Chapter 2: Avicenna on Uniquely Human Emotions

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The goal of this chapter is to present Avicenna's views on the uniquely human aspects of emotional experience. Specifically, I will show that for Avicenna there is a sense in which human emotions are similar to animal emotions, and a sense in which they are unique. Human emotions are *similar* to animal emotions in that involve activations of broadly the same psychological hardware, that is, the same motive faculty shared between animals and humans, albeit caused by a variety of higher cognitions. But because of those unique cognitive causes, we get distinctive activations of those animal faculties, and these constitute uniquely human emotions. In the same way that animals experience different appetites in response to different objects (different types of concupiscible and irascible acts being the main subdivisions), there are further shades of appetitive, motive activity brought about by human cognition. These are activations of the shared animal motive faculty, but they are not reducible to concupiscible or irascible acts. Thus, human emotions are *unique*, both in terms of the more complex cognitions which *cause* them, and in terms of the specific shades of inclination, or motivation, which *constitute* them.

1. Overview of the Evidence that Human Emotions Involve the Animal Motive Soul

The above schema is not presented unambiguously by Avicenna, but there are texts which could be taken as direct affirmations of it, and an accumulation of adjacent texts that suggest they should be taken as such. In other words, the above schema seems to underly his numerous texts that deal with the topic, though it is not stated explicitly. Before diving into the particulars, then, an overview of the evidence is in order, so that it is clear not too much weight is being put on any one text.

This chapter builds off of two key pointers Avicenna gives us in the texts from *Psychology* 4.4 (discussed in chapter one of this dissertation). Firstly, when Avicenna distinguishes between animal emotions that are caused by external pleasures, and those caused by internal pleasures, he says that the motive faculty responds to both of these causes, and it likewise activates "for the sake of the intelligibles pertaining to the good."[1] Here Avicenna has not shifted away from discussing the shared motive faculty—this is still a continuation of the overall goal in 4.4 of explaining the animal motive faculty—but he has listed a new cognitive cause for activating it. So this seems to be an indication that at least *some* uniquely human motive states (i.e., uniquely human emotions) are activations of the shared animal motive faculty. Secondly, shortly thereafter, as he is widening our understanding of what sorts of things count as emotions, he mentions pleasurable completion states (e.g., enjoyment of people and gladness), and follows this by mentioning that "as for the human faculties, there occurs to them other states [*aḥwāl*], particular to them, which we'll talk about soon."[2] Again, given that this comes in the context of his enumerating various states of the animal motive faculty (i.e., emotions), it seems natural to take this as simply saying that there are also uniquely human activations of the animal motive soul, but that he is postponing talk about them (until 5.1, as we will see). If this were *not* a

1 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 4.4, 195.
2 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 4.4, 196.

reference to uniquely human activations of the animal motive soul, there would be much less of a reason for him to mention it here. Unlike philosophers in the Latin West, Avicenna does not have any human faculty of the will, so there is no new faculty later introduced that this could be referring to. So neither of these points is unambiguous, but they begin to paint a picture of how uniquely human emotional life involves the animal motive faculty, a picture which the texts we will look at in this chapter support.

Before we turn to those new texts in detail, it is worth pointing out what we will see in them that is relevant to supporting the above picture. First, Avicenna's discussions of specific human emotions (from Psychology 5.1) and the practical intellect (from 1.5) together show that certain states of the practical intellect (i.e., virtues or vices) dispose humans towards or away from some uniquely human emotions. Avicenna specifically says that this is a way that the practical intellect is related to the animal motive faculty. So the virtues and vices here are states of the practical intellect, but they lead to uniquely human emotions, and those emotions (not the virtues and vices) are states of the animal motive faculty. Secondly, in Avicenna's *Treatise on Love*, he describes how the rational faculties "adapt" the lower faculties to their aims, this being a kind of "partnership."[3] The animal motive faculties are among those ennobled by their proximity to higher faculties in humans, and one result of this is emotions that non-human animals do not have. As cognitive faculties, the reason the rational faculties are able to cause unique states of the animal motive faculties is because of their unique goals and cognitions. The key thing to see in both of these texts is that human emotions are presented as a partnership between the rational faculties (as cause) and the animal motive faculties (as constitutive of the emotion), just as animal emotions are presented as a partnership involving the animal cognitive faculties.[4]

Of course, there are also places where Avicenna discusses human emotions and does not mention the animal motive faculties, so this is—again—not unambiguous. But Avicenna's numerous assertions and suggestions that human emotions *do* involve the animal motive faculty, and a dearth of texts to the contrary, strongly supports the idea that Avicenna has the previously-mentioned schema in mind. Moreover, it just seems in keeping with Avicenna's general habits as a philosopher to think in this way: wherever possible, Avicenna builds more complex activities on existing psychological faculties, and highlights ways in which the intellect depends on animal faculties.[5] There is ample evidence that some distinctly human cognitive capacities engage the internal senses, and the schema being described here would just be a parallel to that on the motive side of the soul.[6]

2. The Practical Intellect as a Motive Principle

The practical intellect is relevant to the discussion of emotions insofar as the practical intellect is a "principle of motion." In chapter one we saw how Avicenna refers to appetitive faculties as motive *faculties*, strictly speaking. Motive *principle* is a more general category for

3 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 256, 259.

4 See *Healing: Psychology* 4.4, discussed in chapter 1, section 4.

5 As Avicenna says in *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, the practical intellect depends on the body and its faculties for "all" its actions, and the theoretical intellect is in mostly the same position (with an exception later made for the reception of intelligibles). See 5.1, 208.

6 The chief example of this on the cognitive side of things is how Avicenna calls the imagination the cogitative faculty when it is engaged in carrying out functions for the intellect. See Black (2013).

Avicenna, comprising appetitive faculties, and closely related cognitive faculties. This distinction between motive principles and motive faculties gets across both what is unique about human emotions (they have a uniquely human cognitive causes, here the practical intellect) even though they are ultimately activations of the shared animal motive faculty. He uses this terminology in two main places in *Healing: Psychology*. The notion of the practical intellect as a motive principle first arises in Avicenna's overview of the human soul's faculties in 1.5:

> The practical [intellect] is a power that is the motive principle [*madbaʾ muḥarrik*] for the human body towards concrete acts that are particularly associated with deliberation [*rawīya*]— deliberation, that is, in accordance with the demands of beliefs that are particularly associated with it [the practical intellect] about that which is appropriate to do.[7] And it [the practical intellect] has an aspect in relation to [*lahā iʿatibār bil-qiyās ilā*] the animal appetitive [*al-nazūʿiyya*] faculty, and an aspect in relation to the animal imaginative, estimative power, and a relation to itself.[8]

From this text, it seems that for the practical intellect to be a motive principle is for it be related to motion, but not necessarily in as direct a sense as a motive faculty ("the animal appetitive [*al-nazūʿiyya*] faculty"), to which it merely has a relation. We will unpack those relations shortly, but to continue understanding the basic terminology, we can see Avicenna again using the specification of "motive principle" in *Psychology* 5.1, just after giving a more detailed account of the practical and theoretical intellect:

