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Dissertation

SHAME AS VIRTUE AND PRIDE AS VICE: EMOTIONS OF SELF-ASSESSMENT IN THE WORKS OF ABU HAMID AL-GHAZĀLĪ AND THOMAS AQUINAS

by

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ABU HAMID AL-GHAZĀLĪ AND THOMAS AQUINAS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the moral and spiritual role of the self-assessing emotions of shame and pride in the works of Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī (c. 1058-1111) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). In my analysis of their ethical and religious views on these topics, I demonstrate their great debt to Aristotle's treatment and his ethics and moral psychology more broadly. Nevertheless, I also point to ways in which they adapted Aristotle's views on shame and pride to their religious commitments. Aristotle understood shame as an emotion that, while praiseworthy, cannot be considered a virtue in the full sense since it presupposes wrongdoing. The virtuous do nothing wrong and, therefore, have nothing of which to feel ashamed. Pride or, more precisely great-souledness, is for Aristotle "the crown of the virtues," since to be great-souled is to be great in every virtue and to think oneself worthy of great honor. By contrast, both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas describe shame not only as a praiseworthy emotion but also as a religious virtue. That is, as an emotion felt *before God*, shame is a good disposition of the soul that results in good actions. Furthermore, they described pride as a sinful emotion and trait of the vicious.

I argue that the dissimilarities between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's views and those of Aristotle on these self-assessing emotions result from their different metaphysical frameworks. More specifically, I argue that the three main metaphysical frameworks sustaining their respective views of shame as a virtue and pride as a vice are 1) a Big God Theory; 2) a deflationary account of the self; and 3) acknowledgement of Theistic causal moral luck. By showing the link between metaphysical/religious frameworks and the valence of self-assessing emotions such as shame and pride, this dissertation contributes to contemporary discussions on the influence of religion on moral commitments in general and on views on moral emotions, more specifically. It also points to ways of understanding shame as a virtue within a Western secular society. Properly defined, the virtue of shame speaks to a widely held intuition that accurate moral self-assessment, in both positive and negative senses, contributes significantly to a life of moral integrity.

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List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this dissertation:

Aristotle

DA	*De Anima*
EE	*Eudemian Ethics*
NE	*Nicomachean Ethics*
Rhet.	*Rhetoric*

Thomas Aquinas

CI	*Contra Impugnantes*
DM	*De Malo*
DV	*De Veritate*
DVI	*De Virtutibus*
In Ps.	*In Psalmos*
Sent.	*Scriptum super Sententiis*
Sent. Ethica	*Sententia libri Ethicorum*
ST	*Summa Theologiae*
Super I Cor.	*Super I ad Corinthios*
Super II Cor.	*Super II ad Corinthios*
Super Matt.	*Super Matthaeum*
Suppl.	*Supplementum Tertiae Partis*[1]

[1] This volume was composed by Aquinas's disciples on the basis of his commentary on the *Sentences*. See Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and his Work, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), p. 147.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī

AH	*Alchemy of Happiness*
BK	*Book of Knowledge*
BTD	*Breaking the Two Desires*
CARE	*Condemnation of Anger, Rancor and Envy*
CAV	*Condemnation of Arrogance and Vanity*
CMSO	*Condemnation of Majesty and Showing Off*
CNGW	*Condemnation of Niggardliness and Greed for Wealth*
DS	*Disciplining the Soul*
EL	*The Etiquette of Living*
EM	*The Etiquette of Marriage*
ET	*Evils of the Tongue*
FAF	*Foundations of the Articles of Faith*
FH	*On Fear and Hope*
IS	*Invocations and Supplications*
LLIC	*On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment*
MH	*The Marvels of the Heart*
MP	*Mysteries of Purity*
MW	*Mysteries of Worship*
OIS	*On Intention and Sincerity*
OR	*On Repentance*
OVSE	*On Vigilance and Self-Examination*

PA	*On Poverty and Asceticism*
PG	*On Patience and Gratitude*
RDH	*Remembrance of Death and Hereafter Life*

Introduction

A. Statement of the Problem

One can easily attest to the intellectual whirlwind of the medieval period by the incredible works of philosophy, theology, biology, astronomy, and other fields of knowledge that have survived and influenced the ways we think of the world around us for centuries. The advancements made during this period in the field of philosophy, especially during and after the "Islamic Golden Age" and the "Twelfth-century Renaissance" in the Latin West, are said to rival that of the golden age of Greek philosophy, with the intellectual giants such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as representatives of the latter. The intellectual revivals in all fields were fueled in no small part by the new-found availability of the works of ancient Greek philosophers occasioned by conquests, which had Jews, Muslims and Christians eager to translate, understand, digest, assimilate, and build upon this wealth of knowledge. Of these available materials, the works of Aristotle were the dominant catalysts of these revivals. In turn, the availability of these materials, and specifically the Aristotelian system of the sciences, were pivotal for the rise of the medieval university.[1] The rise of the university during this period in both the Islamic and Christian European world permitted the conglomeration of genius theorizers, systematization of philosophical and theological ideas into treatises, ample opportunity for debates and, consequently, the polishing of new ideas as well as

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[1] Charles H. Lohr, "The Ancient Philosophical Legacy and its Transmission to the Middle Ages," in Jorge Garcia and Timothy Noone (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 2003), p. 17.

disagreements that led to the branching out of new possibilities. Among these advancements are the ones that encompass the topic of this dissertation, the fields of philosophy and theology.

Given that the availability of Aristotle's works was a major catalyst and foundation for the advancements in knowledge undertaken in the High Middle ages, much has been written about the conflicts and attempts of harmonization between Aristotle's philosophy and the doctrines of the Islamic and Christian religious tradition. Ever since Aristotle "stepped foot" in the Abrahamic religions, the reception of his ideas spanned from quasi-idolization and full appropriation to accusations of heresy and complete ban, with many attempts of partial assimilation in the middle. Disagreements on topics such as the eternity of the universe, the role of revelation in the acquisition of knowledge, the nature of miracles, God and causation, final resurrection, and God's omniscience led to much disagreement about the harmful influence of Aristotle on the Christian and Islamic academic community.[2]

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[2] For general overviews on the translations and reception of Aristotle's works in medieval Islamic philosophy and conflicts arising from such incorporation, see Majid Fakhry, *A Short Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism* (London: Oneworld Publications, 1997); Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Oliver Leaman and Seyyed Hosein Nassr (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy* (Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 2001); Abdurrahman Badawi, *La transmission de la philosophie grecque au monde arabe* (Paris: Vrin, 1968); G. Endress, "The Circle of al-Kindi. Early Arabic Translations from the Greek and the Rise of Islamic Philosophy" in G. Endress and R. Kruk (eds.), *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism*. Studies on the Transmission of Greek Philosophy and Sciences dedicated to H. J. Drossaart Lulofs on his ninetieth birthday (Leiden: CNWS Research, 1997), pp. 43–76; Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture. The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ʿAbbasid Society (2nd-4th / 8th-10th centuries)* (London: Routledge, 1998). On the translations and reception of Aristotle's works in medieval Christian philosophy and the conflicts that ensued, see Anthony Kenny, *Medieval Philosophy: a New History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), Steven P. Marrone, "Medieval Philosophy in Context" in Arthur Stephen McGrade (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 10-50; Börje Bydén and

This dissertation will, on the one hand, be yet another analysis addressing the appropriations of Aristotelian material and disagreements between the Aristotelian and religious traditions, exemplified in the work of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas. On the other hand, this project has important distinctive features. First, it focuses not on theological issues per se, but on the valence of moral self-assessing emotions—shame and pride. Interestingly, ethics in general, and emotions more specifically, do not figure in the list of commonly debated themes among medieval philosophers[3], much less among the topics of heated conflict between Aristotelian and religious thought.[4] Perhaps this is because the topic of emotions is not among those that medieval philosophy is particularly known by. According to Jorge Garcia, medieval philosophers based the issues they tackled on the

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Christina Thomsen Thörnqvist (eds.), *The Aristotelian Tradition: Aristotle's Works on Logic and Metaphysics and Their Reception in the Middle Ages* (Toronto, Ontario: PIMS, 2017); B.G. Dod, "*Aristoteles latinus*" in N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny and J. Pinborg (eds), *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 45–79. F. Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West: The Origins of Latin Aristotelianism*, trans. L. Johnston (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1955).

[3] A cursory look at the index of any handbook on medieval philosophy will demonstrate such absence. See, for example, John Marenbon (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[4] On the Islamic reception of Aristotle's ethics, Anna Akasoy notes: "In the medieval sources and these modern historical investigations, the Arabic translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (henceforth N.E.) does not figure prominently. While the practical benefits of works on medicine, astronomy, and alchemy and the intellectual advantages of the Organon or the Metaphysics may be obvious, this is less the case with the N.E. It is mostly the cultural prestige of Greek philosophy and Aristotle's reputation as the philosopher per se which must have been decisive. Unlike Galen's works on medicine or Aristotle's logic, the impact of N.E. in the medieval Islamic world was also fairly small." in "The Arabic and Islamic reception of the Nicomachean Ethics" in Jon Miller (ed.), *The Reception of Aristotle's Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 86. Regarding its reception in the Latin West, Jack Zupko notes that "In the Latin West there had always been a tension, or perhaps uneasy alliance, between Christian ethics and its pagan forbears, but most commentators regarded Aristotle as having important things to say in moral philosophy, and the belief that Aristotle's views, and especially his arguments for them, should be seen as complementing Christian doctrine was widespread." in "Using Seneca to Read Aristotle: The curious methods of Buridan's Ethics" in Jon Miller (ed.), *The Reception of Aristotle's Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 155. See István P. Bejkzy, *Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages: commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, 1200-1500* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

"concern to integrate revealed doctrine and secular learning,"[5] such as the "relation between faith and reason, the existence of God, the significance of names used to speak about God, the object of theology and metaphysics, the way we know, universals, and individuation."[6] Nonetheless, I will show that while al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's disagreements with Aristotle on self-assessing emotions, and consequently his ethics, are not central *prima facie*, they result from more profound theological and metaphysical disagreements.

The second distinctive feature of this dissertation is that it is a comparative project between Aristotle, on the one hand, and Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī and Thomas Aquinas on the other. Comparative work on Christian and Islamic medieval figures represents a fecund strand of research in religious studies and philosophy.[7] Many have pursued fruitful

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[5] Jorge Garcia and Timothy Noone, *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 2003), p. 1.

[6] Though a few have argued that, in fact, emotions received unprecedented attention by some medieval scholars, including, non-coincidentally, Thomas Aquinas. See Miner and Lombardo.

[7] Ayman Shihadeh, *Fakhr al-Din al-Razi and Thomas Aquinas on the Question of the Eternity of the World;*Traci Philipson, "The will in Averroes and Aquinas" in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, Vol. 87 (2013): 231-247; Massimo Campanini, "Averroes and Hegel on Religion and Philosophy" in *Oriente Moderno,*Vol. 96.2 (Nov 2016): 329-335; Francisco Romero Carrasquillo, "The dialectical status of religious discourse in Averroes and Aquinas" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 88.2 (2014): 361-379; Minlib Dallh, "The Quest for the Divine: al-Ghazālī and Saint Bruno of Cologne" in *Muslim World*, Vol. 102.1 (January 2012): 60-69; Craig Truglia, "Al-Ghazālī and Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola on the Question of Human Freedom and the Chain of Being" in *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 60.2 (April 2010): 143-166; Katherin Rogers, "Anselm and his Islamic contemporaries on divine necessity and eternity" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 81.3 (Summer 2007): 373-393; Nathan Poage, "The subject and principles of metaphysics in Avicenna and Aquinas" in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, Vol 86 (2012): 231-243; Luis Xavier Lopez-Farjeat, "Avicenna and Thomas Aquinas on natural prophecy" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 88.2 (2014): 309-333; Antoine Côté, "Siger, Avicenna, and Albert the Great on universals and nature" in *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch fur Antike und Mittelalter*, Vol. 17.1 (2014): 99-122; Mehmet Ata Az, "Avicenna and Thomas Aquinas on the Possibility of Talking about God" in *Ilahiyat Studies*, Vol. 4.2 (December 2013): 149-181; Jon Mcginnis, "The eternity of the world, proofs and problems in Aristotle, Avicenna, and Aquinas" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 88.2 (2014): 271-288; Daniel De Haan, "A mereological construal of the primary notions being and thing in

work comparing al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, specifically.[8] Much of this scholarship is motivated by, first, the ongoing influence of these figures in their respective religious traditions; second, their prolific and broad-ranging output; and, third, the fact that both figures are embedded in and influenced by Greek philosophical debates and, consequently, discuss similar themes, use similar philosophical tools, and arrive at similar conclusions.[9] The extant scholarship on al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, however, has neglected their shared engagement with and embrace of the Aristotelian ethical model, and their adaptation of it to the Islamic and Christian tradition, respectively.[10] And it is within the

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Avicenna and Aquinas" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 88.2 (2014): 335-360; Jon Mcginnis, "Making Something of Nothing: Privation, Possibility, and Potentiality in Avicenna and Aquinas" in *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review*, Vol. 76.4 (2012): 551-575; John Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*(New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jeffrey Hause (ed.), *Debates in Medieval Philosophy*(London: Routledge, 2014).

[8] Özcan Akdag, "God's Omnipotence and Impossibility in al-Ghazālī and Thomas Aquinas" in ULUM, Vol. 1.1 (July 2018): 23-34; Jamie Jenkins, Al-Ghazālī and St. Thomas Aquinas on the knowability of God: An argument for interreligious dialogue (Dissertation, 2014); S. Ghazanfar, "The economic thought of Abu Hamid Al-Ghazālī and St. Thomas Aquinas: Some comparative parallels and links'' in *History of Political Economy*, Vol. 32.4 (January 2000): 857-888; David Burrell, "Maimonides, Aquinas and Ghazālī: distinguishing God from world" in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 61.3 (Aug 2008): 270-287; David Burrell, "Ghazālī and Aquinas on the Names of God" in *Literature and Theology*, Vol. 3.2 (July 1989): 173-180; R. Rania Shah, "Saint Thomas Aquinas and Imam al-Ghazālī on the Attainment of Happiness" in *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*, Vol. 6.2 (2015): 15-29;

[9] For research on the influence and appropriation of Aristotelian and Avicennian philosophy by both figures see Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering, *Aristotle in Aquinas's Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); D.N. Hasse and A. Bertolacci, eds, *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics* (Boston: deGruyter, 2012); C. Burnett, "Arabic into Latin: the reception of Arabic philosophy into Western Europe", in P. Adamson and R.C. Taylor (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 370–404.

[10] For research on the figure's appropriation of the Aristotelian ethical theory treated separately, see Mohamed Ahmed Sherif, *Ghazālī's Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975); Muhammad Abul Quasem, *The Ethics of al-Ghazālī: A Composite Ethics in Islam* (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1978); Stephen J. Pope (ed.), *The Ethics of Aquinas*, translated by O. P. Mary Thomas Noble (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002);

context of their shared ethical model that we find their disagreements on self-assessing emotions.

Utilizing Aristotle's virtue theory and views on emotions as a foil, this project will explore the moral and spiritual role of the emotions of shame and pride in the works of al-Ghazālī and Thomas Aquinas. I will perform this comparison in two steps. First, I will explore each thinker's ethical theory in general, and views on shame and pride, more specifically, allowing each a separate chapter. Second, I will compare the views, highlighting the ideas that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas seem to be borrowing from the Aristotelian tradition and those that have other origins. Most importantly, in this second step I will abstract their religious motivations for ideas that depart from the Aristotelian tradition.

My thesis is that both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas are strongly influenced by Aristotle's general virtue theory and moral psychology yet distance themselves from his vision in distinct ways. Specifically, they differ from Aristotle in their assessment of shame and pride. Aristotle understood shame as an emotion that, while a *quasi-virtue*, cannot be considered as a virtue in the full sense since it is not a trait of character of the truly virtuous. And pride, or more precisely great-souledness, for Aristotle, was "the crown of the virtues," for to be a proud person was to be great in every virtue and, therefore, to consider oneself worthy of great things. Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, on the other hand, although faithful to a broadly Aristotelian ethical framework, view shame not only as a praiseworthy emotion but, understood as an emotion rightly felt before God,

and, more profoundly, a virtue and Gift of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, they view pride as the most devastating sin and vice.[11] I will argue that these departures from Aristotle result from certain demands of the beliefs and practices of their religious traditions. More specifically, they stem from al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's religious beliefs on God's nature and moral involvement in the world, defects of human nature or tendencies, God's agency in human morality, and religious practices and rituals that reinforce those beliefs.

At least two questions might arise about the choice of shame and pride for the focus of this project: 1) what justifies giving them priority of place over other salient emotions?; 2) what justifies my claim of kinship between them to ensure strong footing for a cohesive research project?

B. Why Shame and Pride?

Relevance of shame and pride

The relevance of these emotions for scholarship broadly, and for this project specifically, rests in, first, their uniqueness as *ethically-salient* or *moral* self-assessing emotions in the works of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, second, based on the fact that they are inherently *social* emotions and that, third, this renders them characteristically *religious* emotions. Regarding their moral character, for al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, shame and pride are often described not as mere emotions, but under the rubric of virtue and vice, which illustrates most clearly the relevance of these emotions for moral and spiritual

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[11] I will also show that al-Ghazālī, more specifically, includes shame as a virtue even before other humans.

development. This is significant because it is not always the case that emotions are described under the rubric of virtue or vice, but as neutral movements of the soul that are categorized as good or bad, or as an essential part of a virtue or vice, according to the context in which they arise.[12] Shame and pride, however, are seen by al-Ghazālī and Aquinas as emotions and traits of character with inherently good and bad qualities.[13]

Furthermore, shame and pride are quintessentially *social* emotions. In philosophical literature, they are often contrasted with guilt, for example, which some contemporary scholars consider an 'internal,' 'individualistic' emotion that does not seem to require a social 'eye' for it to manifest. Shame and pride are emotions that are understood to require a social eye beholding the agent in order for them to blossom at all.[14] This aspect of shame and pride is clear in al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's reflections on these emotions. For example, al-Ghazālī frequently emphasizes that the feeling of shame

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[12] In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle characterizes virtue as the feeling of the right emotion, accompanied by the right action, both the emotion and the action being the mean between two extremes: "For example, it is possible to feel fear and confidence, appetite, anger, pity and pleasure and pain generally, both too much and too little and in both ways not well. But to feel such things when we should, about the things we should, in relation to the people we should, for the sake of what we should, and as we should is a mean and best and precisely what is characteristic of virtue." NE 1106b.10-11. "In 2.7 courage is characterized as being 'concerned with' fear and confidence, temperance with pleasures and pains, and mildness with anger." Christopher C. Raymond, "Shame and Virtue in Aristotle" in Victor Caston (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy, Volume 53* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 121.

[13] There are many qualifications to this statement, to which I will give much attention in chapters 2 and 3 of the dissertation.

[14] This is more prominently the case for shame, although pride, described in a certain way, also requires an audience. This will be the case especially when I describe al-Ghazali and Aquinas's understanding of ostentation or boasting, which they see as close relatives of pride. Charles H. Cooley, "Social Self" in *Human Nature and the Social Order* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922); Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1948); Millie R. Creighton, "Revisiting Shame and Guilt Cultures: A Forty-Year Pilgrimage" in *Ethos* Vol. 18.3 (Sep. 1990): pp. 279-307.

requires awareness of the 'eye of God,' the gaze of the religious community upon the believer, and the believer's awareness of this audience.[15] For Aquinas, the definition of shame includes the fact that one is disgraced "in the opinion of others"[16] and before God.[17] Similarly, pride is a vice that presupposes the social. For al-Ghazālī, pride manifests from an awareness of a community that is able to observe the superiority of the agent's self and possessions.[18]

The social nature of shame and pride also renders them distinctly religious emotions: their manifestation, within the religious environment, relies on a human religious community and belief and practices related to an omniscient transcendent being and the human self. Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's assessment of these emotions, therefore, challenges tendencies to conceive religion or religious subjects in hyper-individualistic ways.[19] In sum, my answer to the first question is that shame and pride are relevant to

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[15] "Woe unto you, O soul, are you not ashamed? You adorn your exterior for people and contend with God in secret with terrible sin. So, do you feel shame in front of people but not God? Is He less important than those gawking at you?" in *Al-Ghazālī on Vigilance and Self-Examination*, Anthony F. Shaker (trans.) (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 2015), p. 78.
[16] ST 1.2.41.4
[17] Thomas Aquinas, *Thomas Aquinas Commentary on Psalm 6*, F. F. Reilly (trans.). Available at https://isidore.co/aquinas/PsalmsAquinas/ThoPs6.htm
[18] Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Ghazālī on the Condemnation of Pride and Self-Admiration Book XXIX of the Revival of the Religious Sciences,* Mohammed Rustom (trans.) (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 2018), p. 26.
[19] Though this is not the focus of this dissertation, the religious dimension of these emotions also renders them fertile ground for analyses of gender and power dynamics within religions, as they have been gendered in consistent and, in my view, troubling ways within Christian and Islamic traditions. Leila Ahmed, Marion Katz, and Zahra Ayubi have shown how, in the work of medieval Muslim thinkers, shame was considered chiefly a feminine emotion, while pride and honor were considered essentially masculine. See Leila Ahmen, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); Zahra Ayubi, *Gendered Morality: Classical Islamic Ethics of the Self, Family, and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), pp. 80-92; Marion Katz, "Shame (Haya') as an Affective Disposition in Islamic Legal Thought" in *Journal of*

scholarship broadly, and are given priority in this project in particular, due to their shared significance as *moral, social,* and *religious* emotions.

Kinship of shame and pride

In response to the second question, my claim of shame and pride's kinship is based, first, on their shared self-assessing character and, second, on the fact that they are both *global* self-assessing emotions. Shame and pride are both what Gabrielle Taylor has called "self-assessing" emotions.[20] Self-assessing, or self-conscious, emotions are those that implicate one's own beliefs about oneself. According to Aristotle, it is based on one's self-estimation (or distortion thereof) and on one's actual merit (or lack thereof) that shame and pride arise. Paraphrasing him, for pride (great-souledness) to be manifest, one must have a *self-estimation* that one is great and one must actually *be* great. Alternatively, shame, for Aristotle, requires one's own judgment of wrongdoing. Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas also see shame and pride as emotions of self-assessment. In addition to the necessary component of one's exposure to an audience, al-Ghazālī refers to shame as a feeling of deficiency, imagination or supposition of guilt[21] and an emotion of self-

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Law, Religion and State, Vol 3 (2014): 139-169. Furthermore, Christian feminists have noted how pride as a sin in the Christian tradition has tended to make stereotypically male experience normative and universal for humanity as such. See S. N. Dunfee, "The sin of hiding: a feminist critique of Reinhold Niebuhr's account of the sin of pride" in *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 65.3 (Fall 1982): 316-327; C. P. Christ and J. Plaskow (eds.), *Woman's spirit rising: a feminist reader in religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

[20] Gabrielle Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt: Emotions of Self-Assessment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[21] Al-Ghazālī, *The Mysteries of Worship*, trans. Edwin Elliot Calverley (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1992), p. 45.

reflection or self-assessment[22]. Meanwhile, Aquinas views shame as arising from a perception of the self as having committed or wanting to commit a disgraceful act.[23] In the same way, pride, for al-Ghazālī, results from a faulty self-admiration and regarding oneself superior to another.[24] Aquinas classifies pride as inordinate self-love, an emotion that falsely thinks oneself great and worthy of things.[25] For both thinkers, shame and pride represent, respectively, accurate and inaccurate emotional attitudes resulting from one's assessment of the self and its merits.[26] Furthermore, in the psychological and philosophical literature, shame and pride are emotions of *global* self-assessment in contrast with emotions of self-assessment of particular *behaviors*.[27] That is, they are

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[22] Al-Ghazālī, *The Alchemy of Happiness,* Kimiya-yi sa'adat (trans.) (London: Octagon Press, 1980), p. 70.

[23] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II.II.144.4. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (trans.) (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981).

[24] Al-Ghazālī, *Condemnation of Pride and Self-Admiration*, Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif (trans.) in *Revival of Religion's Sciences: Volume III* (Beirut: DKI, 2011), pp. 556-57. As Sophia Vasalou puts it, "The proud person [for al-Ghazālī] is not simply the person who deems himself great, but the person who deems himself greater than others and judges his perfections to exceed others." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 42.

[25] Aquinas, *ST* II.II.162.2 ad 4 and 162.3 ad 2.

[26] Contemporary work in philosophy of emotion has provided interesting ways in which to understand self-assessing emotions. It is the act of assessment of the self that triggers these emotions and, therefore, they are contrasted with those emotions that are triggered when one assesses objects or circumstances 'outside' of the self, such as fear of a dog or anger of another driver. As Gabriele Taylor puts it, in the case of self-assessing emotions, "The self is the 'object' of these emotions, and what is believed amounts to an assessment of that self." (Taylor, p. 1) These emotions require self-awareness and self-representation and are cognitively complex for they require the capacity for one to self-evaluate their own actions, in contrast to those that are known as 'basic emotions' (joy, fear, anger, disgust, sadness, and surprise) which require no such thing. More on self-assessing emotions in chapter 4.

[27] "Psychologists interested in contrasting the emotions of shame and guilt often appeal to a distinction at the level of the object dimension of these emotions—i.e., what they are about. …while shame is about the entire or global self, guilt is tied to some specific piece of behavior. It is important to see how this idea has been given substance within experimental psychology, for it now rests on an imposing body of evidence." Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, and Fabrice Teroni, *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 73-74.

emotions that derive from one's assessment of one's self taken as a whole in contrast to one's assessment of specific behaviors or episodic events. One feels shame as a result of a negative assessment of the global self, while pride emerges as a result of a positive assessment of the global self. In sum, my answer to the second question is that shame and pride are related due to their status as global self-assessing emotions.[28]

Difficulties in Delineations

As in the analysis of any concept, especially those related to human experiences, some specific delineations and boundaries are necessary. What exactly am I looking for when analyzing historical figures' views on shame and pride? What definitional presuppositions do I have when diving into their material?

If this dissertation were on contemporary theories of shame and pride, I could simply choose one or more descriptions that seemed, to me, to fit most accurately the phenomenology of these emotions. This, however, is not the case. This dissertation is centrally focused on interpreting and analyzing historical figures, trying to understand, as best we can, what they were saying and, as such, must remain faithful to the boundaries and categories available in the historical material. This is the principal reason why I have chosen to write one chapter for each figure used in this comparison. This way, I can give each figure their own space to unfold their particular nomenclature, categories, and

[28] I should note I do not give prominence to some important moral and/or self-assessing emotions and virtues that are *related* to shame and pride in this project, such as humility (in contrast with pride) and guilt (the more-than-obvious parallel to shame). In order to limit the scope of my project, I have chosen to focus on shame and pride. Nonetheless, I will mention and describe humility, fear, and guilt—but especially the first two—to the extent that they aid in the understanding of shame and pride in the works of these figures.

descriptions. Though I dive into some relevant distinctions of terms within these individual chapters, there are some things I must make clear at the outset.

In any contemporary (particularly philosophical and psychological) discussions on shame, distinctions are often made between shame and guilt, shame and embarrassment, and shame and shyness. This is particularly true in Anglophone philosophical and psychological literature.[29] These are relevant distinctions because they describe different phenomenology or, at minimum, emerge given the presence of different stimuli. For example, embarrassment is usually understood as a response to a socially unacceptable fault, yet not necessarily an immoral one. Shyness, on the other hand, is typically considered much less distressing, and more of a personality trait than an emotion. When dealing with the works of Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas, however, these distinctions are much less present. As we will see, Aristotle makes no distinctions between these different phenomena, neither does al-Ghazālī.[30] Aquinas makes a slight distinction between two different kinds of shame, yet it is not one of those mentioned above. Shame, then, more or less encompasses all kinds of discomfort felt due to exposure before an audience, both morally charged or morally neutral.

The same is not true about pride. All three figures, generally speaking, leave room for some distinctions between different kinds of pride. Some of these different phenomena are considered distinct from pride, while others are simply specific

[29] I suspect this is due to the high level of specificity in the language's vocabulary. I will use this example elsewhere, but all three terms (shame, embarrassment, and shyness) come down to only one word in Portuguese and Spanish, for example.
[30] Though I will make a distinction between modesty and shame in chapter 2.

manifestations of pride. As we will see, Aristotle distinguishes between pride (great-souledness), vanity, and love of self. Al-Ghazālī makes distinctions between pride, self-admiration, love for status and ostentation, while Aquinas describes pride and vainglory.

While these distinctions are important for the sake of precision, they do not pose an obstacle for this project. This is because the focus of this dissertation is the moral and spiritual relevance of emotions or dispositions of *self-assessment* for these thinkers. That is, we are concerned with the whole family of conceptions of pride and of shame respectively in these thinkers. In the case of distinctions between shame, embarrassment, and shyness, all three seem to fit the bill of this focus.[31] The same goes for all of the terms for pride used by the three figures. Because of this, I will clearly point out the important descriptive boundaries within each chapter, but need not worry about the lack of certain contemporary distinctions in their work.

C. An Introduction to Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas

Much of our thinkers' ethical views depend heavily on their religious and political context, as well as their own life story and intellectual influences. Their literary goals and the particular genres of the works I have used in this dissertation are equally important to keep in mind. We are fortunate to have relatively reliable sources about our two medieval authors, while, unfortunately, mostly unreliable sources to base the biography of Aristotle.

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[31] Nonetheless, I must note that I will give particular attention to the thinkers' reference to negative self-assessments that have to do with moral wrongdoings. This preference will be made explicit in the chapters.

Aristotle

Though we have few certain facts about Aristotle's life, they are enough to give us a general outline.[32] Born and raised in Stagira, modern-day Greece, in 384 BCE he was the son of Nicomachus and Phaestis. Some possibly unreliable and polemical sources describe him as, after having lost his father at a young age, spending all of his father's inheritance and then entering the army, after which he supposedly sold drugs. After listening to some lectures in the Academy, he climbed the academic ladder by his own intellectual talents. Another version of his story says that after the death of his father, he was adopted by a family friend, Proxenus of Atarneus, who, being a friend of Plato, handed Aristotle over to him for his studies. Later, Aristotle is said to have adopted Proxenus' son, Nicanor. He married Pythia and together they had a daughter, also called Pythia, who married Nicanor after Aristotle's death in 322 BCE. After Pythia's death, scholars presume Aristotle married Herpyllis, with whom he supposedly had his son Nicomachus, to whom Aristotle addresses the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Aristotle went to Athens when he was seventeen, joining the Platonic Academy and becoming a pupil of Plato for the next twenty years of his life. It was during his years at the Academy that he decided to make philosophical explorations the work of his lifetime. Shortly after Plato's death, Aristotle left Athens and spent years in the region of Assos, Mytilene, Lesbos, and Macedonia (where he supposedly tutored a young Alexander, the Great). In 335 BCE, he returned to Athens where he founded his very own

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[32] For this biography, I am heavily relying on Carlo Natali, *Aristotle: His Life and School* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013) and in part on H. Rackham (trans.), *Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934);

philosophical school—the Lyceum—due to doctrinal differences with the Academy. He lectured at the Lyceum for 12 years and then moved to Chalcis, running away from a death sentence for impiety. He died of illness the following year (322 BCE).

According to Carlo Natali, Aristotle, as his master before him, did philosophy not out of a desire for professional or financial advantage, or due to familial influence, but purely for the pleasure of the activity.[33] This mode of doing philosophy can be seen in his very ethics, where he describes the life lived in the most perfect way, and the epitome of the happy person, as one that lives for philosophical contemplation, and this seemed to have been the primary goal for the students of the Lyceum. The book on which I rely most heavily in this dissertation—the *Nicomachean Ethics*—is generally understood as a version of Aristotle's ethical lectures at the Lyceum, compiled either by himself or by his pupils and intended to serve as a kind of encyclopedia for the students.[34] It is the first systematic treatment of ethics that has survived from the ancient world, and one of the most influential. Following Aristotle's interest in biology and the systematic scientific exploration of the material world, the *Nicomachean Ethics* is nothing less than a close examination and explanation of only one more observable phenomena in a particular species: human behaviors (what is) and the attainment of human flourishing (what ought to be). Or, as Aristotle calls it, the supreme Practical Science. As a treatise to be used for educational purposes, yet fairly simplistic in its characterizations of human moral psychology, the *Nicomachean Ethics*' audience is the educated layperson.

[33] Natali, p. 74.
[34] Rackham, pp. xii-xiii.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī

In creating a biography of Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī, we are lucky enough to have an auto-biography, which, though imagined to be slightly altered to fit his goals, gives us much richer, personally related details of his life.[35] Al-Ghazālī was born in the town of Tabaran, in the region of Tus, in 1058 CE. As a child, he studied Islamic jurisprudence with Ahmad al-Radhankani, and then moved to Nishapur where he progressed in his studies under the tutelage of al-Juwayni. He distinguished himself as a highly capable thinker and left Nishapur after al-Juwayni's death to join the court of Nizam al-Mulk, vizier of the Grand Seljuq Empire. It was here that al-Ghazālī started reading Sufi literature, whose spiritual philosophy and moralistic focus had a lasting influence on him (though only partially).[36] Al-Mulk then appointed him to teach at the Nizamiyyah madrasa, in Baghdad, where he became a famed professor. The details of what happens after this are quite contested. What is known for sure is that in 1095 CE, al-Ghazālī abandoned his position in Baghdad for a two-year period of travels, which culminated in Tabaran, where he stayed to teach in a small madrasa. Al-Ghazālī's own version in the *Deliverer from Error* (his autobiography), is that he suffered from a spiritual crisis that led him to be extremely dissatisfied with the material world, including his professorship at the madrasa, and leave for a spiritual pilgrimage. It was during his travels that he wrote his magnum opus, *Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn)*. In 1106 CE, he

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[35] For this biography, I am heavily relying on Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī and His Revival of the Religious Sciences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[36] Mohamed Sherif notes that it was al-Ghazālī's fascination with character training that attracted him to mysticism and, consequently, to write the Revival of the Religious Sciences (Sherif, p. 8)

returned to teach at Nizamiyya, this time in its Nishapur location. He died in 1111 CE at his madrasa in Tabaran.

Prima facie, it might seem quite odd to count al-Ghazālī as a medieval philosopher, not least because he is considered the Islamic *falāsifa's* (philosophers) most severe critic after the publication of *Incoherence of the Philosophers* (*Tahāfut al-falāsifa*). However, many scholars recognize his deep knowledge of philosophical arguments and, indeed, his acceptance and use of many of them. In sum, "The recent scholarly consensus...is that al-Ghazālī did not refute philosophy so much as critically engage it. He did not reject philosophical doctrines, nor did he accept all of them, or accept the ones he assented to at face value."[37] In fact, this dissertation is partly founded upon the consensus that one of the most salient philosophical influences upon al-Ghazālī

[37] Garden, p. 40. For much more on al-Ghazālī's acceptance and use of philosophical ideas, see Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Jules Janssens, "Al-Ghazzālī and His Use of Avicennian Texts," in M. Maróth (ed), *Problems in Arabic Philosophy* (Piliscsaba, Hungary: 2003); Alexander Treiger, *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazālī's Theory of Mystical Cognition and Its Avicennian Foundation* (New York: Routledge, 2011). Thérèse-Anne Druart recognizes the seeming incongruence and responds to it based on this argument in her contribution to *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy:* "Inclusion of the last-named thinker in my census of philosophers points to yet another complication, for al-Ghazālī's chief contribution to philosophy was a powerful critical work, the *Incoherence of the Philosophers*. This raises the question, what is meant by philosophy? Often, one restricts it to *falsafa*, an Arabic word which simply transliterates the Greek *philosophia* and immediately points to the discipline's foreign origin. Most of the *falāsifa*, that is, Hellenized philosophers, claimed membership in a school deriving from Aristotle, and Averroes bitterly criticized Avicenna for distancing himself too much from 'the first teacher.' Others, however, such as al-Razi, criticized Aristotle and invoked Plato or Socrates. Moreover, Islamic theology (Kalam) had already elaborated some philosophical concepts and an ontology – it had developed philosophical reflections, even if its practitioners did not want to be equated with the *falāsifa*. Ghazālī objects vigorously to the *falāsifa'*s exaggerated claims to having apodeictic demonstrations of the existence or nature of God, but his objections were themselves so philosophically acute that Averroes felt called to refute as many of them as he could (while conceding the validity of others). It has been well argued that there is much genuine and original philosophy in Kalam and that Avicenna had more influence on Ghazālī than has previously been thought." Thérèse-Anne Druart, "Philosophy in Islam" in A. McGrade (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 98.

in the *Iḥyāʾ* is very clearly Aristotelian virtue ethics. Regarding his ethics, al-Ghazālī was primarily influenced by Aristotelian Islamic ethicist Ibn Miskawayh, whose *Reformation of Character* was significantly influenced by the *Nicomachean Ethics*[38], though through the work of al-Raghib al-Isfahani.[39] Ibn Miskawayh, in turn, borrowed many ideas, particularly on the habituation of the soul, from al-Kindi's treatise *On the Means of Dispelling Sorrows*. Al-Kindi is well-known for his admiration for and use of Aristotle's ideas.[40] And, finally, al-Ghazālī seems to carry on some of Avicenna's ideas on the virtues and vices.[41] Though al-Ghazālī borrows much of the moral psychology and list of

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[38] Abu 'Ali Miskawayh, *The Refinement of Character/Tahdhib al-akhlaq*, edited by Constantine Zurayk (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1966). Anna Akasoy notes that "Miskawayh was a key mediator in the Arabic and Islamic reception of Aristotelian ethics." p. 102.

[39] Al-Raghib al-Iṣfahani, *The Pathway to the Noble Traits of the Religious Law/Kitab al-Dhariʿa ila makarim al-shariʿa*, Abuʾl-Yazid Abu Zayd al-ʿAjami (ed.) (Cairo: Dar al-Salam, 2007). See Taneli Kukkonen, "Al-Ghazālī on the Emotions," in Georges Tamer (ed.), *Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-Ghazālī. Papers Collected on His 900thAnniversary Vol. 1* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2015), pp. 138-164 and "The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology," in P. Remes and J. Sihvola (eds.), *Ancient Philosophy of the Self* (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 2008), pp. 205-224. For example, he states, "The treatise *On Disciplining the Soul*, long considered a centrepiece in the *Revivification*, in fact reads like a monotheist's guide to the *Nicomachean Ethics* in many places. Special attention is paid to the doctrine of the mean and its attendant complications; another favourite theme is how character is nothing but a condition or state (*hay'a*) of the soul-self that is particularly well-established (3:49.19)." "The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology," 220. And Akasoy argues that "Elements of [Aristotle's] *Ethics* as included in Miskawayh's *Tadhib al-akhlaq* filtered down into a treatise written by his younger contemporary al-Raghib al-Isfahani, living in the same area until mid-eleventh century. He combined Greek and Islamic aspects in his *Al-Dhari'a ila makarim al-shari'a* (The Means to the Noble Qualities of the Law) which Hourani and Gutas classify as 'analytical religious ethics.' The treatise discusses the soul, virtues, the intellect, the law, and the relationship between human beings and God." p. 104.

[40] Peter E. Pormann and Peter Adamson (eds.), *The Philosophical Works of al-Kindi* (Studies in Islamic Philosophy) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[41] In Mohammad Sherif's detailed analysis of al-Ghazālī's virtue theory, he notes the similarities and differences between them. Al-Ghazālī's list of virtues "closely resembles that of Miskawayh, except that Miskawayh lists some subordinate virtues under justice and gives further subdivisions under liberality, and that Miskawayh disagrees as to the number, order, and location of several subordinate virtues. For example, Ghazālī classifies magnificence and nobility under courage, while Miskawayh considers them as parts of liberality, which is, in turn, under temperance. Ghazālī's table also resembles that of Avicenna. Both agree in listing no virtues under justice, but they differ with respect to the number and location of the rest of the virtues. Avicenna lists only two virtues under temperance,

virtues from these Aristotelian Islamic thinkers, including the addition of shame among the virtues and pride among the vices, he brings many new ideas and arguments to the ethical discussions already in place, some of which will be explored in this dissertation.[42]

Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas left us with no auto-biography, but the events of his life were collected by hagiographers in the process of his canonization as a saint.[43] Born in 1225 in the family castle nestled in Roccasecca, in the county of Aquino, southern Italy, he was the son of Landolfo and Theodora d'Aquino. As the youngest of four sons in a wealthy family, Thomas was expected to work in the highest ecclesiastical office and his father had hopes he would become abbot, thus directing him to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino for his initial education from 1231 until 1239. After this, his parents sent Thomas to Naples, where he studied liberal arts and philosophy and likely came in touch with Aristotle's works. In Naples, Thomas also met the Dominicans, the order that favored the intellectual life of its friars and which he joined in 1244. Since entrance into this order disturbed his parents' plan for him, they captured him and put him in house

namely liberality and contentment, reserving the larger number of his subordinate virtues for wisdom, while Ghazālī does the opposite." Mohamed Ahmed Sherif, *Ghazālī's Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 38-39.

[42] Sherif notes, "Examining the virtues presented by Muslim philosophers in the light of the Greek philosophic tradition, one sees changes and additions that resulted when Muslim philosophers tried to reconcile Greek moral philosophy with the basic tenets of Islam. Miskawayh, for example, includes virtues with religious significance like worship ('*ibadah*) and abstinence (*wara'*). Apart from virtues with religious significance, Muslim philosophers also included virtues such as modesty, which were not considered complete virtues by philosophers like Aristotle. Changes like these...are important for understanding Ghazālī's account of the virtues, for in large measure they made possible his acceptance of these philosophic virtues." p. 40. As we will see in this dissertation, shame (what Sherif calls 'modesty'), in fact, is packed with religious significance for al-Ghazālī, contrary to what Sherif writes.

[43] This biography is heavily indebted to Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and his Work, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996);

arrest. In house arrest, his family did much to dissuade him, including sending a prostitute to tempt him. After a year, however, and seeing that Thomas would not change his mind, he was allowed to return to the order. He studied briefly in Paris, and then moved to Cologne in 1248, where he continued his theological studies under Albert the Great and was recognized for his intellectual brilliance. Albert the Great's influence over Thomas is especially evident in his interpretation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. In 1252, Aquinas was recommended to teach at the University of Paris at the young age of twenty-seven and was appointed master of theology in 1256. At the end of his regency in Paris, he was assigned to teach in Orvieto, Italy, from 1261-1265, and then in Rome, from 1265-1268, as a founder and director of the Roman Dominican stadium. It was in Rome, that he started to write his *magnum opus*: *Summa Theologiae*.

As the main professor at the Roman studium, and responsible for the curriculum of these aspiring friars, Aquinas started to compose the *Summa* "as an attempt to put the formation of the friars on a broader basis."[44] Aquinas worked on it between 1268 and 1273, pouring into his subsequent time in Paris and Naples. On December 6th, 1273, however, Aquinas abruptly ceased writing the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa* after an ecstatic experience which led him to write to his friend, Reginald, "I cannot do any more. Everything I have written seems to me as straw in comparison with what I have seen." Thomas died on March 7th 1274 from illness.

Aristotle's influence on Aquinas, and more specifically on his ethical theory laid out in the *Summa* (especially the *Prima Secundae* and *Secunda Secundae*), is clearer and

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[44] Torrell, p. 144.

more obvious than that on al-Ghazālī. For one, Aquinas quotes and cites "the Philosopher" throughout the treatise. Despite Aristotle's influence over his thought, Aquinas is frequently portrayed by commentators as not only Christianizing him, but also going substantially further than him in depth and systematization.

Though I have characterized these two figures as philosophers, to do so without qualification would be misleading. Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas would likely consider themselves, if anything, much more theologians than philosophers. The *Iḥyāʾ'* and the *Summa* are much more broadly the work of very thorough Sunni Islamic and Catholic theology than anything else. The part of the *Summa* that I will focus on in this dissertation—human moral life—is but a small (though significant) part of his greater scheme that progresses from the nature of the Triune God all the way to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.[45] The "purely" philosophical ideas present in the *Iḥyāʾ'* are miniscule in comparison to analyses of the Qur'an and the hadith or discussions of theological points of contention. Yet, there is little doubt that they *were* philosophers and *did* philosophy—both if we understand philosophy as engagement with distinctly philosophical questions, thinkers, and language, *and* if we understand it methodologically, as utilizing deductive and inductive arguments to arrive at conclusions

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[45] According to Torrell, the *Prima Pars* is about God in himself and his government over creation (subdivided into the divine essence, the distinction of persons, creation in general, the distinction of creatures, angels, the work of the six days of creation, and the creation of man), the *Secunda Pars* is about the return of man to God (subdivided into the human end in itself and the means by which man arrives at that end—both human acts and the divine acts that lead up to such arrival). Finally, the *Tertia Pars* is about Jesus Christ, who guides to the ultimate end and makes its achievement possible (subdivided into the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus's suffering and acts, and the sacraments). In Torrell, pp. 148-150. See pp. 150-153 for the various theories that explain the overall plan of the *Summa*.

or questioning ideas assumed to be true through careful analysis of theoretical arguments. It is important to note, however, that al-Ghazālī, at times, stands in contrast with Aristotle and Aquinas regarding methodology. He is not as much of a systematic writer, at least not in the *Iḥyāʾ*. That is, the *Iḥyāʾ* is, as Sophia Vasalou has coined, a work of "ethical conversion"[46] and not an ethical treatise. His goal of educating his constituents, while similar to that of Aristotle and Aquinas, is coupled with the goal of religious conversion and is undertaken by using a more literary genre rather than the philosophical genre that we encounter in the works of the latter two. Because of this, the task of interpreting this work is much less straightforward.[47] I will point to the problems that this genre creates in chapter two.

D. History of Scholarship

Previous scholarship has provided important insight into al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's views of emotions in the moral and religious life. Studies on al-Ghazālī's position on emotions are rather scarce, even though his *magnum opus*, the *Iḥyāʾ*, is replete with references to the positive and negative roles of certain emotions for proper devotion and the virtuous life.[48] There are, however, a few useful works about al-Ghazālī and shame and pride on which I will build.

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[46] Vasalou, p. 60.

[47] "In ethical works governed by such practical standards, one might say, certain lower-order elements might occasionally pass the gates which a more critical spirit would have screened out." Vasalou, pp. 60-61.

[48] There are only two articles in the Anglophone literature that have been published on the topic of emotion in Ghazālī's works: Taneli Kukkonen, "Al-Ghazālī on Emotions" in *Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-*Ghazālī*. Papers Collected on His 900thAnniversary Vol. 1.* Georges Tamer (ed.) (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2015) and Marion Katz, "Shame (Haya') as an Affective Disposition in

Marion Katz's treatment of حياء (*haya'*- shame) in the work of al-Ghazālī notes the positive role he gives to shame in moral and spiritual development. She mentions his placement of the emotion as one of the virtues of temperance in the *Iḥyāʾ*, interpreting it as an attempt to reconcile Aristotelian virtues with the hadith of the Prophet: "He who has no shame, has no faith." However, she further notices the ways in which al-Ghazālī seems to view shame as a less-than-ideal emotion for moral goals, given the fact that in his *Mizan al-'amal* it is "gendered and associated with a specific human developmental stage."[49] Furthermore, in the *Mizan*, he places shame as "the intermediate level in the three ascending forms of motivation al-Ghazālī identifies for the performance of good actions in this world,"[50] losing only to the superior motivation of seeking the perfection of the soul for its own sake. While Katz's survey is helpful, and certainly innovative in the study of emotions in the work of al-Ghazālī, it is also understandably somewhat superficial given the amount of material and number of figures she tries to cover in her article. Al-Ghazālī deploys the concept of shame throughout the *Iḥyāʾ*, suggesting a nuanced, and at times conflicting, understanding of this emotion in his religious worldview, and many of these have been overlooked in the literature.[51]

Islamic Legal Thought" in *Journal of Law, Religion and State* (2014): 139-169. There are a few more on the topic of Ghazālī's ethical theory and its similarities and differences to the Greek version, though nothing very recent: Mohamed Ahmed Sherif, Ghazālī*'s Theory of Virtue*(Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975); W. Madelung, "Ar-Râgib al-Isfahânî und die Ethik al-Gazâlîs," in *Islamkundliche Abhandlungen: Fritz Meier zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*. R. Gramlich (ed.) (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1974): pp. 152–63.

[49] Katz, p. 150.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Just as an example, she does not mention al-Ghazālī's praise of shame before the 'eye of God.'

The emotion of pride is yet another example of al-Ghazālī's complex view on emotions and the life of virtue. Sophia Vasalou's recently published book on the virtues of greatness in the Arabic tradition includes a survey of al-Ghazālī's ideas on magnanimity (*kibar al-nafs*- كبر النفس)[52] and pride (*kibr*- كبر).[53] Vasalou identifies an apparent incompatibility between al-Ghazālī's positive and negative views on what she calls "the lordly aspect of human nature."[54] On the one hand, al-Ghazālī seems to follow Aristotle's praise of magnanimity and honor, based on human's share in divine traits. On the other hand, he argues fiercely against the feeling of pride, giving it full (negative) attention in the chapter "On the Condemnation of Pride and Self-admiration" in the *Iḥyāʾ*. In this context, al-Ghazālī shows that the proper attitude following self-assessment is servitude and humility, not a desire for honor and domination. Pride (*kibr*) denies God's

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There are numerous references to al-Ghazālī's understanding of shame as a necessary emotion throughout the believer's spiritual journey as a means to becoming an ideal ethical Muslim. For him, this shame is a result of one's awareness of God as an audience for the believer's every behavior and thought. She also does not have sufficient space to address these ideas on shame in relation to al-Ghazālī's Sufi framework. These will all be thoroughly covered in this dissertation.

[52] Vasalou notes the fascinating lexical affinity between the term for magnanimity and pride in Arabic: "Readers may already have picked up on the interesting lexical affinity between the term used to signify greatness of soul (*kibar al-nafs*) and the term signifying arrogance or pride (*kibr*). The terms *kibar* and *kibr*, it is plain, share the same triliteral root. The affinity is suggestive; and among the thoughts it suggests is one I framed when first situating the Arabic reception of greatness of soul in a field of expectations, and indeed of heightened curiosity. Here was a culture that lacked the concept of *megalopsychia*, suddenly confronting a culture that contained it. How would it find the intellectual and linguistic resources to accommodate it? Given the cultural contingency the concept has often been seen to carry—its logic rooted in the world of the Homeric heroes as filtered through the social and intellectual life of the Athenian polis—the confrontation would seem to have the makings of a collision." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 50

[53] She calls both Aquinas and al-Ghazālī's view on magnanimity a "dramatic revision" of Aristotle's view. Vasalou, p. 9. This dissertation will clearly corroborate with her description.

[54] Idem, p. 38.

authorship of all things worthy of praise, and is a sign of the agent's ignorance of or lack of belief in God's deterministic power and human baseness. For Vasalou, the conflict may be resolved by understanding that the standards of excellence of the genre al-Ghazālī engaged with were not so much "critical argument and rational coherence," but "an attitude of appreciation and accommodation, and a concern to transmit received funds of ethical wisdom which need not entail scrutinizing the relationship of every element to every other and subjecting every element to stringent critique."[55] In chapter two, I will offer a different way of reconciling his appreciation for *kibar al-nafs* and disdain for *kibr* that does not rely on the less systematic genre of his work.

In my dissertation, I will expand the scope of the existing work on these emotions in al-Ghazālī's thought. In addition to a broad exploration of the influence of the Aristotelian model on al-Ghazālī and the religious constraints on his views on shame and pride, I will explore specific issues such as: 1) the apparent, yet not explicit, distinction al-Ghazālī makes between the at times blameworthy passion of shame and the always praiseworthy virtue of shame; 2) the tensions between his positive assessment of magnanimity and his negative assessment of pride; 3) the developmental aspect of shame and pride; 4) the embodiment of these emotions and how the religious practitioner can train herself to develop the tendency to feel shame and the tendency to not feel pride; and 5) the influence of Sufism on al-Ghazālī's conception of shame and pride.

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[55] Idem, p. 60.

Although Aquinas's treatise on the passions has not received as much attention as it should, given its centrality for his moral psychology, Robert Miner and Nicholas Lombardo have each recently offered a thorough analysis of the relevant material in the *Summa Theologiae*, namely I.II. 22-48.[56] In his more specific survey of shame (*verecundia*) in Aquinas's thought, Heribertus Dwi Kristanto has argued that Aquinas considers shame "praiseworthy due to both its very nature as a moral passion and its positive roles in the moral life, particularly galvanizing moral development."[57] While Aquinas understood shame to be an involuntary passion, Kristanto highlights that he considered it a sign and an effect of love for all that is morally good and abhorrence of all that is evil. Concluding his survey, Kristanto suggests that Aquinas's *verecundia* cannot be considered a full-fledged virtue because it does not originate from choice, but an impulse of passion. While I will build upon his work, I will also challenge his conclusion in part by showing that, in fact, when seen as analogous to Aquinas's virtue of "fear of God," and in light of his religious commitments, shame before God in Aquinas can and should be understood as more than a virtue: a Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Pride (*superbia*) appears in Aquinas's treatment of vices as the opposite of the virtue of humility. Anthony Flood summarizes Aquinas's position on *superbia* as "the

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[56] Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae, 1a2ae 22-48* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009) and Nicholas Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

[57] Heribertus Dwi Kristanto, *The Praiseworthy Passion of Shame: An Historical and Philosophical Elucidation of Aquinas's Thought on the Nature and Role of Shame in the Moral Life* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 2019), p. 11.

habitual tendency to exalt oneself above God and others" and, therefore, the worst of the vices.[58] Confusingly, Aquinas retains Aristotle's virtue of magnanimity in his moral taxonomy, the possessor of which is worthy of the greatest honor. For Jennifer A. Herdt, Aquinas "stretched [Aristotle's magnanimous man] almost beyond recognition"[59] in order to accommodate his Christian commitments on pride and humility. Magnanimity, in Aquinas, no longer stands for Aristotle's self-aggrandizing virtue, but for a virtue that moves the agent toward acts that greatly benefit other people. In my view, this is Aquinas's attempt of breaching the gap between his negative (religious) view of pride and a charitable interpretation of Aristotle's virtue of magnanimity. In this project, I will expand upon existing work on Aquinas's view on pride by expounding Aquinas's differentiation between magnanimity and pride and showing that the aspect of Aristotle's magnanimity that Aquinas sought to avoid became, in fact, the bedrock of his description of pride: the aspect of positive self-assessments.

Parallel to the list of issues I will address in the works of al-Ghazālī, in the chapter on Aquinas I will explore issues such as: 1) the reasons why Aquinas did not consider shame a full-fledged virtue; 2) the possibility of shame being analogous to the theological virtue of 'fear of God' in Aquinas's thought; 3) the relation between

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[58] Anthony T. Flood, *The Root of Friendship: Self-Love & Self-Governance in Aquinas* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), p. 87.
[59] Jennifer A. Herdt, "Strengthening Hope for the Greatest Things: Aquinas's Redemption of Magnanimity" in Sophia Vasalou (ed.), *The Measure of Greatness: Philosophers on Magnanimity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 72.

Aquinas's virtue of magnanimity and the vice of pride; 4) his understanding of the embodiment of these emotions and how the religious practitioner can train herself to develop a tendency to feel shame and avoid pride; 5) the influence of Aquinas's Dominican commitments upon his views on these emotions.

Significance of the Project

This dissertation aims to fill gaps within the fields of religious studies, philosophy of emotion, and ethics. In philosophy of emotion, little effort has been made to engage views on emotions held by religious philosophers, especially by Islamic philosophers. The framework given by al-Ghazālī and Aquinas will contribute to a better understanding of issues that are relevant to the field of philosophy of emotions. Among others, these include arguments for a positive and negative valence of these particular emotions, the distinctions between emotions *simpliciter* and emotions as virtue and vice, and the relevance of one's religious beliefs and practices for slightly distinct or even opposing valences of emotions.[60] For ethics, this comparative project can help deepen our knowledge of the influence of Aristotle's ethics over moralistic medieval religious

[60] The first of these issues has been discussed in length in philosophical works, while on the second and third, there is next to nothing in contemporary literature. As I will show more clearly in chapter four, it is inadequate to focus merely on the shattering effects of shame and thus, on the same breath exalt the self feeling pride for ourselves and our accomplishments, without careful attention to the positive effects of shame and its consequent boost to humility. It is also insufficient to simply take shame as a phenomenon that occurs before other humans. We must be attentive to the phenomenon felt by those with a theistic framework, and the possible vocabularies for understanding this emotion before an omniscient God. Attention to this audience and the results the emotion produces in the religious and spiritual context of a believer is paramount to expanding our understanding of shame and pride.

thinkers. Furthermore, an analysis of the role of shame and pride in the moral life according to these thinkers will contribute to the content of virtue ethical theories, including regarding the addition of shame among the virtues and pride among the vices. As best said by Aaron Stalnaker, “virtue ethicists need to attend more carefully to religious models.”[61]

For religious studies, this project will contribute, first, to a better understanding of important ‘religious emotions,’ that is, emotions that are salient in religious contexts, both in texts and communities.[62] Second, it will fill the gap in the literature on al-Ghazālī’s view of emotions in the moral and religious life, starting with shame and pride, and of his “religious virtues.”[63] Third, it will inform the field of comparative religion, highlighting the similarities and differences between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas’s views on these emotions, taking into account their overarching religious beliefs, practices, concerns for religious community, and sources of religious authority; this will be the first comparative work on the topic of emotions between these two figures. Fourth, and most importantly, it will point to the ways in which religious beliefs and practices shape emotion valence and categorizations of virtues and vices.

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[61] Aaron Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), p. 33.

[62] More specifically, this dissertation has the potential of entering into conversation with studies in affect theory in religion. Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (eds.), *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Karen Bray and Stephen D. Moore (eds.), *Religion, Emotion, Sensation: Affect Theories and Theologies* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2020); Eve Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[63] The latest work that we have on this subject, and upon which I build, is Mohamed Ahmed Sherif’s *Ghazālī’s Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975).

E. Methodology

The nature of this project is philosophical, comparative, and interpretative.

Given the philosophical nature of the works of Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas that I will survey, as well as of the works of contemporary philosophers of emotion who will form the set of interlocutors in the last chapter of the dissertation, this project will focus on explicit presuppositions and clearly formulated attempts to bring forth the figures' unified or disjointed ideas of the concepts in question. The philosophical method I will be modeling in this dissertation draws on Richard Rorty's and Robert Brandom's visions of "rational reconstruction."[64] Both philosophers have offered this method as a compromise between a-historical and extreme historicist interpretations of "the mighty dead," as Rorty calls the philosophers of history.[65] Rational reconstruction is philosophical interpretation done in two steps. First, there is the historical 'reconstruction' of the figure's ideas in his or her own terms. In this step, the interpreter engages with the author's idea in, what Brandom calls, a *de dicto* manner. That is,

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[64] Richard Rorty, "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres," in Richard Rorty, J. Schneewind, and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Philosophy in History: Essays in the Historiography of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Robert Brandom, *Tales of the Mighty Dead: Historical Essays in the Metaphysics of Intentionality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[65] Rorty explains that these mighty dead can be imagined as the 're-educated dead' in the second step of interpretation: "This means that we are interested not only in what the Aristotle who walked the streets of Athens could be brought to accept as a correct description of what he had meant or done but in what an ideally reasonable and educable Aristotle could be brought to accept as such a description…An ideal Aristotle can be brought to describe himself as having mistaken the preparatory taxonomic stages of biological research for the essence of all scientific inquiry. Each of these imaginary people, by the time he has been brought to accept such a new description of what he meant or did, has become 'one of us.'" *The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres*, p. 51.

illuminating "what the author would in fact have said in response to various questions of clarification and extension" on the basis of what the author does say.[66] The second step is what Brandom calls *de re* interpretation—a rational reconstruction of what "follows from the premises of the author" that puts the author's ideas in dialogues within contemporary discussions on the subject. In other words, it involves constructing a conversation between the commitments of the author and of the interpreter. Despite the second step being susceptible to suspicions of anachronism, Brandom and Rorty believe the *de re* step is common in interpretative work, even if denied or glossed over by extreme historicists. If this anachronism is done "in full knowledge" of its anachronism, Rorty argues, it is unobjectionable. The two steps, when combined, have the potential of producing valuable interpretations of historical figures for discussions in contemporary philosophy.[67]

Regarding the comparative aspect of this project, David Decosimo sums up the two biggest challenges to comparative projects in religious ethics: the "ubiquity of resemblance" that may result in unclear or misguided claims about these resemblances, "misattribution of significance," and the "occlusion of [the comparative scholar's] underlying purposes and values."[68] For comparative projects in religious ethics to be

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[66] Brandom, p. 99.
[67] Richard Rorty, *The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres*, p. 12.
[68] David Decosimo, "Comparison and the Ubiquity of Resemblance" in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 78.1 (March 2010): 231, 236. "It is always possible to find some features shared between things, and when the objects under consideration are as complex as religious ethical traditions, one can usually find quite a few. …Learning from Goodman, we can respond not by reflexively denying the similarity, but by pointing out that it is unimportant or by asking why, aside from the mere fact of its being a similarity, it matters." pp. 232-233

coherent and successful, comparativists must, at the very least, "clearly and explicitly identify the particular goals of their comparisons,"[69] and illuminate the connection and compatibility between those goals and the objects selected for comparison.[70] My comparison between the views of Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas aims at showing how Islamic and Christian religious beliefs and practices shaped their valence of the morally-salient, self-assessing emotions of shame and pride, placing them at odds with their Aristotelian ethical inheritance. Given the significant formal similarities between their ethical theories, I will conduct comparative work focused on substantive issues of agreement and disagreement between Aristotle's views and theirs.

Methodologically, my project stands in a long and growing line of scholarship in religious studies that has produced responsible comparisons between religious texts originating from different religious traditions such as those of Lee Yearley,[71] Aaron Stalnaker,[72] Ayman Shihadeh[73] and Elizabeth Bucar[74]. These authors demonstrate in their work, in diverse ways and degrees, key qualities for careful comparisons between

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[69] Decosimo, p. 236. "Without such a goal or without clarity on what it is, we lack key norms against which to judge the comparison–or even to help explain why comparison is undertaken at all. Indeed, in an important sense, without such goals or clarity on them, the comparativist lacks a sufficient degree of scholarly self-awareness, a clear understanding of just what it is that he or she is doing." p. 239.
[70] Decosimo, p. 241.
[71] Lee H. Yearley, *Mencius and Aquinas: Theories of Virtue and Conceptions of Courage* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990).
[72] Aaron Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010).
[73] Ayman Shihadeh, *Fakhr al-Din al-Razi and Thomas Aquinas on the Question of the Eternity of the World* (Leiden: Brill, 2002)
[74] Elizabeth M. Bucar, *Creative Conformity: The Feminist Politics of U.S. Catholic and Iranian Shi'i Women* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011).

religious worlds that I hope to have mirrored, such as impartiality (i.e., not 'favoring' one tradition over another), responsible interpretations that take into account the cultural and religious contexts of the figures in question, cautious, modest, and carefully qualified statements of similarities and differences, a reticence to generalize from a single figure to claims about 'entire' religious traditions and a refusal to claim that a single figure could somehow 'represent' the tradition to which s/he belongs, and conscientious placement of the figure's ideas in conversation with contemporary academic discussions. Of course, I have in my favor the fact that both religious thinkers are drawing from some of the same Aristotelian texts (at least, second-handedly), and were inserted within a similarly monotheistic religious tradition, which provides some of the same basic concepts, such as an all-powerful, all-good, all-just divine being. Nonetheless, one aspect of this dissertation that distinguishes it from most works of comparative religious ethics, and that aids me in fulfilling the above mentioned goals, is that I treat each figure separately, dedicating one chapter to each. That is, instead of opting for thematic chapters, I have opted for textual chapters. This is an important distinction for three reasons, the first two regard my duty toward the content of this project and toward my thinkers and the second, its pedagogical advantage: 1) this organization allows me to highlight important, but commonly overlooked details of each figure's thought individually instead of "lumping" the ideas of two to three figures all together and, thus, potentially leaving these important details unnoticed; 2) this arrangement allows me to address the thinkers' views on their

own terms, without unnecessarily appealing to my own "umbrella terms" in order to bring their voices together in one chapter and so avoiding oversimplification; 3) keeping track of whose views are being portrayed can be a daunting experience for the reader of comparative works—this structure allows the reader to do so more easily.

Given the interpretative nature of my project, I undertake careful analysis of key works of these figures, while also paying attention to the relevant historical context of these works.[75] The primary site of investigation are the texts that are especially central to these figures on the topic of ethics, such as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʻulum al-din*, and Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* in their original language, their English translations, as well as commentaries. I also appeal to their other texts when these are helpful for the comprehension of a particular idea or the history of that idea during the thinkers' life. I survey and compare the relevant concepts and words in their key texts and, when appropriate, in the works of other authors that influenced their thought or with whom they were in conversation.[76] I also utilize primary and secondary literature that may aid in the understanding of the figures' thought, as well as cultural and religious background. The question of language and translation is particularly important for the interpretative dimension of this project. For example, the Arabic word حياء (*haya'*) can be translated into English as both 'shame' and 'modesty,' each having a different meaning and different implications for the study of emotions and virtue; Aquinas makes a

[75] Here I have in mind Quentin Skinner's criticism to the project of "close reading" of texts, ignoring the author's broader context (e.g. the texts to which he or she is responding, their cultural setting) and defense of analyses of the synchronic context of a text. See *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Vol. 1: The Renaissance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
[76] Given the breadth of this project, I do not do this as much as I would have liked.

distinction between shame for past wrongdoings (*verecudia*) and future desired wrongdoing (*erubescentia*), among other similar terms; and Aristotle's *megalopsychia* has no perfect English equivalent and is notoriously difficult to trace in the works of his inheritors. Since a successful comparison between these two figures, with Aristotle as the background figure, is dependent upon coherent "bridge concepts"[77] such as 'shame,' 'pride,' 'emotions,' and 'virtue,' these and other linguistic and contextual difficulties will be addressed in what follows so that the comparison is made within the most approximate "bridgeable" terms and meanings of the authors.

F. Chapter Outline

Though the chapters of this dissertation are meant to be taken together as a comparative project each chapter, save the fourth, may also be read and considered a valuable project in itself given the scarcity of materials on these topics within the works of these thinkers.

Chapter One: Aristotle on Shame and Pride

This chapter expounds Aristotle's ideas on emotions and virtue in general, and shame and pride (great-souledness) in particular. It begins with an overview of his ethical theory, including his theory of the soul, which is where he houses the virtues/vices and the passions, his theory of virtue, and his theory of the passions. It then zooms into his views on shame and pride. In my survey of these terms, I show that core to Aristotle's definition of them is a negative and positive moral self-assessment, respectively, coupled with a

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[77] A concept developed by Aaron Stalnaker referring to general ideas "which can be given enough content to be meaningful and guide comparative inquiry yet are still open to greater specification in particular cases." *Overcoming Our Evil*, p. 17.

social dimension embedded in the reproach and honor afforded to the shameful and prideful agent. In bringing forth his views on the passion of shame, I present his justification for its positive valence in his work, highlighting his understanding of its role in moral development, and clarify his reasons for not considering it a full-fledged virtue, but a qualifiedly praiseworthy passion. Finally, I turn to his views on the virtue of pride. In this section, I define pride carefully, pointing out its virtuous conditions and the attitudes of those who possess this virtue, and contemporary criticisms offered to such descriptions. Aristotle's classification of shame as a praiseworthy passion, but not a virtue, and pride as the crown of the virtues serve as the contrast against which I set up the views of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas in the following chapters.

Chapter Two: Al-Ghazālī on Shame and Pride

This chapter follows the order of the first, but expounds al-Ghazālī's ethical theory and his views on shame and pride. It begins with an overview of al-Ghazālī's ethical theory, specifically the centrality of knowledge for moral formation, the "internal principles" that inform and are responsible for human moral choices, the emotions, and the virtues and vices. In the section on shame, I share his definitions, his reasons for considering it a virtue, the blameworthy manifestations of the passion of shame and, finally, his understanding of the virtue of shame felt before God. Finally, in the section on pride, I go into detail regarding his justification for the viciousness of pride and his praise of the virtue of humility. I also address the incongruity of his inclusion of magnanimity as a virtue and pride as a vice. In my analyses of both shame and pride, I give examples of religious rituals that, according to al-Ghazālī, serve to embody, and thus habituate, the

virtue of shame and humility. Throughout the chapter, I stress the aspects of al-Ghazālī's thought that were Aristotelian as well as the ways in which he distanced himself from Aristotle's ideas in favor of an Islamic-flavored ethics. Al-Ghazālī's understanding of shame before God and pride clearly show his religious-based suspicion of positive self-assessments of honor and worth and praise of negative self-assessments.

Chapter Three: Thomas Aquinas on Shame and Pride

In this chapter, I transition to Thomas Aquinas's views on shame and pride. First, I tackle the distinctions he makes between passions, virtues and vices, and Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are crucial for proper comprehension of his moral psychology and taxonomy and his understanding of shame and pride. Then, I elucidate his description of shame and its role in the moral life. While I show that Aquinas is heavily influenced by Aristotle in his classification of shame as a praiseworthy passion, but not a full blown virtue, I also demonstrate his praise, and classification as a Gift of the Holy Spirit, of what I will call 'spiritual shame.' In the final section, on pride, I bring forth his reasoning for pride's place not only among the vices, but as the first and most sinful of all vices, opposing the virtue of humility. As an inordinate positive self-assessment, it is an affront to God's sovereignty and, thus, to reason itself. As in chapter two, I also address his attempt to harmonize Aristotle's virtue of magnanimity and the vice of pride. In both my analyses of shame and pride, I give examples of religious rituals and practices that, according to Aquinas, encourage the believer to embody, and thus habituate, the virtue of shame and humility. As with al-Ghazālī, Aquinas's understanding of shame before God as a virtue of sorts and pride as a vice demonstrate his religious-based suspicion of

positive self-assessments of honor and worth and praise of negative self-assessments.

Chapter Four: Comparative work

Having done the interpretative work, the dissertation proceeds to compare their views and construct a systematic way of understanding the differences. In the first part of this chapter, I rehash the commonalities with and, indeed, indebtedness to Aristotle of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's ethical theories in general, and shame and pride within that ethical theory, more specifically. In the second part of the chapter, I focus on significant distinctions between Aristotle's original view on shame and pride, and the religious thinker's views on the self-assessing moral emotions. More specifically, I attempt to explain why the two religious thinkers classify shame, described as being felt before a Divine audience, as a virtue and pride as a vice, when their great ethical influencer, Aristotle, does not. I answer this question by pointing to their different metaphysical and religious frameworks, grouping the ones I consider most influential under three headings: 1) Big God Theory; 2) deflationary sense of self; and 3) Theistic causal moral luck. I describe each of these frameworks in detail and include the ways in which the religious thinker's ways of understanding shame and pride might fit into modern and contemporary philosophical discussions of these emotions.

Conclusion

In this section, I examine the implications of the dissertation's findings to the study of philosophical and religious ethics, as well as to the philosophical study of shame. This chapter further argues that based on several of Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's ideas and in light of its social and moral positive outcomes, it is possible to clearly define

shame in such a way that it may be included among the moral virtues. I defend this view by providing a possible virtuous definition.

1. Aristotle on Shame and Pride

In this chapter, I explore Aristotle's views on shame and pride. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the foundation for my comparative endeavor, which will show the influence of Aristotle's ethics over the religious thinkers Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī and Thomas Aquinas, as well as the ways in which they distance themselves from him regarding shame and pride.

In the first section, I give an overview of Aristotle's ethical theory, including his theory of virtue, with reference to both his theory of the soul and his theory of the passions. This foundational section provides the framework for understanding the characteristics he assigns to shame and pride. In the second section, I hone in on his more specific views on shame, introducing its definition and its role in the moral life. I indicate Aristotle's reasons for considering it a praiseworthy passion, but not a virtue and argue that given its susceptibility to habituation and its praiseworthy outcomes he had sufficient reasons for considering it *more like* a virtue than a passion. Finally, in the third section, I discuss Aristotle's understanding of the virtue of pride (which I will, for the most part, refer to by the Aristotelian term *megalopsychia*): its definition, its internal inconsistencies and the common criticisms to its inclusion among the virtues, as well as Aristotle's description of its close vicious relatives: arrogance, boastfulness and love of self. My argument in this section is that this virtue is very awkwardly defended as a virtue, both due to internal inconsistencies in Aristotle's account and to its clash with today's ethical sensibilities and commitments. Therefore, I argue, modifications must be made—most

importantly, in its self-assessing aspect—in order to include it among the virtues. Finally, I begin to show that these problems with Aristotle's views on the two self-assessing moral emotions provide the ideal backdrop for al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's own disagreements surveyed in this study.

Except for references to Aristotle's theory of the soul in *De Anima* in the first section, I will limit the study of the following sections to the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Rhetoric*. The *Nicomachean Ethics* is, unquestionably, Aristotle's final word on personal ethics[1] and *On Rhetoric* has relevant discussions about theoretical and practical dimensions of passions and virtues/vices.[2] Furthermore, these works are those that most heavily influenced the ethical thought of the figures I will analyze in the next chapters.

A. Aristotle's Ethics: the Soul, Virtue, and Passion

To understand Aristotle's positions on the passions, such as shame and on virtues, such as *megalopsychia*, it is important to briefly summarize his views on their "seat"—the soul—before moving on to his discussions on virtue and passion.

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[1] This is taking into account the fact that the academic consensus is that two of his ethical treatises, *Magna Moralia* and *Virtues and Vices*, are spurious, and that the *Eudemian Ethics* "seems to be a less polished, perhaps earlier, version of the *Nicomachean Ethics*." Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (trans), *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. ix. Despite its underdevelopment in comparison to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, some details given in *Eudemian Ethics* will, at times, be relevant for my analysis.

[2] Unless specified otherwise, the English translations I will use for citations are from Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (trans), *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); George A. Kennedy, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Mark Shifman (trans), *Aristotle: De Anima* (Newburyport, MA: R. Pullins Co, 2011). Furthermore, I used J. Bywater's edition of *Aristotle's Ethica Nicomachea* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894) at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3atext%3a1999.01.0053 for consultations of the Greek version of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and W. D. Ross' edition of *Rhetorica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959) at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3atext%3a1999.01.0059 for consultations of the Greek version of *On Rhetoric*.

The Soul

Aristotle held that the soul accounts for all of the things that distinguish a living being from a non-living being and, therefore, is the origin of capacities ranging from basic movement and perception to the complex human intellectual faculty. Because the soul cannot be equated to the body, according to him, the former must be understood as the immaterial part of the human being: "The soul is that by which we live and perceive and think in the first place, so that it would be a certain *logos* and form, rather than material and the underlying thing" (DA 414a.15-1). Nonetheless, in order to convincingly consider the soul both distinct from the body and having a causal role in the body's movements, Aristotle famously held that it is inseparable from the body. In fact, for him, the relation soul-body is the perfect example of his form-matter theory (DA 412a.20-21)[3], where the form (soul) actualizes the matter's (body) potentiality. The passions, in particular, are phenomena of the soul that are inextricably woven into the body: "But all of the affections (πάθη) of the soul seem to be found together with a body too—spiritedness, gentleness, fear, pity, boldness, and also joy and loving and hating—for along with these the body is affected in some way" (DA 403a.15-19). He thought similarly about the intellectual faculty of the soul. Though Aristotle knew of no

[3] Better known as his theory of hylomorphism, a theory that undergirds all of Aristotle's thought. In sum, it is the idea that all things can be analyzed according to their matter (the physical material of which it is constituted) and their form (the structure that is the final form of the being, toward which it aims). Matter, on its own, is mere potentiality, but the form turns it to actuality. In the case of body and soul, the body cannot, on its own, constitute a living being, for it requires a form which dictates the kind of being it will develop to become. Without the form, the being ceases to be what it is and so the body without a soul is not a living being, and vice-versa (DA 413a.3-5). That the soul is what dictates the kind of being that the body of the being is explains why Aristotle treats questions of the soul primarily as an inquiry in biology.

connection between the brain and the intellect (DA 429a.24-27), he thought the intellect required the body in so far as it needs the physical senses' input in order to perceive and deliberate about particular situations.

What constitutes the soul varies according to the living being under analysis. The soul contains the potential for every capacity that is appropriate for the being in question which, for Aristotle, can be condensed in the nutritive, perceptive, and intellectual faculties (DA 413b.12). For example, the soul of a 'brute animal' differs from that of a human being given the difference in the respective range of capacities.[4] To account for movement toward desired objects both in brute animals and in humans, he includes a discussion of a faculty of desire, also known as the appetite (ὀρεκτικόν) (DA 433a.31-b.1). Within the purview of this important distinctive faculty, Aristotle is able to house the passions which, though they arise in conjunction with the perceptive faculty that gives the agent the outside information about their environment, are *motions* of the appetite toward or away from the object perceived.[5]

Aristotle also accounts for conflict between faculties of the soul. More specifically, he does so for occasions in which one acts in opposition to reason, and therefore demonstrates a conflict between the inclinations of the appetite and the intellect. While both faculties have their seat in the soul, the former is seated in the non-rational

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[4] For example, while the nutritive faculty is present in all living beings, the perceptive faculty is what separates plants from animals (DA 413b.4-7) and the intellectual faculty is what distinguishes humans from other animals (DA 429a.6-10). These faculties, of course, are presented in a hierarchical format, so that the beings who possess all of them are higher up than those who possess only one. Furthermore, those who have the more complex faculty possess all the others.

[5] As an example, he defines the passion of anger as "'a certain motion of such a sort of body or part or potency, caused by this and aiming at that.'" (DA 403a.25-28) More on Aristotle's theory of the passions in the next subsection of this chapter.

part while the latter, obviously, is seated in the rational part. Though, as we will see, one's appetitive desires can certainly accord with the conclusions of reasoning, they often conflict:

> But desire can cause motion in spite of reasoning, for appetite is a kind of desire. All intellectual apprehension is correct, while desire and imagination are both correct and not correct. Hence what causes motion is always what is desired, but this is either the good or the apparent good. Not every good, however, but the practical good (and a practical good is one that admits of being otherwise). (DA 433a.25-31)

According to Aristotle, this internal conflict occurs only in beings with a sense of time, for the appetite requests the immediate result of one's desires, while the intellect deliberates, and produces desires, according to the long-term consequences of our actions (DA 433b.6-10).[6] In other words, the conflict is between the 'deliberative imagination' of the intellectual faculty, which is responsible for imagining potential outcomes of our decisions—especially in relation to their contribution to the achievement of our *telos* (τέλος)—and the appetite, which "does not have the deliberative capacity," and "sometimes it conquers and pushes aside deliberative wish, and at other times the reverse happens" (DA 434a.13-16).

There are some who are skilled in imagining possible future outcomes of decisions (and thus are able to order desires and choose among the desires, accordingly), and there are some who are particularly unskillful in doing so. Those who are able to order desires skillfully according to the deliberations of reason are virtuous or high along

[6] In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle will clarify this idea by arguing that practical reason is that which considers the ultimate good in relation to a particular action, producing in the agent a desire to pursue the act that will most accurately achieve the good. For practical reason, then, what is most relevant is the good, and not necessarily the pleasurable, and this distinction can easily (though not universally) map on to the distinction between short and long-term consequences of an action.

the ladder of virtue-habituation. This serves as a natural segue into an overview of Aristotle's virtue ethics.

The Virtues

Aristotle starts off, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, raising what is, for him, the foundational question in ethics: what is *the Good*? If modern ethicists sometimes focused on an itemized answer to this question, listing certain universal behaviors that fall under the category of right, Aristotle shows how such a list would simply point further, to some ultimate good that is sought. For example, the ethical rule of not murdering someone is only good on account of something else that is good in a more ultimate sense, since the reason people strive for obeying such rules is some other good that they wish to attain. If one is to find the supreme good (τἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον), therefore, one must seek the common end (τέλος) to which all good things point (NE 1094a.18-22)—something that is good in itself, commonly perceived as *complete (*τέλειον), rather than instrumental (NE 1097a.29).

From the onset of the book, Aristotle concludes that the good toward which all people strive, which is good in itself, is happiness:

> Happiness (εὐδαιμονία) above all seems to be of this character, for we always choose it on account of itself and never on account of something else. Yet honor, pleasure, intellect, and every virtue we choose on their own account…but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, because we suppose that, through them, we will be happy. But nobody chooses happiness for the sake of these things, or, more generally, on account of anything else. (NE 1097b.1-7)

Being 'complete,' happiness is consequently self-sufficient, that is, "that which by itself makes life choiceworthy and in need of nothing, and such is what we suppose

happiness to be" (NE 1097b.15-17). But what is happiness? It certainly cannot be defined based on fleeting sensations or anything else that is easily "subject to reversals" (NE 1100b.1-4). This limitation obviously precludes the possibility of fortune and honor being the content of happiness. Rather, happiness, for Aristotle, must consist of something 'secure,' that lasts and endures misfortune. The only viable candidate of a good that is sought for its own goodness, that is the final *telos* of all activity, that is self-sufficient, and that endures misfortune, he argues, is "a certain kind of living well and good action (ψυχὴν ἀγαθῶν...καὶ εὐπραξία)" (NE 1098b.22-23).

The definition, Aristotle acknowledges, is still incomplete. What is it to live and act well? What are good actions? To answer these questions, he investigates the 'work' of human beings. In other words, what is it that, when done well, results in happiness? For him, it is clear that the work of human beings must be something unique to the human, for animals are not said to be happy (NE 1099b.32-33). The only faculty that seems to be unique to humans is the rational faculty. Therefore, to live and act well must be to live and act in accordance to reason. This, he states, is to live and act in accord with virtue (NE 1098a.16-17): "it is the activities in accord with virtue (ἀρετήν) that have authoritative control over happiness, and the contrary activities over the contrary" (NE 1100b.10-12).

Though a life of virtue is, for Aristotle, a happy life, he also considers the possibility of a *most excellent* life, that is, the life that is *maximally* happy. Since the intellect is, as we have seen, the humans' distinctive faculty, the most excellent activity must have to do with the intellect. In NE 1178b.8-23, he deduces the most excellent

activity by analyzing what it is that makes the gods happy. It does not seem to be the case that the gods engage in similar kinds of activities as humans, or even manifest the same kind of virtues. The only kind of activity that seems worthy of the gods is the activity of contemplation, and this, in turn, is true in relation to human life. To live a life of contemplation is, for Aristotle, to live a maximally happy life.

As we have mentioned above, Aristotle held that an ethical life was not about following a standard list of good actions, what he calls 'stationary' ethics (NE 1104a.5). Rather, a good person is one who can "examine what pertains to the opportune moment" (NE 1104a.8-10) once it presents itself, and act according to the deliberations of reason for that particular circumstance. To be the kind of person who can do this well, one must develop the virtues. Virtue (ἀρετήν), for Aristotle, is a fixed disposition of the soul to manifest correct passions and perform correct actions, that is, to feel the right passions and to act in the right way, "when one ought and at the things one ought, in relation to those people whom one ought, for the sake of what and as one ought" (NE 1106b.22-23). To manifest the right passion and perform the right action according to virtue, for Aristotle, is never to do so out of luck, sporadically, or for any other reason except for the good itself, but to do so predictably, out of a steady disposition and for the sake of the noble. More specifically, Aristotle adds three characteristics to the content of virtues: 1) they are the mean between two extremes; 2) they are subdivided into moral and intellectual; and 3) they develop through habituation. I will give a brief overview of these points, and, subsequently, survey his views on the virtuous passions.

