famous parade in Alexandria (see below, §169). Some of the details of Pliny's following description are typical of his exaggerated style, but some important issues are highlighted including that ivory hunting reduced elephant populations, as evidenced by an apparent shortage of ivory in first-century AD Rome. Similarly, regardless of the actual veracity of statements linking an elephant's conscious behaviour with a reaction to ivory hunting, we might notice the literary effect of juxtaposing the intelligence of the animals with the remark about the scarcity of ivory and the Romans' insatiable appetite for the product. In addition to the evidently luxury nature of ivory and the exotic animal products used in medicine, it is worth remembering that the economy of quotidian products such as the hedgehog quills which Pliny describes in the second passage below must have had a significant impact on the animal world.

131 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.4

They themselves know well that the only thing which humans desire of them is their weapon which Juba called 'horns', but which Herodotus, a much

Figure 9.1 Image of an elephant used as a commercial marker for North African traders in the Forum of the Corporations, at the Roman port of Ostia. Late-second/early-third century AD. Photo: Martin Henig

older writer, and people in general call 'teeth'; for which reason they bury their tusks when they fall out (either unexpectedly, or due to old age). Only this part is made of ivory: the rest of them, and the body, is made of normal bone; though recently even their bones have started being cut into layers because of the scarcity [of ivory]; indeed large [tusks] are now scarcely found, except for those coming out of India, as the rest have disappeared from our world through the demands of luxury. That an elephant is young can be determined through the whiteness of its [tusks]. These great animals take the greatest care of their [tusks]: with one, they keep the sharp point so that it isn't blunt for battle, and the other they use for jobs like digging roots and moving boulders. When surrounded by hunters, they put the ones with the smallest tusks in front so that the hunters think that it's not worth the fight; afterwards, when the elephants are tired out they break off their tusks against a tree to pay their ransom.

132 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.56

It is true that when [hedgehogs] sense the approach of a hunter they draw in the head and the feet, and all of the lower part of the body, which has a thin and defenceless woolly covering, and then roll up into the shape of a ball, so that it is not possible to seize it except by the spines. And in fact when they are in desperation they release urine onto themselves which attacks their skin and damages their spines, and they know that they are being hunted for these. Because of this, the trick is to hunt them after they have just released their urine. Then the skin is particularly valuable; otherwise, it is spoiled and fragile, with rotting spines which fall off, and this is still the case even if the animal escapes and survives. For this reason it never moistens itself with this harmful material unless in dire circumstances; indeed, the creature itself hates this self-poison, so in this way it holds out and awaits the very last possible moment to the extent that it is usually caught before it uses it. The balled-up hedgehog can be unrolled by sprinkling hot water on it, and lifting it up by a hind leg, letting it hang until it dies through starvation: there is no other way to kill it and still save the hide. This animal is not, as most people think, superfluous to the lives of humans: if it were not for its quills, the soft wool of animals would have been given to the race of mortals in vain as the wool for clothes is made smooth by hedgehogs' skin. And in this area great frauds and profits have been made from the monopoly of this item; in no other department has the senate made more numerous rulings, and there is no emperor to whom a complaint has not been made from the provinces.

The agrarian handbooks contain practical advice and anecdotes which shed light on the treatment of animals which were reared directly for consumption rather than for secondary products; meat eating was particularly widespread in Rome. Varro's advice below deals with maternal bonding in cows, primarily reared for slaughter rather than milk, and mentions the common practice of castration.

133 Varro, *On farming* 2.5.16

Take good care to rear cattle in the following manner. Suckling calves may not sleep with their mothers as they will be trampled. They can be taken to them at dawn and when they return from pasturing. When the calves have grown somewhat, their mothers must be consoled by having green food thrown into their stalls. The stalls, as is the case in just about all stables, must be paved with stone so that their hooves do not rot. From the autumn

equinox, calves are fed with their mothers. It is not proper to castrate them before they are two years old, as they only recuperate with difficulty; if they are castrated much later, they are hard and useless. Just as with other herds of cattle, every year go over the herd and throw out any that need throwing out as they take up space for those which may bring in profit. If any cows lose a calf, then another must be put under her, one for which there is not enough milk.

Aristotle's *History of animals* (632a) goes into detail on the process and effects of castration, mentioning that animals castrated young become bigger and more handsome than uncastrated ones, and also that sows' ovaries are removed with the aim of making them fatter, but that the animals must first be starved for two days and then hung up for the procedure: it was evidently common practice to fatten animals hugely, another major ethical concern with the modern meat industry. A passage of Varro, which considers porcine animals in their sacrificial context, is early evidence for the practice of fattening animals far beyond the healthy tolerance of their bodies. (On the sacrificial origins of the names for pigs, see also Varro's remarks on cattle below, §145.)

134 Varro, *On farming* 2.3

When they are breeding, they are driven into muddy places and swamps so that they can roll around in the mud: for this is their form of relaxation, just as humans take baths. After the sows have all conceived, the boars are separated. The boar is able to breed at eight months, and is able to keep this up for three years: then his power starts to recede, until he arrives at the butcher: for that man is the arbitrator between pig meat and the people.

The Greeks call the pig hus, *formerly* thus, *from their verb* thuein, *which is 'to sacrifice'. For it seems that at the very beginning, the first animals to be sacrificed were from the herd of pigs, and there are vestiges of this: pigs are sacrificed at the initiation rites of Ceres; and at the initiation rites of peace, when a treaty is made, a pig is killed; and that at the beginning of the marriage rites of ancient kings and noblemen in Etruria, in their marriage ceremony the new bride and groom first sacrifice a pig. And the ancient Latins, as well as those Greeks living in Italy at that time, seem to have done the same. For our women, and especially nurses, call a girl's genitals* porcus, *and the Greeks call it* choiros,[6] *meaning that it is a sign of suitability for marriage. It is said that*

the race of pigs was given by nature to be eaten, and moreover that life was given them just like salt, to preserve the meat.[7]

The Gauls usually make the best and the most legs of pork. A sign of their excellence is that every year hams, sausages, bacon and shoulders are still imported from Gaul to Rome. On the size of the Gallic gammon, Cato has written these words: 'in Italy, the Insubres produce three to four thousand legs of pork; they are accustomed to feeding pigs to such fatness that they are unable to stand on their own or to walk anywhere. So, when they want to take one anywhere, it is put in a wagon'. [...]

And I myself saw something no less remarkable than the things you've spoken about, in Arcadia: I remember seeing a pig which had attained such fatness of flesh that it was unable to stand up, but moreover a shrew mouse ate a hole in its flesh and started a family. I have heard that the same thing happened in Venetia.

There is little hard evidence of the sort of systematic mistreatment of animals which takes place in modern factory-farms and abattoirs, although Plutarch (*On the eating of flesh* 996e–997a) emotively describes the practice of jumping on the udders of pregnant sows to effect a miscarriage,[8] and Pliny confirms that the womb of a miscarrying sow is a delicacy (even called by its own name, *eiecticia*). The ancient practice of fattening birds for foie gras is better attested; two of the economic uses of birds, for food and for feathers,[9] are commented on by Pliny in his tenth book, which is dedicated to ornithology. Before the following excerpt opens, Pliny remarks that geese are considered by some to have *sapientia* ('wisdom') as a goose once attached himself to the third-century BC philosopher Lacydes.

135 Pliny, *Natural history* 10.27

We are wiser, as we know the excellence of goose liver. Stuffing the bird with food makes the liver grow to a great size, and when it is removed it can be enlarged more with milk and honey. Not without good reason is it wondered who invented such a great thing: Scipio Metellus (the consular) or from the same era, Marcus Seius, a Roman knight? [...] White geese give another payment in their feathers; in some places they are plucked twice a year and re-cover themselves in feathers again.

Although he himself clearly approves of foie gras, in another passage his apparent distaste for aviaries is noteworthy as is the evidence that a law

from 161 BC forbade the use of fattened fowl at feasts (*Natural history* 10.71–2). Intensively fattening birds and hares in a short space of time was evidently widespread: in addition to the following passages of Varro, Columella (*On farming* 8.7) provides much information on the process. Evidence such as this graphically illustrates the shortcomings of considering all 'pagan' meat eating as being sacrificial in nature, as 'sacrificed meat' connotes ritual slaughter of cattle and bypasses the reality of such intensive farming: although it is plausible that the animals described here were ritually sacrificed, the emphasis is squarely on the rapid production of luxury meat.

136 Varro, *On farming* 3.7

Those who cram young doves in order to sell them for more money shut them up as soon as they are covered with feathers. Then they stuff them with a chewed-up white bread: in winter, twice a day; in summer, three times a day, at dawn, midday and evening (the midday meal is left out in winter). For those which are just starting to have feathers, they are left in the nests with their mothers with their legs broken, and the food is put down so that they are still able to eat. For with this, the mothers will feed themselves and their young all day. Brought up like this, the young birds become fattened more quickly than the others, and they become whiter.

137 Varro, *On farming* 3.9

Of the three classes of fowls, it is mainly the barnyard fowl which is used for cramming. These are shut up in a warm, narrow and dark place, because their moving and light liberate them from being fattened; the largest hens are chosen for this practice. [...]

The feathers are pulled from their wings and tail, and they are crammed on balls of barley meal, sometimes mixed with darnel flour or flax seeds soaked in fresh water. They are given this food twice a day and are observed so as to see, from certain signs, that the last meal has been digested before a second is given. Having eaten, their heads are cleansed to prevent their having lice, and they are shut up once more. This is for twenty-five days, by which time they have become fattened. Some feed them wheat bread softened in water, mixed with good fragrant wine, and this makes them fat and tender in twenty days. If during the fattening they become over-crammed with food, reduce the food in the last ten days in proportion to its increase in the first ten so that the twentieth day's portion is the same size as the first. This same cramming method is used to fatten wood pigeons.

138 Varro, *On farming* 3.12

It has recently become the general practice to fatten hares as well: they are taken out of the warren and put in hutches, and are made fat in the enclosed space.

In addition to the intensive (and non-intensive) farming described here, the elite culture of hunting played a part in the economy and ecology of animal rearing. The Greek word *paradeisos* referred specifically to the game preserves of Persian royalty (as detailed in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* 1.3–4), though within the Greek world there evidently were certain demarcated areas of land, consecrated or associated with particular deities: in his discussion of the ideal state, the speaker in Plato's *Laws* (824a)[10] mentions forbidding hunters from 'sacred wild places' (*hierois agriois*), and sacred groves are found throughout the Classical landscape.[11] On a more practical level, within the Roman villa economy, the ninth book of Columella's *On farming* describes as 'ancient' the custom of rearing boars, goats, hares and other 'wild animals' in walled enclosures adjacent to a villa; Columella gives detailed instructions of the disposition and maintenance of these enclosures which, as he says, both

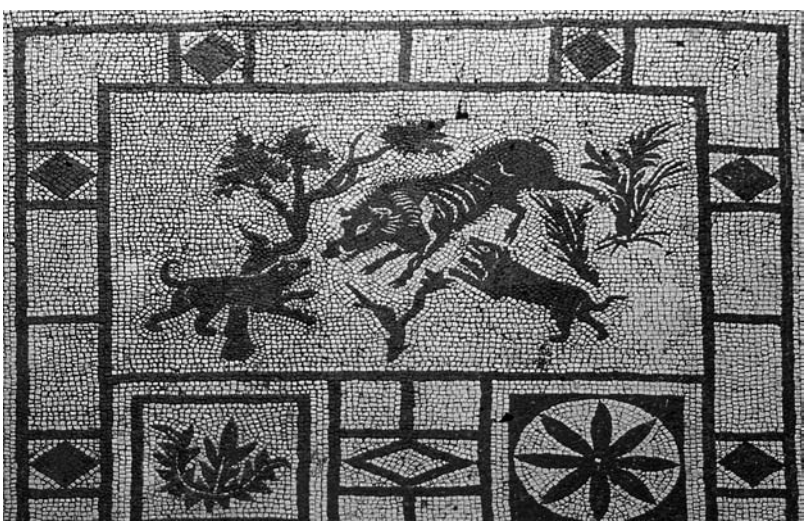

Figure 9.2 Boar cornered by dogs: mosaic from the Casa del Cinghiale (House of the Wild Boar), Pompeii, first century AD. Photo: Martin Henig

act as a storehouse and also serve a similar spectacular role for the villa owner when the beasts are hunted

The ancient eastern concept of the enclosed *paradeisos* arrived at Rome fairly late, but caught on quickly: the individuals named here by Pliny the Elder are datable to the first century BC. The enterprising Fulvius Lippinus is reported to have farmed sea snails by Pliny (*Natural history* 9.82); writing in the second century AD, Aulus Gellius (*Attic nights* 2.20) digests these accounts of *vivaria* and adds a mention of enclosed ponds for farming fish.

The following excerpt of Varro imagines an outdoor environment as artificial and human centred as any modern zoological garden, and conceptually fulfils the same ethos as painted garden scenes common in Roman art.

139 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.78

The first Roman citizen who devised vivaria *for [boars] and other kinds of animals was Fulvius Lippinus: he first reared them in the area of Tarquinii; however, it was not long before imitators arose in L. Lucullus and Q. Hortensius.*

140 Varro, *On farming* 3.1

'Axius', he said, 'wild boars can be kept in "warrens" with no great trouble, and both captured animals and tamed ones, which are born there, often grow fat in them. For on the Tusculan place that Varro here bought from Marcus Pupius Piso, you saw boars and roes come together for food when a horn was blown at a given time, when fodder was thrown from a high platform to the boars, and legumes or something like that was given to the roes'.

'I myself', he said, 'when I was at Quintus Hortensius's in the country around Laurentum, I saw what was more of a Thracian performance. For there was a walled forest which, he said, covered an area of more than 50 iugera*; but rather than a "warren" he called it a "game preserve" (*theriotrophos*, 'beast-rearing place'). There was a high place there, and we were dining at a table set there when he ordered "Orpheus" to be called. When he arrived with his robe and cithara and was ordered to sing, he blew a horn so that such a multitude of deer, boars and certain other quadrupeds emerged all around us that it seemed to me no less beautiful than the spectacles in the Circus Maximus, when the hunts of the aediles are put on (though without the African beasts)'.*

10
Sacrifice and Sacred Animals

The idea of a connection between animals and divinities manifested itself in several ways in the Classical world. Beyond the many narratives of gods' metamorphoses into animal forms and the mythological association of some gods with particular animals, in a practical sense this connection was put into practice in two ways: in the process of animal sacrifice, and in the designation or popular consideration of certain species and individuals as being associated with a god or a sacred precinct. Perhaps because of its remoteness from any equivalent modern practice, sacrifice has been the subject of fascination throughout the modern period and has inspired a wealth of scholarly studies: it remains the subject of intense scrutiny among Classical scholars and even in recent years provocative studies and theories continue to keep the subject alive.[1] Sacred animals in particular are rather less well studied, but many ancient texts attest to popular associations between animals and gods, and there is much evidence for the practice of keeping domestic animals in a sanctuary area as the property of a particular god.[2] Some connections between gods and animals are suggested in a passage of Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* (375f), where an interesting discussion of words for various animals digresses on some well-known traditions of sacred animals including the details that at Praesus there were nuptial sacrifices made to the pig, and that boars were sacred on Crete, although we lack details of how this sacred nature was observed. In his *On abstinence from animal food*, as part of his wider study on the injustice of killing animals Porphyry outlines his understanding of the nature of the sacred animal.