> For there is in a person a sensible judge, and an estimative judge in the realm of imagination, and an intellectual and practical judge. And the motive/inclining principles [*al-mabadī al-bāʿitha*] relevant to faculty that resolves on the movement of the organs, are the estimative imagination, and the practical intellect, and the concupiscible and irascible faculties. Other animals have three of these.[9]

Here he says that the soul not only has four types of "judges"—sensation, estimation, and theoretical and practical intellect—it also has four types of "motive principles [*al-mabadī al-bāʿitha*]," namely, estimative imagination, practical intellect, and the concupiscible and irascible faculties.[10] As we saw when Avicenna initially distinguished the animal motive faculties from the animal apprehending faculties, there is a basic division between the motive and the apprehensive, so by calling all four of these faculties motive principles, he cannot mean that the faculties which show up in both of these lists are primarily motive *and* cognitive. Rather, practical intellect and estimation are primarily identified as cognitive faculties, but they are also more relevant to motion in some way than sensation and the theoretical intellect (which are left off this list), making the former motive principles, and the later not. The practical intellect is *not*, on its own, the subject of an inclination, or appetite, but it accounts for different types of judgments that

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7 "That which is appropriate to do," translating *iṣṭilāḥiyya*. This term is a bit difficult to translate in a way that makes sense of the passage. In his translation of a similar passage in the *Najat*, Rahman translates this term as "purposive," a definition which I am unable to find evidence for elsewhere. "Conventional" would seem appropriate, given that the practical intellect often urges action on the basis of widespread opinion, but when this word is used to mean "conventional," it is typically in the context of of technical "conventions" in language. The translation of "that which is appropriate to do" picks up on the core idea of the root of this verb, and fits with what the practical intellect in fact does.

8 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 1.5, 45-46.

9 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 208.

10 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 208.

result in different actualizations of the animal motive faculties. The appetitive faculties are motive faculties, and can be called motive principles, but "motive principle" is a broader designation than "motive faculty," since the former includes cognitive faculties, while the later does not.

In a general sense, the practical intellect is related to actions, because it deliberates about what it is appropriate to do. Both the mode (deliberation) and the content (pertaining to action) distinguish the practical intellectual from the theoretical intellect. The Arabic word for deliberation, *rawīya*, is a translation of the Greek *bouleisis*. Unlike the theoretical intellect, the goal of the practical intellect is not to receive new, universal information as a result of emanation from the Agent Intellect. Rather, information we already possess is used to make judgments that relate to action in the realm of the variable and corruptible. Nonetheless, Avicenna's way of describing the practical intellect in the above text is quite broad, as there are multiple processes that affect what sort of action is ultimately taken. These multiple processes require that the practical intellect cooperates with other faculties, which is why Avicenna says at the end of the above text that the practical intellect has an "aspect in relation" to several powers. This is just another way of saying that, because humans have rationality, they have the capacity to guide their actions by reason, and this capacity augments or makes use of other capacities already present in the animal soul.

Avicenna goes on to specify three ways that our ability to deliberate about action plays out, i.e., the "aspects in relation" to several powers that belong to the practical intellect. Avicenna presents them in following order: the practical intellect in relation to 1) the motive faculties, 2) imagination and estimation, and 3) the intellect itself (practical and theoretical):

> [1] Its aspect in relation to the animal appetitive power is the respect, in view of which there occur in it [the practical intellect] states [*hayʾāt*] that characterize a human by which one is prepared for quickness of action or passion, such as shame [*khajl*], embarrassment [*ḥayāʾ*], laughter [*ḍaḥika*], crying [*bakāʾ*], and [other actions or passions] similar to those.
>
> [2] And its aspect in relation to the animal imaginative and estimative power is the respect that joins to them when it is occupied with deducing methods of management in generable, corruptible matters and humans arts.
>
> [3] And its aspect in relation to itself is the respect in which beliefs are engendered between the practical intellect and the theoretical intellect that relate to actions and [which beliefs are] commonly accepted, [being] widely known [*dhāʾiʿa*], like that lying is bad and injustice is bad—not by means of demonstration or anything like that [derived] from defined premises. The distinction [between these practical beliefs] and the primary intelligibles is set out in the books of logic, even though were [the beliefs of the practical intellect] logically considered, they would come from the intelligibles in accordance with what is in the books of logic.

These are presented as three separate aspects, but they add up to a complete picture, showing how judgments of the practical intellect lead to acts of the animal motive faculty. Since acts of the animal motive faculty are equivalent to emotions, seeing how these three aspects relate this can help us understand how at least one variety of uniquely human emotions occurs.

Beginning at [3], the first thing deliberation needs to get off the ground is a universal judgment of some class of objects or actions as having some value. It is thanks to our capacity to engage in theoretical thought that we know things like "lying and injustice are bad," to use Avicenna's examples. In *Psychology* 5.1 Avicenna says that the practical intellect is "supplied

by" the theoretical intellect for these, the major premises of syllogisms related to a practical matters.[11] The typical way of coming to such evaluative judgments is through something less epistemically strong than demonstration,[12] but as they are a type of universal judgment, they nonetheless are grasped by the theoretical intellect, and then supplied to the practical intellect.

Of course, universal judgments on their own cannot lead to action in the realm of particulars, which is why Avicenna clarifies at [2] that the practical intellect needs to cooperate with the internal senses, in particular imagination and estimation. Prior to cooperation with the internal senses, universal judgments of value are being used to label particular objects as worth pursuing or not, and to evaluate courses of action, or "methods of management," as worth pursuing or not. But it is one thing to know that lying is bad, and this the practical intellect gets from the theoretical intellect. It is another thing to identify a particular instance of lying (actual or possible) as good or bad, and to in fact pursue or avoid it. This is why Avicenna later says, in 5.1, that the practical intellect needs, in all its actions, the body and its faculties[13]: the practical intellect does not need the body to deliberate in a general sense about what sort of actions are appropriate—this is its relation "to itself." But the point of these general judgments is to judge particular objects and initiate action, and that cannot be done without dealing with particulars.[14]

Avicenna's discussion of the practical intellect's "aspect in relation" to the motive faculty at [1] focuses on the fact that the practical intellect can develop unique dispositions towards emotions that are not present in animals. He is not focused simply on the fact *that* the practical intellect causes acts of the motive faculty, which appears to be something he takes for granted. What he is focused on explaining here is one of the ways in which the state of the practical intellect (that is, the state of our habits of mind and beliefs about practical matters) can influence the motive faculty.

Just as animals can develop dispositions towards certain emotions without the practical intellect, so humans can develop a unique variety of dispositions because of the practical intellect. Some of the actualizations of the animal appetitive faculty mentioned above are emotions of the sort also experienced by animals, and some, as we will see, are uniquely human emotions,[15] but Avicenna's point here is not to go into detail about emotions as such. Rather, it seems that he is describing something like character traits, rooted in the practical intellect, which govern emotions. That this is the case is confirmed as he goes on in the following paragraphs of 1.5 to elaborate on how the practical intellect's relation to the body accounts for good or bad moral dispositions (*aklhāq*).[16] If the practical intellect is influenced by what is "above" it (the judgements of the theoretical intellect), good morals are developed. If influenced negatively by what is "below" it (the needs of the animal and vegetative faculties), bad morals are developed. Since the practical intellect is primarily a cognitive faculty, and influences the appetitive faculty

11 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 207.