Means and Extremes

The very first definition of virtue that appears in the *Nicomachean* is that it is a mean (μεσότητος) between two extremes (NE 1104a.25-26). While the mean is the virtue, the two extremes are the vices, one a vice of excess and the other a vice of deficiency. For example, he suggests liberality as the mean of giving and taking money, while the excess is prodigality and the deficiency is stinginess. Hitting the mean is no easy task, and "[i]t is easy to miss the target, hard to hit it" (NE 1106b.32-33). Though the two extremes are vices, one of the two tends to be less blameworthy than the other. And, because of the difficulty in hitting the virtuous mean, Aristotle argues that it is best to err by aiming for the "least of the bad things" (NE 1109a.35). Though virtues are the mean and most vices are the extremes of those means, there are some exceptions. Aristotle mentions some actions and passions that simply are bad, without having a virtuous mean, such as the passions of "spitefulness, shamelessness, envy" and actions such as "adultery, theft, and murder" (NE 1107a.11-12). No matter how these are done, "they are done in error" (NE 1107a.15).

Moral and intellectual

Throughout the ten books of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle carefully surveys eleven moral virtues and their vicious extremes, and five intellectual virtues. The intellectual virtues are art, science, prudence, theoretical wisdom and practical wisdom. The moral virtues are listed as courage, moderation, liberality, magnificence, greatness of the soul, proper ambition, patience, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty and righteous indignation. All of the virtues, intellectual and moral, are present in the fully

virtuous person.[7] The intellectual virtues are the result of the perfection of the intellectual part of the soul—a disposition to truth—and, consequently, come about through experience and education. The moral virtues, on the other hand, result from the perfection of the non-rational part of the soul (faculty of desire)—a disposition to the good— which occurs when it follows the intellect's rule (NE 1139a.21-31). The moral virtues are the result of a process of habituation of virtuous acts.[8]

Habituation

For Aristotle, one must make a distinction between a virtuous *act* on its own and a full-blown virtue.[9] To consistently identify and choose good actions, and to choose them

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[7] Marguerite Deslauriers argues that Aristotle's division of the parts of the soul in an intellectual faculty and faculty of desire accounts for the intellectual and moral virtues being numerically different *hexeis*, differentiated by the different objects of the desires that determine which virtue is at play. See "How to Distinguish Aristotle's Virtues" in *Phronesis* Vol 47, No. 2 (2002): 103.

[8] That moral virtues require habituation is the reason he denies that they are "present in us by nature, since nothing that exists by nature is habituated to be other than it is." (NE 1103a.19-20)

[9] In the sections on shame and pride I will hint toward multiple stages of moral development that Aristotle seems to lay out in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. According to Howard Curzer's helpful analysis, Aristotle considers five components of virtue: (1) the ability to identify which acts are virtuous in a given situation; (2) an understanding of why they are virtuous; (3) a desire for virtuous acts for their own sakes; (4) dispositions of virtuous action; and (5) dispositions of virtuous passion. With these five components, "The virtuous person reliably acts and feels right." Howard J. Curzer, *Aristotle and the Virtues* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 318. Curzer also gives a helpful overview of which component is added on to each of Aristotle's moral stages:

> Aristotle's implicit account of moral development specifies a developmental path in six stages. Each stage consists of a different character type: (a) one of the many, (b) generous-minded youth, (c) incontinent person, (d) continent person, (e) naturally virtuous person, (f) properly virtuous person. Each new stage is reached by acquiring a new component of virtue. The five components of virtue in the order of their acquisition are: (1) the desire to perform virtuous acts for their own sakes *qua* virtuous, that is, the commitment to lead the life of virtue, (2) the knowledge of which acts are virtuous in which situations (i.e. the ability to identify virtuous acts), (3) the habits of virtuous action, (4) the habits of virtuous passion, and (5) the knowledge of why virtuous acts are virtuous (i.e. the knowledge of the happy life). At each stage on the path the learner gains a different component of virtue and thus advances to the next stage (becoming a better sort of person) at the prompting of a different catalyst, but those who lack the relevant catalyst remain fixated or regress. The many become generous-minded; the generous-minded become incontinent; and

for their own sake, requires repetition (NE 1105b.5). He famously held that “by doing just things we become just; moderate things, moderate; and courageous things, courageous” (NE 1103b.1-3). More specifically, virtue development requires repetition of the hard work of turning away from what is immediately pleasurable and toward what is noble. In fact, Aristotle states that one can identify the habits that are worth developing by paying attention to what one is naturally inclined toward or against: “This [object of our inclination] will be recognizable from the pleasure and the pain that occur in our case. And we must drag ourselves away from it toward its contrary; for by leading ourselves far from error, we will arrive at the middle term” (NE 1109b.3-7). He compares the significant effort exerted in the process of habituation with that of an athlete in their process of achieving physical excellence. By repeatedly resisting immediate pleasures, one becomes “especially able to abstain from them” (NE 1104a.33-36) and actually slowly transforms the good habits from unpleasurable to pleasurable and the bad habits from pleasurable to unpleasurable.[10] The final product—the virtuous person—is someone who enjoys that which the non-virtuous perceives as dreadful. For example,

> the incontinent become continent by performing virtuous acts prompted at first (1) by threat of external punishment, later (2) by internal *aidōs*, and finally (3) by remorse. After the habits of virtuous action are already well entrenched, mere virtuous action no longer moves the learner forward along the moral development path. The continent becomes naturally virtuous (4) by listening to the right music. Naturally virtuous people are (5) able to make moral progress through teaching. If they are properly taught about which character traits are conducive to happiness, then naturally virtuous people acquire the knowledge of why virtuous acts are virtuous. That is, they become properly virtuous people. (Curzer, pp. 351-352)

[10] There is considerable disagreement about the place of pleasure and pain in the virtuous and during the process of virtue acquisition. According to Myles Burnyeat’s influential account, in Aristotle’s attempt to distance himself from Socrates’ intellectualism, where virtue is merely knowledge, he argues that one can only truly take pleasure in a certain activity after engaging in it multiple times and assessing its value first-hand: “I may be told, and may believe, that such and such actions are just and noble, but I have not really learned for myself (taken to heart, made second nature to me) that they

> he who abstains from bodily pleasures and enjoys this very abstention is moderate, but he who is vexed in doing so is licentious; he who endures terrifying things and enjoys doing so, or at any rate is not pained by it, is courageous, but he who is pained thereby is a coward. For moral virtue is concerned with pleasures and pains: it is on account of the pleasure involved that we do base things, and it is on account of the pain that we abstain from noble ones. (NE 1104b.6-11)

Aristotle strongly states that those who have been raised to appreciate the noble and to detest the shameful are in a much more advantageous position to develop virtue than those who have not (NE 1103b.20-25; 1104b.11-13). Some commentators even go as far as interpreting Aristotle to say that without this kind of education it is impossible for one to acquire the moral virtues.[11]

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have this intrinsic value until I have learned to value (love) them for it, with the consequence that I take pleasure in doing them. To understand and appreciate the value that makes them enjoyable in themselves I must learn for myself to enjoy them, and that does take time and practice—in short, habituation." Burnyeat, "Aristotle on Learning to be Good" in Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 78) In other words, Burnyeat argues that the virtuous has learned to feel pleasure in virtuous actions *and* that the process of moral habituation toward virtue is driven by the pleasure found in the habituated moral action. Howard Curzer responds to Burnyeat's account by claiming that though Aristotle claims that virtuous acts are pleasant for the virtuous, "he rejects the thesis that they are typically overall pleasant." (Curzer, p. 328) Rather, and this point is especially poignant in Aristotle's description of acts of courage, "virtuous acts are often not pleasant for the virtuous" (Curzer, p. 329). Consequently, he also argues that the very drive toward virtue is pain, more specifically the pain of punishment or threat of punishment (Curzer, 329) and that Aristotle says that following their pleasures leads the not-yet-virtuous astray" (Curzer, p. 325). I will discuss Curzer's position in more detail in the section on shame in moral development.

[11] Kirstjan Kirstjansson, for example, argues that "It may be true that, in a possible world, Aristotle might have envisaged people who ought to be persuaded by his arguments, irrespective of their upbringing. However, it is clear that in the actual world Aristotle is describing, and given the *de facto* nature of human beings, people without good upbringings will generally not even comprehend, let alone be persuaded by and willing to accommodate, moral truths. Their capacity for moral understanding has been irrevocably compromised, as the 'why' of moral arguments presupposes acquaintance with the 'that' of moral habituation. This is why Aristotle must not be understood to be attempting the task of many moralists of trying to recommend virtue to those who do not care for it; rather, he is giving a course in ethical thinking to enable those who already want to be virtuous to understand better what they should do and feel–and why." Kirstjansson, *Aristotle, Emotions, and Education* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 40-41. This is also the position of Myles Burnyeat (Burnyeat, p. 81). I will go into this topic in more detail in the section on shame in moral development.

For those who are still in the process of moral habituation—who have not yet achieved full virtue—Aristotle raises a potential theoretical problem: “But someone might be perplexed as to what we mean when we say that to become just, people must do just things or, to become moderate, do moderate things. For if they do just and moderate things they already are just and moderate” (NE 1105a.18-21). In response to the possible confusion, Aristotle follows up with a solution: these learners, when they perform virtuous actions, are not doing so *virtuously*. The distinction between virtuous action and an action that stems from virtue, for Aristotle, rests in three aspects of the action, the fulfillment of all three being necessary to give evidence for the presence of virtue: 1) correct knowledge; 2) correct motivation; and 3) stability:

> But whatever deeds arise in accord with the virtues are not done justly or moderately if they are merely in a certain state, but only if he who does those deeds is in a certain state as well: first, if he acts knowingly; second, if he acts by choosing and by choosing the actions in question for their own sake; and, third, if he acts while being in a steady and unwavering state...And yet he who performs these actions is not by that fact alone just and moderate, but only if he also acts as those who are just and moderate act. (NE 1105a.29-1105b.9)

Even so, scholars have argued that, in order to bridge the so-called “moral upbringing gap”—the moral gap between learners of virtue and the truly virtuous—and to maintain a certain continuity between the virtuous actions of the learners and the actions that stem from virtue of the virtuous, we must interpret Aristotle as portraying the learners as engaging in virtuous actions with the right motive (i.e. for the sake of the noble), though these actions are not stable, like those of the virtuous.[12]

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[12] Marta Jimenez has argued that before the agent develops virtuous dispositions, her tentative virtuous actions must come from a noble motivation. According to Jimenez, interpretations of

A survey of Aristotle's view on virtue and vice is incomplete without a description of his views on the passions and both are fundamental for a study of shame and pride. In the next session of this chapter, I will survey Aristotle's views on the passions, their phenomenology and participation in the virtues and vices.

The Passions

Aristotle's earliest definition of the passions occurs in the *On Rhetoric*: "The [passions] (πάθη) are those things through which, by undergoing change, people come to differ in their judgments and which are accompanied by pain and pleasure, for example, anger, pity, fear, and other things and their opposites" (Rhet. 1378a.19-20). He starts by saying that the *pathe* are certain changes in the agent. This clearly stems already from the

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Aristotle's view of the moral upbringing gap have either been of the mechanical kind, which suggest that Aristotle meant to understand the habituation process as "a mostly non-rational process of shaping, typically through repetition, punishment and reward, the learners' emotional responses and their relationship to pleasure and pain" (5) or deflationary kind, which take Aristotle to solve the problem by saying that the actions of the learners are done non-virtuously (that is, for non-virtuous motives). Instead, she suggests that, based on Aristotle's arguments in NE 2.3 and 3.5, the actions of the learners must have strong continuity with those of the virtuous people, both in results and in motivation. Her conclusion, after analyzing Aristotle's passage from 1103b.6-13, is that:

> To become just, courageous, and in general virtuous, not only must we engage in transactions with other people, or deal with dangerous situations, but we also need to do it *well*. If we engage incorrectly in transactions with other people or in dangerous situations, then we will become unjust, cowardly, and in general vicious instead of virtuous. In sum, it is not just from doing certain actions, but from doing them 'in one way' (οὑτωσί) instead of the other that we become virtuous—i.e. doing them in a way that relevantly models the actions of virtuous people. For example, if someone stands at their post during a battle unaware that she is doing so, or does so at the wrong moment, with the wrong goal etc., her action will not contribute to her becoming courageous; it will be similarly useless for her character formation if she stands at her post feeling no fear or with no confidence. For it is by feeling fear or confidence appropriately in the relevant circumstances that people become courageous, and by feeling fear or confidence inappropriately that people become cowardly. (11)

Learners who are on the path toward a life of virtue act from similar virtuous motives, according to Jimenez, "even if this aiming might be occasional and lack the reliability and firmness that the possession of virtue confers." (30) Marta Jimenez, "Aristotle on Becoming Virtuous by Doing Virtuous Actions" in *Phronesis* Vol. 61 Issue 1 (Dec, 2016): 3-32.

Greek word used for this category, *pathos*, which betrays the idea of a passive phenomenon, that is, a change *brought upon* the human agent without a voluntary command from reason, in contrast with an action that is initiated by the agent.[13] One of the changes that passions produce is the shaping of one's judgments by representing the world in particular colors to the feeling agent (e.g. when one feels fear, they have judged a particular object or situation *as dangerous*).[14] Different passions account for differing opinions among people for different passions mean different judgments of the situation at hand. Related to the last point, Aristotle indicates that every passion can be defined as a kind of pain or pleasure.[15] In his later *Nicomachean Ethics*, the focus of his explanation

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[13] L. A. Kosman notes that "Insofar as Aristotle sees fear, anger, desire, pleasure, and pain as *pathe*, as passions, he views what we would call feelings or emotions as modes of a subject being acted upon." "Being Properly Affected: Virtues and Feelings in Aristotle's Ethics" in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), p. 104.

[14] One can understand this as going two ways, both the senses providing the image of the external world which produces the passion and the passion, in turn, shaping one's outlook about the world around him. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle relates this capacity of the passions to shape judgments to the *phantasia* (image) that appears to the agent. For example, in his discussion of anger, he states: "A kind of pleasure follows from this and also because people dwell in their minds on retaliating; then the image [*phantasia*] that occurs creates pleasure, as in the case of dreams." (Rhet. 1378b.8-10) Similarly, shame "is imagination [*phantasia*] about a loss of reputation" (Rhet. 1384a.14). In other words, the passions consist in the production of a *phantasia* that already carries appraisal (pain or pleasure).

[15] In Jamie Dow's thorough analysis of the passions in the *Rhetoric*, he demonstrates this point clearly:

> In *Rhetoric* 2.2–11, six types of emotion are defined by Aristotle specifically as pains. Fear is defined as 'a kind of pain or disturbance from the appearance of approaching damaging or painful harm' (1382a21f.). Likewise, shame is 'a kind of pain or disturbance at bad things that will apparently bring disgrace' (1383b12–14), and pity is 'a kind of pain at' undeserved suffering (1385b13f.). Indignation is pain at the success of the undeserving (1386b9–11); envy and 'emulation' are kinds of pain felt in response to the success of one's equal, the difference between them being whether the pain is felt at the other person's success or at one's own non-attainment of that success (1386b18–21, 1387b23–5; 1388a31–8). Correspondingly, Aristotle clearly recognizes certain emotions as pleasures. The person disposed to pity will feel two other (unnamed) emotions—pleasure at deserved suffering, and pleasure at deserved success. Similarly, the person prone to envy will also be prone to an emotion that is pleasure at the misfortune of their equals, for which English has no

of the passions shifts to their participation in the virtues and vice. Nonetheless, he lists similar passions and still insists they are constituted by pleasure or pain (NE 1105b.21–23).

As I have shown above, Aristotle considers the passions movements of the faculty of desire (or appetite), which resides in the nonrational part of the soul. The nonrational part of the soul is further divided into two faculties: one faculty that does not need the participation of reason at all (vegetative) and one that does "share in reason in a way" (NE 1102b.14), namely, the faculty of desire. That the faculty of desire, and consequently the passions, 'share in reason' means, to Aristotle, that the movements produced by this faculty may obey reason's command and be "apt to listen as one does to one's father" (NE 1103a.5) or they may conflict with reason's command (NE 1102b.16-18). Aristotle frequently points to these two possible trajectories throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics*. For example, to illustrate the fact that the passions may conflict with reason, his derogatory caricature of youth includes the comment that they are "disposed to follow the passions" (NE 1095a.5). This is also true of those lacking self-restraint, whom he places in contrast to those "who fashion their longings in accord with reason and act accordingly" (NE 1095a.10-11), and the poorly educated masses, who "pursue the pleasures that are theirs, together with what gives rise to those pleasures, and they avoid

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> name but Aristotle calls *epichairekakia* and German speakers call *Schadenfreude*. (*Passions and Persuasion in Aristotle's Rhetoric* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015], p. 150)
>
> Apparent exceptions are explained simply as Aristotle's attention shifting from the emotion type to the associated disposition...or as Aristotle's having included in his list some non-emotions because of their rhetorical importance in blocking or calming other states that are emotions. (Ibid, p. 155)

the opposing pains" (NE 1179b.13-15). In these passages, Aristotle understands those who live fully according to their passions as acting irrationally, and displaying limited capabilities to control their desires for immediate pleasures.[16] On the other hand, the idea that passions may be submissive to reason, and ideally are so submissive, is clearly acknowledged throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics* in Aristotle's very definition of the virtues.

Aristotle did not agree with the popular definition of virtue as a certain 'dispassionate' or 'calm' state. Instead, he notes, "the virtue of one's character seems in many respects to be closely bound up with the passions" (NE 1178a.15) in that the virtues consist of passions that produce the best actions, according to the deliverances of reason (NE 1104b.27-29). Nonetheless, Aristotle also wants to establish firm boundaries between passions and virtues. In his discussion of what virtues are, he distinguishes three kinds of things in the soul: passions (πάθη - *pathe*), capacities (δυνάμεις - *dunameis*), and dispositions (ἕξεις - *hexeis*) (NE 1105b.20-21)—ultimately concluding that virtues are dispositions. He defines dispositions as "those things in reference to which we are in a good or bad state in relation to the passions" (NE 1105b.26-27). In this way, he is able to create a connection between them, while still maintaining their distinction:

> Neither the virtues nor the vices, then, are passions, because we are not said to be serious or base in reference to the passions but in reference to the virtues and vices, and because we are neither praised nor blamed in reference to the passions simply (for neither he who is afraid nor he who is

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[16] In its extreme manifestations, the passions can restrict one's knowledge to act correctly, such as what happens to the madman and the drunk (NE 1147a.10-15), but this is not to say that their agency is hijacked. Aristotle usually depicts the passions as simply corrupting reason's judgment. To this effect, Aristotle describes various degrees of dominance of the passions of the deliberations of reason. The imperfect self-controlled, for example, follow their passions, but not "without limit" (NE 1151a.1-5).

> angry is praised, nor is he who is simply angry blamed, but only he who is such in a certain way). Rather, it is in reference to the virtues and vices that we are praised or blamed. Further, we are angry and afraid in the absence of choice, but the virtues are certain choices or not without choice. In addition to these considerations, in the case of the passions we are said to be moved; but in that of the virtues and vices, we are not said to be moved but rather to have a certain disposition. (NE 1105b.29-1106a.7)

First, Aristotle points out that what is commonly held up as praiseworthy or blameworthy in one's behavior is not the bare passion. It would be unlikely to ever see someone applauding someone's anger, or joy, or fear, completely out of context. Rather, anger is commended when it is experienced in the right measure, at the right object, for the right reason, and in the right circumstances (such as, for example, anger toward someone who has delivered a purposeful, and undeserved blow to their face).[17] On the flip side, blame is not attached to an emotion *simpliciter*, but to those that are experienced in an unmeasured way, at an inappropriate object, and in the wrong circumstances (such as excessive anger toward an accidental blow to one's face). A disposition toward passions that are felt within these particular circumstances and which produce particular actions are called virtues and vices.[18] Therefore, passions, out of the context of a specific object, circumstance, consistency, and measure cannot be virtues and vices.

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[17] Though Aristotle also notes that the virtuous person "seems to err more in the direction of the deficiency [of anger], since the gentle person is given not to revenge but rather to forgiveness." (NE 1126a.1-3)

[18] One is tempted to ask "how can the passive, involuntary, *pathe* be tamed in order for the virtuous agent to be consistently affected in the right ways?" L. A. Kosman has successfully undertaken the project of answering this project. According to Kosman, we need to rethink the initial denial that feelings can be chosen: "That denial arose, I think, from our attending to a description by Aristotle of passions without reference to the context of virtue and character in which they occur. But why should we not be prepared to say that a person of steadfast and cultivated virtue who exhibits appropriate feelings in circumstances which he understands correctly and in which those are precisely the feelings which he would want to exhibit, taking into account the entire fabric of his desires, goals, plans, and hopes for himself–why should we not be prepared to say that such a person has chosen those

Second, Aristotle taps into the very definition of *pathos* to argue that passions cannot be virtues or vices, namely, that they cannot be understood as reactions elicited by choice for they overcome the soul in response to stimuli *without rational deliberation's prior consent*. Choice, for Aristotle, is desire "marked by deliberation" (NE 1139a.23-24) and the choice involved in actions produced by virtue is correct desire and right deliberation (NE 1139a.25). This point, then, bleeds into his previous point, for, as Aristotle makes clear in his discussion of choice, it is on the assumption of choice that we offer praise or blame to moral agents.[19] Unlike virtue and vice, however, the mere experience of passions cannot be chosen.[20] In my discussion of shame, in particular, I will come back to Aristotle's arguments against the identification of passions and virtue.

Despite his skepticism regarding passions as virtues, Aristotle holds some passions in high regard. Among these, there is shame, which is the topic of the next section.

B. Aristotle on Shame

Before assessing Aristotle's views on shame, I must say something about the Greek terms he uses to refer to this emotion. Aristotle uses two key terms: *aidos* (αἰδώς),

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feelings?...choice for him is not a concept having to do with individual moments in an agent's life, nor with individual single actions, but with the practices of that life within the larger context of the character and intentions of a moral subject, ultimately within the context of what it has become fashionable to call one's life plan." (Kosman, 114-115)

[19] "praise or blame are dependent on whether the people in question are compelled or not to act as they do" (NE 1110a.35-36)

[20] That virtues and vices are the product of choice is important to Aristotle. It is choice and deliberation that leads the agent toward happiness, for to theorize that the greatest end of human life is ultimately up to divine election or chance "would be excessively discordant" (1099b.20) Therefore, "the objects of deliberation and choice are the means conducive to the end, actions pertaining to these latter would accord with choice and be voluntary. And the activities of the virtues pertain to these means. Virtue too, then, is up to us, and similarly vice is as well." (1113b.1-10) For this reason, Aristotle cannot accept that passions are virtues and vices.

which is generally translated as the noun 'shame,' and *aischune* (αἰσχύνη), which can be translated as either 'shame' or 'shameful.' Later in this section, I will pay closer attention to the kind of shame that Aristotle attributes to each term. For now, I will focus on how well these terms map onto the English term.[21] Some commentators have specifically noted the difficulties in perfectly fitting modern anglophone conceptions of shame onto *aidos*. Douglas Cairns, for example, in his thorough survey of *aidos* in ancient Greek literature, concludes that "*Aidos* is not shame."[22] Some of the ways he distinguishes the two terms is by arguing that 1) *aidos* has a more positive connotation than shame, even being listed as a virtue by some Greek thinkers; 2) *aidos* connotes a closer relation to honor, especially in reciprocal arrangements with others; 3) *aidos* covers the feelings of both embarrassment and shame.[23] Nonetheless, Cairns also points to the terms' shared features: "The notion of the 'other' or the audience is common to both, both are

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[21] For a detailed analysis of the question of whether both *aiskhune* and *aidos* can be considered a *pathos* in Aristotle's work, see Douglas Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) and David Konstan, "Shame in Ancient Greece" in *Social Research* Vol. 70, No 4 (winter, 2003): 1031-1060. While Cairns considers it uncontroversial that *aiskhune* and *aidos* are *pathe*, Konstan considers the answer less straightforward: "For while *pathos* often approximates the English 'emotion', it can have a much wider extension. What is more, precisely in those passages where Aristotle identifies *aidos* as a *pathos*, it is clear that he is using *pathos* in the broad sense to include a variety of psychological states. Thus, in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1220b37-12a12) we find included under the *pathe*, along with *aidos*, such items as courage, moderation, justness, and liberality, which Aristotle normally treats as virtues….Indeed, already in antiquity the scholar Alexander of Aprhodisias (or someone writing in his name), commenting on Aristotle's discussions wondered whether *aidos* could properly be classified as a *pathos*." Konstan, 1037.

[22] Douglas Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 14.

[23] For Cairns, in accordance with Greek values, there simply was no difference between these emotions "significant enough to warrant the development of distinct labels." *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature,* p. 7-8. Nonetheless, this is true of most languages today as well. For example, in Portuguese and Spanish, shame and embarrassment are referred to by the words 'vergonha' and 'verguenza,' respectively.

associated with the eyes and visibility, they share the characteristic symptom of blushing, and both may be attended by typical behaviour patterns such as averting the gaze or seeking to hide oneself."[24] For the purposes of this analysis, I consider this overlap sufficient. Moreover, it is debatable whether Cairns is entirely right concerning his assumptions or claims about the semantic range of our English word 'shame,' for in many cases he mentions, the word 'shame' *does* in fact convey what he says it does not, such as how we frequently use shame in relation to honor in certain cultures.[25]

General Definitions

Aristotle's observations on shame harken back to the *Rhetoric*, one of his earlier works, where it (and some forms of magnanimity, as we will see in the next section) features prominently in his treatment of the passions. Knowledge of the passions, for Aristotle, is central in the development of rhetorical techniques for persuading an

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[24] Idem, pp. 14-15.

[25] Interestingly, Cairns suggests that, when taking into account the greater ancient Greek culture and values, it is almost impossible to conduct research on *aidos* without including research on honor, both due to the closeness of the phenomena and the two possible translations for the verbal form *aideomai*:

> a study of *aidos* becomes a study in Greek values. And…the study of *aidos* becomes a study in Greek values of honour, for the notion of honour is never far away from the evaluation that is constitutive of *aidos*. It is the concept of honour, indeed, which explains possibly the most unusual feature of the usage of *aidos* and its verb, *aideomai*, to which we have already alluded. That *aidos* covers both shame and embarrassment is easily explained; even in English we see the similarity between the two emotions, and they may even, in some contexts, be interchangeable. Less readily explicable to the ordinary reader of early Greek is the fact that there exist two stock translations of *aidos*, two uses of the verb *aideomai* governing the accusative case: 'I feel shame before…' and 'I respect'. Clearly, though, the notions of shame and respect are not totally unrelated; to feel inhibitory shame (*aidos* is always prospective and inhibitory in the earliest authors) is to picture oneself as losing honour, while to show respect is to recognize the honour of another…it is not often recognized that in the concept of *aidos* we have an implicit recognition of the ways in which the honour of self is inextricably bound up with that of others. (p. 13)

My agreement with Cairns is evident in my choice of emotions covered in this dissertation.

audience.[26] By eliciting the right kind of passions in the audience, the speaker is "necessarily persuasive to the hearers" (Rhet. II.6 1378a.6). Shame, then, is listed among the passions Aristotle considers useful in the study of rhetoric, either as a passion the speaker should work to elicit or to avoid eliciting, so as to obtain the public's sympathy. He lays out these passions in oppositional pairs: anger (ὀργή) and calmness (πρᾳότης), friendly feeling (φιλία) and enmity (ἔχθρα)/hate (μισεῖν), fear (Φόβος) and confidence (θάρσος), shame (αἰσχύνη) and shamelessness (ἀναισχυντία), kindliness (χάρις) and unkindliness (αχαριστια), pity (ἔλεος) and being indignant (νεμεσσᾶ), envy (φθόνος) and emulation (ζῆλος).

In his specific treatment of shame and shamelessness, Aristotle defines shame (αἰσχύνη) as "a sort of pain and agitation concerning the class of evils, whether present or past or future, that seem to bring a person into disrespect, and [let] shamelessness [be defined as] a belittling about these same things" (Rhet. II.6 1383b.2). Shame, in other words, is a painful feeling for the exposure of shameful deficiencies that leads to disrepute. Here Aristotle avoids categorizing shame as a kind of fear so that he can include pain for the *past* and *present* evil under shame's purview (in the *Rhetoric,* fear is "a sort of pain and agitation derived from the imagination of a *future* destructive or painful evil" Rhet. II.5 1382a.1; also see NE 1115a.2). However, we will see that in the

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[26] For him, there are three modes of persuasion: 1) showcasing the character (*ethos*) of the speaker in a favorable light; 2) arousing passions (*pathos*) in the audience, and 3) using logical arguments (*logos*) to show the truth of what is being said. Though "character is almost, so to speak, the most authoritative form of persuasion" (Rhet. I.2 1356a.4), "[There is persuasion] through the hearers when they are led to feel emotion [*pathos*] by the speech;" So, a good rhetorician is one who can truly understand character and virtues, logic, and emotions, "what each of the emotions is and what are its qualities and from what it comes to be and how" (Rhet. I.2 1356a.5).

Nicomachean Ethics he describes it as a kind of fear.[27] He cites several deeds that are generally considered shameful, among which are "throwing away a shield or fleeing in battle," "refusing to pay back a deposit," and "having sexual relations with those with whom one should not or where one should not or when one should not" (Rhet. II.6 1383a.3-4). Mainly, he notes, people are ashamed of vices of character, since deficiencies that "seem to be one's own fault" are more shameful (Rhet. II.6 1384a.12).[28]

An essential part of shame, according to Aristotle's definition above, is the presence of an audience before whom one feels shame—after all, without an audience, there is no sense to the idea of 'exposure.' In agreement with a famous proverb, Aristotle connects shame with that which is "in the eyes," or exposed to the eyes of "those who are going to be with them and those watching them" (Rhet. II.6 1384a.18).[29] However, he recognizes, not *every* audience necessarily elicits shame:

> Since shame is imagination (φᾰντᾰσῐ́ᾱ) about a loss of reputation and for its own sake, not for its results, and since no one cares about reputation [in the abstract] but on account of those who hold an opinion of him, necessarily a person feels shame toward those whose opinion he takes account of. He takes account of those who admire him and whom he admires and by whom he wishes to be admired and those to whose rank he aspires and those whose opinions he does not despise. (Rhet. II.6 1384a.14-15)

For Aristotle, shame stems from care for one's reputation and one's reputation is

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[27] As we will see in chapter three, Aquinas solves this problem by describing shame as always regarding the *future* disrepute, even if the wrongful act committed is in the past or present.
[28] Konstan notes that given Aristotle's inclusion of three elements that prompt the feeling of shame—"a particular act (throwing away one's shield in battle); the fault of character that is revealed by the act (cowardice); and the disgrace or loss of esteem before the community at large"—Aristotle bridges our contemporary distinctions between guilt and shame. (Konstan, p. 1043)
[29] Though the sight of the audience toward the shameful act is a central inducer of shame, so is their ability to talk and, therefore, to rational thought, which is why he excludes the possibility of shame before babies and "small animals." (Rhet. II.6 1384b.23)

most valuable in the mind of those who one admires.[30] Furthermore, there are other groups of people before whom one is likely to feel shame, such as a) those who may gossip about the shameful act to those whom one admires; b) those "not liable to the same charge" and c) those "not inclined to be forgiving to people who have clearly made a mistake" (Rhet. II.6 1384b.19). Aristotle also notes that one can feel shame not only of their own disgrace, but of the disgrace of any person with whom they have "some tie of kinship," even of deceased ancestors (Rhet. II.6 1385a.25). According to the passage above, the pain of shame arises not based on the potential loss of material goods that might come from a poor reputation, but based on the value the person puts on good reputation itself, for the intrinsic value of moral upstanding before the community.[31] Also, the use of the term *phantasia* in the passage contributes to Aristotle's theory defended elsewhere that a physically present audience is not required for the emergence of shame, but that both the close approximation of an audience[32] or even the mere imagination of an audience is sufficient for the passion to emerge. More on this aspect of shame below.

Finally, Aristotle notes that the young are more sensitive to shame "for they have been educated only by convention and do not yet understand other fine things" (Rhet.

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[30] In fact, Aristotle reserves a different category for those who care for *anyone's* opinion—the bashful (EE 3.7 1233b.26-29; NE 1108a.30-35).

[31] Martha Nussbaum notes that "A great merit of the Aristotelian *polis* is...the centrality in it of character-friendship, with its capacity for refining self-criticism through emulation and the sense of shame." in "Shame, separateness, and political unity: Aristotle's criticism of Plato" in Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), p. 427.

[32] "if [these people] were either seeing…or if such persons are nearby or are going to learn of it." (Rhet. II.6 1384b.24)

II.12 1389a.10).[33] On the other hand, the elderly "are more shameless than sensitive to shame" for "they think little of their reputation" (Rhet. II.13 1390a.10). These qualifications combine the two principal components of shame for Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*: moral deficiencies and public exposure. The youth is more prone to shame because they do not yet have the correct motivation to avoid moral deficiencies, i.e. love for the noble, and the elderly are not prone to shame because they no longer care about public exposure. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle does next to nothing to apply his exposition of the characteristics of shame to the art of public speaking. Perhaps the student was expected to apply such knowledge as he saw fit, and perhaps Aristotle did not take the time to edit the notes accordingly. Whatever the case, it seems evident that knowledge of the appropriate audience for the emergence of shame, as well as the ideal age for inciting shame, is useful information for those occasionally inclined to use public shame tactics of persuasion. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle gears his comments about shame to moral education.

Shame as a virtue

Most of what Aristotle has to say about shame in the *Nicomachean Ethics* relates to its similarities and distinctions to virtue. This is important to Aristotle because he raises the topic of shame within the context of his list of moral virtues. Shame appears to be a virtue because it is a mean between two vicious extremes—the "bashful"

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[33] Here Aristotle seems to be referring to shame felt prior to wrongdoing, which prevents the young person from committing the act—what we will call prospective shame. As we will see in more detail below, he argues that shame is a less noble motivation for the avoidance of an evil act, virtuous character being the noblest.

(*cataplex*)[34], who are ashamed of everything, and the “shameless” (*anaiskhuntos*), who are ashamed of nothing. According to Aristotle, this can confuse some people, who might be led to consider it a virtue. Though he is clear it is not a virtue, he admits it comes pretty close:

> There are also means in the passions and concerning the passions. For a sense of shame [*aidos*] is not a virtue, but he who [has a sense of shame] [*aidemon*] is praised: in these things too there is one person said to be in the middle, another who is in excess, like the [bashful] person [*cataplex*] who feels shame in everything [*panta aidoumenos*]. He who is deficient in this or is generally ashamed of nothing is shameless [*anaiskhuntos*], whereas he who is in the middle is bashful. (NE 1108a.32-1108b.1)

As opposed to other passions, and similar to the virtues, it would seem like the very term ‘shame’ invariably refers to a good trait.[35] However, as a passion, there are two things that Aristotle thinks are lacking in shame, and which prevent him from listing it among the virtues. First, shame is not voluntary. As is the case with other passions, the human agent is incapable of *choosing* to feel shame, or choosing *not to*. Second, and relatedly, the nature of shame is that of a *pathos*, not a disposition, or *hexis*, which is the nature of virtues.[36] His argument for shame as a passion and not a disposition is clearest in the

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[34] According to Heribertus Kirstanto, the defect in *cataplex* comes from the fact that it makes the person “paralysed and…afraid of trying to do something due to the risk of making errors that could eventually bring ill-repute. In other words, an excessive amount of inhibitory *aidos* may make one unable to act at all.” Kirstanto, p. 25. He owes this more detailed interpretation to a passage in *Magna Moralia* 1.29.1193a5-7: “The bashful man (*cataplex*) is afraid to say or do anything before anybody (for such a man is incapacitated for action, who is bashful about everything).”

[35] This cannot be said about other passions. The term ‘fear,’ for example, cannot, by itself, be used to name a praiseworthy characteristic. It must always be placed within a particular context (‘fear of danger’ or ‘fear of poverty’). Shame, on the other hand, has a particular context embedded in its very definition: pain of evil that brings upon disrepute. In this way, it resembles a virtue such as courage, which is confidence to face dangers that lead to a noble death. In both cases, there is the feeling (*pain/fear* and *confidence*, respectively) toward an appraisal (*shameful evil* and *noble death*, respectively).

[36] As explained above, Aristotle made a clear distinction between *hexei* and *pathe*, where he defines *hexei* as the things in reference to which we are in a good or bad state in relation to the *pathe* (NE

following passage:

> It is not fitting to speak about a sense of shame as a particular virtue, for it seems more like a passion than a characteristic [or disposition]. It is defined, at any rate, as a certain fear of disrepute, and it turns out to resemble the fear of terrible things, for those who feel shame blush and those who fear death turn pale. Both, then, appear in some way to be bodily, which seems to be more a mark of a passion than of a characteristic [disposition]. (NE 1128b.10-16)

The passage above points to an important aspect of Aristotle's definition of shame. As I anticipated, here Aristotle is inclined to define shame as a kind of fear. More specifically, 'fear of disrepute.'[37] This has led some commentators to opine that shame, for Aristotle, is *merely* a passion that is felt as a reaction to public opinion and reproach. This view has emphasized the non-virtuous nature of shame as an emotion that is not necessarily concerned with the good or the noble, but with one's reputation. This does not seem to be Aristotle's opinion. For starters, nowhere in the text does he consider shame's definition as 'fear of disrepute' in general, or its reliance on public opinion more

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1105b.25-27). Though passions are part of the description of virtues and vices, they cannot be understood themselves as virtues and vices.

[37] This idea is already implicit in his description of courage in NE 1115a.13-15: "For some things one even ought to fear, and it is noble to do so and shameful not to—for example, disrepute, since he who fears this is decent and bashful, whereas he who does not is shameless." Nonetheless, one cannot help but see an overlap between pain and fear. As we have seen, Aristotle describes all *pathe* in terms of pain or pleasure and fear is, after all, painful. Regarding the identification of shame with pain or pleasure, commentators have held different positions. Among the commentators who suggest that it is pain, rather than pleasure, that drives shame is Nicholas Higgins, who takes prospective shame to be the "painful guide" that leads to virtue ("Shame on you: The Virtuous Use of Shame in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics" in *Expositions* [online] 9.2 [2015]: 2) and Howard Curzer, who notes that shame is "internalized punishment" and it is fear of this pain that leads people to perform virtuous acts (*Aristotle and the Virtues* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2012], p. 337). On the other hand, Douglas Cairns describes shame in terms of both pleasure and pain "in so far as it belongs with the tendency to regard *to kalon* [the noble] as truly pleasant (NE 1179b.15), and so presumably involves a tendency to find the *aischron* painful." (Cairns, p. 424) For an echo of Cairns position, see Marta Jimenez, "The Virtues of Shame: Aristotle on the Positive Role of Shame in Moral Development." PhD diss. (University of Toronto, 2011).

specifically, one of the reasons for denying its status as a virtue. Furthermore, if we take Aristotle's definition of shame in the *Rhetoric* into consideration—"a certain pain or agitation over bad deeds, present, past, or future that appear to bring one into disrepute" (Rhet. II.6 1383b.15)—the focus is on the internal moral compass that takes the nervous system into overdrive in the face of one's own negative self-evaluation that might be reflected in the public eye. More on this last point below.

Following this passage, Aristotle presents a third reason to disregard shame as a virtue, namely, its qualified praiseworthiness: "But this passion is appropriate, not to every age but to the young; for we suppose that the young ought to be [prone to shame] [*aidemon*] because the many errors they make, in living by passion, are checked by a sense of shame [*aidos*]" (NE 1128b.16-19). The praiseworthiness of shame hinges on the maturity of the person who feels it. If in the *Rhetoric* the young are more prone to shame due to their restricted exposure only to social conventions, here it is because they commit many mistakes. For them, then, shame is praiseworthy given, minimally, an awareness of the blameworthiness of their act and susceptibility to the criticism and advice of others about what is truly noble. Both of these indications, it seems clear, are necessary characteristics of those who are going through the process of character formation.[38]

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[38] In al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, as we will see in the following chapters, it is clear that pride is the deterrer of appropriate shame, since the proud person lacks this susceptibility. In Aristotle, however, we do not find a clear contrast to the shameful person, in the same sense. The closest he seems to get is the 'obstinate,' who he describes as "inclined to abide by their opinion...are not persuadable, when they take hold of given desires, and in fact many of them are led by pleasures" (NE 1151b.5-12). On this, Konstan notes: "It is easy to construct an emotion that is contrary to shame as Aristotle conceives it: for example, one might define it as 'pleasure concerning those goods that are perceived to lead to a good reputation or approval.' Such a sentiment we might well label something like 'pride.' Many modern investigators, in fact, couple shame and pride as opposites. Thus, Donald Nathanson (1992: 86) writes: 'Shame, of course, is the polar opposite of pride.' Classical Greek, however, seems to lack

Maximally, shame may be evidence that the person was *aiming* at the noble and honorable, but either was not able to properly discern the noble choice—for lack of moral education or for lack of practical wisdom—or did not realize it in time to act accordingly.

That shame can be praiseworthy in the young is also clear from Aristotle's quick comment that the young live by passion. In this context, he is likely referring to the youth's strong orientation toward that which brings pleasure and avoids pain, as well as their untrained ability to deliberate on future consequences to particular acts. Consequently, the pleasure sought and the pain avoided do not pass through the filter of virtuous deliberating capacities. Because they are led by these disordered appetites, they are in need of a passion that can guide them toward what is good and noble or keep them away from the shameful. This, then, is the role of shame. Though shame is also a passion, it is a passion with a few virtuous characteristics, as we have seen.

It is also important to note here that Aristotle makes a clear distinction between young people who have a sense of shame, and those who do not. One feature of passions that we have seen in the first section of this chapter and that deterred Aristotle from considering them virtues is the fact that, as a passion, it cannot be a disposition. Nevertheless, the passage above seems to give evidence for shame as a disposition. If there are some young people whose character is inclined to feel shame and others whose character are not, then it seems that shame can be distinguished from other passions as

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a basic emotion term corresponding to a positive sense of pride, though the negative sentiment of arrogance is well attested (for example, in the form of hubris)." (Konstan, p. 1042) As we will see, Aristotle does not consider the magnanimous person a contrast to the shameful person, one reason being that the former has developed a virtue while the latter expresses a passion.

being susceptible to the stability that we see in virtuous or vicious dispositions.[39] On the possibility of shame being a disposition, there is more to Aristotle's views than appears on the surface.

In his study of *aidos* in Aristotle's works, Cairns suggests three ways we refer to shame in our common parlance. First, there is the 'occurence' of shame, which is the short-lived burst of discomfort and fear of reproach following the perception of an audience to a wrongdoing, evidenced in a comment such as 'she is feeling ashamed.' Second, there is the kind of shame that does not refer to a momentary occurrence of shame, but to a sort of disposition to shame toward a particular set of actions. That is, x feels shame in every circumstance c—a particular external circumstance which tends to give rise to the emotion in x. This is the kind of disposition Cairns calls 'disposition of the first order.' Third, there is the shame that we refer to when we say something like 'she is a modest/easily ashamed person' or, contrariwise, 'he is a shameless person.' In this case, we are not referring to a mere occurrent emotion nor to a first order disposition, but to an internal disposition toward (or away from) the emotion of shame, what Cairns calls 'second-order' disposition.[40]

According to Cairns, Aristotle seemingly makes room for this distinction in his differentiation between *pathe* (passions), *dunameis* (capacities), and *hexeis* (dispositions). The *pathe* correspond to our understanding of occurrent emotions and his *hexeis*, manifested as either virtues or vices, map on to our understanding of second-order

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[39] I think there is also room to understand other passions as highly dispositional, such as envy and fear, due to anecdotal evidence that many people are disposed to feel these passions more than others.
[40] Cairns, p. 11.

dispositions. As we have seen, Aristotle characterizes *aidos* as a *pathos*, but not a *hexis*. This, Cairns argues, is because, for Aristotle, there is no such thing as a disposition that is neither entirely excellent or entirely deficient.[41] Because Aristotle admits of no middle ground for second-order dispositions that are neither virtues nor vices[42], what, then, of the intuition that shamefulness is a real disposition? Or, minimally, of the case of a 'first-order disposition' toward shame?

Cairns finds the answer to these questions in Aristotle's use of *dunamis*. *Dunamis*, for Aristotle, is "the potentiality which is actualized in the change" or "capacities for the actualization of activities or experiences."[43] What, exactly, does this mean? Is it simply the potentiality to experience a passion, one that all humans have from birth? Is it "some form of innate capacity to manifest a particular emotion to a particular degree"? Or a developed and acquired capacity to be disposed toward a particular emotion? Cairns quotes an important passage from the *Eudemian Ethics*, where the answer seems clear:

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[41] Cairns further criticizes Aristotle's seeming obliviousness to an intermediate state between excellent dispositions (*aretai*) and deficient dispositions (*kakiai*) in the following passage: "all *hexeis* are either perfections, and so *aretai*, or departures from perfection, and so *kakiai*; there is no third possibility, no intermediate stage between the two. Thus, when we read the ethical treatises and recognize that the excellences of character constitute a sub-class of *hexeis* of character, we need to guard against the assumption that *hexeis* of character can cover evaluatively significant dispositions which are neither *aretai* nor *kakiai*; if something is neither an *arete* nor a *kakia*, then it is not a *hexis*." (Cairns, p. 399)
[42] Cairns' most convincing example is that of 'timidity', which is the disposition to experience fear more than usual: "but the corresponding *hexis* in Aristotle's scheme is not timidity but cowardice, and one can be timid without being a coward. Cowardice, one of a trio of *hexeis* which involve right and wrong ways of being disposed to fear, is further removed from the simple disposition to experience fear that is timidity, and, although both may be defects of character, cowardice signifies, in a way which timidity does not, a failure to organize one's responses to fear-inducing situations in accordance with one's appreciation of the nature of the good life. Second-order dispositions, therefore, are not to be identified wholesale with Aristotelian *hexeis*, but presuppose a rather different, less teleological way of classifying traits of character." (Cairns, p. 401)
[43] Cairns, p. 401.

> We must say, then, in accordance with what in the soul characters become of a given kind. They do so in accordance with the *dunameis* [capacities] for feelings [*pathmata*], according to which people are described as *pathetikoi*, and in accordance with the *hexeis*, according to which people are said to be in a certain condition with respect to those feelings, by virtue of their experiencing them in a certain way or being unaffected [*apatheis*]. There follows the division, found in the finished discussions [?], of the *pathemata*, the *dunameis*, and the *hexeis*. By *pathe* I mean such things as *thumos*, fear, *aidos*, and appetite, in general all those things which are in themselves usually attended by perceptual pleasure or pain. With respect to these there is no quality, one just experiences them, but there is a quality in respect of *dunameis*. I mean by *dunameis* the things according to which those who actualize [i.e. those who possess the *dunameis* and manifest the affects] are described in terms of the *pathe*, as, for example, the irascible, insensitive, lustful, *aischuntelos*, or *anaischuntos*. *Hexeis* are what are responsible for the occurrence of these *pathe* in accordance with reason or otherwise, such as bravery, sophrosune, cowardice, licentiousness.[44]

This passage seems to suggest that *aidos* can be understood in terms of a passion (where it is simply *aidos*), but it can also be described as a *dunamis*. In the latter case, someone is said to be *aischuntelos*, that is, shameful or prone to feel a sense of shame. The contrary is also true: those who are prone to lack the feeling of shame for wrongdoing possess the *dumanis* of *anaischuntos*. Despite the clear association of shame with a kind of disposition, Cairns notices that the *Eudemian Ethics* is the only one of the triad of ethical works where Aristotle makes this assertion. Both the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Magna Moralia* describe *dunamis* simply as an "ability to manifest an emotion, rather than [a] tendency to manifest it to a significant degree."[45] Given the conflict, Cairns sides with the most cautious position, namely, that the *Eudemian Ethics* is Aristotle's earlier view that was modified in the later *Nicomachean Ethics* and, therefore, that later Aristotle

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[44] EE 1220b.6-20, in Cairns, p. 402.
[45] Cairns, p. 403.

did not accept the possibility of the passion of shame to be further developed into a first-order disposition under the nomenclature of *dumanis*. In conclusion, none of the categories that Aristotle creates (*passio*, *dunamis*, and *hexis*) are able to capture the dispositional kind of shame that is commonly accepted, and that Aristotle himself seems to perceive, and we are left only with the occurrent sense of shame.

Cairns' conclusion runs against the conclusion I had proposed upon analyzing Aristotle's language around shame in the youth. To recap, Aristotle's argument that some young people have shame and others do not, and that those who do are to be praised and those who do not are to be criticized, seemed to me to imply that shame (or the lack thereof) can be a disposition of the young, who are not fully virtuous. This conflict does not escape Cairns' analysis.[46] The reason for Aristotle's strong stance against the dispositionality of shame despite the conflicts it creates on other fronts seems rather senseless, at first glance. How hard could it be for him to allow for it in order to save the cohesiveness of his moral taxonomy and, why not, to account for the general public's (and even his) intuitions about the issue? Cairns gives a tentative response.

From very early on in literature on shame, a distinction has been made between prospective and retrospective shame, the former being the shame that is felt before committing wrongdoing, which in turn keeps the agent from performing the wrongdoing, and the latter being the shame that is felt after committing wrongdoing. Drawing on the theory that Aristotle does not make a clear grammatical distinction between prospective

[46] Cairns, p. 413. Cairns also notes that the fact that Aristotle calls the possessor of the mean of *aidos* an *aidemon*, "a dispositional term," furthers the confusion around the fact that Aristotle does not allow for *aidos* to be a disposition.

and retrospective shame[47], Cairns argues that Aristotle seems to hold that to have a propensity toward one kind of shame is to *necessarily* have a propensity to the other. Though Aristotle seems tempted to upgrade the value of prospective shame to a virtuous disposition because of its strong power to deter immoral actions and its indication of love for the good, he considers retrospective shame reprehensible since it entails wrongdoing—and "one who is so disposed as to experience distress with regard to conduct which is *aischron* is disposed to experience that distress whether the conduct is past, present, or future."[48] Cairns further argues that, though many ethicists would still, under such a description, consider shame a worthy and even desirable disposition to have, Aristotle includes among the virtues only those dispositions of the *perfectly* virtuous:

> Aristotle's idea, however, is perfect virtue, the possession of traits of character which preclude wrongdoing, and he is therefore right to oppose any suggestion that *aidos* could be, in his terms, an *arete*. Aristotelian *arete* involves disposition to choose the *kalon* for its own sake, whereas the disposition to experience *aidos* and *aischune*, Aristotle points out, implies that, on some occasions at least, one will have chosen the *aischron* rather than the *kalon*.[49]

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[47] In his analysis of *aiskhune* and *aidos* in the *Rhetoric*, Konstan also argues that "Aristotle's definition makes it clear that he draws no distinction between prospective or restrictive shame on the one hand, and retrospective or remorseful shame on the other...The emotion, as Aristotle understands it, is uniform; what varies is simply the timing of the perceived ills." (Konstan, p. 1040)

[48] Cairns, p. 417.

[49] Cairns, p. 418. In any case, Cairns notes, this view of *aidos* assumes a disposition and, therefore, Aristotle could have and should have given it a similar description as he does to self-restraint (*enkrateia*), which Aristotle does not consider an excellence, "but something mixed" (NE 1128b.34). Some commentators (see Agnes Callard, "Enkratēs Phronimos" in *Archiv für Geschichte Der Philosophie* 99, no. 1 [2017]: 6) interpret this 'mixture' as one between virtue and excessive appetites. Though Aristotle's offhand comment on *enkrateia* is made at the end of his section on shame, he does not clearly state that shame resembles self-restraint *in this way*. Cairns notes that both are "one step removed from the best possible state, a good thing in one way, but not the best *hexis* that is *arete*" (Cairns, p. 420) and, therefore, "*aidos*, once recognized, as it should be, as a *hexis*, could be a good *hexis* like *enkrateia*, a sort of mixture of excellence and defect which can even, on occasion, be seen as a qualified *arete*. *Aidos* would then be a defect relative to the perfection of true *arete*, but a relatively good *hexis* to have when compared with other, worse imperfections" (Cairns, p. 429).

That Aristotle only reserves the *créme de la créme* of dispositions for the fully virtuous is obvious in the rest of the passage in NE 1128b: "And we praise those of the young who [have a sense of shame], but no one would praise an older man because he is given to shame: we suppose that he ought not to do anything that incurs shame" (NE 1128b.19-22). The rationale for denying the praiseworthiness of shame in the older men is the same as for the fully virtuous person:

> Shame [*aiskhune*] does not belong to a decent person either, since it occurs in connection with base things (for one must not do such things). And whether these are shameful truly or shameful according to opinion makes no difference, for neither is to be done; as a result, one should not feel shame. And to be the sort of person to do anything shameful is the mark of someone base. But to be disposed to feel shame at doing any such thing, and on this account to suppose that one is decent, is strange. For shame [*aidos*] attaches to voluntary acts, but the decent person will never voluntarily do base things. (NE 1128b.22-30)

Both the older man and the fully virtuous should have no reason to feel shame, for they do not commit base acts of which to be ashamed. For Aristotle, it makes no difference whether the shame arises merely from what is shameful according to other people's opinion, or from a truly base action.[50] The virtuous person will not do any of these sorts of actions. If in the youth it makes sense to speak of a certain disposition to feel a sense of shame, this disposition, at some point, should cease to exist or at least become obsolete since the practice of wrongdoing has ceased. An analogy is to think of the toddler, of whom it is expected, and even developmentally appropriate, to have emotional breakdowns that can shock an entire supermarket, while the same behavior is

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[50] This comment gives further evidence to the point made earlier in this section that Aristotle does not consider shame to arise only from fear of others' opinion, but that it most likely consists in a "subjective awareness of the true character of one's own actions" (Cairns, p. 423)

wildly inappropriate and even ludicrous in a mature adult. Even more emphatically, to think of shame as a disposition of the *virtuous* is entirely problematic for Aristotle, for to feel shame there need be, of necessity, a base act and neither the older man nor the virtuous person would need a disposition that accounts for these. For him, the idea that shame can be a disposition in some and not in others, or in one stage of maturity and not in others, is further evidence of its lack of stability and, consequently, its dissimilarity with the nature of a virtue.

One exception to Aristotle's denial of shame in the virtuous is in the case of it existing in them *ex hypotheseos*:

> Yet a sense of shame [*aidos*] might be a decent thing on the basis of a given hypothesis: if a person were to do something base, he would feel shame [*aikchunesthai*]. But this does not pertain to the virtues [*aretai*]: if shamelessness [*anaiskhuntia*] (or not being ashamed [*aidos*] to do shameful things [*aischron*]) is base, it is still no more the case that he who is ashamed [*aiskhune*] to do these sorts of things is decent. (NE 1128b.30-34)

In this passage, Aristotle allows only for hypothetical shame, excluding any possibility of the actual feeling of shame in the virtuous. Some commentators, however, have been reticent to accept that Aristotle is criticizing *all* kinds of shame. Some have argued that it is clear that the shame he is characterizing as blameworthy in the elderly and in the fully virtuous is *retrospective* shame. Aristotle is referring to retrospective shame, the argument goes, because he states that the elderly and the virtuous would not commit a base action, and therefore would not feel shame—the emphasis being on actually *committing* the base act. *Prospective* shame, in turn, does not imply the actual doing of a base act, so it may be upheld in a positive light, which is what, they say, Aristotle does

when praising shame in the young.[51] For the proponents of this idea, one way to further this distinction in the text has been to notice a distinction between the Greek terms *aidos* and *aiskhune* and their cognates. Given that Aristotle seems to refer to *aidos* in a positive sense, while the term *aiskhune* receives a negative connotation, this distinction would help harmonize the text in an incredibly neat way.[52] Nonetheless, some have shown its incoherence when applied to other passages within the same chapter.[53] Especially

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[51] Nicholas Higgins, for example, states that "It is this prospective characteristic of shame that is perhaps the most important because it is rooted in knowledge of what is honorable and dishonorable, as well as the saliency of that knowledge to an as yet undone act. It is, if not prudence, the application of wise foresight. The individual knows what is right, knows that what is right is important to an upcoming action, and can rightly judge the wider impact of the action upon members of society." ("Shame on you: The Virtuous Use of Shame in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics" in *Expositions* [online] 9.2 [2015]: 4) Higgins seems to imply that prospective shame is the only one that presupposes these qualities and that retrospective shame arises solely on the basis of the public's opinion, though I argue that retrospective shame might also be a sign of one's knowledge of and love for the noble thing to do. Heribertus Kristanto also takes Aristotle to be making a "discernable distinction" between *aidos* and *aisckune*, the latter being the retrospective kind. See Kristanto, p. 24-25.

[52] Marta Jimenez, in her dissertation on shame in Aristotle, provides a helpful summary of the occurrences of these two terms in their positive and negative connotations: "it seems that Aristotle prefers to use *aidos* and its cognates when he is talking about a positive trait: 'we think young people should be *aidemones*' (1128b16-17), people are restrained from their errors by *aidos* (1128b17-18), 'we praise young people for being *aidemones*' (1128b19), '*aidos* may be said to be conditionally a good thing' (1128b29-30). Whereas instead he reserves *aischune* and its cognates for cases that fall short of something good: 'no one would praise an old person for being *aischuntelos*' (1128b20), 'an old person should not do anything that need cause *aischune*' (1128b21), '*aischune* is not even characteristic of a good person' (1128b22), it is absurd to think oneself good just because one is constituted as to *aischunesthai* when one does something base (1128b26-28), 'if shamelessness—i.e. not to *aideisthai* of doing base actions—is bad, that does not make it good *aischunesthai* of doing such actions.' (1128b31-33). Thus, and probably for this reason, in the arguments in NE 4.9 against the praiseworthiness of shame in older people (1128b19-21) and against the appropriateness of shame in virtuous people (1128b21-23), Aristotle is sometimes taken to be presupposing a distinction between two kinds of shame that could easily be correlated to our two terms: *aidos*-shame, which is forward-looking and praiseworthy; and *aischune*-shame, which is backward-looking and reprehensible." Jimenez, "The Virtues of Shame: Aristotle on the Positive Role of Shame in Moral Development," PhD diss. (University of Toronto, 2011): 140.

[53] Jimenez, for example, agrees that Aristotle seems to mostly criticize retrospective shame, but also shows that, in the first part of the passage on shame in the youth (NE 1128b.16-19), he refers to prospective shame, and clearly states that even this kind of shame is *only* praiseworthy in the youth. Textual analyses also point to Aristotle's indistinguishability of the Greek terms *aidos* and *aischune*: "The first noteworthy detail concerning the use of *aidos* and *aischune* in NE 4.9 is that Aristotle switches from one term to the other throughout the chapter as if he is talking about the same thing—

relevant here is Cairns' argument that I summarized earlier: for Aristotle, "susceptibility to prospective *aidos* entails a susceptibility to retrospective *aischune*," which is why "the mature adult, if he is 'decent', is no more prone to prospective *aidos* than to retrospective."[54] More importantly, however, prospective shame is only possible to those who *actually consider* doing something shameful. The virtuous are not tempted by shameful things, and so they are not held back from doing them by shame. It is the goodness of actions that attracts the virtuous to do well, not the fact that doing otherwise would be shameful.[55]

Shame in Moral Development

The very fact that Aristotle takes up the amount of space that he does to clarify why he does not think shame is a virtue showcases how difficult it is to ignore this connection in common moral intuitions. Though not a virtue in Aristotle's sense of the

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from talking about *aidos* (1128b10, translated by Ross as 'shame') to talking about *hoi aischunomenoi* (1128b13, 'people who feel disgraced'), and then tracking back to *tous aidemonas* (1128b19, 'people prone to shame'), and again switching to the terms *aischuntelos* (1128b20, 'prone to disgrace') and *aischune* (1128b21, 'sense of disgrace'), etc." (Jimenez, "Aristotle on Becoming Virtuous by Doing Virtuous Actions": 138) Therefore, she concludes "that Aristotle does not draw a sharp line between the two terms, and his arguments do not turn on this terminological distinction; rather that his arguments are about shame in general, even if they focus on different aspects of the emotion." (Idem, 142) Higgins takes a different position, stating that, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle "uses this broad form [*aischune*] to indicate the retrospective feeling of shame which arises after the action. Such interpretation is echoed by others, for Cairns notes that 'in the present passage (1158b10–35) *aischune* is used in an exclusively retrospective sense.'" (Higgins, 6). This clear-cut distinction between the terms helps Higgins argue that it is only prospective shame that serves a constructive purpose in virtue development. Though Higgins takes Cairns to be agreeing with his interpretation, he does so only in part. As I have pointed to previously, Cairns acknowledges Aristotle's distinction between retrospective and prospective shame with his uses of *aidos* and *aischune* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, however, he also argues that the philosopher considers shame a broad emotion that encompasses both prospective and retrospective fear of reproach, which is why he cannot consider it a virtue. (Cairns, p. 416)

[54] Cairns, p. 416.

[55] Thanks to David Decosimo for bringing this to my attention.

term, some commentators have shown its crucial role in the life of the learner of virtue. Through an analysis of several passages in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Marta Jimenez has argued that shame is the best candidate for bridging "the moral upbringing gap." To recap, the moral upbringing gap is that which Aristotle believes exists between the virtuous actions of the learners and the actions of the truly virtuous. She shows how Aristotle considers shame a passion that "enables learners to perform virtuous actions for the sake of the noble, and to exercise thus the kinds of motivational and cognitive tendencies that, once integrated and perfected, will constitute virtue."[56] In other words, Jimenez points to shame's character as a 'bridge' between the actions of the not-yet-virtuous (who act based on the inclinations of their passions) and the fully virtuous (who act on the basis of their virtuous dispositions).[57] To understand her argument, which I fully endorse, we must look to Aristotle's discussion of the virtue of courage.

In his observations on courage, Aristotle starts describing people who are not courageous in the same sense as the virtuous are courageous, but who possess a semblance of courage. One of these semblances arises "through virtue, that is, through a sense of shame and longing for what is noble (since it is for honor) and through avoiding reproach, since it is shameful" (NE 1116a.27-29). For Aristotle, "shame-courage" aims at that which is noble. Despite the lower moral status of this kind of courage, it is the

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[56] Jimenez, "Aristotle on Becoming Virtuous by Doing Virtuous Actions": 133.
[57] Jimenez has several fascinating things to say about this work of 'middle path' that shame does. For instance, she argues that "Aristotle has good reasons to maintain a conception of shame as an emotion (*pathos*) and not a disposition (*hexis*), since shame has to be available to learners of virtue, who (by definition) do not yet have stable virtuous dispositions of character." "Aristotle on Becoming Virtuous by Doing Virtuous Actions":134.

noblest kind of non-virtuous courage[58] for it requires a nobler motivation than, say, courageous acts that are motivated by fear of punishment (NE 1116a.36-1116b.2), experience (NE 1116b.4-19), desire (NE 1116b.34-1117a.2), revenge (NE 1117a.6-9), hope (NE 1117a.10-18), or ignorance (NE 1117a.18-27). Those who perform courageous acts that are compelled by one's rulers and, therefore, are motivated by fear of punishment, Aristotle notes derisively, "do what they do not through a sense of shame but on account of fear, and because they are fleeing not what is shameful but what is painful to them" (NE 1116a.31-33). Aristotle had anticipated another aspect of the noble character of shame in NE 1115a.1-5, where he is describing the various things that one may fear, but that are not the kinds of fear related to the virtue of courage. Among these objects of fear is disgrace:

> It is true then that we fear all evil things, for example, disgrace, poverty, disease, lack of friends, death; but it is not thought that Courage is related to all these things, for there are some evils which it is right and noble [*kalon*] to fear and base not to fear, for instance, disgrace. One who fears disgrace is an honorable man, with a due sense of shame [*aidemon*]; one who does not fear it is shameless [*anaiskuntos*]: though some people apply the term courageous to such a man by analogy, because he bears some resemblance to the courageous man in that the courageous man also is a fearless person. (NE 1115a.3-4)

For Aristotle here, disgrace is a noble object of fear and, therefore, those who fear it are honorable. In fact, to lack fear of disgrace is a serious defect. What does this term, 'noble' that stands for what appears both as the aim of the shameful and the character of fear of disgrace, denote for Aristotle? The noble (καλόν - *kalon*)—is better described in

[58] Perhaps courage displayed by the continent, who do not yet have the virtuous passions, but have intentions toward the noble and semi-stable virtuous acts.

the *Rhetoric*, where Aristotle notes that "*kalon* describes whatever, through being chosen itself, is praiseworthy or whatever, through being good [*agathon*], is pleasant because it is good. If this, then, is the *kalon*, then virtue is necessarily *kalon*; for it is praiseworthy because of being good [*agathon*]" (Rhet. 1366a.3). Aristotle frequently contrasts the *kalon* (noble) and *aiskron* (shameful) in his ethical treatises.[59] In other words, the agents who feel shame are praiseworthy, in this context, because: 1) it betrays their desire or love for the good (NE 1116a.27-29)[60] and 2) fear of something that merits being feared, disgrace (NE 1115a.3-4).

By describing shame-courage as arising 'through virtue' in NE 1116a.27-29, Aristotle seems to undermine his general argument in this book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: that the kind of courageous acts that he is describing—shame-driven acts—do not, in fact, derive from virtuous dispositions. The assertion that shame-courage finds its origin in virtue also conflicts with Aristotle's view that virtuous acts are the result of virtuous dispositions, not longing for honor, or fear of reproach. If acts of shame-courage arise from virtue, then why do they depend on non-virtuous motivations? Marta Jimenez, in her analysis of this and other related texts, tries to solve these tensions. She argues that the fact that Aristotle confers a high status on this semblance of courage suggests that

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[59] See NE 1116a.11-12, b.3-31; 1117a.16-17, b.9; EE 1229a.1-4, 1230a.26-32.

[60] Curzer's argument about knowledge vs. habituation of the good can aid us here in understanding how one can know and desire good acts without yet having been habituated to perform good acts: "But habituation is not required to instill the desire to perform virtuous acts for their own sake. Our appetite for virtue is not limited to virtuous acts that have already become habits. We intrinsically value and desire many actions that we have not even performed, let alone performed habitually. For example, we may not only judge that in certain situations standing fast in battle and resisting adulterous advances are the right acts, we may also desire to perform these acts for their own sake even if we have never before been in battle or been the object of seduction." (Curzer, p. 324)

there is something more to the citizens' 'longing for what is noble' than mere desire for acceptance and recognition of the wider polis. She cites, for example, the passage in which Aristotle notes that the citizens "ought not to be courageous on account of compulsion but because it is noble to be such" (NE 1116b.3-4) and that those who have this kind of motivation are willing to die at their posts because "it is shameful to flee and death is more choiceworthy than preservation" (NE 1116b.19-20). Against common interpretations of shame-courage in Aristotle as mere desire for recognition from others and not for true honor, Jimenez argues convincingly that the citizens who act out of shame-courage do not lack the correct motivation—they aim at what is noble and hate what is shameful—, but fall short of being virtuous for their inability to determine the noble thing that should be done or for the lack of stability of the correct acts. If the latter, "[l]earners who obey their sense of shame, then, can perform actions that are not only externally indistinguishable from those performed by virtuous people, but that are also ultimately oriented towards the same noble goals."[61]

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[61] Jimenez, "Aristotle on Becoming Virtuous by Doing Virtuous Actions": 102. Miles Burnyeat also considers shame a "semivirtue of the learner," for "He wants to do noble things but sometimes does things that are disgraceful, ignoble, and then he feels ashamed of himself and his conduct...The actions pain him internally, not consequentially. He is therefore receptive to the kind of moral education which will set his judgment straight and develop the intellectual capacities (practical wisdom) which will enable him to avoid such errors." (Burnyeat, pp. 78-79) Burnyeat's distinction between the virtuous understanding of 'the because' of virtues and the learner's knowledge of 'the that' of virtuous actions maps on well to this idea. That is, the learner who feels shame understands the theory of what is praiseworthy or blameworthy and has desire toward the noble, but lacks the intimate familiarity of the 'worthwhileness' of doing virtuous actions that is only achieved through habituation. For him, someone with a sense of shame will respond well to the study of ethics and virtue habituation because "he wants to do better at the right sorts of things." (Burnyeat, p. 81) Curzer, who restricts the learners who aim at the noble only to the 'generous-minded,' argues that it is the pain of shame that "drives moral progress" for "people come to desire virtuous acts through internalizing punishment, that is, learning to feel *aidōs*. Internalizing punishment is internalizing values as well as desires. So by learning to feel *aidōs*, people are choosing to lead the virtuous life." (Curzer, p. 13) More specifically, he argues that "the many come to choose virtuous actions for their own sake through habituation

The fact that shame-courage results in actions with the right motivation—desire for the noble—helps explain why it is the noblest of the semblances of courage and why Aristotle claims it arises from virtue. Learners of virtue who feel shame, then, are not deficient due to a lack of appropriate motivation[62], but likely due to a lack of stability, which is why, if habituated in the proper acts of shame-courage and given the correct knowledge about virtue, they can develop the virtue of courage for "citizens with shame have already the right kind of orientation towards the noble that will allow them to make progress towards virtue."[63]

One can arrive at this same conclusion—that shame is a quasi-virtue that aims at what is noble and avoids what is shameful—by a different route. I want to argue that Aristotle had sufficient reason to depict shame as *more like* a virtue than a passion because it does not arise from mere desire for pleasure or avoidance of pain, but from perception of the Good. A search for pleasure is characteristic of "those still in the process of becoming complete" (NE 1154b.2), nonetheless, prospective shame is a passion that showcases the learner's love for the noble *in spite* of the immediate pleasure felt by a base action or the pain incurred in public reproach. This is further confirmed in Aristotle's discussion of the inculcation of virtues in the masses. Here, he argues that

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motivated by punishment and threat of punishment, and the generous-minded become able to identify virtuous acts through habituation motivated by the pain of retrospective and prospective *aidōs*." (Curzer, p. 336) For him, shame "negatively reinforces bad behavior" serves as a "salience projector," emphasizing the viciousness of certain acts, and points to the way things *should have* been (Curzer, p. 338). Kirstjan Kistjansson has also described shame as "a virtue of moral learners." *Aristotle, Emotions, and Education* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 55.

[62] Again, this is evidence that shame, for Aristotle, is not motivated merely by the public's opinion.

[63] Jimenez, "The Virtues of Shame: Aristotle on the Positive Role of Shame in Moral Development": 85.

while grand speeches about virtue and vice might be efficacious in making "someone who has a wellborn character and is truly a lover of what is noble receptive to virtue," this tactic is most likely to be inefficient in 'the many:'

> For the many are not naturally obedient to the governance supplied by a sense of shame [*aidos*] but rather to that supplied by fear, and they do not naturally abstain from base things because of the shamefulness involved but do so rather because of the vengeance that may be exacted. For since they live by passion, they pursue the pleasures that are theirs, together with what gives rise to those pleasures, and they avoid the opposing pains. (NE 1179b.11-15)

In this passage, several things are worthy of notice. First, Aristotle treats shame as a positive disposition in the non-virtuous, one that far surpasses fear of punishment or vengeance.[64] Here, once again, what seems to be leading Aristotle to shine a positive light on shame is not the consequence of the speech (many different motivations would result in the same action: the search for a life of virtue), but the motivation behind the resulting actions.[65] The motivation behind fear of punishment is, according to Aristotle,

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[64] In Curzer's analysis of the several steps toward moral perfection, he clarifies that 'the many', unlike the vicious, can make moral progress, though they are only persuaded to do so through the threat of punishment. Through repeated threats, then, the many "can come to value virtuous action for its own sake, to make virtuous action the ultimate end of their lives." By doing so, they are then elevated to the stage of 'generous-minded', though now they do not yet understand how to be virtuous in particular situations. In turn, the 'generous-minded' can make moral progress "by seeking to avoid *aidōs*...This enables them to acquire and internalize the knowledge of which acts are virtuous. They choose these acts for their own sake *qua* virtuous. Unfortunately, they do not consistently perform the virtuous acts that they choose, for they are somehow deflected by their lack of habitual virtuous passions. In other words, the generous-minded rise to the level of incontinence." (Curzer, p. 342)

[65] Comparing this passage with those in NE 1128, Cairns notes that "Here *aidos* is associated with the possession of a character that truly loves *to kalon*, with avoiding the base because it is *aischron*, and contrasted with fear of external sanctions. Those who possess *aidos* here are contrasted with those who live by *pathos*, whereas in the previous passage at 1128b those who possessed *aidos* were those who lived by their emotions. Here, then, *aidos* manages to raise its head somewhat above the level of other *pathe*. The real contrast between the two passages, however, is in their tone, not in their substance; in both *aidos* is appropriate for those at a level lower than that of true virtue, and in both *aidos* may encompass a genuine desire to avoid what is truly *aischron*; the difference is that in the earlier passage Aristotle gave the impression that to possess a sense of *aidos* is nothing very

pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain. On the other hand, the motivation behind a sense of shame must be of a nobler sort. As we have seen in the discussion on shame-courage above, this nobler motivation seems to be love for what is good and noble and fear for a correct object, that is, disgrace. This interpretation would also explain why Aristotle does not believe a speech on virtues would be efficacious in those who have not been raised to properly identify and love the noble. Once again, shame, though not a virtue, seems to be on a higher level of moral quality compared to the other passions.

Summary

Aristotle is resistant to the idea that shame is a virtue, and it is not difficult to understand why once we grasp his understanding of the passions—lacking dispositional nature and intrinsic praiseworthiness—, his broad definition of shame—a passion that encompasses both prospective and retrospective shame—, and his understanding of virtues—stable dispositions that preclude wrongdoing. On the flip side, however, it is difficult to understand why Aristotle did not consider a particular kind of shame, such as shame that is felt for the right things at the right measure, *more like* a virtue than a passion—or, as he does with *enkrateia* (NE 1128b.34), something mixed, given its indication of the moral agent's love of the noble and its positive results in their moral progress. Be that as it may, it is clear that Aristotle holds shame in high regard among the passions as one that fears a correct object of fear—disgrace—and aims at the noble and thus is felt by honorable people. In the next section, I will transition to describe a virtue

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impressive, whereas in the later he indicates the true value of the concept...where the previous passage saw *aidos* as a sign of immaturity in respect of the goal of *arete*, the present sees the same phenomenon, quite reasonably, as a sign of the capacity for progress." (Cairns, pp. 424-25)

that, in contrast with shame, is found in those who are supremely virtuous, for Aristotle. However, similar to shame, its content includes a self-assessment. Shame and great-souledness are similar in another, rather unexpected way: while Aristotle resists considering shame a virtue due to, in part, implicit wrongdoing, some modern readers resist considering Aristotle's great-souledness (or pride) a virtue given its internal incoherences and morally ambiguous description.

C. Aristotle on Pride

General Definition

Among Aristotle's list of virtues is *megalopsychia* (μεγαλοψυχία), described as the one that concerns great things (NE 1123a.35). More specifically, he describes one who possesses *megalopsychia* as one who "deems himself worthy of great (μεγάλων) things and *is* worthy of them" (NE 1123b.3-4). In the words of Michael Pakaluk, the virtue of *megalopsychia* may be understood as developed in one who: 1) "claims great things for himself, as rightfully his"; 2) "when they are rightfully his."[66] Though I have named this section 'Aristotle on Pride,' I will primarily be using the literal translation for *megalopsychia*—great-souled[67]—to refer to this virtue.

What is the greatest, most worthy external thing that one can possess which, then,

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[66] Michael Pakaluk, "The Meaning of Aristotelian Magnanimity" in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* Vol 25 (Spring 2004): 248.
[67] There are several translations for *megalopsychia*. The most popular translation seems to be 'magnanimity,' though contemporary commentators prefer the most literal translation of 'greatness of soul.' Pakaluk translates as 'great-hearted' while also offering lengthier translations such as "aiming to do something truly great with one's life" or "consistently acting on admirable ideals" (Pakaluk, pp. 246-247).

gives this virtue its name? For Aristotle, honor is the greatest of external goods.[68] The great-souled, then, "is concerned with honor (τιμὰς) and dishonor in the way that he ought to be" and deems himself "worthy of honor most of all" (NE 1123b.22-24). On the other hand, the extremes of this character trait, vanity (χαῦνον) and smallness of soul (μικροψυχία), are not concerned with honor and dishonor as they ought (NE 1107b.22-23 and 1123b.3-15).

Distinct from other virtues, *megalopsychia* does not result in actions and passions that are the mean in a particular set of circumstances. As Howard Curzer puts it, "Aristotle lists *megalopsychia* as a moral virtue. Moral virtues are medial dispositions of action and passion. For *megalopsychia* to be compatible with the doctrine of the mean, *megalopsychia* must include dispositions to perform characteristic actions and feel characteristic passions medially in certain situations."[69] Instead, Aristotle describes

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[68] Many commentators have noticed the apparent incoherency that Aristotle runs into by holding both honor and friendship as the greatest of external goods (see NE 1169b.9-11). In particular, Neil Cooper has noted how his failure to reconcile these two goods leads to an unclear integration of *megalopsychia* within Aristotle's greater ethical project. See "Aristotle's crowning virtue" in *Apeiron* 22.3 (1989): 200.

[69] Howard J. Curzer, *Aristotle and the Virtues*, p. 131. Roger Crisp puts it slightly differently and offers a charitable reading of this apparent mistake: "Also interesting is that the capacity to distinguish great goods from small, which in the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle makes characteristic of greatness of soul, is found, according to Aristotle, in every virtue (EE III.5.1232a35– b4). So the courageous person will not judge dangers great, in the sense of worth avoiding, when they are contrary to reason; the temperate person disdains many great pleasures on the ground that they are not great goods; and the generous person takes the same attitude to wealth. So in that sense, Aristotle suggests, greatness of soul follows from the possession of any virtue. This 'orthological' conception of greatness of soul cannot easily be situated within the doctrine of the mean because it is not characterized in terms of some neutral action or feeling which one can perform or feel at the wrong time, or fail to perform or feel at the right time. In that respect, it is a bivalent quality like justice – one either has it and is admirable, or one does not and is blameworthy. But there is nothing to prevent Aristotle claiming that it is part of what makes each individual virtue admirable." "Aristotle on Greatness of Soul" in Richard Kraut (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (John Wiley & Sons, 2006), p. 164.

megalopsychia more like an intellectual virtue that functions by distinguishing what one is worthy of, resulting in actions and passions that are the same as other moral virtues, but in a greater magnitude. To explain why the doctrine of the mean fits so awkwardly in the virtue of *megalopsychia*, Curzer suggests that,

> Aristotle's treatment of *megalopsychia* constitutes a particularly interesting juncture in the history of ideas: the point at which the vestigial, Homeric value of greatness and grandeur seems to clash with the newer value of moderation and the mean. Aristotle tries to reconcile these two apparently incompatible values by formally defining *megalopsychia* as a combination of greatness and self-knowledge. The *megalopsychos*, Aristotle says, is a mean between two extremes. He or she knows and claims just what he or she deserves, unlike the humble person (*micropsychos*) who claims too little, and the vain person (*chaunos*) who claims too much.[70]

The first part of Aristotle's description of *megalopsychia*, then, is intellectual—an assessment of one's self-worth—and is the part of his description that follows the doctrine of the mean. The *megalopsychoi* consider themselves worthy of great honor because of their great virtue. Not only this, but thinking oneself worthy of honor must necessarily be accompanied by the truthfulness of this assessment—one must actually *be* worthy of honor. The vices of the virtue of greatness, then, are present either when one considers oneself worthy of honor, but is not (the 'vain' - NE 1123b.8) or when one is actually worthy of honor, yet considers oneself unworthy (the 'small-souled' - NE 1123b.10-11). Both the vain and the small-souled have deluded or ignorant self-assessments[71], the former dress and speak as if they were worthy of great honors (NE

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[70] Curzer, p. 121.

[71] Though later on in the text, Aristotle will distinguish the causes of small-souledness and vanity, the latter being caused by foolishness and the former by timidity (NE 1125a.19-27).

1125a.30-34) while the latter do not even try to perform noble actions, nor do they pursue good things, for they do not think they deserve them (NE 1125a.27-28).

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle adds other characteristics of the vain and small-souled. The vain are prone to "talking about oneself and making pronouncements and claiming the achievements of another for one's own," while the small-souled are prone to "accepting favors from another, and often, and reproaching someone for a good deed" (Rhet. II.6 1384a.10). Furthermore, he holds that, as in the case of shame, these conditions of the soul are age-discriminate. The elderly tend to be small-souled "because of having been worn down by life; for they desire nothing great or unusual but things necessary for life…And they are more fond of themselves than is right; for this is also a form of small-mindedness" (Rhet. II.13 1389b.5). On the other hand, Aristotle writes that the young love honor and are "magnanimous; for they have not yet been worn down by life but are inexperienced with constraints, and to think oneself worthy of great things is magnanimity and this is characteristic of a person of good hopes" (Rhet. II.13 1389a.11).

These passages showcase the importance Aristotle gave to correct self-assessment, as it is the natural consequence of wisdom. It is not sufficient to think highly of oneself, but one must have a *correct* positive self-assessment, which derives from right reason. The elderly, though they consider themselves in high regard, do not act in ways that confirm the positive self-assessment. The young, on the other hand, think themselves worthy of great things and, apparently, also act greatly. Though Aristotle is not explicit about the youth's *actual* greatness, the fact that he notes they have not yet been worn down by the hardships of life seems to indicate that they have done great things without

yet failing.[72] Nonetheless, Aristotle's depiction of *megalopsychia* in the *Rhetoric* is significantly less complex than that found in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. So much so that, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the great-souled are described as those who deal well with hardships, a characteristic that, it is obvious, does not fit within his original picture in the *Rhetoric*. Furthermore, in *Nicomachean Ethics*, as we have seen in the last section, he describes the youth as mostly being led by passions, rather than by reason. This characteristic alone would exclude the youth from being considered great-souled.

Not only do the *megalopsychoi* have a positive and correct self-assessment, but this self-assessment must be of one's *greatness*. Aristotle notes that "greatness of soul resides in greatness, just as beauty involves a body of great structure: those who are small may be elegant and well proportioned but not beautiful" (NE 1123b.5-9). That greatness is an essential part of *megalopsychia* can be noticed vividly once Aristotle, later in the text, acknowledges the existence of another virtue, sometimes referred to as 'proper ambition,'[73] which regards correct positive self-assessment, but one that warrants small honors (NE 1125b.1-26).[74] The great-souled consider themselves great because they are the best in their achievement of the virtues and "what is great in each virtue would seem to belong to the great-souled man" (NE 1123b.28-30). Great acts of virtue, for Aristotle,

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[72] And, earlier in the text, Aristotle describes the youth as being led by strong desire and passion. This is clear indication that the magnanimity in question is not the full-blown virtue that we find in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

[73] Aristotle does not name this virtue.