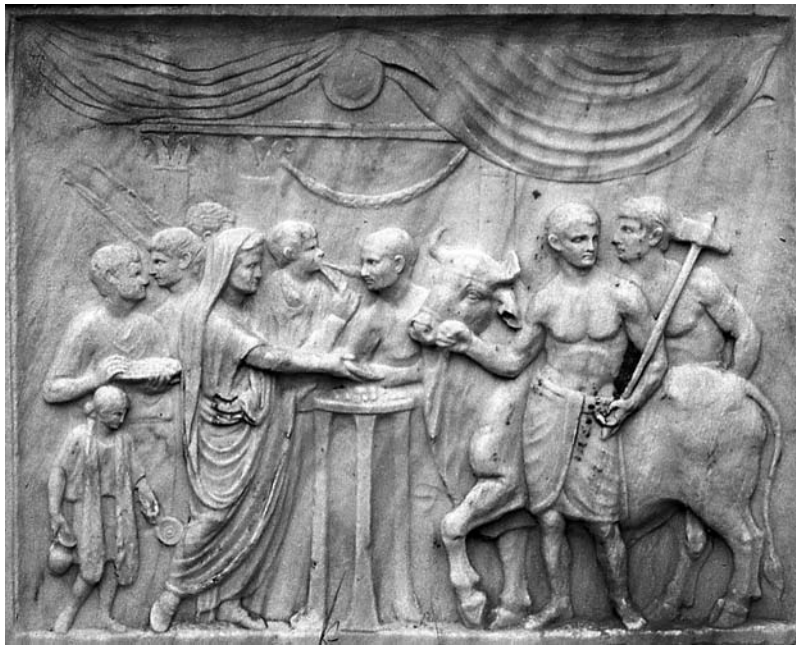

Figure 10.1 Traditional Roman sacrifice to the *genius* of the Emperor, from an altar in Pompeii, first century AD. Photo: Martin Henig

141 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 3.16–17

To men, then, because of their gluttony, animals do not seem to have reason (logos), *but on the other hand, for gods and for godly men animals are honoured equally with suppliants. And indeed the god proclaimed to Aristodikos of Kyme that sparrows were his suppliants. Socrates also made oaths under them, as did Rhadamanthus before him. The Egyptians also think of them as gods, whether they considered them to really be so, whether they deliberately made images of gods with faces of oxen and birds and other animals so that they may equally be abstained from as with humans, or whether for some other more mystical reason. Thus indeed the Greeks also fastened a ram's horns to the image of Zeus, but bull's horns to that of Dionysus; they put together that of Pan from a man and a goat; and of the muses and sirens with wings, as well as Nike, Iris, Eros and Hermes. Pindar in his songs mentions all the gods, when they were chased out by Typhon, making them look not like men but the other animals. Zeus, as Pasiphae's lover, became a bull, but now he's an eagle, now a swan.*

Through these things, the ancients pointed out their honour towards animals, and still more when they talk about Zeus being nursed by a she-goat. There is a law at Crete, from the time of Rhadamanthus, to swear an oath by all animals. Nor was Socrates jesting when he swore by 'by Dog' and 'by Goose',[3] but he was in fact making an oath by the son of Zeus and Justice; neither was he jesting when he spoke of swans as his fellow servants. But the story also says obscurely that they have a soul in common with us, and the gods in anger changed men into animals, and pitied and loved the changed ones: things like this are said about dolphins and kingfishers and nightingales and swallows. And each of the ancients that had the good fortune to be nursed by an animal boasts of the fact, not of his ancestors but of the ones who brought him up; this one by a sheep, that one by a deer; another by a she-goat; another by a bee; Semiramis by pigeons; Cyrus by a dog; and [Kyknos] the Thracian by the swan whose name he also took. From this source the gods too take names: Dionysus the Kid, Apollo the Wolf and the Dolphin, Poseidon the Horse, and Athena the Horse. And Hecate will listen especially well when she hears the names of Bull, Dog and Lioness.

In a much more general sense, particular gods were loosely associated with the sorts of animals which accompany them in artistic representations or literature, and the goddess Artemis in particular in her role as patron of hunters was very often described and depicted as a hunter herself. A passage of Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* describes her delight in suckling young animals (140f.), and the *Homeric hymn to Artemis* contains a typical description of the goddess.

142 *Homeric Hymn 27, to Artemis*, 1–10

I sing of Artemis of the golden arrows, crying out in the hunt, the pure maiden, slayer of deer and shooter of arrows, own sister of Apollo with a sword of gold; who across the shadowy hills and windy mountains, delighting in the chase, stretches her bow of gold and shoots out deadly arrows. The tops of lofty mountains tremble, the thick forest cries out with the howls of beasts: the earth shakes and the sea, full of fish, shakes too; and she with a brave heart chases them everywhere, destroying the race of beasts.

Even in the later fifth century BC the connections between animals and gods remain strong in the popular imagination: Plato's *Phaedo* 84e–85b features an imprisoned Socrates describing the affinity of swans with Apollo, and their gift for prophecy (specifically, like Socrates himself, in regard to their impending death): 'I consider them Apollo's birds',

and they are mythologically liked to Apollo in literature and art.[4] More concrete evidence for the maintenance of sacred animals can be found in relation to Egypt, mentioned above (Chapter 5) by several writers in connection with its unusual sacrificial practices and peculiar attitudes to certain species.

143 Strabo, *Geography* 17.1.38

Sailing along there for around a hundred stadia, *there is the city Arsinoe: previously it was called 'Crocodile City', for the people in this pasture place honour the crocodile very much, and there is a sacred one which they feed and keep by itself in a lake, and it is used to being handled by the priests: they call it 'Souchos'. It is fed on grain and flesh, and wine; the foreigners who arrive there to behold it always bring these things. Indeed we went to the lake with our host, one of the officials who was initiating us into the mysteries there, bringing from our meal some little cakes and roast meat and a jug of wine mixed with honey. We came upon the animal lying on the edge of the lake, and when the priests approached it, some of them opened up its mouth while another put in the cake, and again with the meat, then poured down the honey mixture. The animal then leapt back down into the lake and rushed across to the far side: but when another stranger arrived bringing similar first-fruit offerings, the priest took it, ran around the lake, and held the animal and fed it in the same way.*

But in the Graeco-Roman tradition the clearest and most pervasive association between animals and gods focused on the ritual sacrifice of animals. The earliest Greek texts detail the mythological origins of sacrifice (see the Prometheus myth, Chapter 1, and Hesiod, *Theogony* 535ff.), and Homer's epics contain extended descriptions of the sacrificial process which became the model for depictions of sacrifice in art and literature: the following description from the first book of Homer's *Iliad* contains the necessary elements of a sacrifice which became the archetype for the Graeco-Roman sacrificial procedure.

144 Homer, *Iliad* 1.458–474

When they had finished praying and throwing barley grains onto the victims, they drew back their heads and killed and skinned them; they cut out the thigh bones, wrapped them in a double layer of fat, and put some raw meat on them. The old man burned them on the firewood, pouring dark wine on them: the young men around him held five-pronged spits in their hands. When the

thigh bones had been burned in the fire, and they had tasted the roasted inner organs, they cut the rest into small pieces and pierced them with spits, carefully roasting them and drawing them all off. When they finished their work and the feast was ready, they ate, and no one's spirit was not satisfied alike with the meal. And when they were filled with food and drink, the young men filled their bowls with drink, first making a libation, and then passing it around to everyone: so all day the Achaean youths appeased the god with song, singing the beautiful paean and singing hymns to Apollo; and, hearing this, Apollo's heart was gladdened.

The motivations and anthropology of sacrifice have fuelled a divisive body of scholarship since the nineteenth century.[5] The prevailing theories of sacrifice range from the views associated with Walter Burkert[6] (based on the idea of ritual discharging of a group's potential for violence and drawing on broader comparisons of Greek ritual to other hunting societies and to modern sacrificial practices) to the work of French scholars such as Jean-Pierre Vernant[7] (who emphazised the principle of community ritual and sharing of ritually prepared food). In either case, the impact on the animal world was heavy as at times during the Greek Classical period civic sacrifices reached a very large scale: 'Athenian state sacrifices in the fourth century involved at least 850 oxen'.[8] The extent to which meat eating and sacrifice were intertwined in the Classical consciousness can be seen in the passage of Varro above (§134 above and epigraph to Chapter 9), and the connection is also made in the following excerpt which also sheds some light on a type of sacrificial practice: the *Fordicidia* (or *Hordicidia*) was held on April 15th in the Roman sacrificial calendar, and Ovid's poetical *Fasti* gives further details of the sacrifice.

145 Varro, *On farming* 2.5.6

A sterile cow is called a taura*; a pregnant cow is called a* horda. *Because of this, there is a day in the* fasti *[the religious calendar] named the* hordicidia*, when cows that are pregnant are sacrificed.*

146 Ovid, *Fasti* 4.629–640

When the light rises on the third day after the Ides of Venus, pontiffs offer as sacrifice a sacred pregnant cow (forda). *The* forda *is a fertile cow with calf, so called from* ferendo (*'bearing'*)*: and it is supposed that the word* fetus *is from the same root. Now the herd is heavily pregnant; the earth is also pregnant*

with seed: to a filled Earth is given a filled victim. Some are slaughtered in the citadel of Jupiter; the assembly is given 30 cows and is drenched in plenty of scattered gore. But when the attendants have torn the calves from the guts and put the cut organs on the smoking hearths, the eldest virgin burns the calves in the fire …

Pausanias in his *Description of Greece* shows an interest in the unusual sacrificial practices of some Greek places (for which see also above, Chapter 5) and describes what he has been told by his local guides relating to some past events or practices (as with the ancient custom in Argos of drowning bridled horses to Poseidon, *Description of Greece* 8.7.2) as well as ostensible accounts of contemporary practices, such as the sacrifice of puppies by Spartan youths to the hero Enyalius, connected with the god Ares (3.14.9, on the grounds that the dog is the bravest of all domestic animals). His description of sacrifice in Patrae in the Northern Peloponnese is unusually detailed and includes an explicit statement from Pausanias that he witnessed the procedure: like many such descriptions, the inclusion of this information and the level of detail highlight the normative quality of conventional Graeco-Roman sacrifice.

147 Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 7.18.11–13

Every year too the people of Patrae celebrate the Laphria festival for Artemis, and there is a practice of sacrifice which is particular to the people of that place. Around the altar in a circle they set up logs of wood still green, each log 16 cubits long: inside, on the altar, is placed the driest of their wood. On the point of the festival they build a smooth ramp up to the altar, piling up earth on the steps of the altar. First, then, they lead a magnificent procession for Artemis, and the maiden who is acting as priestess is carried last in the procession on a deer-drawn chariot: but it is on the coming day that they are accustomed to offering the sacrifice, and the festival is held by the city no less than by the observant individuals of the general public. For they throw living creatures onto the altar: edible birds and all sorts of similar victim, and others such as boars, deer and deer-like animals; some bring cubs of wolves and bears; others still bring the full-grown animals. They also put fruit from groves on the altar. After this, they bring a flame to the wood. At this stage I have seen a bear and other animals forcing their way outside at the first surge of the flame, and some fleeing too through their strength: but the people who threw them in dragged them back into the fire again. No one is thought to have ever been wounded by these animals.

Several texts criticize or subvert traditional sacrificial practice, most vocally from the Roman period; Burkert details the history of such criticism from the time of Theophrastus's *On piety*,[9] although purposeful polemics against sacrificial practice are relatively rare. Empedocles, whose arguments against killing animals for food stemmed from a belief in transmigration of souls (see Chapter 3) was active in the fifth century BC and was highly influential on later writers such as Porphyry: the following passage is from the second book of Porphyry's *On abstinence*, in which he summarizes prevailing opinions on using animals for food as a context for a quotation of Empedocles. (A different view of the origin of sacrifice was also given consideration in Plato's *Laws* above, §53, and this text also imagines that in the past humans and animals did not kill each other for food.) The fact that Porphyry also quotes the reservations of Theophrastus, who was a student of Aristotle, demonstrates that serious questioning of sacrificial practice was common in intellectual circles from at least the early Hellenistic period, and these arguments still had currency over 500 years later.

148 Porphyry, *On abstinence* 2.20–22; 2.27

That the god is not happy with the bulk of sacrifices, but rather with anything which happened to be around, is clear from our daily food and the fact that whatever it is may be dedicated before we have enjoyed it; although small, the small offering is of greater honour than anything else. Theophrastus, by using examples from many different countries, shows that the sacrifices of older times were from fruits, and prior to that grasses were taken; and he discusses libations in the following manner. Ancient rites were generally non-alcoholic, and water libations are non-alcoholic; after that there were honey libations as this was our first liquid fruit, prepared by the bees; then oil libations; finally, and last of all, there were libations of wine. As witnesses for these things we not only have the carved pillars which are actually a record of the Corybantic rites, from Crete, but we also have Empedocles, who in his discussion of the lineages of the gods and of sacrifice says the following:

Their god was neither Ares nor Battle-cry,
Neither Zeus the King nor Kronos nor Poseidon,
But the Queen Kypris [Aphrodite] (by which is meant friendship)
And indeed they appeased her with religious images,
With depictions of animals and crafted perfumes,
And burnt offerings of pure myrrh and frankincense,

Pouring libations of yellow honey on the ground…

And even now these rites are yet preserved by some, as certain traces of the truth:

The altar was not stained by the indiscriminate murder of bulls,
[but this was the most foul act for men,
to eat the limbs of animals whose life was wrenched away…].[10]

For I believe that when friendship and perception of kinship prevailed no person murdered anything, believing themselves to be related to the rest of the animals.

A similarly impassioned fragment of Empedocles is preserved in a treatise by Sextus Empiricus (for whom see above, §21) in a jointly dismissive exercise on the anti-sacrificial views of Pythagoras and Empedocles.