12 This is why Avicenna says that they "spread out" and become "widely known," referring to the sort of premises they are: not scientific or primary premises, but premises accepted on the basis of authority or communal consensus. This is discussed more in chapter three.

13 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 208.

14 There is quite a lot summarized quickly in the text we are unpacking here, and much of chapter three will be dedicated to unpacking the particular cognitions that give rise to acts of the motive faculty. In this chapter we will mostly be taking for granted that animals and humans have the capacity to evaluate particular objects, and that these evaluations give rise to the moved-movers of the motive faculty.

15 See the next section of this chapter.

16 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 1.5, 46-47.

insofar as it is a cognitive faculty, these character traits are probably constituted by firmly held beliefs, or habitual modes of thought. For example, if you firmly hold the belief that lying is bad, that is a kind of good character trait, and it will have implications for when you experience shame: if you yourself lie, and firmly believe lying is bad, you are likely to experience shame with little need for new deliberation. This "aspect" of the practical intellect, then, is just an extension of its standard, deliberative role.

More could be be said about the topics brought up in the above text. We will examine the cognitions that give rise to inclinations and actual motion in chapter three in more detail, and moral dispositions in chapter four. But for now it is enough to see that the practical intellect is a cognitive faculty, and gives rise to motive states, unique to humans, thanks to its particular cognitions. It depends on the theoretical intellect to form evaluative judgments, and it depends on the internal senses to apply these evaluations to particulars.

3. Avicenna's Discussions of Specific Uniquely Human Emotions

The distinction between motive faculties and motive principles is at the core of Avicenna's view on human emotions, but he actually spends time unpacking particular human emotions in a portion of 5.1 that is not explicitly related to either the theoretical or practical intellect. As mentioned earlier, Avicenna says in *Psychology* 4.4 that he will eventually discuss "states unique to the rational soul." This seems to have been an indication that he would continue his discussion of states of the animal motive faculty (i.e., emotions), but with respect to cognitions that are uniquely human.

Avicenna begins 5.1 by discussing activities unique to humans, such as engaging in trade and linguistic communication. These are obviously activities unique to humans, but they do not necessarily involve uniquely human emotions. Trade can be a way of acting on concupiscible appetite, and linguistic communication could help fulfill an inclination towards the internal pleasure of familial relations.

It is when Avicenna switches to talking about "affections [*infiʿālāt*]" unique to humans in 5.1 that he is clearly not just interested in behavior unique to humans, but in unique emotions. *Infiʿāl* is another generic term Avicenna sometimes uses to circumscribe similar phenomena that fall under the heading of *inbiʿāth* and *nazzāʿ*. *Infiʿāl* does not as precisely pick out the functional role that these phenomena serve in his psychology as does the idea of "inclination," since it means more generally "passion," or "that which one undergoes." But it is a term that was in use to refer to emotions/inclinations prior to Avicenna, so it makes sense that he would use it here.

The uniquely human emotions discussed in 5.1 do not seem to be chosen with an eye to being comprehensive or systematic, but each emotion is analyzed with an eye to what makes the cognitions that cause it uniquely human. The discussion can be broken in roughly three sections: 1) a discussion of anxiety and wonder, uniquely human emotions that also have uniquely human physical manifestations, 2) shame, a uniquely human emotion in response to behavior grasped as bad according to social norms, and 3) fear and hope with respect to the future, emotions based on a sense of time that is uniquely human.

As we look through these three sections, there will be two main take-aways. Firstly, we will see these uniquely human emotions all depending on uniquely human judgments, as would be expected. But secondly, Avicenna makes no mention of which intellectual faculty—practical or

theoretical—is behind these emotions. They do not all seem obviously related to the sorts of concrete actions practical intellect is posited to explain, so it is possible that some of them are just inclinations humans have as a result of more theoretical judgments.

3a. Wonder and Grief

When Avicenna discusses wonder and grief, he is interested in showing that these emotions are caused by uniquely human cognitions, but also that they are accompanied by noteworthy, uniquely human physical manifestations:

> One of the distinguishing characteristics of humans is that there follows upon his apprehension of rare/witty [*nādira*] things an affection [*infiʿāl*] which is called wonder [*al-taʿajjub*][17], and laughter follows [wonder]. And following his apprehension of harmful things there is an affection [*infiʿāl*] called grief [*ḍajar*], which is followed by crying.[18]

Wonder here is likely a reference to the way that imaginative speech can affect humans, as described in Avicenna's logical works. Generally speaking, imaginative speech, or speech that evokes images in the listeners, is the sort of speech found in most poetry. Avicenna's most sustained discussion of imaginative speech comes in his Healing: Poetics, where he contrasts the sort of acquiescence caused by poetry with the sort of acquiescence caused by more scientific syllogisms:

> Imaginative speech [al-mukhayyil] is speech to which the soul acquiesces [tadhʿan], such that it accepts or rejects matters without deliberation, cogitation, or choice [min ghayr rawiya wa-fikr wa-ikhtiyār]. In sum, the soul is affected on account of [such speech] emotionally [infiʿālan nafsāniyyan], not in terms of discursive thought [fikriyyan].[19]

When we connect with some bit of poetry, or hear a persuasive scientific argument, in both cases the soul acquiesces to something. But in the case of poetry, the images affect us emotionally, while scientific arguments cause what Avicenna terms assent. To use Avicenna's example of imaginative acquiescence, if a poet describes so-and-so as a moon, because they are handsome, the listener may come to be convinced—in a manner of speaking—that that person is a moon, even when they know that this is literally false.[20] On the other hand, when someone is convinced by a scientific argument, they assent to the proposition as literally true.

Of course, this raises the question of just what constitutes imaginative acquiescence. In the prior text Avicenna glosses it as a kind of emotional affect, and shortly thereafter he fills out the picture.

> Imagination is a kind of acquiescence, and assent is a kind of acquiescence, but imagination is acquiescence owing to the wonder [taʿajjub] and pleasure caused by the speech, while assent is acquiescence owing to acceptance that the thing is as it is said to be.[21]

17 No relation to the "wonder/aporia" discussed at the beginning of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which is a different sort of phenomenon, and is translated in Arabic as *ḥayra* or *ʿawīṣ*.
18 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 204.
19 Avicenna, *Healing: Poetics* (1973) 161.
20 Black (1990) 212.
21 Avicenna, *Healing: Poetics* (1973) 162.

So when you acquiescence to the thought that so-and-so is a moon, the acquiescence is based on an imagination of the relevant image, but it is constituted by the fact that you take wonder or pleasure in the speech. Imaginative acquiescence requires a skilled poet to deploy images in creative and evocative ways,[22] but the acquiescence is achieved when the image stirs up an emotional reaction. To react emotionally to an image is to acquiesce to it.

In a section on imaginative propositions in the logical part of Avicenna's *Remarks and Admonitions*, Avicenna unpacks the nature of wonder in more detail: "Imagined propositions are such that, when they are stated, they leave in the soul an astonishing effect [*taʾthīrʿajīb*] of tension or release [qabḍ wa-basṭ]."[23] The word translated as "astonishing" is the same same root as the word for "wonder" in the text from the last paragraph. The connection is unlikely to be an accident, and indeed it would make sense if this were a way of clarifying that wonder is characterized by feelings of both tension and release. Often the flow of great poetry is designed to do just that, and the release can itself lead to what Avicenna says is a characteristic physical manifestation of wonder, namely, laughter.