[74] "Described first as the virtue that pertains to lesser honors, ambition (literally 'love of honor': *philotimia*) represents in one respect a descent from the heights of greatness of soul. Given the small imperfections in this crown of the virtues, however, the discussion of ambition also represents an advance in pointing to the need for a standard by which the proper measure of the love of honor can establish." Bartlett and Collins, *Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 256.

are those that extrapolate even those performed by the properly virtuous.[75] That is, the great-souled are not content in simply acting virtuously within a more private sphere, spending their lives in obscurity, but seek out acts that are highly visible to a great public and, thus, that affect more people and possibly incur greater risk. For example, the great-souled will seek opportunities for acts of courage such as those performed in an important war over those performed in a private dispute. For this reason, Aristotle notes that

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[75] This raises a problem for Aristotle in his description of *megalopsychia*. If being great-souled is simply possessing the greatest version of each of the virtues, then how is it a separate virtue? As Curzer puts the problem:

> *megalopsychia* is not just one virtue among others, but rather *megalopsychia* involves a high degree of the other virtues. Part of *megalopsychia* is the disposition to perform splendid, spectacular, and grand courageous acts, temperate acts, liberal acts, etc. Losing your *megalopsychia* is not like losing your courage. If you lose your *megalopsychia*, you will not be just as you are now except with one less virtue. Instead, some or all of your other virtues will be diminished...*Megalopsychia* is a different kind of character trait than the other virtues because it consists in, and enhances excellent versions of the other virtues. Thus it presupposes the other virtues. The problem is that Aristotle lists *megalopsychia* as just another virtue rather than as a high degree of virtue. *Megalopsychia* appears in the midst of his catalogue of virtues without any indication of its special relationship to the other virtues. (Curzer, pp. 134-135)

The problem worsens when we take Aristotle's theory of reciprocity of the virtues into account. If only the greatest of the virtuous are *megalopsychoi*, then how can all of the properly virtuous be great-souled? But if not all virtuous people are great-souled, how do we understand Aristotle's theory that those who have one of the virtues have all of them? Crisp notices this point and elaborates: "According to Aristotle, happiness consists in the exercise of the virtues, and happiness so understood is 'widely shared' (NE 1.8.1099b18). But greatness of soul is surely a virtue exceptional and rare, and if the thesis of the reciprocity of virtues is correct then it would seem that hardly anyone is virtuous or happy." (Crisp, p. 168). His solution to the problem is to take into account Aristotle's "spectrum of moral character": "So we may assume that Aristotle accepted that, to be virtuous, a person's actions and feelings had to fall into some imprecisely bounded range, and that the perfectly virtuous will always perform at the top of the range, the great-souled at the very least near the top of the range, and the small-souled slightly below the top of the range." (Crisp, p. 168) Curzer suggests a more radical solution to solve these and other problems that *megalopsychia* raises: Aristotle must abandon the idea that *megalopsychia* is a virtue, and rather hold that "*megalopsychoi* are people who have a high degree of the 'other' virtues." (Curzer, p. 140) Pakaluk interprets Aristotle's view as being that *megalopsychia* is an 'overseeing' virtue, not that it refers to the greatness within every virtue. In other words, "no virtue can be lacking if great-heartedness [his translation for *megalopsychia*] is rightly ascribed, not that the extreme or pronounced expressions of each virtue must be present." (Pakaluk, p. 259)

megalopsychia "seems to be like a kind of ornament [κόσμος - *kosmos*[76]] of the virtues, for it makes them greater and does not arise without them. For this reason, it is difficult, in truth, to be great souled, for it is not possible without gentlemanliness [καλοκαγαθία - *kalokagathia*[77]]" (NE 1123b.37-1124a.4). It is this greatness that makes this virtue so difficult to achieve, yet it is this greatness that makes the great-souled worthy of great honor.

Pride and Honor

As has become clear, honor and dishonor are central in Aristotle's description of *megalopsychia.* Achieving honor, in Aristotle's works, has to do with "the attainment of high status, good reputation, the respect and deference of others, superior social standing and other such social goods... By the same token, dishonor should be conceived of as the loss of such things."[78] In the *Rhetoric*, he had already identified honor with others' recognition of one's worth:

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[76] Adornment or crown.

[77] Nobility or goodness. Aristotle places great importance in the true goodness of the great-souled. He emphasizes the great-souled are 'good,' which is his justification for the honor given to them and their good fortune (NE 1124a.25-27), and for their contempt for external goods and inferior honors (NE 1124a.5-9). In fact, some commentators see Aristotle's emphasis on goodness in his description of *megalopsychia* as an ornament of the virtues. Crisp, for example, argues that,

> What Aristotle probably has in mind is the way in which greatness of soul 'supervenes' or 'sits on top' of the other virtues. First, I begin to acquire the (other) virtues. Then I reach a level of modest virtue, at which I am worthy of some modest honor—and if I am aware of that then I have the virtue of proper ambition, though not of course that of greatness of soul. My moral development continues, however, and I develop virtue to a degree worthy of the greatest honor. At that point, if I am aware of my worth, then greatness of soul has emerged out of my possession of these other virtues, and adds further luster to my moral character and worthiness of honor. (Crisp, p. 167)

Furthermore, he claims that *megalopsychia* "makes [the virtues] greater" by "spurring its possessor into action in situations where the timid will stand back." (Crisp, p. 167)

[78] Alexander Sarche, "What's wrong with megalopsychia?" in *Philosophy* Vol. 83, No. 324 (Apr. 2008): 234.

> honor and reputation are among the pleasantest things, through each person's imagining that he has the qualities of an important person; and all the more [so] when others say so who, he thinks, tell the truth. Such ones are neighbors (rather than those living at a distance) and his intimates and fellow citizens (rather than those from afar) and contemporaries (rather than posterity) and the practical (rather than the foolish) and many (rather than few); for those named are more likely to tell the truth than their opposites, [who are disregarded,] since no one pays attention to honor or reputation accorded by those he much looks down on, such as babies or small animals, at least not for the sake of reputation; and if he does, it is for some other reason. (Rhet. 1371a.16)

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, however, the exact importance of honor for the great-souled is a vexing issue: in the same book that he states that "the great-souled man...is concerned with honor and dishonor" (NE 1123b.21-22) and that it is "especially with matters of honor and dishonor...that the great-souled man is concerned" (NE 1124a.5-6), he also notes that

> The great-souled man, then, is, as was said, especially concerned with honors, but he will surely also be disposed in a measured way toward wealth and political power as well as all good and bad fortune, however it may occur: he will be neither overjoyed by good fortune nor deeply grieved by bad fortune. For he is not disposed even toward honor as though it were a very great thing, and political power and wealth are choiceworthy on account of the honor they bring; at any rate, those who possess them wish to be honored on account of them. But to him for whom honor is a small thing, so also are these other concerns. Hence the great-souled are held to be haughty. (NE 1124a.12-20)

In this passage, Aristotle argues that, though honor is valuable to the great-souled, he is not smitten with it. He regards it in the right or due way. As with all other external goods, the great-souled deals with honors moderately—not too enticed, nor oblivious. Though moderate, the great-souled nonetheless long for honor and actively seek it. In NE 1125a.22-24, Aristotle contrasts the great-souled with the small-souled man by stating that the latter deprives himself of the goods he deserves. If he were indeed virtuous, the

person would "long for the things he is worthy of, since they are good." Though an overwhelming number of commentators take Aristotle's centrality of honor at face value, some have shown that there is an irresolvable conflict between considering honor a definitional aspect of the virtue (the object of desire of the great-souled) *and* as one of the external goods that the great-souled are not overly concerned about. As a result, Howard Curzer, for example, has argued that honor is merely the *consequence* of the great-souled's grand demonstrations of virtue rather than an essential component of *megalopsychia*.[79] Instead, for him, what is central to Aristotle's description of *megalopsychia* is greatness of the virtues.[80] I will circle back to these clashing interpretations below.

In addition to the conflict that arises from the great-souled's concern yet lack of concern for honor, there are further issues with Aristotle's emphasis on honor in his description of a moral virtue. For starters, honor does not seem to be a necessary component of the morally virtuous person's life. More poignantly, it does not seem to be the case that desiring honor and striving to achieve it should be a necessary component of the moral virtues, though it might be a desirable feature of one's life in a broader sense.[81]

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[79] Curzer, for example, argues that "A relationship to honor is not central to the formal definition of *megalopsychia*" and that "the fact that *megalopsychoi* are worthy of honor is brought in merely as evidence that *megalopsychoi* have great virtue." (Curzer, 123) Many other influential commentators, however, consider honor a central component of *megalopsychia*, such as Neil Cooper, "Aristotle's Crowning Virtue," *Apeiron* 22 (1989): 195–199; Alexander Sarch, "What's Wrong With *Megalopsychia*?" *Philosophy* 83 (2008): 231–253; Roger Crisp, "Aristotle on Greatness of Soul" in *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, Richard Kraut (ed.) (John Wiley & Sons, 2006), p. 166.

[80] Especially based on the passage that states that "honor is the prize of virtue and is assigned to those who are good." (NE 1123b.35-36)

[81] Alexander Sarche brings up this point, but defends Aristotle by allowing honor to be central "in the wider sense that Aristotle seems to be chiefly concerned with. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* in general,

Taking this objection a bit further, the great-souled focus on achieving honor and reputation seems too outward-looking or even *dependent* on others' recognition for such an exalted virtue (it is, after all, "a kind of crown of the virtues"). This dependence also seems to clash with the self-sufficiency or autonomy that is commonly attributed to the virtuous.

Confusion over Aristotle's 'honor of honor' heightens in his description of the great-souled's interactions with other people. The *megalopsychos* seems to consider small honors, or those given by 'people at random,' insufficiently worthy:

> he will take pleasure in a measured way in great honors and those that come from serious human beings, on the grounds that he obtains what is proper to him or even less–for there could be no honor worthy of complete virtue, but he will nevertheless accept it inasmuch as they have nothing greater to assign to him. As for honor that comes from people at random, or small honors, he will have complete contempt for them, since it is not of these that he is worthy. (NE 1124a.6-11)

The picture that comes across from this passage is of a person who accepts (though rather unwillingly) lavish prestige from lordly figures for their virtuous deeds, yet is arrogantly disdainful of anything less or, even, from anyone less honorable. His virtuous deeds are so grand that no external good could possibly serve as compensation. This preference for (or sole acceptance of) honors awarded by citizens of high classes becomes more blatant in NE 1124b.18-20, where Aristotle, next to a seemingly universal claim that the great-souled is "eager to be of service" specifies this eagerness as one that is directed toward

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Aristotle appears to be explaining what it takes to be virtuous in the broad sense of having personal excellence and being a flourishing, successful individual. Being virtuous in this broad sense obviously requires being virtuous in the narrower moral sense, but it also involves more than that. This is clear from the fact that Aristotle regards excellences like wittiness and intelligence as virtues, even though they clearly are not moral virtues." (Sarche, pp. 252-253) As I have noted, though this is true, it still does not explain why *megalopsychia* would be among the moral virtues.

"people of worth and good fortune." The same is not felt toward "those of a middling rank," who receive measured service from the great-souled. The reasoning for this distinction is that it is a "difficult and august thing to be superior among the fortunate, but easy to be that way among the middling sorts."

The Attitude of the Proud

Other descriptions of the great-souled have received a fair share of criticism, not due to their focus on honor-obsession, but to their seeming self-centered, obnoxious and arrogant nature. For example, due to the *megalopsychos*' great worthiness and unmistakable superiority, Aristotle argues that he "justly looks down on others (since he holds a true opinion of himself), whereas the many do so in a random fashion" (NE 1124b.6-7). Later in the text, he states that because the great-souled is "disposed to feeling contempt for others," he speaks and acts openly and truthfully (NE 1124b.28-30) and "he is necessarily incapable of living with a view to another—except a friend—since doing so is slavish" (NE 1124b.31-1125a.1). Moreover, Aristotle describes the great-souled as having a complicated attitude toward reciprocity, for he

> is the sort to benefit others but is ashamed to receive benefaction; for the former is a mark of one who is superior, the latter of one who is inferior. He is disposed to return a benefaction with a greater one, since in this way the person who took the initiative [with the original benefaction] will owe him in addition and will have also fared well thereby. But those who are great-souled seem in fact to remember whatever benefaction they may have done, yet not those that they have been done (for he who receives the benefit is inferior to him who performed it, whereas the great-souled man wishes to be superior); and they seem to hear about the former with pleasure, but about the latter with displeasure. (NE 1124b.9-16)[82]

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[82] The *megalopsychos*' apparent ungratefulness to good deeds done to him in NE 1124b.11-16 has been the source of much of the discomfort with the virtue. According to Crisp, "The main worry about the great-souled person's attitude here is that he is ungrateful. To be sure, he is concerned to repay

A summary of each of the problematic relational attitudes of the great-souled might look something like this: a) disdain for lowly honors given by lowly people; b) justified contempt for 'inferior' people; c) strive for superiority in occasions of reciprocity.[83] As Crisp poignantly observes, "What seems remarkable in Aristotle's account of virtuous motivation, and the character of the great-souled person in particular, is not so much the concern for nobility, but the lack of concern for the well-being of others."[84] These and other troubling evidences of *megalopsychia* have led commentators to side with one of three interpretations of its place in Aristotle's ethic: 1) pure irony that makes fun of a popular ideal; 2) an unappealing leftover from Aristotle's cultural setting requiring an "excessive, and complacent, attention to one's own virtue—a kind of smug self-satisfaction" that requires "looking down on others."[85]; 3) a good trait only to those who can afford to do great things, therefore, part of the virtue taxonomy of an aristocratic society and useless for "egalitarian or democratic"[86] societies.

In an attempt to rescue *megalopsychia* and prove it a relevant moral virtue for the

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benefits, but apparently he does this not so as to express his gratitude but to restore his position of superiority as swiftly as possible. And once repayment is completed, the fact that he has received a favour will slip from his mind, as a painful sign of his former inferiority." (Crisp, p. 171)

[83] Despite the grim description of the great-souled's relationship to those inferior to him, perhaps a few of Aristotle's descriptions escape cringes from modern-day readers, such as the great-souled not holding grudges (NE 1125a.4-5), avoiding gossip, criticizing others, complaining, and seeking praises (NE 1125a.5-10).

[84] Crisp, p. 176. Crisp considers it ironic that the intellectual history of *megalopsychia*, before Aristotle, shows precisely the opposite: "There is no doubt that greatness of soul was a widely recognized virtue by Aristotle's time, though in ordinary language the terms *megalopsuchia* and *megaloprepeia* (which Aristotle uses for the virtue of magnificence; NE IV.2) were equivalent (Gauthier 1951: 20). Greatness of soul was seen as closely related to generosity, and someone could be described as great-souled who helped another in need (Dover 1974:178). Indeed, in the first book of the *Rhetoric*, usually thought to be an early work, Aristotle describes greatness of soul as the virtue that disposes us to do good to others on a large scale (I.9.1366b17)." (Crisp, p. 161)

[85] Pakaluk, p. 242.

[86] Idem, p. 243.

contemporary Western world, Michael Pakaluk responds to point (b) and (c) summarized above, arguing that Aristotle considers the great-souled to have the "capacity to dismiss competing goods as of no account."[87] In response to the criticism of the great-souled's contempt for people, he stresses that the object of their contempt is not persons, but things. For Pakaluk, it seems obvious that Aristotle does not find the 'repugnant' kind of contempt attractive, given his scolding description of the non-virtuous person who, because of their good fortune, is arrogant. These, though not great-souled, tend to imitate the great-souled in their contempt. However, in Pakaluk's interpretation, they imitate by showing contempt for others instead of contempt for things. Pakaluk arrives at this conclusion by carefully analyzing the texts I quoted above. For example, confronting Bartlett and Collins' translation, he translates NE 1124b.28-30 as "he says what is on his mind, because of his attitude of contempt" or "because he couldn't care less," noting that the translation that implies that the great-souled feel "contempt *for others*" mistakenly implies that the original Greek version includes *for others*, which it does not—παρρησιαστὴς γὰρ διὰ τὸ καταφρονητικὸς εἶναι.[88] Though the great-souled may also feel

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[87] Idem, p. 245.

[88] Pakaluk does a similar correction to the popular translation of NE1124b.6-7, which I had mentioned above as "For the great-souled man justly looks down on other (since he holds a true opinion of himself), whereas the many do so in a random fashion":

> Quite strikingly, Aristotle does not claim that the good person shows contempt for everyone who is not good. (That this is so gets obscured by even the best translation. So, for instance, at 1124b4-6 Rowe has 'For the great-souled person is justified in looking down on people (since his judgments are true), whereas ordinary people do it without discrimination.' This supplies and object, 'looking down *on people*', not found in the Greek.) (Pakaluk, p. 264)

His translation of the passage is "So it's not that he does the actions required by the various virtues; but he does show contempt for other people. Why? Because the great-hearted man shows contempt, with justification, since he has a true assessment of things. Yet everyone else shows contempt in random fashion." (Pakaluk, p. 251)

contempt for people, it is only due to their overarching contempt for things. That is, if someone offers an honor that is inferior to the great-souled worth, they may feel contempt for the offerer.[89]

Moreover, in response to the criticism that the great-souled strives for superiority in occasions of reciprocity, Pakaluk argues that Aristotle's *megalopsychoi* refuse repayment for their deeds because "he takes it for granted that in all of his dealings with others what he does will not end up being reciprocated."[90] According to Pakaluk's interpretation of the great-souled wish to 'excel' (which Barlett and Collins' translate as "to be superior"), ὑπερέχειν, in NE 1124b.14-15, Aristotle is not portraying the great-souled as trying to be superior to others, but rather as attempting to "excel over oneself: to do something, obviously available to [him], that would make [his] doing the other alternative presenting itself to [him]—perhaps the easier alternative—look to be something inferior."[91] For him, it does not imply comparison to others. He concludes that, paying close attention to the text leads the interpreter to see that the *megalopsychos*,

> would not be repugnant: it is not an attitude of smug self-satisfaction, because it is principally an attitude of aspiration…Thus the concern of the *megalopsychos* to be 'superior' is a concern to excel here and now, and is not a smug reflection on his merits, or on his past. Neither is the virtue repugnant in so far as it involves contempt, because it involves the right sort of contempt, of things, when this is required, and not an objectionable

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[89] Further evidence for this position can be found in Aristotle's earlier description of *megalopsychia*, in the *Eudemian Ethics*: "Contempt seems particularly the special characteristic of the magnanimous man; and again, as regards honor, life and wealth—about which mankind seems to care–he values none of them except honor. He would be pained if denied honor, and if ruled by one undeserving. He delights most of all when he obtains honor. In this way he would seem to contradict himself; for to be concerned above all with honor, and yet to disdain the multitude and reputation, are inconsistent" (EE 1232b.8). In this passage, it seems that the stress is on contempt for "honor, life and wealth," not people.

[90] Pakaluk, p. 261.

[91] Idem, p. 271.

> contempt of persons, based on irrational grounds, such as mere differences in wealth, status, or birth.[92]

Hermeneutical Problems

In order to move forward, we need to take a step back and look at the ongoing hermeneutical snags that all commentators of these passages have hit. The problems raised for Aristotle's inclusion of *megalopsychia* among the moral virtues are, generally speaking, two: 1) the honor-seeking nature of the virtue and 2) its manifestations of "smug self-satisfaction." Pakaluk and others[93] have offered interesting though, in my opinion, ultimately unsatisfactory or overly charitable readings of the second problem. For example, Pakaluk's interpretation of the *megalopsychos*' apparent strive for superiority over others as a strive to excel over oneself cannot be found anywhere in the text. The most straightforward reading, and the one that requires the least amount of interpretative gymnastics, is that the *megalopsychos* are, in fact, arrogant, puffed up, and

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[92] Idem,p. 245.

[93] For more fascinating apologetic arguments in favor of Aristotle's depictions of the *megalopsychos*, see Alexander Sarch, "What's Wrong With *Megalopsychia*?" *Philosophy* 83 (2008): 231–253. For example, when explaining why the great-souled would be troubled by the honors of people of lower status, he gives the analogy of an esteemed philosophy professor:

> For instance, consider the likely effect of a professor allowing his Introduction to Philosophy students to openly praise him in class as one of the most talented philosophers living today. Clearly the professor would lose face by allowing his students to pass judgement—even a positive one—on his philosophical ability, since they, as novices, are in no position to make this sort of call….This analogy illustrates the insight that Aristotle has latched on to when describing the *megalopsychos* as disdainful of the praise and honors offered by those with a much lower stature. (Sarch: 244)

And, to justify the great-souled strive for superiority in episodes of reciprocity, he notes:

> conferring a gift tends to have the psychological effect of placing the recipient in the giver's debt and thus in a position of inferiority. If this is correct, then it is to be expected that someone who desires honor and excels at obtaining it would gladly give gifts and do favors (since this would place him in a position of superiority relative to the recipient), but would not want to receive them (since this would place him in a position of inferiority relative to the giver). (Sarch: 244-245)

disdainful toward those who cannot offer them appropriate honors.

Regarding the first problem, interpretations vary. Those who have been troubled by the great-souled's desire and hunt for great, honor-producing acts have offered alternative accounts, claiming that honor is actually not as central as it seems. As I've mentioned, Howard Curzer's interpretation fits in this camp (he thinks the virtue hinges on greatness of virtue, not the consequential honor), as does Roger Crisp's, who centralizes the virtue in the intellectual part—thinking oneself worthy of honor due to great virtue. What these interpretations have in common is their avoidance of the honor-seeking desire and, instead, focus on desire for virtuous acts. On the other hand, most other commentators have taken Aristotle's position to be clear: the *megalopsychos* actively and fiercely seek out honor. While some of those who take this interpretation think this is highly problematic and unworthy of virtue-status, others strive to advocate for *megalopsychia*'s continuance in the list of contemporary virtues, despite and even *due to* this characteristic.[94]

From what I can tell, the interpreters' conclusion about the centrality of honor to *megalopsychia* strongly hinges upon the passages on which they focus. Those who give a very negative appraisal of *megalopsychia* tend to focus their interpretative efforts on passages such as NE 1123b.24 ("honors and dishonors, then, are the objects with respect to which the *megalopsychos* is as he should be."), considering it too outward-looking—concerned with honor-seeking or honor-losing. Those who give a positive, or at least ambiguous appraisal of the virtue tend to focus on passages such as NE 1123b.1 ("the

[94] For an example of those among the latter category, see Pakaluk and Sarch.

man is thought to be *megalopsychos* who thinks himself worthy of great things, being worthy of them"), considering it mainly inward-looking—concerned with the desire to do virtuous things in grand gestures.[95] Much of the work of the interpreter, then, is justifying why one supersedes the other.

In an attempt to fit a value of his time into his ethical taxonomy, Aristotle constructed a confusing, multi-faceted virtue that is difficult to make coherent—greatness of virtue and worthiness of great honor (and self-awareness of these), moderate desire for honor, contempt for external goods and for people, and self-sufficiency are all described as essential to the virtue. To take only a few examples, it seems to me virtually impossible to reconcile contempt for external goods (including honor) and a 'moderate' attitude toward honor[96], to reconcile greatness of virtue and contempt for small honors, and to reconcile self-sufficiency and desire for honor. The attempt looks much like my toddler trying to fit a square into a circle in his shape-sorter. Furthermore, as I have shown, the virtue clashes with contemporary ethical sensibilities and commitments, such as our resistance to an overly outward-looking ethic, to feelings of contempt toward people in less honorable positions, and our high regard for humility. Much in line with what Curzer suggests, I believe the only way that *megalopsychia* can be 'fixed,' in the sense of both making it more coherent in relation to Aristotle's own claims and with our own sensibilities, is to let go of one of the characteristics, which, if pressed to choose, must be their desire and striving for great honor.[97] As others have noted, and I shall

[95] A similar version of my argument here can be found in Sarch: 233.
[96] Much less with Aristotle's textual insistence in the great-souled's desire and search for honor.
[97] Though Curzer goes a step forward by suggesting that Aristotle abandon altogether the project of

repeat here, it is this component of the virtue, coupled with the positive self-assessment, that makes it quite difficult to uphold both the virtue of humility (which we consistently value in today's moral scene) and Aristotle's *megalopsychia* simultaneously.[98] They are—on my account of humility, anyway—mutually exclusive. Greatness of virtue, combined with awareness of one's great virtue and contempt for external goods, seems enough to allow this virtue the autonomy that Aristotle desired. As we will see in chapter three, it is something similar to this route that Aquinas takes.

Great-souledness, Arrogance, Boastfulness, and Love of Self

As I have shown, Aristotle's focus on honor creates some roadblocks for *megalopsychia's* ready acceptance among modern readers, not only for its reliance on external recognition, but especially to those who, like me, have been persuaded of the inclusion of humility among the virtues. However, here another point requires consideration. Though Aristotle never advocates for the inclusion of a virtue like humility—in fact, if one considers small-souledness somewhat similar to humility, he considers it a vice[99]—he is intent on distancing the *megalopsychos* from the arrogant

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making *megalopsychia* a virtue, and instead make it the label of those who have a high degree of other virtues. (Curzer, p. 139)

[98] This, of course, will depend on one's definition of humility. If, minimally, one defines the virtue of humility as merely not lying about one's merits, then they are compatible. On the other hand, if one takes the virtue of humility to include a general disinterest in flaunting and in receiving honors for one's goodness and/or disinterest in evaluating oneself in terms of one's goodness, then Aristotle's virtue certainly seems incompatible. For a fascinating philosophical piece on understanding modesty in these terms (which the author treats as synonymous with humility), see Ty Raterman, "On Modesty: Being Good and Knowing It without Flaunting It" in *American Philosophical Quarterly* Vol 43, No 3 (Jul 2006): 221-234.

[99] Here, I consider humility to overlap with Aristotle's small-souled, but to be distinct in important ways. I believe the overlap resides in that they are both 'concerned with honor.' That is, humility is a virtue that hinges upon one's unwillingness to pursue, or disinterest in, great honors. The distinction, I believe, lies in their self-assessment. Aristotle considers the small-souled one who has a low opinion of himself, considering himself unworthy of the honors he deserves, which then prevents him from

(ὑπεροχῇ), the ironist (εἴρων), the boastful (ἀλαζὼν), and lovers of self (φιλαύτους), urging against their identification (NE 1124a.20). I include an analysis of these four attitudes because they are closely related to the concept of pride in the work of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, the two other interlocutors in this study.

In his discussion of arrogance, Aristotle wants to make a clear distinction between those who have achieved wealth and power, yet are not great-souled, and those whose wealth and power contribute to their greatness of soul. Both will receive honors and, most likely, will treat many of these honors with contempt. Consequently, it can be hard, for some people, to distinguish between them. The distinction, for Aristotle, is in how each of these 1) treat other people of honor; 2) how they act toward external goods and 3) how they treat inferiors.

Regarding their distinction on how they treat other people of honor, the great-souled will not pay heed to someone merely because of their apparent superiority in wealth and power. As mentioned above, this is because he is not overly concerned about these things (NE 1124a.17-20).[100] More poignantly, the great-souled will never do something unlawful or immoral in order to achieve more wealth and power, or in

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performing noble acts. I think the humble may, in fact, have a high opinion of himself and even consider himself worthy of great honor, yet avoid flaunting their worthiness. Understood in these terms, humility would not impede one from performing noble acts.

[100] This very point is evidence for Pakaluk's argument that the great-souled has contempt for things, and not necessarily for people: "a great-hearted man risks being thought arrogant (*hyperoptes*) precisely because of his detachment from power and wealth. The reason is that a great-hearted man will not show someone regard simply because he has these things, nor will he heed someone who is able to confer or withhold these things just because of that ability. However, others will act in these ways, and in doing so they will think that they are only giving the proper respect to the people who have, or have control over, such goods. Hence they will view the great-hearted man as arrogant for not similarly giving heed." (Pakaluk, p. 262)

obedience to someone who possesses wealth and power. This relates to Aristotle's second distinction between the great-souled and the arrogant—how they act toward external goods. In the absence of virtue, he argues, it is notoriously difficult for people to deal, "in a suitable manner" (NE 1124a.32), with the honor that comes from possessing external goods. That is because virtue holds up the moral boundaries within which someone with wealth and power is allowed to act and serves as an internal motivator to stay within those boundaries. As Sarch puts it, being great-souled requires that one perform actions that seek great honor only "of the set of actions that virtue in general renders permissible."[101] Without such moral boundaries and noble motivations, the person of good fortune feels free to choose boundless actions (including immoral ones) that will bring them more wealth and power, which serves as the only motivator, and an external one at that. Perhaps, as Pakaluk notes, "If he began by lacking virtue, he will soon become a mediocre or even bad man."[102]

While the great-souled deals with external goods moderately, not giving too much attention to them nor to the honor that they receive because of them, the arrogant define themselves based on these external goods, deeming themselves superior to others based on them. This leads us naturally to the third distinction—how they treat inferiors. A sign of arrogance, in contrast to great-souledness, is that of looking down on others who have not achieved the same fortune.[103] Depending on the interpretation of Aristotle one adopts,

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[101] Sarch, p. 246.
[102] Pakaluk, p. 263.
[103] In this sense, Aristotle says that the proud "imitate the great-souled man without being like him, and they do this whenever circumstances permit. They do not perform the deeds that accord with virtue, then, but they look down on others nonetheless." (NE 1124a.3-4)

looking down on others is not necessarily bad, in Aristotle's opinion—after all, the "great-souled man justly looks down on others (since he holds a true opinion of himself)" (NE 1124b.6-7).[104] The defect of the haughty person, though, is that they look down on others *without being worthy of doing so*—justified upon wealth and power rather than upon virtue (NE 1124a.3-4). This is why Aristotle states that the arrogant person looks down on others "in a random fashion," or, for no good reason.

In sum, only internal greatness can justify feelings of superiority and to identify great-souledness with arrogance is to succumb to an equivocation fallacy, to mistake internal greatness with external greatness. The arrogant person, though proficient in imitating the great-souled attitude and abounding in wealth and power to support the imitation, lacks the foundation for authentic great-souledness: great virtue.

Aside from the arrogant person, Aristotle describes two other kinds of people who might resemble the great-souled, but who ultimately fall short. If the arrogant resemble the great-souled because of their shared possession of external goods and, consequently, honor, the boaster and the ironist might resemble a virtuous person on account of their shared positive self-assessment (the boaster) and shared virtuous qualities (ironist), respectively. In both cases, however, there is no truthfulness in their self-evaluations:

> The boaster (ἀλαζὼν), then, seems apt to pretend to qualities held in high repute, both qualities he does not actually possess and those that are greater than the ones he does possess, whereas the ironist (εἴρων), conversely, seems to deny the qualities he actually possesses or to make them less. (NE 1127a.22-26)

[104] Those who side with Pakaluk's interpretation that the great-souled does not have contempt for people, but only for things, can still see how the *megalopsychos* can show contempt for people who offer smaller honors *because* of their contempt for things. Though this does not seem to be a likely interpretation.

Though many people may appear to be virtuous because of who they claim to be or have, the truly virtuous are truthful about their worthiness of merit. The boaster lacks the second of the great-souled qualities (the actual greatness), and the ironist lacks the first (self-perception of greatness). For Aristotle, to communicate an inflated or reduced self-assessment to others is to possess the vice of untruthfulness. To be virtuous in this regard, then, is to both have a true self-assessment and to communicate that truth to others, for

> In itself, what is false is base and blameworthy, whereas what is true is noble and praiseworthy. In this way too, he who is given to truthfulness, being characterized by the middle term, is praiseworthy; but both of those given to falsehoods are blameworthy, though more so the boaster. (NE 1127a.29-33)

The great-souled, the proud, and the boaster seem to all fall into a broader category, the category of people that may be called self-lovers. Aristotle addresses criticism commonly directed toward those who love themselves, showing skepticism that all of them should be criticized:

> For people censure those who are fondest of themselves, and on the grounds that these sorts of people are in disgrace, they stigmatize them as 'self-lovers' (φιλαύτους) The base person is held to do everything for his own sake, and the more corrupt he is, the more he does this: people accuse him of doing nothing apart from what concerns his own [good]. The decent person, by contrast, acts on account of what is noble; and the better a person he is, the more he acts on account of what is noble and for the sake of a friend, while disregarding himself. (NE 1168a.29-35)

Here, Aristotle lays out a common misconception: those who care only about themselves are base and those who disregard themselves in favor of the good of their friends are decent. Aristotle cannot make sense of this, for it seems self-evident that one must be a friend to oneself before—logically and chronologically—being a friend to anyone else

(NE 1168b.10). We have feelings of friendship toward people for whom we want good things, and, above all, one wants good things for oneself. Therefore, for Aristotle, friendship toward others is primarily derived from feelings that are had toward oneself. He then undertakes the task of figuring out what kind of self-love is blameworthy, and what kind is a constitutive part of the virtue of friendship. Aristotle argues that those who criticize self-love are, in fact, denouncing those "people who allot to themselves the greater share of money, honors, and bodily pleasures" (NE 1168b.16-17). These are those who overreach more than their fair share of external goods, and "gratify their desires and, in general, their passions and the nonrational part of their soul" (NE 1168b.19-21). Aristotle whole-heartedly agrees that these should receive reproach, for they not only exhibit the vice of intemperance, but of injustice too. However, he thinks there is a kind of person who is more of a self-lover than this intemperate, unjust kind. These, however, are rarely considered self-lovers:

> For if someone should always take seriously that he himself does what is just, or moderate, or whatever else accords with the virtues, and, in general, if he should secure what is noble for himself, no one would say that he is a 'self-lover' or even blame him. But this sort of person would seem to be more of a self-lover; at any rate, he allots to himself the noblest things and the greatest goods. (NE 1168b.26-28)

For Aristotle, these are the true self-lovers, for they claim as theirs the noblest things and the greatest goods, but do not do so without deserving those goods. According to this view, the great-souled is necessarily a lover of the self, for "he will both profit himself and benefit others by doing noble things" while the non-virtuous "will harm both himself and his neighbor, since he follows his base passions" (NE 1169a.10).

Summary

In this section, I have shown Aristotle's multi-faceted description of *megalopsychia* as a virtue that makes one worthy of great honors due to a correct self-evaluation of greatness in the virtues. Aristotle also includes an attitude of contempt for external goods and for people who do not measure up to their virtue, and a general sense of self-sufficiency, as part of the manifestations of the virtue. I showed some of the interpretative difficulties that *megalopsychia* offers commentators, such as its unfittingness within Aristotle's general theory of the mean, its lack of precise consequent actions and passions, and, most importantly, its moral ambiguity due to its relation to honor-seeking. The fact that the *megalopsychoi* desire and seek out honor has seemed, to many commentators not only to contradict their lack of care for external goods, but also to be a deal-breaker in its position among the virtues given its dependence on external validation and its consequent negative attitude toward inferiors. I performed a brief survey of commentator's reactions to and interpretations of the virtue, showing that most fall into one of three categories: 1) those who acknowledge Aristotle's centralization on attaining honor and, on this basis, deny it is a virtue; 2) those who acknowledge Aristotle's centralization on attaining honor yet defend its position among the virtues; and 3) those who deny that honor is as central as it seems and, instead, defend its position among the virtues based on its focus on the greatness of virtue. The divergence of interpretations, I argued, is mostly due to the commentators' focus on some texts over others. I positioned myself between the first and second group, accepting as virtuous a modified version of the virtue, namely one that eliminates the endeavor of seeking out

honor (and, consequently, the *megalopsychos'* contempt for other people and difficulty in reciprocity) and prideful positive self-assessments, yet maintaining its desire for greatness and contempt for external goods. Finally, I have shown that, though *megalopsychia* seems to preclude the inclusion of humility among his virtues, it is not synonymous with Aristotle's understanding of arrogance or boastfulness. After all, *megalopsychia* is a virtue for Aristotle and, therefore, its possessors are limited in the means they may use to attain honor (as well as in the weight they give to it) and are truthful in their positive self-assessment. The arrogant and boastful, on the other hand, are mere imitators of the *megalopsychoi* and their positive self-assessment, yet lack the virtues to back it up and, thereby, their assessment is a false positive. Though the *megalopsychos* are not proud or boastful in this sense, they are lovers of themselves, and justifiably so. Throughout this section, I have shown many of the overlaps between Aristotle's *megalopsychia* and our traditional understanding of the vice of pride, such as its inclusion of an unqualified positive self-assessment, their contempt toward inferiors, and their strive for public honor. These characteristics, especially the first, will be pivotal for the comparative part of this study.

D. Conclusion

To many modern readers, there is something wildly unusual about some aspects of Aristotle's theory of the virtues. Much of the estrangement comes precisely from his views on the two attitudes I have considered in this chapter. In the words of Christopher Cordner:

> there are some things which Kant, and perhaps many of us, would see as external to virtue which Aristotle holds to be properly internal to it. These

> include a proper regard for honor and esteem from one's peers, the desire to avoid shame, and a proud valuing of oneself as a person who has succeeded in constituting himself as virtuous.[105]

Indeed, contemporary talk of virtue rarely veers toward discussions of public opinion or high esteem of oneself. Rather, virtue has to do with personal habits of moral behavior that guide the person toward good acts in each unique situation. The focus is usually on the individual, and not the opinion of the larger community. It is on one's constant need for improvement, and not on one's great worth of rewards. Focus on public opinion, personal reputation, and high self-regard, we think, tends to distract from what is truly relevant in moral decision-making, namely, the good. In fact, we tend to see these things as opposed to virtue—as the very sorts of things that virtue helps us overcome and leave behind.

I hinted earlier that Aristotle's *megalopsychia* resembles shame in odd and unexpected ways. In addition to highlighting the blatant similarity between them—one being a negative self-assessment that fears disrepute and the other a positive self-assessment that recognizes one's worthiness of great honors—I have argued that while Aristotle resists considering shame a virtue, modern readers react similarly to Aristotle's virtue of great-souledness. The reason for these resistances, however, are in direct conflict. Aristotle does not deny that shame is a virtue based on the fact that it is rooted in external rather than internal validation—after all, its origin is in love for the noble, not only in disapproval of the audience—but because it requires a base action, and the truly virtuous do not engage in these kinds of behavior. On the other hand, some modern

[105] Christopher Cordner, "Aristotelian Virtue and Its Limitations" *Philosophy* Vol 69 (1994): 296.

interpreters deny that great-souledness, as Aristotle describes it, should be considered among the virtues—not because it does not produce virtuous actions, but because it is overly reliant on external validation. Arguably, herein lies our great distance from Aristotle's moral universe.

Perhaps the gap is created by our historical location in, as Cordner notes, a post-Kantian moral world. While that may be part of the reason for our sense of distance, it is surely not the only reason. During the course of the comparative work in this project, I will offer a further historical argument: our resistance to reliance on other people's recognition of our moral behavior and to positive self-assessments of our worth as moral beings is an inheritance from monotheistic worldviews. In the next few chapters, I will show medieval Muslim and Christian appropriation of that which religious thinkers found appealing in Aristotle's virtue theory and their displacement of that which they found appalling. More specifically, in both traditions we will find similar resistance to consider shame before other people a virtue, but for different reasons than Aristotle's. The reason for their resistance becomes similar to our own: it is much too reliant on imperfect public approval. Moreover, in both traditions we will find tension between Aristotle's approval of great-souledness (or pride) as a virtue and their consideration of pride as the most terrible of vices, for much the same reasons as we do: it precludes the virtue of humility and requires positive self-assessments that are not wise to uphold, or even truthful. What are the religious thinkers' substitutions for shame before other people and magnanimity? Shame before God and humility. These appraisals, due to no mere coincidence, reflect much of our own values today

2. Al-Ghazālī on Shame and Pride

Woe unto you, O soul, are you not ashamed? You adorn your exterior for people and contend with God in secret with terrible sins. So, do you feel shame in front of people but not God? Is He less important than those gawking at you?

Al-Ghazālī. *On Vigilance and Self-Examination*, p.78

None shall enter the Garden in whose heart there is an atom's weight of pride.

Al-Ghazālī. *On the Condemnation of Pride and Conceit*, p. 558

In this chapter, I will analyze the moral and spiritual role of shame and pride in the work of Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī. Al-Ghazālī's most extensive discussions on shame and pride are in his *magnum opus*: *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (The Revival of the Religious Science).[1]

[1] Though this chapter consists mostly of a survey of the *Iḥyāʾ* as his latest and most important work, I will include ideas from his other books when they add relevant nuances that are not included in his major work. The Arabic versions I used have all been extracted from https://ghazali.org/Iḥyāʾ/Iḥyāʾ.htm. I have used the following English translations of the Books of the *Iḥyāʾ*: *Book of Knowledge*, trans. Nabih Amin Faris (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 1962); *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith*, trans. Nabih Amin Faris (Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1999); *The Mysteries of Purity*, trans. Nabih Amin Faris (Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1991); *The Mysteries of Worship*, trans. Edwin Elliot Calverley (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1992); *Invocations and Supplications*, trans. Khalid Williams (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2016); *On the Etiquette of Marriage*, trans. Madelain Farah (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984); *On the Etiquette of Living*, trans. Leon Zolondek (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963); *The Marvels of the Heart*, trans. W. J. Skellie (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2010); *On Disciplining the Soul*, trans. T. J. Winter (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 1995); *On Breaking the Two Appetites*, trans. Caesar E. Farah (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1992); *On Intention and Sincerity*, trans. Asaad F. Shaker (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2016); *On Vigilance and Self-Examination*, trans. Anthony F. Shaker (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2015). All translations of *Evil of the Tongue*, *Condemnation of Anger, Rancor and Envy*, *Condemnation of Niggardliness and Greed for Wealth*, *Condemnation of Majesty and Showing Off*, *Condemnation of Arrogance and Vanity* are by Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif in *Revival of Religion's Sciences: Volume III* (Beirut: DKI, 2011). All translations of *On Repentance*, *On Patience and Gratitude*, *On Fear and Hope*, *On Poverty and Asceticism*, *On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment*, *Remembrance of Death and Hereafter Life* are by Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif in *Revival of Religion's Sciences: Volume IV* (Beirut: DKI, 2011). The English translation I used for *The Alchemy of Happiness* is from Claud Field (London: J. Murray, 1909). Free translations of passages from the *Iḥyāʾ* and from the *Mīzān* were done by me and, when cited in the footnotes, with the help of Ramage Maher.

In the first section of this chapter, I will elucidate al-Ghazālī's central claim that knowledge is necessary for moral and spiritual progress and success—and how it relates to shame and pride. For him, the attainment of knowledge about the praiseworthy and blameworthy traits of character, with shame included in the latter category and pride in the former, is the individual duty of all Muslims and the foremost means to achieving the eternal reward. In the second section, I will consider his ethical theory, which includes the "internal principles" that are responsible for human moral choices, the emotions, and the virtues and vices. This foundational work will later help frame his discussion of shame and pride. After establishing this foundation, the chapter's third section is dedicated to shame in al-Ghazālī's work—his definitions, his reasons for considering shame a virtue, the qualifications he gives for its being a virtue and, finally, his unqualified praise of shame felt before God. Finally, I will dedicate the fourth section to pride. In this section, I will examine his account of pride's definition, causes, results, remedies, and close relatives, such as love of status and ostentation, all of which provide the reasons he considers it a vice. I will also analyze his views on the virtue of greatness of soul, which, at first glance, might seem synonymous with pride.

Given the attention al-Ghazālī gives to these emotions, and the centrality they hold in the corpus, I argue that shame and pride are essential self-assessing emotions and traits of character in the life of believers. Developing shame is essential to being virtuous and pride is key to the downfall of the moral and spiritual journey. I will show that al-Ghazālī defines shame as an emotional state that arises from a negative self-assessment and awareness of an observing audience (either human or divine). I will demonstrate that,

with support from various hadith, al-Ghazālī holds shame before human beings among the virtues, one that must be encouraged from childhood, because it indicates the person's accurate moral knowledge of what is good and of one's shortcomings, and because it has the potential of deterring future immoral acts. Nonetheless, I will show al-Ghazālī's hesitancy to consider all kinds of shame virtuous. Shame before humans may be felt irrationally, mixed with other blameworthy attitudes, and is a less noble moral motivation in comparison to love for virtue. I will then argue that, due to his theological assumptions and his mystical understanding of Islamic rituals, there is a kind of shame that al-Ghazālī considers unqualifiedly virtuous: shame before God. Shame before God displays the person's correct knowledge of their sinful condition as well as correct theological knowledge of God's superiority, omniscience, and role as final judge of human behavior. I will display al-Ghazālī's definition of pride as, by contrast, an dispositional state arising from vicious positive self-assessments of superiority and self-admiration, the origin and cause of all sin. As an abuse of the lordly qualities given by God to humans, pride is the result of ignorance of God as the creator and conferrer of all good things, of ignorance of one's defects and God's awareness of them, and ignorance of the equal ontological standing of all human beings. As all vices, pride results in vicious acts, both in the short and long term. Though al-Ghazālī lists greatness of the soul as a virtue, which he defines in terms of knowledge of one's superiority, I will show that he does not believe humans are in fact capable of knowing enough about themselves and of others in order to develop this virtue. In sum, I hope to unfold the idea that al-Ghazālī considers the attainment of the virtue of shame and deterrence of pride the unavoidable consequences of proper

knowledge—of the self, of other human beings, and especially of God—and the practice of acts that demonstrate such knowledge.

A. Knowledge of Shame and Pride

In the introduction to the *Iḥyāʾ*, al-Ghazālī spells out his motivation for writing this book: science, or knowledge, of religion has been forgotten in the Islamic community. As he sees it, those who have the responsibility for guiding the people toward correct knowledge—the ‘learned men’—have been overcome by Satan, lost in greed for ‘immediate fortune.’ In writing this book, he volunteers to take upon himself their task, delivering a faithful, comprehensive, and lucid exposition of the inner and outer requirements of true religion. These two *loci* of religion (inner and outer life) help organize the book: the first part is dedicated to the outer requirements and the second part, to the inner requirements. Each part consists of two further subdivisions, totaling four parts—one on ritual, one on social and civil rules, one on the vices that obstruct the path to salvation, and the fourth on the necessary virtues to achieve salvation. Knowledge of shame and pride, for him, affect or are a central part of both the inner and outward dimensions of the religious life and, therefore, are relevant features in all four parts of the book. Given the title he gives to the book, it is not surprising that the first chapter of the *Iḥyāʾ* is entitled *The Book of Knowledge* (*Kitāb al-’ilm*). In it, al-Ghazālī describes the attainment of knowledge as 1) what distinguishes humans from other animals (BK 8); 2) an obligatory ordinance for every Muslim; 3) what gives Muslims the precise tools to avoid evil and to seek what is good (BK 28); and 4) what leads to ultimate happiness, which is one’s encounter with God in the hereafter (BK 11). In other words, attaining

knowledge is not only a *means* to achieve “happiness in this world and the next” (BK 11), but also an *end,* “destined for man and his special characteristic for which he was created” (BK 31).

More specifically, for al-Ghazālī, the kind of knowledge that guides humans to happiness in the hereafter is the knowledge of praiseworthy and blameworthy attitudes and states. Knowledge of these attitudes and states—their nature, fruits, remedies and signs—is what al-Ghazālī unfolds throughout the *Iḥyāʾ* and is what he considers the “science of the hereafter”— the knowledge that leads one to the reward in the afterlife. As we will clearly see throughout this chapter, he classifies shame exclusively as a praiseworthy state of the heart, while he ranks pride solely as a blameworthy state of the heart. This is hinted at already in the beginning of *The Book of Knowledge*, where al-Ghazālī lists some of the principal praiseworthy and blameworthy attitudes and states that he will go on to cover throughout the *Iḥyāʾ*:

> The science of practical religion is the science of the states of the heart, of which the praiseworthy (*maḥmūda*) are fortitude, gratitude, fear, hope, resignation, devotion, piety, contentment, generosity, recognition of one’s obligation to God under all circumstances, charity, good faith, morality, fellowship, truthfulness and sincerity. To know the truth concerning these states as well as their definitions and the means whereby they are attained, together with their fruits and signs, and tending whatever states has been weakened until it becomes strong again and whatever has disappeared until it reappears, belongs to the science of the hereafter. (BK 42)

> On the other hand, the blameworthy (*yaḏām*), such as the fear of poverty, discontent with one’s lot, bitterness, rancor, envy, deceit, ambition, the desire to be praised, the passion to live long in this life for the sake of indulgence, pride (*al-kibr*), hypocrisy, anger, scorn, enmity, hatred, ... conceit, being diverted from attending to one’s own faults by being occupied with other people’s shortcomings, the vanishing of grief from the heart and the departure of fear of Allah from it, ... lack of shame (*ḳala*

> *ḥayā ʾ*) and lack of mercy - these and many similar qualities of the heart are the seed-beds of immoralities and the nursery-gardens of turpitudes. (BK 42-43)

Though shame (*ḥayā ʾ*) only appears in the list of blameworthy states, because the blameworthy state consists in the lack of shame, one can suppose that to feel shame is to be in a praiseworthy state of the heart. That al-Ghazālī thinks this will become obvious in the next section. For him, shame and pride are states of the heart that give rise to moral and immoral action, respectively. Understanding them well equips the Muslim with the knowledge necessary to avoid and eradicate evil traits and develop a praiseworthy character (*al-k̲h̲alaḳ al-maḥmūda*). Because knowledge of shame and pride (or, at least, knowledge of the sources of these states) is embedded in the science of the hereafter—a sacred kind of knowledge—it is *farḍ al-'ayn*, the individual duty of every Muslim.[2] In

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[2] As we will see later in the chapter, al-Ghazālī believes that it is this knowledge *about* these traits, and habituation in these traits, that allow the believer to feel the right emotions in the appropriate circumstances. That is, correct theoretical knowledge leads to correct moral emotions, character, and actions. In thinking in these terms, it seems he could best be classified as a cognitive theorist of emotions. That is, emotions are, or necessarily include, cognitive judgments (or, in Nussbaum's terms, "evaluative perceptions"), expressing knowledge about an object or state of affairs. In this way, emotions have propositional content, which their subjects accept or affirm. Or, alternatively, emotions may express one's values—what one deems important. In thinking this way, al-Ghazālī seems open to the idea that if we change the propositional content (or evaluative perception) about an object or state of affairs, we are able to change our emotions. In other words, if we have the appropriate knowledge, we will have appropriate emotional responses. Furthermore, he believes that we are indirectly responsible for our emotions, since, for the most part, we choose how much and what kind of knowledge we acquire and the values we seek to prioritize—this knowledge or these values can be in line or out of line with proper Muslim knowledge and values. For more on cognitivist theories of emotions, see Robert Solomon, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 1993) and Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For criticism to such theories, see John Deigh, *Emotions, Values, and the Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jesse Prinz, *The Emotional Construction of Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) and Paul Griffiths, *What Emotions Really Are: The Problem of Psychological Categories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). On the other hand, in using the language of "feelings" along with his emphasis in beliefs and knowledge, al-Ghazālī might be more in line with those theorists who take a middle ground approach, such as Peter Goldie, who take feelings to be an essential element of the experience of emotion, but identify these

other words, for al-Ghazālī, knowledge of the emotion of shame and pride are on the same level of importance as *ṣalāt* (daily prayer) and the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). Though he takes the obligatoriness of this knowledge as consensus among the 'learned men,' al-Ghazālī complains that most do not take it as seriously as, for example, knowledge of external rituals or laws about divorce. In writing the *Iḥyā*ʾ, al-Ghazālī's explicit goal is to counter the tendency to focus exclusively on knowledge of correct external religious performance, and give proper attention to knowledge of correct internal spiritual states, including shame and pride.

How, then, should one attain such knowledge that leads to happiness in the hereafter? In the first place, this knowledge can be obtained by studying the sacred Islamic sources (the Qur'an and the Hadith on the life of the Prophet). Second, it can be attained by observing the practices and statements of the Companions of the Prophet and Sufi masters. Third, a superior and mystical kind of knowledge can be imbued by God himself through intimate encounters with him. These three means to salvific knowledge are covered in the *Iḥyā*ʾ. Al-Ghazālī surveys the sacred sources and traditions about the behavior and sayings of holy men, systematically laying them out to the reader. Furthermore, he points to practical ways through which the reader can receive the imbued knowledge from God.

In this section, I have given a general overview of the location of knowledge of shame and pride within al-Ghazālī's broader project of informing the believers of sacred

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feelings with intentionality. That is, feelings are always *about* and *toward* the object of one's thought. Peter Goldie, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

knowledge. Before diving into the particulars of al-Ghazālī's views on shame and pride, we must consider the foundation upon which he holds them. The internal principles, the first category we will explore, will allow us to "physically" locate shame and pride within al-Ghazālī's ethical psychology. The second subsection on virtue and vice will give an overview of al-Ghazālī's definitions and lists of virtues and vices, categories that he also uses to refer to shame and pride. And, finally, the third subsection will be on emotions in the *Iḥyāʾ,* which will provide the tools to understand the role of emotions in al-Ghazālī's ideal moral and spiritual journey.

B. Al-Ghazālī's Ethical Theory

The internal principles

As we have seen above, al-Ghazālī spends a considerable amount of space in the *Iḥyāʾ* expounding the centrality of the inner life of the worshiper in order to attain a successful religious journey, the ultimate achievement of which is paradise and union with God. This focus on interiority comes in the footsteps of his autobiography, *al-Munqid min al-Dalāl* (*The Deliverer from Error*), where he gives detailed reasons why he has abandoned the highly theoretical methods of the Theologians, has found the philosopher's path to truth wanting, but has found fulfillment in the Sufi way.[3] One of the

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[3] In *The Deliverer of Error*, al-Ghazālī considers four groups who seek the truth: "I came to regard the various seekers (*sc.*after truth) as comprising four groups: (1) the *Theologians (mutakallimūn),* who claim that they fire the exponents of thought and intellectual speculation; (2) the *Bātinīyah,* who consider that they, as the party of 'authoritative instruction' *(ta'lim),* alone derive truth from the infallible *imam;* (3) the *Philosophers,* who regard themselves as the exponents of logic and demonstration; (4) the *Sufis or Mystics,* who claim that they alone enter into the 'presence' (*sc.*of God), and possess vision and intuitive understanding....I now hastened to follow out these four ways and investigate what these groups had achieved, commencing with the science of theology and then taking the way of philosophy, the 'authoritative instruction' of the Bātinīyah, and the way of mysticism, in that order" (p. 5). After going through his assessment of each of these paths, he

central ideas he appropriates from Sufism is that religion must focus primarily on internal purification, which is a prerequisite for external purification (MP 3). To properly locate the steps for this internal purification, al-Ghazālī spends a considerable amount of space elucidating his theory of the internal principles.

Al-Ghazālī calls the four 'parts' of the human inner life the "internal principles:" heart (*al-ḳalb*), spirit (*al-ruḥ*), soul (*al-nafs*) and intellect (*al-'aḳl*). These are responsible for developing the blameworthy or praiseworthy qualities or states that I mentioned in the previous section. He spells out the nature and purpose of each internal principle in *The Marvels of the Heart*, Book XXI of the *Iḥyāʾ*, giving each of these principles literal, material meanings. However, he is most interested in their other, more ethereal, definitions—those that he considers relevant for the study of the "destroying and saving

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concludes: "I knew that the complete mystic 'way' includes both intellectual belief and practical activity; the latter consists in getting rid of the obstacles in the self and in stripping off its base characteristics and vicious morals, so that the heart may attain to freedom from what is not God and to constant recollection of Him" (p. 18). The intellectual belief came much more naturally to al-Ghazālī. He studied the theory of all the main mystics (al-Makki, al-Muhasibi, al-Junayd, and al-Bistami), but it soon became clear to him that "what is most distinctive of mysticism is something which cannot be apprehended by study, but only by immediate experience, by ecstasy and by a moral change. What a difference there is between knowing the definition of health and satiety, together with their causes and presuppositions, and being healthy and satisfied! What a difference between being acquainted with the definition of drunkenness - namely, that it designates a state arising from the domination of the seat of the intellect by vapors arising from the stomach - and being drunk!...I apprehended clearly that the mystics were men who had real experiences, not men of words, and that I had already progressed as far as was possible by way of intellectual apprehension. What remained for me was not to be attained by oral instruction and study but only by immediate experience and by walking in the mystic way" (p. 18). According to him, it was his realization of this truth in the Sufi way that led him to abandon his privileged teaching position in Baghdad. *The Deliverer from Error* in W. Montgomery Watt (trans.), *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1951). For more details about al-Ghazālī's quest for truth and, more specifically, his dissatisfaction with the way of the philosophers, see Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). Griffel's work is one of the many works that have shown that, though he seems to position himself against the philosophers in the *Deliverance* and *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, he is in reality a creative appropriator of several philosophical ideas and theories. This idea will also be unfolded throughout this study.

qualities of the heart" (MH 4). Though they are distinct regarding the former, al-Ghazālī sees their definitions converging in relation to the latter. Each of the four qualities are "subtle tenuous substance[s] in man which knows and perceives" (MH 11). It is this similar function that allows al-Ghazālī to utilize the word 'heart' to almost always stand for any one or all of the substances.[4] More specifically, he often identifies the 'soul' with the 'heart,' using them interchangeably.[5] All of these substances, considered according to their immaterial meanings, are the parts that separate humans from other animals, and even mature adults from children.[6] They are what constitute human rationality and, most

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[4] According to W. J. Skellie, al-Ghazālī is borrowing this structure from Arabic philosophers, such as Ibn Sina, who in turn utilized Plato's division between 'rational soul' and 'irrational soul.' Al-Ghazālī's four inner qualities, then, are Plato's 'rational soul.' However, "he follows Aristotle in holding that the heart is the seat of the rational soul." (Introduction to *Marvels of the Heart*, p. xxii). See Avicenna, *Ahwal an-nafs* (The States of the Soul), edited by A.F. al-Ahwani (Cairo: Dar Iḥyāʾʾ al-Kutub al-Arabiyya, 1952) and *Avicenna's de Anima: The Psychological Part of Kitāb al-Shifā'*, edited by F. Rahman (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); Plato, *Phaedo*, edited by David Bostock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Aristotle, "On Youth, Old Age, Life and Death, and Respiration" in G. R. T. Ross (trans.), *Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. 1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955). According to Taneli Kukkonen, he preferred to use the expression 'heart' instead of a consideration of the soul/self as a move that "attempts to distance himself from Greek-derived philosophical terminology by putting forward an Arabic-Islamic alternative when-ever he can." "The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology" in *Ancient Philosophy of the Self,* P. Remes and J. Sihvola (Eds.) (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 2008), p. 208.

[5] And, as Jules Janssens notes, "in his discussions of the meanings of the 'heart' and the 'soul,' al-Ghazālī describes both as identical with man's own self." In "Al-Ghazālī between Philosophy (*falsafa*) and Sufism (*Tasawwuf*): His Complex Attitude in the Marvels of the Heart ('Aja'ib al-Qalb) of the Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn" in *The Muslim World* Vol 101.4 (2010-11): 635. Compare, for example, MH 183 and DS 32-35.

[6] This is a central point for al-Ghazālī because these are the properties which allow humans to have knowledge of and intimacy with God and to act in sophisticated ways: "It should be known that Allah bestowed on all animals other than man all of the things we have mentioned. For animals have appetence and anger, and external and internal senses…We will now mention that which peculiarly characterizes the heart of man, because of which he has been given great honor and is qualified to draw near to Allah. This special characteristic has its basis in knowledge and will….knowledge of axioms and universals is a peculiar property of the reason….Regarding the will, when a man perceives by his intellect the consequences of an act and the good way to deal with it, there is aroused within his essential self a desire for the interest, a desire to exert himself in the means to attain it, and also the will to this end" MH 13.

importantly for him, what allow humans to participate in the divine nature and strive toward God (MH 1).

Though all four substances share the role of perceiving and knowing and the goal of drawing near to God, he reserves a few particular functions to each. For al-Ghazālī, the soul is the locus of praiseworthy and blameworthy traits. He notes that Sufis define the soul as including both the faculty of anger (*qūwat al-ghaḍab)* and of appetite (*qūwat al-shahwa)* in humans, a definition with which he seems to agree (MH 8).[7] For him, the appetite consists in the animalistic part of the soul, responsible for the impulses that strive toward what is sensually profitable or suitable, while the faculty of anger is responsible for the impulses to avoid what is harmful or destructive.[8] The appetite might move the

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[7] Taneli Kukkonen identifies this division as ultimately Neoplatonic: "appetite and anger together constitute the brute soul, the *nafs ba-himiyya*, a term that derives from the Arabic adaptation of Plotinus (the so-called *Theology of Aristotle*). It is contrasted with the specifically human soul (*al-nafs al-insa-niyya*), which is the seat of reason. The latter is what we should identify with, as it is all that sets us apart from brute animals. Just enough Peripatetic materials exist to justify attributing such a dichotomy to Aristotle: but the moralising tone adopted both by the Theology and by Ghazalī is almost entirely Platonic. According to Ghazalī, the human being lies situated midway between the bestial and the angelic: we have, so to speak, a leg in both camps, living at once in both the sensible and the intelligible worlds. Insofar as we focus on our animal functions, we form part of the animal kingdom, while insofar as we partake of the angelic life we may be said to be or to become "angels in human form" (Mīza-n, 210). This schizophrenic condition is painted in the starkest of terms in Ghazalī's writings; it motivates the better part of his reflections on human psychology." In "The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology" p. 210-11.

[8] He also uses the terms "concupiscible" and "irascible," a common distinction that goes all the way back to Plato and that is repeatedly utilized in ancient and medieval thought. See, for example, Archer-Hind, R. D. (ed. and trans.), *The Timaeus of Plato* (Salem, NH: Ayers Co. Publishers, 1988); Aristotle, *De anima*, W.D. Ross (ed.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956); Avicenna, *Avicenna's Psychology. An English translation of Kitāb al-najāt, Book II, Chapter VI with Historico-philosophical Notes and Textual Improvements on the Cairo edition*, by F. Rahman (London: Oxford University Press, 1952); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Bro's, 1920); Hugh of St. Victor, *De substantia dilectionis* in *Six opuscules spirituels*, R. Baron (ed.) (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1969). For a broader overview, see Alix Cohen and Robert Stern (eds.), *Thinking about the Emotions: A Philosophical History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); John M. Cooper, *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

body toward that which is good, such as food when one is hungry, or to what is bad, such as an excessive amount of food. Similarly, the faculty of anger might steer the person clear from what is harmful, such as inappropriate sexual impulses, or steer them away from what is actually profitable, such as good friends. In order to understand al-Ghazālī's theory of how these faculties may work well or poorly, we must turn to his theory of the "armies of the heart."

Al-Ghazālī distinguishes between the four inner principles and what he calls 'the armies of the heart.' That is, the elements that intercede, either internally or externally, between the heart and the external world; those "instruments which the heart uses and employs as the king uses his slaves" (MH 2). He describes three internal armies:

> All the armies of the heart are limited to three classes. One class incites and instigates either to the obtaining of that which is profitable and suitable, as, for example, appetance (*al-shahwa*); or to the warding off of that which is harmful and destructive, as, for example, anger (*al-ghaḍab*). This impulse may be called the will (*iradah*). The second class is that which moves the members to the attainment of these desired ends, and it is called power (*ḳudrah*). These are armies which are diffused throughout the rest of the members, especially the muscles and sinews. The third class is that which perceives and gathers information as spies. These include the power of sight, hearing, smell, taste, etc., which are divided among certain appointed members. This is called intellect (*'ilm*) and perception (*idrak*) (MH 16-17).

Al-Ghazālī takes the internal armies of the heart to be the will, the intellect, and the power.[9] The will encompasses the appetite and anger, which, again, are the desire toward or avoidance of sensual objects. As such, here al-Ghazālī identifies the soul with the will and, therefore, the soul is an army of the heart. The intellect, on the other hand, is

[9] One internal principle (the soul) overlaps with one of the internal armies of the heart (the will).

a kind of "sense" that gathers and reflects upon information about the external world (MH 19).[10] As I described above, the will (appetite and anger) may or may not work as a "good" army of the soul. That is, it may be an instrument for the heart to obtain what is *actually* profitable and ward off what is *actually* unprofitable, but it may not. Whether the appetite and anger work well or poorly is dependent on them being "perfectly obedient to the heart," and this only happens when the heart uses the assistance of the army of intellect. If, however, the heart neglects the assistance of the intellect, it "gives the army of anger and appetence dominion over itself [the heart]," which disobey "in trespass and revolt" and "it will surely perish and suffer a manifest loss" (MH 20). In other words, the optimal state of the internal principles is that of appetite and anger being "forced by their intellects to labor at that which the mind has need of" (MH 20). The heart's use of the army of intellect over the appetite and anger is key to determining whether the heart will lead the person morally astray or to be in a state of obedience to God (MH 9). Finally, power *moves* the body toward or away from these desired objects.

In order to further illustrate the connection between the heart and its armies, the soul and its parts, the intellect and the body, al-Ghazālī proposes three analogies. One of them pictures it all fitting within the idea of a kingdom, to which he will harken back when speaking of shame. The body is the kingdom, the heart is its ruler, the powers and organs are laborers, and the intellect is a "sincere advisor and intelligent minister". In this

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[10] He also mentions other internal armies associated with the intellect, which process all of the information given through the senses, such as common sense, imagination, reflection, recollection, and memory (MH 18).

kingdom, the appetite is like "an evil slave who brings food and provisions to the city" and anger, because of its tendency to move the person away from destructive sensual things, is like the chief of police (MH 20).[11] Al-Ghazālī describes the slave (appetite) mostly as a liar and imposter who seeks, at any opportunity, to take the position of the advisor by offering terrible advice to the ruler, advice that is completely contrary to that of the sincere advisor. Because of this tendency to evil, the appetite's proper place is under the discipline of the chief of police (faculty of anger), who forces him under the authority of the advisor (MH 21). The ruler of the kingdom—the heart—is not essentially good or bad. His character depends upon the advice he chooses to follow. If he seeks advice from his intelligent minister, he is a good ruler. When advised by the minister, the ruler is wise enough to balance the chief of police and the slave according to the circumstances—sometimes becoming an ally of the slave and "gradually modifying it" (MH 22) and sometimes giving more authority to the chief of police to subdue the slave. If, however, he seeks advice from the slave and becomes submissive to him, ignoring the advice of the minister, he is a bad ruler. For al-Ghazālī, most of the people's hearts have surrendered to the counsel of the slave (MH 11).

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[11] In this section, al-Ghazālī describes the faculty of anger as mostly obedient to the intellect, working to ward off immoral desires and actions: "Likewise the heart needs two armies to drive off the things which destroy: an internal army of anger (*ghadab*) by which it drives off things which destroy and takes revenge upon its enemies, and an external which is the hand and the foot by which it carries out the dictates of anger" (MH 15) and "All the armies of the heart are limited to three classes. One class incites and instigates either to the obtaining of that which is profitable and suitable, as, for example, appetence (*shahwah*); or to the warding off of that which is harmful and destructive, as, for example, anger" (MH 16-17). Taneli Kukkonen confirms this reading by saying that "al-Ghazālī…regards the spirit [the translation he uses for the faculty of anger] as inherently more amenable to the suggestions of the intellect than appetite could be." "Al-Ghazālī on the Emotions" in *Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-Ghazālī. Papers Collected on His 900th Anniversary Vol. 1,* edited by Georges Tamer (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2015), p. 150.

Another of al-Ghazālī's illustrations for the interaction between the intellect, the appetite and anger is given within the context of the four human qualities. This illustration will be important to keep in mind when we analyze pride. According to him, humans have the qualities of "the beasts of prey, brutish qualities, demonic qualities, and lordly qualities:"

> In so far as anger rules over him he is addicted to the deeds of a beast of prey, such as enmity, detestation, and attacking people by beating and cursing them. In so far as [appetite] rules him he is addicted to brutish acts of gluttony, greed, carnal desire, and so on. In so far as there is within his soul something lordly, as Allah has said, "The Spirit is my Lord's affair" (17:87), he claims lordship for himself and loves mastery, superiority, exclusiveness, and despotism in all things; and to be the sole ruler, and to slip away from the noose of servility and humility. He longs to study all the sciences, nay rather he claims for himself science and knowledge and the comprehension of the real nature of things. He rejoices when knowledge is attributed to him, and is grieved when accused of ignorance. The comprehension of all realities, and seeking to rule by force over all creatures are among the lordly qualities, and man is greedy for them. In so far as he differs from the brutes in having the faculty of discernment, although sharing with them in anger and appetence, he attains to demonic qualities. Thus he becomes wicked and uses his discernment in the discovery of ways of evil. He seeks to attain his ends by guile, deceit, and cunning, and sets forth evil as though it were good. These are the characteristics of demons. (MH 36-37)

The relation between human qualities and their respective division of the heart is so strong that al-Ghazālī designates a personified representation of each of them. The appetite is the pig, anger is the dog, the demon stands for the demonic qualities, and a sage stands for the lordly qualities. At all times, all humans have a mixture of these four qualities in the heart. And, once again, al-Ghazālī presses the point that the person's character, and consequent success or failure in the moral and spiritual journey, hinges upon which part of the heart is dominant. If the person subjects him or herself to either

the pig or the dog, "he worships the demon in his worship of these two" (MH 39). From submission to the pig (appetite), al-Ghazālī lists the results: "shamelessness, wickedness, wastefulness, avarice, hypocrisy, defamation, wantonness, nonsense, greed, covetousness, flattery, envy, rejoicing at another's evil, etc." And from obedience to the dog (anger), he lists the results of "rashness, squandering, haughtiness, boasting, hot temper, pride, conceit, sneering, disregard, despising of creatures, the will to evil, the lust of oppression, etc" (MH 40). Interestingly, in the previous analogy al-Ghazālī tended to see the faculty of anger as generally working in favor of a good moral life, while here he returns to his initial contention that it's good work depends upon it being obedient to reason, or the lordly qualities. The ideal state, once again, is when the appetite and anger are put in submission under the lordly qualities—the principle of which is reason. When this happens, one's heart is set up for both intellectual and moral virtue; intellectually, "his heart becomes the abode of such lordly qualities as knowledge, wisdom, the comprehension of the real nature of things;" the appetite, under the dominance of reason, gives rise to "such honorable qualities as chastity, contentment, quietness, abstemiousness, godliness, piety, happiness, godly aspect, modesty (*al-ḥayāʾ*), sagacity, helpfulness, and such like;" and when the faculty of anger is submissive to reason, "man attains to the qualities of courage, generosity, gallantry, self-control, patience, gentleness, endurance, pardoning, steadfastness, nobility, valor, dignity, and others" (MH 41-42). In other words, once the appetite is under the control of reason, the heart develops the virtues of temperance, and where anger is under the control of reason, there lie the virtues of courage. As we can see in the quotations above, one of the virtues of temperance is

modesty, or shame, while one of the vices of anger is pride. For the appetite and anger to properly come under the dominion of the intellect, one must discipline the soul toward virtue—the title of the second chapter of this third section of the *Iḥyāʾ* and the topic I will cover below. What are the virtues and vices, according to al-Ghazālī, and how can they be developed?

Virtues and Vices: nature and process of attainment

In the book entitled *On Disciplining the Soul*, al-Ghazālī first sets out to prove that God is he who ordains the improvement of character and to describe the nature of good character. Religion, according to the Hadith, is synonymous with good character (DS 8). Firstly, he defines a character trait as "a firmly established condition (*hay'a*) of the soul, from which actions proceed easily without any need for thinking or forethought" (DS 17). More specifically, then, a good character trait is present when this condition of the soul is "disposed towards the production of beautiful and praiseworthy deeds, as these are acknowledged by the Law, and the intellect" (DS 17).[12] That is, when the person is disposed to do the praiseworthy acts that are prescribed in the Law and dictated by the intellect. This can only happen if the intellect consistently rules over the faculties of appetite and anger (MH 20; OR 14, 43; CARE 279). The same idea is applicable to vice,

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[12] Given the lack of space, I will not be able to cover all of the interesting ways al-Ghazālī differs from the Aristotelian framework in my fourth chapter. Therefore, I will flag here one distinction that I will not cover, but that is interesting nonetheless: the distinction between Aristotle's purely rational ethics in contrast with al-Ghazālī's blended view of reason and *shari'a*. Kenneth Garden, in identifying this key distinction, notes that, for him, "philosophical ethics and the revealed law become mutually interdependent. Truly following the law is only possible for a virtuous soul, and a virtuous soul can only be recognized by its perfect adherence to the law. This becomes an important theme in the *Revival*, in which al-Ghazālī insists on the primacy of the law, but also that following the letter of the law in the absence of its ethical spirit is inadequate." Garden, p. 53.

only the disposition is toward blameworthy deeds, when the faculties of the soul dominate over the deliberations of the intellect. Elsewhere in the chapter, he calls a good character trait ‘virtue’ (*al-faḍīla*) and a bad character trait ‘vice’ (*al-raḍīla*). Nonetheless, al-Ghazālī uses the terms ‘good/praiseworthy traits’ (*al-a*k*h*l*aḳ al-maḥmūda*) and ‘virtue’ (*al-faḍīla*), and ‘bad/blameworthy traits’ (*al-a*k*h*l*aḳ al-maḍmuma)* and ‘vice’ (*al-raḍīla*), interchangeably.[13]

In keeping with the Islamic philosophical tradition’s Platonic heritage, al-Ghazālī distributes the main virtues according to the trichotomy of the soul—the rational faculty, the irascible faculty, and the appetitive faculty (for him, intellect, anger, and appetite)—and the faculty that encompasses all three:

> Therefore, the fundamental good traits of character are four in number: Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice. By ‘Wisdom’ we mean a condition of the soul by which it distinguishes true from false in all volitional acts, by ‘Justice’ a condition and potency in the soul by which it controls the expansion and contraction of anger and desire as directed by Wisdom. By ‘Courage’ we refer to the subjection of the irascible faculty to the intellect, while by ‘Temperance’ we have in mind the disciplining of the appetitive faculty by the intellect and the Law. It is from the equilibrium of these four principles that all the good traits of character proceed, since when the intellect is balanced it will bring forth discretion and excellence of discernment, penetration of thought and correctness of conjecture, and an understanding of the subtle implications of actions and

[13] For example, he calls them *al-faḍīla* and *al-raḍīla* in this passage “The irascible faculty, when sound and balanced, is called ‘Courage’ [*shuja’a*]; similarly, the appetitive faculty, when sound and balanced, is known as ‘Temperance’ [*‘iffa*]. Should the former faculty lose its balance and incline towards excess it is called ‘recklessness’ [*tahawwur*], while should it incline towards weakness and insufficiency it is termed ‘cowardice’ [*jubn*] and ‘languor’ [*khur*]. Should the appetitive faculty move to the point of excess it is called ‘cupidity’ [*sharah*], while if it should incline to defect it is known as ‘indifference’ [*jumud*]. The mean is the praiseworthy thing, and it is this which constitutes virtue (*al-faḍīla*), while the two extremes are blameworthy vices (*al-raḍīla*)” (DS 20) and just below calls them *al-a*k*h*l*aḳ al-maḥmūda*: “Therefore, the fundamental good traits (*al-a*k*h*l*aḳal-maḥmūda*) of character are four in number: Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice” (DS 21). Mohamed Sherif notices the same pattern in *Ghazālī’s Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), p. 30, 110.

the hidden defects of the soul. (DS 21)

The fundamental virtues of good character—wisdom (*ḥikma*), courage (*s̲h̲ud̲jāʼa*), temperance (*ʻiffa*), and justice (ʻ*adāl*)—are manifested when the three parts of the soul are "settled, balanced, and in the correct proportion to each other" (DS 19). Those who achieve this balance are "possessed of a good character under all circumstances" (DS 20). Al-Ghazālī supplements each virtue with a list of sub-virtues and contrasting vices. In the case of courage and temperance, they are the following:

> As for the trait of Courage, this gives rise to nobility, intrepidity, manliness, greatness of soul [*kibār al-nafs*], endurance, clemency, steadfastness, the suppression of rage, dignity, affection [*tawaddud*] and other such praiseworthy qualities. When unbalanced on the side of excess, which is recklessness, it leads to arrogance, conceit, quickness to anger, pride [*takabbur*] and vainglory [*ʻujb*], and when on the side of defect, to ignominy, self-abasement [*dhilla*], cowardice, meanness, lack of resolution, and holding oneself back from doing that which is right and obligatory. (DS 21-22)
>
> As for the quality of Temperance, this gives rise to generosity, modesty [*ḥayāʾ*], patience, tolerance, contentedness with one's low, scrupulousness, wit, helping others, cheerfulness and absence of craving. When it deviates towards excess or defect, greed, cupidity and obscenity result, as do spite, extravagance, stinginess, ostentation, immorality, obscenity, triviality, flattery, envy, malice, self-abasement before the rich, disdain for the poor, and so forth. (DS 22)

We will be circling back to a few of these virtues and vices in the sections on the virtue of shame/modesty (*ḥayāʾ*) and the vice of pride (*kibr*), as well as the latter's distinction from the virtue of greatness of soul (*kibār al-nafs*). For now, a general overview of the whole list will suffice. All of the virtues and sub-virtues are, in perfect Aristotelian fashion, the mean between two vices.[14] This is why the virtue is

[14] As noted by Kukkonen, "The treatise *On Disciplining the Soul*, long considered a centrepiece in the

characterized as the “sound” or “balanced” position, while the vices are either an “incline toward excess” or an “incline to defect”: “The mean is the praiseworthy thing, and it is this which constitutes virtue, while the two extremes are blameworthy vices” (DS 20). Possibly because of his discomfort in borrowing a concept so clearly philosophical, al-Ghazālī straight away grounds the concept in the Qur’an. That is, moderation is a Qur’anic moral ideal, not one invented by the philosophers. In the case of generosity, for example, the Qur’an states: “And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor grudging; and there is ever a middle point between the two” (Q 25:67 - cited in DS 28-29).

How, then, does one attain a good character, that is, the qualities of the heart called virtues? The process of attaining a good character, for al-Ghazālī, is not one in which the person aims toward the *extirpation* of all natural desires and passions, but “to the *restoration* of their balance and moderation, which is the middle point between excess and defect” (DS 28). Why does al-Ghazālī use the idea of ‘restoration’ instead of ‘development’ of a balanced internal drive? Because, in keeping with Islamic anthropology, al-Ghazālī holds the position that human nature (*fitra*) is originally and thus naturally pure and devoid of malice. The *fitra* is naturally inclined to what is good, which is why he considers the inclination toward unlawful thoughts and actions a disease:

Revivification, in fact reads like a monotheist’s guide to the *Nicomachean Ethics* in many places. Special attention is paid to the doctrine of the mean and its attendant complications; another favourite theme is how character is nothing but a condition or state (*hay’a*) of the soul-self that is particularly well-established (3:49.19).” “The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology”: 220.

> The soul’s inclination to these disgusting things is unnatural, and resembles an inclination to the eating of mud; yet even this may gain control over some people and become a habit. As for the inclination to wisdom and the love, knowledge and worship of God, this resembles the inclination towards food and drink. It is the expression of the heart’s nature, and is a divine command, while an inclination to the demands of one’s desires is in itself something strange, and is not part of its nature. (DS 35)

Full restoration of the naturally balanced order of one’s desires and actions has only ever been achieved by the prophet Muhammad. For this reason, part of the process of disciplining the soul is to look to his life, his example, and attempt to emulate it: “Thus a man is close to God (Exalted is He!) in proportion to his closeness to His Emissary (may God bless him and grant him peace)” (DS 22). In addition to, or in conjunction with this method, al-Ghazālī, suggests three ways by which one can acquire the perfect virtues of the Prophet: 1) Divine grace; 2) habituation; and 3) education. These three methods of moral development will form an integral part of his theory on shame and pride.

Divine grace, for al-Ghazālī, is, in actuality, an innate disposition gifted by God “whereby a man is born and created with a sound intellect and a good character, and is preserved from the powers of desire [appetite] and anger,” thus becoming “learned without an instructor, and disciplined without being subject to any discipline” (DS 31). This innate disposition is what led all the prophets to be moral exemplars. Habituation consists in acts of “spiritual struggle and exercise...until his nature conforms to it and it becomes easy” (DS 32). In other words, it is the consistent and frequent acts of virtue, or the cultivation of virtuous habits (*al-’ādāt*) that eventually “become[s] one of his traits and part of his nature, at which time it will come easily” (DS 32). By consistently practicing good acts, the person is also combating the specific vices one has acquired

with their opposites: "the ugliness which is the heart's sickness can only be treated with its own opposite, so that the disease of ignorance is treated by education, that of avarice by giving money away, that of pride by self-effacement, and that of greed by forcibly restraining oneself from the things one craves" (DS 40).

Finally, al-Ghazālī mentions the importance of the moral education of children, to which he dedicates an entire subsection of the Book ("An Exposition of the Way in which Young Children should be Disciplined, and the Manner of their Upbringing and the Improvement of their Characters"). Beyond childhood, education is a constant need throughout one's life, a view that al-Ghazālī makes clear with his focus on true knowledge throughout the *Iḥyāʾ*.[15] All of these means lead not only to virtuous acts that come easily, but to those that are pleasurable to the agent (DS 32). On the flip side, the virtuous person "loathes and is hurt by ugly [deeds]" (DS 32).[16] The development of virtues is the project of a lifetime, and one's striving toward good character should "remain with one throughout one's life, so that the longer a man's life extends, the more solid and complete will be his virtue" (DS 33).

In al-Ghazālī's three-fold model for virtue development, he considers both virtue and vice to be linked to a combination of knowledge and action. Education serves to provide the accurate knowledge that one needs to develop virtue and habituation serves to

[15] Sherif makes an interesting point that habituation and education "are fundamentally the same, since learning how to act virtuously is in fact a form of habituation," but, he notes, "Ghazālī makes a slight distinction between the two. Habituation for him implies a positive attitude on the part of the agent in seeking to acquire virtue, whereas learning depends on an authority outside the agent that teaches him how to act virtuously even if he is not wholeheartedly seeking to attain such a state." Sherif, p. 31.
[16] He further asserts that "The man in whom all three aspects are manifest, so that he is virtuous by nature, by habituation and by education, is possessed of the supreme virtue;" DS 38

direct one's body and will to accord with the acquired knowledge. In contrast, the vicious diseases of the soul may be caused by ignorance (treated with education) or bad habits (treated with acting in opposite ways of one's particular vice). Al-Ghazālī's use of knowledge and works/actions as moral and spiritual preventative and curative measures, as we will see, is ubiquitous in the *Iḥyāʾ*, including in his discussion of shame and pride.

In order to help frame al-Ghazālī's discussion of shame and pride, we must also briefly assess his views on emotions. This is the topic covered below.

Emotions

Despite his partiality for focusing on the inner conditions of the religious practitioner, al-Ghazālī does not have a specific category for what we call 'emotions' today, or even for what most medieval Latin Christian thinkers would call 'passion' (*passio*). What he does have, nonetheless, is the narrower category of *al-shahwa*. This term is translated in his works as either 'passion' or 'appetite.' We have seen that what he means by *al-shahwa* is the faculty of appetite above. Relatedly, in contexts in which it is best translated as 'passion(s)' the word has a stronger connotation of 'desire,' or 'lust,'[17] and refers to the fleshly desires, inclinations and longings that conflict with reason, that is, the inclinations of *the faculty of appetite or of anger* (the concupiscible or the irascible) gone astray from the dictates of the intellect (MH 11; PG 174). Another component of his characterization of these inclinations deriving from the appetite and anger is that of pleasure and pain. The appetitive faculty, for him, is "in pursuit of

[17] In fact, he uses the two terms "desires and passions" together, and as metanyms, several times in the *Iḥyāʾ*. See MP 291, 306; ERQ 560, PA 367. Elsewhere, he mentions passions as parallel to "hopes" (ES 425).

pleasure," while anger is "in flight from the harm" (PG 101). The passions that are not under the dominion of the intellect pursue immediate pleasures and avert from immediate pains (PG 155). Passions, then, for him, can be identified as desires toward material things that provide immediate pleasure, especially related to food and sex (MH 13; PG 174, 176), stemming from the appetitive part of the soul. The passions deriving from the faculty of anger, on the other hand, are aversions from things perceived as bad or that bring pain (PG 174, 176). An example that he gives of an appetitive passion is love, which is an "inclination by disposition to a pleasant thing" (LLIC 442). An example of a passion from the faculty of anger is rancor, which is "to have in one's heart long-lasting aversion and hatred towards another" (CARE 300). This view of the passions certainly falls short of a complete account of the 'emotions.' For instance, al-Ghazālī does not provide a list of inclinations or desires he considers to be passions nor does he provide important distinctions. For example, how should we understand a particular passion that has a second order degree of desire within its definition, such as hope, which is the expectation for something desirable (FH 217)? What of the passions that he defines in terms of *feeling* (استشعار) rather than in terms of desire/aversion, such as when he speaks of the "feeling of arrogance" (PG 107; CAV 573) and "feeling of rancor" (CMSO 476), ostentation as "feeling pleasure" for one's acts (CAV 500), the "feeling of shame" (CAV 523, 525; MW 314, 326, 333), the "feeling of pain that is fear" (CAV 460; ERQ 548, 550, 555), and the "feelings of anger, resentment, envy" (BK 147), among many others. It seems to be the case that, when theorizing about the passions, he refers to them in terms of desire, while on the overwhelming number of occasions in which al-Ghazālī actually

names a passion, he uses the term "feeling" (استشعار). Perhaps the account that can best harmonize these seemingly distinct definitions is that the passions are bodily feelings that necessarily include a desire for or aversion from certain things, that is, a cognitive or evaluative judgment of sorts.[18] Alternatively, this discrepancy is a clear example of something we will explore later in the chapter, namely, al-Ghazālī's occasional lack of analytical precision and attentive distinctions.