149 Sextus Empiricus, *Against the mathematicians* 9.127–29

So then, according to Pythagoras and Empedocles, and the rest of the Italian crowd, not only do we have a certain communion with the gods but also with the irrational (aloga) *animals. For there is one breath that pervades everything in the universe, in the manner of a soul, and this unites us with them. Because of this, to kill them and eat their flesh is a sacrilege as it is a destruction of our own kindred. From this reasoning the philosophers recommended abstaining from living things* (empsychôn) *and spoke of impious men 'staining red the altar of the blessed ones with the warm blood of slaughter'. And Empedocles somewhere says the following:*

Will you not stop the dreadful sound of slaughter?
Do you not see that you are eating each other with carelessness of mind?

And:

The father, lifting up his dear transformed son,
Slaughters him, praying; how he is blind!
Those who sacrifice are at a loss to understand the cries.
And he, again blind to the cries, slaughters and prepares the meal in his halls,
Just as a son lifts up his father, and children their mother,

And wrenching the life from them they eat the flesh of their loved ones.[11]

Like Empedocles, some Pythagorean fragments survive in later texts, including his order 'Not to let victims be brought for sacrifice to the gods, and to worship only at the altar unstained with blood' (Diogenes Laertius 8.20). Around the same time, the philosopher Heraclitus noted the paradox of using a blood sacrifice as a means of purification 'as if someone who had stepped in mud should bathe in mud to wash it off'.[12] The Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana, mentioned above as an advocate of abstaining from meat as it is an unclean food for the philosophically inclined (§54), as well as a defender of the rights of elephants (§76), left some clear views on the morals of sacrifice, writing in two letters (though of dubious authenticity) that 'the gods do not need sacrifice' and 'priests pollute altars with blood'.[13] While not necessarily critical of sacrifice per se, in the following passage Apollonius is clearly alarmed by the scale of the sacrifice and its connection to an insincere dedicator, in the same sort of 'cash-for-favours' economy which Lydian king Croesus unsuccessfully attempted to exploit with large-scale exotic animal sacrifices at Dephi (Herodotus, *Histories* 1.51).

150 Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 1.10

Once, he saw masses of blood on an altar, and before the altar were victims laid out upon it about to be sacrificed: Egyptian bulls and large pigs, some being skinned, others cut up; and two dedications of gold vases with the most wonderful precious stones from India; and he approached the priest and said 'What is this? For someone is pleasing the god with their great munificence'. The priest replied, 'You may indeed wonder that a man might ungrudgingly sacrifice in this manner without having first approached in supplication, and without having spent time here in the same way that others do, and without having received some health from the god, and without having obtained those things which he came here desiring as he only arrived here yesterday. And he says that he will sacrifice more, and dedicate more, if Asclepius should let him approach. And he is one of the wealthiest of men; at any rate he owns more of Cilicia than all the Cilicians put together, and he is supplicating the god to give him back one of his eyes that has fallen out'. But Apollonius, as he was wont to do as an old man, fixed his eyes on the ground and asked, 'What is his name?' When he heard it, he said, 'It seems to me, o priest, that we should not admit this man into the sanctuary: for some repulsive man has come here, and his asking this way suggests that he has not undergone some noble injury;

and sacrificing on such a lavish scale before he has found any benefit from the god is not the way of the normal sacrificer, but of someone who is begging for himself to be excused of some wicked and cruel deed'.

(Subsequently the dedicator is indeed found out as an adulterer, whose eye had been put out by his wife.) In a short tongue-in-cheek treatise entitled *On sacrifice*, the satirist Lucian of Samosata (died c.190 AD) augments a description of the commonly held view of the sacrificial process with a sardonic commentary: *On sacrifice* is one of a number of similar works in a corpus populated with rhetorical exercises, pamphlets and dialogues, and although it might not be considered a serious de facto assault on sacrifice, such as Porphyry would write a century later, it at least exposes the fact that some intellectuals were looking beyond the ceremony and analysing the process and its meanings as a whole. The final sentence may betray some knowledge of the legitimate criticisms of sacrifice, as it links to the barbarian practice of human sacrifice as practised by the Scythians (sardonically linking that practice to the Greek goddess Artemis).[14]

151 Lucian, *On sacrifice* 12–13

With the altars set up and proclamations proclaimed, and lustral sprinklings performed, the sacrifices are brought forward: so the farmer brings an ox from the plough, the shepherd a ram, the goatherd a goat, while another brings frankincense or a honey cake, and even then a poor man may only be able to please the god by kissing his own hand. But the officiates – for let us get back to them – garland the animal, first of all examining it to make sure it is perfect, in order that they don't slaughter something useless. Then they lead it to the altar and kill it before the eyes of the god as it bellows in distress, just as if speaking a good omen, while they play a broken flute accompaniment to the sacrifice. Who could suppose that the gods don't enjoy watching this? And while the notice says that no one with unclean hands can come within the bounds of the lustration, there's the priest standing covered in blood just like the very Cyclops, cutting bits out, lifting out the entrails and examining the heart, flinging blood everywhere around the altar and forgetting no religious scruple. On top of everything, having lit a fire he puts upon it the goat, complete with its own skin, and the sheep with its wool; a divine and sacrosanct smoke travels upwards and gradually drifts to the very heaven. But the Scythian, indeed, dispenses with these sacrifices and considers them lowly; he offers men to Artemis, and thus appeases the goddess.

Even in the cultural climate of Augustan Rome, when sacrifice was positively depicted (for example on the *Ara pacia Augustae*), writers might still express reservations about the act of sacrifice. 'It is, perhaps, characteristic of Horace, the *ruris amator*, the deeply humane poet, that he cannot merely think of such a victim as a thing required for sacrifice, but must see before him, and, as it were, feel it, a living being, warm, pretty, and amusing in its youthful pranks, which will only too soon come to an end'.[15]

152 Horace, *Odes* 3.13

O spring of Bandusia, more shining than glass, worthy of sweet wine and not without flowers,[16] tomorrow you will be given a kid whose forehead, swelling with his first horns, promises both love and battle, though in vain: for he will stain your icy waters with red blood, this offspring of the playful flock. You, the harsh season of the burning Dog-star cannot touch; you give comforting coolness for cattle weary of the plough and for the wandering flock. You yourself shall be become a famous spring when I describe the oak tree placed over the hollow rocks from which your waves of chattering water descend.

Contrast the opinions expressed in Virgil's *Georgics*:

153 Virgil, *Georgics* 3.22–3

Even now, it would be great to lead the solemn procession to the sanctuary and see the slaughter of young cattle…

11
Hunting Animals

Hunting is one aspect of ancient life that is particularly well serviced in the surviving literature: we are fortunate enough to have several dedicated textual accounts on hunting as well as a large amount of corroborating ancient art. The dedicated literary works on hunting techniques (of Xenophon, Arrian and Oppian) are supplemented by several shorter and fragmentary works (such as Grattius and Nemesianus); many illustrative or incidental literary descriptions, poems and epigrams; and hundreds of references in historical and other genres which go far beyond the straightforwardly didactic intent of (for example) Xenophon's manual and contain a wide range of views, from the supposed virtues instilled in young hunters to detailed descriptions of historical hunts and information on the demarcation of land used for game preserves and, more broadly, the uses of hunting for food, spectacle and even pest control.[1] The gentlemanly and, above all, privileged dimensions of ancient (and modern) hunting means that it has a strong voice in the surviving literary evidence and was continually studied in the scholarship of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries;[2] the changing horizons of Classical scholarship ensure that hunting continues to be studied in the twenty-first century.[3]

Even for the many urban Greeks and Romans who may not have directly participated in hunting, several myths reinforced the place of hunting in the Classical imagination: Herakles was the archetypical allegory for the human struggle against the animal world, and most of his canonical labours involve the subjugation of animals (as opposed to the more human-centred labours of Theseus). Ancient theories of the origins of human beings and the distinction between humans and animals sometimes include hunting as a hallmark of early human activity (see Chapter 1 above), and the uneasy relationship between

humans and gods results in several tragic hunting narratives, from Actaeon devoured by his hunting dogs to the hunt of the Calydonian Boar and the death of Adonis. (Writing at a time when the Roman games were flourishing and hunting was a well-established spectator sport, Ovid wryly wonders if Actaeon might prefer to watch, rather than experience, his dogs' activities: *Metamorphoses* 3.247–8.)[4] The military heroes of the Homeric epics are also hunters, and in Classical Athens hunting is a theme of Euripidean dramas such as the *Hippolytus* and *Bacchae*. Hunt scenes were also common in visual media, as a decorative feature in early Greek art and especially in the more narrative art of the Hellenistic and Roman eras when images of individual hunting prowess which were created as royal or imperial archetypes infused hunting with an aspirational quality: many Roman sarcophagi feature heroic hunting scenes modelled after Imperial and mythological scenes, and Roman emperors used public art to display their military and hunting prowess.[5] A key feature of hunting in the moral consciousness of the Greeks and Romans was its capacity to improve the character of young men; Plato gives a flavour of some morally improving qualities associated with animal hunting in a hypothetical discussion of laws in an ideal state (see also §53 above).

154 Plato, *Laws* 823d–824a

So now we speak of our address to the young men, through a prayer: 'o friends, if only you may never be seized with any desire or love of hunting in the sea, or angling, or chasing water-dwelling animals, whether waking or sleeping, lazily hunting with basket traps that do the work for you. And may no desire for hunting for people by sea and piracy come upon you and make you into harsh and lawless hunters, and may robbery in the countryside and city be the furthest thing from your minds. Neither may the wily love of hunting birds – not at all becoming of free men – come upon any young men. The only type of hunting left for our athletes, indeed, is hunting of land animals: and again within this the type done by sleepers, called "night hunting" and done by lazy men, is not worthy of praise any more than the type which involves periodic resting from the work, not mastering the wild strength of beasts with the victory of a work-loving soul, but with nets and snares. In fact, the only remaining type of hunting for all, and the best kind, is hunting four-legged animals with horses and dogs and the hunters' own bodies which they use to conquer everything through running and rains of blows and weapons, men hunting with their own hands: for such men are in the business of god-like courage'.[6]

Such attitudes were to last well on into the Roman era: writing some six centuries later, Arrian of Nicomedia shows a similar regard for the need for hunting to retain its improving moral dimensions, commenting that hunters must always remember the gods before setting out or 'their horses will be injured, their dogs lamed' (*On hunting* 34), and commenting on how distressing it is to see a good opponent caught by one's dogs (*On hunting* 16). Arrian also produced a history of Alexander the Great's campaigns in Asia, perpetuating an attitude which sees the military and the hunt as complementary (an 'officer-class' attitude which persisted into the modern era). Arrian was consciously paying tribute to – and styled himself a successor of – the best-known Classical authority on hunting: Xenophon. In addition to his own philosophical works concerning Socrates, Xenophon authored a general military history of his era (the late-fifth and the fourth centuries BC), a memoir of his service as a mercenary soldier in Asia Minor, and several treatises, including one on horsemanship and the one on hunting from which the following extract is taken. Xenophon had travelled widely and was evidently a keen hunter as the preceding sections describe the process in great detail: here, reflecting on the impact hunting has on the participants in regard to their soldierly qualities, he presumably speaks from his own military experience.

155 Xenophon, *On hunting* 12.1–4

So, the practicalities of hunting have been dealt with. But those who are eager in the task will be advantaged in many ways: they are equipped with healthy bodies and improved hearing and sight, it lessens the effects of old age, and especially trains men for war. First of all, they will not get sick of marching along hard roads laden with arms: they will stay upright, because of their being used to the hard work of chasing wild animals. Then they will be able to lie down on a hard bed, and be valiant guards of the objects of their assignments. In heading towards the enemy they will at once both advance against them and also carry out their orders as they are sent, because it is also the same in chasing prey. When posted to the forefront they will not abandon the ranks, as they are able to be patient. In the enemies' flight, they will give straight and unshakable pursuit across all terrain, because they are used to such pursuit. If their own army runs out of luck in wooded and precipitous territory or some other difficulty, these will be such men as will save themselves, free from shame, and also save the others. For their being accustomed to the task yields to them a certain greater perception.

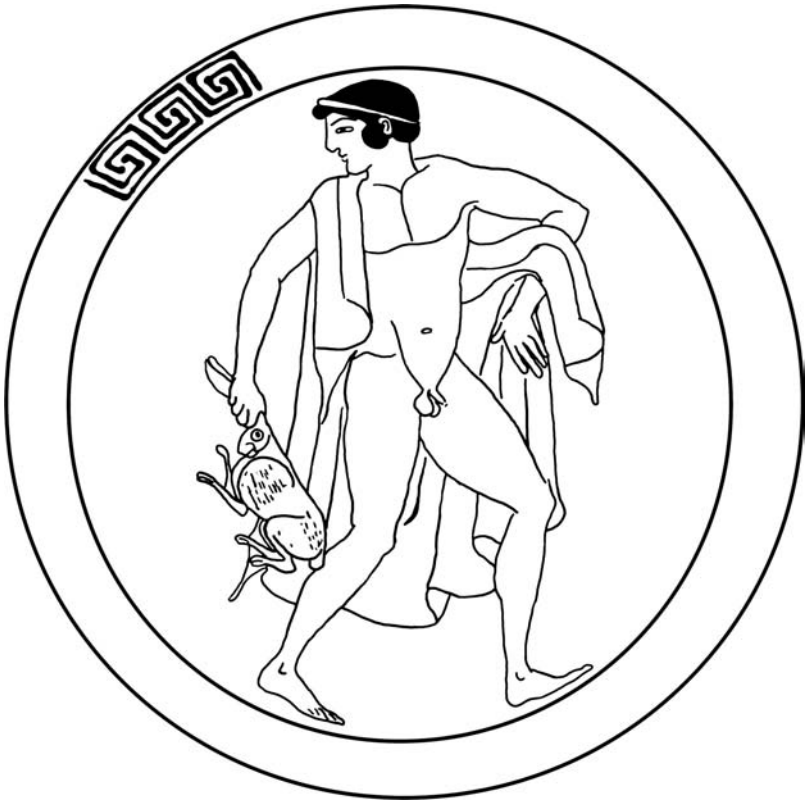

Figure 11.1 Young man with hare: interior of a red-figure cup attributed to Makron, c. 480 BC. London, British Museum, E 59. Drawing: author

Domestic, practical and smaller-scale animal hunting must also have been commonplace, and many Greek vases show a man or a youth carrying a hare as an icon of the hunt and a symbol of erotic pursuit.[7] Casual bird hunting forms the romantic backdrop in an episode of Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe*: in an idle moment Daphnis limes birds outside Dryas's farmhouse as he waits to catch a glimpse of his adoptive daughter, Chloe.[8] Like the act of hunting itself, birds have significant erotic associations in Greek art and Classical literature, associated with Aphrodite and often used as metaphors of erotic pursuit.[9] (The sacrifice scene following Dryas's discovery of Daphnis is also depicted as a peaceful, bucolic event.)