As for laughter itself, this is clearly something that comes after the emotion of wonder, but presumably Avicenna includes it here because of its uniqueness to humans. Laughter holds a notable place within Aristotelian works on psychology, because of Aristotle's statement in *Parts of Animals* that humans are the only animal that laugh.[24] *Parts of Animals* was translated in the 8th century, along with *History of Animals* and *Generation of Animals*, by Yahya Ibn al-Batriq, so Avicenna would have been aware of this specification. In *Parts of Animals*, Aristotle mentions laughter as unique to humans due to the physical makeup of their diaphragm. Given Avicenna's focus on the cognitions leading to wonder and laughter here, it is plausible to take this as a suggestion that laughter is also unique to humans because of the sort of cognitions required to give rise to laughter. That is, we may laugh in response to the wondrousness of art, broadly construed, insofar as it thwarts expectations, surprises, grips us, and creates a kind of tension and release. poetry,

Returning to Avicenna's original definition of wonder in Psychology 5.1, then, we see that wonder is caused by an apprehension of rare/witty things, paradigmatically found in poetry. Wonder can be further glossed as a feeling of tension and release, which often leads to laughter, a uniquely human behavior. That Avicenna does not mention poetry in 5.1 suggests that wonder need not be limited to poetry. But the sort of creativity and rational activity that goes into poetry, and thereby the sort of rational activity required to appreciate what is wondrous about poetry, makes it clear why this emotion would only be available to humans.

The other uniquely human emotion Avicenna discusses here is grief (*ḍajar*). This is the only time Avicenna uses this term in the context of emotions, so it is difficult to know exactly how to translate it, yet grief seems appropriate for several reasons. Lane's Lexicon gives numerous instances of translating *ḍajar* as being vexed, annoyed, frustrated, due to some sort of grief or loss. It appears to be a negative emotion, caused by the loss of something, especially a loved one. Moreover, Avicenna lists a characteristic physical manifestation following *ḍajar* to be crying, which does seem uniquely tied to grief. The Latins translated *ḍajar* as *anxietas*, which is of

22 Discussed at Harb (2013) 28-29.
23 Remarks: Logic (1960) p. 362 (Dunya). Here using Inati's translation (p. 127), modifying her translation of "distress or pleasure" to "tension or release."
24 Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* (2002) 3.10, 673a.

course an emotion that pervades human life[25], and could lead to crying. But mere anxiety does not seem as uniquely human as grief: no doubt animals miss their loved ones when they are apart (we saw Avicenna describe as much in Psychology 4.4, which we looked at in chapter one)[26], but there is no clear parallel in the animal world to what humans do in terms of funerals, lamenting and grieving.

In addition to these observations, comments in two predecessors suggest that grief over the loss of a loved one is likely what Avicenna may mean by *ḍajar*. Though the terminology is not set, there was apparently an awareness of the idea that grief was uniquely human, and a sense that this was worth discussing. On the one hand, the term *ḍajar* is used in Al-Balkhī's *Sustenance of the Soul*, grouped together with *ḥuzn* and *ghamm*, (two two other general negative emotions) and *ghaḍb* (anger), and opposed to pains that afflict the body.[27] On its own, this is not illuminating, but by seeing *ḍajar* associated with *ghamm* in a generic context, we can assume that there is some fluidity between the terms. Then, in a work written around the same period, A.B. Al-Rāzī's *Spiritual Physick,* we see *ghamm* described as a kind of unbearable suffering caused by rational reflection on loss of a loved one.[28] Ghamm, according to Rāzī, is uniquely human, apparently both because of the unique bonds humans make with family and friends, and because of our ability to conceptualize a loss as a loss. Both of these points suggest that there was some notion of "grief over the loss of a loved one" as a uniquely human emotion floating around prior to Avicenna, and it makes sense that that is what he would be referring to in this section under the heading of *ḍajar*.

Humans' propensity to cry is common throughout ancient discussions of emotions, but Avicenna seems to be the first to group it with laughter as a manifestation of a uniquely human emotion. Galen is the first to discuss the tear duct in detail, and he notes that one of its functions is to release moisture from the lacrimal glands.[29] His discussion makes no mention of this being unique to humans, since of course it is not. But animals moistening their eyes out of physical necessity is different from what it is like to cry, and Avicenna seems to pick up on the difference.

Today there is debate about whether humans are, in fact, the only animals that cry or laugh, and after many more years of animal observation it is by no means clear that these physical manifestations do signify uniquely human inclinations. But the fact that there is lively debate about these phenomena shows that it was astute for Avicenna to have pointed it out.

Avicenna does not state explicitly why he chose to group these two emotions together. The most obvious reason would be that wonder and anxiety are uniquely human emotions, known to be so because of the uniquely human cognitions that cause them (apprehensions of rare/witty wondrous things, and apprehensions of loss, respectively), *and because* they lead to apparently uniquely human physical manifestations. Not every uniquely human emotion Avicenna goes on to discuss also has a unique physical behavior associated with it, so that makes wonder and grief a suitable pair.[30]

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25 Avicenna, *Liber de anima* (1968) 5.1, vol. 2, p. 74.
26 See chapter one, section 3.
27 Page 515 in the Arabic text.
28 Chapter 12, *Spiritual Physick*, page 23 in the Arabic edition.
29 Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body* (1968) 489-490.
30 It is certainly going beyond what is explicit in the text, but one might speculate that these emotions are also the two key emotions associated with the poetic genres of comedy and tragedy, respectively. Though Aristotle's treatise on comedy was lost, Avicenna would have known that comedy and tragedy were two main poetic, dramatic forms, one typically leading to wonder and laugher, and the other to grief and tears.

3b. Shame as a Response to Social Order

Avicenna's overview of uniquely human emotions continues with shame, which Avicenna builds to by discussing the way that humans set up moral standards for communal benefit in a way that animals do not. Picking up where he left off the analysis of wonder and anxiety, Avicenna paves the way for his definition of shame by explaining the difference between animal and human moral standards:

> And something that is particular to humans is that there are some acts which it is not appropriate to do—for the sake of mutual association and what is beneficial. One begins to learn this when they are small, and grow up learning it, accustomed from youth to hearing that such-and-such is not appropriate to do, so that this belief becomes like an instinct [*ka-al-gharīzī*]. And there are other acts contrary to [the inappropriate ones], and the first are called bad, the latter good.
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> This is not the case with other animals. For if other animals abandon the acts which it is their wont [205] to do (like when a lion is trained not to eat its master or its offspring), the cause for this is not a belief [*iʿtiqād*] in the soul or a kind of knowledge [*raʾy*], but rather a different kind of disposition [*hayʾa*], e.g., that the animal prefers by nature the existence of what pleases him [i.e., food], and the survival of [the person who gives him food], such that the one who provides for him and who feeds him becomes pleasurable to him, because everything which is beneficial is by nature pleasurable to the one benefited. So the thing preventing [the lion's] tearing apart [its owner] is not a belief, but rather some disposition [*hayʾa*], some other psychological state [*ʿāriḍ nafsāniyya]*].
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> And it is possible that this state could occur due to nature [*jibla*], or as a kind of divine inspiration [*ilhām ilāhī*], as in the love of every animal for its offspring. And this happens without any kind of belief at all. Rather, [this state] is like the imagining by some human [that] something is beneficial and pleasurable, or his distaste for something in whose form there is that which repels him.