In any case, it is clear that al-Ghazālī sees these desires/aversions or feelings emerging from the faculties of appetite and anger in the soul. And the domination of the dictates of the appetite and anger, for him, is equal to the domination of Satan over the soul,[19] and, "[s]ince no heart is devoid of appetence, anger, miserliness, covetousness, hope of long life, and other similar human qualities which originate in desire, there is no heart in which Satan does not roam about prompting to evil" (MH 48). These carnal desires generally lead one far from the path to God and, therefore, are, by definition, evil inclinations:

> The passions (*al-shahwāt*) are the soldiers of Satan, and the minds, those of the angels. When they come together combat is, of necessity, joined between them, as one does not yield to the other, they being adversaries. The strife between them is like the struggle between night and day, light and darkness. Whenever the one gains ascendancy, the other is, necessarily, roused. If the desires mature during childhood or adolescence, before the perfection of the intellect, then the satanic forces have preceded and mastered the situation. (OR 42)

These passions are what lead one to be "undaunted by the consequence of...disobedience"

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[18] As I have mentioned in footnote 2, this would make al-Ghazālī's account either a cognitive theory of emotions or a hybrid account, which considers emotions feelings coupled with intentionality, such as that of Peter Goldie.

[19] "The weapons of Satan are desire and the appetites" (MH 52).

and unfazed by the prospect of eternal punishment and death (OR 40).[20] The pious person "should not be dominated by passions" (FAF 33) for all impious thoughts and character traits are brought about by the dominance of the passions over the soul (OVSE 21, 28).[21] And "passion is like a firmly rooted tree to the eradication of which the servant should be dedicated" (OVSE 72). The secret to eradicating the dominance of the passions, for al-Ghazālī, is repentance—the return from the dominance of passions/desires to one in which the intellect, "which is God's troop and force," is dominant, "perfected and strengthened" (OR 43).

As we noted above, he believes that "[i]n every human being passion prevails over intellect; the impulse which is a device of Satan prevails over the impulse which is an instrument of the angels. Every human being, be he Prophet or fool, must abandon the steps taken to promote desire" (OR 14). Here is where the influence of Aristotelian ethics over al-Ghazālī shines, for it is from this tradition that he borrows the idea that the process of giving dominion to the intellect, and the consequent moderation of the passions, is done through the development of the virtues.[22] The goal, therefore, is not extirpation, but moderation of the passions:

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[20] For more passages in which al-Ghazālī refers to *al-shahwa* in this way, see FAF 27; BK 28, 207, 210; MH 145, 183; OR 14, 63, FH 218; PA 367; PG 119.

[21] "Know that your worst enemy is your soul inside you. It was created to incite ill and predisposed toward evil and the desertion of the good. You are bidden to purify, reform and lead it through continual subjugation to worship of its Lord and Creator. You must forbid it its passions (*al-shahwāt*) and wean it from its pleasures. Neglect it and it runs and wanders away, after which you will not [be able to] vanquish it. Reproach, censure and blame it, on the other hand, and it will be the same self-reproaching soul by which God has sworn." OVSE 68

[22] Kenneth Garden confirms this reading in his analysis of *Mīzān al-'Amal* (Criterion for Action):

> Some people...had the impression that the purpose of self-mortification is to absolutely suppress anger and appetence, and exterminate them; and how far! Appetence was created for a particular benefit and it is necessary for the sound disposition. If the appetite for food discontinues man will be ruined; and if the appetite for sexual relation is absent, there will be no propagation. If the power of anger does not exist, man will not be able to defend himself against his destructives, and thus he will be given to destruction....What is required is not to remove that entirely in so much as it is to adjust it to be moderate, i.e. to be in the middle between excess and indulgence. (DS 99)

The clear difference, however, can be seen in the fact that al-Ghazālī reserves very few references to *al-shahwa* under a positive light, as we have seen frequently in the case of passions for Aristotle and will see even more in the work of Aquinas. What al-Ghazālī does instead is make a distinction between results of the *excess* of passion and of the *defect* of passion.

One of the few examples that we see of this in the *Iḥyāʾ* is in *Condemnation of Anger, Rancor, and Envy*, where he characterizes indulgence, anger, harshness, rancor, and envy as passions (CARE 277-278). These, however, are "traces of the radical anger."

"Practice consists in training the self to act ethically by cultivating habitual virtues such as wisdom and courage and eliminating habitual vices such as foolishness, cowardice, or rashness. Ethical training is necessary because the default disposition among human beings is to follow the dictates of their passions: anger and the appetites for food and sex. The passions, al-Ghazālī writes, have their uses. In order for the human soul to gather knowledge of the true essences of things, it has to exist in the world, and worldly existence requires a body. The body, in turn, requires anger for the sake of defending itself and the appetites for the sake of sustaining itself and reproducing the species. Al-Ghazālī compares feeding the body to feeding a horse that one rides into battle. But for most people, unfortunately, satisfying the passions becomes an end in itself rather than a means to an end. This leads to engrossment in the affairs of the world and heedlessness of the goal of attaining felicity in the afterlife. Thus, taming the passions—practice—becomes a prerequisite for focusing on attaining knowledge. Once the passions are tamed, the intellect (*ʻaql*) is freed to pursue knowledge, though not just any knowledge. What is ultimately desired is knowledge of God." *The First Islamic Reviver: Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī and His Revival of the Religious Sciences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 42.

He then goes on to name the blameworthy results of those who *lack* passion, which I take to be those that originate from the defect of a certain passion—in this case, the defect of the passion of anger: “The fruit of lack of passion represents in the weakness of refraining from such of things as from which an ordinary man should refrain, like dishonoring sanctities, wife and mother, tolerating humility from the baseborn, vileness and cuckoldry, which is blameworthy, for it results in lack of jealousy and loss of self-respect” (CARE 278). In other words, these are the results of the lack of the appropriate amount of anger, that which is reasonably justified in the face of adultery, for example. The distinction between a passion that is under the dominance of intellect and one that is not is clear in the following passage:

> Thus, loss of anger is blameworthy (just as severity of anger is dispraised). What is praiseworthy is the amount of anger that is under the disposal of mind and religion that it erupts when passion and zeal are needed, and extinguished when forbearance and patience are required. To keep it at the point of moderation is the uprightness enjoined by Allah Almighty upon His servants, as well as it is the moderateness described by the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” in his statement: “The moderate is the best in all matters.” (CARE 279)

Once again, the blameworthy excess or defect of a passion occurs when the faculties of the soul (appetite and anger) are not under the dominion of the intellect, while the praiseworthy passion is the moderate one, manifest when the soul is under the direct influence of the intellect and the precepts of religion. Whether a passion is in the first or second condition will dictate whether it serves to pervert or benefit the person in their moral and spiritual journey.

Sometimes, these passions are short-lived manifestations of the faculty of appetite or anger, and sometimes he characterizes them as a constant attitude of the heart stemming from a trait of character. In fact, as we have seen in part above, it is when the person puts their passions under the dominion of the intellect and the precepts of religion consistently and habitually that virtue is developed.[23] For example, through the habituation of the virtue of generosity, the passion of joy is felt in giving money to those in need, while the same passion felt only when acquiring and retaining is a clear sign of the vice of avarice (DS 48). Similarly, those who have correct knowledge of God and oneself develop fear of the eternal consequences of their evil actions, and "fear is an aid in the service of intellect, an instrument with which to overcome and break appetites" (BK 224).[24] Reasonable fear of committing shameless deeds, in fact, is a constituent part

[23] Al-Ghazālī makes the role of the intellect especially central to the feeling of good passions in his insistence in the role of the knowledge that led to that emotional state. Of course, the intellect has little worth if it has not received prior knowledge with which to deliberate. Hope requires proper knowledge of God and fear requires proper knowledge of oneself and God, for "Knowledge is the cause which produces the state and the state decrees the deed" (FH 217) and "the person most filled with fear in respect of His Lord is the man who has most 'knowledge' of himself and his Lord" (FH 235). This knowledge, in turn makes "Hope...a commendable thing, because it is a source of incentive, and despair is reprehensible and is the antithesis of hope, because it distracts from work. Fear is not the antithesis of hope, rather it is a companion to it, as its exposition will bring out. More, it is another source of incentive, impelling along the path of awe just as hope impels along the path of inclination" (FH 220).

[24] One of the reasons for understanding the emotions as constitutive of virtues and vices can be better elucidated with al-Ghazālī's famous illustration of the heart as a mirror. The illustration seems to identify the heart with the location where true reality is reflected. The reflection of reality, however, may be facilitated or prevented by human traits of character, including emotional traits. Praiseworthy attitudes and states "add to the clearness, shining, illumination, and brightness of the mirror so that the clear statement of the Real shines therein, and there is revealed in it the real nature of the thing sought in religion." In contrast, the blameworthy attitudes and states "are like a darkening smoke which rises up over the mirror of the heart and is heaped up upon it time after time until it becomes black and gloomy and entirely veiled from Allah" (MH 42). Thus, the state of the heart dictates the accurate or inaccurate reflection of reality. That is why "if [one's] desire is sincere, his intention pure, and his

of the virtue of modesty (MH 163).[25] In fact, he names some of his virtues under the rubric of what we consider to be emotions—fear, shame, hope, and love. These, it seems to him, can be fully under the dominion of the intellect and be made stable conditions of the soul—virtues. The first three will be analyzed in more detail in the next section.[26] In these cases, al-Ghazālī calls these emotions 'stations' or 'attributes' of the heart (*ḥāla al-ḳalb*) or "traits of character" (*a̲k̲h̲laḳ*).

Summary

In this section, I have given an overview of al-Ghazālī's moral taxonomy and psychology, providing details about his views of the moral ideal where the faculties of appetite and anger are submissive to God through the dominion of the intellect. I have also sketched his theory of virtues and vices, defining virtue as a firmly established condition of the soul and supplying his lists of virtues and vices, which include shame as a virtue of the appetite (temperance) and pride as a vice of anger (courage). Virtues may be developed through Divine grace, habituation, and education. Finally, I have shown that emotions, or passions, are feelings or desires and aversions of the soul, which are blameworthy when in conflict with reason and religion, and praiseworthy when they are in conformity with them. As the latter, they are a constituent part of virtues and, as the former, of vices.

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perseverance good, and if his lusts do not draw him aside nor the suggestions of the self engross him with the ties of this present world, there will shine forth the gleams of reality into his heart" (MH 75).

[25] He formulates this more clearly in *Mīzān al-'Amal* (Criterion for Action), p. 97, cited by Mohamed Sherif, p. 66.

[26] Sherif argues that all of al-Ghazālī's "mystical virtues"—fear, hope, and love—are "basically passions." p. 110. He also contends that the reason al-Ghazālī applies the doctrine of the mean on the virtues of hope and fear "seems to be that hope and fear are passions. Since Ghazālī starts with passions in this case, and analyzes them with a view to man's relation to God, he has to emphasize their mean state to guard against the problems involved in their extremes of excess." Sherif, p. 134.

C. Al-Ghazālī on Shame

In *On Repentance*, al-Ghazālī recounts the story of an Abyssinian who approached the prophet Mohammad with a heavy conscience. "Oh Apostle of Allah," he cried, "I used to commit shameful deeds, do I have a chance of repentance?" Mohammad said yes. Seemingly satisfied with Mohammad's response, the Abyssinian starts walking away only to look back at the prophet with another question: "Oh Apostle of Allah, did He see me when I committed them?" Mohammad answered positively. With this response, al-Ghazālī writes, the Abyssinian utters a shout and dies (OR 22).

The world, through the eyes of al-Ghazālī, is ripe with opportunities for shame. The hyper-vigilant Muslim community is watchful, ever-seeking to obey the command to forbid evil, and God is the knower of all secrets of the heart, willing to reveal them on a whim. Shame is a threat to one's reputation and to one's peace, both in this world and in the hereafter. Nonetheless, shame, for al-Ghazālī, is a virtue. A believer who feels shame reveals that they are aware of the evilness of their deeds and seeks to maintain an honorable place within the community. Most importantly, shame inclines the believer to reform by repenting and seeking virtue.

In this section, I will explore al-Ghazālī's views on this passion in the *Iḥyāʾ*—its phenomenology, valence, and overall role in the moral and spiritual life of the believer. I will show that al-Ghazālī is frequently torn between the idea that shame is a Muslim virtue and that, nonetheless, it is not foolproof evidence of good character. My claim is that this is due to his distinction between shame as a passion and shame as a virtue. Further, I will show how his valence of shame becomes unqualifiedly positive once he

focuses on God as the audience that produces shame, rather than humans. This kind of shame is not only virtuous, but necessary for those seeking to attain the reward of the hereafter. Finally, I will argue that al-Ghazālī's portrayal of the virtuous fear of God is, in many ways, analogous to his understanding of shame before God, thus reinforcing his view that shame before God is a virtue.

Before moving forward, I must say something about the Arabic word for shame that I will be surveying in al-Ghazālī's works: حياء (*ḥayāʾ*). *Ḥayāʾ* can be translated as 'shame' or 'modesty.' This double meaning makes the work of assessing al-Ghazālī's views on shame a little more complex. Through a careful analysis of the context, one can sometimes distinguish when he is referring to what we would call modesty, and when he is referring to what we would call shame.[27] However, I agree with Marion Katz, who

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[27] One distinction that seems to show up is when *ḥayāʾ* is being used in the context of actions or attitudes that both avoid impropriety in one's attire and general public behavior or betray a humble disposition—both of which I take to align better with our understanding of modesty. In these contexts, modesty does not entail a wrongdoing, but merely a perception of the value of others and of the greatness of God. In contrast, when *ḥayāʾ* is used to describe a feeling of lowliness resulting from a negative self-assessment due to a sinful act, I take it to refer more clearly to our understanding of shame.
In *The Etiquette of Living*, for example, where al-Ghazālī gives an overview of the exemplary character traits and practices of the prophet Mohammad, he mentions Muhammad's modesty (*ḥayāʾ*) in relation to his acts of humility:

> There was brought to him a vase in which there was honey and milk, and he refused to drink it saying, "There are two draughts in one, and two foods in one vase." Then he said, "I do not forbid it, but I dislike boasting in respect to the excesses of the world and calculating regarding them for the morrow; rather I love humility. For, verily, whoever is humble before Allah, Allah will extol him."
> In his house he was more modest (*ḥayāʾ*) than his freed servants. He did not ask them for food, nor did he importune them with requests for food. If they fed him, he ate. He ate whatever they fed him, and drank whatever they gave him to drink. He often rose and took that which he ate and drank (i.e., he served himself). (EL 33)

In fact, the *Etiquette of Living* is mostly an ongoing description of all the ways in which the prophet was pious and modest or humble—from the description of what he ate, as described in the quote above, to his clothes (EL 33-35), to his speech (EL 29). The prophet's *ḥayāʾ* is praiseworthy given his high spiritual position. The underlying rationale of these examples of modesty is that the prophet was not expected to act in these ways given his social and religious position, which should make him

points out that, generally speaking, "*Ḥayāʾ* is associated with social degradation and disgrace." Katz chooses to utilize the term 'shame' instead of 'modesty' in her analysis because "modesty (in the sense of avoiding excessive physical or social self-display) is only one instantiation of the word's broader reference to an aversion to performing inappropriate actions."[28] For her, medieval thinkers used *ḥayāʾ* as a single concept with a broad meaning. In his analysis of the use of *ḥayāʾ* particularly in the *Revival*, Muhammad Sherif confirms that al-Ghazālī is using it as being more akin to shame. While in a previous book of his (*Criterion for Action*), "Ghazālī starts his list of the divisions of temperance...with the 'virtue of modesty' (*ḥayāʾ*), followed by a related 'virtue' he calls 'shame' (*khajal*)," in the *Revival* "he begins his list with liberality, followed by modesty, and does not name shame as a virtue, although he mentions its conditions when dealing with modesty in detail."[29]

In fact, it is not difficult to see the underlying connection between modesty and shame. I will mention two. First, both modesty and shame refer to feelings or traits of self-effacement before other people. That is, they both lead to a position of lowliness due to the exposure or the risk of exposure of something that is meant to stay hidden, either because it is morally or socially disgraceful. This leads me to my second point: modesty and shame have a relation of causality. Modesty is often practiced in order to avoid shame. If one is careful to hide what is inappropriate to display or to live according to a

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worthy of prestige and honor. This is in contrast with shame, which highlights one's lack of moral propriety.

[28] Marion Katz, "Shame (Ḥayāʾ) as an Affective Disposition in Islamic Legal Thought" in *Journal of Law, Religion and State* 3.2 (2014): 143.

[29] Sherif, p. 65.

lower standard than one is deemed worthy, there is much less opportunity for shame. With these connections in mind, along with al-Ghazālī's own lack of distinction between them, it is easy to see why a treatment of *ḥayāʾ* need not require a clear contrast between modesty and shame. Nevertheless, I set aside analyses of texts that focus exclusively on what we would deem more akin to modesty, lest my argument above is ultimately unconvincing.

What, then, is shame, according to al-Ghazālī? What are its physical and psychological signs? What are the necessary components for its generation? These are questions I will answer below.

The self-assessment

Al-Ghazālī sees the phenomenon of shame as a feeling of deficiency (*astash'ār taḳṣīr*), imagination or supposition of guilt (*tuhom dhanab*), a kind of pain of the soul (*alam ya'rudh min taḳsīr*), and a fear of failure (*khauf min taḳsīr*). These feelings are always preceded by knowledge: knowledge of one's inability to perform religious obligations (*bāla'djiz 'an al-ḳaīām*), of one's defects and faults *('aīub al-nafs wa afātihā*), of one's lack of sincerity during worship (*yakhlasiha*), or of the evilness of one's nature (*khabathda khlatiha*), and so on; "Whenever these cognitions assuredly result, there is sent forth from them a state called shamefacedness" (MW 47). In all cases, the knowledge that facilitates the emergence of shame consists in some kind of negative self-assessment. However, though this knowledge acquired through self-assessment is necessary, it is not sufficient. Al-Ghazālī holds that without the presence of an audience,

physical or hypothetical, human or divine, shame will not come forth.[30] That is, shame emerges as a consequence of the "gaze of creation" (*absār al-<u>kh</u>alaḳ*) or, more commonly, of the "eye of Allah" (*'aīn allah*) upon one's deficiencies. I will analyze each of these characteristics of shame within their textual context below.

Though he refers to shame as a feeling (*asta<u>sh</u>'ār),* al-Ghazālī does not explicitly call *ḥayāʾ* an *al-<u>sh</u>ahwa*. He only refers to it as a virtue. However, it is clear from his descriptions of shame, summarized above and expanded in the rest of the section, that he is referring to a result of the faculty of anger, since it is a movement away from something harmful or destructive, namely, failure and disgrace. Furthermore, as we will see, sometimes al-Ghazālī refers to shame as a short-lived or occurrent passion, while in others he refers to it as a disposition. This leads me to believe he is implying that shame may be understood as a passion and as a virtue, depending on its characteristics (such as audience, prior knowledge, consequent acts, etc) and consistency. The relevance of this will become clear further along this section.

The audience

There are two kinds of audience that elicit the feeling of shame in al-Ghazālī's view: human and divine. Unpacking each of these is crucial to fully comprehend the valence of the emotion, according to him.

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[30] On the necessity of an audience for the emergence of *ḥayāʾ*, Marion Katz notes that "Disapprobation or disgrace must be exercised by some audience, at least a hypothetical one. From the point of view of linguistic usage, one feels shame 'from' - in the sense of 'in front of' - another person. The gaze that evokes *ḥayāʾ* may be imagined or internalized such that no concrete external observer is necessary. As reflected in the quotation, the divine gaze was envisioned by Muslim scholars—particularly, although not exclusively, among Sufis—as the omnipresent source of proper *ḥayāʾ*." "Shame as an Affective Disposition in Islamic Legal Thought": 144.

Human audience

The human audience is the first to elicit shame in the souls of children, for al-Ghazālī. In fact, it is a child's shame before their parents, teachers and schoolmates that serves as a sign that the "light of reason" (*nūr al-'aqal*) has dawned. From the point in which the child can feel shame for blameworthy acts, their caregiver must treat the emotion as a good state of the heart, one that must be cherished and even encouraged (more on this below) (DS 76). Shame before other human beings continues throughout adulthood as an emotion that serves to hold the individual morally and religiously accountable within the community, to steer the shameful away from blameworthy acts, and to positively boost one's moral character.

Al-Ghazālī describes the person who has their faults discovered by a human audience as feeling a kind of pain. The pain of shame does not originate from the criticism that might result from this discovery, but simply from the self-reflective knowledge of the uncovering (CMSO 522). For this reason, he considers it an emotion that betrays one's concern for what other people think. In fact, concern for one's reputation in the mind of others is *essential* to the emotion, which is why he thinks shame is easily confused with the vice of ostentation (CMSO 522). This concern with one's image in the eyes of others is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, to commit a sin and lack shame when it is discovered is more sinful than to sin and feel shame before other people. In fact, he criticizes shamelessness before other people (*al-fahash*) in several parts of the *Iḥyā'*.[31]

[31] See ET 203-204 for shamelessness of 'filthy' or 'ugly' sins (most commonly related to sexual sins)

Despite the moral and religious importance of shame before other people, al-Ghazālī stresses the limits of the human gaze. He repeatedly invokes the veil that he says exists between the sinner's heart and the mind of other people. That is, fellow humans lack access to the very location of immoral secrets (the heart) that, if revealed, would inevitably result in shame. Furthermore, humans are not the ideal audience for the production of praiseworthy shame because their opinion of the believer is ultimately worthless compared to God's.[32] Therefore, for al-Ghazālī, the human audience is not the greatest producer of shame in the life of the believer; this is the exclusive domain of God.

Divine audience

Shame before God requires knowledge and awareness of his continuous gaze upon the person. For al-Ghazālī, this knowledge is part of the necessary beliefs of "people of certainty" (*yaḳīn*), or people that he regards as the most pious, learned, and faithful in the Islamic faith.[33] In *The Book of Knowledge*, he lists some of the broad tenets of which the learned men have *yaḳīn*, including the *tawḥīd* (unity of God), God's provision of all the believer's needs, reward (*dhawab*) and punishment (*'iḳab*). Al-Ghazālī's final point is that the learned men have *yaḳīn* in God's constant watchfulness over human beings.

> Another is the belief that God is constantly watching you, knowing all the cogitations of your conscience and the hidden meditation of your inward thoughts and reflections. This is accepted by every believer who possesses

and CARE 285 for shamelessness of words.

[32] The ideal, and rare, attitude toward other people's opinions, for al-Ghazālī, is to "overlook the appreciation of all the people in a way that his praiser and dispraiser become equal in his sight, in view of his knowledge that both benefit and harm come from Allah alone, and that all servants are powerless" CMSO 521.

[33] He defines *yaḳin* as certainty, the absence of doubt, or faith, as in "the taking hold of the heart" BK 192.

> *yaḳin* according to the first meaning, namely certainty, or the negation of doubt; but its second meaning which is the one we have in mind, namely faith, is very scarce and is characteristic of the saints.[34] Its fruit is to make man in his solitude as cultured and refined under all conditions as a man in audience with an exalted king. He fixes his eyes on the king and sits before him in silence, maintaining a polite appearance in all his doings and carefully restraining himself from the slightest thing which may violate etiquette. There will be no disparity between his inward thoughts and his outward deeds because he will realize that God watches his inner life just as men watch his outward behavior. Consequently his effort to develop and purify his inner life in order to make it acceptable before the encompassing eyes of God should be greater than his effort to make his outward behavior agreeable to men. This state of certainty (*yaḳin*) breeds modesty (*ḥayāʾ*), fear, meekness, lowliness, submission, and obedience as well as other praiseworthy qualities; while these qualities are conducive to many superior works (*ta'at*) (BK 192).

This certainty of God's continuous gaze is meant to make every moment in the life of the believer potentially susceptible to *ḥayāʾ*, just as if an exalted king were always present. However, unlike a human king, God has unlimited knowledge of one's outer and inner life. In a passage that we will analyze more closely below, he states that one aspect of the four-fold knowledge necessary for the emergence of *ḥayāʾ* is knowledge that God is the *matala' 'ala al-sar wa khatarat al-ḳalb*—the observer, or knower, of secrets and desires of the heart (MW 47). For this reason, those who have certainty in God's watchfulness are quick to align their outward actions with their inward thoughts and intentions. It is (human) knowledge of (God's) knowledge that cultivates *ḥayāʾ* and, consequently, a coherent and virtuous character.[35]

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[34] More accurately, "this is certain (*mutayakana*) to every believer who possesses *yaḳīn* [according to the first meaning], the negation of doubt but its second meaning which is the one we have in mind is very scarce"

[35] In contrast, sin is many times portrayed as an act or thought stemming from ignorance of this fact: "Woe unto you, O soul, if you are wont to sin against God because you believe He is not looking, then how great your unbelief! If you know that He sees you, how great your insolence and how negligible your shame!" VSE 69

For al-Ghazālī, belief in the watchfulness of God does not consist merely in belief in God's all-powerful and all-encompassing senses[36], but also in God's attribute of willing all things into being. Yes, God can see and hear all things, but it is also the case that he created the very human acts, thoughts, and attitudes before their actualization, and thus knows, in the fullest sense of knowing, all about them. As an Ash'arite[37], al-Ghazālī holds that "[a]ll the works of His servants are created [by Him] and for Him, and are connected with His power...He commanded His servants to be careful in their words, works and secret thoughts and intentions, because He knows the orientation of their works, having arrived at this knowledge through [the act of] creation" (FAF 77-78). God's full knowledge of each human, for al-Ghazālī, should give plenty of reason for the feeling of shame.

The fact that God preordained and is 'the sole inventor' of all human acts and thoughts does not, however, let humans off the moral hook. Following al-Ash'ari's concept of 'acquisition' (*iktisāb*), al-Ghazālī argues that humans are, in fact, responsible for their acts and thoughts because they perform them voluntarily "by way of

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[36] In some cases, instead of describing God's *knowledge* of humans, al-Ghazālī focuses on God's sensory capacities. In *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith*, he characterizes the fifth principle of knowledge of God's attributes as knowledge of his auditory and visual powers: "The fifth principle is the knowledge that God is hearing and seeing. Neither the cogitations of the innermost heart nor the secret thoughts and reflections are hidden from His sight; the sound of the creeping of the black ant upon the solid rock in the darkest night is not beyond His hearing. And how could He not see and hear when seeing and hearing are [attributes of] perfection not of defect?...And just as it has been possible for the mind to conceive of His being a doer, although He has none of the physical senses, and knowing, although He has neither heart nor brain, so it is possible to conceive of Him as seeing, although He has no eyeballs, and hearing, although He has no ears, for all cases are the same" FAF 72.

[37] For more on al-Ash'ari's Divine determinism, see Sophia Vasalou, *Moral Agents and Their Deserts: The Character of Mu'tazilite Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Seyyed Nasr Hossein and Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1996); George Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Majid Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1991).

acquisition." Al-Ghazālī describes acquisition as the middle-road position with regards to the problem of God's preordained will and human voluntariness for it "asserts that they [the actions] are voluntary through the will of God by invention and through the will of the servant by another connection which is expressed by the term acquisition" (FAF 78).[38]

Unfortunately, al-Ghazālī's specific views on Divine determinism and causality are not as clear-cut as they might seem. Commentators have shown he seems to waver between a strong A'sharite deterministic view of God being the constant creator of every human thought and action, at each discrete moment in time (what others have called 'occasionalism') and a weaker view of God as the first cause and creator of the chain of cause and effect, which in turn determines human decisions.[39] Both views place God at the beginning and center of all human moral actions. Neither of these positions on moral

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[38] Though the theory of acquisition became mainstream in Islamic thought, advocates of this position have been widely criticized throughout the history of Islamic theology and philosophy for lacking a more robust explanation of exactly *how* this relation between Divine pre-ordination and human responsibility works. See Majid Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), p. 58. Furthermore, it seems that al-Ghazālī might be including more free will in his account of human voluntary actions than al-Ash'ari ever did. According to Binyamin Abrahamov, al-Ash'ari limited human participation only to the location where the act is performed. God is the creator of "both the power to will and the will". "A Re-Examination of al-Ashari's Theory of 'Kasb' According to 'Kitab al-Luma'" in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* No. 2 (1989): 211. Frank Griffel interprets the Ash'arite position differently, putting more emphasis on the human power to choose: "Most of the Ashʿarite theories of human action that precede al-Ghazālī assume that God gives a 'temporary power-to-act' (*qudra muḥdatha*) to the human that allows him or her to perform the act that he or she has chosen. This implies that although God creates the action and its results in the outside world, the human is regarded as the agent (*fāʿil*) and the maker of the act." *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 217.

[39] Griffel takes this latter stance: "Al-Ghazālī generally sees it as self-evident that the causes that we witness in our daily affairs are themselves only the effects of other causes. This is true for *all* causal connections and thus also true for human actions. Al-Ghazālī's stance on human actions is very simple: like all other events in this world, they are God's creation. This is true not only of the human act itself, but also of all causes that have led to it. A human act is prompted by the human volition (*irāda*), which is itself determined by one or more motives. God creates these motives as well as the volition." p. 216.

agency, however, relieve humans of responsibility for their actions and thoughts, but underscore God's supreme knowledge of and agency in their fruition. The former idea allows *ḥayāʾ* to remain central in the moral and spiritual life of the believer, for the responsibility of the past or future disgraceful act is in the human agent. The latter idea, instead of relieving the feeling of shame actually helps give rise to *ḥayāʾ,* according to al-Ghazālī, since humans should feel shame from God's deep knowledge of them. This is one of the reasons al-Ghazālī sees *ḥayāʾ* as a praiseworthy emotion and moral state, as we will see below. In what follows, I will bring forth a detailed account of al-Ghazālī's valence of *ḥayāʾ*.

The Praiseworthiness of Shame

Most, if not all, of al-Ghazālī's references to *ḥayāʾ* deal with the positionality of one's deficiencies—their hiddenness and revelation. The prowling threat of revelation before other people and God is constantly menacing one's deceitful peace. Sometimes, *covering* one's flaws before other humans is good, and even recommended, while at other times, it is a prideful move that betrays one's ostentatious intentions. *The uncovering* of one's sins (or at least the threat thereof), at times, is necessary to shake one out of moral and spiritual torpor, while at others it is blameworthy because of its ill-effect on other believers, who might feel tempted to imitate the bad deed.[40]

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[40] In an illuminating passage, he argues that no human being is devoid of hidden sins, the only difference lies in whether they are revealed to other people: "As for his case with anyone else, they are divided into screened and exposed. As for the screened, he should not be arrogant over him, for perhaps he might probably have fewer sins, more acts of worship, and love Allah more than him. As to the exposed, you have no right even to criticize such of them as whose sins are more than yours during your entire lifetime, for it is difficult to take account of the number of sins of you or of anyone else during your lives. It is true that you might judge his sins to be more severe and grievous, when you see him, say, kill or commit fornication, but even at this case, you have no right to be arrogant

Al-Ghazālī argues in favor of the concealment of one's sins from the public based on the fact that "Allah Almighty dislikes the emergence of sins and likes them to be concealed" (CMSO 520). God's preference for the concealment of sins seems to be sustained by Islamic tradition. Al-Ghazālī, in particular, is convinced of it on the basis of a hadith preserved by al-Hakim: "Whoever commits anything of those evil sins, let him screen himself with the screen of Allah Almighty." Though, as we saw above, God is called the *observer* and, ultimately, the *revealer* of secrets, al-Ghazālī repeatedly characterizes God as the *coverer* of human secrets and sins from the human public, at least during life on earth (PG 193; CMSO 522; CAV 593). The rationale seems to be that God mercifully covers sins.[41] To override his will for secrecy is, in fact, to defy God himself for only he is the revealer. God's screening of one's evils and faults and "disclosing only the good" to others, for al-Ghazālī, is one of the main favors for which one should be grateful (PG 193).[42]

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over him, since the sins of hearts, like envy, hatred, rancor, showing off, doubts about the attributes of Allah Almighty, etc., are so much grievous in the Sight of Allah Almighty. You may become, by virtue of your hidden sins, more hateful in the Sight of Allah Almighty than the dissolute wicked whose wickedness is evident, in view of his sincere obedience, fear and love for Allah Almighty, that are lacking in you, by which Allah makes expiation for his other sins; and when the veil is removed on the Day of Judgment, you will find that he is above you in rank and position" CAV 593.

[41] Part of the reason al-Ghazālī mentions for God's will to cover human sins is because uncovered sins tend to influence others to follow suit, "for men are predisposed, by nature, to have love for imitation, and following each other" (CMSO 519). In the same way, disclosing acts or worship is good because it urges others to imitate them (CMSO 516).

[42] Al-Ghazālī also mentions Sha'wanah's words of supplication, describing God as mostly unwilling to put believers to shame when he declares: "O my God! If my sins have frightened me, then, my love for You has given me shelter. O my God! Had you wanted to put me to humiliation, You would not have guided me aright; and had You wanted to put me to shame, You would not have screened me: so, let me enjoy that to which You have guided me, and make permanent for me that with which You have screened me" (WR 604). Again, in *Remembrance of Death and Hereafter Life*: "We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from being given to disgrace in front of the people by the witness of our organs against us. But, on the other hand, Allah Almighty promised to conceal the misdeeds of the faithful believers and safeguard him from being put to that shame in front of anyone" (RDH 721).

On the other hand, if one's faults are in fact revealed to the public, the only praiseworthy response is *ḥayāʾ*:

> he feels *ḥayāʾ* of having his sin disclosed to the people. It is a kind of pain, which one experiences from the early days of childhood once the light of reason shines on him, causing him to feel [shameful] (*fistahī*) of the [shame-worthy] deeds (*al-ḳabaiḥ*). It is praiseworthy. The Messenger of Allah said: '*ḥayāʾ* as a whole is good.' The Messenger of Allah further said: '*ḥayāʾ* is a branch of faith.' The Messenger of Allah also said: '*ḥayāʾ* brings about nothing but good.' The Messenger of Allah said: 'Indeed, Allah likes the [shameful] forbearing.' To be sure, he who commits wickedness and dissoluteness and does not care whether or not the people would know his wickedness is more sinful than him who does so but screens himself and feels [shame] (*yastar wa yastahī*) of people's knowing about his dissoluteness. But *ḥayāʾ* here is much similar to showing off (*al-riyā'*), and a very few among people could make sense of that. Every maker of show claims that he is [shameful] (*mastahī*), and that he makes good his acts of worship because he feels [ashamed before] people. But this is falsehood, for *ḥayāʾ* is a moral character which originates from the honored disposition (*al-tabi' al-karīm*), and the motives of both showing off and sincerity are provoked after it; one might be sincere or might make show of deeds with it. (CMSO 522)

Three main ideas about *ḥayāʾ* are noteworthy in this passage. First, as we have seen briefly in the first section of this chapter, it is a praiseworthy emotion. To be sure, he cites hadiths that support this idea—or, better, he cites the sources from which he gathers this idea in the first place. The second idea is that, though shame is evidence of the agent's defective deed, the presence of shame makes the sinfulness of the deed a little less severe for it shows that the believer both cares about what other people think and understands that what he or she has done is blameworthy. The third idea expressed in this passage is that shame originates from an honored, praiseworthy, or noble disposition (*al-ṭabia' al-karīm*).

In order to understand this positive valence of shame, we must dive deeper into the moral and spiritual values that he sees as both facilitating and emerging from *ḥayā*ʾ. Let us start with the human's first manifestations of the emotion.

Shame in childhood

As we have seen in the previous section of this chapter, al-Ghazālī argues that a good moral character is developed in three ways: Divine grace, habituation and education. He elaborates on the last of these in *On Disciplining the Soul* with a discussion on proper child-rearing. What are the ideal conditions under which children grow up to exhibit good character?

The role of the caregiver, according to al-Ghazālī, is to both be watchful for the signs of readiness for moral education exhibited by the child and to guide her, through reward and punishment, toward good acts that will eventually lead to good character. He states that the most basic condition for the development of good character in children, and the one that should be noticed by the caregiver, is shame:

> When the signs of discretion appear in him he should again be watched over carefully. The first of these is the rudiments of shame (*ḥayā*ʾ), for when he begins to feel diffident and is ashamed of certain things so that he abandons them, the light of the intellect has dawned in him, whereby he sees that certain things are ugly, and different from others, and begins to be ashamed of some things and not others. This is a gift to him from God (Exalted is He!) and a good foretoken that his traits will be balanced, his heart pure, and his intellect sound when he enters upon adulthood. The child who has developed the capacity for shame (*ḥayā*ʾ) should never be neglected; rather this and his discretion should be used as aids in his education. (DS 76)

The reference to shame as a sign of the dawning of the intellect is clear in the passage: with the capacity for shame, the child can now *iara* (see) *al-ashiā ḳabihān* (the

ugly things).[43] More specifically for al-Ghazālī, the dawning of the intellect meant that the person was now able to keep the appetite of the soul under the dominion of the intellect. For example, shame can only occur with the dawning of the intellect. For al-Ghazālī, these ugly things ranged from socially inappropriate behavior all the way to immoral acts, as we will see in more detail below. His characterization of the appearance of shame as the indicator of the intellect's dawn showcases not only his positive assessment of *ḥayā*ʾ, but also his understanding of the intellect as the faculty that assesses an object or an act as right or wrong, praiseworthy or shameful. Shame, for him, is a gift from God and, if it appears in childhood, one can be almost certain that the child will grow up to have balanced faculties and, consequently, the virtues of a good Muslim.

Al-Ghazālī argues that the ability and tendency to feel shame aids the child in acquiring praiseworthy traits such as picking up his food only with his right hand (DS 76), chewing his food properly, preferring white rather than colored clothes (DS 77), and avoiding blameworthy traits such as excessive laughter and boasting about his parents' possessions (DS 78).[44] Due to the positive outcomes of a child who has the ability and tendency to feel shame, the caregiver should be especially cautious in her management of the budding emotion:

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[43] In *On Repentance*, al-Ghazālī specifies the age that this dawning begins and at what age it is fully matured: "For the perfection of the intellect comes at the age of about forty; its foundation becomes complete only at puberty and its rudiments appear at the age of seven" OR 42. That is, al-Ghazālī probably expected to see the initial signs of shame by the time a child is seven years old.

[44] These key manifestations of shamefulness in a child seem more like those we would attribute to modesty, which shows how tricky it is to make a clear distinction between these terms in al-Ghazālī's thought. However, in light of what he says is the trait that the child develops with the emergence of shame—to understand that certain acts are wrong or ugly—it seems the distinction between shame and modesty is merely of levels of 'wrongness,' shame referring to morally wrong acts and modesty referring to socially frowned-upon acts.

> Whenever a good trait or action manifests itself in the child he should be admired and rewarded with something which gives him joy, and should be praised in front of others; likewise, when once in a while he does something bad it is best to pretend not to notice and not to bring it to the attention of others (but never to reveal to him that it is something which others might be bold enough to do), particularly if the child himself has diligently endeavored to hide his action, for the exposure of such deeds may cause him to grow emboldened, until he no longer cares when they are made public. Should he repeat the action, he should be privately reproached and made to feel that it was a very serious thing, and be told, 'Beware of doing anything like this again, or I shall tell others and you will be disgraced in front of them!' (DS 78)

The teacher or parent must be cautious of when and how they should uncover a child's shameful acts before other people. On the one hand, if the wrongdoing of a child who has a strong tendency toward the feeling of shame is exposed, they may react with boldness and shamelessness. Perhaps here al-Ghazālī is thinking of cases when the child would, in an attempt to counteract the shame, behave in even worse ways than before. In these cases, he seems to think that, by maintaining the secrecy of the act, the child might fix their crooked ways on their own. On the other hand, if it is a repeated wrongdoing, the threat of shame is recommended—the child must be reminded of the possibility of exposure to the public. The caregiver, then, should manage the child's shame in ways that allow it to become a virtuous trait of character throughout their life and also to encourage other virtues.

Shame in the adult moral life

It is remarkably difficult to clearly distinguish al-Ghazālī's discussion of the moral life and the spiritual life. This dichotomy is alien to his worldview—that which contributes to the moral life necessarily contributes to the spiritual journey toward God, and vice versa. Nonetheless, for convenience and for organizational purposes, I will make

a distinction between shame in the moral and ethical realm and shame in the spiritual or religious realm.[45] My distinction between shame in the moral and spiritual realms is based upon the being toward whom the agent is intentionally acting or feeling. Roughly speaking, if the intention is directed toward a fellow human, I consider it part of the moral realm. If it is toward God, I consider it part of the spiritual realm.[46] First, I will expound on the former.

Given the importance al-Ghazālī attaches to shame during childhood, it comes as no surprise that it appears time and again as a necessary, or at least contributing, passion or virtue for curbing moral temptations in the life of the mature adult. This is why, for al-Ghazālī, it is one of the subvirtues of temperance. In *The Breaking of the Two Desires*, he goes into details about the sins that result from intemperance, or lust: the desires of the genitals (sexual lust) and the desires of the stomach (lust for food). These temptations of the flesh, for him, are the most common and the easiest to fall into and, therefore, are those that carry the greatest potential to lead the believer astray from the journey to unity with God. For this reason, they require close attention and particular ascetic practices, such as sexual abstinence and frequent fasting, to be curbed. In addition to these practices, al-Ghazālī praises the "armies of the heart"—shame and fear—as powerful deterrents of sexual sins in particular (BTD 112). Earlier in the book, al-Ghazālī treats the lust for sex as the "worst of lusts and most deserving of shame" (BTD 98). Shame,

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[45] I want to thank Amanda Napior for forcing me to betray my own location in the creation of this distinction.

[46] This definition, in fact, coheres with al-Ghazālī's own definition of the 'religious' as "the devotional practice between man and his Lord" in the *Iḥyāʾ* and his definition of ethics as "[t]he science of the soul in respect to its qualities and character [ethics]" in the *Criterion*. Quoted in Sherif, p. 113 and 7.

therefore, is both the most salient consequence of impermissible sexual acts *and* one of its impediments.

Shame and fear appear together once more in al-Ghazālī's description of the phenomenology of lustful temptations. When, for example, a man sees, with the corner of his eyes, a woman walking behind him, the first thing that comes to the heart is "the involuntary suggestion (*khatir*)," which is to turn around to see her. Second comes the desire to look, coming from the appetite of the soul and which he calls "natural inclination" (*mayl al-tah'*). After this comes a more forceful sense that he must look at her. At this point, "*ḥayā*ʾ or fear may prevent him from looking. The nullification of these inhibitions occurs through reflection (*ta'amul*), but in any case it is a judgment of the reason and is called a conviction (*i'tiḳad*)" (MH 162-63). Further along the text, he describes those who are unable to resist these temptations as those in whom rises "the smoke of passion over the heart so that the light of *ḥayā*ʾ, manly virtue, and faith is extinguished, and he strives to secure what Satan desires" (MH 183). Shame and fear, for al-Ghazālī, are tools of the self that assist in fulfilling the believer's moral obligation of resisting temptations and, therefore, sidestepping future divine punishment.[47] This passage also corroborates al-Ghazālī's description of virtues as the dominion of the intellect over the passions of the soul, for it depicts shame and fear as the result of "judgment of reason."[48]

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[47] The relationship between fear and shame that can be noticed throughout my analysis of shame in al-Ghazālī's work should be kept at the forefront of the reader's mind. I will bring up their overlaps in the last part of this section.
[48] That shame is evidence of good character is only true if it is coupled with the actual curbing of the temptation, for it is possible that one feels shame for their inner suggestion and natural inclination, yet cannot find the firmness of character that leads them to decide not to look. In this case, he would

Relatedly, al-Ghazālī contends that those who are capable of imagining their shame on the Day of Judgment are the ablest to avoid falling into moral temptation. In the *Evil of Tongue*, he mentions that those who practice mockery (shaming others) should think of the shame they will feel facing Allah and those whom they have mocked on the Day of Judgment (ET 247).[49] The power of imagining shame in the afterlife is, for al-Ghazālī, a powerful mental state for avoiding sin. Earlier, in his *Alchemy of Happiness,*[50] he describes one of the spiritual hells as actually being named 'shame,' because it happens "when a man wakes up to see the nature of the actions he committed in their naked reality" (AH 66). This kind of shame, al-Ghazālī imagines, is so painful that it is worthy of being one of the enduring sensations of hell. He reinforces the seriousness of the pain of shame through a parable. He imagines a prince celebrating his marriage who, after the celebrations, returns drunk to what he imagines to be his chambers, next to whom he imagines to be his bride. Upon awakening, the prince finds out that he is, in fact, "in a mortuary of fire-worshippers, his couch a bier, and the form which he mistook for that of his bride the corpse of an old woman beginning to decay" (AH 67). Shame, in reality, emerges in the prince when his father, the king, along with his many soldiers, finds him in this condition. The analogy is sufficiently clear. God is the king, and the soldiers are all of the faithful believers. It is the knowledge of God and of other humans

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likely say that shame has not yet been habituated into a virtue, for the virtue is only present if there is consistency in this process of nullifying the carnal desires.

[49] It is interesting to note that, for al-Ghazālī, though the feeling of shame is a virtue, shaming others is blameworthy. This could be related to the idea I will expound upon below that one should not uncover the sins of others since this is solely the role of God, who is the uncoverer of secrets.

[50] The Alchemy of Happiness (*Kimiya-yi Sa'ādat*) is considered a previous, shorter version of the *Iḥyā'* written in Persian. See Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī and His Revival of the Religious Sciences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 9.

about the true nature of the sinner's acts that will be the source of a hellish kind of shame in the afterlife. To be able to imagine such a horrid eternal destination, al-Ghazālī thinks, should be motivation enough to avoid disgraceful acts and thoughts.

In the *Condemnation of Anger, Rancor and Envy*, al-Ghazālī mentions the imagination of shame as a way of extinguishing the feeling of a particular kind of anger. If Satan entices the believer to feel anger, understood as a desire for vengeance, and to act upon this feeling, he suggests replying,

> How astonishing you are! Do you disdain to endure harm in this world, and will not disdain to endure punishment on the Day of Judgment, when that man will catch hold of your hand and take back his right from you? Do you disdain to be put to humiliation in this world and will not disdain to be disgraced and put to shame on the Day of Judgment? Do you disdain to seem slight in the sight of people today and will not disdain to seem despicable in the sight of Allah, angels and Prophets on the Day of Judgment? (CARE 287)

*Ḥayā*ʾ serves a distinct and valuable role in the child and adult's moral development. It indicates one's accurate moral perception—distinguishing well between right and wrong—and is an effective deterrent of immoral acts. Shame may help deter the adult from bad acts both by serving as an "army of the heart" during the sensual temptation as well as by imagining its sting in the afterlife. Though al-Ghazālī states multiple times that *ḥayā*ʾ is a praiseworthy trait, and even a virtue, in the next section I will show some of the ways he problematizes his own view.

Contingencies in the praiseworthiness of shame

Before launching into an analysis of al-Ghazālī's exceptions to the praiseworthiness of shame, we must understand why this is a potential problem for the coherence of his ethical taxonomy. As I have shown in the previous section on virtue and

vice, virtues are habituations that unfailingly make one act, feel, and think in a praiseworthy manner. These acts and thoughts are praiseworthy because they are reasonable—they stem from the dominance of the intellect over one's unruly appetite and anger. Therefore, a virtue, in al-Ghazālī's view, must make one inclined to act in accordance with the deliverances of reason. The virtue of *ḥayāʾ*, then, should be such that it inclines one to always feel pain when their faults are uncovered or are at risk of being uncovered before other people, for no other reason than their knowledge that what they did (or want to do) is blameworthy. Furthermore, this virtuous disposition would dispose only to good (rational) thoughts, motivations, and actions. His qualifications to the praiseworthiness of shame that I will discuss below are potentially problematic exactly because they show that shame before other humans can be followed by irrational motivations (such as vanity), is second-to-best in the list of moral motivations, and only sometimes lead to good action. Though he does not make an explicit distinction between what it looks like for one to simply feel the *passion* of shame and what it is to have the *virtue* of shame, I will suggest that it is this distinction that might help ground these seemingly conflicting valences of shame.

Shame can be coupled with vices

In the previous subsection, I quoted one of al-Ghazālī's most poignant defenses of *ḥayāʾ* as being among the virtues. At the end of that passage, however, he mentions that *ḥayāʾ* is frequently confused with a vice. Let us revisit the claim:

> Every maker of show claims that he is [shameful] (*mastahī*), and that he makes good his acts of worship because he feels [ashamed before other] people. But this is falsehood, for *ḥayāʾ* [shame] is a moral character which originates from the honored disposition (*al-tabi' al-karīm*), and the

> motives of both showing off and sincerity are provoked after it; one might be sincere or might make show of deeds with it. (CMSO 522)

According to this passage, *ḥayāʾ* is a virtue (moral character) that originates from an "honored disposition." Nevertheless, he adds that the person feeling shame can subsequently develop blameworthy thoughts and desires, such as a desire for *al-riyā'* (ostentation).[51] This seems to go against the hadith he had just quoted in order to support his positive view of shame: "*ḥayāʾ* brings about nothing but good." Here, I believe al-Ghazālī is not explicitly making an important distinction between the virtue of shame (which stems from an honorable disposition and results in good actions, intentions, and emotions) and the passion of shame that is not under the dominion of the intellect (which does not necessarily stem from an honorable disposition and may result in poor actions, intentions, and emotions). Though he does not make this distinction that would harmonize his account of shame, it is clear he intuits two kinds of shame.[52]

To illustrate the connection between shame and ostentation he points to in CMSO 522, al-Ghazālī offers an example. He asks us to imagine someone who is asked, by a friend, for money. The potential loaner, who does not want to lend the money but ends up doing so, may do so given the presence of one of three different internal states:

1) shame followed by ostentation—the person feels ashamed of saying no, which then leads them to attempt to show off and seek praise by agreeing to the loan. In this case, ostentation "has sprung from shame" (CMSO 522);

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[51] Though Sharif translates *al-riyā'* as 'showing off,' I will utilize the translation 'ostentation' here on out, occasionally using 'showing off' when referring to the actual practice of the trait of character.
[52] Thanks to David Decosimo for this insightful suggestion.

2) shame followed by sincerity—the person feels shame for saying no and, when pausing to think about the request, understands that it is the right thing to do. In this case, the result is "a kind of sincerity provoked by shame" (CMSO 522);

3) only shame—the person has no regard for spiritual reward, no fear of criticism, or wish for praise; they agree to loan the money solely in order to avoid feeling shame before the friend.

Here, though the consequent good action is indistinguishable (the loaning of money to a friend), the internal motivation to do so, for al-Ghazālī, ranges from blameworthy (in the case of shame followed by ostentation and of shame alone) to praiseworthy (shame followed by sincerity). For him, then, shame that motivates one to perform good actions can be tainted by morally dubious motivations and result in blameworthy acts, that is, acts that are not provoked by virtuous dispositions. What follows is that shame, for him, can be felt without the agent's full comprehension of the moral and spiritual dimensions of the action intended.[53] In other words, the reason for one's feeling of shame need not rest on one's sinfulness, nor on the punishments that one will incur because of it. Rather,

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[53] The kind of shame that al-Ghazālī is referring to here seems to be what we have called in the previous chapter 'antecedent shame,' that is, the shame felt *prior* to the performance of any act that could be considered shameful and thus sometimes serving as a prevention for the fruition of the act. Interestingly, when al-Ghazālī is describing consequent shame (shame felt *after* the said shameful act), he refers to it as praiseworthy while, in the context of describing antecedent shame, he gives the above nuances regarding its valence. This might be because, when feeling shame for a disclosed sin committed in the past, there is no room for pride or ostentation—the traits that may taint the praiseworthiness of shame—while, if a sin or shameful deed has yet to be performed, one can utilize the springboard of antecedent shame to both avoid the shameful deed and promote oneself as worthy of honor through the performance of a virtuous deed. Nevertheless, he notes that accompanying pride or ostentation need not be present for antecedent shame to be blameworthy; the lack of sincerity *resulting* from it is sufficient. This is because good deeds that result from antecedent shame alone are not necessarily evidence of good character, but merely avoidance of the audience's awareness of his or her vicious heart.

it is possible that the agent only feels shame because the sin is disclosed to the public, which in turn results in a loss of honor and possible criticism. This indicates that he is speaking here of a kind of shame that is not virtuous. These blameworthy consequences to shame can also be seen in his description of the children who are developing a sense of shame, which I analyzed in the previous section. If dealt with in the wrong way, the feeling of shame in some children may result in emboldened defiance against the moral norms in place. Again, though al-Ghazālī himself does not distinguish between the passion and virtue of shame, this division would explain why some manifestations of shame are clear habituations of the *virtue* of shame, while others seem more like the temporary *passion* of shame—shame is not a virtue if it is not submissive to the deliverances of the intellect. As a virtue, it must follow correct knowledge of sin and good intentions, it must be a proper feeling of blameworthiness, and it must result in good actions.

Shame as a less noble moral motivation

In addition to the problem of shame potentially being followed by blameworthy motivations and actions, al-Ghazālī elsewhere characterizes it as a more primary moral motivation than others. In the book he wrote prior to the *Iḥyāʾ*, *Mīzān al-ʼAmal* (Criterion for Action), he notes that, while *ḥayāʾ* is the first sign of the intellect, faith is the last (*al-iyamān akhar maraṭib al-ʼaḳul*) and "how can you achieve the last level without the first one?"[54] It seems here that al-Ghazālī, while clearly positioning *ḥayāʾ* as an important emotion or virtue in the moral agent, considers it one that manifests in the immature

[54] Excerpt from http://ghazali.org/works/mizan-amal.htm. No pages.

stages of human development. In fact, later in the passage, he lists three motivations for moral behavior in ascending order of maturity and places *ḥayā*ʾ in second. First, there is fear of losing something in the present world, such as loss of money (*ya<u>d</u>ja<u>sh</u>a fī al-hāl wa al-māl*), which is caused by lust (*al-<u>sh</u>ahua*). Second, the motivation of fear of blame (*<u>k</u>hauf al-ma<u>th</u>ima*) from other people, which is caused by *ḥayā*ʾ and the younger part of the intellect (*mibada al-'aḳul al-ḳasīr*). And, third, a desire for virtue (*ṭalib al-faḍīla*) and perfection of the soul (*kamal al-nafs*).[55] Again, this is likely because al-Ghazālī utilizes this term primarily to designate blameworthy states of the soul. He considers the first level of moral motivation to be found mostly among commoners and the second level among most rulers (*al-salathīn*), 'the big people of the world (*akabir al-dīnīa*)[56] as well as among the general public (*iḍafa ila la-'auam*). The third level, however, is the 'perfection of reason' (*kamal al-'aḳul*) and is reserved for the most pious (*al-aulīa'*), the wise (*al-hukma'*) and the truly intelligent (*muhaḳiḳīal-'aḳla'*).[57] To do what is good and avoid what is evil because of one's pursuit of virtue and the soul's perfection, despite what other people think, betrays a more noble moral motivation.

Al-Ghazālī here seems to raise certain qualifications for the goodness, or

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[55] Interestingly, it would seem that all three motivations are passions (fear, shame, and desire), yet only the least mature motivation is explicitly called an *al-<u>sh</u>ahua* and, as we will see, he considers the third a perfection of the soul because it is concomitant with the perfection of reason. Thus, though desire for virtue is a passion, it is a passion that is in perfect submission to the intellect.
[56] As Katz puts it "By associating dependence on shame as the primary source of moral regulation both with 'sultans and grandees' and with pre-adolescent children, al-Ghazālī provides a mordant (if oblique) commentary on the level of ethical development displayed by those in power. But he also implies that shame, because it is essentially a fear of loss of face, is a particularly powerful motivator for those with social face to lose." "Shame as an Affective Disposition in Islamic Legal Thought": 151.
[57] Insight on this translation was attained with the help of Ramage Maher.

appropriateness of the virtue of shame. In very similar ways as Aristotle did, he places the praiseworthiness and usefulness of the virtue of shame within the confines of a particular phase of moral maturity. Once again, this seeming incoherence in al-Ghazālī's work can be harmonized with the passion/virtue distinction, since he might be referring to the occurrent feeling of shame, present especially among those who hold positions of authority and, consequently, are constantly vigilant of their reputation before the public. In fact, if we take al-Ghazālī at face value, and *ḥayāʾ* can be a virtue, then it also seems to be implicit in the most noble of moral motivations, which requires that the person grow morally out of love for *all* the virtues, including shame. Because of *ḥayāʾ*'s qualified placement among the virtues—both because it may be accompanied by wrong motivations and because it is a less noble moral motivation than love of virtue—it would be more accurately depicted as both a passion and a virtue in the works of al-Ghazālī. When depicted as wrongfully felt, it is a passion that has not been placed under the dominion of the intellect, and when depicted as rightfully felt, it is a virtue.

Shame in the Spiritual Life

Despite this reasonable explanation for al-Ghazālī's seemingly disparate depictions of the praiseworthiness of shame, we must still try to understand how he explains the Islamic tenet that "*ḥayāʾ* is a branch of faith"? In other words, how does al-Ghazālī see *ḥayāʾ* within the context of spiritual development and how is the virtue of spiritual *ḥayāʾ* distinct from the passion/virtue that is felt before other humans throughout one's journey of moral development? Perhaps al-Ghazālī's last observation about *ḥayāʾ* in the first passage quoted above might give us a good starting point: "But better is to feel

shame of Allah Almighty…The strong person favors to feel shame of Allah other than to feel shame of people, unlike the weak, who might not have power to do it" (CMSO 523). Elsewhere, he stresses that one clear sign of lack of sincerity is when one feels shame *only* before the human public:

> Had his deference come from seeing God's majesty, this notion would have accompanied him in private; it would not be present solely whenever others are present. A sign of being secure from this flaw is that the notion he conjures up in private resembles what he conjures up in a crowd, and that the presence of other people did not give rise to the notions, any more than the presence of the beast might be its cause. As long as the person distinguishes, in what concerns him, between the sign of a man and the sight of a beast he departs from pure sincerity. (OIS 70)

Shame before God, according to this passage, is evidenced in the person when they experience the feeling of shame equally when they are in private or in public—that it did not rise because of the *human* public is, for al-Ghazālī, proof of the purest form of its sincerity and, consequently, of its praiseworthiness.

Shame before God is, by far, the kind that occupies most space in the *Iḥyāʾ* and it is the only kind of shame that al-Ghazālī considers unqualifiedly praiseworthy.[58] This shame necessarily implies the proper moral and religious apprehensions that he seems to consider prerequisites for virtuous shame. Furthermore, it is not motivated by love for honor and good reputation in the opinion of humans, but it assumes knowledge of God's will and of the reward and punishment that result from particular actions, thoughts and intentions. Most importantly, though, it recognizes God's attributes and places his

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[58] One can certainly think of feelings of shame before God that do not seem praiseworthy, such as feeling it for the wrong reasons, or due to a misguided understanding of God. However, al-Ghazālī does not mention any wrong ways of feeling shame before God.

opinion as sovereign over the opinion of any human.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the *Iḥyāʾ* is organized into four sections, the first two roughly pertaining to the external acts of the Muslim's life and the last two roughly pertaining to the internal life of the Muslim. The role of shame in the spiritual life of the believer follows the division of the book. That is, shame before God is crucial both for the proper realization of external, communal, ritual acts of worship as well as for the internal, individual, spiritual condition of the soul. Though, as we will see, shame is an *internal* reality in both contexts, in the first it has practical external results—that is, acceptable rituals—while, in the second, it has internal results—that is, sincerity and piety. In both cases, shame has a central role in attaining life in the hereafter. I will treat these two contexts for shame separately.

Shame before God During Rituals of Worship

In *The Mysteries of Worship*, he goes over the rules of proper performance of *salāt* (prayer)— the location, intention, ablutions, clothing, positioning of the body, *takbīr*, etc.[59] Though one might assume that this part of the *Iḥyāʾ* is solely concerned with the outward requirements of the ʻ*ibadāt*, al-Ghazālī cannot help but dedicate a large portion (more than half) of the chapter to the inner requirements of worship, or, as he calls it, "the acts of the heart." He argues that God is much more concerned with the correct intentions, the sincerity of the ritualistic act and the understanding of the inner meaning of the ritual, all of which are manifested in the proper emotional state of the

[59] The chapter does not include details about the rules of other kinds of rituals of worship, such as purification, pilgrimage (*hajj*), recitations, or fasting (*zakah*) given the preceding and following chapters, which focus on these practices.

practitioner, than he is about the external correctness and attention to detail of the outer movements of the body. This is repeated time and time again throughout the chapter *The Mysteries of Worship*, as well as throughout the *Iḥyāʾ*. For example, he states that, “for all degrees of what men do, the portion of everyone from his Worship is according to the measure of his fear, his humbleness and his magnifying. For, the place where the gaze of Allah falls is the hearts, not the outward movements” (MW 49). Despite the centrality he gives to the inner requirements, he notes that they are almost completely ignored by the jurists (MW 2), who at most require a verbal declaration of the intention (*niyya*) before or during the *takbīr*.[60]

Notwithstanding the silence of the jurists, worship requires the correct condition of the heart—it cannot be the result of mindless movements, or “the veil of unmindfulness.” Rather, for al-Ghazālī, proper worship is accompanied by six inner realities: “(a) the presence of the heart; (b) apprehension; (c) magnifying; (d) awe; (e) hope, and (f) shamefacedness” (MW 44).

Presence of heart (*haḍur al-ḳalb*), for al-Ghazālī, is the full-fledged mindfulness of the worshiper. That is, the worshiper is fully present and engaged in the ritualistic act. Apprehension (*al-tafaham*) concerns the worshiper’s perception of not only *what* they should do, but of the *meaning* behind the act. Once one is present at heart and understands what one is about to do and what it entails—including knowledge of God’s

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[60] Al-Ghazālī justifies the silence of the jurists with a political argument: “canon lawyers do not concern themselves with what is within, and are not troubled about hearts or the way of the next abode. Rather, they build up the external side of the laws of the religion upon the external side of the acts of the members, since the external side of the acts is a sufficient guard against being killed or chastised by the *sultan*” (MW 41).

greatness and the worshiper's fragility and weakness—then one will likely submit to the correct emotional state of a worshiper: magnifying (*al-ta'thīm*) God for his greatness, awe (*al-hība*) of God's power, and hope (*al-radjā'*) in God's mercy.

Finally, there is shamefacedness: "(f) Shamefacedness is additional to the whole, for its basis is the feeling of deficiency and the supposition (*tuhom*) of guilt (*thanab*). Exaltation, magnifying, fear and hope may be conceived of, without shame, where there is no supposition of deficiency and committing of sin" (MW 45). For al-Ghazālī, in order for there to be *ḥayā'* during worship, there need be, at the very least, a *tuhom* (imagining or assumption) of deficiency or fault (*thanab*)[61]. Shame, then, seems to, prima facie, not be a necessary pre-condition for proper worship, since the worshiper may not be hiding a fault and, therefore, not feel shame. On the other hand, al-Ghazālī's description allows for the subjectivity of one's self-assessment—the worshiper might feel shame even if there is no concrete fault for which to feel it. In any case, shame, if felt, is a combination of the supposition of fault along with the other internal conditions—presence of heart, magnifying of Allah, and fear and hope of Allah.

In what, exactly, does this feeling of deficiency consist, within the context of religious worship? Al-Ghazālī responds:

> As for shamefacedness, its cause is in one's sense of deficiency in religious service, and one's knowledge of one's inability to perform the great right of Allah. It grows strong through knowledge (*bi-ma'arifa*) of the blemishes and faults of the self, the littleness of its sincere devotion, the vileness of its inner nature, and its inclination to what is fleeting in all its actions, in spite of the knowledge (*al-'ilm*) of the great things that the majesty of Allah requires, along with the knowledge (*al-'ilm*) that He is an

[61] I have translated *thanab* here as 'fault' in order to avoid the contemporary association of the word 'guilt' with an individualistic emotion that follows offense, as in 'feeling guilty.'

> observer of the secret thoughts (*matala' 'ala al-sīr*) and the idle fancies of the heart, although they are subtle and hidden. Whenever these cognitions (*al-ma'arif*) assuredly result, there is sent forth from them a state called shamefacedness (*al-ḥayā'*). (MW 47)

The feeling of shame stems from four cognitions: a) knowledge of what God deserves ("the great right of Allah"); b) knowledge of the person's inability to achieve the greatness of service that God deserves or requires; c) knowledge that God is the ever-present audience of all actions, thoughts and desires of the worshiper; and d) knowledge of the faulty acts, thoughts, and desires of the self.[62] As we have seen before, knowledge is a central concept in the *Iḥyā'*. The word al-Ghazālī uses to refer to knowledge, however, varies. In some contexts, he uses the word most commonly used for theoretical, or 'book' knowledge—*al-'ilm*—while in others, he uses the word most commonly used for experiential, and sometimes mystical, knowledge—*al-ma'arif*. As I have noted parenthetically in the passage, here he uses both terms. Both theoretical and experiential knowledge may be the cause for the rise of shame in the individual—theoretical knowledge of the first three items listed above, having to do with God's nature and will, and experiential knowledge of the last item listed, having to do with oneself. Interestingly, he calls the collection of these cognitions *ma'arif*.

Al-Ghazālī's account of shame before God in this passage describes it as arising not only when one is aware of one's moral stains, but also of one's *'ibadāt* stains—worship that is tainted with lack of sincerity and, consequently, made invalid. Though he had previously argued that shame is not a necessary feeling when it is caused by moral

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[62] Nuances of the translation were given with the help of Ramage Maher.

faults, al-Ghazālī's more nuanced definition of shame as a feeling of deficiency in the broader sense potentially makes its occurrence more common. This is evidenced in other parts of the *Iḥyāʾ*. For example, in both *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith* and *The Mysteries of Worship*, al-Ghazālī urges worshipers to always doubt the validity of one's religious performances, for their acceptance, "despite the outward fulfilment of all the prerequisites of validity, may be blocked by a hidden cause unknown except to God" (FAF 135). Since certainty of the perfection of ritual is impossible to attain, shame and a humble disposition are necessary components of worship. In fact, al-Ghazālī at times identifies one with the other.[63]

The internal states of the heart are not only required prior to one's worship, but are expected to accompany each one of the rituals. In effect, each external posture, for al-Ghazālī, serves two purposes: 1) as an external symbol of an internal state of the heart; 2) to help produce a deeper manifestation of the inner condition of the heart.[64] Starting with intention (*niyya*), the first component of some of the *ʿibadāt*, al-Ghazālī stands in opposition to many of the jurists of his day by arguing that it is not sufficient to simply intend to commence a particular part of worship, such as to formulate the intention to

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[63] "For the cause of humbleness is the knowledge of the gaze of Allah upon His creature, and the knowledge of His majesty and the knowledge of the creature's shortcoming. So, from the recognition of these things humbleness is born, and it is not confined to the Worship. On that account it is related about a certain one that he did not raise his head to the sky for forty years, out of shamefacedness towards Allah, and lowliness before Him" (MW 70).

[64] Al-Ghazālī sees the relationship between the body and the heart as a two-way street. That is, while the desires and intentions of the heart certainly drive the body to follow suit, the oppressive movements of the body may lead the heart astray from its virtuous intentions: "These external activities are only settings in motion of the inward activities, a restraining of the members, and a quieting of them by the holding on to one direction, so that they may not wrong the heart. For, whenever they do wrong, and act oppressively in their movements and their turnings to their directions they desire the heart to follow, and they turn away with it from the Face of Allah" MW 55.

recite the *takbīr*.[65] Rather, *niyya* consists in appropriate emotional states:

> As for the Intention, resolve to respond to Allah by obeying His command to perform the Worship, completing it and abstaining from what it prohibits and what corrupts it, and by sincerely doing all that for the Face of Allah, *hoping* for His reward, *fearing* His punishment, seeking nearness to Him, taking upon yourself His favor in His permitting you to have communion, in spite of your evil manners and your numerous disobediences. *Magnify* to yourself the dignity of communion with Him, and how you are communing, and with what you are communing. At that it is fitting that your brow should perspire from *shame* and your muscles should quiver from *awe*, and your face turn yellow from *fear*. (MW 56-57, my emphases)

Though correct *niyya* is always already an internal act of worship, al-Ghazālī believes it is more than a mere oral formulation. Its very definition and manifestation includes emotions—to intend to worship God is to know all that it entails and to physically[66] and emotionally respond in accordance with that knowledge: in *magnification or awe* of one's communion with God, *hope* for God's favor and nearness to him, *fear* of God's punishment, and *shame* for one's evil condition when approaching the ritual.

In a similar manner, the rite of purification must encompass all parts of one's self, from the 'outermost container' all the way to the heart:

> As for the Purification, whenever you purify your place, which is your outermost container, and then your clothing, which is your nearest covering, and then your skin, which is your closest shell, do not be unmindful of your kernel, which is your essence, and that is your heart. So, exert yourself on its behalf, cleansing it by repentance and remorse for previous acts, renewing the resolve to abandon such things, in the future.

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[65] For a detailed analysis of the laws for *niyya* in medieval Islamic legal literature, see Paul Powers, *Intent in Islamic Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

[66] Al-Ghazālī would seem to agree, though not explicitly, with the common medieval idea that passions, or emotions, include physical manifestations: shame causes sweat of the brow, trembling is the result of awe, and a yellow face is the result of fear.

> So cleanse by repentance your inward parts, for that is the place the One you worship observes (MW 54-55).

The rite of purification, therefore, is an external act which must occur internally as well. Once again, in this passage, al-Ghazālī notes that God's gaze is focused primarily on the heart, as opposed to merely centering on the body of the worshiper.

After the rite of purification, one must cover their body. Al-Ghazālī contends that the covering of one's body is not only for the "gaze of people," but the covering of "the disgraceful (*'aurāt*) things of your inner self, and the dishonorable things of your secret thoughts, which no one gazes upon but your Lord." When one covers the body, one must simultaneously "present these disgraceful things to your mind, and ask yourself to cover them, but be assured that no covering covers them from the eye of Allah, and only remorse, shamefacedness (*al-ḥayā'*) and fear cover them" (MW 55). Aside from its purely physical meaning, then, the practice of covering one's body is symbolic of covering one's sins on another level—just as one would feel shame if their sexual body parts were exposed to the public, one must feel shame before God for the exposure of one's secret faults. Furthermore, just as clothing serves as a cover of one's sexual parts, al-Ghazālī considers shame and fear to be the 'covers' of disgracefulness.

What does it mean for an emotion to 'cover' a fault? Al-Ghazālī goes on to explain this concept as follows:

> For you acquire, by their presence in your heart, the sending forth of the armies of fear and shame from their places of hiding, and your self is humbled by them, and your heart becomes lowly under the shame, and you stand before Allah in the posture of a creature who is guilty and wicked, and a fugitive who has repented and returned to his Lord, bowing his head from shame and fear. (MW 55)

Perhaps a clearer translation of the first part of this quotation would be "It would be beneficial to you, through the presence of heart, to have emerge the armies of fear and shame from their trench, for your self is humbled by them, and your heart surrenders under the shame."[67] This free translation brings to the surface al-Ghazālī's reliance on militaristic terminology. The image that he is trying to relay is that these emotions—shame and fear—are soldiers hiding in a trench. When the worshiper is present with the heart during worship, they are reminded of the disgraceful and dishonorable things in their inner self—the enemies—thus bringing these soldiers forth, out of their trenches, to initiate the spiritual battle. The role of the soldiers is to seize the part of the heart where these disgraceful things reside and humble it, and take it as a fugitive back to the King. Shame and fear, therefore, serve as covers for one's faults because they induce the heart to submit to God, who is, ultimately, the coverer of faults.

Just as the rite of covering the body must be accompanied by an internal reality, the same is true for the required erect standing posture and inclined head. Both the body and the heart must stand in reverence and incline in humility before God as if in the presence of a powerful king:

> The Standing erect is only standing in person and heart before Allah. So let your head, which is your highest member, be bent, lowered and inclined, and let the placing of your head out of its erect position be an indication of the heart's grasp of humility, abasement and freedom from headship and pride.

The erect standing position and bowed head before God should be a reflection of one's internal states of fear, shame, and humility. If one's heart is not yet in these states and one

[67] Translation done with the guidance of Ramage Maher.

is "unable to perceive the extent of His majesty," al-Ghazālī asks to imagine being in the presence of an earthly king or "that you are regarded and watched by the watchful eye of a righteous man of your family." If this image elicits these states, he decries, "You claim knowledge and love of Allah! Then are you not ashamed of your boldness toward Him, you esteem one of His creatures and fear men, without fearing Him. Who has more right that you should fear Him?" And, quoting a hadith, "For that reason when Abu Hurairah asked, 'Of what sort is shamefacedness toward Allah?' Muhammad said, 'Be ashamed before Him as you are ashamed before a righteous man of your family'" (MW 56). For al-Ghazālī, there is no sense in feeling fearful, humble and shameful before a flawed human being and not before God, the latter being the required accompanying feeling of an inclined head during prayer.

If the worshiper's internal states are consistent with and participate in the external acts of worship, might one rest assured of their validity and God's acceptance? Al-Ghazālī replies with a resounding no. Fear, humility, hope, and shame should not only be integral parts of the *'ibadāt*, but also remain present in the worshiper long after he or she has finalized them.

> Then make your heart feel caution and shame on account of your deficiency in the Worship. Fear that your Worship may not be accepted and that you are hated on account of some guilt, outward and inward, and your Worship will be returned to your face. Yet, for all that, hope that He will accept it, through His generosity and favor. YaIḥyā ͗ b. Waththab, whenever he worshipped, used to wait as long a while as it pleased Allah, with the pain of the Worship evident upon him. Ibrahim al-Nakah'i used to remain after the Worship for a while, as if he were ill. (MW 66)

For al-Ghazālī, the reward for correct (external and internal) worship is not confined to that given in the hereafter. Worship that is free from outward and inward

faults, "in accordance with the inward Stipulations which we have mentioned of humbleness, magnifying and shame" can result in "illuminations of the heart," which, for him, are deliverances of mystical knowledge during one's life on earth. In other words, divine secrets are only revealed to those who have worshiped in shame before God—knowledge of one's deficiencies during worship results in mystical knowledge of God.

So far, I have shown the ways in which al-Ghazālī incorporates shame before God within his views of praiseworthy worship. *Ḥayāʾ* is the appropriate result of knowledge of God and of one's moral and spiritual condition, one of the internal requirements of worship, one of the emotions that directs the worshiper toward God, and is enhanced and deepened by the ʿ*ibadāt*. Consequently, wherever God is the audience of *ḥayāʾ* in al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ*, it is unqualifiedly praiseworthy.[68] In addition to the requirement of shame among the practices of the ʿ*ibadāt*, al-Ghazālī also emphasizes the need for shame before God in the whole of one's spiritual journey. Shame is very much an essential part of what he calls the 'struggle against the self' (*jihād al-nafs*) that is part of the believers' process of spiritual vigilance.

Shame before God as Vigilance

In *On Vigilance and Self-Examination*, al-Ghazālī focuses on the ultimate goal of every believer: steadfast commitment (*murabata*). To achieve this goal, al-Ghazālī lays out six 'stations,' or necessary steps toward *murabata*. Important for this discussion is the

[68] I am including here only occasions of *ḥayāʾ* during one's earthly life. In *Remembrance of Death and Hereafter Life*, al-Ghazālī describes the horrible and sweat-inducing shame and fear of those who will go through judgment on the Day of Reckoning. This kind of shame, clearly, is not the virtue, but the passion. See RDH 713, 719, 721.

second station: vigilance. A state of vigilance, for al-Ghazālī, is to "be aware of the one watching (*raḳib*) and to turn attention to him" (VSE 17). For his purposes, al-Ghazālī focuses on vigilance of God. This state is only achieved through a certain kind of knowledge, "this is the knowledge that God sees the hearts, knows everyone's innermost secrets, watches the deeds of the servants and oversees in every soul what it has earned. For Him, the secret of the heart is exposed, much like the exposed face before other people—"nay, more so" and "Those who are certain in this knowledge are those who are near to God (*muḳarrabun*)" (VSE 17).

Al-Ghazālī describes two levels of vigilance in believers. First, there are those who are absolutely entranced by visions and awareness of God. These extremely pious believers abandon almost all worldly activities, living ascetic lives filled with awe. The more attainable second level of vigilance, al-Ghazālī notes, is comprised of those pious people

> whose hearts are overcome by the certainty that God sees the hearts' interiors and exteriors. However, the awareness of divine majesty does not dazzle them. On the contrary, their hearts keep within the limit of balance and are capable of attending to states and deeds. While performing deeds, however, they never fail to be vigilant. They are certainly dominated by shame (*ḥayāʾ*) before God, advancing and retreating only upon confirmation in it. They abstain from what might disgrace them on [the Day of] Resurrection. But since they [already] consider that God sees them in the world, they have no need to await the Resurrection. (VSE 21)

Shame is a characteristic of those who remain spiritually vigilant, always mindful of God's watchfulness and of the state of their heart.

In this subsection, I have surveyed al-Ghazālī's view of shame before God. The virtue of shame before God, for him, always derives from a perfectly rational assessment

of who God is and who humans are. In contrast to fellow humans, God is worthy of vigilance on the part of the believer, and, before him, there will always be faults of which to be ashamed. Furthermore, the motivating intention of the virtue of shame before God and the resulting acts and thoughts are always virtuous. Though an analysis of shame in the works of al-Ghazālī might settle on the occurrences of *ḥayāʾ* and its grammatical variances, there is another virtuous emotion that he describes in very similar ways: fear of God. In the next section, I will show the similarities between fear of God and shame before God, thereby expanding upon the praiseworthiness of this category of shame.

Shame as a Species of Fear of God

In the quarter on the "ways to salvation," al-Ghazālī dedicates a whole book to two emotions: hope and fear. The location of this book already discloses his opinion of these emotions: they are key instruments to knowledge of and closeness to God, which result in the attainment of salvation.[69] The pair is not in conflict and fear is not the opposite vice of the virtue of hope (that is the role of despair) (FH 220). According to al-Ghazālī, God and Muhammad successfully employed these two emotions to align humans' behavior with God's will. They applied the "whip of fear" to the people, only to

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[69] In comparing al-Ghazālī's virtues with Aristotle's, Sherif makes an interesting observation: "Making use of the more elaborate and detailed treatment of the passions in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Ghazālī takes the same passions which are used as the basis for the philosophic virtues, and looks at them in the light of his views of nearness to God. This is the genesis of Ghazālī's 'new' virtues which we have called mystical. For example, because the philosophers regard death as the object of the greatest human fear, they conclude that fear is a defect for which the corresponding virtue is courage. Ghazālī, on the other hand, looks at the same passion in the light of man's relation to God, who ought to be feared both in this life and the next, and concludes that the right state of character is 'fear of God.' Thus the passions are raised to higher levels beyond the usual low rank assigned to them in the treatment of 'philosophic virtues.' In the same way, Ghazālī frequently takes a disposition generally understood in terms of man's relation with his fellow men, abstracts it from the political context, and reformulates it in terms of his concept of nearness to God." Sherif, pp. 110-111.

allow the "reins of hope" to cure them of the despair resulting from that fear (FH 228). Both are necessary in the face of knowledge of God and one's inward defects, for the fearful person who is not treated with hope is driven to the extreme of despair, while the exceedingly hopeful person who is not fearful of God is either ignorant (of oneself or of God) or self-deluded (FH 257). In sum, the ideal human state is one of equilibrium between the two emotions (FH 260).

Al-Ghazālī notes that fear results from the imagination of something evil in the future (FH 234). Fear of God, more specifically, originates from knowledge of God and his power to destroy the petty human, either because he simply feels like it or because of the human's sins.[70] For this reason, fear of God only occurs with the combination of knowledge of God and self-knowledge, more specifically, knowledge of one's "own defects and his knowledge of the majesty of God and His self-subsistence." That is, the person most filled with fear is the person "who has most knowledge of himself and his Lord" (FH 235). Once again, virtue and virtuous emotions derive from proper knowledge and, once again, it comes down to self-knowledge and knowledge of God.

If not taken to the extreme of despair or felt simply in passing, fear of God is praiseworthy because it "provides an incentive for action and blackens all the lusts, and snatches the heart away from reliance on this world, and summons it to withdraw from the home of self-deceit" (FH 252). Not only does fear of God result in abstention from

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[70] Al-Ghazālī mentions two ranks of fear of God, one that fears God's punishment in the hereafter and one that fears "being veiled from God" and being alienated from Him (FH 242). The first is inferior to the second. Surprisingly, this is an incredibly similar distinction to one Aquinas will make between servile and filial fear, which we will explore in chapter 3.

sin, but also in the development of virtue: "So the lusts are burned up by fear and the members are trained, and self-abasement and humility and submissiveness and lowliness obtain in the heart, and pride and rancor and envy abandon it" (FH 252). Al-Ghazālī further commends fear of God as God's instrument to drive his creatures "towards perseverance in knowledge and action, so that by means of both of these they may obtain the rank of nearness to God" (FH 237).[71]

Already, the correlation between fear of God and shame before God starts to emerge. Just like shame, fear of God entails a negative self-assessment on the part of the believer coupled with appreciation of God's intimate knowledge of the human's secrets and God's power to punish.[72] Al-Ghazālī, however, connects these emotions even further in his discussion of the various objects of fear. Out of his long list of the objects of fear, he adds the fear "that the defections of his obedience will be uncovered, where there is revealed to him from God what he did not take into the reckoning" (FH 240). In other words, generally speaking, fear of God includes fear of God's punishment and, more specifically, shame *is* one of the feared punishments.[73] More specifically, the shame

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[71] Al-Ghazālī is particularly interested in the ways in which fear leads to action, just like a whip which, used in the right way, incites action, "impelling along the path of awe" FH 220.
[72] Marion Katz also considers *ḥayāʾ* to imply the feeling of fear: "Indeed, *ḥayāʾ* may be defined as a type of fear, specifically the fear of social disapprobation; this definition has clear roots in the Greek philosophical tradition." "Shame as an Affective Disposition in Islamic Legal Thought": 143-44.
[73] It is important to note that al-Ghazālī understands fear of God to be motivated by two propositions about God. First, as we have noted, the proposition that God punishes those who are worthy of punishment. Second, the proposition that "He is self-subsistent and that He does not care" (FH 242). Of these two propositions, al-Ghazālī thinks the second is the strongest motive for fear that a human can elicit, for God predestines each person, sometimes without motive, to salvation or perdition. Therefore, fear of being at the whim of a mighty and ruthless God is, above all objects of fear, the highest in rank. This kind of fear would not classify as a kind of shame for a disgrace, for it has nothing to do with one's merit or lack thereof, but it might be *ḥayāʾ* in the sense of acknowledging one's insignificance before God. Thanks to Ellie Ash for this insight.

feared in the Day of Judgment is shame before both God and other humans.[74] In a vivid description of the imagined punishments that summon fear of God in the believer, he invokes the image of God drawing back the veil of one's wrongdoing:

> the thing abhorred is pictured within them, such as the image of the pangs of death and its rigors, or the interrogation of Munkar and Nakir, or the punishment of the grave, or the terror of the resurrection, or the awfulness of the halting-place before God and shame because of the drawing back of the veil... (FH 242)

Fear of uncovering, as we have already seen in several other passages of the *Iḥyāʾ*, is one of the very definitions of *ḥayāʾ*. What makes this definition of fear of God particularly interesting is that al-Ghazālī seems to be referring to shame *of* shame.[75] That is, the believer feels *prospective* shame (shame of future uncovering) of *retrospective* shame (shame of past disobedience).[76]

Al-Ghazālī considers these manifestations of fear of God "particularly advantageous to everyone" for, generally speaking, they lead to a change in one's attitude or behavior "so as to exclude what leads to the thing feared" (FH 240). Praising the effects of fear of the uncovering (in my view, of prospective shame), more specifically, he states that "whoever fears that God will scrutinize his secret heart occupies himself

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[74] Elsewhere, he mentions that one is justified "to rejoice with Allah's screening his sins, and grieve when Allah tears the screen off him, and puts him to shame, which provokes his fear that Allah would tear the screen off him on the Day of Judgment" (CMSO 520). That is, if one's sins are exposed in this life, there is a greater likelihood that they will be exposed on the Day of Judgment.

