

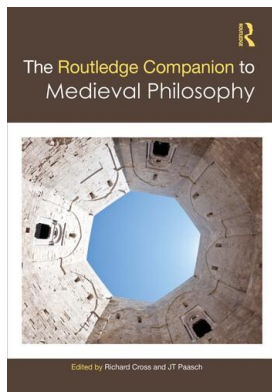
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EMOTIONS

Vesa Hirvonen

In the last few decades, emotions have been found to be a rather interesting topic, not only in analytical philosophy, but also in other philosophical traditions. To some extent, historical discussions of emotions, which include ancient and medieval approaches, have also aroused interest. Martha Nussbaum has published several monographs dealing with historical theories on emotion: *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (1986); *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (1994); and *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (2001). A monograph of historical approaches to emotions was published by Richard Sorabji in 2000, under the name *Emotion and the Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*. Simo Knuuttila published a history of emotions in ancient and medieval philosophy under the name *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (2004). Hilge Landweer and Ursula Renz edited a large collection of articles on emotions from antiquity to the Middle Ages and modern times under the title *Klassische Emotionstheorien: Von Plato bis Wittgenstein* (2008). And Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro edited a series of articles called *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* (2012).

There have also been various studies concentrating on individual philosopher's theories on emotion. Alexander Brungs published a monograph on Thomas Aquinas's theory: *Metaphysik der Sinnlichkeit: das System der Passiones Animae bei Thomas von Aquin* (2002), and Vesa Hirvonen published a monograph on William Ockham's theory: *Passions in William Ockham's Philosophical Psychology* (2004). Dominik Perler published a monograph dealing with some medieval and early modern emotion theories under the title *Transformationen der Gefühle. Philosophische Emotionstheorien 1270–1670* (2011). Here, I will particularly use Knuuttila (2004) and Hirvonen (2004) as sources for this chapter; my purpose is to sketch what it was in emotions that interested medieval philosophers and the kinds of theories they had about them.

The Early Middle Ages

In the early Middle Ages, emotions particularly aroused interest because of the theological questions which dealt with them. Early medieval writers pondered what kinds of feelings, if any, Christians may have and perhaps should have. Monks and other Christians were thought to be able to rule over their volitions and behavior, thus avoiding sin. However, what about the so-called first movements toward sin and if one could not rule over them, could they be considered to be sins? These questions made theologians interested in emotional phenomena and since emotions

were linked with will, early medieval logical discussions about a person's will also aroused interest in the emotions.

Early medieval theologians and philosophers approached emotions mainly from the Neoplatonic and Stoic perspectives. Generally speaking, the attitude to emotions was negative in both of these traditions, considering them to be disturbances of the soul which should be fought against. The Stoics held emotions to be false judgments of things. The most important theological authority of that time was Augustine (354–430 CE) who lived most of his life in Roman North Africa, working since 396 as the bishop of Hippo. Being the most important Latin Church Father, Augustine's works include more than 100 treatises as well as numerous letters and sermons.

To some extent, Augustine's attitude toward emotions was more positive than that of most Neoplatonics and Stoics. He sometimes calls emotions "perturbations," but more often "affections" (*affectiones*) or "passions" (*passiones*) and these Latin terms were also used later on in the Middle Ages. The most common medieval term referring to an emotion was passion (*passio*), hinting that emotion was somehow a question of a passive state of mind. Following Cicero, Augustine uses the Stoic model which involves four types of emotions: appetite (*cupiditas*), fear (*metus, timor*), pleasure (*laetitia*), and distress (*tristitia*). This model was commonly known in the Middle Ages and was especially used in the early Middle Ages. Augustine also uses the Platonic terminology, treating concupiscence (*concupiscentia*) and anger (*ira*) as generic movements of the irrational part of the soul. In his theology of love, Augustine presents the very influential distinction between enjoying (*frui*) and using (*uti*) love; enjoying love meaning loving something as the highest good, this love being reserved only for God. All other objects should be used.

