

TIDA RESEARCH SEMINAR 2024

BRIEF DESCRIPTION, MAIN GOALS, AND PROJECTED RESULTS

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My starting point in this research seminar is the observation that the *hoti* stage of inquiry is not only collected in the *HA*, which is clearly a database for the study of animals, but it is also duplicated in the relevant explanatory inquiries. Following the requirement outlined in *APo* II, most of these inquiries begin from the study of the facts before turning to the study of the why.

The observation was important to David Balme, who drew the conclusion that *HA* is a late work. By his lights, *HA* was the latest work by Aristotle on the topic of animals, entailing a revision of the previous views on animals. This conclusion, known as ‘Balme hypothesis’, is not universally accepted. For instance, Wolfgang Kullmann rejected it. Furthermore, it cannot be substantiated beyond any reasonable doubt. As a result, we can bracket the Balme hypothesis. What remains is the duplication itself. Duplication is not quite the right word. It turns out that the relevant *explananda* are established by Aristotle prior to engage in any attempt to find the relevant explanations, regardless of the fact that similar (but never identical) scientific data are collected in *HA*.

A first goal of this seminar is to study the way (or, rather, ways) in which the relevant *explananda* are established by Aristotle. We will study how Aristotle arrives at the relevant *hoti* stage of investigation. At some level, it is trivial to say that the scientific data are not a given but rather a theoretical artifact. But it is by no means obvious how we arrive at these data and by means of which pre-explanatory strategies. At least initially, I would like to focus on three case studies – *De somno*, *De respiratione*, and *De incessu* – in order to show how Aristotle progressively refines the data so as to establish the relevant explanandum. I will refer to this phenomenon as ‘*hoti* refinement’.

A second goal of this course is to study *HA* as a database for the study of animals. We do not know how Aristotle arrives at the data collected in *HA*. We only have the data and have them organized and presented in a certain way. Most of the recent secondary literature is about the strategy adopted for the organization and presentation of the data and whether the aims of *HA* include classification in addition to explanation. The *status quaestionis* can be found in couple of articles published by the late Allan Gotthelf (GOTTHELF 2012). These articles reflect a debate that was going in the late '90s and involved (among others) James G. Lennox and David Charles.

We will not be able to read the whole *HA*. What we end up reading will also depend on our guest speakers and what they will ask us to read in preparation for their visit. For sure we

want to read *HA* I 1–6, which gives us a foretaste and an outline of the task that lies ahead of us. But I would also like to engage in a few in-depth explorations with a focus data collected in *HA* I–IV with respect to the regular and necessary alternation of sleep and waking, respiration, and locomotion.

The relevant texts (including *HA* I 1–6) are offered in a translation produced for this research seminar in the Sourcebook, which is already available on Ilias.

We will also engage with some of the relevant secondary literature on and around the so-called *hoti* stage of investigations. A few essays have been uploaded on Ilias

Projected results:

1. We will study the Aristotelian view that the scientific investigation proceeds in stages, with a focus on the so-called *hoti* stage of investigation.
2. We will challenge the view that the scientific data are first collected (either in *HA* or an *HA*-like investigation) and then explained by Aristotle. As a matter of fact, we know next to nothing about the way (or ways) in which Aristotle collected the relevant data. *HA* is a highly theoretical (and selective) presentation of the relevant data for their subsequent explanation. Those data reflect a very advanced stage of the scientific enterprise. We can get a better sense of what goes on at the *hoti* stage of investigation when we look at the explanatory investigations where the data undergo a process of elaboration and progressive purification for their subsequent explanations.
3. We will come to a better understanding of the very close connection that exists in Aristotle's mind between the pre-explanatory and explanatory stage of investigation.

Relevant primary and secondary literature

The Sourcebook contains a few relevant texts in English translation.¹ With one exception, the translations are all mine.² It also contains the relevant secondary literature we will read and discuss in class. The most ambitious among us will also find further readings in the short bibliography at the end of the Sourcebook

Everyone is expected to provide herself or himself with a copy of the relevant Greek text. For *HA*, we will work with the text established by the late David Balme (BALME 2002). Some of the results presented in this critical edition must be supplemented with the results published by Friederike Berger (in BERGER 2005). She also produced a *stemma codicum*.³

¹ We may add additional texts in translation as we move on. One obvious candidate is *GA* I 1–16 (Aristotle on the sexual parts of animals)

² The English translation of Aristotle's *De somno* is by Klaus Corcilius.

³ David Balme died before completing his critical edition, which was seen through the press by Allan Gotthelf. The latter communicated with F. Berger and was able to take on board some of the results published in BERGER 2005. To be sure, the critical edition produced by Balme is not going to be the last word on this front. A great deal of work has been done by Wolfgang Kullmann and his research team after the publication of Balme 2002. I refer the reader to the bibliography at the end of the Sourcebook for more information on what has been produced on and around *HA* after BALME 2002.