[75] The "shame spiral" or its recursive property, as it is called in literature on shame.

[76] In the context of *On Fear and Hope*, this kind of fear is particularly pungent when one thinks of their state right before death. For al-Ghazālī, fear of the uncovering of one's past disobedience and their uncovering at the time of judgment is dominant upon death is not praiseworthy for "fear has the effect of the whip which urges to action, and the time of action has passed away, and so the person who is at the point of death has no power over action" (FH 252). This corroborates with the idea I proposed previously—that the shame in the unbelievers in the afterlife is not the virtue of shame, but the passion.

with the purifying of his heart from the whisperings (of Satan)" (FH 240). For al-Ghazālī, the path to the hereafter aims toward intimacy with God, which is characterized by "love and constant recollection." However, to achieve that aim, there must be a "forsaking of the pleasures and the lusts of this world," which, in turn, is only attained by "the fire of fear."[77] In other words, fear of God (or shame before God) leads to piety, and is even a condition of faith, for "piety is simply an expression for the restraint which is regulated by fear" (FH 254).[78]

Summary

According to Kenneth Garden, al-Ghazālī's ultimate goal in writing the *Iḥyāʾ* was to "guide its reader to felicity in the hereafter, but his project had major implications for the understanding and practice of the religious sciences in this world, which had to be reordered to serve the goal."[79] In exploring his views on shame, it is safe to say that al-Ghazālī considered *ḥayāʾ* a central virtue in achieving the ultimate goal of unity with God in the hereafter. As a disposition toward an unpleasant feeling that emerges on the occasion of a correct negative self-assessment and awareness of an audience, shame as a virtue serves al-Ghazālī's ethical project as a sign of correct self-knowledge and an emotional conduit to praiseworthy behavior. Though al-Ghazālī admits that there are

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[77] And he adds, "how can such fear be other than meritorious, since by it chastity and abstinence and piety and spiritual combat are obtained, and these are actions both meritorious and commendable which promote nearness to God" FH 254.

[78] Though stated in passing, al-Ghazālī holds that fear is not an enduring motivational emotion in the pious. Once one has achieved perfect intimacy with God, the pious no longer has the need of fear as a moral and spiritual motivation—nor of hope, for that matter (FH 235). Nonetheless, he believes that very few have achieved such a spiritual status. For the majority, fear and shame are continuously needed.

[79] Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver*, p. 27.

inappropriate or immature ways of feeling shame, I have argued that it is likely that, in these passages, he is referring to the passion of shame and not the virtue. In general, however, shame before other people, when accurately felt and habituated, is a virtuous emotion and developing the tendency to feel it would serve his reader well. The concept of the virtue of shame before God, moreover, serves al-Ghazālī's spiritual project as emotional evidence of correct knowledge of God and sincerity in worship, as well as a forerunner of piety. As I have shown, because he considers the virtue of shame before God, or fear of God, a rational feeling—it is the result of correct knowledge of God's majesty and of human lowliness and, in the correct measure, leads to pious/good behavior—that should be felt across ages, genders, and social boundaries, it is a virtue.

D. Al-Ghazālī on Pride

Al-Ghazālī recounts the story of Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz, who, after performing the Hajj, was walking in a prideful manner. Tawus, who saw him walking this way, approached him and poked Umar's side, saying: "This is not the walk of him who has excretion in his belly" (CAV 550).

As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, for al-Ghazālī, pride is one of the blameworthy traits or characteristics that "are fatal in the world to come" (BK 119). According to his definitions in *Condemnation of Pride and Self-Admiration*, al-Ghazālī understands pride as "regarding oneself superior to another" (CAV 556), a feeling of "self-importance," relying on "what he has thought of himself," and "self-magnificence" (CAV 557). As we will see in more detail below, al-Ghazālī describes pride as one of the

excesses of the lordly qualities, or qualities of supremacy, that is, a trait that takes one's reflection of the characteristics of God to its vicious extreme. More than simply a blameworthy trait, he characterizes pride as a sin and the root of most other sins. In this section, I will expound upon al-Ghazālī's views on pride: its siblings, causes, results, and remedies. My overall argument is that al-Ghazālī considers pride a vice (though he most commonly uses 'blameworthy character trait' as a synonym of vice) because of his religious beliefs about the sinful human tendencies, the centrality of the virtue of humility, and the ontological gap between humans and God. The first and second elements refer to internal restraints to a feeling of superiority, while the third refers to an external restraint. I will also argue that, while al-Ghazālī seems to give room to the virtue of 'greatness of the soul,' this virtue is ultimately considered unachievable.

The Siblings of Pride

Though the Arabic word *al-kibr* (كبر)—and its grammatical variations—is the word most commonly translated as 'pride' in al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'*[80], he mentions others that relate to pride in some way:

> It should be known that [pride] (*al-kibr*) in origin is an internal character, and what emerges outwardly of acts and behaviors is its fruits and outcomes. Those acts should belong to showing pride and haughtiness. There is one main reason for [pride], i.e. self-vanity (*al-'ad̲jib*)…for if one is proud of his moral character, knowledge, wealth, etc, he soon makes much of himself, and behaves arrogantly (*takbīr*) towards the people (CAV 573).

[80] In Sharif's translation, he translates *al-kibr* almost always as 'arrogance.' Though I will mostly use his translation in the passages quoted in this section, I will use the translation 'pride.'

First, there is *al-'a<u>dj</u>ib* (admiration), which al-Ghazālī considers the internal *cause* of pride. Though the word for admiration is not followed by the word 'self' (*al-nafs*), which would aid in its translation to 'self-admiration' or 'self-vanity,' the addition of *al-nafs* in the previous sentence—when describing pride as 'magnification of the self over others' (*ast'aḍam al-nafs*)—supports the inference. For al-Ghazālī, it is evident that admiration of one's knowledge, deeds, or any other attitude and action, may lead one to view oneself as greater than others, and thus to develop the vice of pride. Second, though not mentioned in the passage above, there is the trait that he, elsewhere, considers to be another internal cause of pride, which is 'love for status' (*hub al-<u>dj</u>ahu*). Third, and referred to in the passage as pride's "fruits and outcomes," is 'ostentation' (*al-riyā'*), 'backbiting' (*al-<u>gh</u>aība*), 'envy' (*al-hasad*), 'rancor' (*al-haḳad*)[81]. I will include a more thorough analysis of some of these traits when appropriate.

Causes for the sin of pride

Sins, for al-Ghazālī, are abuses of natural, God-given, human qualities. Inasmuch he considers humans to possess four qualities—of supremacy ('lordly'), of delivery, of bestiality, and of predacity—so are the divisions of sin, for these same qualities may serve as "stimuli of sin."[82] The general sin of pride falls under the sins of supremacy:

[81] Al-Ghazālī also has a book entitled *Condemnation of Self-Delusion* in his Quarter of the Defectives. I think there are interesting connections between pride and self-delusion (*al-<u>gh</u>arur*). He defines the self-deluded person as one who "renders good the evildoing…[they] do not distinguish that in which they endeavor for their own selves from that in which they endeavor for the sake of Allah Almighty…[they] leave the obligatory duty and engage in the supererogatory deed." (CC 615) In other words, the conceited have a deceptive self-assessment of their merits, considering themselves great when they are not. However, I am limiting my analysis to the traits that al-Ghazālī himself connects to pride.

[82] Sophia Vasalou notes that "This fourfold scheme echoes a more familiar tripartite scheme found in numerous works of Arabic philosophical ethics based in the Platonic distinction between the rational,

> The bent for the supremacy qualities, encourages such traits as prestige (*al-kibr*); glory (*al-fakhar*); power, love of praise, appreciation and wealth; the desire for perpetual life; and quest for superiority over all until it seems that man wishes to say, 'I am your Lord, the most high.' From these some of the greatest sins result, of which men are heedless, and which they do not reckon as sins, yet they are the great ravagers which are the source of most transgressions. (OR 55)

The bent toward qualities of supremacy, or lordly qualities, is precisely a bent that imitates the lordliness of God. The human, being the earthly creature that most closely resembles God due to the presence of a rational faculty, is the creature most worthy of honor. Elsewhere, he describes this drive toward lordliness by saying that "the soul has two desires in that: the first is to deny the other, and the second is to affirm oneself. By both desires, one's supremacy is achieved" (PG 109). The problem is that this bent toward honor is likely to go astray and to take on a form that is "in opposition to slavery (to Allah) which he is commanded to observe" (PG 109). This is why he later specifies the sins of supremacy as "[the bent for] glory (*al-fakhar*), power (*al-'az*), arrogance (*al-'alu*), [pride] (*al-kibryā'*) and control over all creatures (*qasad al-satila' 'ala jamiya' al-khala*)" (OR 55).

According to al-Ghazālī a prideful person is ignorant of, distorts, or does not care about two pieces of correct knowledge: 1) that humility is the commanded praiseworthy trait, which is in direct opposition to pride; 2) that God knows the sinful secrets of the heart, while humans only see the outward acts.

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spirited or irascible, and appetitive parts of the soul. Given the frequent identification, within these works, of the 'predatory' aspect with the irascible faculty and of the 'beastly' aspect with the appetitive faculty, the most intuitive way of reading al-Ghazālī's 'lordly' element is as another designation for the privileged faculty standing at the normative apex of this scheme, namely reason." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 38.

In regard to knowledge of humility, al-Ghazālī, in *The Book of Knowledge*, gives a few arguments against the practice of religious debates that intend to win people over for Islam. Pride is one of them. Using the Prophet as a foil, the debater, in contrast, "persists in exalting himself above his equals and peers and in claiming for himself a station higher than his worth." In order to justify this prideful behavior, al-Ghazālī argues, the debaters must distort the valence of pride and humility. They "consider humility, which God and his prophets commended, abasement, and regard pride (*al-kibr*), which is reprehensible to God, the dignity of religion. In other words, they have altered the signification of these terms for the confusion of people" (BK 111-112).

Elsewhere, he brings forth a second kind of knowledge that is lacking in the prideful: that God is aware of their defects.

> You also please the creatures on the account of displeasing Allah Almighty, in order to be respected and honored in this world. Woe to you! It seems as if it is easier upon you to be despised by Allah on the Day of Judgment than to be scorned by the people in this world. You also hide your shameful deeds from the people and do not care that Allah Almighty knows them all. It seems as if your scandal in the Sight of Allah Almighty is easier upon you than your disgrace in the sight of the people. Do you regard the slaves in a higher position in your sight than Allah Almighty? Exalted and Hallowed by Allah from our ignorance! (CNGW 439)

To feel pride, then, is to ignore knowledge of God's awareness of the person's shameful deeds.

Pride is not only the result of lack of knowledge, but also the result of lack of belief. In *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith*, al-Ghazālī includes the renouncing of pride as an essential part of belief (*imān*): "Islam...means submission (*taslām*), and surrender (*istislām*) to God through yielding and compliance; and henceforth abjuring

rebellion, pride, and stubbornness...For every acceptance with the mind is a submission and disapproval of pride and unbelief" (FAF 100). If 'Islam' means submission, then pride represents its very antonym. By conceiving of oneself as superior, al-Ghazālī deems it impossible to truly submit to God and to others. Though I have separated al-Ghazālī's idea of pride as the result of lack of knowledge and lack of belief, for him, these two factors are closely related. To lack a certain kind of knowledge is to inevitably lack belief in Islam. For this reason, *The Book of Knowledge* is a setup for *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith*—not only do they follow that order in the book, but also in the life of the believer; belief follows knowledge, and renouncing pride follows both.

For al-Ghazālī, pride is not only caused by ignorance and disbelief of certain propositions, but requires belief in other kinds of propositions. In his detailed rendering of pride in *On the Condemnation of Pride and Self-Admiration*, he states that pride consists in three propositional beliefs, and all three need to be simultaneously held in order for pride to arise:

> The origin of arrogance then is that character which lies in the self. It is to get comforted and rely on regarding oneself superior to another, whom he regards inferior to him. Arrogance summons a second party whom the arrogant regards inferior to him, and a thing with which he becomes arrogant...He then should place himself in a particular position, and place the other in another position in a way that lets him see himself above him in rank and position. Those three elements give rise to [pride] within himself. Once those occur, he thinks himself to be self-important and overjoyed and relies on what he has thought of himself, and those are components of the character of [pride]. (CAV 556-57)

In other words, the three beliefs that need be summoned are: 1) the belief that one is superior (belief about the *subject* of pride); 2) the belief that another is inferior (belief about the *object* of pride); 3) the belief that one possesses a thing that sustains the

hierarchy (belief about the *content* of pride).[83] Belief in the three propositions mentioned above are, for al-Ghazālī, the result of two prior states: on the one hand, ignorance, as I mentioned above, and, on the other, a feeling of safety from the "plan of Allah Almighty" and "none feels safe of the plan of Allah Almighty but the losers" (CAV 569). In what follows, I will give details regarding each of the parts of these epistemological causes for the vice of pride—its subject, object, and content.

The subject of pride

The subjects of pride, according to al-Ghazālī, deem themselves superior. As we have seen above, he sees self-admiration (*al-'ad̲jib*) as one of pride's internal causes (CAV 600). This causal relation is due to the fact that *al-'ad̲jib* is the trait that makes a person see themselves as "perfect in a particular characteristic like knowledge, property, wealth, etc" (CAV 601), while *al-kibr* is the trait that takes this perception and uses it to evaluate oneself as superior to another person or other people; the former logically precedes the latter. As I have explained above, al-Ghazālī considers self-admiration the result of ignorance about one's proper position in relation to others.

Self-admiration is a tragic vice, for al-Ghazālī, because it has dire consequences for one's relationship to others and especially to God. When one admires their own deeds and character, it is typical to be ignorant or to turn a blind eye to one's evil doings; their admiration for themselves makes them regard the duty of inspection of their character particularly unnecessary, and the lack of such inspection, for al-Ghazālī, results in tainted worship (CAV 600). Furthermore, the worshiper loses all fear of God's punishment

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[83] Though the first two are conceptually united, I am separating them for closer analysis.

"under the belief that he has a good position with Him, and a right due to his deeds...His self-admiration causes him to praise himself, give prestige to and justify himself" (CAV 600).

The object of pride

What I am calling the "object" of pride is the person to which the prideful person compares themselves, perceiving them to be inferior. According to al-Ghazālī, one can feel superior when comparing oneself to three objects. First, there is pride towards God. For him, "this is the most odious arrogance. Its only motives are mere ignorance and transgression" (CAV 559) and consists in seeking to be superior to God, such as the ancient pharaohs; second, there is pride toward the Messengers of God, which is "out of self-conceit and refraining from submission to men belonging to mankind" (CAV 560); and, finally, there is pride toward servants, which, for al-Ghazālī, just means all other fellow humans who are not Messengers of God. To be prideful toward God is the most serious offense, while being prideful toward servants is the least grievous of the three. Nonetheless, the latter is still sinful pride because, al-Ghazālī reasons, to place powerless humans as the object of one's pride is to steal God of a right that is only his:

> loftiness, superiority, and magnificence are fitting but for Allah Almighty, Who is the Omnipotent King. But as for the powerless and helpless servant, who is too powerless to do anything, how should loftiness be fitting for him? If a servant regards himself lofty, he indeed has disputed with Allah Almighty over one of His attributes, which is not fitting but for His Majesty. Its example is like a servant who takes the hat of the king and puts it on his head and sits on his throne: how daring he is! How rude and wicked he is! How disgraceful and shameful he is! How deserving of punishment and torment he is! (CAV 562)

Furthermore, pride that has humans as its object inevitably results in pride that

holds God as its object because the feeling of superiority toward humans usually results in the person refusing to accept the truth about God that originates from any human. Al-Ghazālī exemplifies this with the case of Iblis, who refused to prostrate to the first created human, considering himself better than Adam, which in turn "led him to be arrogant to the command of Allah Almighty" (CAV 564).

The content of pride

The last necessary belief for the appearance of pride, regarding its content, can be held about internal or external objects. Pride of a character trait is an example of an internal object of pride, while an external object can be "acts and deeds that issue from the organs and parts of the body" (CAV 556). For al-Ghazālī, this content might be derived from a 'religious' context or 'from the world.' Regardless of its context, the content of one's pride must necessarily be perceived as an 'attribute of perfection.' In total, he lists seven. Religious content of pride might include religious performances perceived as particularly perfect, or religious knowledge, while worldly content of pride might be "good ancestry, beauty, power, wealth and number of patrons" (CAV 564).

Al-'adjib—self-admiration, one of the causes of pride—is a kind of forgetfulness (CAV 601) or ignorance (CAV 602) of the fact that it is God who confers all of the person's good things, such as "existence, good attributes, acts and their causes and motives" (CAV 603). Self-admiration develops once the believer regards their goods as merited, and not as favors from God. In fact, he notes, if the believer understood that they are favors "in the sense that if He wills, He could deprive him of it, [self-admiration] is removed from his heart" (CAV 601). For al-Ghazālī, God is not only the provider of

outward reasons for self-admiration and pride, such as wealth and status, but of inward reasons as well, such as the impulse to do good deeds and to perform praiseworthy worship.

It is in this context that Al-Ghazālī once again tackles the issue of divine pre-determination. Most likely responding to the Mu'tazilites, who insisted on posing the human as the originator of actions, he defends a version of the Ash'arite position. In his lengthy response, he raises two main points. First, that it is evidently true that everything that a human being is and does, including all movements, acts, and desires of the will, is "created and invented by Allah Almighty" (CAV 603). Second, that it is only natural to be under the *impression* that everything one does is through one's own power and will, but that all power is from God and there is no merit in the human.

> Once the power is created, the decisive will is directed, the causes and motives are moved, and the impediments and obstructions are kept away from you, the work becomes so much easier upon you. To be sure, stimulating the causes and motives, keeping away the impediments and obstructions, and facilitating the means: All are done by Allah Almighty, and you have nothing to do with any of them. (CAV 604)

As I have mentioned before, there is disagreement as to what theory al-Ghazālī is advancing here and elsewhere in the *Iḥyāʾ*. One might interpret these passages as advocating for occasionalism (God creates every act at the moment of its instantiation) or as arguing to a causality theory, where God creates the causal connections that eventually result in the person's decision and act. Independently of which is his true position, al-Ghazālī holds that once one has knowledge of God's agency in human moral acts, it is

surprising that self-admiration is even a viable option.[84] One's good deeds or good character is nothing more than evidence that God has "favored you over the dissolute wicked of His servants" (CAV 604). Al-Ghazālī has no trouble biting the bullet in accepting the flip side of this coin. For him, just as the sincere and pious believer has done nothing to deserve being this way, but instead has merely been favored by God, the wicked person has not chosen to be wicked. Rather, God has "directed the causes and motives of wickedness over the dissolute" and "kept away from them the causes and motives of good" until evil has been made "easy upon them" (CAV 604). God has not favored some and disfavored others for any prior reason, but only "favored you and chosen you by His bounty, whereas kept the disobedient away (from His mercy) and given him to wretchedness by His justice. How amazing you are when you are conceited!" (CAV 604)

The results of pride

Pride has both short and long term results in the life of the believer. Regarding its short term results, al-Ghazālī notes that one might be able to spot pride by external appearances. For example, the prideful person may start "refraining from the people," "giving himself precedence in the gatherings," and "disapproving of him who falls short of fulfilling his rights" (CAV 569). Those who suffer from a more severe case of pridefulness present more obvious signs such as "blow[ing] his own horn and singing his

[84] As we will see in more detail in chapter 4, this becomes an interesting reason for al-Ghazālī's positive view of shame and negative view of pride. Sophia Vasalou says something similar, stating that it is his deterministic views that are "at the root of his account not only of the need for humility but also of a number of other moral imperatives such as gratitude and trust (*tawakkul*) in God." p. 56.

own praises," performing obligatory rituals in more earnest just to outdo those who are performing them next to him, defaming of others and praising his own knowledge and works, "rejoic[ing] at the mistake of anyone of his fellows in order to be able to correct it, and griev[ing] if anyone of them is correct lest he would seem better than him" (CAV 570) and having people walk behind him (CAV 575).

In the *Evil of the Tongue*, he focuses on the effect of backbiting. There, he confirms his definition of pride as a feeling of superiority over other people and adds that it is one of the temptations for those who hold prestigious religious positions. The temptation is particularly strong for reciters due to the public nature of their role. Because of their elevated position and public semblance of piety, these are people who are most likely to backbite—to speak ill of the behavior of other people—imagining themselves superior to them and thus "combine two shameful deeds: backbiting and showing off" (ET 240). By slandering, many pious men aim to demean other people and, simultaneously, publicize themselves as superior. Despite their superiority in the opinion of the public, al-Ghazālī makes it clear that, before God, something entirely different is happening:

> In relation to your purpose of showing pride and justifying yourself by demonstrating your superiority and preeminence to others, through slandering them, you should learn that by evil with which you mention others, you cancel out your superiority and preeminence in the sight of Allah Almighty. Moreover, danger lies in the people's thinking of your superiority, for it might decrease once they know your inclination to depreciate others. In this way, you will sell what is certainly with the Creator for what is falsely with the creatures. More precisely, if the creatures are to think of your superiority, in no way would they avail you against Allah Almighty. (ET 247)

Not only is the prideful slanderer evil in the eyes of God, but they would be humiliated if the public were to be informed of their true intention. For al-Ghazālī, to feel proud and to speak poorly of others to guarantee one's position is to despise God's opinion in comparison to human opinion. Instead of wondering about the deficiencies of others, al-Ghazālī suggests meditating upon one's own defects. If the worshiper does not reveal them to him or herself, God will, for "you could hardly be safe from the punishment in this world, which might be in the form of Allah's tearing your curtain (of defects and shameful deeds) just as you have done the same with your brother by wondering at his state" (ET 248).

Pride's long term results, for al-Ghazālī, are the inability to obey moral and religious mandates and, ultimately, to suffer divine punishment. Pride is one of the most grievous sins, for him, because it is both the antecedent trait of most sins and impedes the formation of praiseworthy traits of character, traits that are necessary for the believer to enter Paradise:

> It becomes a veil to prevent one from the Garden for it deprives the arrogant of all the good manners characteristic of the faithful believers. Those good manners represent the different gates of the Garden. Arrogance and self-importance close all of those gates. That is because one is not able to like for the other believers the same as he likes for himself as long as he has in himself an atom's weight of arrogance, nor is he able to be humble, which is the fountainhead of all the good manners characteristic of the pious as long as he feels supercilious, nor is he able to purify his heart from rancor, envy and resentment as long as he is haughty, nor is he able to persist in truthfulness as long as he is bigheaded, nor is he able to give up anger as long as he is arrogant, nor is he able to curb his fury as long as he is arrogant, nor is he able to give good advice as long as he is arrogant, nor is he able to accept advice from others as long as he is arrogant, etc. (CAV 558)

The characteristics that are essential for being a perfectly moral and pious individual, at least when it comes to one's relationship to other believers—empathy, humility, persistence in truth, absence of rancor, envy, anger, and resentment, the giving and receiving of advice—are impossible to achieve with the presence of pride. If one nourishes the belief that they are superior to others, then blameworthy characteristics such as anger, envy and resentment are bound to be present, as well as disobedience to commands that imply the equality of all beings, such as the Golden Rule, is likely.

There is, however, an even deeper reason for al-Ghazālī to consider pride the most serious of sins and among the illnesses of the soul which lead to destruction:

> There is no difference at all between a man who worships himself and one who worships an idol: inasmuch as one worships anything other than God one is veiled from Him. Therefore, anyone who pays attention to anything in his dress, apart from its being from a legitimate source and ritually pure, in a way which turns his heart towards it, is occupied with his own self. (DS 42)

Al-Ghazālī considers pride (and any sin of supremacy) a form of self-idolatry, and any kind of idolatry is considered an extreme religious offence, the practitioners of which will face punishment. In fact, any sin (or, as he calls it, "sickness of the heart"), which al-Ghazālī lists and describes in the third part of the *Iḥyā'*, is characterized by the person possessing something that is "more dear to him than God" (DS 47). In the case of pride, that which is dearer to the person than God is themselves.

The remedies for pride

As is the case with all of the other vices, al-Ghazālī believes in the possibility of removing pride from the heart and suggests ways to do so. In fact, eliminating pride is an obligatory duty of all individual Muslims (*farad al-'aīn*). For this, he suggests two

complementary routes: “the first is to uproot it and remove its tree from the heart entirely, and the second is to avert its symptoms, i.e. the means with which man is arrogant” (CAV 580). The first route is only achieved through accurate knowledge, while the second is achieved through deeds that counter the blameworthy trait.

For al-Ghazālī, accurate knowledge of oneself and of God are sufficient to remove pride. Knowledge of God that is useful for banishing pride is two-fold. First, one must know, or remember, that glory, prestige, and honor are due only to him (CAV 580). Second, one must know that God is the observer of secrets. Just as the virtue of shame only arises in the heart of the believer if he *remembers* that God is the observer of secrets (*matala’ ‘ala al-sīr*), pride can only overcome the believer if he *forgets* this truth. In fact, for al-Ghazālī, the cause of many sins can be boiled down to a case of amnesia: “But Satan tempts the hearts of those who fear Allah, which are devoid of passion and blameworthy characteristics, not to lusts, but to emptiness through neglect of remembrance. When one begins the exercise of remembrance again Satan draws back” (MH 145). In an especially poignant passage, al-Ghazālī states:

> For the cause of humbleness is the knowledge of the gaze of Allah upon His creature, and the knowledge of His majesty and the knowledge of the creature’s shortcomings. So, from the recognition of these things humbleness is born, and it is not confined to the Worship. On that account it is related about a certain one that he did not raise his head to the sky for forty years, out of shamefacedness towards Allah, and lowliness before Him” (MW 70)

Humility, or humbleness, as we shall see below, opposes pride and, therefore, serves as its remedy. When the believer *knows* that God is closely watching them and that God is great and, therefore, the only one worthy of feeling pride (as in feeling superior to

others), then the resulting state or disposition will be humility and, interestingly enough, shame. This passage also indicates that extirpation of pride follows not only knowledge of God as the knower of secrets, but also knowledge of one's own defects.[85]

In knowing oneself, one becomes aware of one's defects and, therefore, "it is befitting for him only to adhere to humbleness, humiliation, and submission" (CAV 580).[86] What constitutes the correct kind of self-knowledge that uproots pride? Al-Ghazālī points to knowledge of four things: 1) the state of non-being and, later, incomplete state from which humans were created; 2) the fragility and weakness of one's human nature (its tendency to get sick, to suffer calamities, to feel hunger and thirst, etc.); 3) humans's ultimate death and decomposition in the earth; 4) that on the Day of Judgment one's faults, especially one's pride, will be read out loud and, based on the report, one will be punished.[87] The resulting attitude of those who contend on these issues seems uncontroversial to al-Ghazālī:

> How should he who is in such a state become [prideful] or haughty? How should he rejoice even for a single moment? He sees the beginning and the middle of his state while being in this world, and were the end of his state to be visible to him, he might have chosen to be no more than a dog or a

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[85] Vasalou summarizes these two kinds of knowledge by stating that, for al-Ghazālī, "The vice of pride will be uprooted by a knowledge of God that induces a proper appreciation of His greatness, combined with a knowledge of self that induces a proper appreciation of its insignificance." Vasalou, p. 42.

[86] He confirms this in *Evil of the Tongue*, where he notes that knowledge of secrets is a safeguard against pride, for the person praised "knows about himself what a praiser knows not; and were all of his secrets and passing thoughts that occur to his mind to be uncovered to the praiser, he would cease to praise him" ET 266.

[87] Sophia Vasalou observes that this is "a sweeping portrait of the human condition which traces the long arc of human life from the absolute nothingness of non-existence, through to birth, to the different stages of development, to death, and on to resurrection and the Day of Judgement, highlighting the powerful hand of God at every step of this narrative *sub specie aeternitatis*." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 43-44.

> pig in order to turn into dust in the company of animals, and not a man to hear speech and receive punishment. (CAV 582)

Knowledge of one's own condition and fate is not the only kind of self-knowledge that can eliminate pride. Elsewhere, al-Ghazālī writes that in order to eliminate feelings of superiority over other human beings, one must have correct knowledge of one's relation to others by "estimating yourself with due estimate...by believing that you belong to the same race to which your servant belongs, since all the people belong to the same father and mother" (CARE 284). Furthermore, more specific knowledge may be necessary, depending on the specific object of one's pride. For example, the kind of knowledge that helps abolish the pride of beauty is to think of all the disgusting elements one harbors in the body, such as excretion in the intestines, urine, nasal mucus, dirt in the ears, and sweat underneath the armpits. For al-Ghazālī, "If one has such a look of himself, he would not be arrogant because of his beauty, which is inevitably perishable" (CAV 586).

Although knowledge of these things is a necessary precondition for ridding oneself of pride, it is not sufficient; one needs to put in the work to "confirm" the intellectual commitment (CAV 584).[88] One of these ways is to work on habituating

[88] It is unclear whether what must come (chronologically) first is knowledge or work. This raises, once again, the 'chicken-egg' problem I have already mentioned. In *On Disciplining the Soul* he states that the soul "does not become tame before its Lord or enjoy His remembrance until it is weaned from its habits, firstly through enduring isolation and retreat, in order to keep the hearing and the sight from familiar things, and, secondly, through acquiring the habit of praise, remembrance and prayer while still in a state of retreat, until it becomes dominated with familiarity with God's remembrance rather than with the world and its desires" (DS 64). In this passage, it seems that remembrance (knowledge) is the *result* of works (weaning of habits). However, as we see in this section and in others, work seems to be motivated by the mental state of remembrance. Elsewhere, he seems to think that knowledge must come first: "All those attributes [praiseworthy attributes] go back to both knowledge and power. That is, one knows the real nature of things and then has power to force himself to them by

humility (*al-ṭauāḍia'*) (DS 40), for the most efficient way of combating vices is to practice their exact opposite ("the general technique consists in doing the opposite of everything that the soul inclines to and craves" DS 44-45). In *Condemnation of Pride and Self-Admiration*, he goes into more detail.

Al-ṭauāḍia', for al-Ghazālī, is a praiseworthy trait of character that should be deeply woven into every aspect of the believer's life. In the context of his chapter on pride, it serves as the contrasting trait of character of *al-kibr*, being the mean between the two extremes of pride and ignominy[89]:

> It should be known to you that this quality, like the other qualities, has two extremes and a middle. That which inclines to excess is called [pride], and that which inclines to reduction is called ignominy and baseness, and the middle is called humbleness. …To be sure, the two extremes of all things are blameworthy, and the dearest to Allah is the middle of everything. (CAV 597)

The practices that most forcefully develop the virtue of humility, for al-Ghazālī, are the daily acts of worship, such as "bowing, prostration and standing in submission" (CAV 585). As we have seen in the previous sections, he considers the '*ibadāt* to be more

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oppressing his desires. All good characteristics depend on those two attributes, which are beyond the perception of senses, although they are inseparable part of the body, and it is that part which is the real beloved. …What is really loved is the source of that good conduct, i.e. the praiseworthy good manners and noble virtues, which go back, in total, to the perfect knowledge and power, which are loved by nature, although they are not perceived by senses" (LLIC 446).

[89] Sherif notes that, by including humility in his ethical taxonomy, "Ghazali is in agreement with most of the well-known Muslim philosophers; al-Farabi, for example, considers humility as a virtue which is the mean between arrogance and baseness, and Avicenna regards it as a subdivision of wisdom which restrains the soul from arrogance. Thus, earlier Muslim philosophers had already departed from the Aristotelian position by considering humility as a virtue. This was due, not only to the influence of Christianity and Islam, but also to the spirit of Hellenistic thought, especially those of the Stoics. Ghazali's attitude toward humility seems to be more positive than that of the Muslim philosophers. For while some of those philosophers only briefly mention this virtue, and others like Miskawayh completely ignore it, Ghazali discusses it at length and regards it as 'the principal virtue of pious men.' His view of humility, therefore, is a valuable illustration of his qualified acceptance of the philosophic virtues." Sherif, p. 54.

than simple repetitive positions of the body, but to facilitate the habituation of Muslim virtues: "what is sought is solely to change the heart and to convert its attributes, and not [the attributes of] the limbs. Do not surmise that the purpose of placing the forehead on the ground is simply to join the forehead to the ground; rather, it is to establish by virtue of habit the attribute of humility in the heart" (OIS 21). This is why, for al-Ghazālī, intention (*niyya*) is the most important aspect of worship rituals, for "action without intention is useless...someone who prostrates himself [in prayer] inattentively, engrossed in worry about worldly things: the effect from his forehead placed on the ground will not spread to his heart to establish humility" (OIS 21).

Other actions that combat pride include forcing oneself to walk behind others, sitting below others in gatherings, responding to the invitation of the poor, carrying one's possessions by oneself, and wearing cheap clothes. In one example of a humbling action, he suggests that Shaykhs who diagnose pride in the heart of the believer to prescribe begging in the marketplace:

> Should he perceive that frivolity, pride and self-esteem have taken hold of him he should instruct him to go to the marketplace and beg, since self-esteem and love of authority can only be broken by humiliation, of which begging is the most intense form. He will require him to persist in this for a period until his pride and self-esteem are destroyed, for pride, and also frivolity, are among the illnesses which lead to destruction. (DS 41)

For al-Ghazālī, the humiliation caused by begging in such a public place as the marketplace, where many of the people who know the believer would pass by, is sufficiently strong to break even the most severe cases of pride. He suggests such an extreme measure for pride exactly because of the severity of this illness.

As was the case with knowledge, he also holds that specific kinds of work must be done depending on the content of pride. For example, if one's wealth is the content of one's pride, then donating some of the wealth and exercising the virtue of generosity is a possible solution. Another example is in the case of pride of religious knowledge and worship. For al-Ghazālī, one must combat this kind of pride by making certain qualifications and considerations of doubt when thinking or speaking of one's belief or good works. This is not only a formal necessity—it is impossible to know for sure if one's prayers, fasts, or charity have been accepted by God—but also a spiritual necessity to avoid incurring the sin of pride. "No matter how little doubt may be in such cases," all believers must add a qualification in order to convey one's doubt of the perfection of their work: "Yes, if it were the will of God" (FAF 134). Whatever the humbling practice adopted, it should be repeated "until the praiseworthy kind of humbleness becomes integral to his disposition, and the vice of pride is removed from his heart" (CAV 597). This integration is revealed when "he finds it [the practice] light and easy upon himself" (CAV 597).

The greatest source for ideas of humbling practices is the life of prophet Muhammad. In order to develop the virtue of humility, al-Ghazālī advises the believers to look to the actions and attitudes of the Prophet for he

> used to provide the camel used for irrigation with fodder, tie the camel, milk the sheep, stitch the sandal, patch up the garment, eat with his servant, and grind on behalf of him whenever he fell ill, bought things from the market by himself, and shyness did not prevent him from carrying his things in his hand or in the end of his garment. On his way to his family, he used to shake hands with the rich and the poor, the old and the young, and was the first to salute whomever he met, be he old or young, black or red, free or slave. He had no two different suits for his exit

> and entrance. He never felt shy of responding to the invitation of everyone whatever he might be, nor did he look down upon what he was invited to, no matter trivial or insignificant it might be. (CAV 578)

All of these habits stand in contrast to those of the proud person, who considers himself too important to do any chores or to carry their own possessions to their house (CAV 575), does not commingle with people he judges inferior and avoids sitting with the destitute (CAV 562 and 575), wears new and extravagant clothes to appear important to others (CAV 576), and does not go to visit other people, but expects them to come to him (CAV 575).

So far, we have covered al-Ghazālī's definition of pride, its causes, results, and remedies. These details about pride have brought to light his view of pride as a self-assessing vice that arises from one's mistaken self-perception and ignorance regarding God's nature and acts. Consequently, the analysis has also given us ample evidence for understanding pride as an essentially religious emotion and vice, in al-Ghazālī's view, for its causes, results and remedies have to do directly with knowledge of God and habituation of acts that are directed toward God. Nonetheless, there is a final facet of pride that only becomes clear when we take a closer look at al-Ghazālī's discussion of two of pride's close relatives: love for status and ostentation. These closely related vices help underscore al-Ghazālī's view of pride as a social emotion.

Pride's close relatives: love for status and ostentation

Al-Ghazālī does not understand pride to be an emotion felt in isolation from others, which is what distinguishes it from another similar trait, self-admiration (*al-'adjib*), which "does not summon anyone other than him who is swollen with *al-'adjib*,

and were he to be created alone, he would likely be... *al-'adjib*, whereas he would unlikely be...[proud] unless in relation with anyone else, for as...[proud], he sees himself above that other person" (CAV 556-57). Pride might, in some cases, include more outsiders than simply the person to whom the prideful considers himself superior. In many cases, an additional audience is required to show off one's superiority.

In his *Condemnation of Status and Ostentation*, al-Ghazālī expounds upon the vices that call for a broader audience: love for status (*ḥub al-djahu*) and ostentation (*al-riyā'*). For him, both betray an excessive love for the "possession of hearts" (CMSO 457). To recall, al-Ghazālī describes ostentation as an outward fruit of pride, one that is directed toward "the people" (CAV 573). Aside from pride, ostentation requires an additional internal motivation, namely, love for status. The difference between love for status and ostentation, for him, is, first, that love for status is a broader category of vice within which we can place ostentation. Generally speaking, status is the thing loved that *leads* one to show off, for "ostentation is to seek status" (CMSO 489).[90] Their connection to pride, then, is that the feeling of superiority (pride) either leads one to seek status and show off to others, or vice-versa. An analysis of these will aid us in understanding al-Ghazālī's view of the viciousness of prideful traits that seek out social recognition, as

[90] "The Arabic word for ostentation (*riyā'*) is derived from 'seeing' (*ru'ya*), and the basis of ostentation is seeking position in people's hearts by showing them good virtues. Nevertheless, status and position in the heart may be sought by means other than acts of worship just as they are also sought through acts of worship. [The word] 'ostentation' (*riyā'*) is restricted through common usage only to seeking position in [people's] hearts by means of acts of worship and their display."
For passages in this section, I utilized the translation by Shaykh Ahmad al-Shami, in http://www.masud.co.uk/ISLAM/misc/MISC-Ghazali_status.htm due to his translation of 'riyā'' as 'ostentation,' which I find more helpful than Sharif's translation as 'showing off' and his translation of '*ḥub al-djahu*'as 'love of status' instead of Sharif's 'love of majesty.'

well as the need for an audience for their manifestation.

Love for status

Al-Ghazālī recognizes that love for majesty is only natural. This is because the goal of human beings is to be perfect and "[t]o have majesty established in the hearts means that hearts have faith that a particular person has a certain characteristic that draws him to a degree of perfection" (CMSO 458). Aside from the fact that the soul "loves and desires perfection and delights in it for its own sake," there are practical advantages for those who have status. For al-Ghazālī, a person who has achieved a certain status can more easily attain their basic needs for survival. The danger, however, lies in *seeking* status.[91] More specifically, to seek it by forbidden means and for the wrong reasons. In other words, love for status that is manifested in these ways, which I will detail below, is "among the destructive sins which should be treated and remedied" (CMSO 470) for it becomes "the first seed of hypocrisy and showing off" (CMSO 469).[92]

One of the wrong *reasons* for loving status is "for its own sake" and not for the attainment of some other good that is necessary for survival (CMSO 468). In his discussion on the remedies for the wrong kind of love for status, al-Ghazālī suggests the person ponder *why* they love it. If they love it because they want the power over people's

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[91] "Love for majesty is the origin of all kinds of corruption. You may say: 'Which fame is greater than the fame of the Prophets, the rightly guided caliphs and the pioneering learned and scholars? Why has the excellence of anonymity escaped them?' In reply to that, let's say that what is blameworthy is to seek for fame. But when fame is given to a servant by Allah Almighty, without being ostentatious to get it, it is not blameworthy." http://www.masud.co.uk/ISLAM/misc/MISC-Ghazali_status.htm

[92] Hypocrisy, for al-Ghazālī, is when the outward acts contradict the inward intention. The most grievous kind is that which is manifested in the life of worship— when rituals of worship are followed through in order to be seen by other people instead of to be seen by God, and thus are not accompanied by the ideal intention: to be done for the sake of Allah (CMSO 469).

hearts that comes from status, he suggests they should imagine these people fifty years in the future, when none of them (including the person seeking status) will be alive (CMSO 470). Not only is status short-lived because it depends on transient people, but also because people's hearts change as fast as water boils. They may love us in one moment, and hate us in the next (CMSO 471).[93]

One of the wrong *ways* of achieving status, on the other hand, is by trying to achieve it based on the audience's "belief in his having a certain attribute which he does not have, like knowledge, piety or ancestry. This is forbidden for it belongs to falsehood and dissembling, either by word or deed" (CMSO 468).[94] If, however, one actually possesses the praiseworthy attribute, then seeking status that is based on it is permissible. And, obviously, one who receives status without seeking to achieve it is committing no

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[93] Though not central to my argument in this section of the chapter, it is interesting to note something in al-Ghazālī's practical suggestions on how to extinguish love for status. In order to do so, he argues that one must remove one's status from people's hearts "by doing acts for which he is blamed, until he seems slight in the sight of people." Al-Ghazālī's suggestion is radical self-humiliation, or self-imposed shame, so that one can then fall into anonymity and "be satisfied with the acceptability in the Sight of the Creator" (CMSO 471). Shame, therefore, is one of the remedies for one of the types of pride.

[94] While lying about the attribute that is central to one's status is prohibited, al-Ghazālī deems it permissible to hide other defects that are not central to one's status, but that could put it in jeopardy. In fact, here he uses quite strong words to talk about the impermissibility of removing 'the curtain' of one's defects, a topic we have covered in the section on shame in this chapter. Al-Ghazālī does not perceive hiding defects that are unrelated to status as falsity or hypocrisy, but simply as avoiding that people get distracted from the praiseworthy feature for which the person has attained status. As long as the defect does not directly contradict the attribute the person is famous for, there is no harm.

> The other permissible way is to seek to hide one of his defects or sins in order that his position in the hearts of people would not disappear because of it. This is also permissible for it is not blameworthy to put curtain over one's defects, and it is impermissible to remove the curtain and highlight what is shameful. There is no dissembling in that. It is just to close the gate of knowing what is pointless or useless. It is like the one who hides from the ruler, for instance, that he drinks wine, but does not give him the false impression that he is pious. His statement that he is pious is dissembling, whereas his avoiding to recognize that he drinks wine does not give the impression that he is pious (CMSO 468).

sin. The greatest example of the latter is the prophet Muhammad and the rightly-guided caliphs (CMSO 489).

Ostentation

As I have mentioned, al-Ghazālī suggests that ostentation (*al-riyā'*) is a trait that also aims at gaining people's recognition and love or, as he puts it, at "possessing people's hearts." It is the natural, external consequence of pride and love for status. As I have hinted at above, al-Ghazālī describes many occasions in which ostentation is not unlawful. Showing off worldly things "might be either permissible, or dutiful or undesirable, according to the different purposes intended" (CMSO 490). Ostentation when it comes to religious acts of worship, however, is blameworthy. Showing off 'deeds of worship,' for al-Ghazālī, is "a ridiculing of Allah," since it implies that one seeks the benefits of other people, instead of he who can truly reward one's deeds, and thus attributes more power to humans than to God (CMSO 491). In even stronger terms, al-Ghazālī calls this kind of ostentation "concealed polytheism," for the "exalted is the people and not Allah Almighty" (CMSO 491). In contrast, the sincere person does not care what other people think of his worship, nor if they are observing the ritual at all, but only cares about "the knowledge of Allah about him" (CMSO 498). It comes as no surprise, then, that al-Ghazālī believes that having the intention to show off "frustrates deeds" (CMSO 505). For him, lack of sincerity is the primary reason for God invalidating a deed of worship and "the most conspicuous flaw confounding sincerity is ostentation" (IS 68). In other words, if formulated *before* the performance of the religious deed, ostentation invalidates the *'ibadāt*. Furthermore, in *On Patience and Gratitude*, he notes

that ostentation should also be avoided *after* performing good works. This is one of the kind of patience that God praises:

> In this state [after finishing good work], one needs to keep patient on disclosing it and showing it to others in avoidance of being heard and seen of men. He also should keep patient on regarding it with the eye of conceit or pride lest it would become invalid and fruitless, as shown in the statement of Allah Almighty: "o you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and make not vain your deeds!" (PG 108)

The cure for ostentation is described according to the same formula as the cure for pride and love of status: knowledge and works. The knowledge required is of future humiliation and shame. Al-Ghazālī asks the worshiper to imagine everyone finding out about their ostentatious intentions in worship. If this were to happen, "they would hate him" (CMSO 508). This scenario, though imaginary, is the inevitable future reality of the insincere:

> Sooner or later, Allah Almighty is to uncover his secret, until he causes him to be hateful to the people, as being a maker of show, hateful in the Sight of Allah Almighty. But if he proves sincere to Allah Almighty, surely, Allah uncovers to them his sincerity, causes them to love him, makes their hearts subject to him, and unleashes their tongues to praise and laud him, given that no perfection lies in their praise, nor does imperfection lie in their dispraise. (CMSO 508)

Once again, al-Ghazālī uses the image of God as the uncoverer of secrets. In this case, the intention of showing off that is covered by the worshiper will eventually be revealed for all to see. Along with the imaginative component of the cure, al-Ghazālī recommends that action be taken. First, the worshipper with a tendency toward ostentation must hide their acts of worship as much as one tries to hide their shameful

deeds (CMSO 508).[95] The habit of doing this will eventually lead the worshiper to be entirely "satisfied with the knowledge of Allah alone of his acts of worship, giving no importance to the knowledge of people" (CMSO 508).

In sum, love for status and ostentation, when described in particular ways, are blameworthy vices connected to pride. While seeking status is a vice when it is done for its own sake and by telling lies, ostentation is a vicious trait when done in the context of acts of worship. This is because acts of worship, by definition, should be done for the sake of God. Therefore, if one is performing them solely for other humans to see, they are no longer acts of worship. In the case of both love for status and ostentation, the focus is erroneously and even irrationally placed on the love and praise of human beings, who are both finite and "powerless to benefit or even harm" the worshipper: "Which ridicule is more than to raise a servant above the master? To be sure, this is among the major destructive sins" (CMSO 491).

So far, we have covered al-Ghazālī's criticism toward all traits that are related to one's feeling of superiority over other people—self-admiration, pride, love of status and ostentation. Nonetheless, he also mentions a trait that is very similar to pride, but that al-Ghazālī seems to consider one of the praiseworthy traits, or virtues: greatness of the soul.

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[95] He has similar advice to those who only preach and teach in order to show off their knowledge: "it should be known that the excellence and importance of knowledge are great, like ruling and judging. We do not tell anyone of the worshippers to leave knowledge for knowledge in itself has no evil. But the real evil lies in him who intends to make show of his knowledge, by undertaking the task of preaching and teaching, narrating Hadith, etc. We also do not tell him to leave it as long as he has a religious motive to do it, even if it is mixed with the motive of showing off. But if nothing but showing off motivates him, then, to leave making show of knowledge is more beneficial and much safer for him" (CMSO 532).

Pride Versus Greatness of the Soul

Not all positive self-assessments are false or vicious, for al-Ghazālī. In his list of virtues and vices of courage, he includes greatness of the soul (*kibār al-nafs*) as one of its virtues (DS 21).[96] While *kibār al-nafs* is the virtue, its excesses are pride (*al-kibr*) and self-abasement, or littleness of the soul (*sag̲h̲īr al-nafs*).[97] As Sophia Vasalou has noted, al-Ghazālī's only detailed description of *kibār al-nafs* appears not in the *Iḥyāʾ*, but in his earlier *Mīzān al-ʾamāl*:

> A virtue through which a person has the capacity to judge himself worthy of grand things while despising them and caring little about them out of delight in the value and grandeur of his soul (*kibār al-nafs*). Its effect is that one takes little pleasure in great honours bestowed upon him by scholars and one takes no pleasure in honours bestowed by contemptible people, or in small things, or in good things that are a matter of luck or fortune.[98]

The conflict between al-Ghazālī's inclusion of this virtue in his list and what we have seen about pride and self-admiration above is plain. How is one to understand, on the one hand, his clear disdain for positive self-assessments and a search for honor and, on the other hand, his posing the existence of a virtue that judges oneself worthy of great honor?

The basis for al-Ghazālī's acceptance of this virtue in his moral taxonomy seems

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[96] In the original text, there is a spelling mistake in this particular virtue. Instead of *kibār al-nafs*, it shows up as *kisār al-nafs*. Given the context, and the obvious contrasting vice of "littleness of the soul" (*sag̲h̲īr al-nafs*) that follows, translators have understood this as a typo and translated the expression as 'greatness of the soul.'

[97] Sophia Vasalou calls the lexical kinship of *kibār al-nafs*and *al-kibr* an "awkward contiguity": "The term *kibār al-nafs,* signifying a sense of one's greatness understood as a virtue, lies only a morphological whisker away from the term *kibr*, signifying a sense of one's greatness understood as a vice." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition,* p. 51.

[98] *Mīzān,* 277. Cited in Vasalou, *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition*, p. 25.

to stem from a hadith he quotes in the *Book on the Etiquette of Marriage*, where Mohammad is expounding upon the kind of jealousy that is permissible in marriage:

> The Prophet said, "God favors certain types of jealousy and detests others; He favors certain types of pride and detests others. As for the jealousy which God loves, it is jealousy which results from just suspicion; and the jealousy that God detests is that which results from unfounded [suspicion]. The pride which God favors is that which a man has in battle and in the face of difficulties; and the pride that God detests is pride in falsehood." (EM 78)

This positive valence of a specific kind of pride appears once more, and in more detail, in a passage of *On Poverty and Asceticism*. Here, al-Ghazālī discusses a version of 'pride' that seems to fit the virtue of *kibār al-nafs*, namely, a correct assessment of oneself as being in a higher rank than others. Superiority over others, he claims, is a property that some humans share with God by virtue of being God's creation. However, feeling superior or attributing superiority to someone is only fitting if, in fact, one deserves that position. The examples al-Ghazālī gives of fitting superiority include "the believer's superiority over the disbeliever, the learned over the ignorant, and the obedient over the disobedient" (PA 311). He immediately admits that this seems to go against what he has argued thus far in the *Iḥyāʾ*—that pride is a blameworthy feeling of superiority—and attempts to make the distinction between pride and this praiseworthy feeling of superiority:

> It is true that superiority might lead to arrogance (*al-takbīr*), haughtiness and vanity, but in this case, it becomes not one of the attributes (*safāt*) of Allah Almighty. Superiority of Allah means that He is the Greatest of all things, a fact which He knows well. The servant is ordered to pursue the highest rank (among all living beings), as long as he has the power to get it, but with truth (*bi-alastihaḳiḳ*) and not falsehood and confusion. The servant has to know that the believer is more grand than the disbeliever, the obedient than the disobedient, the learned than the ignorant, and the

> man than the animals, plants and non-living organisms, and closer to Allah Almighty. It is in this concept only that the attribute of grandeur (*safa al-takbīr*) becomes fitting for him. But unfortunately, this is of the things unknown to the man for it is determined by the conclusion of his deed which none knows but Allah almighty. Being so, it is not fitting for him to think himself in a rank higher than that of the disbeliever, for the deeds of the disbeliever might possibly be concluded with faith, and his deeds with disbelief. Thus, this thought is unfitting for him due to the shortage of his knowledge of the consequences and ends. (PA 311)

Just as God has the quality (*safa*) of grandeur over his creation, some humans may have the quality (*safa*) of superiority over other human beings. Nevertheless, there are rules that draw the line between a positive feeling of superiority and a negative one: 1) the believer must truly *merit* the position of being superior; and 2) the believer must *know* that he/she is superior. The problem, however, will seem obvious. How can one know for a fact that they are superior? How does one read the intentions of the heart (both of one's own heart and the heart of others)? In the end, al-Ghazālī contends that, *in reality*, the virtue of greatness of the soul is "unfitting," for knowledge of superiority is not unveiled to humans.

I have already shown other arguments that could be extrapolated from the *Iḥyāʾ* that would prove the inclusion of a virtue of *kibār al-nafs* defeating, such as his arguments for the virtue of humility[99], the danger that self-admiration poses on the validity of one's acts of worship, the viciousness of the human sense of self-sufficiency in light of God's prescience and creative acts, and the ubiquity of evil secrets in the heart

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[99] For Vasalou, "the terms in which he specifies this virtue, as the above will also have suggested, are so stark as to make one wonder what foothold it could still allow to any notion of human greatness." p. 45

of most believers.[100] In Sophia Vasalou's exposition of al-Ghazālī's disparaging view on one's "attitude to the self and the view of the proper way of relating to its merits,"[101] she argues that "[t]he unmarked transition of *kibār al-nafs* from virtue to vice within the body of a single work will seem extraordinary. Yet more extraordinary will be the broader phenomenon it represents, and that is a distinct failure on al-Ghazālī's part to thematize the existence of conflict where conflict is certainly to be found."[102]

Vasalou brings forth a series of possible reasons for the obvious, and unmentioned, conflict in al-Ghazālī's work. She ultimately justifies it based on the pedagogical aims of the *Mīzān* and the *Iḥyāʾ*. Both of these are works of what she calls "ethical conversion," intended to heal believers of their moral and spiritual maladies. Led by practical instead of analytical standards, "certain lower-order elements might

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[100] Sherif notes a particularly interesting reason for al-Ghazālī devaluation of the virtue of greatness of soul in comparison to Aristotle's views, namely, his focus on honor in the hereafter: "Ghazali's reaction to Aristotle's contention is simple: he is interested primarily in deeds that bring great goods in the hereafter, and these things seems to be accomplished most successfully when men are obscure and engaged in activities which do not advertise greatness of soul….Since Ghazali is concerned with individual salvation, greatness of soul should appeal to him but it does not, because Aristotle deals only with worldly honor and is silent about immortal glory or great goods after death. In Aristotle the whole sphere of moral virtue is directed to what is perishable; it is only intellectual virtue which is concerned with the imperishable and immortal. For Ghazali, on the other hand, although morally virtuous actions are performed by one perishable being in relation to another, they are executed with a view to the divine reality of the hereafter. For this reason humility and obscurity serve the goal of Ghazali's character training better than greatness of soul and are therefore better fitted to crown the moral virtues. It is in this context that we can understand Ghazali's classification of greatness of soul as one of the virtues of courage, as well as his judgment that its extreme defect is a virtue which ranks higher than it." Sherif, p. 51. As Vasalou insightfully put it: "self-knowledge not only fails to support a judgement of one's greatness—the only judgement it supports is a judgement of one's baseness….It is not that the term 'great' could not be applied to human beings at all within this outlook. But it will be applied precisely to the humble; and as the quoted remarks already suggest, it will be applied not from their perspective, but from God's." p. 46

[101] Vasalou, p. 25.

[102] Idem, p. 53.

occasionally pass the gates which a more critical spirit would have screened out."[103] I have spoken more of al-Ghazālī's particular context and audience in the introduction, specifically in relation to Aristotle and Aquinas's. In any case, Vasalou's argument is in fact what I consider to make most sense in light of al-Ghazālī's thought.

Summary

In this section of the chapter, I have given an overview of al-Ghazālī's reproving exposition of the vices related to positive self-assessment. Pride and its associates—self-admiration, love of status, and ostentation—are vices that showcase the believer's ignorance of God as the only being worthy of glory and honor, and of one's own defects, moral or natural. To view one's deeds or character as worthy of honor, especially when in relation to someone else's, is a disease in need of the cure of humility—one of the most praised virtues for believers. Humility and shame are the most appropriate moral and spiritual responses to knowledge of oneself and of God because they place the believer in their proper place, given the pervasiveness of defects in their heart. Though the virtue of greatness of the soul seems, at first, to pose a virtuous alternative for positive self-evaluation, al-Ghazālī ultimately deems it unfitting due to human's inability to unequivocally know of one's superiority. For al-Ghazālī, only God knows the true

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[103] Idem, p. 61. This theory leads Vasalou to question some attempts of pushing the limits of analytic engagements with al-Ghazālī's thought further than it was meant to go: "The distinction drawn above between different domains of ethical writing and their respective levels of reflective depth, if sound, might lead us to question this faith, suggesting that the right way to approach certain textual phenomena may not be by striving through toilsome interpretation to incorporate them into a well-ordered universe in which each and every one of them has a meaningful and coherent place, but rather by accepting that certain phenomena may carry reduced significance within this universe and might even be dropped out of it altogether without serious loss. Yet, of course, in practice such faith could only be abandoned after pushing it as far as it will go." p. 62

condition of one’s heart; only God creates good human actions; only God is superior to all other beings.

E. Conclusion

In the introduction to this chapter, I summarized my goals for this chapter: to unfold the idea that al-Ghazālī considers proper knowledge, of the self, of other human beings, and especially of God, a one-way road to the feeling of virtuous shame and the emptying of pride. As we have seen throughout the chapter, for al-Ghazālī, epistemic accuracy is key not only for the creation of moral categories, such as shame as a virtue and pride as a vice, but also for the habituation and eradication of such traits. Knowledge can be theoretical and experiential, infused or acquired; it shapes the heart, its traits and actions; it is preventative and curative. It is correct knowledge of the self and of God—whether its possession, deficiency, or unattainability—that defines the boundaries of shame’s virtuosity and pride’s viciousness. While a virtuous tendency to feel shame depends upon the possession of correct knowledge of one’s own defects and of an audience who can witness those defects (especially the divine audience), the vicious feeling of pride depends upon ignorance of one’s defects and of God’s observance of those defects. More specifically, the virtue of shame before God can only exist with clear knowledge of God as the observer of secrets and the spectator of all acts. In the same way, the vice of pride is fostered with daring ignorance of God as the creator of all good things that humans might possess, as knower of defects of the heart and as the only being worthy of honor.

Despite this heavy reliance on epistemic accuracy for the production of virtue and

elimination of vice, al-Ghazālī also reserves a significant role for the habituation of virtuous or vicious acts. Shame is a virtue not only because it originates from correct self-knowledge and knowledge of God, but also because it results in good actions and is the result of habituating shame before other humans and before God. Pride is a vice not only because it betrays mistaken knowledge of the self and of God, but because it results in bad actions and is the result of habitually acting in ways that place oneself in a superior position. To consistently act in ways that may develop more shame and humility, and to avoid actions that might entice the feeling of pride is part of one's religious obligations. As I have shown, al-Ghazālī considers the Islamic rituals the perfect basis for this process of habituation of the virtues. By performing the daily rituals of prayer and purification with the appropriate internal conditions, the believer is inculcating the virtues of shame and humility before God, thus slowly eliminating feelings of superiority and thirst for human recognition.

Though shame and pride are commonly understood as social emotions—ones that, generally speaking, require an audience for their genesis—for al-Ghazālī, to perceive them as virtue and vice, and for them to truly have an impact on one's journey to the hereafter, they must be predicated upon their divine audience. And, though shame and pride are self-assessing emotions, for al-Ghazālī, this self-assessment must be predicated upon the deep ontological gap between God and humans. In other words, accurate self-knowledge and knowledge of God, as well as the correct habituation processes and resulting acts, stem from a religious framework. As I will show in more detail in chapter four, it is al-Ghazālī's broader, monotheistic religious framework, as well as his

particular Islamic worldview, that ultimately convinces him of the inclusion of shame as one of the virtues and pride as the principal vice.

3. Thomas Aquinas on Shame and Pride

Taken…in a broad sense virtue denotes whatever is good and praiseworthy in human acts or passions; and in this way shamefacedness is sometimes called a virtue, since it is a praiseworthy passion.

ST II.II 144.1

Pride is always contrary to the love of God, inasmuch as the proud man does not subject himself to the Divine rule as he ought.

ST II.II 162.5 ad 2

The purpose of this chapter is to gain a sense of the role of shame and pride in the human moral and spiritual journey, according to Thomas Aquinas. In Aquinas's work, shame and pride appear under different guises. At times, he refers to them as passions, at others as affections, virtue or vice, and even as a gift of the Holy Spirit (the last, only in the case of shame, as I argue in this chapter). Therefore, the first section of this chapter clarifies Aquinas's definitions of these categories, as well as the connections he sees between them. The second section analyzes shame in relation to these categories, while the third section does the same with regard to pride. My argument is that shame and pride, for Aquinas, are crucial self-assessing affections in the determination of a successful or unsuccessful moral and spiritual life. Shame before human beings, I argue, is a negative self-assessing affection that may indicate the moral agent's love for good, and not merely a demonstration of one's concern for social reputation. Shame before humans, however, cannot be a full-blown virtue, according to Aquinas, for a feeling of shame may be in conflict with reason and it usually presupposes wrongdoing. I then demonstrate that the gift of Holy Spirit of shame before God does not incur these risks,

and is a clear indication of the human's love for God and understanding of the ontological gap between God and humans. As such, I argue that shame before God, as gift of the Holy Spirit, is a habitual affection pivotal for the journey of spiritual and moral perfection. Aquinas describes pride, on the other hand, as a positive self-assessing affection that arises from human's lack of recognition of God and subjection to him. Pride, for Aquinas, is at the root of the human's failure to achieve moral and spiritual maturity. In sum, my argument follows the one I have made in the previous chapter: that, for Aquinas, being able to properly assess the self, either positively or negatively, both in relation to other human beings and in relation to God, is a great part of a successful moral and spiritual journey.

A. Passions, Affections, Virtues, and Gifts

One of the challenges in the study of Aquinas is to make clear correlations between his views on the 'passions' and what we call 'emotions.' As many Aquinas (and Medieval) scholars have rightly noted, there is no equivalent word in Latin for our English word 'emotion.' Aquinas uses at least two words that encompass feelings we tend to categorize as emotions today, *passio* and *affectus,* and much has been discussed regarding their similarities and differences.[1] We need not to take a stand on this debate to

[1] See Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Diana Fritz Cates, *Aquinas on the Emotions: a religious-ethical inquiry* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009) and John Dryden, "Passions, Affections, and Emotions: Methodological Difficulties in Reconstructing Aquinas's Philosophical Psychology" *Literature Compass* 13.6 (June 2016): 343-350. Dixon shows that the word 'emotion' is a recent addition to language (originating from Scottish writers in the first half of the nineteenth century). He argues that the fact that this new word became the catch-all expression for the previously separate concepts of passions, affections, appetites, and sentiments, led to the modern idea that the emotions are the enemy of reason. Regarding Aquinas's particular use of the word *passiones* and its relation to our contemporary word 'emotion,' Cates defends the position that Aquinas's *passiones* are equivalent to our definition of emotions; Nicholas Lombardo holds the

achieve my goals in this chapter. When Aquinas treats shame and pride as a passion, I will treat them as passions, and when he treats shame and pride as an affection, I will treat them as affections, providing the necessary distinctions. Furthermore, there is no doubt that shame and pride fit within the modern category of emotion.[2] For practical reasons, however, I will use 'emotion' only as an all-encompassing term, when referring to a phenomena as both an affection and a passion.

Though this study needn't take a stand in the passions/affections vs. emotions debate, a discussion of shame and pride in Aquinas is severely handicapped without proper distinctions between passions and affections. To complicate matters further, Aquinas closely relates passions and affections to virtue and vice. That is, many virtues are about having the right emotion, felt in the right circumstances, toward the right object, and in the right way. For similar reasons, he sees a connection between emotions and Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Overall, the link between passions, affections, virtues and Gifts of the Holy Spirit is their joint contribution to the moral and spiritual perfection of the human agent. Undeniably, I need to clarify their similarities and dissimilarities before moving forward into a study of shame and pride. Thankfully, Aquinas is well aware of the complicated connections between these concepts and he dedicates a significant amount of space to untying the knots. I will follow his lead in doing so.

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contrary view that Aquinas's *passiones* are not sufficient to cover all we take to be emotions. Dryden takes the middle position that Aquinas's *passiones* are prototypical emotions. He rightly notes that "the methodological difficulty in researching emotion in the Middle Ages is not so much that the concept of emotion and some particular medieval psychological concept are necessarily incommensurable. The real problem is that they are potentially incommensurable depending upon what the meaning of emotion is." (Dryden, 345)

[2] See more on this in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Passions and affections

The main reason for distinguishing between passions and affections is the fact that, in Aquinas's work, some of the passions receive the same name as their corresponding affection.[3] However, in trying to distinguish between these two phenomena, one notices the large discrepancy between the amount of space Aquinas dedicates to an analysis of passions and of affections. While there is a large section entirely devoted to general and specific characteristics of the passions (I.II.22-48)[4], the affections are mentioned in passing only a few times throughout the *Summa*.[5] Nonetheless, it is still possible to make a few clear distinctions between them with the

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[3] Perhaps the best text in which to see this is I.II.26, where Aquinas gives details on perhaps the most difficult passion to understand: love. In this article, he raises the question 'Is love a passion?' to which he responds positively. In his response, he also hints toward a different kind of love that is in the will: "Since, therefore, love consists in a change wrought in the appetite by the appetible object, it is evident that love is a passion: properly so called, according as it is in the concupiscible faculty; in a wider and extended sense, according as it is in the will."

[4] Due to space limitations and the actual focus of my project, I set aside discussion of Aquinas's uniqueness in discussing the passions at such length as well as in giving the passions a prominent place in the human moral life. When noticing Aquinas's uniqueness in the *Summa* compared to other medieval thinkers, Mark D. Jordan summarized the issue in the following way: "The third structural innovation in the *prima secundae* is the large space given over to the passions. Many of the patristic and medieval works already mentioned lay out classifications for the passions and point to them as a problem for the conduct of rational life….But because Thomas has learned from Augustine, sometime after commenting on Peter Lombard, about the important of the passions in ancient moral theory, he expands the four chapters in Nemesius and John of Damascus and the single question in Albert into the twenty-seven questions that constitute one of the largest single blocks in the second part….Does not Thomas's unprecedented concern with the passions digress from theology into natural philosophy? On the contrary, Thomas spends attention on the passions because he wants to win them over from physics. He means to show, with Augustine, that the passions must be discussed as elements of rational action…For Thomas, the chief thing for the moralist to know about the passions is that they are open to rational persuasion." in "Ideals of *Scientia moralis* and the invention of the *Summa theologiae*" in Scott MacDonald and Eleonore Stump (eds.), *Aquinas's Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 89.

[5] Nicholas Lombardo notes that affection is not always used to refer to affections of the will, but that it is sometimes a general term that may refer to passions of the soul and/or affections of the will. He notes that "From his scattered comments, it seems clear that all passions of the soul are affections but not all affections are passions." (*The logic of desire: Aquinas on emotions* [Washington, DC: The Catholic University Press, 2010], p. 76) as an example of *affectiones* being used as a catch-all term, see I.II.22.2.

information Aquinas provides. Generally speaking, Aquinas distinguishes them on account of their "location" in the human agent and the cognition that gives rise to each of them.

Regarding location or their seat in the person, Aquinas defines passions as movements of the sensitive appetite of the soul, which is responsible for moving the agent toward or away from sensible objects (I.II.22.1). The movement toward an object is caused when it is imagined as good, and away when the object is imagined as evil (I.II.22.3).[6] For this reason, Aquinas characterizes the passions as passive, from the very meaning of *passio* in Latin, given their nature as mostly *reactions* to what and how something is apprehended.[7] He further divides the passions into passions of the concupiscible part of the soul and passions of the irascible part of the soul. The passions of the concupiscible are those that respond to appetible objects, that is, objects that are imagined either pleasurable or painful (I.II.23.1), while the passions of the irascible are those that respond to sensible objects that are imagined as being arduous (I.II.23.2).[8] He

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[6] Objects are imagined good or evil depending on the subject's intention of the perceived object (I.II.22.2). Intentions, for Aquinas, have to do with the particular way that we color things or events and are stored in the imaginative faculty, in the intellect. For example, if I have bad memories of dogs as being prone to bite. This memory will be stored in such a way that I will immediately apprehend my neighbor's dog as a fearful object. This is the intention that colors all my perceptions of dogs. Therefore, when I encounter my neighbor's dog, I will feel the passion of fear. The object that gives rise to a passion has to do with its intentional object, not necessarily its material object. In my example, it is the dog *as fearful* that gives rise to fear, not simply the dog.

[7] This is clearly explained by Elisabeth Lippens: "Passion results in the victory of the agent over the patient, which Thomas also characterizes as some kind of assimilation. All this explains why the passion of the soul is moved and movement. It is a *motus movens*, a reaction-action. This implies that a passion of the soul is not a 'natural' movement, in the sense that it finds its origin in an internal bodily need, as do the movements of the vegetative soul. Rather, it is a reaction to an external agent or stimulus. Passions of the soul are basically reactions of the unity of body and soul to the external world." in "Rationalized passion and passionate rationality: Thomas Aquinas on the relation between reason and the passions" in *The Review of Metaphysics* 56.3 (March 2003): 535.

[8] He identifies eleven main passions, sorted into these two kinds and for the most part occurring in

identifies passions as necessarily involving both the soul and the body, since the soul is responsible for the imagination of the object as good or evil, while the body reacts in particular ways as a result of the perception (I.II.22.2 ad 3). On the other hand, affections are considered movements of the intellective appetite (the will).[9] Because of its location in the will, affections are not accompanied by bodily movements.[10] Furthermore, the objects of affections are intellectual, that is, they are universal concepts and ideas not perceived by the senses. While both passions and affections, for Aquinas, originate from an appetite, passions arise from and move toward (or away from) *sensible* objects and desires, while affections arise from and move toward (or away from) *intellectual* objects and desires.

The second important distinction between passions and affections can be seen within the context of Aquinas's distinctions between cognitions. Aquinas considers

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pairs of contraries. The six concupiscible passions are love and hate, desire and aversion, delight and distress. The five irascible passions are hope and despair, confidence and fear, and anger (no contrary).

[9] For Aquinas, appetite is "an inclination toward something, something that is both similar and suited to that which desires it." (I.II.8.1) In I.II.180.1, where Aquinas is giving details on the contemplative life, he observes: "Consequently the contemplative life, as regards the essence of the action, pertains to the intellect, but as regards the motive cause of the exercise of that action it belongs to the will, which moves all the other powers, even the intellect, to their actions." This passage shows that, according to Aquinas, the will has an appetitive power as much as the soul, since it too has the function of moving the agent toward a particular action and can be moved by both sense and intellectual cognition. According to this same article, "the appetitive power moves one to observe things either with the senses or with the intellect, sometimes for love of the thing seen because, as it is written (Matthew 6:21), 'where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also,' sometimes for love of the very knowledge that one acquires by observation."

[10] Interestingly, if the contemporary category of 'emotions' includes both Aquinas's passions and affections, the former including bodily movements and the latter not, it is difficult to place Aquinas in either the cognitive or non-cognitive camp within discussions in philosophy of emotions. For more on Aquinas's theories of passions and affections in relation to contemporary theories of emotion, see Leonard Donald Gordon Ferry, "Passionalist or Rationalist? The Emotions in Aquinas's Moral Theology" in *New Blackfriars* Vol. 93, No. 1045 (May 2012): 292-308 and Peter King, "Emotion" in *Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

passions to be movements of the sensitive appetite in response to the data provided by *sensory cognition*, while affections are movements of the intellective appetite in response to the data provided by *intellective cognition*. Sensory cognition is activated when the agent perceives a particular sensible object. Aquinas allows for this perception to be not only of a physical object, but also of a memory and imagination of an object. Intellective cognition perceives not a particular object, but universal objects. That is, it perceives abstract concepts and ideas, not objects that are tied to the material world. To illustrate this distinction, it is helpful to think of the passion of joy toward justice. A virtuous person would feel the passion of joy as a bodily reaction to watching an act of justice while walking down the street—for example, seeing someone return a one-hundred dollar bill to its owner. On the other hand, the agent may feel the affection of joy when contemplating the universal concept of justice. Despite this distinction, he does not mean to say that these perceptions occur separately and that these cognitions can only be activated one at a time. Rather, sensitive and intellective cognition almost always work in tandem, the intellective cognition usually abstracts universals from particular objects and, as John Dryden puts it, "acts of the intellective cognition can influence the way in which sensible objects appear."[11]

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[11] John Dryden, "Passions, Affections, and Emotions: Methodological Difficulties in Reconstructing Aquinas's Philosophical Psychology" in *Literature Compass* 13.6 (2016): 345. For Aquinas, it is possible to feel a passion about an abstract concept such as justice, love, or feel the affection of joy or sadness that includes bodily reactions. In the case of the former, Lombardo argues that Aquinas accounts for passions toward abstract concepts: "Since concepts are known through phantasms abstracted from material objects, they are directly related to sense experience and thus the appetite, and so it follows naturally that the passions might respond to the apprehension of a concept." p. 91 In the case of the latter (affection with bodily reactions), Aquinas would probably respond that this happens "by participation"—the 'overflow' of the will descends to the sensitive appetite, causing the bodily reaction (I.II.3.3, 4.5-6).

The distinctions given above have practical implications in Aquinas's moral theory and his theology. For example, the difference in location of passions in comparison with affections allows Aquinas to explain how God and the angels, even though they do not have a soul (or a body for that matter), can still have certain 'movements' or 'feelings.'[12] What God and the angels manifest when they are said to feel love or anger, are affections (movements of the will) and not passions (movements of the soul and consequent changes in the body):

> Love, concupiscence, and the like can be understood in two ways. Sometimes they are taken as passions—arising, that is, with a certain commotion of the soul. And thus they are commonly understood, and in this sense they are only in the sensitive appetite. They may, however, be taken in another way, as far as they are simple affections without passion or commotion of the soul, and thus they are acts of the will. And in this sense, too, they are attributed to the angels and to God. But if taken in this sense, they do not belong to different powers, but only to one power, which is called the will. (I.82.5)
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> When love and joy and the like are ascribed to God or the angels, or to man in respect of his intellectual appetite, they signify simple acts of the will having like effects, but without passion. (I.II.22.3 ad 3)[13]

The same goes for the blessed in heaven, who are also incorporeal. When commentating on the presence of emotions in the blessed, in *De veritate* 25.3 ad 7, Aquinas notes: "Joy and fear, which are passions, do not remain in the separated soul,

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[12] The word "move" or "movement" when talking of affections in God is tricky. In I.60.1 ad 2, Aquinas, in response to the objection that angels cannot love since they cannot be acted upon, as is characteristic of agents who feel love, notes: "All things in the world are moved to act by something else except the First Agent, Who acts in such a manner that He is in no way moved to act by another; and in Whom nature and will are the same. So there is nothing unfitting in an angel being moved to act insofar as such natural inclination is implanted in him by the Author of his nature. Yet he is not so moved to act that he does not act himself, because he has free-will." Accordingly, while Aquinas accepts the idea that angels are moved by natural love and willful love (I.60.2), since it is implanted by God in creation, he would not accept that God is so moved.

[13] See more in II.II.28.1, I.20.1 and I.60.1.

since they take place with a bodily change. But there remain acts of the will similar to those passions."

According to Aquinas, the will, however similar to the sensitive appetite, is a superior appetite (I.82.3). It is superior, in short, for two main reasons. First, because it is an *intellectual* appetite, that is, it is moved by universal principles. Another way Aquinas refers to universal principles is a "common notion of good."

> Now the sensitive appetite does not consider the common notion of good, because neither do the senses apprehend the universal. And therefore the parts of the sensitive appetite are differentiated by the different notions of particular good: for the concupiscible regards as proper to it the notion of good, as something pleasant to the senses and suitable to nature: whereas the irascible regards the notion of good as something that wards off and repels what is hurtful. But the will regards good according to the common notion of good, and therefore in the will, which is the intellectual appetite, there is no differentiation of appetitive powers, so that there be in the intellectual appetite an irascible power distinct from a concupiscible power: just as neither on the part of the intellect are the apprehensive powers multiplied, although they are on the part of the senses. (I.82.5)

The movement of the intellective appetite toward the common notion of good contrasts them with the sensitive appetite, which moves toward that which is pleasurable or useful. The second reason Aquinas considers the intellective appetite superior to the sensitive appetite, even though the will is inferior to the intellect as it is a "moved mover" while the intellect is "a mover not moved" (I.II.9.1), is because it moves the sensitive appetite and it moves itself toward the object of the intellect (I.II.9.3). Even though the sensitive appetite can occasionally move the will, it cannot move itself like the will can, and is more commonly moved by the will.

This superiority that Aquinas awards the intellective appetite bleeds into his view of the affections. In other words, since the affections are movements of the will, to

Aquinas, they are superior sorts of feelings compared to passions. Eleonore Stump puts it well:

> A passion in the basic sense is a desire aimed at the good as the good is perceived by the senses. When the good is perceived by the intellect and stimulates the intellective appetite or will, the resulting desire has something in common with a passion in its most basic sense, even though it lacks the tie to the senses. In the intellective appetite, the desire is not so much a bodily feeling prompted by a perception as it is a conative attitude prompted by the mind's understanding.[14]

The affections' lack of immediate ties to the senses and its connection to the universal good perceived by the will make them feelings that are more prone to cooperate with the achievement of the ultimate end (*telos*) of humans: happiness. In Stump's article, she adds a further reason for Aquinas's comparatively higher view of affections: while passions originate from perceptions of the outside world and of the particular object on which the agent focuses his or her attention, affections can be infused by God in order to contribute to the perfection of the agent. While passions are natural human affects of the sensitive appetite, affections can be "dispositions in the intellective appetite infused into a person by God."[15] In fact, as we will see, two out of the three theological virtues (virtues infused by God) are named after passions, but are in fact affections of the will: love and hope. Let us move on to exploring Aquinas's link between passions/affections and virtues.

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[14] Eleonore Stump, "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions" in *Faith and Philosophy* 28.1 (2012): 41.

[15] Ibid. In this article, Stump concludes that the similarities and differences between passions and affections are analogous to those between acquired and infused virtues, a distinction we will cover below.

Passions, affections and virtues

Passions, affections and acquired virtues

Perhaps Thomas Aquinas's most remarkable contribution to Christian ethics is his theory of the virtues—appropriated from Aristotle, yet with clear Christian adaptations. For him, due to the fall from grace, human nature is far from its original moral and intellectual perfection. Humans' natural state, after the fall, is one in which the intellect is no longer *always* ordered toward the ultimate human good—imperfect happiness on earth in achieving the perfection of human nature and perfect happiness found in union with God in the beatific vision (I.II.2.8); the will and the soul (with their constituent passions) are no longer *consistently* or *perfectly* under the control of reason, which is humans' highest faculty. Consequently, we often choose, feel, and act poorly or, as Aquinas would put it, inordinately. Humans need, therefore, a reintegration and cooperation between right reason, the will, and the intellective and sensitive appetite if they want to achieve true happiness, the ultimate human good. A large part of this work of reintegration is done in the process of developing virtues.

For Aquinas, virtues are habits (*habitus*) or stable dispositions that incline one's thoughts, judgments, emotions, and actions to always be in accord with right reason. Aquinas makes several distinctions between different kinds of virtues. First and foremost, he distinguishes between the acquired virtues and the infused virtues, which pertains to the origin of the virtues; while acquired virtues are developed through human effort (I.II.65.1), the infused virtues are given to the human by God (I.II.63.4)—more on the latter below. Within the category of acquired virtues, he makes a distinction between

those that are moral and those that are intellectual. He accounts for four moral virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance (I.II.61.2). Each one of these virtues is associated with a distinct part of the soul: wisdom is the perfection of the intellect[16], justice is the perfection of the will, courage is the perfection of the irascible part of the soul and temperance is the perfection of the concupiscible part of the soul. These virtues dispose the human agent to think, feel, and act according to the mean between two extremes—not excessively, nor insufficiently.

There are direct connections between passions, affections, and virtues in the *Summa*. First, Aquinas mentions the effect that acquired virtues have on the passions and the affections as well as the passions' contribution to the virtues. Second, he speaks to the possibility of passions and affections *being* virtues. Both aspects are important to my argument in this chapter and I will address them in order.

For Aquinas, virtues are *about* the passions (I.II.59.5). In other words, a moral virtue is either a "mean between the passions" (I.II.59.1 ad 1)—which shows how passions can be part of the very nature of a virtue—or, minimally, virtues result in particular passions. As an example of the former, take the virtue of courage. To have the virtue of courage is to habitually act in a way that seeks a mean between excessive fear of death and excessive daring—both extremes are passions of the soul. For Aquinas, then, the virtues put the passions under direct control of right reason.[17] As an example of how

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[16] Aquinas justifies wisdom's (also translated as prudence) classification as a moral virtue, though a perfection of reason itself, by stating that it is "something of a moral virtue" (I.II.61.1) for it "confers...aptness for a good work…[and] presupposes the rectitude [of the appetite]" (I.II.57.3).

[17] As Stephen Chanderbhan has puts it, "virtue helps to ensure that *passiones* do not pull in a direction opposed to reason—or, at least, not as hard." "The Shifting Prominence of Emotions in the Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas," in *Diametros* 38 (2013): 70.

virtues result in particular passions, Aquinas mentions the joy that arises from an act of justice in an agent who has the virtue of justice (I.II.59.5). In collaboration with right reason, passions are more likely to accurately react to perceptions of true good. Therefore, the virtues result in passions felt at the right time and in the right measure to the right good.[18] On the flip side, Aquinas believes that *reasonable* passions can serve as extra motivation for the performance of acts of virtue.[19] Much interpretative work has been done on Aquinas's theory of the passions' subjugation to reason and contribution to virtue, however, for the sake of brevity, I will leave the summary as is.[20]

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[18] For Aquinas, passions are under the control of reason when the sensitive appetite is moved by reason. This happens when reason (both the intellect and the will) operates on the 'interior senses', more specifically on the particular imagination (I.II.30.3.ad 3). It is in the particular imagination, where the "retention and preservation" (I.78.4) of the image of the object picked up by the senses occurs, that reason may control the passions by modifying how the object is retained and perceived and, consequently, how the sensitive appetite reacts to that perception. This modification of perception of the object, Aquinas explains, occurs when the particular instance that is picked up by the senses is "guided and moved according to the universal reason...Anyone can experience this in himself: for by applying certain universal considerations, anger or fear or the like may be modified or excited" (I.81.3). Take, for example, the case of fear of a dog, which is one I have used earlier in the chapter. If I am afraid of every dog I encounter because of previous bad experiences with them, my emotional reactions are not in accord with universal reason. Universal reason might dictate that some dogs merit fear, while others do not. More specifically, universal reason might dictate that all dogs that wag their tails, position themselves submissively, and lick during an encounter with a human are not fearful. If one is able to truly internalize this perception in the particular imagination, the consequent emotional reactions to dogs will be in accord with right reason.