156 Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 3.6; 3.10

So at a run he went to the farmyard, and after shaking the snow from his legs he set up snares, smeared birdlime on the long twigs, and sat down, then setting his mind to the birds and to Chloe. Many birds came, and he caught enough that he had plenty of work gathering them, killing them and plucking their feathers. But no one came out of the farmyard: not a man or woman, not a farm bird, but everyone had been shut in and stayed inside with the fire, so Daphnis was altogether at a loss, with his birds of ill omen.

[Dryas's dog steals some meat and runs away to where Daphnis has just decided to pack up and go home. Dryas, chasing the dog, comes across Daphnis: he invites him in, where he meets Chloe, and asks him to stay overnight as they are sacrificing to Dionysus in the morning.]

When the day dawned it was freezing cold, and the icy north wind was burning everything. They got up and they sacrificed a one-year-old ram to Dionysus, then lit a large fire and prepared the food. And Napê made bread, and Dryas boiled up the lamb, so Daphnis and Chloe seized upon the free time and headed out of the farm to where the ivy was; and again they set up traps and used the birdlime, and they were hunting a great deal as there were more than a few birds. And they were enjoying continuous kisses and delighted in talking to each other: 'I came here because of you, Chloe!' 'I know, Daphnis'. 'I'm killing these unhappy blackbirds because of you, Chloe!'

Robin Lane Fox (1996: 126) makes the distinction between the 'culture of fun' and mere pest control, documenting a number of instances where human populations were encroached upon by agricultural pests as well as instances of the purposeful introduction of alien species. In one case dating to the third century BC, the progeny of a pair of hares caused such damage that a deputation was sent to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi (who advised a cull, through hunting with dogs). Rabbits, whose voracious breeding and destructive behaviour have caused massive ecological damage in the modern era, were in Classical times confined to the Iberian peninsula and surrounding islands: here the inhabitants of the Balearic islands appeal for state assistance in a cull.

157 Strabo, *Geography* 3.2.6

There is a plentiful abundance of fatted cattle and all sorts of game. But there is a scarcity of pests, except for little burrowing hares which some call leberides*:*

for they wreck both plants and seeds with their root nibbling. They are encountered throughout more or less the whole of Iberia, extending to Massalia and ravaging the islands as well. Those who live in the Gymnesiae *are said to have once sent ambassadors to the Romans because of their countryside: they said that they were being driven out by these animals, and they were unable to hold out against their multitude.*

Other species were also regarded as pestilential: the later Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus describes a military burning of crops as also having the beneficial side effect of killing the lions which plague the region (18.7.3–4), which may indicate one reason for their great quantities in the Roman games.

Strabo's *Geography*, a valuable source of information on hunting practices of many far-flung places, describes some locations known for elephant hunting: the section from which the following passage is taken is practically a gazetteer of these hunting grounds, with nine separate locations described as such. Some esoteric trivia is also supplied: in addition to the description below, in the previous book of his *Geography* Strabo details elephant hunting in India (15.1.42), mentioning that tame females are used to lure wild males into trenches, and the males are then worn down and starved. The passage of Strabo incorporates evidence of the zeal of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (d. 246BC) for elephant hunting, which set a precedent for imperial patronage of grandiose animal display (see §169 below): the impact of Hellenistic monarchies on the animal world (ultimately culminating in the Roman empire) was considerable, and is also demonstrated in accounts such as the passage of Diodorus Siculus (§159 below) describing the great lengths hunters go to in order to secure royal approval, and by extension the importance of elite sponsorship of animal hunting.

158 Strabo, *Geography* 16.4.7; 10

Then there is an island planted with olives and which floods; then to Ptolemais near the elephant game parks, a city founded by Eumedes, who had been sent to the hunting grounds by [Ptolemy II] Philadelphus. [...]

Lying above are the city Daraba and the hunting ground for elephants, called 'near the well'; the elephantophagi *('elephant eaters') live there, and they practice elephant hunting in this way: when they see a herd moving through a woodland they do not set upon them from up in the trees, but they stealthily*

follow any stragglers among them and cut their hamstrings. Some hunters, on the other hand, kill them with arrows dipped in the bile of snakes. The actual shooting is effected by three men: two go forward and keep hold of the bow with their feet, and one draws the string. Other hunters make a note of the trees against which the elephants habitually rest, then approach from the other side and cut these trees at the root: so whenever the beast approaches and leans against it the tree falls, and the elephant itself also falls; as it is unable to get back up, on account of its leg having one continuous bone, they leap down from the trees and butcher the animal.

159 Diodorus Siculus, *Library* 3.36.2–4; 3.37.7

As for snakes, those peoples who live near the country which is desert and infested by beasts say that there is every kind of them, of a size beyond belief. For when some writers state that they have seen some one hundred cubits long, it may justly be assumed, not only by us but by everybody, that the stories are false; indeed they add to this tale, which is utterly distrusted, things far more astonishing when they say that, since the country is flat like a plain, whenever the largest of these beasts coil themselves up, they make, by the coils which have been wound in circles and rest one upon another, elevations which when seen from a distance resemble a hill. Now, one might not easily agree on the size of the beasts just described, but we shall make a record of the largest beasts which have been brought into public sight and were taken together in well-made containers to Alexandria and the steps that were taken in their capture. Ptolemy II, who loved the honour of elephant hunting and gave great gifts to those who made a marvellous capture of the strongest of these animals, and spending a great expense on this enthusiasm, both marshalled many war elephants and also assembled other animals of a wondrous nature and brought them to the knowledge of the Greeks. Because of this, some hunters, observing the generous nature of the king in regard to his gifts and forming a sufficiently large body of comrades, decided to risk their lives and hunt down one of these enormous snakes to bring it, living, to Alexandria and to Ptolemy. [...][10]

Bringing the snake to Alexandria, they presented it to the king: a marvellous sight and nowadays not believed on its own strength; gradually they lessened its wildness and little by little tamed it, so that its becoming tame was a wondrous spectacle. Ptolemy distributed worthy gifts to the hunters and fed the tamed snake; and for visitors to the kingdom it provided the greatest and most wondrous sight.

Exotic hunting practices were as fascinating to ancient readers as exotic animals, and Xenophon's manual *On hunting* does more than just instruct the reader on best practice at home, with details of some exotic techniques which may derive from Xenophon's experience as a seasoned soldier. The poison which he recommends here, wolfsbane (Greek *akoniton*), was known by Theophrastus to be dangerous to animals and, when properly compounded, fatal to humans (*On plants* 9.16.4), and it has a history of use as an arrow poison in the modern era.

160 Xenophon, *On hunting* 11.1–4

Lions and leopards, lynxes, panthers, bears and other such beasts are captured in foreign lands around Mount Pangaion and Kittos above Macedonia, some on Mysian Olympos and on Pyndos, on Nysa beyond Syria, and on other such mountains as are able to provide a habitat for them. Some beasts – in mountains of difficult terrain – are caught by the use of poison 'wolf's bane': this the hunters throw around, mixing it with anything that the beasts might enjoy, around the watering places and anywhere else they might go. Others, coming down into the plain by night, are cut off and caught with horses and weapons, putting their captors into danger. And there are some for whom they make dug-out pits of a great depth, leaving a pillar of earth in the middle: onto this, they lead a trussed goat when night falls and around it they pile a ring of brushwood, leaving no gap. During the night, when animals hear the sound coming from the circle they run around the fence and, when they don't find a way through, they jump over and are caught.

The connection between hunting and the military is also seen in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* ('On the education of Cyrus [the Great]' who died 530 BC) where there are several analogies between regal command and hunting: at 1.2.9–11 (hunting as the best preparation for the rigours of war); 1.6.28–9 (the techniques of hunting as devious and lowly tricks not to be used against humans except in war); 2.4.25–6 (Cyrus on campaign, instructing a commander: 'think of it like hunting' and so on); 6.2.5 (Cyrus promoting men who distinguish themselves when hunting with him); 8.1.34–9 (Cyrus continually hunting in his parks, to maintain his skills); the young Cyrus's training is detailed at length at 1.4.7–15, including the details of royal game preserves. Like many diplomats and military officers, ancient and modern, Xenophon evidently took his enthusiasm for hunting on campaign, as he demonstrates himself in his memoir the *Anabasis*. Here Cyrus the Younger

(c. 423–401 BC) and his army have marched through Syria and arrived at the Araxes river.

161 Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.5.1–3[11]

From there he drove out through Arabia, keeping the River Euphrates on the right side for five stages of desert, 35 parasangs. *In this place the ground was a plain and level, like the sea, and full of wormwood; any other plants or reeds there were all fragrant like spices; there were no trees there but all sorts of animals, a great many wild donkeys and many ostriches; there were also bustards and gazelles: the horsemen would sometimes chase these animals. And the donkeys, when one of the horsemen chased them, would run on and then stop, for they were much better runners than the horses; and when the horses approached again, they would do the same thing, and they could not be caught without the horsemen posted around separately and hunting the animals from one to the other. The flesh of the captured animals was quite like deer but more tender. No one could catch the ostrich: any pursuer would quickly give up, for it would immediately flee some distance, running with its feet and lifting its wings as if using them like a sail. But it is possible to catch the bustards if one is quick off the mark, for they only fly a short distance, like partridges, and they shortly give up. The flesh of these animals was very delicious.*

Similar exotic hunting accounts come from Caesar's *Gallic war* in descriptions of German fauna and hunting practices (6.27–8): they hunt the elk, Caesar says, by finding the trees against which they lean to sleep, and then cutting the trees so that they fall over when leant against; the now-extinct *urus*, or auroch, was captured in pits. Like descriptions of the peculiar diets of Britons and Germans (see Chapter 5 above), these practices contribute to the barbarian characterization of these peoples and stand in contrast to conventional Graeco-Roman hunting techniques.

Perhaps because of the constant availability of exotic animals in urban centres in the Roman era, exotic hunting practices become a subject of fascination for artists and writers in the first centuries AD. The Great Hunt mosaic in Piazza Armerina in Sicily depicts a lavish hunt for exotic creatures and is one of many similar scenes found throughout the Roman world;[12] in literature, a hunt scene is found in the Greek novel *Leucippe and Cleitophon* of Achilles Tatius. The story of the wily habits of the elephant is given above (§75), and the speaker of that anecdote, a lusty general, has the following to say on the hippopotamus after a specimen is captured. Writing in the late second century AD, hippopotami

had apparently been exhibited in Rome for around 200 years (see below, §180); the smouldering eroticism of the general is again typical of the Classical juxtaposition of hunting and erotic imagery.

162 Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon* 4.2–4

Then Charmides (for that was the name of the general) began to have his eye on Leucippe, and it started in this way: some hunting men had caught a river animal worthy of some note: the Egyptians called it a Horse of the Nile. [...] The general called us to have a look, and Leucippe went along as well. We were casting our eyes on the animal, and the general was casting his eye on Leucippe; suddenly he was smitten. Wanting us to stay around for as long as possible, so that he could continue to be pleased with the sight, he sought out some threads of conversation and began to lecture us first on the nature of the animal, then on the ways it is hunted, how it is extremely greedy and can make a meal of a whole field of grain, and how it is hunted with a trick: the hunters note the haunts of the animal and dig a pit, then they conceal the top with straw and earth. Below the straw device they set up a wooden chamber with doors open facing the top of the pit, and lay in wait for the beast to fall in: as soon as he walks on the trap, he at once falls into the cage and is deposited in there just like a lair, and the hunters quickly run up and close the cover doors; in this way they conduct their hunt, and indeed no one has the power to subdue the animal by force. 'He is especially formidable in other ways and his skin, as you can see, is thick and will not allow injury from iron weapons; he is, as I say, the "elephant" of Egypt. And he seems to be second in strength only to the elephant of India'. 'Have you ever seen an elephant?' asked Menelaus.

Positioned somewhere between practical manual and literary work, two texts, *On fishing* (*Halieutica*) and *On hunting* (*Cynêgetica*), are both ascribed to an 'Oppian' though they are not by the same author; intricately detailed and broadly didactic (and Stoic) in purpose, they are long poems addressed to the emperors Septimius Severus and his son Caracalla respectively. *On hunting* was written after AD 198 and is minutely detailed in zoological descriptions and the history of hunting: here the narrator describes lion hunting in Libya.

163 Oppian, *On hunting* 4.77–101

But first will you note the outstanding lion chase, and the brave hunters. First they go and mark a place where among the caves lives a roaring, beautifully

maned lion: a terror to cattle and to the very herdsmen. Then they track the great trail, beaten by the footprints of the beast, by which he often goes to the river for a refreshing drink. There they swiftly dig out a large, wide-perimeter trench, and then in the middle of the trench they build up a large pillar, heaped up high. They lift up and suspend from this pillar a young lamb just born of its mother, and then they crown the trench outside with a wall of large stones tightly packed so that the approaching lion doesn't see the clever trap. The hanging baby lamb cries out, and the cry hits the hungry heart of the lion: and he goes in search of the source, his eager heart gladdened, hurrying along the trail of the bleating and looking around here and there with fiery glances. Presently he approaches the trap and circles all around: roused by the force of his hunger, his stomach prevails and he leaps over the wall, and the wide walled chasm takes him, tricking the lion as he enters the unseen depths of the trench…

(The lion runs around the trench like a race horse until, exhausted, the hunters trap him in a net.) Lions were exhibited and slaughtered in Rome in their hundreds; similarly the appearance in Rome of elephants at the games (see below, Chapter 12) must also have prompted speculation as to how they arrived in the city, and Pliny the Elder combines the proverbial intelligence of the elephant with the mechanics of its capture and transportation. Needless to say, regardless of the veracity of Pliny's details the fact remains that large numbers of these animals made their way to games in Italy, and Pliny's account is a plausible description of what must have been a common event (as it had been since the time of Ptolemy II, according to the remarks of Strabo above §158). In the second passage below, Pliny describes the capture of the tiger, which continued to be a rarity in Rome (unlike lions):[13] the animal's natural maternal instinct is noted by Pliny, and his description certainly does not lack *pathos* for the robbed mother tiger.