Humans form complex societies, and standards have arisen in order to promote the common good. The way we typically come to learn these standards is not by way of logical proofs, but rather by indoctrination: we are told that something is wrong over and over, until this belief becomes ingrained in us.[31] This is an illustration of how "widely known" practical beliefs spread, something we have already seen Avicenna say is characteristic of the practical intellect's activity.[32]

This is not the most epistemically strong sort of belief, but it is more than non-human animals have. Non-human animals might seem to be cooperating for the common good at times, such as by not eater their masters, but what is actually going on there is something more basic and related to simple sensory pleasures and pains. Animals want to eat, because this gives them pleasure, and they know that their master brings them food, so their master is associated with pleasure. At no point are animals motivated by any kind of propositional belief, much less a societal standard. They just do what is in their interest, for the sake of pleasure.

Because of this cognitive difference, a difference in emotional experience follows. Avicenna uses the above insights to offer his analysis of the uniquely human emotion of shame:

31 The way Avicenna discusses human moral development here is reminiscent of Aristotle's discussion of virtue, acquired as a second nature, in *Nicomachean Ethics* (1984) 2.1.
32 See section 2.

> And there follows from a person's awareness that someone else is aware that he did something which it is agreed upon that one should not do a psychological affection [*inf͑ʿāl nafsānī*] called shame [*khajl*]. And this is also one of the distinguishing characteristics of humans.[33]

The reason humans can experience shame, and brute animals cannot, is that animals do not set up moral standards for communal benefit. Shame occurs specifically when you know that you have done something wrong (according to agreed-upon societal standards) and you know that someone else also knows that you have done that same thing wrong. This would make shame different than guilt, which seems able to be felt even if no one else is aware. Shame requires the scrutiny and judgment of another person, and reference to agreed-upon standards. One does not typically feel shame as a result of the judgment of someone from another culture, with whose moral standards they are not in agreement. Non-human animals cannot feel shame since, of course, they do not have communal moral beliefs, or the capacity to form them

3c. Fear and Hope: Emotions Related to a Uniquely Human Awareness of Time

Avicenna concludes his discussion of uniquely human emotions by describing those that are in response to objects that might cause harm or pleasure in the future. The two names he uses for emotions that can be about future objects, fear [*al-khawf*] and hope [*al-rajāʾ*], are sometimes also used for animal inclination. However, Avicenna explains that certain types of fear and hope are unique to humans.:

> And because someone believes something in the future will harm them, there could occur them a person a psychological emotion [*inf͑ʿāl nafsānī*] called fear [*al-khawf*]. Other animals only have [an emotion concerning harm] in relation to what they think of as likely to occur in the present, and connected to the present.
>
> And a human has, in contrast with [future-oriented] fear, hope [*al-rajāʾ*], while [the emotion] animals have is merely in relation to the present, and what is not for that which is far off from the present. That which animals do is rote, and not because they are aware of time and that which pertains to it. Indeed, that also is a kind of instinct [*ḍarb min al-ilhām*]; for example, that which ants do in terms of moving provisions to their burrow (which signals rain) [this behavior is because] they imagine that that is something which is happening in that time, just like when an animal flees an opponent when he imagines that the other one is going to strike him at that time.[34]

Aristotle noticed the relevance of time to psychology in *De Anima* 3.10, saying that it is humans' ability to perceive time that allows them to resist now-oriented animal appetite, putting off such immediate pleasures for the sake of future goods.[35] Avicenna is less interested here in conflicting inclinations, than in the fact that perception of time makes certain uniquely human emotions possible. It is one thing to attempt to restrain a present concupiscible appetite out of considerations for the future, and this is what Aristotle was focused on in *De Anima* 3.10. It is another thing to be aware of a possible pleasure or harm that does not yet exist, and to hope or fear, respectively, that it might.

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33 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 205.
34 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 5.1, 205-206.
35 Aristotle, *On the Soul* (1986) 3.10, 433b5-10.

Avicenna explains elsewhere what he means by time, and human perception of it,[36] but it is uncontroversial in his tradition that humans have the ability to perceive time, and other animals in general do not.[37] Admittedly, some animals exhibit behavior where it looks like they are aware of time, and even seem to prepare for the future. Themistius, commenting on *De Anima* 3.10, speculates that this may be because select animals, like ants and bees, do in fact perceive time.[38] But in the above text Avicenna has a different explanation for that behavior: some sort of instinct prompts them to imagine that it is raining in the present, and presumably to imagine that it is just about to rain in the present, which provokes behavior that to us looks like preparation.

Despite Avicenna seeming to talk about present- and future-oriented hope and fear, it is perhaps just as likely that his point in this passage is that hope and fear—properly understood—are themselves uniquely human emotions, with animals simply having analogous emotions related to the present. We may sometimes call the animal analogues "hope" and "fear," but they are really something substantially different. Even in the above text, Avicenna never explicitly says that animals have hope and fear. He says that humans have hope and fear, which are future-oriented, and that animals also have emotions that are similar, but related to the present. Beyond the ambiguity of the above text, Avicenna's definitions of these emotions elsewhere in his work support thinking of them as uniquely human.

Avicenna discusses fear in his Healing: Rhetoric, and hope earlier in the Psychology, and both of these discussions focus on these emotions as future-oriented. The opening of his discussion of fear is as follows:

> And as for fear, it is a pain [ḥuzn] and agitation [ikhtilāṭ] of the soul, on account of [li] imagining an expected, debilitating evil either reaching [total] corruption or not. Not every evil is feared. For envy or a person's being licentious are among the sort of things that are not feared. Among evil things, that which is feared is that which will harm the one to whom it will occur, with corruption or pain, and it [the object of fear] is *something in the future*. As for that which has passed, or that which occurred, fear about it has passed away. And the object of fear is, despite its *being in the future, expected, i.e., close to happening*. For that which is far off is not feared. For that reason not everyone fears death, but rather only he fears it who is on the brink of it. So objects of fear, then, are those things which have the ability to inflict this sort of harm.

For something to be an object of fear, it must be some appropriate distance in the future. Fear is not about things in the present, but it is also not about things so far off in the future that they do not seem to be a reality. Death is certainly not a pleasant thought, but according to Avicenna, only those on the brink of death (for whom it is something expected) fear it. The rest of us, perhaps, just have angst or worry about death.

Avicenna's definition of hope earlier in the Psychology comes in the midst of his discussion of the estimative faculty and memory. Specifically, he is trying to show how connected the internal senses are, such that experiencing an emotion could arouse memories of something that previously caused that emotion, or how thinking of some prior cause of an emotion could re-trigger the emotion again. When he switches to talking about hope and wishful thinking, he does not draw these points as explicitly:

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36 Avicenna, *Healing: Physics* (2009) 2.10-11.
37 Aristotle, *On the Soul* (1986) 3.10, 433b5ff.
38 Themistius, *An Arabic Translation of Themistius's Commentary on Aristotle's* De Anima, p. 221, 120.10ff.