[19] Peter King gives examples of the passions' general motivational power: "an emotion is a reaction that may well have causal efficacy: fear of the wolf moves the sheep to flee, a perceived insult causes the proud man to lash out in anger, the hope of winning motivates the runner to put on a final burst of speed at the end of the race. Reactions can cause or motivate subjects to act; their doing so depends on how they are related to other elements in the subject's psychology. That is, being in a given state can be the cause of further events, regardless of how the subject comes to be in that state." Peter King, "Emotions" in *Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 211. Though he is referring here to the general power of the passions to motivate toward action, under the influence of virtue, passions can further serve as specific motivating powers toward virtuous acts. It is important to observe, however, that, without the virtues, passions may also serve as motivators toward vicious or sinful acts. Without the control of reason, passions can go both ways.

[20] For the different interpretations on this subject, and the arguments for a stronger or more modest view of the the passions' submission to the command of reason, see Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the passions: a study of Summa theologiae: 1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Nicholas Lombardo, *The logic of desire: Aquinas on emotions* (Washington, DC: The Catholic

In some ways, the connection between virtues and affections is similar. Some of the virtues are indeed *about* the affections, such as all those under the purview of justice. However, while the affections are also modified in positive ways by the acquisition of virtues, it is in less dramatic ways compared to what happens to the passions. As we have seen above, the affections are the result of the perceptions of intellective cognition, and thus naturally react to the universal good. Because of this, affections are less prone to go against reason and more prone to react to true goodness. This explains Aquinas's view that "the will does not need a virtue perfecting it" (I.II.56.6). Notwithstanding the affections' natural rationality, Aquinas still sees an important role for the virtues in directing affections toward God and one's neighbor:

> Now the proper nature of a power is seen in its relation to its object. Since, therefore, as we have said above (I.II.19:3), the object of the will is the good of reason proportionate to the will, in respect of this the will does not need a virtue perfecting it. But if man's will is confronted with a good that exceeds its capacity, whether as regards the whole human species, such as Divine good, which transcends the limits of human nature, or as regards the individual, such as the good of one's neighbor, then does the will need virtue. And therefore such virtues as those which direct man's affections to God or to his neighbor are subjected in the will, as charity, justice, and such like. (I.II.56.6)

In the quote above, Aquinas distinguishes between a *natural* power of the will and a *supernatural* one, or one that "transcends the limits of human nature." The natural power of the will is to desire and to move toward one's own good, but it is not natural for

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University Press, 2010); Mark D. Jordan, "Aquinas's Construction of a Moral Account of the Passions" in *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 33 (1986): 71-97; Elisabeth Lippens, "Rationalized passion and passionate rationality: Thomas Aquinas on the relation between reason and the passions" in *The Review of Metaphysics* 56.3 (March 2003): 525-558; Timothy McDermott, "Beginnings and Ends: Some thoughts on Thomas Aquinas, Virtue and Emotions." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 12.1 (April 1999): 35-47.

one's will to be inclined toward someone else's good. For example, while one can naturally respond with the affection of love toward one's own health, it is not natural to the intellective appetite to respond with an affection toward the virtuous good of another person. This is where the virtue of justice comes in. For example, it is necessary to have developed or to have received from God the virtue of justice in order to properly feel compassion for another's right for healthcare. Chanderbahn offers more specific examples of the effect of acquired virtues on the affections:

> One could be said to experience genuine joy that, say, a war is over and peace is attained in a place, irrespective of how that affects one's own desires, interests, and subjective perceptions. Similarly, one could experience genuine sadness and anger at the plight of the marginalized and unjustly persecuted in a society consequent upon an intellectual realization of their situation.[21]

In other words, under the influence of the acquired virtues, the affections more accurately detect and react to the universal good, consequently reacting to the good of other people, because the agent's will is in harmony with right reason.

Let us now turn to Aquinas's view on the possibility of passions and affections being virtues in themselves. On this issue, Aquinas sees a significant difference between passions and affections, generally related to the presence or absence of choice. To illustrate, I will use the example of the passion of sorrow, since it will be an important passion later on in this chapter. According to Aquinas, sorrow can be a passion of the soul and it can be an affection of the will. In his discussion of penance, a subspecies of the virtue of justice that he defines as sorrow for something one has done, he makes this

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[21] Chanderbahn, p. 73.

distinction clear:

> Now it has been stated above (III:84:9) that sorrow or sadness is twofold. First, it denotes a passion of the sensitive appetite, and in this sense penance is not a virtue, but a passion. Secondly, it denotes an act of the will, and in this way it implies choice, and if this be right, it must, of necessity, be an act of virtue. For it is stated in Ethic. ii, 6 that virtue is a habit of choosing according to right reason. Now it belongs to right reason than one should grieve for a proper object of grief as one ought to grieve, and for an end for which one ought to grieve. And this is observed in the penance of which we are speaking now; since the penitent assumes a moderated grief for his past sins, with the intention of removing them. Hence it is evident that the penance of which we are speaking now, is either a virtue or the act of a virtue. (III.85.1)

In other words, affections can be considered virtues because they originate from the free choice of the will—they are *deliberate*— and, therefore, can be developed into habits. Passions, on the other hand, are not *entirely* voluntary[22], but are reactive movements of the soul and the body. Although passions are certainly 'tamed' with the acquisition of virtues in the irascible and concupiscible parts of the soul, so that, for example, someone who is used to reacting with anger toward silly mistakes made by their partner can react with kindness and patience with the development of the virtue of gratitude and friendship, those passions cannot, in themselves, be virtues.

In addition to this reason, Aquinas dedicates an article in Question 59 to specifically answer this question. He gives three main three reasons why a passion cannot

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[22] This particular characteristic of passions is usually derived from Aquinas's comparison of the relation between reason and the passions to a "political rule" in contrast with a "despotic rule" (I.II.17.7) That is, there is clear acknowledgment of who is the ruling and ruled party, and, though the ruled party is naturally subject to the ruler, it does not necessarily submit all the time. For passions to be virtuous, the agent must habituate their seat—the irascible and concupiscible parts of the soul—in virtuous acts. In other words, though passions may be consistently virtuous, they are so not due to the process of habituation of the passions, but to habituation of the irascible and concupiscible powers (I.II.56.4).

be understood as a virtue:

1. Because of its definition as a movement of the sensitive appetite, whereas virtue is a *principle* of the movement of the appetite.
2. Because a passion is not, in itself, either good or evil, while virtues and vices are good and evil in themselves.
3. Because, even if a certain passion is essentially good or evil, its movement is from the appetite to reason, while virtues move from reason to the appetite.

Despite these reasonable points, Aquinas still offers a way to place passions under the rubric of virtues and vices. In his response to the objection that some passions are widely considered vices, such as envy and anger, Aquinas notes that there is a distinction between a virtuous and vicious *act*, and a virtuous and vicious *habit*. If we are talking of virtuous and vicious *acts* then, Aquinas says, a passion can indeed be called a virtue or vice. Here, again, Aquinas does not consider it reasonable to classify the passions of envy and anger as vices *per se*, because they cannot be made into a vicious habit. That is, because these passions, by definition, are movements of the sensitive appetite, the passions happen as spontaneous reactions of the appetite to an intentional object. If they are passive reactions, there seems to be no room to develop a habit of envy and anger. Even if one were to think that some people are in fact *habitually* envious or angry, since there is no pondering, no reflection of reason before such passions, these presumed habits are not habits in the way Aquinas defines them. Reason, for Aquinas, is the primary component in the development of a habit. It is the demand of reason that ignites a habit and it is reason's control over the appetite that allows for that habit to stick. The passivity

or reactivity implied in a passion precludes the possibility of it being a virtue or vice in the full sense.

Nonetheless, Aquinas allows for a passion to be understood under the rubric of a virtuous or vicious *act*. Because an act does not imply the presence of a habit, passions can be classified as virtuous or vicious according to the circumstances in which they arise, and whether, in those circumstances, they are "opposed to reason or in accordance with reason." This is how Aquinas seems to understand sin—as a vicious act. An example of a passion that can be considered a virtuous act shows up in I.II.59.1 ad 3. In his reply to the objection that pity (*misericordia*) is a passion and also a virtue, Aquinas clarifies that pity is "an act of virtue" because it is a movement of the soul (a passion) that is obedient to reason. Aquinas supplies this response, however, with a confusing addendum that seems to contradict all we have seen on this issue up until now: "But if by pity we understand a habit perfecting man so that he bestows pity reasonably, nothing hinders pity, in this sense, from being a virtue. The same applies to similar passions."

In this passage, it is difficult to discern whether Aquinas is allowing for a merely semantic use of the word 'virtue' when applied to pity, or whether he is in fact open to the possibility of understanding a passion as a full-fledged virtue. In light of the Latin version of this passage, the former seems more likely. The English translation does not indicate Aquinas's inclusion of the word *dicatur* in the last sentence of his response. A more precise translation of this sentence is "Nevertheless, if someone says (*dicatur*) pity is a habit that perfects man so that he bestows pity reasonably, nothing prohibits pity, said (*dictam*) in this way, of being a virtue." It seems Aquinas is more interested in allowing a

semantical break from his rigid theory against the passions being virtues than allowing passions to *phenomenologically* function as virtues. Nevertheless, he still allows certain passions to be close relatives of virtues in that they 1) can contribute to the perfection of human beings; 2) can act as a rational principle of movement and not as a passive happening, 3) can be a mean between two extremes; 4) can be said to be somewhat like habits. These characteristics, I will argue further along in this chapter, are what allow Aquinas to treat shame within the context of his treatise on virtues and, their reversal, to speak of pride within the context of vices.

In sum, Aquinas sees important effects of acquired virtue on both the passions and the affections. The virtues place the passions under the dominance of right reason, allowing the agent to feel only the right passion, at the right measure, at the right time. Virtues also motivate the agent to respond with affections to the virtuous good of other people. Furthermore, we have seen that, due to the affections' voluntariness and object of virtuous good, they can be developed into virtues. Passions, on the other hand, cannot. However, I have further shown that Aquinas sees some passions acting in very similar ways as virtues, and thus allows them to be called 'virtues.'

Passions, affections and theological virtues

As I showed in the introduction, much of Aquinas's ethics is heavily influenced by the ethical writings of Aristotle, especially the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Nonetheless, there is much to Aquinas's ethics that moves him away from a strictly Aristotelian ethic

and that showcases his primary role as a Christian theologian.[23] Aquinas's movement away from or superimposition over Aristotle's ethics is especially clear in his inclusion of infused virtues within the ethical part of the *Summa*.

While Aristotle believed that proper moral upbringing and habituation are sufficient to lead one to true happiness, Aquinas argued that 1) perfect human happiness is not achieved merely with the perfection of human nature, but includes union with God in the beatific vision in heaven (I.II.62.1; I.II.110.3); 2) proper moral upbringing and habituation are insufficient to lead one to human perfection and to perfect happiness (I.II.62.1 ad 3; I.II.110.3); 3) humans need supplemental principles and strength in order to achieve moral and spiritual perfection and, consequently, to achieve true happiness. The name he gives to these supplemental principles and strength is infused virtues. Infused virtues are not developed through human effort or even moral upbringing, but are infused by God who "works in us without us" (I.II.55.4). The most important infused virtues, for Aquinas, are the theological virtues, which are listed as love (*caritas*), hope (*spes*), and faith (*fides*). While acquired virtues, both intellectual and moral, perfect the human intellect and appetite to think, feel, and act according to the perfection of human capacity, perfectly obeying the mandates of reason, theological virtues dispose humans to think, feel, and act in ways that surpass human reason (I.II.62.2). The other distinction that Aquinas makes between acquired and theological virtues is that, while the former allow for many different goods as their objects, the latter have only God as their object

[23] In fact, some of the ways he distances himself from Aristotle's thought—his views on shame and pride—are the topic of this dissertation.

and as the direct *telos* of action (I.II.62.1).[24]

All these details about theological virtues are pivotal for us to understand the relation between these virtues and the passions and affections. As I have done in the subsection above, I will address Aquinas's views on the effect of the theological virtues on the passions and affections, and then I will address his views on the possibility of passions and affections *being* theological virtues.

In I.II.61.5 ad 2, the objection is raised that there cannot be a species of virtue called 'perfect' virtue (the theological ones) for any virtues are about the passions.[25] Aquinas responds by saying:

> Human virtues, that is to say, virtues of men living together in this world, are about the passions. But the virtues of those who have attained to perfect bliss are without passions. Hence Plotinus says (Cf. Macrobius, Super Somn. Scip. 1) that "the social virtues check the passions," i.e. they bring them to the relative mean; "the second kind," viz. the perfecting virtues, "uproot them"; "the third kind," viz. the perfect virtues, "forget them; while it is impious to mention them in connection with virtues of the fourth kind," viz. the exemplar virtues. It may also be said that here he is speaking of passions as denoting inordinate emotions.

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[24] What this means, in practice, is explained well by Joseph Wawrykow: "By faith, one believes, on the basis of God revealing, what is needed for salvation: what the end of human existence, in God, is, and the way to that end, as arranged by God. By hope, one aspires to the God who beatifies, trusting in God's aid. And, by charity, one has a friendship with God, made possible by God's outpouring of love for humans; and by willing in charity one comes into union with God, imperfectly in this life, but perfectly in the next. All of this lies beyond the natural principles of the human person, even as perfected by the acquired virtues. Such have to do only with an end that is proportioned to human nature, not with God as beatifying." Joseph P. Wawrykow, "The Theological Virtues" in Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 288.

[25] This question betrays the common understanding among religious medieval philosophers that the passions are necessarily a negative influence in one's journey toward moral and spiritual perfection. As we have noted above, this is not Aquinas's view. Even though he recognized the potential for passions to lead to sinful action and vice, many have seen him as much more of an optimist with regard to their auxiliary role in ethics and religion, at least when referring to the earth-bound ethical life.

Here, Aquinas makes some interesting points. First, he reinforces the point he had previously made (I.II.59.5) that acquired ('human') virtues are, indeed, about the passions. Second, he states that the blessed have passionless virtues. In order to explain this distinction between earth-bound and heaven-bound virtues, Aquinas quotes Plotinus making nuanced distinctions of the types of virtues and what exactly they do to the passions. It is impossible to be sure what kind of virtues Plotinus is referring to in each category, but he seems to be calling 'social virtues' what Aquinas calls the acquired moral virtues, the 'perfecting virtues' what Aquinas calls the theological virtues, the 'perfect virtues' as those held by the blessed, and the 'exemplar virtues' as those held by Jesus. If this interpretation is correct, Aquinas would be leaning on Plotinus to explain the relation between passions and virtues in the blessed (the 'perfect virtues'), who, according to Plotinus, forget their passions. The blessed no longer reside within a physical body and, therefore, cannot manifest the passions.

Despite his general agreement with Plotinus, he adds a caveat at the end, one that shows a slight disagreement with Plotinus regarding one of the categories of virtues. It seems clear that Aquinas's point of disagreement is regarding the place of the passions in the 'perfecting virtues,' which supposedly 'uproot the passions.'[26] Aquinas does not seem entirely convinced by this assessment and suggests that Plontinus might just be referring to the uprooting of '*inordinate* passions.' Aquinas wants to keep some room for the

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[26] That this is the only relation Aquinas disagrees with Plotinus is clear because of the textual evidence of Aquinas's agreement regarding the other three categories of virtues and their relation to the passions. Aquinas might also disagree with the last type that Plotinus mentions—the passions in the virtues of the examplars. However, in both the case of the person with theological virtues and in the case of Jesus, Aquinas questions the absence of *all* passions in an earth-bound, bodily human (in the case of Jesus, the incarnate God).

ordinate passions among those with theological virtues. This would, indeed, agree with his point that the passions have to do with all virtues relating to "men living together in this world." Within the larger picture of Aquinas's anthropology, the passions cannot be entirely absent from the agent while he or she is an earth-bound, somatic being, even under the influence of theological virtues.[27] As Elisabeth Lippens has noticed, "[For Aquinas,] in this life, imperfect happiness needs to be realized in and through man's relation to the material world, that is, his body and the external world. The passions as sensitive reactions to the external world are therefore an integral part of the basic theological directedness of human beings toward their proper fulfillment."[28]

There may be another way of understanding this passage. It seems possible that Aquinas wishes to convey that persons with theological virtues no longer have the need for the ethical motivations given by the passions. As we have seen in the previous section, Aquinas argues that, though passions do not deliver information about the good *per se*, they may give extra motivation to do good acts according to the good assessed by

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[27] Chanderbhan even argues that the blessed, though they do not have passions, have something closely analogous to an emotion: *instinctus*. He notes, "Through this *instinctus*, one would come to know God's approval or disapproval of something (*not* just the proposition *that* God approves or disapproves of something) and, given this, be moved to act accordingly. Due to the sharing of minds that is characteristic of charity, as well as the complete, perfect, and non-discursive nature of God's knowledge, it is plausible to claim that knowledge of a specific evaluation by God shared in this context will turn out to be non-propositional. Given this, the *instinctus* turns out to be an emotion that specifically pertains to *knowledge* of goodness or badness – specifically, knowledge that God (a God with a will, yet lacking *passiones*, at that) has of some object or state of affairs. Insofar as this *instinctus* can be cast as an emotion, it bears the marks of an *affectus*. In this situation, the emotion's role is no longer auxiliary. On the contrary, this *affectus* is the paradigmatic way that shared knowledge of God's evaluation of some object or state of affairs is manifested in a human. As the irreplaceable vehicle of specific and *morally relevant knowledge* – of *Divine* knowledge, at that – emotions have a role at this level of moral development that outranks the auxiliary roles they tend to have at the lower level of moral development described above." p. 83.

[28] Elizabeth Lippens, "Rationalized Passion and Passionate Rationality: Thomas Aquinas on the Relation between Reason and the Passions": 526.

reason. In this sense, the passions have an auxiliary role in the ethical journey. The contrary is also true—some passions may give extra motivation to do what is evil. Given God's infusion of all the necessary auxiliaries with the infused virtues (including, as we will see below, the endowment of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit), Aquinas might be pointing to the 'uprooting' of the passions *in their role* as an ethical supplement, not necessarily their complete disappearance.

If the argument above is sound, then we can understand Aquinas as endorsing a relationship between passions and affections and theological virtues similar to the one between passions and affections and acquired virtues, yet with important caveats. That is, through the theological virtues, God tames the passions and upgrades the affections to be in accord with reason, prompting them to be felt in the appropriate ways and the appropriate circumstances. The difference, however, lies in their role and the purpose for which they are 'tamed.' They do not disappear entirely, since this would not make sense in the earth-bound and somatic life of a virtuous person—the agent continues to feel the appropriate emotions such as anger in the face of injustice and joy in the face of good objects—yet they do not serve in auxiliary roles for good action. In other words, Aquinas wishes to stress that the agent imbued with Divine instruments has no need for extra motivation to do what is good. What, then, is the purpose of the passions and affections in such agents? First, according to Aquinas, their existence is inevitable in the human body and soul. Second, and most importantly for our purposes, Aquinas sees the ordinate, good passions as intricate parts of the theological virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. If these virtues are infused in order to properly direct the agent toward God and God's

will—what God wishes human agents to feel and how to think and act—their infusion leads the passions and affections to have the same purpose and be felt appropriately in relation to God and to one's neighbor.

Regarding the possibility of passions being theological virtues, it is perfectly clear that Aquinas does not allow passions to be virtues for the same reasons we have listed in the previous subsection. Nonetheless, as I have mentioned above, two of the three theological virtues are named after passions of the soul—love and hope. This does not go unnoticed by Aquinas: "Love, hope and joy have good for their object. Now God is the Sovereign Good: wherefore the names of these passions are transferred to the theological virtues which unite man to God" (I.II.68.4 ad 4). The reason Aquinas is able to 'transfer' these concepts from passions to theological virtues is exactly because of the nature of affections. The same reasons that allow affections to function as acquired virtues, allow them to also function as theological virtues: the fact that they are movements of the intellectual appetite rather than the sensitive appetite and that they consider universal objects. Therefore, love and hope, as theological virtues, are affections that are infused by God in the human agent. As such, they have different objects than their counterparts in the sensitive appetite—God is the object of all theological virtues—and direct the person to the happiness that comes from union with God.

Virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The final connection that is relevant to this chapter is the one between theological virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.[29] Aquinas takes up space to make this distinction because, on the surface, they seem very similar, especially given the fact that some of the components of the respective lists receive similar names[30] and that both are divinely infused.

In the Question dedicated to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Aquinas defines them as "perfections of man, whereby he becomes amenable to the promptings of the Holy Ghost" (I.II.68.1). According to certain passages of the Bible, the list of Gifts of the Holy Spirit includes: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. In the second article he asks whether the Gifts differ from the theological virtues. Aquinas responds, as is typical of him, both 'yes' and 'no.' No, they are not different if we consider that they correspond simply to different aspects of the same thing (a virtue is a gift—lowercase 'g'—that perfects the human acts) and that they are both

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[29] I am purposefully leaving out an analysis of the fruits of the Holy Spirit because they do not include the passion/affection of shame, which is the virtuous passion on which I am focusing. Nonetheless, Eleonore Stump has a fascinating argument about the connection between the passions and the fruits of the Spirit. For her, while infused virtues have correlates in the list of Gifts of the Spirit, passions and affections have correlates in the list of fruits of the Spirit. She argues that, while affections are the intellectual analogue of the passions, the fruits of the Spirit are the *spiritual* analogue of the passions—affections felt toward God in what she calls a 'second-personal connection:' "For Aquinas, then, the contribution of the fruits of the Holy Spirit to the moral life is not a matter of the passions being governed by reason, any more than it is in the case of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Rather, the fruits of the Holy Spirit are a matter of having emotions, spiritual analogues to the passions, transformed in second-personal connection to God." "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions," p. 42 According to Stump, passion in this analogous sense "is for Aquinas the touchstone of all morality." p. 43

[30] Compare the list of theological virtues (love, hope, and faith) and the list of Gifts of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord). Though they receive different names, a few may be understood as overlapping in some ways, such as faith/piety and hope/fortitude.

enabled by God.[31] Furthermore, Aquinas enumerates some similarities between them: 1) both are habits, and not merely acts or passions;[32] 2) both are infused by God to perfect human action; 3) both perfect the promptings of human action toward a supernatural end in ways that surpass human natural abilities;[33] 4) because they exceed natural abilities, knowledge about them and the habits that they instill cannot be reached by reason alone, but only through revelation.[34] Nonetheless, he argues, there must be distinctions between them, since some aptitudes are in one list and not in the other.

How, then, are theological virtues and Gifts of the Holy Spirit distinct? It seems that Aquinas's theoretical distinction is two-fold. First, the Gifts *derive* from the theological virtues since the virtues are the Gifts' 'roots':

> The mind of man is not moved by the Holy Ghost, unless in some way it be united to Him: even as the instrument is not moved by the craftsman, unless there be contact or some other kind of union between them. Now the primal union of man with God is by faith, hope and charity: and, consequently, these virtues are presupposed to the gifts, as being their roots. Therefore all the gifts correspond to these three virtues, as being derived therefrom. (I.II.68.4 ad 3)

In other words, the theological virtues must necessarily be in place in order for one to receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is not difficult to see: faith is a necessary

[31] In this question, Aquinas is analyzing the Gifts' similarities and differences to both acquired and theological virtues. In my summary of his answer, I am covering solely his comparison between Gifts and theological virtues.
[32] "Our Lord in speaking of the Holy Ghost said to His disciples (John 14:17): 'He shall abide with you, and shall be in you.' Now the Holy Ghost is not in a man without His gifts. Therefore His gifts abide in man. *Therefore they are not merely acts or passions but abiding habits*." ST I.II.68.3 (my emphasis)
[33] Though some authors seem to think that only the Gifts prompt humans to exceed the limits of reason (see Lombardo, p. 140), I believe Aquinas consistently argues that both do so (see I.II.62.1 and 68.1).
[34] See I.II.62.1 and 68.1.

component for the Gift of piety; hope is a necessary component for the Gift of fear of the Lord; and so on. For Aquinas, each theological virtue has corresponding Gifts of the Holy Spirit—that is, Gifts that derive from a particular theological virtue.

Second, Gifts allow for different objects that are not the Supreme Good (God), though their objects are of a higher nature than those of the moral and intellectual virtues. The object of the Gifts, though ultimately the Supreme Good, is not necessarily God, as is the case with the theological virtues. Aquinas's example of this difference is exactly the Gift that is most relevant to this study: fear of God.

> Love, hope and joy have good for their object. Now God is the Sovereign Good: wherefore the names of these passions are transferred to the theological virtues which unite man to God. On the other hand, the object of fear is evil, which can nowise apply to God: hence fear does not denote union with God, but withdrawal from certain things through reverence for God. Hence it does not give its name to a theological virtue, but to a gift, which withdraws us from evil, for higher motives than moral virtue does. (I.II.68.4 ad 4)

Though fear of God is a Gift that includes God as *part* of its object, as we will see below, God is not its *direct* object. In a more practical sense, Aquinas sees the Gifts as further infused promptings of what the human agent must do in particular situations. Even when all acquired virtues are developed and all theological virtues are infused, human reason "does not know all things" and is still subject to "folly, ignorance, dullness of mind and hardness of heart" (I.II.68.2 ad 3). These remnant defects, for Aquinas, are resolved through the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Summary

I hope it has become clear, after this first section of the chapter, that the relations between passions, affections, virtues, and Gifts of the Holy Spirit are complex, but ones

that Aquinas deliberately attempts to untangle. A Venn Diagram of the commonalities and dissimilarities of their characteristics would look somewhat like this:

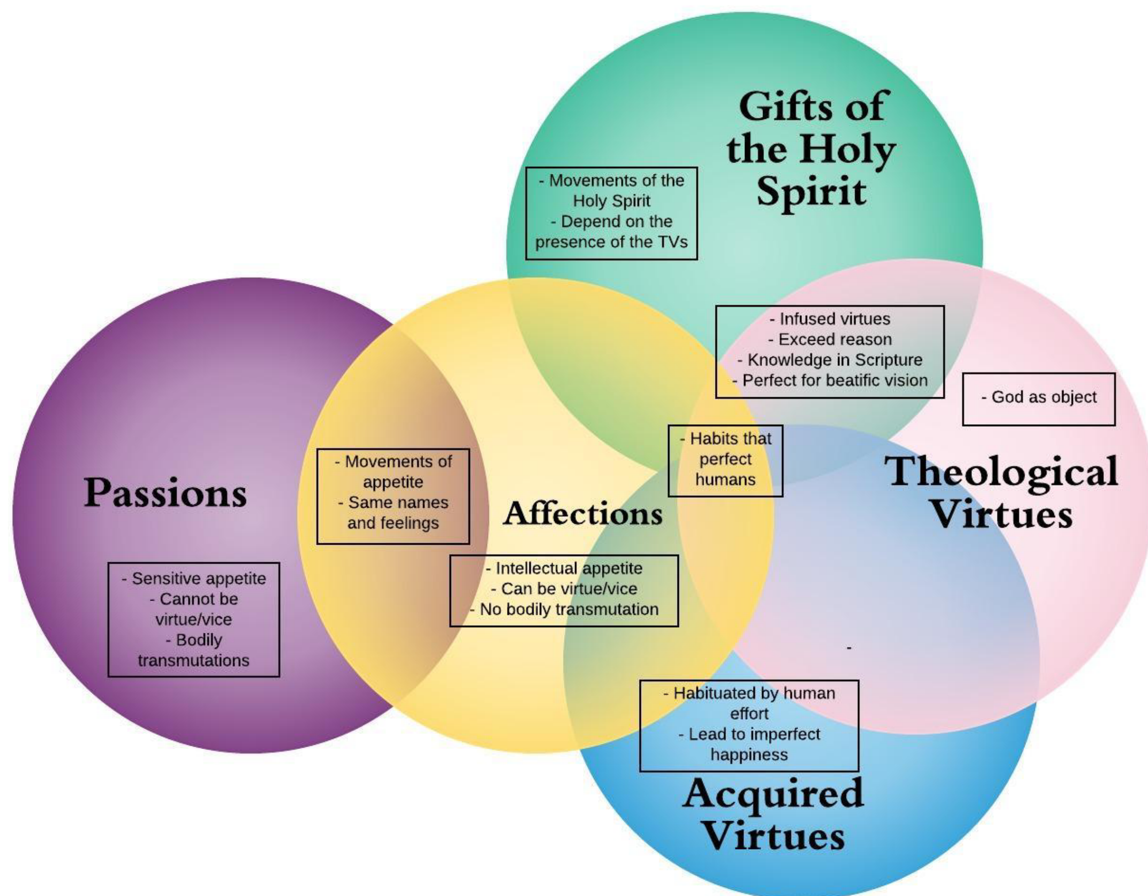

Figure A. Aquinas's five moral categories and their relations

The Venn Diagram above illustrates that the five categories are distinct while containing characteristics that overlap with one or more of the other categories. Passions and affections have in common that they are movements of an appetite and that they are similar feelings (receiving the same names), the difference being that passions are movements of the sensitive appetite while affections are movements of the intellective appetite. This difference allows the affections to be more in tune with reason, and

therefore, superior to the passions. A further difference is that while passions cannot be virtues or vices, affections can. This characteristic of the affections, in turn, is what connects them to acquired and theological virtues as well as with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some of the theological virtues, in fact, *are* infused habitual affections of the will. The theological virtues inhabit a separate circle from the acquired virtues because Aquinas not only considers them superior to the acquired virtues, but they have God as their only object, instill knowledge and abilities that surpass human reason and are infused rather than acquired. The last two characteristics allow the theological virtues to overlap with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the theological virtues circle still converge in part with acquired virtues because of their common characteristic of being virtues (and, therefore, are habitual dispositions that perfect the human agent). Finally, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit receive a separate circle given the fact that they have the unique characteristic of being infused by the Holy Spirit yet, distinct from theological virtues because they can still have as their object something aside from God and because they depend on the presence of the theological virtues.

Now that we have these connections untangled, we are better equipped to understand the place that Aquinas reserves for shame and pride within his ethical schema. In the next section, I will analyze many of the articles in the *Summa* and other works where Aquinas expresses his views on *verecundia.*

B. Aquinas on Shame

Shame does not appear as frequently as some of the other passions, such as love and hope, receiving only a handful of articles dedicated exclusively to it. Nonetheless, as

will become clear in the first subsection, shame is a species of fear. Therefore, I will also bring forth Aquinas's view on fear wherever the fear described can be easily correlated with shame. This, I claim, is one of the distinctive features of this project, making it stand out from the few other academic projects focused on shame in Aquinas.[35] This technique allows us to take some of Aquinas's views on fear and apply them to his views on shame, thus arriving at a much richer understanding of the place of this emotion in the moral and spiritual journey of the human agent. My main argument in this subsection is that shame is 1) an essentially praiseworthy and necessary passion throughout the human moral life; 2) a Gift of the Holy Spirit when having God as part of its object and, therefore, an essential affection for the successful spiritual journey. The importance of the first section will be made clear in times where the distinction of shame as a passion, as an affection, as a virtue, and as a Gift will make all the difference.

Shame, or *verecundia*, first shows up in Aquinas's *magnum opus* in his treatise on the passions, *Prima Secundae* 22-48. In this treatise, Aquinas considers shame a species of the passion of fear (*timore*), which is the first characteristic of this passion that we will analyze more closely.

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[35] I am thinking here of the only two academic works I know of that focus on shame in the works of Aquinas: Heribertus Dwi Kirstanto, *The Praiseworthy Passion of Shame: An Historical and Philosophical Elucidation of Aquinas's Thought on the Nature and Role of Shame in the Moral Life* (Rome: G&BP, 2019) and Daniel Dahlstrom, "Shame: A Phenomenological Re-examination of Aquinas's Analysis" in Andrew LaZella and Richard A. Lee, Jr (eds.), *The Edinburgh Critical History of Middle Ages and Renaissance Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 97-114.

Shame as a passion of fear

In Question 41, Aquinas gives evidence that fear is one of the passions of the soul, and that shame is one of its species. For us to properly understand shame, it is important to properly understand how Aquinas defines fear. Fear's object—that which motivates its genesis and from which it withdraws— is a future, inevitable, evil. Because fear regards a difficult evil, Aquinas places it in the irascible part of the soul. In the fourth and final article of the Question, Aquinas enumerates some of the species of fear—a list of six kinds. First, he distinguishes between fear related to one's action and fear related to external things. Fear related to one's action may result in laziness or *segnities* (fear of too much work), shamefacedness or *erubescentia* (fear of an evil action yet to be done) and shame or *verecundia* (fear of an evil action already done).[36] Fear related to external things results in amazement or *admiratio* (fear of a great evil that one cannot overcome), *stupor* (fear of some unusual evil), and anxiety or *agonia* (fear of something unforeseen).

What sets shamefacedness and shame apart from laziness, placed within the same category of fear of one's action, is that the former are set off by feelings of "disgrace which damages [the agent] in the opinion of others" (I.II.41.4). And yet, there is a third distinction between the two kinds of fears of disgrace: while *erubescentia* refers to fear of a disgraceful action that has yet to be done, *verecundia* is fear of a disgraceful action that has already been done.[37] In the treatment of shame in his treatise on the virtues, Aquinas

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[36] In Heribertus Kristanto's extensive study of shame in Aquinas, he includes analyses of three other Latin words—*confusio*, *pudor* and *turpitudo*. Though I find this an incredibly valuable addition to the study, with many payoffs, for lack of space I must limit my analysis to the two most common words he uses to refer to the phenomenon.

[37] Aquinas's distinction between *erubescentia* and *verecundia*, at least as it is done in this question, does not happen in contemporary literature on shame. Rather, instead of giving two distinct words for

words the distinction between blushing/shamefacedness (*erubescentia*) and shame (*verecundia*) slightly differently. There he states that if someone avoids committing a disgraceful act because of his or her fear of reproach, it is *erubescentia*, while if someone does something disgraceful and avoids the public eye for fear of reproach, it is *verecundia* (II.II.144.2). Aquinas's whole point in making these distinctions is to place the difference between the two passions in the chronological order in which they show up in reference to a disgraceful act. He categorizes *erubescentia* as a feeling that comes *prior* to the disgraceful act and shame as *subsequent* to it. Though both are still connected by the object of their fear—future reproach—shamefacedness avoids the impending disgrace by *refraining* from the reproachable act while shame avoids the impending disgrace by *hiding* the act.

Aquinas's definition of shame raises crucial questions about the legitimacy of his classification of shame as a species of fear, which he voices in the second and third objection of Question 41.4. The second objection expresses a common conception that fear is only in relation to objects that "surpass our power." That is, we might think that fear is only felt when there is nothing one can do about the impending evil. Therefore, fear should only become manifest in the face of the second category of objects—external things— and not in the face of the first category—personal actions. Aquinas's pushback to this objection is that, even though the action (a disgraceful act) in itself is in the power of the agent, the consequences of said actions are not, which are, in fact, the object of

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these phenomena, usually an adjective is simply added to the word 'shame.' That is, a feeling of reproach for a future disgraceful deed is called "prospective shame" while the same feeling for a past disgraceful deed is called "retrospective shame."

such fear. Relatedly, the third objection deals with *verecundia* in particular, which, being related to past deeds, does not seem to fit Aquinas's requirement of fear being of *future* evil. To this objection, Aquinas argues that the fear is *not* of the past action, but of "future reproach or disgrace."

In his description of the nature of the passion of shame, Aquinas includes the bodily transmutations that occur in the manifestation of this passion. In those who feel fear in general, the vital spirits and its accompanying heat contracts or retreats to the center of the body, resulting in an inclination to run away, cold members, speechlessness, trembling, paleness, and chattering of teeth (I.II.44.1). In a parallel way, the inner parts of the body become warm, which result in "a loosening of the bowels, and urinary or even seminal evacuation" (I.II.44.2 ad 1). However, shame, in particular, displays a slightly different physical transmutation. Instead of the outward parts of the body losing heat, shame spreads heat to them, so that "those who are ashamed blush" (I.II.44.1 ad 3).[38] The difference between shame and general fear, according to Aquinas, is that it is not contrary to nature (that is, it does not fear death), but only contrary to the appetite (that is, it fears a certain kind of pain), "consequently, there results a contraction in this appetite, but not in the corporeal nature."

Aquinas's assessment of shame, in this section, is very straightforward and devoid of much detail. This article is, after all, only a quick list of fear's species, and shame is only one item on that list. Nonetheless, this material, however succinct, reveals some important aspects of shame that will be the foundation of our analysis of Aquinas's view

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[38] Elsewhere, he refers to this same physical evidence of shame. See II.II.144.2 and 4; *In Ps*. 43, n. 16.

on the emotion, especially when related to God, in other parts of the *Summa*. Because shamefacedness will also be a crucial part of this analysis, and will at times even be identified with shame, I will include it in the following summary.

Shame is necessarily social

Shamefacedness and shame rely on the existence of 'others' since it is the damage in the opinion of others that creates fear in the perpetrator of the disgraceful act. The Latin reads more straightforwardly than the wordy English translation ("disgrace which damages him in the opinion of others"): "*turpitude laedens opinionem*"— turpitude in the opinion of others. *Turpitude*, in Aquinas, is used only when implying an extrinsic cause. In all cases in the *Summa*, this extrinsic cause is the sentiments and standards of a human or Divine audience.[39] More specifically, what the human audience seems to bring to the table in order to cause such reproach is an agreed upon set of social, moral, and spiritual norms that, when transgressed by the agent, brings upon him or her the disapproving eyes and accusation of fault of the community.

It results from fear of social disgrace

Aquinas's assumption in these passages is that the reproachable agent actually *cares* about the opinion of others, for in order for there to be fear, there must be a perception of the resulting disgrace as *evil*. An assessment of the disgrace as evil must be a result from viewing the opposite as good. Therefore, if disgrace in the public opinion is evil, a positive reputation in the public opinion is good. The agent, therefore, cares not

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[39] Roy J. Deferrari, *A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas based on the Summa*, 1890-1969, p. 1119. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015011488064&view=1up&seq=1167

only about a positive reputation, but cares about the opinion of the public. According to Aquinas's definition, the presence of shamefacedness or shame also entails a perception of one's past or intended future action as blameworthy or, at least, as blameworthy in the *opinion of the audience*,[40] which implies that the agent who feels shame agrees with the standards upon which he or she is being judged.

It is based on the future and the past

At this point of the *Summa*, Aquinas does not portray one of the passions as more morally praiseworthy than the other. In fact, throughout this discussion, there is no moral judgment on any of the passions. Instead, here the focus is on making distinctions, as he notes, based on 'the effects' of each species of fear. Shamefacedness is based on future desired actions and shame is based on actions performed in the past. Even though fear, for Aquinas, is always directed toward future evil, shame can still be understood as a species of fear because it is fear of future reproach for a past action.

Aquinas's approach to shame in the treatise on the passions is not limited to Question 41, the question on fear. He briefly mentions *verecundia* within the context of the moral praiseworthy or blameworthiness of passions, in Question 24. Let us turn to this Question.

Shame as a praiseworthy passion

The treatise on the passions is primarily concerned with the nature and location of the passions, and less concerned with their contributions to the moral life. [41]

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[40] In his discussion of shame in the *Secunda Secundae*, Aquinas spends some time on this distinction, which I will get to below.
[41] Lombardo observes that the treatise "is specifically focused on passions considered apart from

Nonetheless, Aquinas dedicates one question to potential moral qualities of the passions and it is in this Question that we find Aquinas's understanding of the relation between passion and virtue as well as one of Aquinas's references to *verecundia* that will be crucial to our analysis of shame as a virtuous passion.

Aquinas's answer to the question "Can moral good and evil be found in the passions of the soul?" (I.II.24.1) is yes and no. 'No' because, *in themselves*, the passions are neutral, for they are *motus quidam irrationalis appetitus* (movements of the irrational appetite) and, therefore, are not intrinsically rational. And 'yes' for two reasons: first, because the passion can be judged good or evil according to its relation to right reason; and second, because passions, when they are moved by reason and the will, are voluntary, and voluntary reactions can be morally categorized as either good or bad.

In general, Aquinas agrees with Aristotle's tendency to judge a passion good or evil according to its agreement with the orders of reason. Therefore, if a passion accords with right reason, it is a good passion (or a good instance of that passion) and if a passion goes against right reason, it is an evil passion (or an evil instance of that passion). As we have seen in the first section, Aquinas, in this Question, sets the stage for his treatise on virtues, and the passions that will be included in that section, by stating that passions, if controlled by right reason, not only are not sinful, but may contribute to, or even be a large part of, virtue. After all, "nothing that is obedient to reason lessens the moral good" (I.II.24.3).

In clear opposition to the Stoic view on the passions, Aquinas holds that there are

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questions of morality" (p. 19).

kinds of relationships between reason and passion that he thinks *enhance* the moral goodness of an act. First, there is a relationship of "redundance." That is, if the passion simply serves to confirm or even enhance the movement of the intellect toward a good act, arising as a consequence of the intensity of the will toward that act, then the passion clearly helps to enhance the goodness of the act. Second, the relationship of "choice." That is, when, through a rational judgment, the agent *chooses* to be influenced by a passion with the goal of intensifying the promptness to act, the passion "increases the goodness of an action" (I.II.24.3 ad 1).

While most passions serve to increase or decrease the goodness of an action based on their collaboration with reason, and therefore are good or bad only within the context of good or bad reason, Aquinas acknowledges that some passions might be good or bad *in themselves*, or, as he puts it, *secundum speciem suam* ("according to their species" - I.II.24.4). That is, some passions have objects that are inherently responsive to reason, somewhat independently of the circumstances in which they occur and their relation to right reason *in the moment*. I say 'somewhat' independently because judgment of the passion as being good or bad is, obviously, not entirely independent from their relation to right reason since any judgment is itself an intellectual activity. Aquinas states that what has to be in harmony with reason is not the passion itself, but the "object to which the passion tends."

We have seen what Aquinas means by the object of a passion in our analysis of the various species of fear: that which, being perceived or imagined by the agent, generates the particular passion. This perceived object, then, is what the appetite then

moves toward or away from. Therefore, if the object to which the passion tends, that is, the object which gives rise to that particular passion, is necessarily in harmony with reason, the passion is not accidentally good, but *essentially* good. If, however, the object is necessarily in conflict with reason, the passion in question is essentially evil. It seems clear that Aquinas is not convinced that there are many examples of passions that have such clear cut objects. Nonetheless, he mentions envy, pity and shame as possible candidates.

Going off of the examples provided by Augustine and Aristotle, Aquinas argues that "pity (*misericordia*)[42] is a kind of virtue," and "*quod verecundia est passio laudabilis*" (I.II.24.4). The translation of the Fathers of the English Dominican Province proves to be a very unfortunate one: "that modesty is a praiseworthy passion." Given what we know about Aristotle's *aidos*, analyzed in detail in the first chapter, and the Fathers' translation of *verecundia* as 'shame' in Question 41, the word 'modesty' here seems misplaced.[43] In any case, Aquinas is very clearly referring to the same *verecundia* he characterizes as fear of "disgrace in the opinion of others" a few questions later. He then adds the passion of envy as a passion that is evil in itself. Since it is a species of the passion of sorrow which sorrows for another's good, its object is "in discord with

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[42] This Latin word is best translated as "mercy," but since this might have given the mistaken idea of the kind of mercy that is understood to pertain only to God, the translator might have thought best to translate it as "pity." There is clearly a distinction in modern understanding of these two traits. While pity seems to entail simply a feeling of sadness toward the misfortune of another without any particular tendency for compassion, empathy or even the tendency toward action to aid the unfortunate, mercy seems to entail all of the aforementioned qualities.

[43] This is an especially relevant passage to apply the famous Latin saying "*traduttore, traditore*" in the sense that we are tricked into thinking that "modesty" is a separate passion from the shame that shows up a few questions later.

reason."

The exact wording that Aquinas uses in this article is very puzzling: "In this way moral good and evil can belong to the species of a passion, in so far as the object to which a passion tends, is, of itself, in harmony or in discord with reason: as is clear in the case of 'shame' which is base fear; and of 'envy' which is sorrow for another's good: for thus passions belong to the same species as the external act" (*Et hoc modo bonum et malum morale possunt pertinere ad speciem passionis, secundum quod accipitur ut objectum passionis aliquid de se conveniens rationi, vel dissonum a ratione, sicut patet de verecundia, quae est timor turpis; et de invidia, quae est tristitia de bono alterius. Sic enim pertinent ad speciem exterioris actus*). Aquinas is not entirely clear whether he considers shame and envy to be in *contrast* with one another, the former being the essentially good passion and the latter being the essentially evil one, or if *both* exemplify evil-in-itself passions. Robert Miner seems to think the latter interpretation is correct, while also recognizing how problematic it is:

> Shame (*verecundia*) is evil by its nature, since it is 'wicked fear.' The example seems puzzling, not least because the *sed contra* of this very Article identifies *verecundia* as a praiseworthy passion. Why does Aquinas appear to contradict himself so blatantly? Possibly he simply failed to pay attention (*etiam Thomas dormit*). Alternatively, Aquinas may wish to remind us that if specifically identical passions sometimes bear different names, it is no less the case that passions differing in species may bear the same name.[44]

As I have made clear in my choice of interpretation, I find Miner's reading hard to swallow. I think there is ample space to interpret Aquinas as placing shame and envy in

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[44] Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the passions: a study of Summa theologiae: 1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 93.

contrast with one another; first, because it would make no sense for Aquinas to give two examples of evil passions if he is trying to give an explanation of how a passion can be good *or* evil in itself. And, second, it would be especially odd considering his positive understanding of shame in the *sed contra* of this Question and in the larger context of the *Summa*, more specifically in Question 144 of the *Secunda Secundae*, which we will analyze in depth below. One reason Miner might be tempted to bite the bullet for this interpretation of Aquinas's negative view of *verecundia* in this article is his translation of "*timor turpis*." Miner translates *turpis* as 'wicked,' which in itself is already an interpretation, and a negative one at that. If, however, we understand Aquinas to be somewhat coherent in his understanding of this passion, we can utilize the broader context he gives in Question 41 for a proper translation of *timor turpis*.

As we have seen in our analysis above, Aquinas defines *verecundia* as fear of "*turpitude laedens opinionem*"— shamefulness, disgracefulness, baseness, or dishonorableness in the opinion of others. Is the fear (or the passion) itself wicked? No. What is wicked is the act or behavior that public opinion judges as *turpis*. Perhaps the best translation and rewording for clarity of Question 24's *Respondeo* is "In this way moral good and evil can belong to the species of a passion, in so far as the object to which a passion tends, is, of itself, in harmony or in discord with reason: an example of the former is 'shame' which is fear of baseness/disgracefulness; and an example of the latter is 'envy' which is sorrow for another's good."

This paraphrase coheres with his later thought, in Question 39, that some passions, even though they have an evil (present or future) as their objects, can be

understood as good, including shame. In order to argue for this, Aquinas distinguishes between something being good or evil in itself and being good or evil on the supposition of something else:

> A thing may be good or evil in two ways: first considered simply and in itself; and thus all sorrow is an evil, because the mere fact of a man's appetite being uneasy about a present evil, is itself an evil, because it hinders the response of the appetite in good. Secondly, a thing is said to be good or evil, on the supposition of something else: thus shame is said to be good, on the supposition of a shameful deed done, as stated in Ethic. iv, 9. (I.II.39.1)

Aquinas's view of shame as a virtuous passion is clearly upheld in the following passage of *De Veritate*:

> ...passions are said to be meritorious inasmuch as the act of the will aroused by the passion is meritorious. Conversely, when a passion is aroused by the will because the movement of the higher appetite overflows into the lower. For example, when by his will a person detests the filth of sin, the lower appetite is by that very fact moved to shame (*verecundia*). In this sense shame (*verecundia*) is said to be either praiseworthy or meritorious by reason of the act of will which caused it...Some passions are called laudable by the philosophers because they are the effects and signs of a good will, as is evident in the example of shame (*verecundia*), which shows that the man's will is averse to the filth of sin, and in that of pity, which is a sign of love. On this account the names of these passions are sometimes used by the saints for the habits which elicit the act of will which is the source of these passions. (DV Q. 26, A. 6, co.)[45]

Here, again, Aquinas points to the natural praiseworthiness of shame since it flows from a reasonable movement of the will away from what is evil. Here and in the *Secunda Secundae*, as we will see in the next section, Aquinas considers shame to be a reliable

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[45] This passage also seems to point to a slightly different, or at least equally probable, definition of shame. Rather than fear of disgrace, Aquinas here is alluding to its nature as a certain aversion to the wrongdoing of sin. Thanks to Daniel Dahlstrom for this insight.

sign that the agent recognizes what is good and detests what is evil.

Though Question 24 and 39 of the *Prima Secundae* point faintly to Aquinas's positive assessment of *verecundia*, no section of the *Summa* gives us as clear a view of his view on shame as II.II.144. If in the *Prima Secundae verecundia* is a passion that is essentially good, in *Secunda Secundae*, it is as close to a virtuous passion as it could get.

Shame as a virtuous passion

After its appearance among the passions of the soul, *verecundia* shows up again as an integral part of the virtue of temperance in Questions 143 and 144 of the *Secunda Secundae*. Temperance, for Aquinas, is a virtuous disposition that controls the concupiscible passions from leading the agent excessively toward things that "seduce the appetite" (II.II.141.2). In other words, it is the disposition that inclines humans to heed to reason when they are overwhelmed by immoderate passions that seek pleasure and shun pain (II.II.141.3). In his specific discussion of the integral parts of temperance he proposes shame and honesty as the pre-conditions for the development of the virtue of temperance—while shame aids in the acquisition of temperance by avoiding disgrace, honesty is the love of temperance itself.[46] The English term for shame here is

[46] "The integral parts of a virtue are the conditions the concurrence of which are necessary for virtue: and in this respect there are two integral parts of temperance, 'shamefacedness,' whereby one recoils from the disgrace that is contrary to temperance, and 'honesty,' whereby one loves the beauty of temperance. For, as stated above (II-II:141:2 ad 3), temperance more than any other virtue lays claim to a certain comeliness, and the vices of intemperance excel others in disgrace" (II.II.143.1).
It seems here that Aquinas is limiting the feeling of shame to exclusively *moral* disgrace, though there might be causes for disgrace that do not fall under the category of intemperance (for example, the shame of stupidity, or of being part of an unpopular family). In II.II.144.2 ad 2, he explains this discrepancy: "As stated above (II-II:63:3), though honor is not really due save to virtue alone, yet it regards a certain excellence: and the same applies to reproach, for though it is properly due to sin alone, yet, at least in man's opinion, it regards any kind of defect. Hence a man is ashamed of poverty, disrepute, servitude, and the like."

'shamefacedness,' however, in Latin, it is the same word translated as 'shame' in the treatise on the passions—*verecundia*—and its grammatical variations.[47]

Aquinas starts out by establishing that shame is not a virtue in the strict sense because it is "inconsistent with perfection" (II.II.144.1). This inconsistency, for Aquinas, is due to shame's definition as fear of something base or disgraceful—a *difficult future evil*. Given this definition, those who have achieved moral perfection, first, do not find it particularly difficult to avoid a *future* base action, and therefore do not fear it, and, second, the morally perfect do not actually *do* any base actions, so they do not feel shame for *past* ones. That Aquinas is unwilling to call shame a virtue, but instead calls it a *laudabilis passio* (praiseworthy passion), might indicate his awareness of its complex nature.[48]

Based on this response, there are two important observations to make regarding Aquinas's definition of *verecundia* in this Question. First, though using the term *verecundia*, Aquinas seems to be using it as an umbrella term, encompassing both the definition of *verecundia* and *erubescentia*, given his mention of *future* base action (the object of *erubescentia*) and *past* base action (the object of *verecundia*).[49] Second, it is interesting that Aquinas here seems to direct the fear felt by the agent toward the *actual*

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[47] The choice for this translation most likely comes from the seeming confusion that Aquinas makes between the definition of *verecundia* and *erubescencia*. For the translators, it might have seemed that Aquinas was using the concept of *erubescencia* (shamefacedness), while using the word *verecundia* (shame), since he speaks of its ability to refrain one from performing the base act in the future. That Aquinas is, in fact, careful about his definitions will become clearer below.

[48] As Heribertus Kristanto rightly puts it: "By opting for the category of praiseworthy passion, Aquinas seems to be trying to encapsulate the multifaceted and ambivalent phenomenon of shame" (p. 8).

[49] Similar to what he does by referring to both passions and affections with the umbrella term *affectiones*.

base action, be it in the past or in the future, not toward the future *reproach* due to the base action, which is how he defines *verecundia* in the treatise on the passions: "Now shamefacedness is inconsistent with perfection, because it is the fear of something base, namely of that which is disgraceful." The slightly modified definition seems to derive from the influence of Damascene's definition of shame as "fear of base action," one he does not use in the treatise on the passions, but uses here.[50] He solves this seeming incompatibility by arguing that reproach or disgrace is naturally attached to, or inherent in, vice (or sin) and, therefore, that shamefacedness regards both the reproach *and* the vicious act simultaneously.[51] Since fear must have as its object a future evil that is difficult to avoid, both kinds of disgrace must be simultaneous in the case of shame for it to be a species of fear. Though Aquinas attempts to converge both objects, it is this modified rendering that allows for his more seamless placement of *verecundia* as a kind of virtue. It is also this modified definition that makes shame, in the *Secunda Secundae*, a self-assessing emotion. While in the treatise on the passions, there was no explicit indication that one has to assess their future or past act as evil (only the reproach), in this passage Aquinas includes that necessity.[52]

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[50] As the reader might remember, this is also his definition in DV Q. 26, A. 6, co., where he defines shame as an aversion to the "filth of sin."

[51] In II.II.144.2, Aquinas considers two definitions of disgrace. There is disgrace that is inherent to vice and disgrace that attaches reproach to a person. In the first case, disgrace is the deformity of a voluntary act and, properly speaking, does not *necessarily* produce shame because it may not produce fear of disgrace if it is not apprehended as a threatening evil. Aquinas calls the second kind of disgrace 'penal' since the negative status is attached to the person's act by a third party. This attached reproach to the person who committed the act, for Aquinas, can clearly come from a disgrace inherent to vice (and he sees shame as a passion that *properly* arises from sinful acts—144.2.ad1), but not necessarily since it can be due to defects that are not one's fault, such as poverty, disrepute, servitude, and the like (144.2.ad 2).

[52] It is interesting to note that if we only had Aquinas's account of shame from the treatise on the

Let us return to the problem Aquinas sees in shame as implying imperfection. In the *Tertia Pars*, discussing penance as a virtue, Aquinas gives further details regarding this issue. When comparing penance (sadness toward a past evil act) with shame, the objector states that since shame, which is directed toward an evil act, is not a virtue, then prudence cannot be considered a virtue either. Aquinas responds that this conclusion does not follow, because

> shame regards the evil deed as present (*nam verecundia respicit turpe factum ut praesens*), whereas penance regards the evil deed as past. Now it is contrary to the perfection of virtue that one should have an evil deed actually present, of which one ought to be ashamed; whereas it is not contrary to the perfection of virtue that we should have previously committed evil deeds, of which it behooves us to repent, since a man from being wicked becomes virtuous. (III.85.1 ad 2)

Placing this quotation side by side Aquinas's definition of shame above seems, once again, to show an incongruence in Aquinas's definition of *verecundia*. Whereas in the *Secunda Secundae* he defines *verecundia* as fear of a future or past base action, here he treats it as regarding *present* evil acts.[53] I believe the answer to the incongruity is that Aquinas is referring to the 'evilness' of the base act committed, not the actual action. The 'evilness,' while attached to the action performed, is also still 'present' to the agent. That is, what the agent has done in the past or what he intends to do in the future has not yet 'gone away' for shame does not imply that the agent has in any way repented or paid for

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passions, with its focus on fear of reproach, it might seem to the reader as if shame, for Aquinas, is merely a form of social control, primarily focused on the audience's point of view and concern for one's social reputation. However, shame as defined in the *Secunda Secundae*, and within the structure of the virtue of temperance, brings into focus the inner world of the sinner as one that recognizes good and evil and is repelled by the latter.

[53] A definition of shame as a passion that regards the present evilness of the action is more compatible with the description of shame that I have shown in *De Veritate*, namely, aversion to the filth of sin.

the evil act or intention, whereas, in the case of penance, one's "displeasure or disapproval" of the act and one's "intention of removing its result" is included in the virtue's very definition. In this case, penance implies some kind of 'elimination' of the evil done in the past, while shame, when understood merely through the prism of its proper definition, does not.[54]

In addition to the primary reason given above—that it implies imperfection—Aquinas discards the possibility of shame being a virtue in the strict sense for other reasons, the first of which I have explained in detail in the first section: 1) it cannot develop into a habit due to the fact that it is not originated from choice, but "from an impulse of passion" (II.II.144.1 ad 1)[55]; 2) it is a passion that removes obstacles for virtue, but does not help construct virtue (II.II.144.1 ad 3); 3) it is the result of "excessive love of disgraceful things" (II.II.144.1 ad 4)[56]; and 4) the habit of feeling shame would

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[54] In fact, on its own, shame does not infer any kind of action, which is one of the reasons it cannot be considered a virtue.

[55] Kristanto goes into detail regarding this issue. For him, the relationship between shame and choice is not as straightforward as this in other works by Aquinas: "While other passions constitute movements of the sensitive appetite following a certain sensitive apprehension, shame qua passion is not set in motion simply by a sensitive apprehension, because the object that moves the passion of shame, i.e., disgrace (*turpitudo*) or something disgraceful (*turpia*), can be understood only by the intellect. Aquinas says in QDV 26.6 co. that it is only when the intellective appetite, i.e., the superior appetite or the will (*voluntas*), has understood and hated the disgrace of sins that the inferior appetite or the sensitive appetite will be set in motion and shame will take place. This will become one of the rationales why shame is called a praiseworthy passion…In Sent. 4.15.2.1.1 ad4 Aquinas likewise states that shame constitutes a praiseworthy passion because, as in the case of mercy (Misericordia), shame comes into being as a consequence of the choice of the good from the part of the will." Kristanto, p. 87.

[56] Continence is another example of a good trait, but that is short of a virtue because it implies some wrong. That is, it is right action *despite* unruly passion, which, for Aquinas, is an incomplete right action. The fact that one needs to go through an internal battle in order to perform a good action and that the passions are not necessarily in accord with reason, makes this trait miss the mark for virtue. The ordering of the passions toward reason is an absolutely necessary component of virtue. See I.II 58.3 ad 2 and III 7.2 ad 3.

not result in the *virtue* of shame, but in the virtue of avoiding disgraceful things in the first place, which would consequently bypass the feeling of shame (II.II.144.1 ad 5). Though not present in this question, one can deduce another reason for Aquinas to avoid calling shame a virtue: that it can sometimes *result* in bad action rather than avoid it. In his biblical commentaries, Aquinas frequently quotes Sirach 4:21, which reads: "There is shame that brings sin, and there is a shame that brings glory and grace."[57] Commenting on passages in Psalms, for example, he says that the evil kind of shame is that confounds[58] the sinner, but that does not lead to repentance—it is merely a fear of punishment. This kind of shame, he notes, is present in the condemned at the time of eternal punishment. The good kind of shame, however, also makes the sinner confounded, but it is a "good fear by which they are wholesomely confounded into repentence" (*In Ps.* 34, n. 17). This, for Aquinas, is the shame that is present in penitence (*In Ps*. 39, n. 15).

If shame cannot be considered a full-fledged virtue, one is led to question why Aquinas would include it as an integral part of the virtue of temperance at all. The answer is that Aquinas accepts *verecundia* as a virtue in a *broad* sense because it is "good and praiseworthy among human acts or passions" (II.II.144.1). This idea coheres with what Aquinas had emphasized in I.II 44.3, that fear conduces one to work well. More specifically, he argues that shame actually *leads* one to be more temperate. He writes

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[57] See *In Ps*. 24, n.3; In Ps. 34, n.17; In Ps. 39, n.7; Super Matt., c.8:1-4; c.18, 1.2; Super I Cor. C.4, 1.3.

[58] For Aquinas, to be confounded (*confusio*) "consists in someone failing to accomplish what he intends" (In Ps. 34, n. 4).

"shamefacedness is a part of temperance, not as though it entered into its essence, but as a disposition to it" and it "lays the first foundation of temperance by inspiring man with horror of whatever is disgraceful" (II.II.144.4 ad 4). Shame is a disposition to temperance because those who feel it toward a past evil action are not likely to repeat it, and those who feel it toward a desired future action are not likely to go through with it. This distinction between the *essence* of a virtue and a *disposition* toward virtue is the foundation of Aquinas's argument why, even though an integral part of temperance, shame is not present in the perfectly virtuous.

In his response to the question of whether the virtuous can be ashamed (II.II.144.4), Aquinas agrees with Aristotle in two of his assertions: 1) that a "virtuous man is not shamefaced" (NE iv, 9) and, 2) that "shame is in the virtuous hypothetically" (NE iv, 9). How can shame be present, yet absent from the virtuous? As I have shown in the first chapter when commenting on Aristotle's original statement, they do not feel the passion of shame toward an actual sinful act, either past or future, but are *disposed* to feel shame, for if there *were* anything disgraceful in them they *would* be ashamed of it.[59] In other words, we might also say that shame is a potentiality in the virtuous, not an actuality. It is in this sense that shame is in the virtuous hypothetically.[60] This is in harmony with Aquinas's explanation of the first created man's possession of the virtues in his innocent state, before the fall. Following Augustine's lead, Aquinas argues that

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[59] This is also expressed in II.II.144.1 ad 5.

[60] In the case of shame for one's virtue, Aquinas argues that it occurs only in people who are not truly virtuous for "[i]t is owing to imperfection of virtue that a man is sometimes ashamed of the reproaches which he suffers on account of virtue, since the more virtuous a man is, the more he despises external things, whether good or evil. Wherefore it is written (Isaiah 51:7): 'Fear ye not the reproach of men'" (II.II.144.2 ad 1).

Adam possessed all the virtues, yet in different ways. While the virtues that "do not imply an imperfection" (charity and justice) are easy to accept as being in Adam, the virtues that imply an imperfection present a challenge:

> But any virtue which implies imperfection incompatible with the perfection of the primitive state, could exist in that state as a habit, but not as to the act; for instance, penance, which is sorrow for sins committed; and mercy, which is sorrow for others' unhappiness; because sorrow, guilt, and unhappiness are incompatible with the perfection of the primitive state. Wherefore such virtues existed as habits in the first man, but not as to their acts; for he was so disposed that he would repent, if there had been a sin to repent for; and had he seen unhappiness in his neighbor, he would have done his best to remedy it. This is in accordance with what the Philosopher says, "Shame, which regards what is ill done, may be found in a virtuous man, but only conditionally; as being so disposed that he would be ashamed if he did wrong" (Ethic. iv, 9). (I.95.3)

Though Aquinas denies that the virtuous may feel any kind of shame in the *Summa*, he allows for a certain kind of shame in the virtuous in his commentary on Psalms 43:16, where the Psalmist states that shame is always before him, supposedly due to disgrace according to the opinion of "the gentiles," but not due to sin. On this, Aquinas argues there are two kinds of disgrace (*turpitudo*):

> The first truly is base, and this is the baseness of sin,
> and shame (*verecundia*) about this does not befall the virtuous, since they do not have within themselves consciousness of sin, about which they could be ashamed. But it does befall the wicked: *what fruit, therefore, did you have then in those things of which you are now ashamed?* (Rom 6:21). Another kind of baseness depends on one's own estimation, namely, debasement or derision that one suffers externally, and this can exist even in perfected persons, and it is this of which he says, *all the day long*. (*In Ps* 43, n.8)

Here, Aquinas concedes that it is possible for the virtuous to feel shame due to reproach that is afforded by others, but not truly deserved. This kind of reproach is the kind that Aquinas refers to in the *Summa* as "disgrace in the opinion of others" (*turpia secundum*

opinionem), in II.II. 144.3. Because the virtuous can still suffer dishonor and have their reputation tainted, even without wrongdoing, they are still susceptible to shame.[61] Elsewhere, Aquinas also refers to something like a *natural* shame, which originates from some kind of innate sense of right and wrong, such as sexual shame[62] and shame of poverty and mendicacy[63]. The virtuous are also susceptible to natural shame.

In the context of his discussion of the revelation of sins in the context of judgment, Aquinas addresses the question of shame in the blessed. When raising the question whether, in heaven, everyone will be able to read all that is in another's conscience, Aquinas answers in the affirmative based on the Pauline idea that all that is in darkness will be revealed and the biblical narratives of the revealed sins of David, Mary Magdalene, and Peter. The sins of the unrepentant will be revealed for the "confusion of the sinner" and their shame, but the revelation of the sins of the saints will serve to bring "great glory on account of the penance they did" (Suppl. III.87.2 ad 3). Aquinas explains that the act of revealing the saints' sins will not bring them shame because "shame is 'fear of disgrace,' as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. ii), and this will be impossible in the blessed." This is reiterated in Aquinas's strange question whether those who will rise again at the final resurrection will rise all of the male sex. Aquinas answers that the

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[61] This is a concession that is not present in the work of Aquinas's master, Aristotle.
[62] In commenting on Aquinas's *Sent*. 4.26.1.3 ad3, Kristanto notes that "This 'sexual shame' is due not to disgrace resulting from sin (*turpitudo culpae*) but to disgrace resulting from the punishment of the first sin (*turpitudo poenae*). The punishment (*poena*) of the first sin consists in the disobedience of concupiscence and of the genitalia to reason, and this defect always makes men naturally ashamed…Aquinas would grant that the virtuous men, too, are susceptible to this 'sexual shame', for this kind of shame derive from the impulse of passion and may precede the judgment of reason" p. 110.
[63] *CI*, Pars 2, Chapter 6, ad 9

blessed will rise in different sexes (male and female), but that "there will be no shame in seeing one another, since there will be no lust to invite them to shameful deeds which are the cause of shame" (Suppl. III.81.3).[64]

Though assigning shame only as fear of dishonor or hypothetically to the perfectly virtuous and not at all to the blessed, Aquinas is well aware of the benefits of a disposition to feel shame in the life of those who have not yet achieved perfection, earthly or heavenly. He states, "[i]n the average man it is found, insofar as they have a certain love of good, and yet are not altogether free from evil" (II.II.144.4 ad 1). Not only is shame beneficial in the ways we have seen above, but it is one of the signs of a person who knows and values what is good—albeit imperfectly and without the full complement of virtue.[65] When one knows and values what is good, one knows and despises what is evil. As expected, Aquinas notes that people can misconstrue an act or a reproach as evil, producing the feeling of shame without necessity. Although one should only feel shame

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[64] This can be understood as fear of both reproach and of sinful acts, since the blessed are not vulnerable to either. Though it seems at first glance that Aquinas does not allow for shame in the blessed, as we will see in the next section, the hypothetical presence of *verecundia* in the virtuous can be paralleled with Aquinas's discussion of the presence of the Gift of the fear of the Lord in heaven among the blessed. In both cases, Aquinas is envisioning the endurance of a praiseworthy and ordinate affection within those who have achieved perfection, in one case worldly moral perfection and in the other case, other-worldly moral and spiritual perfection. One important question I will answer is why Aquinas considers *verecundia* in the blessed impossible while fear of the Lord, which I consider 'spiritual shame,' is possible.

[65] Aquinas's theory of love for good in those who feel shame is particularly interesting given Aristotle's view on the subject. As we have seen in the first chapter, Aristotle ascribes to the shameful longing for what is noble and hate for what is shameful—another way of Aristotle saying desire for the good and repulsion from what is evil. Nonetheless, Aristotle does not place this characteristic at the center of his description of *aidos* due to his main goal in the *Nicomachean Ethics* of proving that it is not a virtue. Aquinas, on the other hand, gives a more prominent place for this important theory. He had already proposed it in *Sent*. 4.19.2.1 ad 5: "no one can be moved either by the hate or the fear of a disgraceful thing except the one who somehow has already possessed the desire for what is beautiful and good."

of sinful acts, it is possible that one feels shame of a good act by a distorted perception of it (seeing the act as vicious when it is not) or due to fear of being thought presumptuous or hypocritical for performing virtuous deeds (ad 3). He states, surprisingly yet revealingly, that more grievous sins are sometimes less shameful. This, he believes, might be for two reasons: either because they do not receive as much reproach—such as spiritual sins, which attach less reproach on the sinner in comparison to sins of the flesh, since the former are less visible to the public than the latter—or because they provide more temporal benefits to the person committing the sin, thus offsetting the feeling of shame. In this last case, he assumes that it is uncontroversial that one is more ashamed of cowardice than of daring and more ashamed of petty theft than of a major robbery[66]. This is because he sees the latter sins as offering more benefits to the person who commits them (ad 4).

In the same way that one may feel shame without necessity, one may also *lack* the feeling of shame when it is called for. Aquinas sees two reasons for shamelessness: either the acts that should produce shame are not viewed as disgraceful by the agent, or one apprehends the disgrace as something impossible for them to incur or easy to avoid (II.II.144.4). This is why, according to Aquinas, people who are steeped in sin, virtuous

[66] In II.II 66.3 and 4, both are contrary to justice, yet Aquinas distinguishes the two by defining theft as “taking another’s thing secretely” and robbery as taking another’s thing publicly and violently. Supposedly, the latter causes more shame because the financial benefit of committing robbery is usually greater. Kristanto interprets Aquinas as viewing the shame associated with power: “In a robbery, by which one takes away another’s property violently and openly, the robber looks more powerful or courageous in the eyes of others. On the contrary, in a theft, by which one takes another’s belonging secretly, the thief looks more weak or somewhat cowardly in the eyes of the others. Whereas there is more pride and less shame in robbery, in theft there is more shame and less pride” p. 92.

people, and the elderly are the groups of people who do not feel shame; the people most steeped in sin do not feel shame because of the first reason—they do not view their sin as disgraceful—while the virtuous and the elderly are devoid of shame because of the second reason—disgrace is seen as impossible or easy to avoid. Aquinas also notices that the degree of shame is intricately related to the people who serve as the audience of the base act. According to him, we are more liable to be made ashamed by persons closely connected with us since they are better acquainted with our deeds, whereas strangers, who are ignorant of what we do and who we are, inspire us with no shame at all. He also thinks the moral standing of the audience matters. That is, the wise and virtuous person is likely to provoke more shame because their opinion is weightier than that of an unwise or non-virtuous person. The two latter audiences are especially generative of shame because their opinion is much more likely to reflect a true assessment of the person's action.[67]

From this survey, we can conclude that Aquinas recognizes shame as an essentially praiseworthy self-assessing passion and, therefore, a virtue in a broad sense. It is essentially praiseworthy because it reveals the agent's love for what is good and avoidance of what is evil and it is followed by temperate acts. He also acknowledges the necessity of a disposition toward shame in the virtuous person, even if just

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[67] This is important for Aquinas because he makes a distinction between "(1) disgraceful things according to the truth (*turpia secundum veritatem*) and (2) disgraceful things according to opinion (*turpia secundum opinionem*)." Kristanto, p. 101. Though Aquinas believes shame can arise from both kinds of disgrace, truly disgraceful acts are the proper object of shame, and this kind of shame does not occur in the virtuous, while shame caused by disgrace according to other people's opinion can still occur in the virtuous. See *In Ps.* 43, n.8.

hypothetically, and in any human being. In the ordinary moral agent, the presence of a disposition toward shame is indicative of his or her love for good and benefits the agent by inspiring horror of disgraceful actions, disposing the agent to the virtue of temperance. In the next section, I will turn to the possibility of understanding shame as a Gift of the Holy Spirit. I will analyze this possibility through the lens of the theological virtue of hope and its corresponding Gift, 'fear of God.'

Shame as a Gift of the Holy Spirit

A cursory analysis of Aquinas's view of shame in the *Summa* would most likely result merely in a focus on shame before other humans. After all, there is little reference to *verecundia* or *erubescencia* felt before oneself or before God. The only explicit mention of the latter is found outside the *Summa*, in his commentary of Psalm 6:11, where the psalmist requests to God that all his enemies be ashamed and troubled. One interpretation that Aquinas gives to this passage is that his enemies should feel shame before other humans so that, eventually, this shame can be felt before God: "But the structure of this passage can be explained another way: in the beginning, someone is ashamed before the eyes of men, and then is sad, and avoids evil; in the end, he is ashamed before the eye of his reason and that of God" (*In Ps*. 6, n. 7). I believe this gap in the *Summa* can be partly explained by attention to the fact that Aquinas does not use only *verecundia* to refer to the phenomena of shame. One must keep in mind that he understands shame to be a kind of *fear* and, in some cases, the fear he discusses is well-aligned with his description of shame. In this case, henceforth, a certain kind of fear will be included in this survey, namely, the fear that Aquinas describes by the essential

characteristics of shame: fear of a past or future base act that brings reproach upon the agent, that fears both the evil of the base act and the judgment of the communal and/or divine audience, and that potentially leads the agent to improve his or her moral actions or habits—fear of God.

Aquinas wrote a question on fear in his broader discussion of the theological virtue of hope. Fear, here, is not the opposing vice of hope (that, for Aquinas, is the vice of despair), but hope's corresponding Gift of the Holy Spirit—the Gift of fear of God.[68] As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, Aquinas believes the Gifts derive from the theological virtues, each of the latter potentially giving rise to one of the former. Though the infused virtue of hope is essential for the perfection of human nature, the Gift of fear of God enhances a human being's perfection by aiding hope in its goal of union with God.

The kind of fear that interests Aquinas the most in this part of the *Summa*, and which is for him a Gift of the Holy Spirit, is one that includes God as part of its object. This is not the same as having God as its object absolutely, since this would make fear of God a theological virtue, which Aquinas strictly denies.[69] This is because the object of fear is always an evil, and no aspect of God's nature can be considered evil.[70] Aquinas,

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[68] It is clear that Aquinas wants to distinguish this kind of fear from the passion of fear ("Damascene divides fear as a passion of the soul: whereas this division of fear is taken from its relation to God, as explained above." II.II.19.2 ad 1). This distinction also has to do with the one I extensively alluded to in the first section—between fear as a passion and fear as an affection.

[69] When explaining the differences between theological virtues and Gifts, he notes: "Consequently some have held that the gifts are not to be distinguished from the virtues. But there remains no less a difficulty for them to solve; for they must explain why some virtues are called gifts and some not; and why among the gifts there are some, fear, for instance, that are not reckoned virtues" (I.II.68.1).

[70] He repeats this objection more clearly in II.II.19.9 ad 2: "The proper and principal object of fear is the evil shunned, and in this way, as stated above (Article 1), God cannot be an object of fear."

then, needs to qualify what he means when stating that God can be *part* of the object of fear. He does this by comparing the object of hope and the object of fear, since "God is the object of both hope and fear, but under different aspects":

> Just as hope has two objects, one of which is the future good itself, that one expects to obtain, while the other is someone's help, through whom one expects to obtain what one hopes for, so, too, fear may have two objects, one of which is the very evil which a man shrinks from, while the other is that from which the evil may come. Accordingly, in the first way God, who is goodness itself, cannot be an object of fear; but He can be an object of fear in the second way, insofar as there may come to us some evil either from Him or in relation to Him. (II.II.19.1)

Though God is not evil, as Aquinas clearly points out, the punishment or guilt that arise as the consequence of transgressing God's will is evil to the human agent. This kind of evil, he notes, is only *relatively* evil, but *absolutely* good (II.II.19.1). Generally speaking, the moral and spiritual outcomes of the passion of fear are indeterminate. Fear might lead one to do what is good or evil, spiritually laudable or not. However, fear *of God*—which includes God as its object and derives from the theological virtue of hope—is morally and spiritually good, for it leads the agent to shun evil behaviors out of fear of the consequent punishment and/or separation from God and "turn to God and adhere to Him" (II.II.19.2).

With this in mind, I would like to argue that shame, in the *Secunda Secundae*, appears not only within the context of temperance, as a kind of moral virtue, but also among the Gifts of the Holy Spirit under the rubric of filial fear of God. However, because of its particular object, this kind of shame is what I will be calling "spiritual shame." That is, fear of God is a disposition to feel the affection of shame throughout one's intimate spiritual journey with God—a fear of God's reproach in response to sinful

behavior and human sinful nature. In order to defend this thesis, we must analyze some of the characteristics of this virtuous fear that has God as part of its object.

There are, for Aquinas, two potential candidates for the species of fear infused by the Holy Spirit: servile fear or filial fear. Servile fear is fear of the evil of punishment (*malum poenae*), and is based on the power relation that exists between God and humans—God being far superior in might and knowledge and thus being capable of penalizing the human as God sees fit. Filial fear, on the other hand, is fear of the evil of culpability (*malum culpae*) and the natural separation between the sinner and God provoked by sin or the sinful nature.[71] Since Aquinas agrees with Augustine that "fear is born of love, since man fears the loss of what he loves," he contends that servile fear results from a love for the goods that might be lost through punishment and filial fear is born of love of the human for God (II.II.19.3).[72] The object of the love that produces each

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[71] Aquinas never properly defines *culpae* in the *Summa*. From the scattered information he gives, he seems to understand it as some kind of natural distancing from God provoked by a sin—"the aversion of the mind from God" (III.86.5). This culpability is attached to the sinner because of the evil of the sin itself. If *culpae* results from a venial sin, it can be pardoned through grace and penance (temporal punishment). If attached to the sinner as a result of a mortal sin, it cannot be pardoned, but warrants eternal punishment. In *De Malo*, the definition is clearer: "Guilt is the evil of the action itself (*culpa est malum ipsius actiones*)" *DM* I, a. 4, co.
One of the ways *culpae* has been translated is 'guilt.' I avoid this translation here because of its double meaning in the modern English language. One definition has to do with a negative emotion or feeling of culpability for performing an action that is perceived (by the agent) as wrong. The second has to do with the very fact that one has committed wrongdoing, synonymous with guiltiness or culpability (and, in many *Summa* translations, *fault*). Aquinas's *culpae* is more in line with the second definition. For this reason, I will not take up any space to discuss the modern distinction (of which Aquinas is not even aware) between shame and guilt. For more on *malum culpae* and Aquinas's two-fold understanding of the nature of sin (*culpae and poenae*), including Aquinas's analysis of it in *De Malo*, see Romanos Cassario, *The Godly Image: Christ and Salvation in Catholic Thought from Anselm to Aquinas* (Petersham, MA: St Bede's Publication, 2002).

[72] In Aquinas's commentary of Aristotle's views on courage, he agrees with Aristotle in deeming the courage that arises from shame of punishment less praiseworthy than the courage that arises from shame of disgrace for shame of disgrace indicates knowledge and desire for what is good. This, I think, is analogous to his preference for filial fear of God over servile fear of God: "This fortitude of the citizen is practiced through shame or fear of the disgraceful, inasmuch as someone flees disgrace,

kind of fear determines its praiseworthiness. Fear born from love for God[73], and its concomitant yearning for union with God, makes filial fear not only praiseworthy, but indeed a Gift of the Holy Spirit. Though fear of punishment (servile fear) does not exclude the possibility of love for God, it is not a necessary condition for fear of God's punishment.[74]

My argument does not hinge on which kind of fear best represents the Gift of fear of God, for both kinds fit well with what I want to call "spiritual shame."[75] For example, both servile fear of God and shame fear the future evil of punishment if we understand divine reproach as a kind of punishment for sin.[76] Furthermore, both filial fear of God and shame fear alienation from the audience that testifies to the sin. However, it is easy to see how servile fear does not perfectly fit the category of shame, for it is not limited to fear of divine reproach. That is, one can fear other kinds of punishment, such as physical pain and eternal death. Filial fear of God, on the other hand, is more closely analogous to

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and through a desire of the good or honorable insofar as this fortitude seeks honor, which is the testimony of goodness. For this reason he [Aristotle] adds an explanation that fortitude of this sort is motivated by honor and avoidance of opprobrium, which is the disgraceful. Since then honor is a thing near to an honorable good, and blame to the disgraceful, it follows that this fortitude is close to real fortitude, which seeks what is honorable and flees from what is shameful. Then, at 'Those who,' he indicates the second kind of civic fortitude that is practiced on account of punishment. He says that those who are brave, because compelled by the fear of punishments inflicted by rulers of the state, can be assigned the same type of civic fortitude. They are, however, inferior to the previously mentioned insofar as they do not act bravely on account of the shame of disgrace but on account of fear of punishment" (*Sent. Ethica* Lib 3, L. 16).

[73] He compares filial fear with the fear of a son toward his father, while comparing servile fear with the fear of a servant toward his master (II.II.19.2 ad 3).

[74] Aquinas leaves open the possibility of servile fear being praiseworthy or even virtuous (II.II.19.4).

[75] Here, I am using the definition of *verecundia* in the *Secunda Secundae* that combines the fear of both future and past base actions. This combination will prove important in what follows, since fear of God does not only regard past sins, but also future *possible* sins. Therefore, if one were to identify fear of the Lord with *verecundia* as defined solely in the treatise on the passions, I believe it would not be entirely successful.

[76] Aquinas seems to think so in Suppl. III 87.2 ad 3.

the emotion of shame for, like shame, it is the combination of two characteristics: 1) *fear of disgrace* resulting from wrongdoing that manifests itself in terms of culpability and its consequent separation from God and 2) the disgrace is in the opinion of an *audience* which, in the case of fear of God, is God himself. Furthermore, fear of God, like shame, is a kind of fear that produces positive results in the life of the sojourner. In fact, Aquinas, following Augustine, relates the Gift of fear of God with the fruit of poverty of the spirit:

> Poverty of spirit properly corresponds to fear. Because, since it belongs to filial fear to show reverence and submission to God, whatever results from this submission belongs to the gift of fear. Now from the very fact that a man submits to God, it follows that he ceases to seek greatness either in himself or in another but seeks it only in God... It follows that if a man fear God perfectly, he does not, by pride, seek greatness either in himself or in external goods, viz. honors and riches. (II.II.19.12)

While shame before other humans, for Aquinas, usually results in moral improvement, filial fear approaches the human agent to God and produces reverence and humility.[77] In reality, filial fear does not simply *produce* humility and submission, these are part of the very *nature* of filial fear. By fearing God as superior to oneself and the only being worthy of great honor, the human naturally deflates their self-evaluation and sees clearly their status of inferiority and unworthiness of great honor. Therefore, while shame before humans results in temperate acts, shame before God results in right (in this case right means inferior) self-assessment, which precludes the vice of pride, and placement of glory and honor where glory and honor are due: in God.

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[77] I have stated this last piece of evidence very modestly. Because Aquinas does not speak directly of a 'spiritual' kind of shame, the only evidence of a positive result of shame are what we find in his discussion of shame as a moral passion. I suspect, however, that he would also agree that shame of God, stemming from the theological virtue of hope, results in a greater attraction of the human to God.