According to Augustine, emotions are states of the soul involving evaluative estimations, behavioral suggestions, and pleasant or unpleasant feelings. People can voluntarily consent to or dissent from an emotional suggestion and also repel the emotion itself. Augustine thinks that because of original sin human emotional dispositions are disturbed and emotions have to be ruled strictly by the rational part of the soul. In criticizing Stoic *apatheia*, Augustine states that emotions are common to both good and bad, but good people have them in a good way and bad people in a bad way (*City of God* 14.8); in a good way, they can even have moral value. As well as his interest in proper emotions, Augustine was also interested in the first movements. According to him, they are not free but are a person's uncontrolled reactions to things, becoming free only when they can be expelled and the person can consent to or dissent from them. A misguided emotional reaction becomes a sin when it is voluntarily controllable.

Augustine was the ruling figure in early medieval theology and most Latin theologians shared his ideas. The French theologian, Anselm of Laon (d. 1117), was one of those who developed the Augustinian theory of the first movements of the soul. According to Anselm, tempting suggestions (*suggestio*) put into the human mind by the devil or by one's own carnality as such are not sins, but penal consequences of original sin. Such a suggestion may immediately lead one to take pleasure (*delectatio*) in a forbidden thought. If one fights against the pleasure, it is a question of a venial sin, but if one lets the pleasure grow and therefore consents (*consensus*) to a sinful feeling, it is a question of mortal sin. Anselm calls unpremeditated, inevitable pleasure, pre-passion (*propassio*).

In the twelfth century, pre-passion (*propassio*) meant the initial state of an unpremeditated desire or emotional response and was used as a synonym for the more common expression, first movement. Twelfth-century theologians had different views as to whether pre-passions/first movements toward sin were sins or not. The view that even unavoidable movements toward sin were immediately venial sins became a widely accepted position, among others, thanks to Peter Lombard (c. 1095–1160) who defended it in his *Sententiae* (c. 1155), which later became a university textbook for students of theology to comment on. The same view was also held by e.g. Bonaventure (1221–1274), Albert the Great (1200–1280), and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).

Many of them remarked that since the first movements may be mediately voluntary, they may also be preventable.

Emotions often had an important role in mystical theology. This is especially true of the French mystic, Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153), who united spiritual contemplation with a personal experience of love. When considering emotions, although Bernard often used the traditional Stoic four-fold classification, he also referred to the Platonic division of the emotions into those of the concupiscible and irascible parts of the lower parts of the soul. Bernard and many other mystics considered the relationship between a Christian and God as being an ardent love-affair; some posited even special mystical emotions toward God (see the mention of Jean Gerson later in this chapter).

High Scholasticism

A new era of medieval discussions on emotion started in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when new Latin translations of Greek and Arabic medical and philosophical works began to be studied and aroused comment. Already in the late eleventh century, Constantine the African (c. 1020–1087) compiled *Liber Pantegni* which is a text book of Hellenistic and Islamic medicine, partly a translation of the texts of the Persian physician Haly Abbas ('Alī ibn al-'Abbās al-Mağūsī', d. 994). The *Pantegni* had a strong influence on medieval medicine. In it, emotions are dealt with from the point of view of the movements of the vital spirits and heat in the body. The *Pantegni* lists six emotions which are relevant in medicine because of their physiological consequences: joy (*gaudium*), distress (*tristitia*), fear (*timor*), anger (*ira*), anxiety (*angustia*), and shame (*verecundia*). According to the *Pantegni*, joy and anger cause the vital spirits and heat to move from the heart to the extreme parts of the body. Fear and distress have the opposite effect: they cause the vital spirits and heat to withdraw into the heart.

When considering the twelfth- and thirteenth-century medieval discussions on emotion, the most influential philosophical authors were the Persian philosopher Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā, 980–1037) and Aristotle. Avicenna's *De anima* (the sixth book of his *al-Shifā*) became an important source for medieval philosophical psychology beginning in the twelfth century, and a number of Aristotle's works aroused extensive comment particularly starting in the thirteenth century.