164 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 8.8

They are caught in India by a keeper leading one of the tame elephants to a wild one, which he has found on its own or which has wandered from the herd, and then beating it; when it is fatigued the keeper climbs up on it and controls it no differently from his previous mount. In Africa they capture them with pits, and as soon as an elephant falls into one the rest of the herd gather branches of trees, roll down boulders and build ramps: with all their strength they attempt to drag it out. Previously, they were tamed

by trainers on horseback gathering them in an artificial valley designed to fool them with its length, and enclosed by its steep sides and ditches, they would become subdued through hunger. The test is whether they will calmly accept a branch held out by a man. Nowadays, on account of their tusks, hunters shoot their feet, which is the softest part. The Troglodytes of the farthest reaches of Aethiopia, who only eat hunted animals, climb trees near the elephants' paths; from there they look out for the very last in a procession and leap down onto the very back of their hindquarters. With their left hand they seize the tail and jam their feet onto the left thigh, then hanging here they cut the other hamstring with a sharp double axe held in the right hand; with this injury the elephant's flight is slowed and the hunter cuts the remaining tendon, carrying it all out with great swiftness and efficiency. Other hunters use a safer but less effective method, fixing enormous stretched bows firmly into the ground; these are held fast by the very strongest young men, and others working in harmony of exertion bend the bow so as to stick the animals with arrow spears as they pass by; presently they track them using the traces of blood.

165 Pliny the Elder, *Natural history* 8.25

Hyrcania and India produce the tiger, an animal of tremendous speed especially noticed when all its cubs – always very numerous – are taken from it. They are taken by a hunter lying in wait with the fastest available horse, which is also repeatedly changed for a fresh one. When the female returns to an empty lair – for the offspring is of no concern to the male – she rushes headlong down the track of their scent. The hunter, as her roar approaches, throws off one of the cubs; she lifts it up with a bite and even with the extra weight she rushes with more speed, immediately repeating the action until the hunter has returned to his ship, and her frustrated anger rages on the shore.

Some indication of the pressures put on stocks of wild animals to feed the games can be detected in the correspondence of Cicero from around 50 BC, in the relatively early days of the large-scale Roman games, written when Cicero was proconsul of Cilicia in southern Turkey. Extant letters from Caelius, his correspondent, contain several requests: 'At the same time as you may hear of my appointment [as *aedile*], if you could see to it, I do ask that you procure me some panthers' (Cicero, *Letters to his friends* 8.2.2). Caelius was evidently

facing some difficulty acquiring animals, and it was clearly a matter of urgency that he was able to host a lavish animal hunt, as he later wrote to Cicero: 'Now, as I have to give these games might you care to let us have some of these beasts, as I am forever asking of you?' (8.6.5) and elsewhere writing at length on how Cicero's parsimony will reflect badly on him in respect of a rival (8.9.3). All of this political pressure will have been directly reflected in the animal hunts of Asia and Africa, and under the patronage of the emperors this pressure would escalate in scale. One of Cicero's replies to Caelius indicates the pressure put on animal populations.

166 Cicero, *Letters to his friends* 2.11.2

On the panthers: my instructions are being diligently handled by experienced hunters. But their scarcity is remarkable, and it is said of the panthers which are there that they vehemently complain that there are no traps for any other animals in my province except for them. So, it is said in Caria that they have decided to leave our province. However it is being seen to with zeal, primarily by Patiscus. Whatever there is, it is yours: but how many there may be, we simply don't know.

Another passage from the *Geography* of Strabo highlights the impact of human activity on the natural world and on human communities in regions which were encroached upon in order to supply Roman public entertainment even in the first century BC. The geographical purpose of Strabo's work lends extra credence to his remarks, and a verse from the *Palatine Anthology* of unknown date poetically expresses the devastation of the African countryside.

167 Strabo, *Geography* 2.5.33

All the coastal land from Carthage to the Pillars [of Hercules] is good, but particularly suitable for wild beasts,[14] as is the whole inland region. So it is not unreasonable that some of these people were also referred to as nomads, as the great numbers of wild animals meant that they were unable to cultivate the land. But now the nomads are experienced in capturing the animals, as the Romans also take them because of their enthusiasm for animal fights, so they are now familiar with both hunting and farming.

168 *Greek Anthology* 7.626

O farthest Nasamonian frontiers of the Libyans, your wide plains are no longer oppressed by wild beasts; no longer will your deserts echo with the sound of lions' roaring in the farthest sands beyond the nomads; for now the boy Caesar has hunted and captured the countless species and put them each before the spearmen. The mountain ridges, once the lairs of wild beasts, are now used for men to rear cattle.

12
Animals and Public Entertainment

In the modern imagination, by far the most gratuitous association between animals and humans in the Classical world is the mass torture and slaughter of animals in the Roman arena, activities which actually took place in the city of Rome as well as in Italian and other regional centres. Even to focus on this phenomenon may be to misdirect ethical analyses of the use of animals for entertainment: horse racing and chariot racing were known in ancient Greece[1] and became mass spectator sports in Rome,[2] and there is evidence for a significant undercurrent of smaller-scale activities such as cock fights[3] and other animal fights (a famous piece of archaic Greek relief sculpture depicts a group of youths pitting a dog against a cat);[4] but the best literary evidence for the use of animals for public entertainment concentrates on the notorious large-scale games of Rome. However, systematic, state-sponsored use of animals for entertainment had a long history before Rome, dating in the Classical tradition from the Hellenistic period: we have seen Ptolemy II Philadelphus patronizing exotic hunts (see Chapter 11), and a spectacular account of a procession held by him in around 279 BC is preserved in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus (c. AD 190). Athenaeus's speaker declares that he is basing his account on that of Callixeinus of Rhodes, an otherwise unknown historian who may have been active in the second century BC, fairly close to the described events.[5] Around a century later another Hellenistic ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes (reigned 175–164 BC), held a similar parade near Antioch: this ruler had made incursions into Egypt against the Ptolemies, and may even have crowned himself king of Egypt; in any case, Polybius's account (§170 below) was written perhaps 50 years after the event itself.

169 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 200f–201c

'…After them were sent 24 elephant-drawn chariots; 60 pairs of goats; 12 of saiga antelopes, 7 of oryx antelopes, 15 of hartbeest; 8 pairs of ostriches, 7 of ass deer; 4 pairs of wild asses and 4 yoked chariots. On all of these rode little boys wearing driving cloaks and hats. Standing beside them were little girls equipped with little shields and thyrsus staffs, adorned with robes and gold. The boys holding the reins wore crowns of pine, the girls ivy. And following them were 6 pairs of camels, 3 on either side: following closely were wagons drawn by mules. These carried foreign canopies in which sat Indian women and others decked out as prisoners. And camels, some carrying 300 mnas *of frankincense, 300 of myrrh, and 200 of saffron, cassia, cinnamon, orris root and the rest of the spices. Coming next were African gift bearers, some carrying 600 tusks, others 2,000 logs of ebony, others still 60 mixing bowls full of gold and silver, and gold dust. After these, 2,000 hunters marched in procession bearing gilded hunting spears. And 2,400 dogs were led along, some Indian, the rest Hyrcanian or Molossian or other breeds. Next, 150 men came out carrying trees, and on these were hanging birds and all kinds of animals. Then, in containers, parrots and peacocks and guinea fowls, pheasants and other birds from Africa were brought out in great crowds'.*

Having told us about many other things as well, and recounted many herds of animals, he adds 'sheep: one hundred and thirty African, three hundred Arabian, twenty Euboean; and tewnty-six all-white Indian oxen, and eight African oxen; one large white female bear; fourteen leopards, sixteen panthers, four lynxes, three cubs, one giraffe, and one African rhinoceros…'

170 Polybius, *Histories* 30.25

Next came a 100 six-horse chariots and 44 horsed chariots; then a chariot drawn by 4 yoked elephants and another by a team of 2; and then following in single file, 36 fully equipped elephants. To speak of the rest of the procession is difficult, so must be related in summary. Eight hundred young men walked in the procession, wearing gold crowns; there were about 1,000 well-fed oxen; sacred envoys, just short of 300; and 800 elephants' tusks.

The elephant-drawn chariot remained a symbol of grandiose and stately opulence throughout the Classical period and appears on a well-known ivory diptych which may depict the later Roman aristocrat Symmachus, who died in AD 402 and whose letters describe his organizing his own animal fights.[6] The strength and magnificence of elephants, which were

major players in the Punic Wars (see Chapter 8), appealed to warring Roman politicians in the late Republic in those public games which they used to court public opinion; several times Pliny the Elder gives details of such spectacles, and in his description of elephants he mentions animals exhibited by Pompey and by the early-Imperial general Germanicus.

171 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.2

At Rome, [elephants] were first put under the harness for the chariot in Pompey the Great's African triumph; before this, it is recorded in the triumph of Liber Pater [Dionysus/Bacchus] when he conquered India. Procilius says that at Pompey's triumph the yoke of elephants was unable to fit through the city gate. In the gladiatorial spectacle of Germanicus Caesar, some of the elephants even put on a sort of dance with their clumsy movements. It was a common thing to see them throw weapons through the air [with such force] that the wind could not divert their path, and to put on gladiatorial fights with each other, and play at Pyrrhic dancing. And after this they walked on a tightrope, and four of them would even carry a litter in which lay one who imitated a woman giving birth; and they walked around the couches in a dining room full of reclining people so carefully that they did not bump into anyone who was drinking there.

Aelian (*On animals* 2.11) in a lengthy section concerned with elephants and music, provides more (and much more fanciful) details of the elephants trained under Germanicus, which despite their apparent unlikelihood nevertheless are testimony at least to the large-scale use of elephants under the Roman empire. Regional animal fights taking place outside Rome are used in a scenario of Apuleius's *Metamorphosis*: the bandits who have captured the transformed protagonist hatch a scheme for a robbery using the skin of a bear. Although its context within a novel renders the scenario fantastical – the robbers dress up as a bear to gain access to the house of the grandee in order to rob him – it is not improbable that many of the thousands of animals imported for spectacles would have succumbed to such fates as are described of the many exhausted and dying bears.

172 Apuleius, *Metamorphosis* 4.13–14

What a great number and variety of wild animals! He had particularly brought in those creatures that would soon provide funerals for so many condemned prisoners. But amongst so great preparations of noble price, he bestowed most

of his patronage in buying a huge number of enormous bears, which either by chasing he had caught himself, or which he bought at a high price, or which were given to him by some of his friends: and all these he kept and fed, at great expense. But for all his care of the public pleasure, he could not flee the malicious eyes of ill-will: for some of them were exhausted from being tied up too long, some were weakened with the fierce summer heat, some were slow with the long inactivity, and they were so seized with disease that there were hardly any left. And one could see them scattered throughout the streets, half-dead, like animal shipwrecks: then the lowly people, having no other food and forced by their wild poverty to find new meat and a cheap dinner, would come out and fill their bellies with the flesh of the bears.[7]

The evidence for large-scale games in the major urban centres is concentrated on Rome, but there is some evidence for public animal fighting in Classical Athens. Themistocles is said to have arranged a cockfight to inspire the performance of Athenians during the Persian Wars,[8] based apparently on the senseless aggression of cocks who fight for no particular reason but for the sake of being victorious.

173 Aelian, *Varia Historia* 2.28

After their victory over the Persians, the Athenians made a law that cocks should be brought into the public theatre on one day in a year: I will tell you how this law came about. When Themistocles led a force of citizens against the barbarians, he caught sight of a cockfight: he didn't just give them a passing glimpse, but he turned to the army and said 'they undertake this hardship not for their fatherland, nor for gods of their fathers nor for the tombs of their ancestors; not for their reputation or freedom, or their children, but so that each may not be bettered, neither giving way to the other'. So, speaking this way he encouraged the Athenians. Now this happened as a way of encouraging them to virtue, so it was agreed to observe this occasion as a reminder for any similar deeds.

Similarly, before the institution of the Roman games, ritualistic violence towards animals took place in early Rome: the agrarian origins of the Roman games are hinted at in Ovid's aetiological account of a peculiar Italian custom of setting fire to a fox in honour of Ceres, from his *Fasti*. The religious element of the Roman *venatio* is also evident in another passage of the *Fasti* (5.371) where the narrator asks the goddess Flora why goats and hares, rather than 'Libyan lionesses', are hunted in her honour during the games in May.

174 Ovid, *Fasti* 4.681–712

So now it is necessary for me to give the reason why foxes are sent out with burning torches tied to their backs. The land of Carseoli is cold and not suitable for growing olives, but the fields are very good for growing corn. [The speaker relates how he travelled there, and his host tells a story of a nearby countrywoman and her family.] 'She had a son who was given to wantonness when a child and was now two years and two lustra *in age [12 years old]; in a valley at the far end of a willow grove he caught a vixen which had taken off many of their farm birds. He wrapped his captive in straw and hay, and set fire to her: she fled these fire-setting hands, and wherever she ran she ignited the crops which covered the fields; a breeze gave strength to the destructive fire. The deed itself has faded into obscurity, but a memorial remains: for a certain law in Carseoli forbids the naming of a fox, and as a means of punishment one is burned at the* Cerialia *so that the animal itself is destroyed in the same way as it destroyed the crops'.*

In Pliny the Elder's encyclopaedic *Natural history* a large of amount of information is given which links the animal subjects of his eighth book to events with which his contemporary readers would have been familiar. In the following passage, and elsewhere, a description of a particular species is supplemented with details of its first appearance in the Roman games and notable anecdotes of their past exploits. Animals' appearances in triumphal processions pre-date their inclusion in the competitions and fights which would become the mainstay of the Roman games, though here Pliny gives a history of the elephant's appearances in Italy culminating in their use in a *venatio*. On this occasion the spectacle was apparently a practical way of disposing of the animals and at the same time triumphing over a defeated enemy by parading and destroying his equipment, rather than the more gratuitously indulgent motivations for the *venatio* in the late-Republican and Imperial periods.

175 Pliny, Natural history 8.6

Italy saw Elephants for the first time in the war with King Pyrrhus and they were called 'Lucanian cattle' because they were first seen in Lucania, in the year of the city 472 [280 BC];[9] but Rome saw large numbers of them in a triumphal procession five years later, and more in the year of the city 502 [252 BC] captured by the pontiff L. Metellus in his victory over the Carthaginians in Sicily. There were 142 of them, or according to some, 140, conveyed on rafts made of barrels joined together in rows. Verrius tells us that they fought in the Circus and were killed

with javelins for lack of any other plan, as it was not desirable either to keep them or to give them to kings; L. Piso tells us that they were simply brought into the Circus, and so that contempt for them might be fostered they were led around the Circus by normal workers with blunted spears. But the authors who say that they were not killed do not explain what happened to them afterwards.