Despite Aquinas's praise of fear of God, he clearly points out that it is the last item on the list of Gifts of the Holy Spirit[78], as if wanting to emphasize his discomfort with the presence of a negative emotion. Nonetheless, it is there. Why, then, does Aquinas deny shame's full-blown place as an acquired virtue in his list of virtues of temperance, but allows fear of God as a Gift of the Holy Spirit, which is higher up in his hierarchy of human principles? One could argue that Aquinas is simply cow-towing to the intellectual and religious authorities he follows so closely—following Aristotle in his denial that shame is a virtue of temperance, and following the Bible and Augustine in his inclusion of fear of God in the list of Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This option, however, is unlikely given what we know of Aquinas's "free spirit" when confronted with popular ideas with which he disagrees. Another option, which does not exclude the first, is that Aquinas is simply following the logic of definitions. While moral virtues are acquired habits[79], some of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are habitual affections initiated by the Holy Spirit. In this way, passions such as fear in general, and shame more specifically, cannot be developed into habits by one's own will power and habituation, but affections *can* be dispositions infused by the Holy Spirit, moving one to consistently feel them—possibly by instilling in us love for God, which in turn moves us to fear being apart from God. Also crucial to this difference in virtue attribution is that, by definition, fear of God is in

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[78] Although, in Question 19.12, he holds that fear is in first place among the Gifts, chronologically speaking.

[79] There is much debate regarding the issue of infused moral virtues, which I am setting to a side in this dissertation. For more on infused moral virtues and the possibility of Aquinas considering all the moral virtues in the *Secunda Secundae* as infused moral virtues see Lombardo, p. 127-138.

relation to God, who is worthy of producing fear[80], and not to objects that should not, in reality, produce fear. That is, fear of God is an ordinate fear for it has a specific object that accords with reason: separation from the source of life and love. Finally, fear of God necessarily occurs as a result of a correct assessment of one's lowliness, unworthiness and blame, not as a result of an incorrect self-assessment. When qualifying this emotion in these ways, shame, understood under the rubric of fear of God, cannot be a moral virtue, but it can be a Gift of the Holy Spirit.

To emphasize further Aquinas's positive view of spiritual shame (under the rubric of 'fear of God'), I will turn to his discussion about this affection in the blessed in heaven. If a virtue or trait is believed to be maintained among the blessed in heaven, it is a sign that, for Aquinas, it transcends the human body and earthly circumstances, and, therefore, is among the most ideal and is part of the supernaturally perfected human nature. In Question 19.11, Aquinas once again restrains his opinions about fear of God within the confines of biblical passages. Psalm 18:10 states that "The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring forever and ever," which leads Aquinas to maintain that it must be a Gift that persists in heaven.[81] Aquinas is very unclear about the exact kind of feeling that will persist in heaven though he is adamant that it must, minimally, be a kind of filial fear. This is because the blessed are safe from any kind of punishment and, therefore, it is impossible that they feel the servile kind of fear. Filial fear, on the other hand, derives

[80] Again, Aquinas does not consider God himself to be the object of fear of God, for God is not evil, but the evil consequences that follow from culpability of sin before God.

[81] If there were any need for further evidence to categorize fear of God as an affection, and not a passion, its presence in the blessed is a very solid one.

from love for God and this love will only be greater in heaven. The evil object that gives rise to this kind of fear, however, is slightly different in heaven. Understood more broadly, fear of God is fear of the evil of non-subjection to God. However, this evil, while possible on earth, is impossible in heaven (II.II.19.11). How, then, will fear of God endure in heaven? He answers this question by comparing fear and hope: "Hope implies a certain defect, namely the futurity of happiness, which ceases when happiness is present: whereas fear implies a natural defect in a creature, in so far as it is infinitely distant from God, and this defect will remain even in heaven. Hence fear will not be cast out altogether" (II.II.19.11 ad 3). In contrast to his view of shame in the blessed, fear of God will not remain only hypothetically in the blessed. Nonetheless, similarly to shame, the evil object of the fear of God is slightly modified in heaven. What the blessed fear is not the evil of culpability from sinful actions, but fear of the incommensurability between God's nature and human nature. This fear, then, is not a state of retreat from an evil, but a state of attraction to a good. This feeling, Aquinas notes, looks a lot more like awe than fear for the blessed "wonder at God's supereminence and incomprehensibility." (II.II.19.11)[82]

If fear of God (the filial kind) can be interpreted as a kind of shame (the spiritual

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[82] This association between shame and awe harkens back to ancient Greek literature, where some authors made a distinction between *aischune* as referring to shame as disgrace for moral violations and *aidos* as referring to shame as awe and reverence. This distinction, according to Kristanto, continues onto other languages, such as the distinction between the Latin *foedus* and *pudor*, the Italian *vergogna* and *pudore*, and French *honte* and *pudeur*. See Kristanto, p. 18; T. J. Scheff, "Shame in Social Theory" in M. R. Lansky and A. P. Morrison (eds.), *The Widening Scope of Shame* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Analytics Press, 1997), p. 209; Kurt Reizler, "Comment on the Social Psychology of Shame" in *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 48, No. 4 (Jan. 1943): 463-464. As we have seen in chapter one, Cairns argues that this distinction had disappeared by the time of Aristotle.

kind), then there are many more connections that can be added to our understanding of shame. I will highlight only three: 1) the relation between shame and hope; 2) the relation between shame and pride; 3) the relation between shame and wisdom.

Aquinas places his analysis of fear of God within the confines of his discussion of the theological virtue of hope. The connection between them, for Aquinas, is two-fold. First, ordinate fear of God after committing some wrong is accompanied by hope to obtain God's help. Therefore, "filial fear and hope cling together, and perfect one another" (II.II.19.9 ad 1). The second connection is very much in line with the first. Aquinas notes that the two affections (fear and hope) stem from different facets of God's nature. God's justice gives rise to fear, while God's mercy elicits hope (II.II.19.9 ad 2). Again, Aquinas believes that the sojourner must be imbued with knowledge of both of God's attributes and respond with both affections in order to arrive at the perfect harmony between contrition and joy. In the same way, spiritual shame is only a Gift of the Holy Spirit if it is in partnership with hope of God's mercy and forgiveness.[83] This point will become clearer in our analysis of shame within the context of confession.

While shame's relation to hope is (or should be) one of perfect complementarity and reciprocity, spiritual shame and pride are opposites. Quoting Sirach 10:14 ("the beginning of the pride of man is to fall off from God"), Aquinas shows the antithetical nature of these two affections: shame of God (or filial fear) submits to God and pride refuses submission to God (II.II.19.9 ad 4). Additionally, while spiritual shame creates

[83] I must point out that this is almost exactly the same thing al-Ghazali says on the topic, as we have seen in the previous chapter.

attraction between the human agent and God, pride creates aversion.[84] Therefore, because of their direct opposition, the Gift of spiritual shame helps eliminate pride.[85]

Finally, Aquinas points to the relation between spiritual shame and wisdom, which is, as with hope, one of complementarity. Quoting the Psalmist "fear is the beginning of wisdom," Aquinas argues that fear is the first step of true wisdom. This wisdom has to do not only with knowledge of God, but with directing human conduct in accord with human and Divine law. For Aquinas, fear is the beginning of wisdom in regard to its effects (II.II.19.7). More specifically, he considers filial fear "the first effect of wisdom" for wisdom presupposes filial fear: "man must first of all fear God and submit himself to Him: for the result will be that in all things he will be ruled by God."[86] Once again, Aquinas shows how fear of God (*aka* spiritual shame) is an essential emotion for the maturation of the Christian throughout his or her earthly journey.

In this section, I have shown that, as a fear of culpability, alienation, separation, and non-submission that arises from filial love for God, the Gift of fear of God is interchangeable with the phenomenon of 'spiritual shame.' If my argument for this substitution is convincing, then shame in this particular definition is much more than a passion or a pseudo-acquired virtue, but a Gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed to move the

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[84] These are just a few of the connections between shame and pride in Aquinas. In the second section of this chapter, I will point to many more.

[85] One of the ways it does so, as we will see in the section on pride, is by underscoring human fallibility and defects, thus aiding in the development of the virtue of humility.

[86] He also notes that fear of God—in my interpretation, spiritual shame— might result in the vice of despair instead of leading the agent toward God and virtue. When contemplating one's sin, fear of God might make one feel helpless in the face of God's reproach (II.II.20.1). However, in this case, the fear of God is no longer a Gift of the Holy Spirit since, as I have noted, proper fear of the Lord must result from and be influenced by the theological virtue of hope.

agent toward God and the hope of forgiveness and salvation. As I will show in chapter four, understanding shame before God as a Gift of the Holy Spirit is valuable because 1) it indicates Aquinas's depiction of shame as a required *religious* emotion (in both the social and metaphysical sense of religious emotion); and 2) it places Aquinas among the religious thinkers who might want to downplay the emotion of shame felt before humans, but who underscore the importance of this emotion before God. This Gift is necessarily connected with hope of God's mercy, it opposes pride, leading one to submit and revere God and is the starting point of true wisdom. If spiritual shame is a Gift of the Holy Spirit that directs one to a more intimate relationship with God, how exactly, for Aquinas, is this seen in practice in the life of the sojourner? This is the topic I address below.

Shame in action

Though *verecundia* shows up in passing in other contexts of the *Summa* (II.II.32.10; II.II.66.9; II.II.73.4; II.II.187.5), there are a few places that showcase Aquinas's practical applications of this emotion in the life of the sojourner, especially relating it to acts of devotion and demonstrations of piety. In this section, I will lay out his views of shame as an inherent part of the act of confession.

Shame as an aid in confession

In the rite of confession of sins, Aquinas resists the idea that *verecundia* is the cause of confession. He argues that, instead of causing confession, shame actually tends to "hinder the act of confession" (Suppl. III.7.3 ad 2). Rather, "the hope of pardon" is the cause of confession. Nonetheless, the feeling of shame functions as one of the punishments for the sin committed and, therefore, as a "delivery" from other forms of

punishment.

In Supp. III.10.2, once again Aquinas points to shame as one of the intrinsic punishments of sin—it "has the punishment of sin attached to it." Confession "diminishes the punishment" for sin, and thus helps reduce not only other types of external punishment (such as atoning deeds, prayers, time in purgatory, etc.), but also decreases the shame felt by the sinner. In sum, shame serves as a two-way street; it is a natural aid to the Church by providing one of the punishments that helps absolve one's sin and it is an aid to the sinner, relieving them from other kinds of punishments. Confession, on the other hand, is a practice that gives the agent the appropriate space to relieve their shame through verbal communication of its source.[87]

Despite denying shame as a cause of confession in Question 7, Aquinas includes *verecundia* in the list of sixteen necessary *conditions* for confession ("simple, humble,

[87] Aquinas, in turn, categorizes confession as one of the acts of the virtue of penance (Suppl. III.7.2 and 3), which is a species of the virtue of justice (III.85.3). Shame and penance share some characteristics: they both include some sort of passion toward an evil act, they both originate from fear of reproach, and Aquinas seems to think that they both are likely to result in a change in behavior or, at the very least, search for atonement. Though Aquinas recognizes that penance can be simply understood as a passion of sorrow, and, therefore, not a virtue, the differences between penance and shame can shed light into the reasons why penance is a full-fledged virtue and shame is not. I have mentioned these differences in this section, but they bear repeating. First, and perhaps most importantly, is that penance includes, in its very definition, a purpose to amend the sin committed. Shame, on the other hand, does not necessarily include such a purpose in its definition. The second distinction has to do with the underlying passion of shame and penance. While shame refers to a kind of fear, penance is a kind of sorrow. As is the case when differentiating one passion from another, what must come into view is the object. According to Aquinas, the object of fear is an external difficult future evil, while the object of sorrow is "one's own evil" (I.II.35.8) and a present evil at that (I.II.42.3 ad 2). More specifically, shame fears future reproach, while penance involves sorrows for past sin. Aquinas places shame under the rubric of temperance because it helps lead the agent toward restraint and moderation for fear of receiving reproach for an intemperate action. He places penance under the rubric of justice because it leads the agent to, sorrowful for past sins, seek to "make some kind of compensation...on the part of the ofender…[and] retribution...on the part of the person offended against" (III.85.3). Because the present evil of penance is relieved by atonement and confession, the evil for which the agent feels sorrow is no longer present.

pure, faithful, frequent, undisguised, discreet, voluntary, shamefaced [*verecunda*], entire, secret, tearful, not delayed, courageously accusing, ready to obey" Suppl. III.9.4). This leads him to add another role for shame in confession: confession "takes its origin in the horror which one conceives for the shamefulness (*turpitudinis*) of sin, and in this respect confession should be 'full of shame' (*verecunda*) so as not to be a boastful account of one's sins, by reason of some worldly vanity accompanying it." Shame, therefore, is not only part of the punishment for sin and a condition for heartfelt confession, but it also serves as a motivation for confession, since it underscores the horror of the sin committed. While shame can certainly diminish the integrity of confession by impeding one from telling the whole truth, and thus affecting the 'courageous' condition mentioned above[88], it holds a vital role as a motivator for confession. Elsewhere, Aquinas further develops this role of shame by arguing that the presence of shame in the sinner is one of the most telling signs that they are willing to repent and receive amendment for their sin.[89]

[88] "The fourth condition is that one should act immovably, and in this respect it is said that confession should be 'courageous,' viz. that the truth should not be forsaken through shame."
[89] "In sins one must consider whether the sin is entirely secret, or whether it has come to the knowledge of others, or whether it is visible so that it does. For if the sin has already come to others' notice, then the sinner must be denounced to someone who has the power of correcting him, so that those who have been scandalized by his fault may be edified by his punishment. But if it has not yet come out into public, but is in the process of doing so, then he should also be denounced, so that future scandal may be countered. But if it is entirely secret, then one should consider whether the amendment of the sinner can be probably hoped for or not, which one can easily notice if one considers whether he sinned by his choice or by a passion, or out of malice or weakness, which is the same thing. Indeed, this can be assessed by the condition of the sinner, and the repetition of the act. For if someone has fallen into a certain sin often and unchecked by any restraint, it is a sign that he sins from malice or choice, and he will not easily be amended. But if once, when the occasion of sinning was presented, he slipped into sin and afterward showed sadness and shame for his sin, it is a sign that the sin is from passion or weakness, and that he will be amended more easily." (Sent. Lib. 4, D. 19, Q. 2, A. 3, response to question 1) Furthermore, in his commentary on Psalm 6:11, he states

In sum, Aquinas sees shame as a vital emotion for the success of one of Christianity's most central rites—the confession of sins. He sees it as a motivator, a necessary condition, and one of the penances for the act of confession as well as a sign of honesty and willingness to change.

Summary

In this second section, I have shown that, in the treatise on the passions, Aquinas considers shame a passion of the irascible part of the soul—a fear of future disgrace for the performance of base acts. From his discussion on shame in the treatise, I have concluded that the passion is one that depends on the social eye for its genesis in the soul and that it is an essentially praiseworthy passion because of its indication of love for good in the agent and a motivator for moral improvement. In my analysis of shame in the *Secunda Secundae*, I have shown that Aquinas adds to the original object of shame (future reproach) the object of the base act *per se,* thus making it more clearly a self-assessing emotion. Therefore, shame is not only fear of *reproach* for a past or future base act, but also fear of the base act *itself*. I have argued that this slightly modified definition of shame's object allows Aquinas to consider shame an integral part of the virtue of temperance, for it serves as an indicator of the agent's love for good, not just an externally produced fear for loss of reputation, and as an impediment to intemperate acts. Subsequently, I compared the nature, object and consequences of shame before God with the Gift of the Holy Spirit 'fear of God,' concluding that the two can be understood

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that "shame is the beginning and end of amendment" (*Est autem erubescentia principium et finis emendationis*) *In Ps*. 6, n.41.

interchangeably. As such, shame before God can be construed as a habitual affection of the will that is fundamental in the spiritual life of the sojourner, both in the perfecting, earthly stage, and in the perfected stage. Therefore, though shame before humans is considered a passion that falls short of a virtue, shame before God is more than a virtue—it is a Gift of the Holy Spirit. And, finally, I outlined one of the ways that Aquinas sees shame working in the practical lives of the believer. Aquinas thought that shame was not only a necessary condition for a legitimate confession of sins, but that it was also a large part of one's punishment for the sin committed (penance). In sum, I have argued that shame is an essentially social and religious self assessing emotion that approaches the agent to the perfection of human nature as well as to union with God in the beatific vision.

C. Aquinas on Pride

Aquinas does not make explicit connections between shame and pride. Nonetheless, several shared characteristics create the link between them in his work. Broadly speaking, they are both: 1) inherently social emotions—their origin requires an audience; 2) emotions that originate from self-assessment; and 3) emotions that are described as a virtue (shame) and vice (pride) of temperance. In addition to these, the shared characteristic that will be most prominent in this section is their integral relationship to (either enhancing or diminishing) the success of one's spiritual journey toward the beatific vision. By making these emotions either a moral aid to the believer in achieving greater closeness to God (shame) or a moral inhibitor, creating greater distance from God (pride), Aquinas implicitly places them within a more specific category of

religious emotions. He presents pride as a negative religious affect in much stronger ways than he presents shame as a positive religious affect given pride's position not only as a sin and vice among others, but as the most prominent and primal of all.

In this section, I will start by giving a broad definition of pride, which will lead us into a discussion of pride as both a passion of the soul and an affection of the will in the *Summa*. This dual location of pride will be important to explain how Aquinas understands it both as a passion and as a vice (disposition). To understand the clear negative valence of this emotion in Aquinas's work, I will briefly show his reasons for depicting it as the beginning and first of all sins and vices. Despite this negative valence of a positive self-assessment that goes against reason, I will show how Aquinas leaves room for the Aristotelian virtue of magnanimity which, as we will see, should be the ordinate version of pride. However, I will point out that Aquinas actually describes this virtue in very different ways, clearly modifying the positive self-assessment part of Aristotle's *megalopsychia* as well as his focus on honor, creating a version much more amenable to the virtue of humility and generosity. Next, I will explore the vices that oppose magnanimity, which Aquinas calls pride's daughter: vainglory. An analysis of this vice will serve to show the particularly socially-reliant version of pride. Finally, I will explore the ways in which Aquinas saw pride in practice in day to day life. In the examples I will give, Aquinas notices that pride results from internal defects of self-assessment rather than external forces such as titles and honor and that Dominican rituals and practices such as vigils, fasting, and mendicancy are efficacious to subdue pride.

Aquinas describes pride as a movement of the irascible faculty. This is because

pride strives to attain a difficult good, namely, excellence (*excellentia*). The prideful person's drive toward excellence, however, is defective, for it is an "inordinate desire to excel" (I.II.84.2).[90] He explains this better noting that "all excellence results from a good possessed" (II.II.162.4), yet the prideful person exaggerates or lies about the good possessed, "aiming higher than he is" (II.II.162.1), and thus opposes right reason.[91] One opposes right reason in reference to excellence when he desires, or "tends to," this good as coming from oneself (with no divine assistance), as having been received by one's own merit, as being possessed when it is actually not, or as being greater than what is actually possessed (II.II.162.4).[92] Aquinas supplements his definition of pride with another feature—the proud person has an incorrect positive self-assessment: "he esteems himself greater than he is: and this is the outcome of an inordinate desire for his own excellence, since a man is ready to believe what he desires very much, the result being that his appetite is borne towards things higher than what become him" (II.II.161.3 ad 2). Thus, the vice of pride is a combination of appetite and evaluation, one *desires* against reason and one *evaluates* oneself against reason—the latter, for Aquinas, is a natural outcome of the former. As a vice of the irascible faculty, he categorizes it as a vice that opposes the virtue of temperance.

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[90] As we will see below, it is a vice that opposes the virtue of humility and magnanimity, which are virtues of the irascible faculty. Pride, therefore, is one of the inordinate versions of our striving for goods that are difficult to get.

[91] Aquinas briefly mentions Augustine's more specific definition of pride—"desire for inordinate exaltation"—but, for reasons that will become apparent later in this section, he opts for maintaining that which the prideful desire more broadly construed.

[92] Michael Foley makes the astute observation that "the first two betray a loss of self-knowledge while the last two reflect a perverse and ultimately disingenuous love of excellence." "Thomas Aquinas's Novel Modesty" *History of Political Thought*, 25(3) (2004): 407. More on this below.

Pride as a passion and an affection

At face value, it would seem that Aquinas classifies pride as a passion, since he describes it as a movement of desire in the irascible faculty of the soul (I.II.84.2). This is further evidenced by his recognition of certain bodily transmutations that occur when one is feeling pride. He mentions three physical signs of pride. First, he alludes to the prideful person's eyes, borrowing from the Psalmist's idea that "lofty eyes are a sign of pride" (II.II.161.2 ad 1). Such physical characteristic of pride, for Aquinas, has to do with the very definition of pride: pride being the inordinate desire to excel, the eyes of the proud follow one's desire in looking upwards.[93] Furthermore, since the prideful persons do not feel fear or respect, they do not feel compelled to lower their eyes. This characteristic is in perfect contrast to the physical signs of shame, given that shame is a specie of fear, and that "fearing and respectful persons are especially wont to lower the eyes, as though not daring to compare themselves with others" (II.II.161.2 ad 1). Second, he mentions the physical sign evident in one's neck. In his comments of the Isaianic condemnation of proud people, he follows Isaiah and Job's characterization of them as those who stretch up their necks: "[H]e denounces the sign of pride in the body: they have walked with stretched out necks, which is a sign of pride: he hath run against him with his neck raised up, and is armed with a fat neck (Job 15:26)" (Super Isaiam, chapter 3, lecture 3, 116). Again, the stretched neck is an indicator of one's intention: to reach higher than what is reasonable. And third, he mentions the effects of pride on one's chest. In his commentary

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[93] Commenting on a biblical passage, where the author warns the proud that their eyes will be humbled, he notes: "And he says, eyes, because pride consists in this, that a man raises his gaze to things that are greater than his proportion." Super Psalmo 17

of the beatitudes in Matthew 5, more specifically of “Blessed are the poor of spirit,” one of his interpretations for the word ‘spirit’ is pride, following Augustine’s interpretation: “For sometimes ‘spirit’ refers to man’s pride: ‘Turn away from a man whose breath is in his nostrils, for of what account is he?’ (Is 2:22); it is called pride, because as wineskins are inflated with air, so men by pride: ‘Puffed up by his sensuous mind’ (Col 2:18). Therefore, Blessed are the poor, i.e., those who have little of the spirit of pride” (Super Mat. Cap 5).[94] Given that one of the meanings of ‘spirit’ is wind, or air, Aquinas notes that the proud often puff up their chest.[95]

Despite evidence for seeing pride as a passion, it does not explicitly appear in the treatise on the passions, and Aquinas treats it primarily as an affection throughout the *Summa*. Pride is, in fact, one of the cases (along with envy) of what Nicholas Lombardo describes as “vicious affectivity [that] encompasses affections of the will as well as passions of the soul.”[96] Though Lombardo names pride as one of the vices that can be located in two places and, giving some arguments for this dual locus, he does not go into details regarding possible reasons why Aquinas allows this in the specific case of pride.[97]

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[94] Further along the commentary of ‘Blessed are the poor of spirit,’ Aquinas argues that those who obey this beatitude manifest the gift of fear of God: “Note also, according to Augustine, that this beatitude pertains to the gift of fear, because fear, particularly filial, makes one have reverence for God and, as a result, a man despises riches.” This contrast between pride and fear of God (or spiritual shame) is further evidence of the contrast I am making between the two.

[95] Despite the external signs of pride, Aquinas also makes it clear that it is often undetected by other people, which is why it was not directly prohibited in the Decalogue: “Pride is the beginning of sin, but it lies hidden in the heart; and its inordinateness is not perceived by all in common. Hence there was no place for its prohibition among the precepts of the Decalogue, which are like first self-evident principles” (II.II.170.2). This makes sense in light of what we will see below—that pride may also be an affection and, therefore, is not necessarily tied to bodily movements.

[96] Lombardo, p. 193.

[97] Commenting on Aquinas’s description of some vices as affections *and* as passions, Lombardo writes, “This ambiguity seems deliberate. It seems Aquinas wants to invoke the general category of affectivity without committing himself to a particular appetite, either because he wants to imply that

I believe Aquinas gives us such reasons. In what follows, I will give three reasons why Aquinas is compelled to describe pride as both a vicious passion and a vicious affection.

Aquinas brings up the sin of *superbia* for the first time in I.63.2, where the greater context is a discussion about the sin of demons—its nature and origin. If pride were *only* described as a passion, it would be difficult to understand how it was the first sin to originate among rebellious angels. As we have noted extensively in the first section of this chapter, passions, for Aquinas, are movements of the sensitive appetite of the soul and since angels do not have souls, they cannot have passions. In order to explain how the rebellious angels might have felt pride, Aquinas utilizes the category of affection. He describes pride, in this case, as an affection of the will which denies subjugation to a superior being:

> Sin can exist in a subject in two ways: first of all by actual guilt, and secondly by affection. As to guilt, all sins are in the demons; since by leading men to sin they incur the guilt of all sins. But as to affection only those sins can be in the demons which can belong to a spiritual nature. Now a spiritual nature cannot be affected by such pleasures as appertain to bodies [passions], but only by such as are in keeping with spiritual things; because nothing is affected except with regard to something which is in some way suited to its nature. But there can be no sin when anyone is incited to good of the spiritual order; unless in such affection the rule of the superior be not kept. Such is precisely the sin of pride—not to be subject to a superior when subjection is due. Consequently the first sin of the angel can be none other than pride. (I.63.2)

Since the angels cannot fall into any of the carnal sins for lack of a sensitive

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the vice involves both appetites, or because he is hesitant to decide which sort of appetitive movements are more characteristic of a particular vice. In any case, the category of affection allows for the possibility of vicious affectivity that is not intrinsically bound to our animal nature, and thus enables Aquinas to discuss the affective dimension of specific vices without being committed to locating them in the passions." p. 193

appetite that would move them toward such sins, the sins that led to the rebellion of the angels must have been the result of an inordinate appetite of the will. For Aquinas, those were pride and envy. Therefore, the first reason for Aquinas to characterize pride as both passion and affection is to be able to account for the emotion of pride in both humans and angels.

The second reason for Aquinas to characterize pride as both passion and affection has to do with the varying objects of the emotion. Again, the object of pride, that is, that which is perceived and which initiates the movement in the soul, is excellence. For Aquinas, the viciousness of pride is not derived from its proper object, but from the manner in which this object is desired (II.II.162.2 ad 4), namely, inordinately.[98] Excellence, Aquinas notes, can be found in many different kinds of things. Generally speaking, it can be derived from sensible objects and spiritual objects. When Aquinas locates pride in the irascible faculty, in Question 162.3, he deals with the biggest objection to this position: if there are objects of pride that are not material objects that can be perceived through sensible cognition, which then produce the reaction in the sensitive appetite, then how can it be located in the irascible faculty of the soul? He solves this problem by explaining that there are two kinds of irascible faculties: one in the sensitive appetite, and one in the intellective appetite.

> ...if the difficult thing which is the object of pride, were merely some sensible object, whereto the sensitive appetite might tend, pride would have to be in the irascible which is part of the sensitive appetite. But since the difficult thing which pride has in view is common both to sensible and to spiritual things, we must needs say that the subject of pride is the

[98] That Aquinas does not deny that striving toward excellence is good is evidenced in the project of the *Prima Secundae* as a whole, and in the virtue of magnanimity, as we will see, in particular.

> irascible not only strictly so called, as a part of the sensitive appetite, but also in its wider acceptation, as applicable to the intellective appetite. Wherefore pride is ascribed also to the demons. (II.II.162.3) [99]

As we have seen in the previous section, the same logic applies to fear (or shame) as a Gift of the Holy Spirit—it goes from being understood merely as a passion in the sensitive appetite to an affection in the intellective appetite. Though pride's general object is inordinate excellence, the exact locus of the origin of pride (whether in the soul or in the will) depends on the particular kind of excellent object. Elsewhere, Aquinas points to four species of pride: when someone considers that what he has is not given from God; when a person thinks they have received something from God, but only as a result of their own merits; when someone boasts having what they do not have and when a person looks down on others, considering him or herself the only possessors of some good.[100] Now, all of these may have their origin in both sensible objects, such as when one is proud of their accumulated wealth while ignoring the fact that it was a gift from God, and in spiritual objects[101], such as when one is prideful of their fasts or of their

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[99] Oddly, Aquinas had previously denied a distinction between concupiscible and irascible in the intellective appetite in I.82.5. In fact, in *De Virtutibus*, Aquinas addresses the mistaken idea that *all* sins are in the will, because they depend on consent of the person's will, giving the example of pride as one that does not originate in the will: "It should be said that every sin is in the will as in its cause insofar as every sin comes about by consent of the will, but it is not necessary that every sin be in the will as in its subject: Gluttony and dissipation are in the concupiscible, and pride is in the irascible." (DVI article 5, ad 10) This, it seems to me, is a contradiction that cannot be harmonized within Aquinas's *Summa*.

[100] See ST II.II.162.4 and Super I Cor. 4:6-13.

[101] This is corroborated by Aquinas's commentary of I Cor. 4:6-13: "To understand this it should be noted that some sins do not end in carnal delight, but only in spiritual, and are then called spiritual sins; for example, pride, greed and spiritual apathy." This spiritual pride is different from boasting *for* God. Aquinas thinks that boasting for God is not pride, but humility: "This is the way the first form of pride expresses itself, namely, when a person, taking pride in what he has, says that he has it of himself, as Ps 12 (v. 4): 'With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is our master?' But a person boasts as one receiving, when he glories in himself by ascribing everything to God, as was said above (1:31): 'Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord.' To boast in this way is not pride but

future reward in heaven for good deeds, thinking that they have received their reward by their own merits.[102]

I would like to propose a third reason for understanding pride as both a passion of the appetite and an affection of the will, one that derives naturally from the second. In distinguishing between pride that is in the sensitive appetite and pride that is in the will, as well as between pride as a general and specific sin, Aquinas, as many other thinkers who have discussed the nature of pride[103], understood it as manifesting in two ways: occurrently and dispositionally. Passions, as I have shown in the first section of this chapter, are not dispositions. They are occurrent movements of the soul. However, for Aquinas to classify pride as a vice, it must be a disposition. Therefore, it is important that he maintain that pride may manifest in two ways and, consequently, in two different appetites. For these three reasons, it is entirely expected that Aquinas would place pride's loci in both the sensible and the intellective appetite.

Pride as a sin

Except for a few sentences that treat *superbia* as the 'greatness' that God promises the believers (II.II.162.1 ad 1), Aquinas consistently treats pride as a sin. In this section, I will analyze more closely the two ways in which Aquinas sees this sin as the

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humility under God, to Whom a man gives glory as in Sirach (51:17): 'To him who gives me wisdom I will give glory.'" Super I Cor. 4:6-13

[102] As he says in Super Matt.: "pride can happen in two ways: either from cupidity or from desert" Super Matt. chap. 10.

[103] Aaron Ben Zeev, for example, notes that "a distinction between pride as an emotion and pride as a character trait should be made. As a character trait, pride may be regarded as ignoble since it often results in arrogance and in the belief that we are better than others. As an emotion, pride is more limited: it is a particular and short-term attitude referring to some of our particular traits or accomplishments; as such it often has a positive value." "The Virtue of Modesty," in *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 30 (July, 1993): 244.

'beginning' of all sins and the most grievous. This is an important endeavor contributing to my greater argument about the ways in which Aquinas is moving away from Aristotle's views on positive self-assessments. For Aquinas, most positive self-assessments are prideful because they tend to displace God from his rightful position as the foremost object of human love and subjection and, in his place, set the "excellent" self.

Pride as the beginning of all sins

To classify pride as a sin, Aquinas simply applies his definition of pride as an inordinate desire to excel to the prideful person's relation with God's sovereignty. With a distorted desire to excel and warped positive self-evaluation, one does not recognize God's sovereignty and is, therefore, not "subject to God and His rule" (II.II.162.5). Staying close to biblical descriptions of pride, Aquinas states that not only is pride a sin, but "the beginning [*initium*] of all sin" (I.II.84.2 and II.II.162.7). This classification becomes slightly confusing once Aquinas adds covetousness as the *root* (*radix*) of sin (I.II.84.1) and self-love as the *cause* (*causa*) of all sin (I.II.77.4). What, after all, is the difference between *initium*, *radix*, and *causa*? Aquinas ultimately identifies pride with self-love, so the first and the third conclusions are synonymous.[104] To solve the difference between covetousness as the root of sin and pride as the beginning or cause, Aquinas first states that covetousness speaks to the sins of attraction to mutable goods,

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[104]"In desiring to excel, man loves himself, for to love oneself is the same as to desire some good for oneself. Consequently it amounts to the same whether we reckon pride or self-love as the beginning of every evil." (I.II.84.2 ad 3) This definition goes against Aristotle's definition of right self-love, as we have seen in chapter 1, which one would think would have influenced Aquinas's definition of it.

while pride speaks to one's aversion from God, the immutable Good. In other words, pride comes chronologically before covetousness because it is the distance from God that leads to an inordinate attraction to mutable goods, primarily because lack of submission to God eliminates the obstacle to sin in the form of the Divine Law.[105] For Aquinas, pride is the beginning of sin because inordinate desire to excel is at the very beginning of the *intention* or *goal* of sin, for the human agent only desires temporal goods in order to achieve excellence of some sort.[106] The *execution* of every sin, however, is motivated more precisely by covetousness.

In the *Secunda Secundae,* Aquinas gives nuance to the idea that pride is the beginning of sin by noting that not all sins originate from pride. Some sins might arise from ignorance, or weakness (II.II.162.2). This seeming incoherence is later noted by Aquinas and fixed in II.II.162.7 ad 1: "Pride is said to be 'the beginning of all sin,' not as though every sin originated from pride, but because any kind of sin is naturally liable to arise from pride." The latter conclusion is a much weaker contention than the original "pride is the beginning of all sin," but is the only way Aquinas sees to take into account

[105] This is also evident when Aquinas places pride as the catalyst of unbelief: "Unbelief, in so far as it is a sin, arises from pride, through which man is unwilling to subject his intellect to the rules of faith, and to the sound interpretation of the Fathers. Hence Gregory says (Moral. xxxi, 45) that 'presumptuous innovations arise from vainglory.'" (II.II.10.1)

[106] My favorite of Aquinas's descriptions of this inordinateness is in his commentary of I Corinthians 13: "First, indeed, as to pride, which is a disarranged desire for one's own excellence. One seeks his own excellence in a disarranged manner, when it does not satisfy him to be contained in that station which has been established for him by God. Therefore it says in Sir (10:12): 'The beginning of man's pride is to depart from the Lord.' This happens when a man does not wish to be contained under the rule of God's arrangement. And this is opposed to charity, by which one loves God above all things: 'Puffed by without reason by this sensuous mind and not holing fast to the head' (Col 2:18). It is right to compare pride to arrogance [being puffed up]. For that which is puffed up does not have solidity but its appearance; so the proud seem to themselves to be great, while they really lack true greatness, which cannot exist without the divine order: 'He will dash them speechless to the ground' (Wis 4:19)." (Super I Cor. 13:4-7)

the sins of ignorance and weakness. He also acknowledges that, while pride is the beginning or cause of every sin, it is not the species of every vice. This is because the species is determined by a sin's proximate end, while pride is most commonly a sin's remote end and its cause (II.II.11.1).

The first human sin is the perfect illustration for the idea that pride is the beginning of all sins. Following a long line of Christian theological tradition, Aquinas considers pride to be "man's first sin" (II.II.163.1). Before the fall, humans were in a state of innocence and, therefore, the sensible appetite knew no rebellion against reason: "it was not possible for the first inordinance in the human appetite to result from his coveting a sensible good, to which the concupiscence of the flesh tends against the order of reason." The more plausible explanation for the first man and woman's sin, therefore, is that the first inordinateness was the coveting of some *spiritual* good, the good of being like God. To desire to be like God is not only to desire something beyond what reason dictates, and thus inordinately[107], for Aquinas, but also to concomitantly deny or blaspheme God (II.II.163.3).

Pride as the most grievous of sins

Pride, for Aquinas, is the first of the sins, both chronologically and qualitatively. We have seen why pride is the first sin chronologically, so now we will turn to his reasons for seeing it as the first qualitatively. Once again, aversion to God is the motivation for Aquinas's view of pride as "the cause of gravity in other sins" (II.II.162.7

[107] Aquinas spells out why this desire was inordinate by specifying that what they desired was God's knowledge and power, rather than the likeness of nature between humans and God that is explicit in the biblical text on the creation of humans (II.II.163.2).

ad 4). For him, sin consists in a "conversion to a mutable good, and this is the material part of sin; and aversion from the immutable good, and this gives sin its formal aspect and complement" (II.II.162.6).[108] This aversion is not simply due to ignorance or weakness, but is rather "simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule" (II.II.162.6). Pride, therefore, is the most grievous of sins because, while aversion from God is the *consequence* of other sins, it is part of the *essence* of pride (II.II.162.7).

Aquinas gives further evidence to argue that pride is the most grievous of sins. One of them is that God seems to be more interested in leading humans to overcome their pride than in leading them away from sins arising from covetousness: "In order to overcome their pride, God punishes certain men by allowing them to fall into sins of the flesh, which though they be less grievous are more evidently shameful" (II.II.162.6 ad 3).[109] Here, Aquinas makes another interesting connection between pride and shame. He

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[108] "Among all the vices, God detests pride most of all, and so the Epistle of James says, God resists the proud (Jas 4:6). This is so because the proud rebel against God in a certain sense when they do not want to humbly submit to him, and from this they fall into the contempt of divine precepts in every sin." *Super Iob* chapter 40

[109] Aquinas makes a distinction between a sin's gravity and its ability to produce shame. The shamefulness of a sin results not necessarily from its gravity, but from the resulting reproach coming from the audience.
He makes this same point in his commentary of II Corinthians 12: "...very often a wise physician procures and permits a lesser disease to come over a person in order to cure or avoid a greater one. Thus, to cure a spasm he procures a fever. This the Apostle shows was done to him by the physician of souls, our Lord Jesus Christ. For Christ, as the supreme physician of souls, in order to cure greater sins, permits them to fall into lesser, and even mortal sins. But among all the sins the gravest is pride, for just as charity is the root and beginning of the virtues, so pride is the root and beginning of all vices: 'Pride is the beginning of all sin' (Sir. 10:15, Vulgate)...But pride turns away from God, for pride is an inordinate desire for one's own excellence. For if a person seeks some excellence under God, if he seeks it moderately and for a good end, it can be endured. But if it is not done with due order, he can even fall into other vices, such as ambition, avarice, vainglory and the like. Yet it is not, properly speaking, pride, unless a person seeks excellence without ordaining it to God. Therefore pride, properly called, separates from God and is the root of all vices and the worst of them. This is why God resists the proud, as it says in Jas. (4:6). Therefore, because the matter of this vice, that is, pride, is mainly found in things that are good, because its matter is something good, God sometimes permits his elect to be prevented by something on their part, e.g. infirmity or some other defect, and

argues that God uses shame in order to rid the human agent of their pride. Because sins of covetousness are more public than spiritual sins, which can be easily hidden, God allows the agent to fall into them and feel shame because of the public reproach, hoping for the fruitful result of humility and submission. However, punishment awaits those who are not able to overcome pride. Commenting on God's monologue at the end of the book of Job, Aquinas enumerates the drastic punishments for the proud:

> There are two types of proud men. Some exalt themselves above others from the goods which they have, like the man who said in Luke, I am not like the rest of men (Luke 18:11). These are properly called the proud, as the name itself shows. The specific punishment of the proud is lack of peace, because when each man strives to be higher than the other and refuses to be subject to another, they cannot have peace with each other; and so Proverbs says, there is always quarreling among the proud (Prov 13:10). He shows this, saying, scatter the proud in your fury, saying in effect, "Exercise the duty of God, which is to disperse the proud so that they cannot band together," for the fury of God here means grave punishment. Another type of proud men are those who presumptuously claim for themselves what is above them. These are properly called the arrogant, and so Jeremiah says, I know their arrogance and haughty character of heart, says the Lord, and there is no virtue there (Jer 48:29). The proper punishment of these men is dejection. For since they wanted to lift themselves up where they could, the consequence is that they fall down into peril, as the Psalm says, you laid them low when they were lifted up (Ps 72:18), and so he says, and consider every arrogant man and humble him, that is, you should cast them down from the point of view of your providence. The first punishment common to both of these types of proud men is confusion. Since they cannot attain the height to which they pretend, they are confounded when they see their inability, and so he says, consider all the proud and confound them, and he also said already, if his pride should ascend up to heaven, he will be lost like dung in the end (Job 20:6). The second punishment is their destruction, which he shows, saying, and destroy the wicked in their place...The third punishment is that after they are reduced to the lowest place, the brightness of their renown ends. For it is just that he who sought the ostentation of glory should be

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sometimes even mortal sin, from obtaining such a good, in order that they be so humbled on this account that they will not take pride in it, and that being thus humiliated, they may recognize that they cannot stand by their own powers." (*Supra II Cor.* 12:7-10)

> erased from the memories of men; as Proverbs says, the name of the wicked will rot (Prov 10:7), and so the text continues, you will hide them in the decay together, that is, you will make them forgotten because of the state of evil to which they are reduced….Their fourth punishment is that not only are they not known by others, but also that the goods in which they gloried will not be known, and so he says, and their faces, which means their cognitive powers, because the sight of man is located in the face, plunge into the ditch, into the depths of Hell. (*Super Iob* chap. 40)

Aquinas's collection of punishments for the proud consist almost entirely of social humiliation. For him, pride being an affection that seeks glory—the approval and recognition from the public—it will inevitably lead the proud to fall into public reproach and eventual forgetfulness. Nonetheless, these are mostly punishments that will come upon the proud on the occasion of the Last Judgment. Before then, however, God attempts to save them from pride by the reproach for sins of covetousness.

In this analysis of pride as sin, some conclusions, along with previous points, need to be repeated given their importance to my broader argument. First, pride is a vicious affection that desires inordinate excellence and evaluates the self *positively* beyond reason. Thus, pride for Aquinas is a *self-assessing* emotion and disposition. Second, Aquinas considers this defiled desire and evaluation as the beginning and intention of all voluntary sin and the most grievous, thus serving as the most all-encompassing and spiritually damaging sin. Third, pride, in its general sense of aversion from God, is an inherently *religious* emotion. Fourth, pride is an essentially *social* emotion, and thus includes the idea of an audience before which one desires excellence. This point will become clearer in the next section, but already in his description of many of the punishments for pride, Aquinas highlights social punishments as contrasting with what the prideful seek: no peace with other humans, public dejection, and, most importantly,

the erasing of the prideful person (and the goods they were proud of) from everyone's memory.

Pride as a vice

Aquinas distinguishes between sin and vice in the same way he made the distinction between an act of virtue and virtue itself, one we visited earlier in our discussion. That is, sin is an inordinate *act* while vice is an inordinate *habit* or *disposition* (or the lack of an ordinate disposition) (I.II.71.1). It is interesting to note that Aquinas considers sin (the act) more morally reprehensible than vice (the disposition) for he says that it is possible to have a vicious habit without acting upon it:

> For it is better to do well than to be able to do well, and in like manner, it is more blameworthy to do evil, than to be able to do evil: whence it also follows that both in goodness and in badness, habit stands midway between power and act, so that, to wit, even as a good or evil habit stands above the corresponding power in goodness or in badness, so does it stand below the corresponding act. (I.II.71.3)

When analyzing pride as a vice, Aquinas classifies it as the vice that opposes the virtue of humility, under the more general category of the virtue of temperance. The virtue of humility tempers and restrains the mind, "lest it tend to high things immoderately" (II.II.161.1).[110] To tend to high things moderately, for Aquinas, is simply to have an accurate assessment of who one is and what one is capable of achieving. In Aquinas's own words, it is to have "true self-estimation" (*veram existimationem de se habet*) (II.II.162.3 ad 2). The chief obstacle for true self-estimation or assessment is pride

[110] Aquinas distinguishes between two kinds of virtues in this treatise—between one that serves as a moderator and restrainer of the passion that moves one *toward* an object (i.e. hope), and one that strengthens and urges on movements that tend to *recoil* from the difficult good (i.e. despair). Humility belongs to the former category, while magnanimity belongs to the latter. (I.II.161.1)

(II.II.161.4), so humility's operation is to eliminate pride by disposing toward "knowledge of one's own deficiency" (II.II.161.2) and the suppression of immoderate movements of the passion of hope (II.II.161.4).[111] In the spiritual sphere, humility further encourages human beings' subjection to God with its accompanied reverence toward God.[112]

As opposed to humility, the vice of pride is a habitual disposition to aim higher (*supra*) than one is, either by wishing to "overstep what he is" (II.II.162.1) or to esteem oneself greater than one actually is "since a man is ready to believe what he desires very much" (II.II.162.3 ad 2). As was the case for the sin of pride, Aquinas holds that the vice of pride naturally results in lack of subjection to God because it prompts one to "raise himself above that which is appointed to him according to the Divine rule or measure." (II.II.162.5) Because pride is the cause for lack of subjection to God, it is at the beginning of all the vices and is, therefore, "the queen and mother of all the vices" (II.II.162.8).

In this brief analysis of pride as a vice, we have seen that Aquinas considers pride not only as the affection behind all acts and attitude that betray one's inordinate desire to excel, but also a habitual disposition away from the perfection of one's nature manifested through humility. It does so by falsely assessing one's own possessions, abilities, or character. As so, it is also a habitual disposition away from subjection to and fear of God

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[111] As a virtue of temperance, humility moderates "the impetuosity of the emotions" which, in the case of pride, refers to the impetuosity of the passion of hope—"the movement of a spirit aiming at great things" (II.II.161.4).

[112] In this case, humility and shame— and fear of God more generally— have very similar effects, both opposing the effects of pride. This seems to be confirmed by Aquinas's agreement with Augustine's ascription of humility to the Gift of fear of God: "Wherefore humility would seem to denote in the first place man's subjection to God; and for this reason Augustine ascribes humility, which he understands by poverty of spirit, to the gift of fear whereby man reveres God." (II.II.161.2)

because it elevates one's self-estimation above that which God has established. Now, just because Aquinas is against an *inordinate* desire to excel, and considers the control of that desire a virtue (humility), does not mean he considers *any* kind of desire to excel a vice. To achieve proper excellence and honor is to have the virtue of magnanimity and though pride primarily opposes the virtue of humility, Aquinas also sees it as indirectly being in opposition to magnanimity. It is to this relation that we will turn to below.

Pride and magnanimity

Following Aristotle, Aquinas sees magnanimity (*magnanimitas*) as a virtue of the irascible faculty that disposes one to achieve honor by performing courageous acts (II.II.129.1). He also calls it a virtue that regards "greatness of courage" (II.II.129.3). It is, therefore, a species of the virtue of fortitude.[113] Because only virtue is worthy of true honor, magnanimity is nothing more than evidence of one's virtues (II.II.129.1). The fact that God is honored, for Aquinas, is evidence of God's internal perfection.[114] Similarly, those who are the most excellent in their display of the virtues are the ones who are most honored and, therefore, who have the virtue of magnanimity.[115]

Much has been written on the oddity of Aquinas's acceptance of Aristotle's

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[113] For Aquinas, magnanimity is a part of fortitude because it is a strengthening virtue, giving the agent the courage to remove difficult obstacles that impede the attainment of honor, which is also why he identifies magnanimity with confidence (II.II.128).

[114] See Jennifer Herdt's chapter for a detailed account on how Aquinas bases his views on the perfection of all the virtues (especially magnanimity) on his views of Jesus' virtues. According to her, Aquinas includes magnanimity among the virtues because Jesus was the perfect manifestation of it. "Strengthening Hope for the Greatest Things: Aquinas's Redemption of Magnanimity" in Sophia Vasalou (ed.), *The Measure of Greatness: Philosophers on Magnanimity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019)

[115] Aquinas places one's desire to obtain honor at the same level as one's desire to avoid shame since to feel shame is to incur dishonor. For both, humans are willing to "set aside all other things" (II.II.129.1).

magnanimity as one of the virtues.[116] Scholars see a clear incompatibility between this virtue and Aquinas's Christian virtue of humility and its seeming similarity with the vice of pride.[117] Are the virtues of magnanimity and humility compatible within the Christian ethical framework? Does the lingering danger of the sin of pride allow space for the development of the virtue of magnanimity? The answer to these two questions, for Aquinas, is yes. As we will see, however, this positive answer hinges exclusively upon his interpretation of magnanimity, and not Aristotle's original version. Aquinas's reaction and adaptation of Aristotle's *megalopsychia* is relevant to our study of self-assessing emotions because it will clearly show his reluctance to accept a disposition toward positive self-assessments, and thus his divergence from his master's views.

Regarding the question of compatibility between magnanimity and humility, Aquinas recognizes the fine line he wishes to tread by praising both humility and magnanimity.[118] Let us start this evaluation of compatibility by raising the two aspects of

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[116] See Jennifer Herdt's chapter "Strengthening Hope for the Greatest Things: Aquinas's Redemption of Magnanimity" and John Marenbon's chapter "Magnanimity, Christian Ethics, and Paganism in Latin Middle Ages," in Sophia Vasalou (ed.), *The Measure of Greatness: Philosophers on Magnanimity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Tobias Hoffmann, "Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas on Magnanimity" in István Bejczy (ed.), *Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages: Commentaries on Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics *1200–1500* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 101-129; David Horner, "What It Takes to Be Great: Aristotle and Aquinas on Magnanimity" in *Faith and Philosophy* 15.4 (1998): 415–44; Mary M. Keys, "Aquinas and the Challenge of Aristotelian Magnanimity" in *History of Political Thought* 24 (2003): 37–65; Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "Aquinas's Virtues of Acknowledged Dependence: A New Measure of Greatness" in *Faith and Philosophy* 21 (2004): 214–27.

[117] "Aristotelian magnanimity has often been subject to critique by Christian thinkers, and in fact the tension between magnanimity and humility is often seen as capturing the basic tension between pagan and Christian conceptions of virtue." Jennifer Herdt, *Putting on Virtue: the Legacy of the Splendid Vices* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 40.

[118] As noticed by the objector in II.II.129.3 ad 4: "Further, no virtue is opposed to another virtue. But magnanimity is opposed to humility, since 'the magnanimous deems himself worthy of great things, and despises others,' according to Ethic. iv, 3. Therefore magnanimity is not a virtue."

humility, according to Aquinas. First, humility tempers and restrains the mind "lest it tend to high things immoderately" (II.II.161.1). That is, it is a restraint of *desire* for great things. Second, it tempers one's *assessment* of one's merit: "knowledge of one's own deficiency belongs to humility, as a rule guiding the appetite" (II.II.161.2).[119] In what follows, I will distinguish magnanimity's compatibility with humility on these two fronts, showing that while they are certainly compatible regarding the first aspect, they do not seem to be regarding the second.

In relation to the first aspect of humility, there is no conflict with magnanimity, for Aquinas. This is clear because the virtue of magnanimity urges the mind "on to the pursuit of great things according to *right* reason." In fact, they are complementary because while humility moderates the inordinate urge toward great things, guarding the soul against presumptuous hope, magnanimity urges the person toward great things within the confines of reason, guarding the soul against despair (II.II.161.2 ad 3). The ordinate desire for great things is, for Aquinas, what distinguishes magnanimity from pride, the opposing vice of humility. Most obviously, the ordinate aspect of magnanimity comes from the fact that the magnanimous person actually deserves honor for great displays of virtue and the proud person does not. Additionally, magnanimity is in accord with reason because it is "about honors in the sense that a man strives to do what is

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[119] In this response, Aquinas is making it clear that humility is a virtue of the appetite, and therefore, it primarily has to do with moderation of desires. However, he also recognizes that the intellect is involved in the sense that the humble person must *know* that he or she is deficient (in relation to some superior standard) in order for the appetite to be moderated by humility. He repeats the cognitive and self-assessing aspect of humility in II.II.161.6: "As stated above (Article 2) humility has essentially to do with the appetite, in so far as a man restrains the impetuosity of his soul, from tending inordinately to great things: yet its rule is in the cognitive faculty, in that we should not deem ourselves to be above what we are."

deserving of honor, yet not so as to think much of the honor accorded by man" (II.II.129.1 ad 3). While the proud person seeks recognition and honor from other people for its own sake,[120] the magnanimous person is not motivated by external praise, but by doing what is *worthy* or *deserving* of honor. The right reason on display is the fact that honor is merely a natural consequence of great virtue rather than an artificially produced kind of honor, based on false pretension.

Let us now turn to the second, evaluative aspect of humility. While humility highlights and feeds off of one's knowledge of deficiency, the magnanimous person "deems himself worthy in accordance with his worth, since his aims do not surpass his deserts" (II.II.129.3 ad 1). It is interesting to note that Aquinas includes this positive self-assessing aspect in response to an objection and then nowhere else in the Question, whereas Aristotle places it at the center of the virtue and repeats it several times. It seems as if it is helpful to Aquinas, but he does not want to give it too much heed. The response in which this aspect appears is regarding magnanimity being a mean between two extremes. If magnanimity is to be a virtue, it should be a mean. However, the question goes, between what is magnanimity the mean? In response to this question, Aquinas needs to invoke Aristotle's idea that magnanimity is a mean between two self-assessments: thinking too little of oneself and thinking too much of oneself. The magnanimous person thinks reasonably of his worth and acts accordingly. There is something clearly odd in Aquinas's inclusion of this aspect of Aristotle's theory of the

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[120] Which is why, as we will see below, pride (the opposite of humility) is almost synonymous with vainglory for Aquinas.

virtue. Both humility and magnanimity include a certain self-assessment of worthiness, but they are almost entirely mutually exclusive: while humility's self-assessment is one of deficiency that hinders great works, magnanimity's self-assessment is one of worthiness that buttresses great works.

Aquinas is quite aware of this source of conflict between his two virtues, yet tries to resolve it by distinguishing between two facets of humans, the praiseworthy and the blameworthy, which account for magnanimity and humility, respectively:

> There is in man something great which he possesses through the gift of God; and something defective which accrues to him through the weakness of nature. Accordingly magnanimity makes a man deem himself worthy of great things in consideration of the gifts he holds from God: thus if his soul is endowed with great virtue, magnanimity makes him tend to perfect works of virtue; and the same is to be said of the use of any other good, such as science or external fortune. On the other hand, humility makes a man think little of himself in consideration of his own deficiency, and magnanimity makes him despise others in so far as they fall away from God's gifts: since he does not think so much of others as to do anything wrong for their sake. Yet humility makes us honor others and esteem them better than ourselves, insofar as we see some of God's gifts in them. Hence it is written of the just man (Psalm 14:4): "In his sight a vile person is contemned [Douay: 'The malignant is brought to nothing, but he glorifieth,' etc.]," which indicates the contempt of magnanimity, "but he honoreth them that fear the Lord," which points to the reverential bearing of humility. It is therefore evident that magnanimity and humility are not contrary to one another, although they seem to tend in contrary directions, because they proceed according to different considerations. (II.II.129.3 ad 4)[121]

Aquinas is doing a lot of work in this passage to harmonize his Christian theology and his agreement with Aristotle. He is distinguishing between them by noticing the two

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[121] Here, it seems Aquinas is arguing that magnanimity is only in those who possess the infused virtues. Although it is not clear whether 'God's gifts' refer to the theological virtues or the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, as we have seen above, the latter presuppose the former.

facets of human nature: the perfection infused by God and the sinful nature. If one properly evaluates one's excellence with an eye toward one's natural deficiencies, the result is humility. If one acts according to the power of God's gifts, the result is magnanimity. Notice, though, that Aquinas is *not* contrasting the negative self-assessment of the humble and the positive self-assessment of the magnanimous. In fact, he once again fails to mention the positive self-assessment that Aristotle attributes to the *megalopsychoi* where it would clearly be called for. Instead, he contrasts the "perfect *works* of virtue" of magnanimity with humility's aspect of negative self-assessment—making a "man *think* little of himself." What was a perfectly ripe opportunity for Aquinas to contrast the virtues in terms of self-assessments, varying in valence according to one's focus on God's gifts or one's sinful nature, became a clear indication of his reluctance in allowing for a positive self-assessment in a believer who recognizes God as the first mover of great acts of virtue. For Aquinas, it is clear, magnanimity is not a virtue of positive self-assessment, but a virtue of great acts of virtue.[122]

Furthermore, Aquinas attempts his harmonization of humility and magnanimity by providing a reasonable explanation for Aristotle's seemingly reprehensible characterization of the *megalopsychoi* as despising others. For him, the motivation for

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[122] Marenbon makes this point even clearer: "For Aristotle, magnanimity is a purely self-regarding virtue. Consider someone who performs great socially beneficial actions and is honoured for them. Such a man is not for this reason magnanimous. What needs to be added for him to be magnanimous is a correct grasp of his own worthiness for these honours—a quality that makes no difference to others, but makes the man himself better. For Aquinas, magnanimity is an other-regarding virtue, since it is gained only through performing, reasonably (not attempting the impossible), the sort of great, socially beneficial acts that should win honour. Aquinas is not, therefore, faced with the problem of explaining why Christians should be directing themselves to honour, since honour is involved in his account of magnanimity only in connection with great and socially valuable acts." (Marenbon, 97)

this loathing attitude is other people's lack of recognition of God while using the virtuous gifts that he bestows.[123] Humility, however, allows the person to honor others in so far as they utilize God's gifts well. In other words, both magnanimity and humility dispose us to right attitudes toward other people—to despise them when they deserve such despising, and to honor them when they merit such honor. Notice that, in this passage, humility does not award others gratuitous honor simply for them being part of the human species, but it does dispose one to a negative attitude toward the self based upon universal human sin.

Based on the passage above, magnanimity and humility would be opposites when it comes to self-assessment if Aquinas were to maintain that magnanimity is (at least in part) a virtue of positive self-assessment, but because Aquinas dodges the bullet by not making this identification clear, they are not opposites within the context of Aquinas's work. Rather, humility and magnanimity have a surprisingly similar goal: for the human agent to achieve and assign honor when and to whom it is reasonably worthy.[124] For Aquinas, the opposite disposition to humility with regard to self-assessment, as we have seen, is pride:

> Pride is directly opposed to the virtue of humility, which, in a way, is concerned about the same matter as magnanimity…hence the vice of pride by default is akin to the vice of pusillanimity, which is opposed by default to magnanimity…Since, however, pride implies a certain elation, it is more directly opposed to humility, even as pusillanimity, which denotes littleness of soul in tending towards great things, is more directly opposed to magnanimity. (II.II.162.1 ad 3)

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[123] This is very different from Aristotle's unqualified characterization of the great-souled as showing contempt for other people.

[124] The latter aspect is directly related to the virtue of justice, which is concerned about right relations with other members of society. Thanks to David Decosimo for this insight.

In this passage, Aquinas is working with the two aspects of humility that I have referred to above: the aspect of self-assessment and the aspect of desire for and action toward great things. He relates humility and magnanimity due to their shared concern for correct assignment of honor, as well as pride and pusillanimity given their shared incorrect relation to great acts of virtue. On the other hand, in this passage, he contrasts humility and pride in relation to their shared aspect of self-assessment. This is clear by the use of *superioritatem* to describe pride (translated as 'elation') and to connect it to humility. That is, both humility and pride are primarily concerned with a feeling of superiority—while humility moderates this feeling, pride exacerbates it.

Of course, positive self-assessment is not the only aspect of pride, in the same way that negative self-assessment is not the only aspect of humility. As we have already seen, pride is primarily concerned with an inordinate desire to excel. With these two aspects of pride in mind, we can answer the second question I raised above regarding the compatibility between his negative valence of pride and positive valence of magnanimity. Pride, for Aquinas, is very obviously an entirely different, and even opposing, disposition. Though one might be tempted to quickly identify pride and magnanimity[125] based on their shared bend toward excellent things, Aquinas distinguishes them based on 1) the differences in nature of the excellence sought after—pride seeks for inordinate excellence, while magnanimity seeks ordinate excellence; 2) the differences between true

[125] As Aquinas himself notices: "To do anything by stratagem seems to be due to pusillanimity: because a magnanimous man wishes to act openly, as the Philosopher says (Ethic. iv, 3). Wherefore, *as pride resembles or apes magnanimity*, it follows that the aforesaid vices which make use of fraud and guile, do not arise directly from pride, but rather from covetousness, which seeks its own profit and sets little by excellence." II.II.55.8 ad 2

honor and false honor, which in turn is a difference in self-assessment; false honor is the result of deceit or ignorance (mistaken self-assessment) while true honor is the result of perfected virtues (correct self-assessment)[126]; 3) the reliance on an audience for the resulting affection; while pride, in most of its manifestations, requires an audience that will agree with or believe in one's faulty self-assessment, magnanimity does not; and 4) the differences of directedness; while pride is directed toward the self, that is, motivated by self-love and directed toward one's own excellence, magnanimity is other-directed for the virtues and honor that are sought are done so for the benefit of others. Pride, however, is not the specific vice that opposes magnanimity. That role belongs to one of pride's 'daughters': vainglory. In order to properly grasp the inherently social aspect of pride, we must understand the vice of vainglory.

Pride and vainglory

Vainglory is perhaps the most prominent of pride's daughters, for Aquinas. In fact, in a few passages, it seems Aquinas identifies one with the other, treating them as synonymous.[127] Nonetheless, Aquinas considers vainglory the other opposing vice of the virtue of magnanimity, not of humility—while magnanimity desires ordinate glory and honor, vainglory desires *vain* glory.[128] What makes glory of the vain kind and not of the

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[126] This is especially clear in Aquinas's list of the four species of prideful people: 1) those who erroneously think their good came from themselves; 2) those who believe their good came from God, but due to their own merits; 3) those who boast having what they do not have; 4) those who want to say they are the only possessors of what they have, despising others. (II.II.162.4)
[127] See II.II.38.2, II.II.112.1 and II.II.132.4.
[128] "Now it is not a sin to know and approve one's own good: for it is written (1 Corinthians 2:12): 'Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God that we may know the things that are given us from God.' Likewise it is not a sin to be willing to approve one's own good works: for it is written (Matthew 5:16): 'Let your light shine before men.' Hence the desire for glory does not, of itself, denote a sin: but the desire for empty or vain glory denotes a sin: for it is sinful to

moderate kind is that the vain kind seeks glory for that which is unworthy of glory (for Aquinas, something frail or perishable), for someone who does not deserve glory, and for one who's desire for glory is not for God's honor or for the spiritual welfare of his neighbor. This list of characteristics of the vain kind of glory echoes in many ways Aquinas's list of pride's species in II.II.162.4, which is possibly the reason why Aquinas calls vainglory the "immediate offspring of pride" (II.II.132).

Aside from the fact that magnanimity seeks honor in things worthy of honor and *vain* glory seeks it in things that are not, Aquinas makes further distinctions that concern one's interior and exterior motivations for seeking honor. The vainglorious person is in stark contrast with the magnanimous person who, though seeking honor, does not care to be praised, but cares about the truth of the worthiness of his or her acts and virtues.[129] That is why the vainglorious will glory in whatever they can take credit for, while the honor of the magnanimous is accepted only on the basis of true virtue. Making sure other people know about one's good deeds or virtues is only appropriate, for Aquinas, when it is useful to do so. God, for example, reveals God's nature and deeds because it is useful

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desire anything vain, according to Psalm 4:3, 'Why do you love vanity, and seek after lying?'" (II.II.132)

Aquinas, most of the time, is careful to assign the word honor (*honorem*) to the virtue of magnanimity and glory (*gloriae*) to the vice of vainglory. Though he notes that glory does not *necessarily* entail the knowledge and approval of other people—it may be one's own knowledge of one's own good and, therefore, it is not a sin—that is the way he most commonly describes it: "wherefore the word glory properly denotes the display of something as regards its seeming comely in the sight of men, whether it be a bodily or a spiritual good….it follows that the word glory properly denotes that somebody's good is known and approved by many" (II.II.132.1).

[129] "Likewise it is inconsistent with magnanimity to glory in things that are not; wherefore it is said of the magnanimous man (Ethic. iv) that he cares more for truth than for opinion." (II.II.132.2 ad 1) And "He that is desirous of vainglory does in truth fall short of being magnanimous, because he glories in what the magnanimous man thinks little of." (II.II.132.2 ad 2)

to human beings to know about them. If the knowledge of what one does or has is useful, for example, to conduct other people to glorify God, or for any other goal that leads to other people's well-being[130], then it is no longer vainglory, but *true* glory (II.II.132.1 ad 1 and 2). The final distinction between magnanimity and vainglory is that the magnanimous person is not concerned with the natural consequences of honor and glory, such as "power and wealth" (II.II.132.2 ad 1), while the vainglorious person is frequently motivated to act in honorable ways only to receive the resulting perishable goods (II.II.132.5 ad 1). These key characteristics make evident, then, that vainglory is the version of pride that is most dependent on the social.

Pride in practice

As I have done in the section on shame, I will survey below the ways in which Aquinas sees pride in practice in the believer's life—that is, the specific practical activities and rituals that Aquinas unpacks as either conducive to pridefulness or helpful as tools for hampering pride. This survey will more poignantly showcase that pride, for Aquinas, is an affection that *by definition*, and therefore necessarily, results in negative effects in the moral and spiritual journey of the believer. I will bring forth his discussion on 1) clerical professorship; and 2) on the practices of vigils, fasting and mendicancy.

Pride in the Office of Teaching

In the polemical *Contra Impugnantes*, Aquinas deals with a controversial issue debated between the Dominican mendicant order and the anti-mendicant masters of the

[130] Aquinas mentions other possibilities, such as the moral betterment of those people who hear of the good of someone else.

University: the acceptability of teachers among friars who have taken a religious vow.[131] One of the arguments given against this role is that teachers receive much honor and the religious have taken a vow to renounce the world, with all its riches, pleasures, and honor (*CI* Pars 2, Chap. 1). Aquinas takes this issue to heart given that he was counted among those who had taken a religious vow, yet were also teachers.[132] He explains that this controversy resulted from a pious move away from one extreme, resulting in the falling into the other extreme. The first extreme had been the norm for a part of the Church's history—monks, simply relying on the fact that they had 'spiritual authority,' took on the role and authority of teachers: "This assumption of authority, on their part, gave rise to considerable disturbance to the Church." The harmful effects of allowing any monk, even those with no academic training, to be a teacher, led the Church authorities to the other

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[131] Mary C. Sommers specifically mentions the polemical works of William of St.-Amour as the catalyst of many of these controversies: "The origins of the conflict between the religious and secular masters at Paris are a complicated and explosive mix of politics, patronage, and apocalypticism. However, the very presence of *religiosi* at universities as teachers and students was a sign of an altered ecclesiological landscape, full of promise or dangers depending on one's point of view. For William of St.-Amour and his followers, religious who assumed public duties such as teaching in the consortium of masters were like the *gyrovagues*, monks without stability, whom Benedict had warned against in his Rule, as well as portents of the 'last days', i.e., they were both a perversion as old as monasticism itself and a dangerous 'novelty.'" in "Defense and Discovery: Brother Thomas's Contra Impugnantes" in Armand Maurer and R. E. Houser (eds), *Laudemus viros gloriosos: essays in honor of Armand Maurer* (2007), p. 184. Jean-Pierre Torrell mentions several reasons for the dispute, including the rising number of teaching positions given to the friars and, consequently, the diminishing number of secular masters in the university, refusal of the Dominicans to join a strike, and disputes over authority of Aristotle's writings. See Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and his Work, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), pp. 75-95. For more on the specific cultural and religious war on which Aquinas was writing, see Mark Johnson (ed.), *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Mendicant Controversies: Three Translations* (Leesburg, Virginia: Alethes Press, 2007), pp. vii-xxxiv. For more context on the Dominican focus on education and teaching, see M. Michèle Mulchahey and Timothy B. Noone, "Religious Orders," in Jorge Garcia and Timothy Noone (eds), *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 2003), pp. 46-50.

[132] See Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason, and Following Christ* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 1-37.

extreme, which was to ban clergy from teaching altogether. To refute this position, Aquinas sets up three responses. The first challenges the idea that honor necessarily results in pride, the second argues that *all* humans must strive to avoid pride, not just teachers, and the third questions the inclusion of humility in the religious vow.

First, Aquinas clarifies that honor is a natural part of teaching, but not necessarily a cause of pride. Though teaching is a public activity, and one that appoints honorable titles, such as ‘doctor’ or ‘master,’ Aquinas reasons that these factors are not necessary catalysts for pride. A prime example of a profession that includes its own kind of honors, yet does not necessarily lead to pride, is priesthood. Therefore, “if religious do not, by their vows, renounce the priesthood, they need not renounce the office of teaching.” Furthermore, many practices among the religious have potential for producing pride, yet they are not prohibited (e.g. wear expensive clothes, a priest sitting above a deacon). In the same way, teachership should be allowed for those who have taken religious vows.

Second, Aquinas shows that *every* person is ordered to renounce the world, not just the monastic monks. According to the Bible, that duty includes renouncing “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.”[133] If pedagogical professions necessarily produced pride, then no one should assume the position of a teacher, “since it is the duty of all to avoid pride.”

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[133] In ST I.II.77.5, Aquinas elaborates further on these three categories of sins. Following a long line of theologians, he states that concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life are the causes of all sin. These three are the direct consequences of self-love, which Aquinas says is inordinate desire of good. Since there are three kinds of goods—the natural and the spiritual goods of the concupiscible part of the sensitive appetite and the arduous goods of the irascible part of the appetite—these are respectively related to the three categories of sins.

Third, the religious vow[134] does not include a vow of humility, nor of any specific virtue; the religious vow is of obedience.[135] Virtue, Aquinas argues, has to do with voluntary disposition and gifts from God, not vows. Nonetheless, even if the religious vow did include a dedication to perfect humility, that still would not preclude the receiving of honors since, as he shows in the first point, it is not contrary to the virtue of humility. The problem with honors, for Aquinas, is not the honors in themselves, but the way they are received or sought after: "For pride consists not in possessing honors, but in being unduly elated by them."

Vigils, Fasting, and Mendicancy

As we have seen above, Aquinas was very resistant to the idea that teaching necessarily exacerbated one's already strong inclination toward pride—minimally, he did not believe teachership was the only profession to potentially do so. Nonetheless, he was convinced of the efficacy of certain religious rituals and practices in diminishing pride. Among the Christian practices, he mentions vigils, fasting, and mendicancy, in particular. In an attempt to defend the practice of these practices among the up and coming Dominican order he raises this issue in *Contra Impugnantes*. Within the same conflict

[134] According to Sommers, Aquinas is alluding to the vow of all monastic orders (Sommers, p. 201).

[135] Though a life of obedience does not necessarily result in less pride, Aquinas mentions in the *Summa* that pride *can* be diminished by a life of obedience: "Now the goods of this world which come into use in human life, consist in three things: viz. in external wealth pertaining to the 'concupiscence of the eyes'; carnal pleasures pertaining to the 'concupiscence of the flesh'; and honors, which pertain to the 'pride of life,' according to 1 John 2:16: and it is in renouncing these altogether, as far as possible, that the evangelical counsels consist. Moreover, every form of the religious life that professes the state of perfection is based on these three: since riches are renounced by poverty; carnal pleasures by perpetual chastity; and the pride of life by the bondage of obedience." (I.II.108.4) This focus on the role of obedience in aiding one to renounce pride will make more sense in our analysis of vigil, fasting, and mendicancy below.

between the new order and the secular university masters mentioned above[136], the latter were skeptical of the necessity and legitimacy of the practice of relying on alms to live. Aquinas calls this group "the adversaries of Christian poverty." Among the many objections that Aquinas's interlocutors raise against the practice, he mentions the argument that strong and healthy men should be working for their subsistence instead of depriving the poor of their due alms (ad 4), and that if the rule of begging for money became universal, "the human race will come to an end" (ad 11). Aquinas goes on to respond to the many arguments against the collection of alms, but he is especially keen on proving that living on alms is not only lawful, but that begging should be *required*. That is, the monks should not merely live on alms given to them voluntarily, but they should *actively beg* for financial aid. One of the reasons he gives for this has to do with pride:

> As vigils, fasting and suchlike macerations of the flesh are employed as means to combat concupiscence, so everything that tends towards humiliation diminishes pride, which is as much to be avoided as lust, since, as St. Gregory says, spiritual sins are the more heinous. Now no penitential exercise can be more humiliating than mendicancy, for man is naturally ashamed of begging. Hence as fasting and watching, regarded in the light of bridles to concupiscence, pertain to the state of perfection; mendicancy likewise, embraced for the love of Christ and for the sake of humility, pertains to the same state. (*CI*, Pars 2, Chapter 6, Res 13)

Practices of humiliation that are especially common among those who have taken the religious vows (vigils, fasts, and mendicancy), for Aquinas, are extremely useful in one's plight against pride. Vigils and fasts are practices that naturally downplay one's

[136] Secular (*saeculum*) in the sense of pertaining to the 'worldly,' not the modern definition as hostile to religion or the religious.

own physical needs and accentuate one's deficiencies. Begging, in particular, is a praiseworthy practice not only because these are those who have made a vow of poverty[137] and therefore are in *need* of charity, but because it helps to suppress the worst of the spiritual sins, pride, by acts of humiliation.[138] At the same time, Aquinas does not accept begging for begging's sake. Quoting St. Gregory, he clarifies that one must ask only for what is needed, "for it would be great pride if they were to beg for what is unsuited to their condition of poverty" (*CI*, Pars 2, Chapter 6, Res 13). Though mendicancy is not a necessary practice to signal humility in the religious person, its opposite—such as the use of ostentatious clothes by clergy— is a clear sign of pride or, at the very least, leads to a feeling of pride.[139]

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[137] The intention for which is an imitation of the life of Jesus Christ: "That the poverty of Christ ought to be imitated is proved by the Gloss in the following words: 'Let no one despise himself. He who inhabits a poor dwelling is rich in conscience, and he sleeps more peacefully on the ground, than the wealthy man can rest amidst his gold and purple. Fear not then in your misery, to approach Him who has put on our poverty.'" (*CI*, Pars 2, Chapter 6, Res 4)

[138] Aquinas here confirms an idea we have seen elsewhere—that shame has an important role in suppressing pride. One of the arguments against mendicancy that Aquinas mentions in the objections is the problem of shamefacedness (*erubescencia*). Because mendicancy causes shame (or embarrassment), and displays that which is disgraceful, then mendicancy must be disgraceful: "That which naturally causes shame in man, is intrinsically disgraceful...Now men are instinctively ashamed of begging; and the nobler a man's nature, the more acutely he feels the disgrace of mendicancy...Mendicity then is in itself disgraceful; and no one ought to resort to it who can live by any other means." (*CI*, Pars 2, Chapter 6, ad 9) Aquinas's response to this problem is a little confusing. While he thinks the feeling of shame is in fact useful for repressing feelings of pride, he also argues that, when properly understood, mendicancy is not shameful. Beggary is only shameful if one sees material deficiency as a disgrace, so Thomas's plea is for the mendicant to shift his assessment of the practice, for "beggary undertaken for the sake of Christ deserves honor rather than contempt."

[139] "The fact that the assumption of poor garments for hypocritical purposes is a great sin does not prove that poverty of apparel is itself more sinful than extravagance of attire. For poverty of clothing is not as closely connected with hypocrisy as splendour of attire is related to pride and luxury. Ostentation in dress leads of itself and directly to pride and luxury. It is therefore in itself culpable. But meanness of attire does not of itself directly tend to hypocrisy. Hypocrisy results from the abuse of a humble fashion of dress, just as it may result from the abuse of any other good work. Now the more excellent a work is, the more reprehensible is its abuse. Therefore the heinousness of hypocrisy is a testimony in favour of poverty of apparel and of the other external penitential works of which

Summary

In this last section of the chapter, I have shown that Aquinas portrays pride as a vicious passion of the irascible part of the soul and affection of the will that results from a deceptive or falsely hopeful self-assessment and reach for excellence. This affection, for Aquinas, is the beginning and most deleterious of all sins because it is chronologically at the genesis and serves as the end of all the other sins. Pride is also the queen of all vices given that withdrawal from God and lack of subjection to God, both essential to pride, is at the core of all other vices. These characteristics are evidence of Aquinas's belief that pride is the sin/vice that undergirds human inability to achieve human moral perfection, unwillingness to recognize God as the provider of gifts, either material or spiritual, and resistance to being subject to God's will communicated through the Law. Pride, therefore, is an essentially religious self-assessing passion and affection that, when habitual in the human agent, is responsible for the unsuccessful spiritual journey toward union with God. I have also argued that pride is inherently social, especially in the case of vainglory, given either 1) its reliance on an audience to approve of or believe in one's false self-assessment or 2) its reliance on a social foil to the material or spiritual object of one's pride. Finally, I have identified two areas in which Aquinas sees pride in practice. First, in Aquinas's denial of the necessary connection between teaching and the development of pride and, second, in his argument that Christian practices of humiliation tend to lead to a diminishing of pride. In sum, pride, for Aquinas, is an essentially social

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hypocrisy is the abuse. We do not mean, however, that hypocrisy is absolutely speaking the greatest of sins. For unbelief, whereby a man lies against God, is a more heinous crime than dissimulation, whereby he lies against himself." *CI*, Pars 3, chapter 1, res 7

and religious vicious self-assessing emotion that distances the agent from the perfection of human nature as well as from the chance of achieving the beatific vision.

D. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed analysis of two emotions in the work of Thomas Aquinas. To conclude, I will summarize both the similarities and differences between them and give inferential remarks on their role in the moral and spiritual life.

In my analysis of shame and pride, I have pointed to four characteristics that show the kinship of these emotions in Aquinas. First, both shame and pride, for Aquinas, are crucial emotions in the life of those seeking to achieve moral perfection and the beatific vision. That is, they are naturally *moral* and *religious* emotions. For the moral agent, shame is an affective shield against committing future morally disgraceful actions and the appropriate feeling toward past morally disgraceful actions. For the sojourner, shame is a virtuous fear that, coupled with hope of forgiveness, keeps both God's justice and mercy in clear view, keeping the agent away from sin and approaching them to God. Pride, on the other hand, does the opposite, serving as a catalyst for all the other sins and vices that distance the agent from human perfection and from the ideal subjection and reverence toward God. Shame before God is *fear* of non-subjection to God, while pride is *desire* for non-subjection to God. The former approaches while the latter withdraws. Second, both shame and pride are essentially *social* emotions. While shame is, by definition, the fear of reproach coming from the wrongdoing's audience, be it human or divine, pride seeks recognition of one's excellence by the social group. Third, both shame and pride are *self-assessing* emotions. While shame originates from a negative self-assessment of one's past

or future intended actions (most likely a true one, although Aquinas allows for the possibility of false negative self-assessments), pride originates from a positive self-assessment of one's material or spiritual accomplishments (and a false one at that). Fourth, both emotions have ties with the moral virtue of temperance and the infused virtue of hope. While shame is an integral part of the moral virtue of temperance and of the infused virtue of hope (under the guise of fear of God, which hopes for God's mercy toward a sinful act), pride is the opposing vice of the virtue of humility, which is under the category of temperance, and is an inordinate manifestation of the passion of hope.

For Aquinas, passions and affections have a pivotal role as extra motivation for virtuous and vicious actions and habits. Some are even a large part of the composition of virtues and vices. However, as I have shown in the case of emotions that relate to God either as having God as a partial or integral part of their object or as those which naturally distance one from God, some emotions *are* religious virtues and vices. Shame of God and pride are excellent examples. I believe this is so for two reasons. The first is the fact that they can be understood as a passion *and* an affection. As a passion, neither shame nor pride are voluntary. Though, as passions, they are essentially praiseworthy and blameworthy due to their strong tendency either to contribute or not to the moral life, as affections of the will they necessarily do so. The second reason for considering these emotions religious virtue and vice is their self-assessing character. None of Aquinas's other passions and affections result from an evaluation of one's own actions and

intentions.[140] This activity, however, is essential to Christian ethics—no truly virtuous action can result from improper intentions; effective repentance, confession or conversion follow only from an accurate estimation of one's past actions and intentions as well as from the appropriate emotional response when confronted with such estimation. Yet, in the fallen state, the human agent is incapable of properly practicing self-assessment and of responding in the emotionally appropriate way. How, then, does one resolve this conflict? Aquinas's solution is to show that proper self-assessment and emotional response in the moral life very much depends on the presence of the relevant virtue of humility and penance. In the spiritual life, they further depend upon the presence of God's grace, manifested through Gift of Holy Spirit of fear of God. Therefore, the successful moral and spiritual life depend, in great part, on the banishment of pride, and the reception of the Gift of shame. If pride is the poison of false self-assessment and consequent withdrawal from God, shame of God is an antidote, which, properly accompanied by hope of forgiveness, humility, and magnanimity, leads the cured human into union with God.

[140] At least, not essentially. For example, though sadness and joy can be results of self-assessment (such as in the case of penance), they are not *exclusively* the result of self-assessment.

4. Shame & Pride: A Comparison

A. Conflicting valances

When we speak of shame and pride, we commonly choose between two ways of applying the concept to what we, or others, are feeling or should feel. Generally speaking, we can refer to them as positive or negative emotions. That is, at times we use the concepts to refer to a rightful, useful, or rational feeling and, at others, a wrongful, useless, or irrational emotion. “You should be so proud of what you have done here,” a satisfied boss might say to her employee when contemplating a particularly stellar work of journalistic creativity. On the other hand, the negative sense of pride in “Judy can be so proud, especially when one tries to give feedback on her drawings” comes across clearly. The word is the same, the valence of the emotion in each claim, however, is completely opposite. The first example points to a rightful emotion, one that the person is warranted in feeling, and those who surround her are correct in encouraging. The person who is or should be proud *rightfully thinks well of themselves,* either generally speaking or pertaining specifically to a skill, an act, a character trait, or possession. The creative journalist has put in the hard work—the hours, the mental overload, and the pain of producing something excellent—to merit the feeling of pride, a feeling that claims a rightful place of honor. The second example, on the other hand, speaks to the kind of emotion the feeling of which we generally disapprove. It is an unwarranted, or ignorant emotion, one that claims superiority and honor without knowledge of the full truth about oneself and/or about the prized object of pride. Judy judges her work of art truly great, perfect even, and herself as a great artist, but perhaps only because she turns a deaf ear to

opposing voices, which would make herself and her work vulnerable to the point of reevaluation and redirection. To be proud, in these cases, is to be closed to any opinion aside from one's own and to claim superiority and honor where there is little or none to claim. We view it as an immoral emotion given its tendency to curtail one's need for moral improvement and social reciprocity, and because of its roots in a sometimes mistaken self-assessment and need for self-aggrandizement.

The same goes for shame, but in a slightly subtler manner. On the one hand, you have the mom of a teenager shouting "You should be ashamed of yourself!" as she brings him home from the Sheriff's department, where he has spent the night after attempting to steal a pack of beer from a 7-Eleven. On the other hand, "Shame has led your child to act in unruly ways" is uttered by a psychologist who attempts to pinpoint the underlying reason for undesirable middle-schooler behavior. The first example betrays the way we understand shame as an appropriate, even rational feeling to be displayed by those who have acted inappropriately (and were caught doing so). In fact, the teen's lack of shame would be evidence of flagrant imperviousness to other people's negative opinion (even of his own mother), his denial of the transgression's wrongfulness, or just pure ignorance of it all. Shamelessness, in our eyes, is a severe deficiency, which only highlights the positive value we put on the feeling of shame itself. In contrast, shame shows not only awareness of wrongdoing (and, consequently, of what is correct behavior), but even openness to correction and redirection. The second example, however, shows the other side of the shame-colored coin. In these contexts, shame is an unhealthy emotion, one that produces more harm than good. Instead of offering the means to self-observation and

moral attunement, shame in these cases crushes self-esteem in irreparable ways, *leading* instead to immoral actions, if only in an attempt to hide one's shattered sense of humanity and dignity. Child psychology, or simply human psychology for that matter, has increasingly shown the surprisingly negative effects of criticism that serves as the bedrock of shame, not to mention acts of shaming.[1] To place a child in a situation in which she perceives herself as bad in the eyes of others, they say, is an inefficient, if not dangerous way to achieve good behavior. It is, surprisingly, when the child and the adult feel *good* about themselves, they say, that they will act well. This use of the term shame is to say nothing about the numerous other ways we use the term as an irrational feeling, such as "it is so sad that he is ashamed of his poor family/race/sexual orientation." These are cases where the objects of shame are not moral, but sociological in nature and the kind that we tend to consider unreasonable, if for no other reason than the fact that they are mostly out of our control.