Avicenna was especially interested in the faculties of the soul. Following Platonic terminology, he divides the faculties of the sensory soul into ones which move and ones which are apprehensive. The moving faculty is divided into the concupiscible and the irascible parts. The reactions of the concupiscible part are acts of desiring things which are taken to be pleasurable. Avicenna's examples of concupiscible acts are such as the desire for food, wealth, and sexual intercourse, which are forms of seeking pleasure. The reactions of the irascible part are acts of desiring to defeat adversaries and to repel things which are considered to be harmful. The irascible part of the sensory soul is directed toward victory and repelling antagonistic things. Avicenna's examples of these emotions are pain, sadness, fear, and anger. Pleasure and joy are said to belong to the apprehensive power. Avicenna says that sensory pleasure is the perception of fulfillment of a natural appetite. Such a perception is pleasant; pleasure is the feeling related to an awareness of something positive happening. Avicenna's view of emotions shows similarities to Aristotle's (and Plato's) compositional theory. Emotions have cognitive causes and they involve bodily feelings and behavioral suggestions. Avicenna treats the emotions themselves as motive or apprehensive acts.

In Aristotle's texts, medieval writers found several lists of emotions. In *Rhetoric* 2, Aristotle separately considers twelve emotions (most of them already discussed by Plato): anger (*orgē*), a mild temper (*praotēs*), friendly love (*philia*), hatred (*misos*), fear (*phobos*), confidence (*tharsos*), shame (*aiskhune*), feeling kindly (*kharis*), pity (*eleos*), indignation (*nemesis*), envy (*phthonos*), and emulation

(*zēlos*). Aristotle did not present a general theory of the structure of emotion, but various emotions analyzed by him involve a cognition of what is happening, a pleasant or unpleasant feeling about the content of the evaluation, a behavioral suggestion, and/or bodily changes. According to Simo Knuuttila, Aristotle's theory shows similarities to modern compositional emotion theories and has had an influence on some of them. It is important to realize that in Aristotle's theory, emotions were considered as central constituents of the human life; the good life did not presuppose the elimination of them, but being well disposed in the human being, they were taken to be important parts of human life. Aristotle's rather positive stand on emotions was an important starting point for Aristotle's medieval commentators and followers who found good emotions to be constituents of a good life, although they often concentrated on pondering ways of controlling various emotions in order to organize life in a Christian manner.

In the first decades of the thirteenth century, a new influential taxonomical principle concerning emotions was put forward by several Aristotelian writers, including among others the French Franciscan theologian John of la Rochelle (d. 1245). In it, the emotions are classified into contrary pairs of acts of the concupiscible power and the irascible power. The contrary concupiscible emotions are interpreted as being reactions to sensually good or evil things, while the irascible emotions are interpreted as reactions to arduous things. John of la Rochelle associated the new taxonomical principle with a detailed classification of the emotions which became very influential. He simplified Avicenna's theory in treating all emotions as acts of the motive powers which are accompanied by bodily changes; none of them were treated as cognitions.

In John of la Rochelle's texts, the basic states of the concupiscible power are liking and disliking. The concupiscible emotion pairs are as follows: concupiscence (*concupiscentia*)—disgust (*fastidium*), desire (*desiderium*)—avoidance (*abominatio*), joy (*gaudium*)—pain (*dolor*), delight (*laetitia*)—sadness (*tristitia*), love (*amor*)—hate (*odium*), envy (*invidia*)—pity (*misericordia*). The basic attitudes of the irascible power are strength and weakness. The irascible emotion pairs concerning good objects are as follows: ambition (*ambitio*)—poverty of spirit (*paupertas spiritus*), hope (*spes*)—desperation (*desperatio*), arrogance (*superbia*) and dominance (*dominatio*)—humility (*humiliatio*), contempt (*contemptus*)—reverence (*reverentia*). The irascible emotions which concern evil objects are courage (*audacia*), anger (*ira*), and magnanimity (*magnanimitas*). Penitence (*paenitentia*), impatience (*impatientia*), and fear (*timor*) are somehow the opposites of courage. (For this classification in detail, see Knuuttila 2004: 234–235.)

Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican theologian and philosopher at the University of Paris, made an attempt to classify emotions with the help of the theory of natural movements in Aristotle's *Physics*. "He apparently believed that the systematic use of the principles of natural philosophy made his taxonomy of emotions more scientific than those of his predecessors. This is the most idiosyncratic part of Aquinas's theory of emotions" (Knuuttila 2004: 343). According to Aquinas, all natural beings, stones, plants, brute animals, and human beings have a natural appetite toward their natural end. Human beings and animals have a sensory appetite (*appetitus sensitivus*) toward something evaluated as being good or bad. The emotions exist there.