> Wishful thinking [al-ʾamānī] and hope [al-rajāʿ] also do that. And hope [al-rajāʿ] is different than wishful thinking [al-amaniyya], for hope [al-rajāʿ] is the imagination of something with the judgment or belief that it *probably [will] exist*, while wishful thinking [al-amaniyya] is the imagination of something and the desire for it [shahwatihi] along with the judgment that *[it] would cause* pleasure [iltidhādh] if it came about. And fear [al-khawf] is opposed to hope [al-rajāʿ] by means of contrariety, and despair [al-yaʾs] is the opposite of [wishful thinking]. And all of these are judgments belonging to estimation.[39]

Both wishful thinking and hope are future-oriented emotions, directed at good objects. But hope, according to Avicenna, brings with it the expectation that the good in question will probably exist, whereas wishful thinking just has the expectation that the good in question would cause pleasure. So hope is a bit more expectant, wishful thinking a bit more like daydreaming. In any case, hope, like fear, is defined as fundamentally future-oriented.

But, of course, animals wait for their food with expectation, and they shrink away from their master's rod, which is why in the above texts Avicenna does not deny that animals have something like fear and hope. So what is the difference? If it were just a matter of degrees (something in the near future versus the far off future) that would not be much of a difference.

They key difference seems to have to do with the idea of expectation. When animals wait for food in the present, the focus in on wanting the food, not expected it to occur. When animals "fear" their master's discipline in the present, they are aware that the bad thing is in fact about to happen. There is no reckoning up of probability and expectation-forming, there is just the reality that they are about to be punished.

It is worth mentioning that there is a similar classification of emotions in history of philosophy that might seem related to what Avicenna is doing here—since it makes key distinctions related to time—but which is importantly different. That is, the Stoics generally held to a fourfold of basic emotions, divided according to object (good or bad) and time (present or future). An emotion towards the good in the present is called pleasure, towards a good in the future is called desire. An emotion towards something bad in the present is pain/distress, towards something bad in the future is called fear.[40] The difference between this set of distinctions, and the one Avicenna is unpacking in Psychology 5.1, is that pleasure and pain/distress have to do with the actual occurrence of some good or harm. There is no expectation. Whatever analogous emotions Avicenna thinks animals have to future-oriented fear and hope, they are not pleasure and pain/distress.

To summarize, the three new types of emotions Avicenna points out here, unique to humans, are distinguished as follows: wonder and grief, which are typically accompanied by laughter and crying, respectively, shame in response to others being aware of your violating social norms, and future-oriented fear and hope (which may just be standard fear and hope). In Avicenna's descriptions of these emotions, explanatory emphasis is placed on the intellectual acts that precede them, but he does not specify whether it is the practical or theoretical intellect at work. Presumably it is some combination of the two.

4. Pleasures of the Rational Soul

39 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 4.3, 187.
40 Knuuttila (2004) 51-52.

The third broad category of uniquely human emotions Avicenna discusses are pleasures of the intellect, and here again Avicenna does not specify whether he has the theoretical or practical intellect in mind. As discussed in chapter 1, some complex emotions have pleasure or pain as a component part, but Avicenna also considers pleasures or pains as types of emotions when they occur on their own. A pleasurable emotion occurs when a faculty attains some completion, and the agent is aware of having done so, while pain is awareness of some defect or lack of completion. So a pleasure of the theoretical intellect is what happens when the theoretical intellect performs its function of grasping intelligibles. This is an activity that does not seem to involve the practical intellect. So, whereas the unique emotions in the prior section (shame, wonder, etc.) were not clearly assigned to any intellectual faculty in particular, and may be interpreted as belonging to the theoretical intellect, the practical, or a combination of both, these human emotions are more clearly emotions of the theoretical intellect alone.

In *Remarks and Admonitions* Avicenna discusses intellectual pleasures of the theoretical intellect as the highest sort of pleasure. It is the highest sort of pleasure, both because of the nature of the object being apprehended, and because of the nature of the faculty apprehending that object. Avicenna describes various things that fall under the scope of the theoretical intellect's object: the First Truth, celestial substances, and indeed the whole of existence, in the sense of the various essences that exist, free of material attachments.[41] These objects are more abstract and stable than the objects of sensation, and to grasp them requires a faculty more able to penetrate to those depths.

When any of those objects are grasped by the theoretical intellect, humans experience the highest pleasure available to them, in this life or the next. Of course, it is more difficult to experience the pleasures of the theoretical intellect in this life, because we are prone to be distracted by the body, but Avicenna insists that we do get glimpses of it nonetheless, if we work hard at reducing those distractions.[42] Some people might question whether such pleasures are actually more intense than those of lower faculties, but to this Avicenna simply responds that they must be the sort of people who are weighed down by worldly distractions.[43]

Despite the fact that the theoretical intellect does not attain its specific acts of grasping intelligibles through a physical organ, when that is done in this life these acts nonetheless they have an affect on lower faculties. An example of this comes early on in *Healing: Psychology*, in the midst of Avicenna's initial effort to define the soul as a substance and first actuality of the body. There, he explains the soul's relationship to the body in a way that highlights the effects from distinctly human emotions on the vegetative faculties. The point of this in context is just to show that the human soul's being potentially separable does not prevent it from having important connections to the body in this life. The complex passage has been numbered throughout for the sake of reference below:

> And the governance of the soul over the body causes the strengthening of the faculty of *growth* and its weakening, in view of [1] the soul's awareness of propositions [*qaḍāyā*] that it [2] hates or loves with a hate that is not at all bodily. And that is when there is [3] occurring to the soul a certain assent [*tasḍīqan mā*], and that is not at all that which affects the body insofar as it is a belief, but rather there follows from that belief [4] the affect [*infiʿāl*] of joy [*surūr*] or pain [*gham*], and that also is one of the psychological apprehensions, and does not occur to the body insofar as it is body, [5] and [that joy or pain] affects the *growing, nutritive*

41 Avicenna, *Remarks: Mysticism* (1960) 8.9.
42 Avicenna, *Remarks: Mysticism* (1960) 8.15-16.
43 Avicenna, *Remarks: Mysticism* (1960) 8.2.

> power such that there occurs in it, on account of the occurrence that first occurs to the soul—let that be intellectual joy [*al-faraḥ al-naṭqī*]—a strength and effectiveness in its act, and on account of the contrary occurrence—let that be intellectual pain [*al-ghamm al-naṭqī*], in which there is no physical pain—a weakness and an impotence that corrupts its effectiveness. And perhaps the temperamental disposition will be broken down through that [weakness and impotence].[44]

To clarify, humans sometimes experience intellectual joy and pain, the terms he uses at [5]. At their core, these are intellectual acts, and as Avicenna says they do not occur to "the body insofar as it is a body ([4])." Intellectual joy and pain are caused by some sort of assent to a proposition ([1, 3]), which is also something that is "boy and all bodily ([2])", but it is not specified whether he is talking about the practical or theoretical intellect. Presumably intellect joy or pain could be caused by either faculty reaching one of its completion states (i.e., doing that which they are uniquely suited to do).