The games held in 186 BC by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior are widely regarded as the first major animal spectacles in Rome and were an addendum to a regular triumphal return after military campaigns. Nobilior's other contributions to Roman culture include a spate of ambitious building and the importation of works of art looted from Greece: Livy (39.5.7ff.) details Nobilior's securing of permission from the Senate to spend as much as he liked on his triumphal celebrations, up to 80,000 sesterces, as thanks to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and this established the format as a flourishing arena for competition between public figures (for which see above, §166), culminating in the late-Republican games of Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great (see below) and the subsequent sponsored games of the Imperial period, all at huge cost to the fauna of the Mediterranean world.

176 Livy 39.22.1–2

Then for ten days, with great preparation, M. Fulvius held the games which he had vowed for the war in Aetolia. Many skilled men from Greece came for the purpose of doing him honour. And competition of athletes was also put on then as a spectacle for the Romans for the first time, and a hunt was given of lions and panthers, and the games were celebrated rather like those of the current era.

Like the evidence from Strabo and Cicero above (§166–7), a passage from Pliny gives some sense of the spiralling costs the animal world was paying as a result of the political turmoil in Rome during the first century BC, apparently after the abolition of legal restrictions on importing wild animals into Rome. The reasons behind this law are unknown, but it may have simply been a way of curtailing the potential for an ambitious individual to gain excessive power through lavish games: this is precisely what happened in the last decades of the Republic, and the L. Sulla mentioned here would become the notorious dictator of Rome.

177 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.20; 24–25

Q. Scaevola (son of P. Scaevola) when he was curule aedile gave the first fight in Rome featuring several lions; and L. Sulla, who was later dictator, when

praetor [93 BC], gave the first ever to feature 100 maned lions; after him, Pompey the Great had 600 lions in the Circus, 315 of which had manes; and [Julius] Caesar the dictator, 400. [...]

There was an old decree of the Senate which forbade the importation of African [animals] into Italy. Cn. Aufidius, when Tribune of the Plebs [114 BC], carried a resolution against this which permitted importation for spectacles in the Circus. But Scaurus, when aedile [58 BC], first exhibited the multi-coloured panthers [that is, leopards], 150 altogether; then Pompey the Great with 410, and the divine Augustus 420. The latter, in the consulship of Q. Tubero and Paullus Fabius [11 BC], at the dedication of the Theatre of Marcellus on the fourth day before the nones *of May, was the first of all Romans to exhibit a tamed tiger in a cage; and in fact the divine Claudius exhibited 4 together.*

Perhaps the most notorious incident in the history of the Roman games was the elephant fight arranged by Pompey the Great in the last years of the Roman republic, an event which prompted comments from several authors including a contemporary account from Cicero (see below, §191). Pliny includes the incident in an account which forms a particularly violent history of the elephant's appearances in Rome: the veracity of its details need not immediately be doubted, as Pliny's other descriptions of the 'tricks' foisted upon elephants sits alongside any modern description of their circus tricks.

178 Pliny, *Natural history* 8.7

According to Fenestella, an elephant first fought in the Circus at Rome when Claudius Pulcher was curule aedile, in the consulship of M. Antonius and A. Postumius in the year of the City 655 [99 BC]; and then 20 years later, when the Luculli were curule aediles, elephants fought against bulls. Also in the second consulship of Pompey [55 BC], at the dedication of the temple of Venus Victrix, 20 elephants (some say 17) fought in the Circus against Gaetulians with javelins. [...] [One elephant flings a fighter into the air.] And there was another wondrous event, when one was killed with a single blow: the javelin was driven in below the animal's eye and reached the vital parts in the head. The band of elephants attempted to escape through the enclosing iron fences, not without alarming the people. Because of this, Caesar the dictator, when afterwards he was to exhibit a similar spectacle, surrounded the area with canals; these Nero removed when adding places for the equestrians. But when Pompey's [elephants]

lost all hope of escape they sought the mercy of the crowd with indescribable gestures of supplication, almost deploring their fate with wailing, and they stirred the public to the extent that they forgot the commander and his munificence, which was carefully designed to win their honour, and – all of them weeping – the audience rose up in a body and hurled curses at Pompey.

The plight of these elephants made a deep impression on the Roman imagination: covering the same events though writing some 250 years after the fact, Cassius Dio suggests that an agreement was reached between the elephants and their keepers, but expresses more reserve than is found in the accounts of Pliny. Dio's remarks on the sagacity of elephants suggest either that he was familiar with the observations of Pliny (some of which are given above at §73) or that such assumptions regarding the intelligence of elephants were widely held.

179 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 39.38

And Pompey dedicated the theatre in which we still now take pride during these same days, and in this theatre he put on a spectacle with music and gymnastic contests, and for the racecourse a horse race, and the slaughter of many beasts of all kinds. For they got through 500 lions in five days; and 18 elephants fought against hoplites. Of these, some were killed there and then; others not much later; for some of them were pitied by the people, against the opinions of Pompey, when, as they were wounded, they halted the fight, and they went about with their trunks lifted to heaven and lamented, so that the rumour went out that they did not do it by chance, but were crying out against the oaths that they trusted when they crossed over from Libya, and they were calling on the gods for retribution. For it is said that they would not come aboard the ships before taking a promise under oath from those who were leading them that no harm would come to them. I do not know whether this really happened or not, for some have also said that elephants can understand the speech of their own countries and have knowledge of the movements of the heavens, so that at the time of the new moon, even before the moon comes into the sight of men, they take themselves to flowing water and, once there, make a purifications of themselves.

If moral disapprobation is merely suggested in these accounts of Pompey's spectacle then the remarks of Seneca, who saw the games flourish under the patronage of the Julio-Claudian emperors, are more enlightening for their explicit contrasting of the supposed kindness of

Pompey with his ostentatious displays of violence to animals and to men in the arena (*On the shortness of life* 13), demonstrating that at least philosophically inclined Romans were aware of the games' cruelty – although he reserves his sympathy for such men as are made to be crushed to death by animals, not to the animals who are slaughtered.

While the cultural programme of the emperor Augustus used literary and visual images of animals to illustrate the idea of agrarian peace brought about by the end of the civil war (see above, Chapter 6), animals 'on the ground' continued to be used for entertainment in the manner established in Rome over the previous century. Augustus had precedent in the actions of Julius Caesar: in addition to the games mentioned above (§177), in the years of his dictatorship before his death in 44 BC, embroiled in civil war, Caesar continued to bolster a reputation for munificence by contributing to the Romans' penchant for exotic animals, exhibiting a giraffe according to Cassius Dio (43.23) in a passage sandwiched between accounts of the military defeats of Cato the Younger (46 BC) and Gnaeus Pompey (45 BC). As part of a wider curtailment of this sort of personal promotion and one-upmanship which characterized the late Republic, Augustus set a limit on the number of gladiators allowed in games given by anyone other than himself (Cassius Dio 54.2), and restrictions may have extended to animal fights as well. Augustus's games described below by Cassius Dio, which took place in 29 BC at the dedication of the Altar of Julius Caesar after the deaths of Cleopatra and Marcus Antonius, are notable not only for their exotic animals but also the exotic human beings, symbolizing the vast extent of Rome's power under Augustus. Augustus's pride in his games – and further details of the scale of slaughter – is demonstrated below (§181) in a passage of his *Res Gestae*, a monumental list of his achievements commissioned by himself for display at several prominent points around the Roman world.

180 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 51.22

And beasts and cattle were slaughtered in huge numbers, including a rhinoceros and a hippopotamus, the first at that time seen in Rome. Many have written of the nature of the hippopotamus, and it has been seen by even more; and the rhinoceros, indeed, is rather like an elephant but with a horn raised up on its nose and called 'rhinoceros' because of this. Having brought in these animals,

crowds of Dacians and Suevi did battle with each other. These latter are Celts, the former a sort of Scythian.

181 Augustus, *Res Gestae* 22

I gave to the people venationes *of African beasts 26 times in my name or that of my sons and grandsons, in the circus or in the forum or in the amphitheatre; in them, about 3,500 beasts were killed.*

Suetonius (*Augustus* 43) also mentions Augustus's renown for exhibiting exotic animals, including the tiger mentioned in passing by Pliny above (§177) at the dedication of the Theatre of Marcellus in 11 BC, and mentions Augustus's personal enthusiasm for the games (*Augustus* 45) though with an emphasis on human athletic contests. Cassius Dio (54.26) also reports that 600 Libyan animals were slaughtered at the games for the dedication of the Theatre of Marcellus, a huge occasion at a monument named for Augustus's beloved would-be successor. Similar reports are made of other emperors: Claudius held games at which, Dio states (60.7), 300 bears and 300 'Libyan beasts' were slaughtered (in addition to a horse race and a camel race); the notoriously venal Caligula slaughters 500 of each on one occasion (59.13), and bears face mass slaughter on several other occasions. The frequency, scale and detail of the games under the emperors as described by Dio Cassius are, in fact, rather nauseating: beasts are frequently slaughtered in their hundreds, and the practice continues unabated through the first centuries AD. In general, in the Roman record a 'good' emperor will be implicitly praised for putting on lavish spectacles, and Augustus is proud to take credit for such spectacles, but the 'bad' emperors are often characterized as having too much personal enthusiasm for personally participating in the games (this applies particularly to Dio's narrative, reaching its crux in his ostensibly eyewitness description of the emperor Commodus below, §186). Accordingly, the following incident is intended to be read as the action of a capricious tyrant: Dio describes Tiberius banning hunting games in AD 27.

182 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* (epitome) 58.1a

[Tiberius] was the cause of much misfortune for the Romans, since he caused lavish waste for men in public and in private matters. For he decided to expel hunting spectacles from the city. And because of this, some persons attempted

to put them on outside the city, and they perished along with their makeshift theatres which were merely made out of some planks of wood.

There was space outside the arena for acts of spontaneous cruelty: the bookish emperor Claudius (reigned AD 41–54) did not miss the opportunity to take advantage of a beached whale at the harbour at Ostia around 15 miles from Rome. Again we are free to doubt the truth of the story, but Pliny was a young adult during the reign of Claudius, and such a spectacular event would probably have been widely discussed.

183 Pliny, *Natural history* 9.5

And indeed an orca, seen in the harbour of Ostia, was approached in battle by the emperor Claudius: it had landed when he was building the harbour, drawn there by a wrecked ship carrying hides from Gaul. Feeding there for a few days, it made a hollow in the shallow water, and the waves had raised up such a mound of sand that it was utterly unable to turn around; and while she was following her food, as it was propelled by the waves towards the shore, her back began to protrude from the water like the hull of an overturned boat. Caesar ordered for a number of nets to be stretched across the mouth of the harbour and, departing himself with the praetorian cohorts, he provided a spectacle to the Roman people with soldiers showering spears from attacking ships, one of which we saw sink after being filled with water by spray from the animal's breathing.

While Augustus was known for putting on entertainments at various locations throughout the city of Rome, the construction of amphitheatres provided a dedicated space for gladiatorial games, and none more so than the Flavian amphitheatre now known as the Colosseum. The *Liber Spectaculorum* of the poet Martial was written to commemorate the dedication of the Colosseum in AD 80 and consists of 32 short epigrams displaying the dazzling array of spectacles on offer. Most of the epigrams detail animal events: we are told that the mythological tale of the Cretan queen Pasiphae mating with a bull has been made real on the stage (5), that a rhinoceros spectacularly tossed a bull (9) and fought off a host of other assailants (22), that a lion was punished for biting its master (10), that when a pregnant sow was lanced its piglet was born from her wound (commemorated three times, 12–14), and that when a fleeing deer approached Caesar for mercy the chasing dogs knew to desist (30), in addition to many mythological re-enactments which invariably lead to a human being gruesomely and imaginatively killed by animals.

The Colosseum's dedication was within living memory of biographer Suetonius, who was a child at the time (though probably not in Rome), and he was serving on the Imperial staff in the capital from around AD 100. The tone of his biography of the emperor Titus, who presided over the dedication, is one of glowing promise which was halted by his early death and the accession of his infamous brother Domitian: here the lavish games given at the dedication of the magnificent (then unfinished) new amphitheatre include spectacles at the artificial lake constructed for the purpose by Augustus, and although the detail of '5,000 animals in one day' is mentioned, Suetonius does not specify if this was the number killed or just exhibited. Dio's much later account of the same event (below, §185) adds more details and differs in several respects, though it is clear that this was an occasion memorable for its scale; a brief mention of games given by Trajan (ruled AD 98–117) as part of his triumph over the Dacians (§186) is typical of the spectacles which greeted emperors returning from campaign, though its inflated numbers mark these games out as particularly lavish.

184 Suetonius, *Titus* 7

In fact it was openly thought and predicted that [Titus] would be another Nero. But this rumour worked to his advantage when he turned out to be the opposite: finding that he was without fault, he was greatly praised as being, in fact, of the highest virtue. [...] And he was no lesser in munificence than those before him: on dedicating the amphitheatre and adjoining baths which had been quickly built, he put on games with the most lavish of preparations and generosity and giving a naval fight in old Naumachia *arena, with a gladiatorial contest in the same place featuring 5,000 animals of all sorts in a single day.*

185 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* (epitome) 66.25

And in other respects [Titus] did nothing outstanding, but certainly in the consecration of the hunting theatre and the baths named after him he produced many and wonderful spectacles. Wild cranes were made to fight with each other, as were 4 elephants, and around 9,000 other domestic and wild animals were slaughtered; and even women participated in this, though no prominent women. Many men too fought as gladiators, and groups fought both as foot soldiers and in naval battles. For he suddenly had this same theatre filled with water and brought in horses and bulls and other domesticated animals that had all been taught to behave in the water just as on the land.

186 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* (epitome) 68.15

On Trajan's return to Rome, such a great number of embassies came from a variety of foreign lands, including from India. And he put on games on 123 days, during which some eleven thousand wild and domestic animals were slaughtered and ten thousand gladiators fought.

Although he was remembered as being popular with the crowd, the enthusiasm of the emperor Commodus (reigned AD 180–192) for the games earned him the condemnation of commentators including Dio, who was himself a Roman senator and around the same age as Commodus, though he was to flourish under the subsequent Severan dynasty. Dio apparently witnessed the events described here: his disapproval, of course, refers more to Commodus's relish and to the cowardly manner of his conduct than to the fact of the games' occurrence.

187 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 73.18

And on the first day he alone killed a hundred bears, shooting down from the circumference walls of the arena: for the whole theatre had been divided by some joining diameter walls, which bore a circular roof and intersected so that, divided into four, the animals would be easier to shoot with spears from all sides. [...] And let no one think that I stain the dignity of history by writing down these events: in some ways I would like to omit them, but when they concern deeds done by the emperor and I myself was there, when I saw each event and I heard and talked about it, I have considered it only right to hide nothing of them.