Aquinas's list of concupiscible (emotion) pairs are as follows: love (*amor*)—hatred (*odium*), desire (*desiderium*)—avoidance (*fuga*), pleasure/joy (*delectatio/gaudium*)—pain/sadness (*dolor/tristitia*). Love and hatred are basic orientations toward an object; desire and avoidance are actual movements toward or away from an object; joy and sadness are affective states when the object is present. Irascible emotions appear if there are obstacles to fulfilling the appetite, when the object is arduous. According to Aquinas, irascible emotions concerning good objects are as follows: hope (*spes*)—despair (*desperatio*), and concerning bad objects: courage (*audacia*)—fear (*timor*) and anger (*ira*). There is hope when the good object is likely to be achieved, and despair when not. Correspondingly, there is courage when the bad object is likely to be avoided, and fear when not. Something present which is bad and causes sadness may give rise to anger.

Aquinas thinks that emotions are cognitive: they presuppose an evaluation. He does not seem to think, however, that emotions have a proper cognitive component. Robert Pasnau seems to be right when he says that when positing this, Martha Nussbaum is wrong (see Knuuttila 2004: 253, n. 206). Aquinas treated emotions as explanatory factors of behavioral change; therefore, there is no systematic discussion in his texts of the feeling aspect of the emotions. Like Aristotle, Aquinas thought that it is wise to educate a person to have good emotional habits in order for him/her to have a good life. This education has to be done under the control of the intellect and will. The will is an immaterial appetitive faculty, the acts of which are sharply distinguished from the emotions which exist in the sensory appetite.

The Late Middle Ages

Some Franciscans, in particular, started to re-estimate which emotions were posited only in the sensory part of the human being; they may have had several reasons for questioning this. First, they did not consider the bodily connection to be necessary for emotions. For the English Franciscan, William Ockham (c. 1285–1347), it was clear that God, through his absolute power, could produce absolute qualities (such as emotions) in creatures and cause them to persist there, without anything else. Second, according to the Franciscans, the will with its phenomena seemed to remind them of the sensory appetite. That is, at least John Duns Scotus (1265–1308) and Ockham thought that the intellectual cognitions which partially cause the acts of the will concern not only universal, but also singular objects. They also thought that the will was free and not bound with rational judgments; therefore, its acts were subjective, not always being rational reactions of the person, just like sensory emotions. The “passivity” of those emotions of the will which are under direct voluntary control is, of course, very special, if one can call it “passivity” at all. One might perhaps say that it is a kind of passivity of total freedom: the will may react in any way possible, even human beings themselves do not necessarily know what arouses their wills in various situations and what their reactions will be. In any case, Scotus and Ockham located emotions both in the sensory appetite and in the will. Ockham’s theory of emotions has been investigated in detail (Hirvonen 2004); therefore, here I will mainly discuss this.

According to Ockham, the human being has two souls, the sensory soul and the rational soul, both of which have the power of appetite. The sensory soul has the sensory appetite and the rational soul has the will. Although the emotions in these appetites are qualities separated from cognition, in most cases they are, however, cognitive: they are partially caused by cognition and they cause a cognition concerning themselves so that their subject knows them. The sensory appetite is not free in its emotional reactions. The will is free in its reactions, but not always directly. Using his razor, as far as possible, Ockham identifies the emotions with appetitive acts. All the sensory emotions are acts; the will has two emotions that are not acts.

According to Ockham, the basic emotions in the sensory appetite are desire (*desiderium*)—avoidance (*fuga*) toward absent objects, pleasure (*delectatio*)—pain (*dolor*) toward present objects. One might say that in order to illustrate the sensory emotions, Ockham uses the traditional Stoic four-fold model. In addition to these traditional concupiscible emotions, Ockham sometimes adds irascible emotions such as hope (*spes*) and fear (*timor*) to the sensory appetite. However, Ockham seems to think that a more nuanced emotional life happens in the appetitive power of the intellectual soul, that is, in the will.