They key thing to see for our passages is that the assent and intellectual joy or pain, despite being in themselves intellectual and non-bodily, have an effect on the body, described at ([5]). Intellectual joy causes a "strength of effectiveness" in the vegetative faculties, whereas intellectual pain causes a "weakness and an impotence" in the vegetative faculties. The only further description Avicenna gives of what he has in mind here is that because of intellectual pain, we might experience some sort of breakdown or corruption of our temperament. But it is not difficult to fill in the blanks: as a medical doctor, Avicenna's basic point is probably just the observation that positive emotions effect the whole person, whereas negative emotions do the opposite. Examples are most easily identifiable in what we know today about the negative physical effects of mental distress: stress can affect fertility, digestion, and more.

The way that higher pleasures are integrated with the body in this life for humans can be contrasted with discussions of pleasures experienced by celestial substances, and God, which Avicenna never refers to with the language of "passion (*infiʿāl*)," that would imply passivity, or bodily affect. In particular, in the *Metaphysics*, in the midst of Avicenna's account of the attributes of God (i.e., the Necessary Existent), he says that God experiences pleasure in apprehending God's own nature. In keeping with the above definition, this means that God is in a state of perfection, and being aware of this is pleasurable. Indeed, paralleling his descriptions of human intellectual pleasure above,, Avicenna says God's pleasure of the highest sort, because it is the greatest perfection apprehended by the one who is most able to apprehend things.[45] As to the pleasure of the celestial substances, one place this comes up is when Avicenna describes the sort of pleasure humans will have once their rational soul is no longer associated with a body. He says that it is difficult to grasp this sort of pleasure, but that we know it will be like that which the celestial substances currently experience.[46] The pleasures of God and celestial substances are indeed pleasures, as they fall under the heading of "awareness of a perfection," but they involve no bodily passivity, and so do not really pertain to the discussion of emotions as such.

5. Ennobling of the Lower Faculties by Higher Faculties

44 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 1.3, 31-32. Emphasis mine.
45 Avicenna, *Healing: Metaphysics* (2005) 8.7, 297.
46 Avicenna, *Healing: Metaphysics* (2005) 9.7, 352.

The prior senses in which humans' emotional life goes beyond animals' emotional life can be supplemented by some further distinctions made by Avicenna in an early work, *Treatise on Love*. That is, in *Treatise on Love*, Avicenna discusses how various higher faculties ennoble the lower faculties to which they are joined. The ennobling of the lower by the higher can take many forms, from correcting, to providing unique goals, to providing better methods of obtaining goals. This relationship is not necessarily exclusive to an emotional context (since, e.g., sensation is also ennobled by proximity to the intellect), but it provides us with language for further describing, and perhaps gives us further instances of, the intellectual faculties functioning as motive principles. To the extent that the intellect corrects, or provides reasons and goals for different activations of the animal motive faculty, this adds to our picture of how Avicenna understands human emotional experience. Though Avicenna does not explicitly draw the connections in his later works (which we have been discussing) to what he discusses here, it is possible for the concepts discussed in *Treatise on Love* to shed light on what is going on in some of the previously discussed aspects of uniquely human emotional experience.

The *Treatise on Love* is so called because its broader goal is to show how everything—from inanimate objects to celestial bodies—moves on account of a love for that which is suitable for it. Avicenna's basic point here is teleological: everything flows from God, the source of existence, and naturally desires to return to God. That is, everything, owing to the sort of thing that it is, tends towards the Good to the extent that it is able. It is suitable for rocks to tend downwards, and to this extent they partake of the Good. Plants' characteristic acts—nutrition, growth, reproduction—reflect the Good, insofar as they aim at preservation of the species, which is an imitation of divine eternality.[47] Humans, here the subject of our focus, naturally desire knowledge, which is much closer to the nature of the Good.

What the *Treatise* has to say about uniquely human emotional life primarily comes up as an explanation of the senses in which animal appetites are integrated with the rational faculties, involved in human pursuit towards the good. The issue he appears to be concerned with is that—having just described the objects of love for the vegetative and animal faculties—it seems as though humans, with still yet a third set of faculties in their nature, will be pulled in too many directions. He gets around this by arguing that, when combined in the same subject, lower faculties are ennobled, and thereby subordinated to the highest faculty's goals. The following passage is his most explicit statement to this effect:[48]

> Every one of the psychological faculties, whenever it is joined to a higher, more noble faculty, there occurs in it [lit: passes over into it] an increase in refinement and nobility, on account of this connection and the height of [the higher faculty's] beauty, such that actions proceeding from the lower faculty experience an increase, either in terms of number, or excellence of mastery, or elegance of their method and quest towards their end. For every higher faculty has an ability to support the lower and strengthen it, and to prevent the lower from harm in such a way that it causes the lower to receive an increase of beauty and nobility [...] like the support of the concupiscible animal faculty for the vegetative faculties, and how the irascible faculty protects [the vegetative faculties] from something that could harm their matter (though they cannot prevent the vegetative

47 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 267. Also discussed in section 4 of his *Compendium: Psychology* (1875).
48 Avicenna was possibly influenced in this by Alexander of Aphrodisias: "For this reason, even though there are many soul powers in [living] things in which the rational power is present, the soul constituted from them all is one, because no subsequent power can occur without the power that comes before it. Rather, they all belong to it as parts, where successive [powers] are joined to the preceding ones and the preceding ones are because of this expanded and developed." See *On the Soul: Part I* (2012) section 30.

> faculties' natural tendency towards degeneration) [...] and likewise the rational faculty adapts the animal to its goals.[49]

In this text, we see how the various faculties work together in several ways. First, higher faculties help the lower faculties by *defending* them from harms. For example, the animal soul helps the nutritive faculty (in animals) avoid harm (the nutritive faculty in plants get no such help). A plant is defenseless against something that wants to make a meal of it, but the digestive tract of an animal is somewhat more secure, since it is protected by the same instinct to flee a predator that every other part of the animal benefits from. Second, higher faculties provide *better methods* to achieve lower goals, as with how humans acquire nourishment much more efficiently than most animals, from the way we store food, to the way we cook it. Finally, lower faculties can be given *more objects* than they would otherwise have. For example, animals only know to eat what instinct tells them to, but humans have invented all manner of new dishes.

All these modes of integration of the higher and lower can be summed up by the phrase in the last line of the text, where Avicenna says that higher faculties "adapt (*tawqīf*)" lower faculties to higher goals. Avicenna elsewhere calls this a "partnership (*ishtirāk*)."[50] This adaptation or partnership does not essentially change the lower faculties, but it does integrate them with the higher. Of course, Avicenna acknowledges that sometimes lower faculties are disordered and need reigning in,[51] so the ideal form of this integration is not a given.