In addition to these bears, Commodus is also reported to have personally killed lions, as well as exotic animals such as elephants, hippopotami, rhinoceroses, a giraffe, a tiger and domestic animals: surviving images of Commodus portray him dressed as Hercules, whose labours primarily consist of struggles against the animal world, and Dio mentions before the opening of the passage that large numbers of such statues were made (a famous example is preserved in the Musei Capitolini at Rome). Writing some decades after the fact, by which time Commodus's reputation as a 'bad' emperor was secure, the historian Herodian (after describing Commodus's insistence on being referred to by the name of Hercules) discusses his participation, including the frequent and large-scale shooting of animals from the special track in the amphitheatre

described by Dio above which separated the emperor from the floor where the animals normally fought.

188 Herodian, *History of the Empire* 1.15.3–5

He would run alongside deer and other cervids, and all sorts of horn-bearing animals except bulls, and chasing them down he used to hurl his weapons, anticipating their course and bringing them down with well-timed blows; for lions and leopards, and other nobler animals, he would run around above them and throw down his javelin. And no one saw either a second javelin or another wound except that which caused the animal's death: for at the same time as the animal would start to charge, he would deal a blow to its brow or its heart, and never did it take another blow or another javelin into any other part of its body, because at the same time it would ideally be both wounded and killed. All were driven to terror by the brilliant aim of his own hand. On one occasion he used arrows with very sharp crescent-shaped heads against Mauretanian ostriches, with swift feet and arching wings: letting the arrows fly, he decapitated them at the top of the neck, and even though their heads had been cut off by the force of the arrow they still ran around as if nothing had happened to them.

On the ostrich decapitation, zookeeper George Jennison commented in 1937 that 'this last detail is correct; the same phenomenon may be observed in ducks and geese in the like circumstances'.[10] After Commodus's death and the ensuing civil war, the victorious Severan dynasty was keen to show 'business as usual' and continued the spectacle, with scale and exoticism still a priority: by AD 203, some 300 years after the first exhibition of elephants in Rome, the animal spectacle had become a de facto mandatory event for incumbent Roman emperors.

189 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 77.1

And every type of spectacle was put on in honour of the return of Severus and his ten years as emperor, and his victories. At these spectacles 60 wild boars from Plautianus, when a message was sent, began to fight with each other; and many animals were slaughtered including an elephant and a corocotas. *This latter animal is from India, and as far as I understand, this was the first time it was introduced to Rome: it has the skin of lion mixed with a tiger and looks like them, as well as a dog and a fox, curiously mixed together. The whole reservoir in the theatre was kitted out in the form of a boat so that it would both receive and discharge 400 beasts all at once, and then suddenly,*

as it was opened up, bears, lionesses, panthers, lions, ostriches, wild asses and bisons (this is a kind of cattle in shape, foreign in race and appearance) leapt out so that all the wild beasts and cattle, numbering 700, were seen and slaughtered running about together.

Son and successor to Septimius Severus, the 'bad' emperor Caracalla is negatively characterized by Dio in the same way as Commodus, participating in games himself and, as Dio reports elsewhere, paying particular honour to a bloodthirsty senator whom Dio mentions was an enemy of animals and of men (79.20), but specifically promoted by Caracalla because of his brutality.

190 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* (epitome) 78.10

[Caracalla] himself was continually spending money on the soldiers, as we have said, and on animals and horses: he was continually killing wild animals and cattle, for the most part compelling us [the senate] to acquire them but occasionally buying them himself, and once with his own hands he slaughtered 100 boars together.

The written histories of the Roman Empire and the political trajectory of the position of emperor both suffer considerable disruption in the following century, though much of the best and most detailed visual evidence for hunting and gladiatorial shows (including the 'Great hunt mosaic' at Piazza Armerina)[11] come from the third and the fourth centuries. The fragmentary and famously unreliable history of the later emperors collected as the *Historia Augusta* includes a depressing detail in the biography of the emperor Probus (reigned AD 276–282): in a show featuring 100 lions, the animals provided a disappointing spectacle as they were unwilling to charge through the gates – presumably through exhaustion – and were shot at the doors of their cages; the remaining hundreds of other less impressive lionesses, leopards and bears provided a spectacle described by the author as 'less pleasing than it was large' (*Life of Probus* 20).

There remains the question of what the Romans actually thought of the animal fights. Most intelligent contemporary criticism of the games focused on the more evidently shocking practice of gladiatorial human combat or (as Seneca noted, see above on §179) on the human victims who were executed by animals: the focus of moral consideration is generally on the human. The major exception to this is the incident with Pompey's elephants, and a contemporary critique of this event

survives in a letter of Cicero. He applauds his correspondent, M. Marius, for having the good luck to be ill during games which Cicero describes as charmless, vulgar and overblown.

191 Cicero, *Letters to his friends* 7.1.2–3

You already know about the rest of the games, which didn't even have the sort of agreeable nature which games on a middling scale usually have; for the spectacle was so elaborate as to leave no room for cheerful enjoyment, and in fairness I don't think you'll feel deprived of a good show. For what delight can be had at seeing 600 mules in the 'Clytemnestra'? Or 3,000 mixing bowls in the 'Trojan Horse'? Or the sheer variety of foot soldiers and equestrians fighting in some battle? These things gained the approval of the populace, but they would have been of no delight to you. [...] It remains to describe the two beast hunts which took place over five days: magnificent, no one would deny, but what delight can they bring to a refined man when either a feeble man is torn to pieces by the strongest of beasts, or the grandest of beasts is stuck through with a hunting spear? Even if there is something about them which merits seeing, you have often seen it; and I who actually saw them saw nothing new. The last day was the day of the elephants, and with them there was great wonder on the part of the common crowd, though there was nothing to be delighted at; rather, a certain compassion overcame them, and a sort of belief that in those great animals there was some fellowship with the race of humans.

Notes

Introduction

1. Plato, *Theaetetus* 152a.
2. Tom Regan, in his foreword to Linzey and Clarke, 2004, p.x.
3. Most especially, of course, Sorabji, 1993; more recently Osborne, 2007; see also the bibliographies given in Newmyer, 2011, pp.23–6, 34–6, 39, 47–8 and so on.
4. For example, Spencer, 2000; Dombrowski, 1984; Haussleiter, 1935.
5. Jennison, 1937.
6. Toynbee, 1973; Martin Henig kindly informs me that he is preparing a new edition of this extremely useful book.
7. On hunting, Barringer, 2001; on religion and culture, Gilhus, 2006; on philosophy and literature, Osborne, 2007; on literature with a special focus on speech, Heath, 2005.
8. On tragedy, see Thumiger, 2006.
9. This ideally includes 'hard' evidence such as epigraphy, papyrology and other branches of archaeology which are beyond the scope of this volume but which, due to their documentary nature, contain the best evidence for how animals actually lived.
10. Nussbaum, 1996, p.405.
11. See Chapters 3 and 9.
12. The present volume was conceived before the announcement of that useful collection, and I have tried to ensure that there is little overlap between the two, and to include references to texts provided there. Although overlaps have been kept to a minimum, without some key texts (for example, from Cicero *de natura deorum*, Seneca's *Letters*, and the passages on diet from Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*) the present volume may be justly accused of inexcusable omission (as it inevitably still will). However, some overlaps are necessary for reasons of context: for example, Cicero's pithy remark on animal rights from *On the ends of good and evil* (see below, §30; cf. Newmyer, 2011, p.77) is quoted almost as a self-contained maxim, whereas the sections preceding it expound the inflexible Stoic hierarchy between gods and men, and thus prepare the reader to accept his explanation of *why* humans have no moral obligations to animals.
13. Clark, 2011, p.40.
14. Newmyer, 2011, p.3ff.
15. Newmyer, 2011, p.65.
16. Partially given in Newmyer, 2011, pp.66–8, and in various passages below.
17. Sorabji, 1993, p.103.
18. Nussbaum, 2011, p.231.
19. Singer, 1997, p.33.
20. Newmyer, 2007, p.160; cf. also Sorabji, 1993, p.12.

21. 'All attempts to answer that question before 1859 are worthless', quoted on p.1 of Richard Dawkins' *The selfish gene*.
22. Segal, 1974, p.291.

1 Animal origins, minds and capacities

1. *TEGP* 2.39.
2. Campbell, 2006, p.35.
3. Gilhus, 2006, p.39.
4. See Heath, 2005.
5. 'Man the measure of all things': on the divisive issue of the meaning of this statement, see Guthrie, 1969, pp.188–91: the debate hinges on whether Protagoras means that mankind is the 'gold standard' by which all other things are measured or, as Socrates and the other ancients understood it, that *each man* governs his own world by his individual impressions of it.
6. Plato *Protagoras* 317b
7. Hesychius, Scholium on Plato *Republic* 600c (*TEGP* 15.3)
8. Regarding man's supposed natural inferiority in being unclothed, Aristotle (*Parts of animals* 687a–b) instead imagines man's nakedness and unarmedness as an advantage over animals, giving them particular flexibility in weaponry: see Denyer, 2008, pp.103–4.
9. For a text of Empedocles, see Inwood, 2001.
10. *TEGP* 9.1, 9.19 with some comment at pp.326–8.
11. Hippolytus, *Refutation of all heresies* 1.3.2–3
12. *TEGP* 9.121
13. *TEGP* 9.122, see also Campbell, 2006, p.30f. for the texts and comment.
14. Archelaus is omitted from *TEGP:* this text's Diels-Kranz number is DK60 A4.
15. Campbell, 2006, p.48.
16. Given in *TEGP* 13.51, 13.109 with comments at p.623.
17. Campbell, 2006, pp.51–2.
18. Taylor, 1928, p.640.
19. See the round-up in Rowe, 2004.
20. A modern parallel both of the intellectual content and the literary context is the episode of the bird-people in Douglas Adams's *The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy:* that author was better acquainted than most with the theory of evolution, and exaggerates its principles to comic effect by having a race rapidly evolve into birds to escape economic catastrophe on their planet's surface.
21. Campbell, 2001; see also Campbell, 2006, p.37.
22. On *phrên*, see n.53 below.
23. Graham, 1992, pp.152–3.
24. Stephen T. Newmyer's ongoing research is putting together a picture of ancient positions on the mental capacities of animals: see most recently Newmyer, 2012, for animals and shame.
25. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.11–14 (given in Newmyer, 2011, p.54 with comments).
26. '*interpretation, explanation* ... esp. of thought by words, *expression*', *LSJ* s.v. ἑρμηνεία, citing the present text.
27. Sorabji, 1992, p.196 with n.7.

28. On animals and the divine, see especially Newmyer, 2003.
29. Cole, 1992, p.49 and *passim* for animals and *phronêsis* in Aristotle; cf. also Sorabji, 1993, p.13.
30. 'There is no dearth of material ascribed reliably to Aristotle which touches on these issues to one degree or another; the extant Aristotelian corpus gives us answers to many of these questions. Alas, they are in some areas inconsistent answers'. Cole, 1992, p.44.
31. Sorabji, 1993, p.13 treats *sunesis* and *phronêsis* as synonymous, but linguistically the former refers to the joining-together of ideas, while the latter properly means the activity of the *phrên* or midriff, the seat of the emotions normally translated as 'mind'.
32. See Sorabji, 1993, pp.8–9.
33. Surviving in a sixth-century AD Armenian translation: for an English translation and commentary, Terian, 1981. For several excerpts with context and commentary: Newmyer, 2011, pp.13–4, 30, 45, 56–7, 61–2, 85–6.
34. The dog sniffs for the prey down one branch of the fork and, not picking up the scent, it bounds down the other branch without relying on its nose: the dog deduces or reasons that the prey has gone this way (*On animals* 45). See Newmyer, 2011, p.14 for the passage; for another version of the story of the dog, see also §21.
35. On 'the ways…in which the Stoics rob animals of anything like human action', see particularly Sorabji, 1993, pp.112–4 with references.
36. Stoics are happy to credit animals with *sollertia*, which can refer to a sort of sneaky cunning rather than intelligence proper.
37. Given at Newmyer, 2011, p.66–8.
38. Sorabji, 1993, p.44.
39. Although 'Pyrrho was not a Pyrrhonist' (Warren, 2001, p.293), the tradition recorded by Sextus Empiricus does date back to the followers of Pyrrho in the third century BC.
40. The beginning and end of this passage are given in Newmyer, 2011, p.64–5. For a detailed analysis of the mental qualities assigned to dogs in this passage, see Sorabji, 1993, p.79f.
41. The word is *oikeion*: this, along with *allotrios* ('strange things'), could apply equally to people (that is, family and strangers, or even friends and enemies) as well as to broader concepts; for animals and the familiar, cf. Plato's *Republic* above (§8)
42. That is, the Cynic school.
43. The word for 'discussion' here is also *logos*.
44. For Pythagoras, see Burkert, 1972.
45. Given in Newmyer, 2011, pp.68–9

2 Animal Justice and Morals

1. See Newmyer, 2011, pp.82–3 for translation and discussion
2. Sorabji, 1993, p.117 and Newmyer, 2011, p.83 characterize the gift to man as a 'denial of justice' to animals.
3. Beall, 2005/6, p.176, summarizing the debate; Beall also remarks that 'Hesiod's specific citations of *dikê* directly concern the court in many cases', citing as one exception the case of the animals.

4. Osborne, 2007, p.198; for discussion of these fragments, see also Sorabji, 1993, pp.107–8, and Procopé, 1989 and 1990.
5. *TEGP* 14.366–8
6. Cf. Osborne, 2007, pp.47f. for a discussion of the meaning of 'dear man', *philos anêr*. Is Pythagoras talking about a friend, or men in general?
7. Clark, 2011, p.51.
8. Part of the passage is given in Newmyer, 2011, p.77.
9. Cicero quotes three lines of the *Phaenomena* of Aratus, given as the second half of §92 below.
10. Cf. Sorabji, 1993, pp.162–3 where the second half of this passage is translated and discussed.
11. For comment, see Gilhus, 2006, p.22; for a legal perspective, Polojac, 2003.
12. Translation from Watson, 1985, book 9.1 (no page numbers).