As previously mentioned, Scotus and Ockham also posited emotions in the will; Scotus said explicitly that there were concupiscible and irascible powers also in the will, and although Ockham did not say this as explicitly, he also considers the emotions of the will using this model. Ockham is mostly interested in the concupiscible emotions. According to him, they are in the

will: love (*amor/dilectio*)—hatred (*odium*) which can be toward either present or absent objects, desire (*desiderium*)—avoidance (*fuga*) toward an absent object, and pleasure (*delectatio*)—sadness (*tristitia*) toward a present object. Ockham made great efforts to prove that, unlike in the sensory appetite, regarding the will, one has to make a distinction between love and delight, and hatred and sadness, although this does not sound very economical. This was also the opinion of Scotus. In Ockham's model, being distinct from love and hatred, delight and sadness are not acts of the will, but only emotions (*passions*), some kind of state of mind or feelings. There are usually a number of partial causes for the act-emotions in the will, cognition of the object and the will itself being the most important ones. State-emotions, delight, and sadness are, according to Ockham, always caused by an act of the will although Scotus thought that in some cases, they could be caused without an act of the will. In any case, both were of the opinion that they were not under the direct control of the will.

In addition to the concupiscible emotions, Ockham (and Scotus) posited irascible emotions in the will, being caused partially by the other emotions, partially by certain evaluation in the intellect. It has to be noted that although these acts are in the will, they are not immediately free; that is, the will itself is not their immediate cause, but is the reason for an act that, in turn, causes them. Ockham mostly speaks about hope (*spes*) which is caused by the desire for an absent object and the evaluation that the object can be reached, whereas despair (*desperatio*) is caused by desire of an absent object and the evaluation that the object cannot be reached. Fear (*timor*) is caused by avoidance and the evaluation that the object cannot be avoided.

Ockham also applies the distinction to the pair love of friendship (*amor amicitiae*)—love of concupiscence (*amor concupiscentiae*). The first is loving something in itself and for itself; the latter is loving (wanting) something for some other reason. The third classification of love (put forward by Augustine) which Ockham uses is the one which distinguishes between loving something as the highest good (*frui*) versus using it (*uti*).

Scotus and Ockham strictly separate emotions from cognitions, but they state that they are usually partially caused by a cognition and recognized with the help of a cognition. Most emotions are appetitive acts giving behavioral suggestions but only two of them are purely affective states. Scotus and Ockham think that one can (and one should) become dispositionally apt to have certain sensory emotions and emotions of the will, reacting in the right way and therefore also behaving well. According to Ockham, the sensory appetite can be disposed to emotions with the help of good bodily qualities, and the will with the help of virtuous habits. With the help of good act-emotions of the will, a person can—and has to—control his/her inner life and behavior.

Ockham strictly separated emotions from cognitions, but his secretary, the English Franciscan Adam Wodeham (1300–1358), was of a different opinion. Since he finds it odd that God could cause love without cognition, he argues that love is a kind of cognition caused by another cognition. This is possible since according to him, love is a complex act made up of different components. Wodeham also deviated from Ockham in his opinion about embedding pleasure in love (enjoyment).

Jean Gerson (1363–1429), Chancellor of the University of Paris and a theologian, philosopher, and mystic, probably presented the longest medieval list of emotions. Under the eleven types of emotions in Aquinas's taxonomy, around 100 emotions are classified by Gerson. He thought that Aquinas's classification of emotions can be applied to the acts of the will and even to the affective acts of the spiritual apex of the soul. As a mystic, Gerson admits that people can have supernatural experiences through the spiritual senses. According to Knuuttila (2004: 284), "Gerson's idea of the parallel between sensitive, intellectual and mystical passions, exemplifies the late medieval tendency to regard affective experiences as one class of mental phenomena, which are then divided into the reactions of the various psychic powers."

Conclusion

Medieval philosophers and theologians had rather detailed theories of emotions. Most of them considered the emotions to be appetitive reactions, either inseparable or separate from cognitions, but being at least partially caused by a cognition. The emotions were thought to suggest that certain behaviors, and being ruled by the will more or less, were often thought to be constituents of a good life. A morally good life was thought to be easier if you had the support of your emotions and habits which were generated by good emotions.

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