Of particular interest for our purposes here is the sense in which the rational faculties can provide different objects for the animal motive faculty. Avicenna's discussion in Treatise on Love seems to suggest two ways in which we can understand this. First of all, intellectual faculties can provide uniquely human reasons for the pursuit of concupiscible and irascible objects. Normally, the concupiscible appetite is actualized when we are thinking about some pleasure to the external senses, the irascible when we are thinking about some obstacle that would cause pain to the external senses. In non-human animals objects are presented in the imagination more or less at random ("*min ghayr qaṣd.*")[52] Humans, however, can attempt to rouse our appetites for physical pleasure or dominance for more noble reasons, such as preservation of the species, or defending a city, and they can do so at will. Insofar as these are inclinations, they are not uniquely human. They are actualizations of the specifically same sort of inclinations that animals can have, just stirred up intentionally.[53] But insofar as animals are not able to govern inclinations in this way, the phenomena is uniquely human.[54] That makes these sort of acts of the motive faculty unlike

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49 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 254.
50 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 256.
51 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 259.
52 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 256.
53 As we will see in the next chapter, objects can be evaluated in a natural, instinctual way, or a rational/deliberative way.
54 Another example of the higher being integrated with the lower is between the vegetative faculties and the concupiscible appetite. the generative faculty is oriented at reproduction of the species. The concupiscible appetite, likewise, while it is *ultimately* oriented towards sensory pleasure, often seeks to find sensory pleasure in acts related to reproduction. A major difference between the generative faculty and the concupiscible appetite, however, is that the concupiscible appetite is a faculty for pursuing goals in a voluntary manner (*bil-ikhtiyār*), whereas the vegetative faculties act in a natural, albeit psychological, way (*bi-nawʿ ṭabīʿī*). When in partnership, however, Avicenna says the vegetative faculties can concur (*tuwāfiq*) with the concupiscible appetite, such that it *seems* vegetative faculties reach their goal in a voluntary manner. In other words, when partnering with a voluntary faculty pursuing the same generic sort of goal, vegetative faculties experience the benefits of voluntary action, which means seeking a goal on

the particular uniquely human emotions from section 2, which do not seem to be activations of the concupiscible and irascible appetites, strictly speaking.

On the other hand, sometimes the governs the animal motive faculties according to its own objects, in a way that goes beyond simply providing different reasons for concupiscible and irascible appetite. Recall from chapter one that in *Psychology* 4.4, text T1.5b, Avicenna briefly mentioned that the animal motive faculty can be actualized "for the sake of the intelligibles pertaining to the good." No further explanation is given for this sort of remark in 4.4, or anywhere else in Avicenna's later works, about what this means. But in the *Treatise on Love*, after describing the way that the intellect can guide the concupiscible and irascible faculties, he mentions something similar:

> And acts could proceed from a person, from the core of their rational faculty, such as the conceiving of intelligibles, inclination [*nazzāʿ*] towards important matters, love of the next life and [love of] being close to the noble one.[55]

These activities, which we could summarize as seeking intelligibles and seeking the divine, are objects to which non-human animals simply do not have access, and therefore cannot experience emotions towards. We can see the connection of this passage to 4.4 because, summarizing still further, these things are objects which it would be appropriate to call good.

The good, as Avicenna defines it in his *Rhetoric*, is that which is sought for its own sake.[56] We can understand this in two ways. Firstly, in this context, the good is that which is not sought merely for the sake of pleasure. While there is a broad sense of "good" which Avicenna will sometimes use to refer to sensible objects, and activities which are done well, he does not use the term "good" when discussing the final objects of strictly animal inclinations. Rather, as we have seen, they are for the sake of external and internal pleasure. Humans, on the other hand, have the capacity to seek out that which is good in and of itself. Of course, experiences of the good (intelligibles and the divine) are pleasant, but they are not sought for that reason. The second way of understanding the good is as that whose goodness is not dependent on anything else. In this sense, God is the true good.[57] It is not always clear which sense of good Avicenna is using when he refers to uniquely human objects of inclination, but what is clear is that he thinks such uniquely human objects of inclination exist. We have inclination towards the good insofar as it is presented to the animal motive faculty as something "to be sought after," in the language of *Psychology* 1.5.

Avicenna's discussion of the integration of higher and lower faculties, then, covers cases where rational faculties modify preexisting concupiscible and irascible appetites, and cases where uniquely human objects are pursued, resulting in truly uniquely human inclinations. The former seems more relevant to the discussion of the practical intellect as motive principle in section one, and the latter to our discussion of uniquely human emotions in section two, but ultimately the discussion in Treatise on Love stands on its own as a distinct contribution to Avicenna's thoughts on human emotional experience.

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one's own terms, in one's own way. A plant cannot choose when to blossom and scatter seed, but animals and humans can choose mates. Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 217.

55 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 256.

56 Avicenna, *Healing: Rhetoric* (1954) 2.3, p. 80.

57 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love* (1983) 263.

In his later works, Avicenna does not repeat his in-depth discussion of the fact that lower faculties are integrated with higher faculties, but he takes it as a given and applies the framework. One place he does mention it explicitly is at the beginning of his analysis of the estimative faculty, in Psychology 4.3:

> Animals, and animal-like humans, only follow estimative judgment in their acts, even though for the human there could occur—to his senses and [lower] faculties, because of the proximity of reason—that which almost makes their internal senses rational, contrary to beasts. And on account of this, [humans] attain things to which other animals do not attain—benefits [*fawāʾid*] like composite [*muʾallafa*] sounds, composite colors and smells, and composite tastes, and hoping and wishing. And this is because it is as though the light of reason emanates, roaming about over these faculties.

And the imaginative faculty also in humans becomes a subject for reason, after being [merely] the subject for estimation in animals, so that humans can make use of the sciences. And memory is also beneficial in the sciences, as with the experimental, which memory attains to, and the particulars of astronomy, and suchlike.[58]

Animals and humans both have the faculties of estimation, imagination and memory. In animals these faculties perform their basic functions, involving the grasping and retaining of intentions and forms. But humans are able to make use of these basic functions to carry out more complex activities. In the second paragraph, regarding imagination and memory, it seems clear that Avicenna's point is that reason requires their grasp of particulars, past and present, for the data of sciences.

Similarly, his point about estimation in the prior paragraph seems to be that reason takes the basic information given to it about particulars by estimation, and makes use of this in more complex thoughts. Avicenna speaks above of the "benefits" of composite objects, and hoping and wishing.[59] Throughout the rest of the chapter, he comes back to estimation as that which tells us of something being beneficial or harmful, so presumably his point is that humans making use of reason can make judgments about the value of some complex object, or benefits and harms in the future. For example, an animal could perhaps judge whether all the individual ingredients for some dish on the menu at a fine dining restaurant would be good for it to eat, and would likely even be inclined to eat a slice of gourmet quiche, but they would not be able to appreciate it as a gourmet, culinary achievement.

In all these examples of from *Psychology* 4.3, the ennobling of the lower faculties by the higher involves reason making use of the lower faculties' basic functions. The lower faculties are transformed, not essentially, but by being wrapped up in a larger, more complex project.

6. Conclusion

What we see, then, having looked at all these cases of uniquely human emotional experience, is that some aspects of human emotional life are unique in that they are are ways of ennobling the same sort of acts or impulses already found in animals, while others are unique in that they do not fit as well under the heading of animal concupiscible and irascible appetite. The former would include instances of when practical judgments lead to actions that depend upon, or govern,

58 Avicenna, *Healing: Psychology* (1959) 4.3, 183.
59 We discussed the text on hoping and wishing in section 3c of this chapter, above.

animal appetites, while the later would include cases of uniquely human emotions (e.g., shame and wonder), inclinations towards the good in and of itself, and intellectual pleasures. But all of these cases seem to involve the cooperation of the rational faculties (as a cause) with the animal motive faculties (as constitutive of the emotion). Avicenna's picture of human emotional life, then, is well integrated with his account of animal emotion, but keenly attentive to the wide variety of emotions it seems humans experience, beyond those experienced by animals.