3 The Ancient Idea of Vegetarianism

1. Sorabji, 1993, p.171.
2. This common opinion is in fact rather misleading (and, of course, Judeo-Christian) in perspective as it fails to account for the fact that the 'pagan' culture of Classical antiquity can conservatively be said to have spanned 1,200 years and much Europe, Africa and Asia.
3. In the fourth volume of *Hippocrates* in the Loeb Classical Library edition, p.317f.
4. In the sixth volume of *Hippocrates* in the Loeb Classical Library edition, p.311.
5. Preserved in Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 386c–d.
6. Osborne, 2007, p.235, referring to Porphyry.
7. On the 'city of pigs', see especially McKeen, 2004.
8. Henderson, 2004, p.153.
9. Adapted from the translation of Gummere (Loeb Classical Library, 1917).
10. 411a ff. (chapter 10, in the fourth volume of the Loeb edition).
11. Spencer, 2000, p.93.
12. Part of this text also appears in Newmyer, 2011, pp.104–5.
13. See Green, 2008, p.42.
14. Part of this passage appears in Newmyer, 2011, p.98.
15. See C. Spencer, 2000, p.54.
16. On Pythagoreans and comedies, see Battezzato, 2008, with many ancient references and much bibliography.
17. See the remarks of Segal, 2001, p.63.
18. See especially Green, 2008, p.42 with bibliography and ancient references.
19. This passage and its continuing lines appear in Newmyer, 2011, pp.99–100.
20. Barrett, 1964, p.342.
21. The passage continues in Newmyer, 2011, p.101f.
22. See Newmyer, 2006, p.85ff. and pp.88–9 on the rest of this text.
23. See Newmyer, 2011, pp.105–8 for an introduction and excerpts, and Newmyer, 2006, p.94f. for comments.
24. Newmyer, 2006, p.95, paraphrasing *On the eating of flesh* 996e–997a, which is given in Newmyer, 2011, p.108; for less emotive accounts of fattening birds, see also below, Chapter 9.

25. 994e, see Newmyer, 2011, pp.63–4 for the passage.
26. http://freegan.info
27. This passage is the second half of a fuller excerpt in Newmyer, 2011, pp.78–80.
28. Literally 'goose liver', on which see below, §§135–7.
29. See Clark, 2000, p.129 with n.53 for this section.
30. The Greek word is '*douleuô*', to be a '*doulos*' or slave.
31. (On the Scythians and cannibalism, see §151 below.) This passage continues that given at §141. For some preceding sections of this book and comment, see Newmyer, 2011, pp.80–1.
32. Plutarch above (§57) used the same lines of Aeschylus, though in a different context: see Clark, 2000, p.173 n.466.
33. The word is *philanthropia*, given here as 'human-centred benevolence' and normally translated as 'philanthropy', though that word is not quite satisfactory: its modern English sense is one of practical benevolence through monetary donation (*OED*) rather than the species-exclusionary and rather limp fellow feeling which Porphyry is criticizing here.
34. Sorabji, 1993, p.163.
35. Osborne 2007, pp.231–2.

4 Observing and Imagining Animal Behaviour

1. For Aesop's fables and morality, see Zafiropoulos, 2001, p.26ff.
2. Newmyer, 2007, p.153; for the Homeric animal simile, see Lonsdale, 1990.
3. See Alden, 2005, for a thorough study of the lion in Homer including discussion of the species and the likelihood of leonine behaviour being derived through observation rather than hearsay.
4. This episode is the subject of Plutarch's humorous dialogue *Gryllus,* where one of the crewmen argues that he would rather remain an animal; see p.114.
5. On anthropomorphic language and Homeric similes, see Lonsdale, 1990.
6. Part of this episode is given in Newmyer, 2011, pp.113–4; for an ancient reception of this episode, see §21 above.
7. See Thumiger, 2006, p.195.
8. Segal, 2003; Segal, 1964.
9. Griffith, 1999, p.181.
10. Versions exist in both Pliny (*Natural history* 8.69) and Aelian (*On animals* 6.49).
11. Aristotle, *History of animals* 577b, where the anecdote is incidental to his biological observation that the animal lived to 80 years.
12. Section references to Pliny the Elder throughout this volume refer to the larger sections marked with Roman numerals in the Loeb Classical Library edition rather than the smaller sections designated by Arabic numerals.
13. For the intervening section, see Chapter 12 below.
14. Demonstrated in a 1931 pictorial entitled 'Trust!', viewable at www.britishpathe.com.
15. See most recently, 'Chimpanzees "have a sense of fairness"', *Daily Telegraph*, 15 January 2013, citing laboratory experimentation by behavioural scientists, including Frans de Waal.

16. See below, §162 for the description of a hippopotamus hunt which precedes this passage.
17. See also Pliny, *Natural history* 8.5 for three instances of elephants falling in love with a flower girl, a soldier and a perfume seller.
18. This episode, from Herodotus, is given by Newmyer, 2011, pp.50–1 as ancient evidence of animal helping behaviours.
19. See Newmyer, 2006, pp.39–40; for excerpts, Newmyer, 2011, pp.18–9, 37–8.
20. Gregory, 2007, p.193; for a detailed study, see Griffith, 2006.

5 Animals and Cultural Identity

1. Spencer, 2000, p.59 compares the Egyptians' disposal of 'unclean' animal heads with Deuteronomy 14:12, which also suggests giving impure meat to a stranger or selling it.
2. Asheri et al., 2007, pp.281ff. and *passim*.
3. See Campbell, 2006, p.88ff. for translation and comments.
4. For analysis of 'barbarian' nomad/pastoralists vs. 'civilised' Graeco-Roman agrarians, see Horden and Purcell, 2000, p.82ff.
5. See the second volume of the Loeb Classical Library edition, at 7.189ff.
6. Lloyd-Jones, 1975, p.40.

6 Bucolic Ideals and the Golden Age

1. For perspectives on the golden age, see Vidal-Naquet, 1978; see also Campbell, 2006, pp.40–7, where more ancient texts are translated with comments.
2. See West, 1978, p.101.
3. *TEGP* 9.191
4. For example, the Athenian red-figure cup by Makron (Berlin, Antikensammlung F2291): *LIMC* s.v. *Paridis Iudicium* 36 (and *passim* for more goats); for this vase, see the *Beazley Archive Pottery Database*, at www.beazley.ox.ac.uk, vase #204685.
5. or 'large garlic': *megalôn* or *Megarôn*.
6. Zanker, 1988, p.177 with pp.178–9 for illustrations.
7. Campbell, 2006, pp.44–5 with an excerpt and comments.
8. See Liebeschuetz, 1965.

7 Animal Study and Experimentation

1. For dissection, see especially Lloyd, 1991, chapter 8; see also chapter 15 entitled 'Science and morality in Graeco-Roman antiquity'.
2. See Roellig et al., 2011 for modern biology and a summary of the ancient enquiries.
3. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.11, see Newmyer, 2011, p.54 for the passage.
4. The information comes from the Christian-era philosopher C[h]alcidius.
5. See the remarks of Lloyd, 1991, p.179.
6. *ad loc*. in the Clarendon Aristotle series (1910). Having corresponded on the matter with a 'Professor Morgan' (presumably the biologist Thomas Hunt

Morgan), Platt concludes that Aristotle is correct in asserting that injured eyes of young birds do fully heal, but was exaggerating in his description of the birds' eyes being 'put out' (that is, 'removed') and sprouting *ex arches* ('from the beginning').
7. Aristotle had just asserted that the animal body was separable into three parts (the part where food is taken in, the part where it is excreted, and the part in the middle) and that those which can move have extra parts in the form of limbs.
8. Translation of Spencer (Loeb Classical Library, 1935).
9. For English editions, see Singer, 1956 (especially index s.v. *Vivisection*); Duckworth 1962.
10. Duckworth, 1962, p.15.
11. In the eighth volume of the Loeb Classical Library edition (ed. W.H.S. Jones, 1963) pp.563–4; a short essay on 'popular medicine' is appended to the volume (569–75).

8 Animals and Warfare

1. Sabin et al., 2007, p.117f for the Greek cavalry.
2. Hainsworth, 1993, p.299.
3. See, among many accounts, http://prime.peta.org/2012/01/military for the United States' abuse of animals in Afghanistan.
4. The text is from the *Epitome of histories* by Zonaras, derived from Dio's own history: the present text is the start of Zonaras 8.26, from pp.110–1 in the second volume of the Loeb Classical Library edition of *Dio's Roman History*. All subsequent references to Dio are to the Roman numeral books as arranged in the Loeb Classical Library editions.
5. See Scullard, 1974, and, recently, the popular *War elephants* of John Kistler (2006).
6. 'Similarly, Julius Africanus, *Kestoi* 9, tells how the Parthians kept their horses from neighing by so tightly binding their tails as to rob them of their spirit by the pain which the cord inflicted. It is reported that the mules belonging to the American army in France were prevented from braying by a simple surgical operation', note *ad loc*. in the Loeb edition, 1923.

9 The Economic Animal: Farming, Food and Trade

1. See Horden and Purcell, 2000, pp.197–200.
2. The lesser ass, as opposed to the 'greater' ass, the mule which benefits from careful selection of equine blood (as Columella describes in detail at 6.36).
3. On the economic importance of sheep, see especially Frayn, 1984.
4. See http://www.ciwf.org.uk/farm_animals/cows/dairy_cows/welfare_issues.aspx
5. See, for example, Singer and Mason, 2006, pp.57–8.
6. See the remarks on §97 above.
7. See above, §32.
8. The passage is given in Newmyer, 2011, p.108; see above, p.88.

9. Down plucking is a modern animal-rights controversy and is subject to a People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) boycott: see Villalobos, 2010.
10. The passage is given in Newmyer, 2011, p.88, which continues §154 below.
11. See Hughes, 2007, p.62f.

10 Sacrifice and Sacred Animals

1. See the collection Faraone and Naiden, 2012, chapters 1–2 for the historiography of Classical animal sacrifice and chapter 3 for an evidence-based re-appraisal.
2. See Gilhus, 2006, chapter 5 on sacred animals; Hughes, 2007, p.62f. For a brief discussion focusing on the sacred cattle of Apollo at Delos, see Isager, 1992; for a detailed species-by-species account, see Bodson, 1975.
3. 'by Goose' for 'by Zeus': fortunately the pun translates exactly. See Clark, 2000, p.89 with note on this 'false swearing'.
4. If this was indeed a popular assumption, then to imagine how this animal's divine status may have influenced its treatment we may think of the common (erroneous) assumption of Britons that all swans are the property of the British monarch; it is not hard to believe that this deters some vandals from harming them.
5. See above, n.177; also Gilhus, 2006, chapter 6.
6. Most cogently expressed in Burkert, 1983.
7. Vernant and Detienne, 1989.
8. Price, 1999, p.34.
9. Burkert, 1983, p.10
10. *TEGP* 9.189–91; The last two lines are quoted by Porphyry slightly later in the text, at 2.27 (repeating the above line as well).
11. See *TEGP* 9.196–208 for this text and further fragments; cf. Campbell, 2006, pp.42–3 for texts and comments.
12. *TEGP* 5.161
13. Apollonius, *Letters* 26–7; cf. Penella, 1979, pp.46–7 with comments and further references at p.105.
14. For an analysis, see Graf, 2011.
15. E. Fraenkel (1966) *Horace,* quoted in Arieti, 2004, p.105.
16. The flowers signify the Frontinalia festival in October.

11 Hunting Animals

1. Lane Fox's chapter-length survey of 1996 is the best introduction to the topic, written as it is from the knowledgeable point of view of a critical and sensitive historian who is also an active and vehement supporter of fox hunting (see remarks in Lane Fox, 2010, p.7).
2. The introductory remarks of E.C. Marchant in the 1925 Loeb edition of Xenophon's minor works (including *On hunting*) demonstrate the close affinity felt by this type of scholar to his supposed Classical forbears and are worth quoting in full: 'When an Englishman tells you that he is "going

to hunt", you understand him to mean that he intends to hunt the fox on horseback. Had you heard a young Greek of the fourth century B.C. make the same remark, the odds would have been that he was going to hunt the hare on foot'. He continues by detailing the practical shortcomings of Xenophon's hunting manual.

3. Of the Anglophone studies dedicated to hunting, J.K. Anderson's 1985 survey acknowledges the author's debt to eighteenth-century gentlemen William Somervile and Sir Peter Beckford (p.xii) and amounts to little more than a very well-researched manual on the techniques of Greek and Roman hunting, whereas Judith Barringer's 2001 monograph considers the cultural phenomenon of the hunt from a variety of perspectives, with chapters on erotic dimensions and symbolism, warfare, class and society, politics, myth and funerary connotations; Ada Cohen's 2010 study of the art and culture of Macedonian kings, particularly the impact of Alexander the Great, highlights the central importance of hunting in the cultural consciousness of the societies which dominated the ancient Mediterranean and Asia Minor for centuries after Alexander's death in 323 BC.
4. Thanks to Sarah Harden for drawing my attention to this passage.
5. See, for example,, Tuck, 2004.
6. The passage continues in Newmyer, 2011, pp.87–8.
7. On the symbolism of this image, see recently Lear and Cantarella, 2008, pp.32ff.
8. Bird liming is also depicted on a small number of Greek vases: see Boardman, 1993, p.72
9. 'My girl's sparrow is dead', Catullus 3; for the animal world and the erotics of *Daphnis and Chloe*, see Epstein, 2002.
10. An action-packed but very lengthy and minutely detailed account of the actual snake hunt is omitted here for reasons of space.
11. Thanks to Stephen Kidd for drawing my attention to this passage.
12. Dunbabin, 1999, p.134.
13. Jennison, 1937, p.77.
14. The word used here is *theriotrophos*, literally 'beast-nourishing': interestingly the same word is mentioned above by Varro (§139) as the Greek work for a wild game park.

12 Animals and Public Entertainment

1. The 'wastrel son' Pheidippides in Aristophanes's *Clouds*, performed in 423 BC, has racked up debts due to gambling on equestrian sports (for example, *Clouds* 26–32).
2. Futrell, 2006, p.205ff.
3. For an analysis of cockfights, see Csapo, 1993.
4. See Boardman, 1993, p.61 for illustration.
5. Jennison 1937: 30–5 analyses the procession in detail, concerned especially with where the animals might have come from and – as a gentleman zookeeper – exactly which species were exhibited. His identifications are followed here.

6. For the diptych: Elsner, 1998, pp.30–1 with illustration; for the games: Jennison, 1937, p.95ff. with references to the letters of Symmachus.
7. On animals, the games and food, see Kyle, 1998, chapter 6.
8. See Csapo, 1993, pp.10–1 with note 47
9. The manuscript gives the year as 282 BC: see discussion in the Loeb edition. The years mentioned in passages of Pliny below also follow this edition.
10. Jennison, 1937, p.87
11. Dunbabin, 1999, p.132ff.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

LIMC – *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich: Artemis).
LSJ – Liddell, H.G and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* 9th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
TEGP – Graham, D.W. (2010) *The texts of early Greek philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

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