What, then, do Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas have to say about these conflicting valences of shame and pride? I hope it has become abundantly clear to the

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[1] For only a handful of research that correlates negative outcomes with feelings of shame, see June P. Tangney, Jeffrey Stuewig and Andres G. Martinez, "Two Faces of Shame: The Roles of Shame and Guilt in Predicting Recidivism" in *Psychological Science*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (March 2014): 799-805; Deborah Schooler, L. Monique Ward, Ann Merriwether and Allison S. Caruthers, "Cycles of Shame: Menstrual Shame, Body Shame, and Sexual Decision-Making" in *The Journal of Sex Research,* Vol. 42, No. 4 (Nov, 2005): 324-334; Joe J. Gladstonea, Jon M. Jachimowicz, Adam Eric Greenbergc, Adam D. Galinskyd, "Financial shame spirals: How shame intensifies financial hardship" in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Vol. 167 (Nov 2021): 42-56; Jeff Elison, Carlo Garofalo, Patrizia Velotti, "Shame and aggression: Theoretical considerations in Aggression and Violent Behavior" in *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, Vol 19, Issue 4 (July–August 2014): 447-453; James Gilligan, "Shame, Guilt, and Violence" in *Social Research* Vol. 70, no. 4 (2003): 1149-1180; H. Thomas, "Experiencing a shame response as a precursor to violence" in *Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* Vol. 23, 4 (1995): 587-593.

reader that both negative and positive facets of these emotions show up in the work of each thinker. The interesting question, however, is not *if* they show up, but *in what context*, for them, are pride and shame negative emotions and in what context are they positive emotions. Another issue that I have been investigating, and one that is closely related to the first, is the contexts in which they describe shame not only as a positive emotion, but a virtue, and pride not only as a negative emotion, but a sin and vice. The point at which this becomes possible, and actual, I show in this chapter, is exactly at the point of convergence between their ethical theory and their metaphysical theories. And it is under the description that arises from this metaphysics that they are both able to shift the valence of these emotions as good or bad, virtue or vice.

Upon the foundation I have constructed in the previous three chapters, I claim two things regarding these topics in this chapter. I claim that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas have many views in common with Aristotle about ethical theories in general, and shame and pride within that ethical theory, more specifically. That is, Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas agree on certain descriptions of virtue ethics in general, and of positive and negative kinds of shame and pride, more specifically. This more general commonality between the thinkers' is crucial to this comparative endeavor, and is the one I consider in the first section to follow. The more specific claim about the commonalities of their views on shame and pride, however, though relevant to this study, is redundant. This is because when it comes to universal human emotions, there are many agreed-upon conceptualizations about emotions that appear across the board (what a particular emotion refers to, its phenomenology, when they are good and when they are bad, etc.).

This is especially true when we are speaking of the views of thinkers who are relying on many of the same materials to form their own position. Given its redundancy and given the fact that these similarities must have been glaring after reading the past three chapters, I find little use in rehashing them in detail here. If anything, this chapter requires only that I show that the three thinkers I have examined in this dissertation are referring to a similar phenomenon when analyzing shame and pride, and not entirely unrelated ones. This, then, is my second (brief) endeavor in this chapter.

My second claim is that, despite these similarities, there are important dissimilarities. I do not mean to say this in a way that is rightfully derided in the field of comparative religious ethics, evidenced by random and expected kinds of dissimilarities between two objects of comparison.[2] I mean dissimilarities that arise from deep disagreements on the capacity for autonomous moral actions—and, thus, on the potential merit of human honor—, on the nature of God, on the final fate of the human soul and who is control of that fate, and on the depths of human moral inadequacies. That al-Ghazālī and Aquinas disagree about these issues with Aristotle makes for a host of differences between their ethical theories. In this study, I have chosen to focus on one of those: the valence of the self-assessing emotions of shame and pride. When reviewing this list of disagreements, I will show that the relevant point of divergence here is *metaphysics*. By metaphysics, I do not wish to refer to the convoluted philosophical term, which, rather confusingly, is defined as "the study of being itself" or of "being *qua*

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[2] See my discussion on the "ubiquity of resemblance" problem and other critiques to comparative projects in the introduction.

being." Rather, in this study it refers to the study of the moral and ontological nature of God and humans.[3] Tempting as it is, to place the distinctions that determine their different valences of these emotions under the category of *theology* is to overly simplify them. It is not just the reality of God, with all God's core characteristics outlined in Christian and Islamic tradition, that shape al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's valence of self-assessing emotions, but, concomitantly, a tradition of human essential self-worth. This, of course, is not detached from their theology. In fact, it is integrally related to it. However, I do not believe it can be ultimately reduced to their theology. In the second part of this chapter, I will point out these metaphysical dissimilarities under three general categories: 1) Big God Theory; 2) deflationary sense of self; and 3) Theistic causal moral luck. These dissimilarities corroborate with my greater point in this study, namely, that religious metaphysical frameworks provide important lenses with which to assess the valence of self-assessing emotions.

B. Foundational similarities

Between Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas

Perhaps it has become very clear that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas are working with a very close version of Aristotle's ethical framework regarding concepts of virtue, vice, and steps toward moral development. For all three, the category of virtue is the ideal lens through which to understand and conceptualize human moral life. Virtues can be

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[3] Though the nature of God has definitely been included among the subject matters of metaphysics, as Averroes is famous for doing, it was much more common among medieval philosophers to consider the study of God (or, more specifically, proofs for God's existence) merely the indirect subject matter, as the cause of being. See Aquinas on this, in Metaph., *prooem*. For an overview of this discussion, see Stephen P. Menn, "Metaphysics: God and Being" in A. S. McGrade (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 147-170.

developed through both theoretical education and practical habituation and it is consistent work on these two aspects that may eventually lead to a firmly established disposition toward obedience to right reason, which leads to good actions and good emotions. They are also all working with similar assumptions about the role of emotion in the moral life. Though there are relevant differences between them[4], the generally optimistic stance that emotions are central components of the virtuous life, both the praiseworthy ones (those that are in conformity with the deliberations of right reason) and the blameworthy ones (those that are not in conformity with right reason), permeates their works. That is, emotions moderated by good reason are the very essence of some of the virtues.

As I mentioned in the introduction, this shared framework serves as a foundation for this chapter, namely, the chapter where I perform the comparative work. Though comparisons of views between historical figures do not require that they share some kind of framework, such as religious, geographic, linguistic, political, or ethical frameworks, those that do allow for an easier comparison. In the case of this particular comparative project, the similarities between the three figures' ethical theories raises intriguing questions about the dissimilarities between them—that is, the thinkers' ethical theories are similar enough that the question "why do they differ on the question of the valence and role of self-assessing emotions in the moral life?" becomes a particularly interesting

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[4] Starting with the fact that both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas gave more prominence to the emotions in the moral life than Aristotle ever did. See Eleonore Stump, "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions" in *Faith and Philosophy* 28.1 (2012): 29-43 and Stephen Chanderbhan, "The Shifting Prominence of Emotions in the Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas" in *Diametros* 38 (2013) and Teneli Kukkonen, "Al-Ghazālī on the Emotions" in Georges Tamer (ed.), *Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-Ghazālī. Papers Collected on His 900th Anniversary*. Vol. 1. (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

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Between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas

There are two levels of shared frameworks that become clear throughout this dissertation. In contrast to most works of comparative religious ethics, and despite the very title of this dissertation, this is not a comparison between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, nor is it even a comparison between Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas. Rather, it is a comparison with Aristotle on one side of the stage and al-Ghazālī and Aquinas on the other. Two against one. The second level of shared frameworks that I need to show, then, is that shared by al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, who, in this project, occupy the same side of the stage despite the glaring differences between them that become clear after reading the two chapters dedicated to their thought. This, of course, is not the only way to compare these figures, but is the way I have chosen to do so.

Aside from their shared virtue ethics influenced by the Aristotelian tradition, these two figures are steeped in similarly monotheistic religious traditions. Though this may seem too broad a shared framework, it lends some of the same basic religious beliefs. For the purpose of this project, the most important one is that of an all-powerful, all-seeing, all-good, all-just, creator divine being. In turn, this shared belief has important consequences on their views of the human self, as I will show in detail below.[5] The Christian and Islamic traditions, more specifically of the Medieval period, lend a fertile

[5] In making this broad assumption, I am not choosing to ignore the very real differences between these religious traditions' positions on these topics. In this chapter, however, I have abstracted some of these views until the point of overlapping agreement, noticing, at the same time, their disagreements when necessary.

soil for comparison not only for their shared monotheistic views, but also for the theoretical materials they shared that lead to converging ideas and methods of intellectual investigation. In no way are these materials reducible to the translations of Aristotle's works to Arabic and Latin.[6]

If one looks more closely, one can see other, less evident similarities between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas which contribute to their parallel views on shame and pride. In the interpretation of these thinkers, the rituals practiced by their religious denominations embody the valence that they assign each of the self-assessing emotions analyzed and they perceive as part of their mission to point their readers back to these practices. For example, as I have shown in chapter two, for al-Ghazālī shame is not simply a praiseworthy abstract concept that should be felt before God, it is an emotion that must be habituated through repeated, carefully performed and correctly understood bodily movements such as touching one's head on the floor for daily prayer. And pride, for Aquinas, as I have shown in chapter three, is not an invisible evil that lurks in darkness, but is visibly manifest in the routine and seemingly mundane choice of the attire one

[6] Maybe as influential is their access to and use of the works of Avicenna, though this is not the focus of this dissertation since Avicenna is not the primary source for their ethical views and because, ultimately, Avicenna is also heavily influenced by Aristotle. Of the tangential ideas that show up in this dissertation, we know that Aquinas adopted, for example, Avicenna's concept of universal and particular. Al-Ghazālī, on the other hand, purportedly uses Avicenna's language when discussing his views of divine determinism, the faculties of the soul and, most importantly, agrees with him and others in including *haya'* (shame) among the virtues. See C. Burnett, "Arabic into Latin: the reception of Arabic philosophy into Western Europe", in P. Adamson and R.C. Taylor (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 370–404; D. N. Hasse, and A. Bertolacci (eds.), *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics* (Berlin/Boston: deGruyter, 2012); Mohamed Ahmed Sherif, *Ghazālī's Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 27-39.R. M. Frank, *Creation and the Cosmic System: Al-Ghazālī & Avicenna* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1992); Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

purchases and the place one sits in Church. To both encourage and eradicate this emotional tendency, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas are on a mission to train their communities morally and spiritually, both by pointing to rituals and practices that are already mandated by sacred books and ethical manuals or by coming up with their own. In the case of al-Ghazālī, the goal was to reach the broader Islamic community and in the case of Aquinas, the more restricted community of Dominican friars. Notwithstanding, they both agree in using the conceptual framework of virtue habituation as an efficacious way to educate their constituents (or, in al-Ghazālī's terms, to 'revive' them) in the proper Islamic and Christian moral and spiritual acts and emotions. I will expand upon this point in greater detail in the second section of this chapter.

Even more specifically, in their work, both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas are attempting a kind of apologetic of their denomination. Though not explicit in the *Summa*, Aquinas made it one of his goals to defend the legitimacy of the newly ascending Dominican order, to which he was fully committed. Al-Ghazālī, on the other hand, in the *Iḥyāʾ* and other works, was attempting something similar for the Sufi tradition, though his full commitment to the movement is less than clear. Though these two sects of their religion vary widely, this work of apologetics (and, at times, polemic) of the values and practices of these branches of their religion accounts for some of the similarities in their ideas of self-assessing emotions. As we have seen in the previous chapters, in defending the legitimacy of the Dominican order, Aquinas proves its practices, that follow the broader customs of the mendicant orders, efficacious for some of the greatest of Christian goals: to squash pride and develop humility. In a more forceful fashion, al-Ghazālī supports the

Sufi push for an internal criterion for valid worship which includes a sense of shame before God. It is exactly because al-Ghazālī strays away from the orthodox obsession on bodily positions, and turns his eyes toward the state of the heart, that more space is given to the relevance of shame (both in its positive and negative dimensions, as seen in chapter two) and the viciousness of pride.

C. Similarities on Shame and Pride

What we need from a comparative project, however, is not only a shared framework. The concepts compared must be shown compatible across the work of each thinker. Given that this is a comparison of the figure's views of shame and pride, there is no sense to it if I cannot show a clear agreement between them on what these terms stand for. Nonetheless, in order to avoid spending too much space in what I perceive to be the necessary, but least important work of this chapter (once again, for the attentive reader, the overlap of these concepts have been evident), I refer the reader to Table A and B. In these tables, I give a summary of the main points I brought forth in the last three chapters, highlighting each author's definitions and detailed positions on shame and pride and, consequently, showing the main points of agreement, or at least partial agreement.

Though I am tempted to move on, there is one elephant in the room that I must address in more detail.

The problem of megalopsychia

As has been clear since the beginning of this dissertation, I am placing Aristotle's *megalopsychia* on the same footing as al-Ghazālī's *al-kibr* and Aquinas's *superbia*. My comparison between these terms, however, presupposes there is substantial overlap in

their definitions, and some Aristotle scholars might be resistant to this.[7] They may argue, for example, that for Aristotle, the great-souled are *correct* in their positive self-assessment while, for the religious thinkers, pride is a *false* positive self-assessment arising from ignorance or exaggeration of one's true worth. How, then, can I compare these concepts when they seem blatantly distinct? More importantly, why am I not comparing, instead, Aristotle's *megalopsychia* with al-Ghazālī's great-souledness and Aquinas's magnanimity? Alternatively, why am I not comparing Aristotle's vanity, which is a *false* positive self-assessment, with al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's pride? Would these not be more accurate stages for comparison?

Let us look at the virtue of great-souledness/magnanimity a little closer. First, we must recall Aquinas and al-Ghazālī's concept of the virtue of magnanimity, or great-souledness, to see if they are, in fact, concepts that we may more easily identify with Aristotle's *megalopsychia*. To recall, al-Ghazālī recognizes a virtue called great-souledness (*kibar al-kibr*) which refers to the virtue of being (and evaluating oneself to be) superior to other people. Therefore, at face value, it would seem that pride (*al-kibr*) is to consider oneself superior without actually being such, and great-souledness (*kibar al-kibr*) is to consider oneself superior while actually being superior—in quite similar ways that Aristotle describes *megalopsychia*. However, also recall that al-Ghazālī is not convinced that such self-assessments are at all possible given our human limited knowledge of ourselves and of others and because no one is in fact worthy of such

[7] Such as Anders Tolland, "A Defense of Aristotelian Pride" in Christer Svennerlind, Jan Almäng, and Röngnvaldur Ingthorsson (eds.), *Johanssonian Investigations: Essays in Honour of Ingvar Johansson on His Seventieth Birthday* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Books, 2013).

position. For al-Ghazālī, then, positive self-assessments of merit and honor are at best unreliable, and at worst, wrong. To rehash Aquinas's position, *magnanimitas* barely includes a positive self-assessment in its nature. In his work, magnanimity is much more about great acts of virtue that benefit other people and, therefore, an other-regarding virtue in contrast with Aristotle's self-regarding virtue. Like al-Ghazālī, he also notes that positive self-assessment is a tricky business because one is often ignorant of one's own faults and of the truth about other people's hearts. Furthermore, for both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, any positive self-assessment must be moderated by humility, which, in the face of the temptation of esteeming oneself great, underscores one's defects.[8] For Aquinas, humility and magnanimity are not conflicting virtues for his magnanimity does not include a positive self-assessment in its essence like Aristotle's *megalopsychia* does. *Because he is also humble*, the magnanimous person recognizes his faulty nature and his lowly place in relation to God while also acknowledging God's fundamental role in empowering the human to live a life of great virtue. These recognitions are exactly the reasons why al-Ghazālī and Aquinas avoid depicting the virtuous person as arriving at positive self-assessments, both occasionally and dispositionally: the great person is

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[8] As Sophia Vasalou puts it, "the conflict between al-Ghazālī's views of esteem and self-esteem and ancient views inscribed into the virtue of greatness of soul seems open and direct." *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition*,
p. 50. She insightfully notes that "it is in fact conceit that constitutes the most direct interlocutor of Aristotle's virtue of greatness, insofar as the latter was specified in absolute rather than comparative terms." p. 43. That is, she takes conceit to manifest in absolute positive self-assessments ("I am great") in contrast with pride, which manifests in comparative positive self-assessments ("I am greater than…"). I have sided for the comparison between *megalopsychia* and conceit in this dissertation because, for al-Ghazālī, pride and conceit are almost inextricably related and because Aristotle himself also describes *megalopsychia* in comparative terms (e.g., the *megalopsychos* only accepts honor from superior people; the *megalopsychos* looks down on inferior people, etc.).

constantly reminded of their littleness even though they are greatly virtuous. These terms can be, and have been, compared in many interesting ways. However, due to their differences on the issue of positive self-assessment, which is precisely my focus in this study, I have not chosen them as the three objects of my comparison. Which concepts, then, *do* carry a positive self-assessment in their definition?

Aristotle's great-souledness and our religious thinkers' pride are connected by their sense of superiority, which is a consequence of their positive self-assessment. Aristotle's *megalopsychoi* do not, at any point in the text, display humility or even recognize anyone else's superiority. They are great, they know it, and they have no reason to humble themselves before anyone else. In fact, to do so would be false and, therefore, not be virtuous at all. Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's vice of pride displays this trait as greatly blameworthy, especially for not recognizing God as greater than humans, but also for not recognizing the greatness of God in other humans. The need for humility is based upon the tendency to evaluate oneself in ways that exceed one's capabilities and nature exactly because of ignorance about or forgetfulness of God. It is al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's recognition of this tendency that motivates them, and the prophets on whom they draw and from whom they learn, to regard pride at the center of all sins and humility as an exceedingly important virtue. That is, because pride forgoes God's sovereignty over humans it is not only a transgression of the Divine Law, but also goes against the deliberations of right intellect. It is for this reason that I do not compare Aristotle's vice of vanity with the religious thinkers' pride. The problem, for the latter, is not that the prideful person is necessarily *wrong* about their own great deeds and great virtue, but that

they 1) do not evaluate these deeds with an eye toward the greatness of God and his role in human moral success and 2) do not moderate their self-assessment according to their defects (aka, they are not humble). As such, as we have seen in the previous chapters, both the *megalopsychos* and the proud person display similar attitudes that are described by Aristotle in a positive tone and by al-Ghazālī and Aquinas in a negative tone. Attitudes and actions such as an active search for honor and the company of honorable people, while despising people of a lower status, for example.

For these reasons, I have chosen to make the move of placing Aristotle's virtue of *megalopsychia* on the same comparative stage as al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's vice of pride. Though, again, this is not the only reasonable choice of comparison, it is to this move that I owe part of the insights of the next section of this chapter.

Shame

	Aristotle	Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī	Thomas Aquinas
Definition	**Aidos:** fear of disrepute (NE) and a certain pain or agitation over voluntary bad deeds, present, past, or future that appear to bring one into disrepute (Rhet.).	**Haya':** a kind of pain of the soul from a feeling of deficiency, imagination or supposition of guilt; fear of failure.	**Verecundia:** fear of an evil act and the consequent disgrace that damages one in the opinion of others.
Location of origin	Non-rational part of the soul	Soul	Appetitive part of the soul
May be a disposition?	**NO**	**YES**	**NO**
Distinction between prospective and retrospective shame?	**NO**	**NO**	**YES**

Pre-conditions	- Perception of an audience; - Judgment of wrongdoing; - Desire for the good and the noble, but lack of knowledge of the good or consistency in good acts.	- Perception of an audience (physical or hypothetical; human or divine); - Knowledge of a moral or spiritual shortcoming; - Concern for one's reputation in the mind of others;	- Perception of an audience (especially those who are close to the wrongdoer); - Judgment of disgraceful act; - Concern for the opinion of others; - Consideration that disgrace is inevitable;
Bodily Characteristics	Blushing	N/A	Blushing, low gaze, contrition
Categorization	Praiseworthy and more common in the young, not present in the elderly and in the perfectly virtuous; exists only hypothetically in the perfectly virtuous.	Praiseworthy especially in the young.	Praiseworthy in those who are not yet fully virtuous. Not commonly felt by the elderly and those steeped in sin. Exists only naturally (non-moral shame) and hypothetically in the virtuous and not at all in the blessed.
Contrasting dispositions	Shamelessness and bashfulness	Shamelessness and boldness	Shamelessness and bashfulness
Valence	Praiseworthy passion because it is evidence of love for what is noble; shows awareness of blameworthy/praiseworth y acts. Positive passion in the non-virtuous, far superior to fear of punishment.	One of the virtues of temperance because it indicates accurate moral perception and is a deterrent of immoral acts. Originates from a noble disposition.	A praiseworthy passion that is good by its very nature and a prerequisite for the virtue of temperance. It is the effect and sign of 'good will' that avoids what is evil.
Caveats to positive valence	- Better than most moral motivations, but a lesser motivation for good acts compared to love for virtue; - Entails wrongdoing and therefore cannot be a virtue;	- Better than most moral motivations, but a lesser motivation for good acts compared to love for virtue; - Audience that causes shame is limited in knowledge;	- Entails wrongdoing and therefore cannot be in the virtuous or in the blessed; - It is not voluntary and, therefore, not a stable disposition like a virtue.

	- It is not voluntary and, therefore, not a stable disposition like a virtue;	- May be felt irrationally; - It can appear concomitantly with a vice, such as ostentation;	- It does not essentially include repentance; - May be felt irrationally;
Spiritual shame	N/A	Virtue of the pious	A Gift of the Holy Spirit

Table A: comparison of shame in Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas

Pride

	Aristotle	Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī	Thomas Aquinas
Definition	**Megalopsychia**: a virtue that disposes one to deem oneself worthy of great honor, and to claim great honor to oneself due to performance of great acts of virtue. It is concurrent with a desire for superiority and active search for occasions of great honor.	**Al-kibr**: a vice that disposes one to feelings of self-importance, magnificence, and superiority to others. Caused by self-admiration and results in love for status and ostentation. The origin and cause of all sin.	**Superbia**: an inordinate desire to excel beyond reason, either by thinking oneself worthy of something or by lying or exaggerating about goods/virtues possessed. Concomitant with a tendency to think of oneself more than one is.
Location of origin	Soul	Soul	Irascible part of the soul and will
May be a disposition?	**YES**	**YES**	**YES**
Pre-conditions	- Active search for and performance of great acts of virtue; - Positive self-assessment of one's worthiness of honor; - Social recognition of greatness with honor;	- Belief that one is superior and that others are inferior; - Ignorance of one's defects and God's awareness of them; - Ignorance of God as the creator and conferrer of all good things;	- Desire for more external goods (especially honor) than one properly deserves; - False self-assessment of greatness; - An audience before which one can exalt oneself;

		*Ostentation, consequent of pride, requires a human audience.	
Characteristics	- Delight in honors given by people of higher status; - Contempt for honor given from people of low status or for small honors; - Eagerness to be of service to people of worth and good fortune; - Justly looks down on others; - Disposed to feeling contempt for others; - Speaks and acts openly and truthfully; - Benefits others but is embarrassed to receive benefaction; - Disposed to return a benefaction with a greater one to restore superiority; - Wishes to be superior and thus does not remember benefactions done to him; - Does not hold grudges, avoids gossip, criticizing others, complaining, and seeking praises; - Will not perform unvirtuous acts just for honor;	- Ostentation; - Backbiting; - Envy; - Rancor; - Exalts himself above peers, demeaning them through slander; - Not able to give good advice and does not accept advice from others; - Refrains from lowly people; - Gives himself precedence in gatherings; - Disapproves publically of those who have shortcomings; - Sings his own praises; - Happy to correct other people's mistakes;	- Ostentation; - Puffed chest; - Lofty eyes; - Stretched up neck; - Sits in places of honor; - Wears expensive clothes; - Makes sure everyone knows of their achievements and good deeds; - Seeks recognition from the public; - Is motivated to do good works only to receive external and perishable goods; - Looks down on others; - Exaggerates or lies about their excellence; - Gives themselves all the merit for their excellence; - Lacks true greatness;

Classification	Virtue of courage	Vice of temperance	Vice of temperance
Valence	Praiseworthy and the crown of the virtues due to its agreement with reason that the person is great and worthy of great honor.	Blameworthy because it goes against reason, which establishes that God is superior in nature and acts and that humans are defective.	Blameworthy because it opposes right reason, which dictates that the person does not possess the good for which they feel proud and that their self-estimation is incorrect. It is also sinful because it displaces God from his rightful position as the foremost object of human love and subjection.
Contrasting dispositions	Vanity (considers oneself worthy of great honor, but is not); small-souledness (is worthy of great honor, but considers oneself unworthy); arrogance (will do anything and please anyone to achieve external goods); boastfulness (pretends to have qualities he does not); ironist (denies the qualities he possesses).	Humility	Humility

Table B: comparison of pride in Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas

D. Relevant dissimilarities

Now that the foundational similarities between their ethical accounts and the compatibility of their concepts of shame and pride have been firmly established, we may proceed to the meat of my argument in this chapter. That is, my answers to the question "what are al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's contributions to the discussion of the valence of these

self-assessing emotions within their virtue ethics?" Firstly, it is important to note that discussions of the adaptations of Greek virtue ethics made by religious thinkers abound. Alasdair MacIntyre, for example, has a well-known summary of some important points of adaptation from Aristotelian ethics to religious ethics. He lists ethicists such as the Christian Aquinas, the Jewish Maimonides and the Islamic Ibn Roshd as having understood ethics not only as "teleological injunctions, but also as expressions of a divinely ordained law," adding or amending to the lists of virtues and vices, adding "the concept of sin to the Aristotelian concept of error," and describing the true end as other-worldly.[9] Eleonore Stump brings the point of theistic adaptations of Aristotelian ethics into greater relief when commenting on Aquinas's divergence from Aristotle's original framework. The same idea can be applied to al-Ghazālī:

> The difference in culture between Aristotle's pagan worldview and Aquinas's Christian worldview about the ultimate foundation of all reality has far-ranging effects in many areas of philosophy, and most notably ethics. It should therefore not be a surprise that Aquinas's ethics is non-Aristotelian. What would be genuinely surprising is if, with this difference in metaphysical worldview, the ethics of the two philosophers were the same.[10]

It definitely should not be surprising that we see relevant dissimilarities between Aristotle's and al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's virtue ethics. On the other hand, it remains interesting and relevant to map out the impacts that a Abrahamic monotheistic[11] framework had on their virtue ethics in general and on their views on specific virtues,

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[9] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*: *A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), p. 53.
[10] Eleonore Stump, "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions," in *Tópicos (Mexico)* Vol. 42.1 (2013): 33.
[11] This is an important qualification because Aristotle was a theist, and a monotheist at that.

vices, and emotions, in particular. As I have indicated in the introduction, there is a scarcity of material on these topics.

To set the stage, let us circle back to my introductory remarks to this chapter. There, I mentioned the positive and negative valences for the two emotions I have chosen to explore in this dissertation. With the examples we contemplated, it seems naïve to assume that anyone would judge any given emotion to be always good or always bad. To be considered good or bad, emotions must be put into context. What then, are the general conditions under which Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas consider shame and pride negative or positive emotions? In what ways are these “rules of valence” influenced by their religious views or lack thereof?

As I hope has become clear thus far, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas *agree* with Aristotle on the positive valence of shame before other humans and, also, on many of the same reasons for not considering it unqualifiedly positive (see Table A). However, the more interesting part, as I have noted, is not found in this agreement, but in their disagreement. And the principal disagreement lies in the valence of shame before God: al-Ghazālī and Aquinas both regard shame before God as not only praiseworthy—a virtue and a Divine Gift—but indeed as a religious mandate.[12] Therefore, under a particular description as a disposition toward a negative self-assessment that fears reproach from God, shame is a religious virtue that is present in the fully virtuous believer as well as those who are

[12] To reiterate something that I mentioned in chapter two, neither al-Ghazālī nor Aquinas talk of a blameworthy kind of shame before God, but I do not want to assume that they would deny the existence of a passion of shame before God that may contrast with the virtue of shame before God. For this reason, I am explicitly referring to this shame before God as a virtue and not simply using the term shame on its own.

enjoying the afterlife of the saved, an idea that has no place in Aristotle's writings.

Regarding pride, on the other hand, the disagreements come more easily to the fore. It is a virtue for Aristotle and a sin/vice for al-Ghazālī and Aquinas. This stark contrast is clear from the get go because, while shame before God is treated separately from shame before humans by our religious thinkers, pride is always already an emotion and trait that has to do with one's relation to God. That is, pride, in its very essence, betrays ignorance about or lack of belief in God's nature and work as well as of one's defective moral and spiritual nature. Therefore, under a particular description as an emotion of positive self-assessment that desires greatness and superiority, pride is unqualifiedly negative for the religious thinkers, yet not for Aristotle.

E. The metaphysical frameworks

This definition of shame that warrants al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's positive valence and this definition of pride that justifies their negative valence are not to be found in Aristotle's work because they rely on metaphysical presuppositions that Aristotle did not have. I will suggest three categories of metaphysical frameworks in this chapter: 1) the 'Big God' religious framework; 2) a deflationary sense of self; and 3) a Theistic causal moral luck framework. To discuss these three ideas that I believe undergird the valence al-Ghazālī and Aquinas assign to self-assessing emotions, I will rely on terms borrowed from the sociology and anthropology of religion, theology, as well as from philosophical ethics.

The 'Big God' of Christianity and Islam

The relatively new field of cognitive and evolutionary approaches to the study of religion has introduced alternative ways of understanding the origin, definition, and enduring attraction of religion. One of the theories proposed by a few scholars in this field will be helpful to partially frame the first theistic presupposition that shapes al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's ethics, and that is the 'Big God' theory.

For social psychologist Ara Norenzayan, the Axial age[13] saw the emergence of what he dubbed 'Big Gods,' which showcase intriguing differences from the gods of the Archaic era due to the grand scale of their dominion over the world and over humans.[14] These gods of the so-called monotheistic 'Axial religions'—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—now required exclusive loyalty and enforced moral behavior with their maximally powerful nature and unrestricted domain. Religions that develop the idea of a Big God agree that God is intensely interested in human behavior and closely monitors moral behavior, with eternal consequences to those who do not follow the moral norms put in place by this God. According to Norenzayan, it is thanks to the conformity that is enforced by the religions of Big Gods that cooperation-based communities of strangers

[13] The term "axial age" was originally coined by German philosopher Karl Jasper in his *The Origin and Goal of History.* The term refers to the period between 800 and 300 BCE, during which there began to emerge new ways of thinking about the cosmos and of interacting with the world across the globe. Jaspers found several commonalities between ideas that surfaced in different parts of the world, including spiritual, political, and philosophical innovations. These innovations supposedly continued to influence subsequent societies, which is why even religions that originated after the Axial age are still dubbed "Axial religions." See Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).
[14] Ara Norenzayan, *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

become successful in the Axial age.[15]

It is not my goal here to support or criticize the minutiae of the Big God theory, or even the broader Axial age theory, but to use it as a useful framework for the point I wish to make.[16] The God of al-Ghazālī and Aquinas *is* the Big God of the monotheistic traditions. That is, the God who knows all, can do all, and is perfectly good and just. More importantly, he is the God that is highly invested and interested in human moral and religious behavior. This is in contrast with the archaic gods of Aristotle's Greek religion, who are not generally described as omniscient or morally absolute, but who are seen merely as a more powerful version of humans, petty behavior and unruly emotions included.[17] This belief in a Big God is clearly influential in al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's valence of shame and pride in two principal ways. First, that God is attentively watching over humans and judges their behavior in order to assess the merits of their reward and punishment allows for ample territory for shame and deters feelings of pride. Second, awareness of a Big God, infinitely superior both ontologically and morally, results (or should result, for them) in modest and humble attitudes. In what follows I will show the

[15] Norenzayan, p. 145. For more on the 'Big God' theory, see Robert Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011) and Ann Taves, "Big Gods and Other Watcher Mechanisms in the Formation of Large Groups" in *Religion* 44.4 (2014): 658-666.

[16] In fact, the theory is subject to several criticisms not only from an historical perspective due to its sometimes crass generalizations and quick assumptions of causality, but also from the perspective of religious studies due to its dubious definition of religion and its obliviousness to Eastern religions that emerge in the so-called Axial age, but that are not devout to a 'Big God.' For a summary of the critiques to Norenzayan's theory in the literature, see Michael Stausberg, "Big Gods in review: introducing Ara Norenzayan and his critics" in *Religion* 44.4 (2014): 592-608.

[17] This can be confusing, since Aristotle is considered an Axial figure given his contribution to the idea of the separation of religion and political power, characteristic of the Axial period. However, I would contend that, despite being an Axial figure in the general sense, he is still very much embedded within the Archaic Greco-Roman religion, in which the gods are not considered morally invested in the lives of humans, nor are moral ideals themselves. Thanks to John Balch for pointing this out to me.

specific ways in which they weave these beliefs into their valence of shame and pride.

The Rationality of Shame before God

As we have seen in all three thinkers that I have surveyed in this dissertation, an audience is an essential ingredient for the emergence of shame. Yet, interestingly, the human audience is either subtly or strongly characterized as somewhat unfit for judging other people's actions and, therefore, for accurately assessing them as blameworthy. In al-Ghazālī and Aquinas there is the added problem that humans cannot read hearts and, therefore, can be mistaken about someone's intentions and motivations. For this reason, al-Ghazālī goes so far as to deny humans the right of even unveiling other people's defects and wrongdoing. Only God has the right to do so for only God has the properties necessary to accurately assess human wrongdoing, thoughts, and motivations. Humans can also be inappropriate judges of other humans due to their limited knowledge of the correct moral and religious norms that should be used to assign blame and, therefore, facilitate the feeling of shame. Once again, only God is the ultimate knower of the norms against which people should be judged.

The relationship between this point and the rationality—and therefore goodness—of shame should be clear enough.[18] If humans are not fit to properly evaluate one another, either because of their restricted knowledge of the other or of the correct moral norms, the rationality of the shame originating from such evaluations is not guaranteed. That is,

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[18] Here I am using 'rational shame' in a sense with which I believe all three of my thinkers would agree, namely, the kind of shame that is the result of deliberative and correct reasoning regarding the object of the shame felt (that for which one feels shame) and the audience the shame (before whom one feels the shame). This kind of shame could also be referred to as "fitting" or "apt" shame, but I have chosen to use the terms rational/irrational as I see them as best fitting the Aristotelian virtue ethics.

one would certainly feel shame if judged (even wrongly) by another human to have broken a moral or social norm, but that feeling of shame might not be fitting because the emotion might not cohere with the truth of one's actual action or with the truth about the action's immorality. Consequently, one of the ways that one can guarantee shame's virtuous rational foundation, that is, guarantee that it is felt due to disgrace that is founded upon true assessment of the human agent, is to consider God the assessor. For al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, God is the only accurate assessor of human behavior and, therefore, shame elicited before God is a warranted emotion and a virtue. How, though, is the human to know that they have done something disgraceful before God? For them, humans may know the proper reasons for feeling shame before God through revelation.[19] I will go into greater detail about this below. Of course, we are still missing the importance of an accurate *self-assessment* in order for the emotion to be warranted and, therefore, virtuous, but this is a topic I am reserving for later.

Why is God an accurate assessor, for these thinkers? In short, because he is a Big God. He has perfect knowledge of the human heart and acts and, consequently, the virtue of shame before God is due to perfectly assigned blame. Furthermore, at the core of God's role as the perfect attributor of reproach is God's investment in the human moral life. In the Abrahamic monotheistic traditions, this characteristic of God surpasses that of any god in the Greco-Roman world. This strong investment is manifested in three ways:

[19] Evidently, humans are susceptible to being wrong in their interpretation of revelation, and therefore in their understanding of what does or does not result in reproach from God. Not to mention being mistaken in the self-assessment of whether one's wrongdoing is, in fact, an instantiation of the wrongdoing mentioned in the Divine revelation. Nonetheless, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's position on this seems to be that, when assisted by God, one is able to accurately know the correct moral and spiritual norms as well as know one's position in relation to those norms.

1) God is the provider and revealer of the moral and religious norms upon which all humans must base their lives, 2) he is the judge who evaluates their success or failure, and 3) he is a being whose attributes are perfect in every sense.

God, the Perfect Moral Judge

Unlike Aristotle, who derives the standard of moral life from "reason alone," al-Ghazālī and Aquinas are adamant that it is God's revelation that consists in the primary source of the ideal moral objects of shame (with reason as a contributor to achieving such knowledge).[20] This belief gives them munition to counter any argument stating that the objects of shame before God are subjective or derivative of temporary norms in place in a particular time or place. That these norms that dictate the feelings of shame have a strong epistemological foundation make them both objective and universal. Furthermore, al-Ghazālī is clear that given the fact that it is God who is the ultimate judge and rewarder of all acts and thoughts, it is to him that we owe shame, not to fallible, finite human beings. Unlike the gods of antiquity, who, for the most part, require sacrifices of appeasement, the Abrahamic God requires moral righteousness as a sign of faithfulness and loyalty. The moral acts of the human become the ultimate sacrifice of appeasement in these monotheistic traditions. Failure to submit to this Big ruler and judge is a source of shame for true believers. Finally, but not least important to these thinkers, they consider God the perfect producer of proper reproach because of his classical attributes. In the religious traditions in which these thinkers are located, God is everywhere (omnipresent),

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[20] This aspect of their theory can also help to explain why certain objects of shame that one might consider non-moral are indeed moral for these thinkers. When revelation describes them in moral terms, they become moral objects of shame for the religious tradition.

God knows everything (omniscient), and God is perfectly good and just. Al-Ghazālī frequently makes the connection between the 'watchfulness of God' and feelings of shame before him—once you are aware of the former, the latter comes naturally. As I have noted in the previous subsection, God is the ever-present audience, even when one mistakenly has the sense of being alone, and an audience, everyone knows by now, is an essential component of the emotion of shame. Aquinas's spiritual shame arises from an appreciation for God's grandiosity, manifested both in his mercifulness and in his just nature. Furthermore, being perfectly good makes God the ultimate ideal for the moral life. Not so much an exemplar, for no one can perfectly imitate the Divine nature, but the standard by which all good and evil is evaluated. The attributes of perfect goodness, combined with omnipotence and omnipresence, give God not only the right, but the power to reproach the human agent.

That these attributes, interests, and acts of the Christian and Islamic God shape our thinker's positive valence of shame says much about what they believe shame to be *about*. This analysis allows us to place our thinkers' position in a contemporary debate in philosophy of emotion—what specific kind of self-assessment is conjured in the shameful person? I contend that, using the language of this debate, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas show that shame is a mix of autonomous and heteronomous self-assessment.

In Gabrielle Taylor's groundbreaking philosophical analysis of self-assessing emotions, she argues that shame has to do with feeling degraded, not the kind of person one believed or hoped to be.[21] Though Taylor includes the idea of an audience in the

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[21] Gabrielle Taylor, *Pride, Shame, and Guilt: Emotions of Self-Assessment* (New York: Oxford

feeling of shame, for her, both the agent and the audience share the values by which she is judged and, therefore, the self shares the negative assessment made by the audience. More recently, Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, and Fabrice Teroni similarly concluded that the evaluation performed by the subject who feels shame is one of incapacity to fulfill the demands of values to which she is attached.[22] Phil Hutchinson argues that, because one can deny the judgments of the social group, one's character is the standard for the emotion of shame.[23] In contrast, there are those who place the origin of shame primarily *outside* of the agent. For Jean-Paul Sartre, shame is the feeling that arises when one perceives themselves to be the object that the other is looking at and judging, without opportunity of defense.[24] One need not, then, self-assess negatively to feel shame. Bernard Williams tends to agree that shame is more a response to the denigrating regard of others than a negative self-assessment.[25] Other scholars take an entirely novel approach, such as David Velleman, who understands the feeling of shame as a failure from the part of the agent to maintain hidden what is to remain hidden, a "failure of privacy," "and so an inadequacy in your capacity for self-presentation…potentially undermining your standing as a social agent."[26] And, finally, Martha Nussbaum considers shame a feeling of inadequacy, "lacking some desired type of completeness or

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University Press, 1985).

[22] Julien A. Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno and Fabrice Teroni, *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[23] Phil Hutchinson, *Shame and Philosophy: An Investigation in the Philosophy of Emotions and Ethics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[24] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: an Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (London: Routledge, 2020).

[25] Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), Appendix 2.

[26] J. David Velleman, "The Genesis of Shame" in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* Vol 30.1 (2001): 38.

perfection."[27]

The implicit controversy in this discussion is not simply definitional, but is one of heteronomy versus autonomy of the emotion of shame. There are those who defend shame as an autonomous human emotion, originating primarily from a perception of failure of one's own moral values and, therefore, not entirely dependent on the judgement of others. Scholars like Deonna, Rodogno and Teroni, for example, consider the sole concern for appearances and outside influences morally superficial, though they allow for some of the values held dear by the agent to be social in nature, such as the values of reputation or privacy. And there are those who think it more accurate to view shame as a partially or radically heteronomous emotion, one that has little to do with one's own moral values, but that is integrally attached to one's perception of others' views of oneself. For these, shame is a morally problematic emotion that has little to no value for moral development.

How do al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's views of shame compare to contemporary classifications and what does the idea of God contribute to these views? As I have made clear in previous chapters, shame for them, both before other humans and before God, has to do with a clear perception of incompleteness or lack of a certain perfection. At times, Aquinas calls that which the agent perceives in oneself a "deficiency" or "deformity." It would seem, then, that both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas hold an autonomous understanding of shame, though, evidently, not deprived of a heteronomous component—one's perception of incompleteness is primarily based upon the internalization of external

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[27] Nussbaum, p. 184.

sanctions, both social and Divine[28], and their very definition of shame includes the component of reputation, reproach, and the opinion of others, all of which are the exclusive domain of the public. As Kristján Kristjánsson puts it: "in order to elicit shame, the heteronomous judgement needs to have the required 'autonomous bite'."[29] Shame before God in particular, however, can also be felt in recognition of one's incompleteness in comparison to God's pure completeness. Al-Ghazālī considers it a given that a true believer will feel shame before God even when no specific wrongdoing has been done since the very ontological gap between humans and God is unsurpassable. That is, the Big Gods' completeness and perfection in all their attributes coupled with their super senses (the capacity to see everything, including the imperfections that are hidden in one's heart) creates, for these thinkers, a fertile soil for shame in the human.[30]

How do al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's Big God religious traditions shape their valence of pride? The consequences for pride are very similar to those of shame, only inversely so. If God's perfection induces shame in humans, it consequently crushes any feelings of pride, not least because shame and pride are opposites in the scale of self-assessment. Because al-Ghazālī and Aquinas both assume that imperfections are either universal or *very* likely in every human being on this side of heaven, as we will see in more detail

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[28] This does not make their view less autonomous as few, if any, scholars of emotion would claim that the standard upon which we judge ourselves and feel shame is attained completely autonomously (perhaps Immanuel Kant is the exception here).

[29] Kristján Kristjánsson, "Is Shame an Ugly Emotion? Four Discourses—Two Contrasting Interpretations for Moral Education" in *Studies in Philosophical Education* 33:495 (2014): 503.

[30] Their contribution to the discussion of heteronomous vs. autonomous shame can also help illuminate a further reason for their positive valence of "shame before God." For them, while human sanctions might be illegitimate because of the limits of the social rules and of the human senses, and therefore bypass the true autonomous assessment, Divine sanctions can never bypass the autonomous perception.

below, they reason that acknowledgement of the existence of a being that can see any and all imperfections is likely to hinder feelings of pride. After all, to desire to be or believe one is great, in the case of humans, one must be willing to ignore their inevitable deficiencies. To foster feelings of greatness and superiority, especially toward God, is against reason *as construed by* Muslims and Christians, because part of the knowledge that constitutes right reason is knowledge of human's contingent existence, sinful nature, fallibility, and, most importantly, God's undeniably superior nature and acts. For these thinkers, equipped with knowledge of God's grandiosity and the fleeting nature of human achievements, the appropriate response of human beings is to develop the virtue of humility, which is the clear counterpart to the vice of pride. To perceive oneself as superior to others is to deny central revealed and rational truths about the equality of all beings and the superiority of God. The relation of these thinker's metaphysical views with their valence of pride will come more easily into view in the section below.

Up until now, I have focused my attention on al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's assumptions about the attributes of God and his moral involvement in the world, which I have dubbed their Big God religious framework. This framework, I have argued, has a direct effect on their valence of shame and pride. On its own, however, the Big God framework is insufficient to explain these thinker's positive valence of shame and negative valence of shame. As I have repeatedly stated, both shame and pride are bi-directional—they result from an external audience who observes and evaluates the agent, but as a *self-assessing emotion*, many times they also require the agent's agreement of said judgment. It is on this aspect that I will focus next.

Deflationary account of self

In my second point, I would like to argue that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's deflationary account of self, promoted by their religious traditions, have strong ties with their positive valence of shame and negative valence of pride. This point is made more clearly when viewed in parallel with Aaron Ben-Ze'ev's philosophical analysis of the virtue of modesty. Ben-Ze'ev defines modesty as an evaluative attitude that concerns the fundamental equal moral worth of every human being. That is, when one's evaluative belief is that all humans share a common nature and common fate, what results is the virtue of modesty. This evaluation of other humans is what leads the modest person to refrain from exaggerating the value of their accomplishments within a limited evaluative framework (i.e. baseball trophies, PhD diploma, wealth, etc.) for the gap that their accomplishments create between them and others surrounding them is dwarfed when placed within the perspective of basic human equality. Modesty understood in these terms, Ben-Ze'ev notes, does not "oblige one to deny the superior position within a given evaluative framework."[31] In other words, it does not require dishonesty, or insincerity about one's accomplishments, nor does it require one to remain ignorant about them. Rather, Ben-Ze'ev's definition of the virtue of modesty merely requires one to be capable of fusing one smaller evaluative framework within a greater, more universal evaluative framework.

If "modesty requires a realization of the fundamentally similar worth of all human beings, and the evaluation of this similarity as more significant than the differences

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[31] Aaron Ben-Ze'ev, "The Virtue of Modesty," *American Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 30 (1993): 237

resulting from the accomplishments of different human beings"[32], then spiritual shame and resistance to pride requires a realization of the fundamentally similar *moral and spiritual deficiency* of all human beings and considering this more salient than the differences resulting from any particular accomplishment. Utilizing Ben-Ze'ev's nomenclature, and adding some of my own, I am arguing that this belief in a shared deficiency in all humans serves as one of the monotheistic meta-evaluative frameworks of self-worth and other-worth that mold the valence of self-assessing emotions. As is the case with modesty, the shame and humility that finds its roots in this meta-evaluative framework does not deny the positive self-appraisals that occur within other, more limited evaluative frameworks, such as when one is pleased with themselves for finishing a job done well. However, any positive self-appraisals are required to be fused and dwarfed under the dominating meta-evaluative framework of inadequacy in relation to the greatness, creativity, and perfect nature of God.

I have shown this to be true at several points of this dissertation. For both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, any glory that might be accorded to a human shrinks in light of the truth of the human sinful condition. To be clear, there are important anthropological disagreements between al-Ghazālī and Aquinas. In line with Islamic anthropology, al-Ghazālī holds that the *fitra*—human's unspoiled original nature—desires closeness to God and is naturally subordinate to God's will. This is why, as we have seen in al-Ghazālī's work, to deviate from God's law is to go *against* one's nature. As some have noted, in this sense the Islamic (and more specifically Ghazālīan) anthropology is in line

[32] Idem, 240.

with a more Platonic anthropology, in which "the human being lies situated midway between the bestial and the angelic: we have, so to speak, a leg in both camps, living at once in both the sensible and the intelligible worlds."[33] To allow oneself to be dominated by our bestial side is to give way to our inordinate desires, or the appetite, in a way that is not in harmony with reason and the law of God. Ultimately, then, our nature is not the cause of the suffering that results from immorality since it is not responsible for confusion, disobedience, or perdition. If anything, it is the cause for human yearning and purposeful direction toward wholeness, obedience, and salvation. This unnaturalness of disobedience and distancing from God is different from Aquinas's Augustinian anthropology of original sin. Steeped in the Augustinian tradition, Aquinas is inclined to give the fallen human nature a significant burden of responsibility for human immorality. In contrast to al-Ghazālī, Aquinas relies on biblical evidence that to deviate from God's law is, in fact, to *obey* the fallen human nature. This contrast creates a distinction in their views of God's interference in the moral and spiritual life of the believer. For al-Ghazālī, though there certainly is room for divine intervention in human moral development, it is especially salient and absolutely necessary in Aquinas's ethics.

Despite this distinction in their views on the innate human capacities for goodness, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas share many views relating to moral development. For both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, moral development hinges upon habituation. The better the actions we habituate, the better person we will be, not only because we will be acting

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[33] Taneli Kukkonen, "The Self as Enemy, the Self as Divine: A Crossroads in the Development of Islamic Anthropology" in *Ancient Philosophy of the Self* (2008): 210.

well, but because we will actually like to do those good things. The same goes with bad actions. Similarly, if the proper spiritual practices are habitual, they become pleasurable and second nature. Furthermore, they both take a step further than Aristotle's *eudaimonic* theory in establishing that the achievement of a life of virtue in this world only allows for a limited kind of happiness. True happiness is only achieved in contemplation of and unity with God. This union requires more than mere virtue habituation and moral perfection. In fact, for both thinkers, it is impossible to achieve through human effort alone and, thus, requires divine intervention of some sort or another. Here there is certainly a difference in degree of divine intervention, as I mentioned. Though al-Ghazālī certainly acknowledges human dependence on divine deliverance of *knowledge* that contributes to the moral and spiritual life, and that Divine grace is manifest in the purity and direction bestowed in the human *fitra*, he does not have a parallel view of infused virtue and grace to Aquinas's in the *Iḥyā'*[34] (more on this in the next section). Despite the fact that human effort does not, by itself, reach true happiness, both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas believe that the human work of clearing the path by extinguishing bad habits and creating good habits is essential for the later divine work. In this sense, it is the combination of feeble human effort and divine grace that allows for perfect human virtue and the achievement of ultimate happiness.

It is upon a deflationary view of the self that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas establish the

[34] Though it is not parallel to Aquinas's infused virtues, as we have seen, al-Ghazālī certainly has a strong idea of "divine assistance." Sherif connects acts of worship with this divine assistance: "Acts of worship are 'virtues' in that they are means to the attainment of happiness. Indeed, they are the most important means to such an end because, through them, man appeals directly to God for divine assistance without which it is impossible to achieve anything." p. 91.

centrality for shame before God, not based solely upon a particular wrongdoing, but upon the deprecated state of humans. For al-Ghazālī, this state is of constant forgetfulness of God. For Aquinas, it is a state of ever-increasing distance from God. For both, this state is the cause of, or at least justification for, not an occurrent kind of shame that arises, subsists temporarily and fades like other emotions, but for an almost perennial kind of shame. This perennial kind of shame in the believer is a clear sign that they not only understand who God is, but that they are unmistaken about who they are. This brings up another central characteristic of shame, according to most of those who specialize in the emotion: the shameful person's agreement with the evaluative judgment of the audience. According to Charles Cooley, for example, "We always imagine, and in imagining share, the judgments of the other mind."[35] There is no doubt that the shameful believers that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas envision—those who have a clear understanding of the defects of the sinful self—are in full agreement with other humans', but especially God's, judgment.

Religious rituals are incredible evidence for the idea that shame may arise from a religiously-based deflationary view of the self. Recall that al-Ghazālī includes shamefulness as one of the key pre-conditions for the correct state of the heart before ritual as well as a condition for the heart during proper ritual performance. Though he certainly focuses on shamefulness that stems from knowledge of sinful acts, he also points to knowledge of one's natural vileness and inclination to fleeting things. For al-Ghazālī, it seems, ritual is the perfect opportunity for habituating shame before God.

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[35] Charles Cooley, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York: Scribners, 1922), p. 184-185.

Every day, several times a day, shame should be felt strongly in the soul and embodied through particular positions so that one's natural state of forgetfulness of God's presence can be shunned. These rituals are especially effective when one is able to perceive God's presence and understand his attention to the details of the heart throughout the practice. The audience, even if invisible to the human eye, is once more essential for the feeling of shame. Also recall that Aquinas lists shame as a necessary condition for the rite of confession. The believer cannot expect their act of confession of sins to be effective before God and before the religious community if it is not accompanied by a strong sense of horror for one's sin and fear of divine and human reproach. That shame is present in their rendering of religious rituals is not surprising. As described by Cooley, Goffman and Scheff, shame is a sign of disconnect and alienation.[36] Rituals may be understood, in part, as an attempt to bridge the disconnect and subdue the alienation caused by the ontological gap between humans and God. In order for this to happen at all, the alienation must first be acknowledged through a feeling of shame.

Aside from a deflationary view of the self rooted in its natural alienation from God, the religious thinkers include human limited properties as part of the deficiencies of human nature. This is also a reason for shame, not due to those limitations on their own, but for their natural consequences. For al-Ghazālī, for example, one cannot *know* that their ritual was perfectly acceptable to God (and, therefore, that the alienation was subdued). Consequently, shame must be the fallback emotion during and after any ritual.

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[36] Thomas Scheff, "The Ubiquity of Hidden Shame in Modernity" in *Cultural Sociology* Vol 8.2 (2014): 132.

For Aquinas, even the blessed feel a certain kind of fear before the realization of the incommensurability between God's nature and their human nature, no matter how significantly improved their moral state is in heaven.

The view that shame stems from a deflationary view of the self is precisely what some philosophers of emotion view as characteristic of shame. In contemporary literature, this is called the "Global Self" aspect of shame. In sum, the theory is that what ultimately distinguishes shame from guilt is that it is a negative self-assessment done in relation to the Global self, that is, the person taken as a whole, while guilt is a negative self-assessment that relates to particular bad actions.[37] Generally speaking, shame is better expressed through the evaluative statement "I am a bad person" rather than the more guilt-like expression "I did something bad." This tends to be true, according to the literature, if one has a "fixed" self-regard. In other words, the more fixed, or unchangeable, one considers one's traits of character, the more they tend to respond with shame to moral failure. According to the Global self theory, "the self is the focus of

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[37] See Helen Block Lewis, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis* (New York: International Universities Press, 1971) and see Janice Lindsay-Hartz, Joseph De Rivera, and Michael Mascolo, "Differentiating guilt and shame and their effects on motivation" in J. P. Tangney & K. W. Fischer (Eds.), *Self-conscious emotions: The psychology of shame, guilt, embarrassment, and pride* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995), pp. 274–300 for psychological studies that seem to suggest this theory is true. Also see Deonna, Rodogno and Teroni for a critique of such view. For them, shame is not necessarily all-encompassing, but is focused on our character as it relates to particular values. Furthermore, they argue that "the notion of a 'global self' remains quite mysterious and much too dramatic to account for many episodes of shame." p. 85. Also, for Kristján Kristjánsson, "It is common in everyday language, popular literature and soap operas to see people lamenting about, for instance, the all-encompassing guilt they feel for having spent their whole lives failing to appreciate the people who really love them…or to hear them saying how ashamed they are of some specific inappropriate gesture or remark which slipped through their defense barriers. One can, it seems, reasonably feel guilt about general aspects of one's emotional make-up and ashamed over specific behaviours." In "Is Shame an Ugly Emotion? Four Discourses—Two Contrasting Interpretations for Moral Education" in *Studies in Philosophical Education* 33:495 (2014): 504.

evaluation."[38] Though this theory is not devoid of criticism, it helps name the religious thinkers' suggestion of an almost perennial feeling of shame before God. Given their views of human nature or tendencies, the Global self is constantly evaluated negatively by those who are attentive enough to notice.

From this deflationary view of the self, our thinkers also derive a negative valence of the emotion of pride. If the human condition of sinfulness, either in their very nature or by later acquired tendencies, is universal, then there is little space for feelings of superiority or for a desire to excel that exceeds the rational expectations for fallen humans. For them, this blameworthy emotion or disposition was not only the catalyst for human moral and spiritual downfall, but constitutes the root of most sins humans fall prey to. Therefore, for them, the vice of pride, which is the habitual tendency toward feelings of superiority and greatness, is the principal tendency of human fallen nature. This is no surprise. As Anthony Steinbock put it, "Insofar as pride entails an exclusion of otherness…pride can be understood as a closing down or narrowing movement in and through a peculiar assertion of the self."[39] For a human being to feel pride and act according to this feeling is to orient themselves inward, while the ideal God established for his creatures is an orientation toward the magnification of God and the well-being of other humans, that is, an outward orientation. More severely, to feel pride is to lack recognition of the greatness of God. Though, for both thinkers, humans can achieve incredible degrees of moral and spiritual "perfection," any person in this position should

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[38] Deonna, Rodogno and Teroni, p. 84.
[39] Anthony J. Steinbock, *Moral Emotions: Reclaiming the Evidence of the Heart* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2014), p. 32.

never fail to recognize that their perfection is little in comparison to God's and, furthermore, to shift the honor to God, since their greatness is a gift from God.[40]

As we have clearly seen in previous chapters, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas recognize vestiges of goodness in the human species that bring balance to their negative view of positive self-assessments. God created humans with a unique nature that shares some of its features with that of God and, as God is worthy of honor, his human creation inherits some of these rights of honor. Some people are able to more clearly demonstrate this shared nature in their moral and spiritual life and, for this reason, are worthy of great honor. Furthermore, to aspire to great things, to act in great ways and to recognize one's honorable merits for doing so *while recognizing these feats as gifts from God* and *while acting for the purpose of enhancing the lives of other people* is not incompatible with piety and a proper Muslim and Christian humility. Both thinkers find in their moral and spiritual exemplars the perfect manifestation of this harmony between greatness and humility. Jesus and Mohammad were certain of their greatness, recognized the great honor that was due to them, and acted according to perfect virtue in the greatest sense imaginable while, at the same time, maintaining a humble attitude of acting for the sake of other people and many times being unwilling to accept the honor rightfully due to them. Humility, in this case, is slightly modified in order to fit the character of these exemplars. Rather than humility being about thinking little of oneself given certain deficiencies, exemplified by Jesus and Mohammad it is the virtue that values and works toward the well-being of others even when doing so is detrimental to one's own well-

[40] Vasalou makes a similar point in *Virtues of Greatness in the Arabic Tradition,* p. 44-45.

being, especially by assuming a position of lowliness *despite* greatness. Al-Ghazālī gives evidence of Mohammad's humility by listing his acts of modesty and acts that favored others (especially the lowliest) instead of himself. Aquinas depicts Jesus as the most perfect manifestation of the virtue of humility in his incarnation as a lowly human and his death on the cross. Jesus and Mohammad were certainly worthy of great honor (in fact, the worthiest in human form), yet denied honor in exchange for the benefit of others. Their choice of exemplars of virtue creates a clear contrast between their views of pride and Aristotle's, whose ideal moral agent is not coy to claim their due honor.

Notwithstanding their recognition of honorable aspects of human nature, both al-Ghazālī and Aquinas do not miss a beat to follow these assertions with ones of caution. Without a doubt, when evaluating the correctness of one's positive self-assessments, recognition of one's faulty nature must prevail over recognition of one's part in the divine nature. In fact, in their work there is little to no space for understanding pride as an emotion or disposition that has to do with self-respect and dignity, as is common in positive connotations of pride today, exemplified in the kind of pride I mentioned in the very beginning of this chapter where one feels a merited sense of self-respect.[41] This is most likely because neither al-Ghazālī nor Aquinas see room for a double meaning for

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[41] Robert Roberts mentions several others of these cases of positive shame: "The self-reference in pride can also lend health to a deflated self. The poor black teenager who is proud of the accomplishments of Louis Armstrong or Michael Jordan or Toni Morrison enjoys a mitigation of an erosive discouragement, a prop in the edifice of his dignity and self- respect. Self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect are dispositional attitudes in the neighborhood of pride but are not vicious. Patriotism is a kind of pride, and may be a virtue. 'Pride' is an ambiguous term, and as far as I can tell, always has been." In "The Vice of Pride" in *Faith & Philosophy* Vol 26.2 (2009): 122.

pride[42]—one, as Robert Roberts notices, that is compatible with humility, and the other that is an "inordinate prominence of the self."[43] That latter definition is that to which they most closely subscribe.

Just as in the case of shame, humility as contrary to the vice of pride is inculcated in the believer through ritual practice. The strong natural impulse toward pride requires not only knowledge of the human defective nature, but habituation of bodily movements that highlight that knowledge and inculcate humility in the believer. Al-Ghazālī sees the ritual of standing erect, yet with the head bowed, as a crucial act of habituation of humility, freeing the heart of pride. Aquinas, on the other hand, finds effective antidotes for pride in Christian and particularly Dominican practices, such as fasting and, in the case of his order, mendicancy. That the community of Sufi Muslims and Dominican Christians practiced intentional rituals to disavow the self of an excessive need for honor or sense of greatness is part of the reason these thinkers were willing to defend their practices in the first place. [44]

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[42] According to Thomas Scheff, neither do we: "The confusion of English vernacular is obvious in the case of pride, since dictionaries and usage both imply two contradictory meanings. The first meaning is negative: pride is interpreted as egotism. ('Pride goeth before the fall'). When we say that someone is proud, it is likely to be condemnatory. False pride might be a better name for this kind of self-feeling, to distinguish it from true pride. The second meaning is positive: a favorable view of self, but one that has been earned. This kind of pride is genuine, authentic, justified. However, even adding these adjectives doesn't completely eliminate the negative flavor. In English, the word pride is often tainted by its first meaning, no matter how impressive the justification." "A Retrospective Look at Emotions" in Jan E. Stets, Jonathan H. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions: Volume II* (New York: Springer, 2014), p. 256-257.

[43] Roberts, p. 124.

[44] As we have seen, al-Ghazālī, in contrast with all other Muslim philosophers, has a long discussion of the virtue of humility, regarding it as the main virtue of the pious person: "His view of humility, therefore, is a valuable illustration of his qualified acceptance of the philosophic virtues." Sherif, p. 54. I believe a partial reason for this focus on humility is the influence of Sufism in his theology and philosophy.

The physical and epistemological deficiencies of human nature are also taken into account when describing pride as a vice. As I have mentioned before, al-Ghazālī considers the virtue of great-souledness practically impossible to obtain because of human incapability to know if one is *in fact* superior to others. He also mentions human limitations and even disgusting aspects of the human body such as weird bodily excretions as reasons for people to immediately forgo any sense of pride in its sense of superiority to others. Though Aquinas does not focus on specific human deficiencies that should deter one from pride, he does make it clear that the finitude and imperfectness of human nature is reason enough for humility, for it is a fitting virtue even for Jesus who, though morally perfect, assumed a human nature (II.II. 161.1 ad 4). Furthermore, for him, to habituate pride is to consistently consider oneself greater than one actually is, yet one

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Similarly, Aquinas, though using the language of honor in his description of magnanimity, recasts honor as something that should not be sought for its own sake, but only for the sake of others. John Bowlin has a fantastic summary of Aquinas's engagement with Aristotle's thought on the topic: "Magnanimity is immediately about hope, which tends to the difficult good, and mediately about honor, which is owed to those who do or achieve something great and difficult (STII–II.129.1.2). Accordingly, magnanimity is also about hope for honor and therefore must regard two things: the attempt to accomplish some great deed as its end, and honor as its matter (STII–II.131.2.1). The trouble here, at least for Aquinas, is that unlike Aristotle, whom he follows in these matters, he cannot recommend honor as a good that may be desired and hoped for as virtue's reward. For Aristotle, those who wish to accomplish great things also desire honor, and they justly claim it for themselves in accordance with the greatness of their achievements. This is why he refers to them as the proud (EN 1123b16–26). By contrast, Aquinas declares that desiring honor for oneself is nothing but vicious ambition, and this is true even if one is deserving, having pursued some great deed or accomplished some great work. It is 'inordinate appetite of the arduous good,' what Aquinas calls 'pride of life' (STI–II.77.5; cf. ST. I–II.84.2; II–II.162.1) because it represents a failure to recognize that great things are accomplished only with God's assistance, and that, as a result, honor is due principally to God, not to the magnanimous. It is also a failure to recognize that God grants excellence to the magnanimous in difficult matters so that they may profit others. It follows that right appetite for excellence must not 'rest in honor itself, without referring it to the profit of others' (STII–II.131.1). For this reason, Aquinas describes magnanimity as 'the best use of the greatest thing' (STII–II.129.1), by which he means using honor, the greatest of external goods (STII–II.129.2), to seek the good of one's neighbor and to revere God." John Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 25.

would expect that the virtue opposed to pride would be to consider oneself great when one actually *is* great, such as in Aristotle's model, which makes great-souledness the virtue that opposes the vice of vanity[45]. That the virtue that opposes pride is humility gives testimony to Aquinas's ideal: that the appropriate and true negative self-assessments of humility are the upside of the false positive self-assessments of pride.

When considering self-assessing emotions, one must take into account the audience that produces the emotion, one's assessment of the self *and* the ultimate cause of one's moral actions. I have given al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's approach to the first two aspects in the subsections above and will tackle the last below. Regarding the last aspect, it seems intuitive that less shame and less pride would occur in those who do not deem themselves responsible for the bad or good action in question.[46] Yet, in the next and last point, I will show their surprising argument that shame should be more present (yet pride more absent) exactly *because* they see God as the Divine creative director behind human action.

Theistic causal moral luck

In Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel's famous work on what Williams first dubbed 'moral luck,' they argue there are many factors that influence one's moral choices and, consequently, how they are, or should be, evaluated by others.[47] More specifically,

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[45] Vanity is *one* of the opposing vices of great-souledness, along with small-souledness, boasting and irony. For Aquinas, magnanimity is only the virtue of attaining ordinate glory, in opposition to the vain glory of its opposing vice. See chapter one for more on this.

[46] Obviously, it is not uncommon for some people do feel shame and pride for an action or attribute that was not under their control. The qualification "less," in this sentence, is critical.

[47] Bernard Williams, "Moral Luck" in *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers from 1973-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Thomas Nagel, *Mortal Questions* (Cambridge:

these authors are concerned with the factors that are not under the agent's control. Nagel defines the concept in the following way: "Where a significant aspect of what someone does depends on factors beyond his control, yet we continue to treat him in that respect as an object of moral judgment, it can be called moral luck."[48] He goes on to identify four kinds of luck, which can also be applied to moral luck: resultant, circumstantial, constitutive, and causal. Resultant luck is that which is the outcome of an act, such as when one intended to poison their partner, but got distracted by a TV show and ended up accidentally putting the poison in the cat's food and killing it. Circumstantial luck is luck in the circumstances around the moral agent, such as the case of the kleptomaniac cyclist who, due to a blockage on their usual cycling path, ends up stealing merchandise in a shop on the urban route they were forced to go through. Constitutive luck refers to luck in the very moral agent, their upbringing, genetic tendencies, friends, environment, etc. If it is the case, for example, that the son of a tyrannical dictator learns to be an evil tyrant only due to the circumstances in which he was raised, it is a case of moral luck for the circumstances that led to his moral decisions were beyond the agent's control. Finally, causal luck is when the agent's act is caused by something outside of their control. For example, if it turns out that determinism of the will is true, all of our acts are caused by previously determined factors.

I raise the issue of moral luck from philosophical ethics in order to use it as a lens to understand one of the important reasons why al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's views of shame

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Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[48] Thomas Nagel, *Mortal Questions*, p. 26. Luck here does not necessarily refer to "good luck," but to whatever is outside one's control, with either good or bad results.

and pride differ from Aristotle's, and it is what I am calling Theistic causal moral luck. Since moral luck is about the different ways we feel and attribute moral blame and praise, it is directly related to shame and pride.

Aristotle's moral luck

Aristotle holds that two things are true: 1) much of one's moral decisions is a consequence of one's constitution and circumstances (upbringing, education, etc.), that is, things that are beyond one's control; 2) *and* that one's control over one's actions (agency/voluntariness) is germane to ethics in general. This last point is what warrants many occasions of blame (which, many times, results in shame) and of praise (the highest version of which is given to the proud). Nonetheless, he does not explicitly mention the possible incompatibility between these premises, nor does he recognize that, due to the first premise, the attribution of praise or blame for an agent's actions may not be warranted. Rather, Aristotle takes the two truths for granted without need for further argument.[49]

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[49] Here I am not taking a stance on Aristotle's deterministic or non-deterministic, compatibilist or incompatibilist view of responsibility for one's character. I am only noting that he does not make an explicit argument for either position, which is why there is so much disagreement on the issue. As W. D. Ross put it: "On the whole we must say that he shared the plain man's belief in free will but that he did not examine the problem very thoroughly, and did not express himself with perfect consistency." Aristotle (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1923), p. 209. For much more on the two interpretations of Aristotle's position, see P. Destrée, "Aristotle on Responsibility for One's Character" in M. Pakaluk and G. Pearson (eds), Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 285-318; G. Di Muzio, "Aristotle's Alleged Moral Determinism in the Nicomachean Ethics" in Journal of Philosophical Research Vol. 33 (2008): 19-32; J. Roberts, "Aristotle on Responsibility for Action and Character" in Ancient Philosophy Vol. 9 (1989): 23-36.

Al-Ghazālī and Aquinas on Theistic causal moral luck

For the religious thinkers, blame and praise, and consequently shame and pride, do not and should not merely occur based on voluntary actions. According to al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, these emotions and dispositions can also be based upon moral luck. Not only this, but sometimes the cultivation of shame and the evasion of pride in part *rely* on knowledge that our moral decisions are out of our control. More specifically, I will argue that their conceptions of Theistic causal moral luck lead them to conclude that shame *should* be felt for reasons outside of the agent's control and pride most certainly *should not* be felt for reasons outside of the agent's control. Theistic causal moral luck here refers to God's supreme control over the broader human history and the specific human life being the causal factor that goes beyond the agent's control.[50]

Al-Ghazālī clearly defends a version of Theistic causal moral luck, as we have seen in the second chapter. Though he wavers between a strong Ash'arite deterministic view of God being the constant creator of every human thought and action, and a weaker view of God as the first cause and creator of the chain of cause and effect, both views place God at the beginning and center of all human moral actions. Taking the second,

[50] Understood in this way, Theistic causal moral luck is especially problematic when speaking of humans' eternal destiny. In Aristotle's theory, it was just a matter of worldly happiness and unhappiness. For the religious thinkers, moral decisions have eternal consequences independently of their divinely-prescribed antecedent catalysts. Hence, the bigger problem for them, and one that has gone on forever in theological and philosophical literature, is: if God is the one in control, while the human lacks much of the control, then why undertake the moral journey at all and where is the justice in the outcome? This is a question I am setting aside for the purposes of not getting off track. The study I have offered in this dissertation is on the positive and negative valence of shame and pride, so I am dealing with theistic causal moral luck only as it relates to this topic. Though the question of pre-destination and Divine justice in the work of these writers is an interesting one, it has had its fair share of commentators.

weaker account to be al-Ghazālī's true position, he holds that God is the originator and determiner of all chains of secondary causes, including those that direct human decisions. More poignantly, God is the creator of all necessary conditions for a human act: the knowledge, motivation, volition to act, power to act, and, finally, the act itself.[51] Humans, on the other hand, are the "place" of good or bad action. That is, where the acts that God has previously created and made the effect of a particular cause may temporarily take place. In the spiritual sphere of life, it is in humans that God "creates…the actions that later cause their redemption."[52] Though humans are the 'acquirers' of actions, the acquired action is only possible due to God's provision of knowledge of good and bad actions, the power to acquire the action, and the previously created chain of events that led to the action's acquisition. Inasmuch as al-Ghazālī does not defend a radically deterministic position, he does not hold that God forces the hand of humans to act according to his will. Nevertheless, God is the ultimate agent behind all moral actions.

Al-Ghazālī's acceptance of the theory that God created the causal chains that govern the universe and that are set in motion in each human life leads him also to conclude that God in some way predetermined people to be a certain way and to fulfill his plans on earth. That he thinks God has created such decrees is clear in the ways al-

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[51] Mohammad Sharif notices this in similar ways than I do, also within the context of comparing al-Ghazālī's virtue ethics to the Greek, Aristotelian version: "It is evident that Ghazālī accepts the psychological basis of virtue and argues for it. He also accepts the basic characteristics of virtue acknowledged by the philosophical tradition. But he introduces certain changes such as the possibility of divinely bestowed inborn virtue, divine intervention to show man how to distinguish between good and bad deeds, and finally, the impossibility of fully observing the mean without appealing to divine guidance. Changes like these to not belong to the philosophic tradition, and Ghazālī introduces them on the basis of religious teachings, particularly those of Islam." *Ghazālī's Theory of Virtue* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 37-38.
[52] Griffel, p. 223.

Ghazālī talks of those who attain moral and spiritual perfection with little to no education or need for habituation. God, in these cases, eliminates all obstacles to achieve such perfection, setting off a chain of causal effects that lead the person to the position he wills.

This theory of Theistic causal moral luck is, of course, metaphysical and very different from the causal moral luck at play when someone is pushed and, as a consequence of this push, ends up sitting on a button that activates a bomb. The distance between the latter kind of causal moral luck and al-Ghazālī's kind is evident because of his assumption of agency in one's acquiring of the act as well as in his very motivation behind writing the *Iḥyā'*—to persuade Muslims to undertake the arduous, and worthwhile, path of moral and spiritual revival.

To be sure, al-Ghazālī implies other kinds of moral luck, in very similar ways than Aristotle. Though "every child is born in equilibrium and with a sound innate disposition," it is through their particular environment (especially parents and educational system) "that ugly customs are acquired." This circumstantial and constitutional moral luck, however, is not an obstacle for morally praising or blaming the person. That is, to have been brought up by non-believers and, therefore, having the disposition to be disobedient to God's law is no exemption from being blamed for one's impious actions and attitudes. Similarly, to have been educated according to the precepts of Islam because one's parents, society, and school are Muslim and, consequently, to turn out to be an obedient Muslim *is not* an obstacle to receive praise. For al-Ghazālī, however, Theistic causal moral luck *is* an obstacle for self-praise in the form of pride and a motivator for a

certain kind of shame. At the very least, knowledge of Theistic causal moral luck is a form of checks and balances regarding one's moral and spiritual self-assessments and other-assessments. Let us explore how al-Ghazālī frames this.

For al-Ghazālī, to have a correct self-assessment, one must keep in mind that God is behind all human moral action. To be sure, humans *must* receive punishments and rewards for their actions and attitudes—this is a large part of the motivation behind good action in the *Iḥyā*ʾ' and is the effect of the very causal chain that God created. Nonetheless, because the action and attitude requires God's assistance, the merit for them is not entirely due to the human *as an agent* and, therefore, they should not elicit pride. If all of the parts of the causal chain leading up to the virtuous act, the virtuous act included, are created by God, there is little pride to be felt by the mere acquisition of that act into one's own repertoire of actions. Furthermore, if the person gave no contribution to God's decision to make that person a virtuous person or a non-virtuous person (and to spring in action the causal chain that would lead to that effect), then why boast participation in the effect? To recall, al-Ghazālī also summons his readers to feel fear of and shame before God for a similar reason for which they should shun pride—reward for human actions is not up to the human, but is given based on divine will. Even if the believer delivers what they think was a perfectly performed spiritual duty, God may not accept it. That God's role in human decisions should shun pride yet promote shame in al-Ghazālī's thought seems problematic. Why does the argument not cut both ways, that is, why doesn't this fact both shun pride and disallow shame? Though he does not recognize this potential case of special pleading, it does seem that he is here referring to the kind of shame that is

due to the ontological gap between humans and God. In other words, given that God displays all this power of deciding the human's eternal destiny, humans should feel shame of their inadequacy and lowliness in comparison to God.

The idea that God ultimately choses humans' eternal destiny seems to contradict al-Ghazālī's theory that God creates pre-determined causal chains, one of which is the chain of causes that ultimately leads to the effect of reward in heaven. However, as many commentators have noticed, al-Ghazālī, in contrast with other Aristotelian Muslim philosophers, did not hold that these causal chains are *necessary*.[53] He denies such necessity exactly in order to maintain belief in Divine miracles. Miracles, after all, are a disruption of sorts of a well-known causal chain. He repeats this idea when talking about shame and pride. The believer, informed of the truth that God can interfere in causal chains, cannot feel pride for he cannot be sure that God will maintain the structure of the causal chain of salvation. That is, God may or may not choose to reward one for good deeds or punish one for bad deeds. The ultimate decision is God's and no amount of certainty of one's merit can push God one way or the other. Instead of pride, shame and humility are the most appropriate responses to knowledge of Theistic causal moral luck.

Aquinas has a subtler view of Theistic causal moral luck. For him, humans do not operate solely upon the freedom of their will and the contingencies of events in the world do not arise by chance. Rather, God is the ultimate cause of both human agency and all

[53] This is especially clear in the *Incoherence of the Philosophers (Tahafut al-Falasifah)*. See, among many other works, George Giacaman and Raja Bahalul, "Ghazālī on Miracles and Necessity" in *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 9 (2000): 39-50.

events in the world, even when these seem accidental.[54] Aquinas sees this causal relation between God and human agency in two ways. The first is almost identical to al-Ghazālī's view, namely, that God's providence is responsible for the causal chains existent in the world. As he puts it "As to the design of government, God governs all things immediately; whereas in its execution, He governs some things by means of others."[55] These other means, for Aquinas, are the causal laws that God puts into action in the world. The second way, and directly related to the first, is God's assignment of a good end to all created things, the perfection toward which things are ordered according to their nature. This is no random assignment of goods, of course, but partial participation of God's creatures in his own nature. For example, God creates in human nature the drive toward the good end discerned by right reason—happiness—which is achieved by the perfection of the human's unique capacity of rational thought. By doing so, humans are led to act in search of that perfection. However, ultimately, in seeking the good end, Aquinas believes humans are seeking the final Good—God. That is, as the essence of all goodness, all beings ultimately desire God himself.[56] God, therefore, is the *beginning*, the *end*, and the *source* of every moral act.[57]

In other contexts, Aquinas, like al-Ghazālī, stresses the existence of a Divine rule, which establishes each person within a particular "station." As we have seen, pride is the

[54] ST I.116.1
[55] ST I.103.6
[56] ST I.6.1
[57] "A creature's goodness is both properly its own and a fragmentary manifestation of God's. Goodness 'inheres' in a creature, but as a creator and end, God is that good's ultimate source—in two senses. He creates creaturely goodness and makes it—*qua* participation in him—good (I.6.4)." David Decosimo, *Ethics as a Work of Charity: Thomas Aquinas and Pagan Virtue* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 53.

absence of subjection to God in relation to this station, that is, to appoint oneself to a station or position that was not part of the original rule of God. In other words, God has made the seating arrangements. To choose another table is an affront to his sovereignty, proudly nominating oneself as the event coordinator. Similarly, Aquinas also believes there are external and involuntary circumstances, brought about by Divine Providence, that affect moral development. For example, in chapter three we saw how external goods such as wealth may allow for greater virtue, including the virtue of magnanimity. They can also help bring about or exacerbate pride. It is God's causal agency that enables these "accidental" circumstances. Nonetheless, Aquinas does not question human free will in any circumstance. In the very introduction to the second part of the *Summa*, he states "Having discussed the exemplar, God…we now examine his image, man, insofar as he is principle…, as having free choice and power over his works."[58] For him, there is no sense in "counsels, exhortations, commands, prohibitions, rewards, and punishments" if human free will were not a reality.[59] Though Divine government over humans and human free will are very difficult to reconcile as every Theist philosopher in history would attest to, Aquinas suggests a way. All of the components of human decision-making come from God and, without this Divine assistance, there would be no free will. For example, the natural desire that humans have for perfected reason, manifested in a life of virtue, is given by God, while the actual virtuous act is voluntary and chosen freely. In other words, "The choice itself…is in us, but presupposes the help of God."[60]

[58] ST I.II. *prooemium.*
[59] ST I.83.1
[60] ST I.83.1 ad 5

In the work of Aquinas, however, more important than God's interference in causal affairs leading up to a virtuous act is the causal moral luck implicit in the necessary contribution of divinely infused virtues for the complete success of human moral life. Central to the *Summa* is the idea that humans are insufficiently capable of, on their own, achieving the highest moral standard. There are virtues that are beyond natural human capacities, especially those related to a relationship to God and to other human beings, that require divine intervention and infusion of the most important virtues. Divinely infused virtues are needed to fulfill a moral and spiritual gap that is a residue from the entrance of sin in the world and embedded in human nature—both to heal the wounded nature and to elevate it.[61]

This Thomistic idea, however, counters something that his philosophical master, Aristotle, holds dear. That is, for Aquinas, God's grace in infusing virtues can overcome the limitations of even the least fortunate of upbringings.[62] That infused virtues rely exclusively on God's grace and cannot be attained solely by human effort essentially means that they are not merit-based or effort-based. In other words, infused virtue "leaves

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[61] Eleonore Stump rightly argues that this aspect of Aquinas's ethics makes it, in its very essence, non-Aristotelian,
"not least because it is impossible to acquire for oneself by practice a disposition that God works in a person without that person...Whatever benefits the Aristotelian virtues, with their source in human reason, might have for their possessor, on Aquinas's views, a person who has only the Aristotelian virtues is not yet in accord with the true moral good, whose measure is the divine law." Stump: 33. According to Kate Ward, God's grace is the very explanation to why persons develop virtues to different degrees, for even the acquired virtues cannot be acquired without God's help. Kate Ward, "Toward a Christian Virtue Account of Moral Luck" in *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* Vol.38.1 (2018): 138

[62] For more on Aquinas's view of the supersession of God's grace over fortune or luck, see Chapter 5 of John Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

no room for pride."[63] Yes, for Aquinas one can develop moral virtue without God's infused virtues, but the former is then considered "imperfect" for it does not assist the agent to attain perfect happiness found in the beatific vision. In fact, as I have shown in chapter three, the infused Gifts of the Holy Spirit, among which is fear of God (which I argued to be a form of shame before God) is a disposition of fear of reproach from God that is only possible with a love for God given by the Holy Spirit, and not possible with human love alone. The Gift of shame before God—a pivotal habit of the soul for reaching the greatest of happiness in heaven—is not possible without its infusion by the Holy Spirit.

The principle of Theistic causal moral luck, in sum, helps guide al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's valence of self-assessing emotions. Instead of transforming self-assessing moral emotions into useless, or at least unwarranted emotions given limited human agency over good and bad actions and the development of virtue and vice, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas use this lack of complete control over the moral life to support their positive valence of shame and negative valence of pride. Shame is a praiseworthy emotion because it showcases the believer's knowledge of their limited power on earthly matters, including their own moral and spiritual success, and as a virtue, is only present in the believer through supernatural intervention. Similarly, pride is a vicious emotion because it displays the agent's clear ignorance of their true merit and worthiness of honor in light of God's work in the backstage of life.

[63] Decosimo, p. 103.

F. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have brought the views of the three thinkers analyzed throughout the dissertation into hypothetical dialogue. My question for this chapter was “why?” Why do the medieval religious thinkers take shame to be virtuous and pride vicious, in comparison to Aristotle? I boiled down the reasons I see for this divergence to three metaphysical frameworks, 1) Big God Theory; 2) a deflationary account of the self; and 3) Theistic causal moral luck.

The metaphysical frameworks that I have pointed to in this chapter are, for me, the main reasons for which al-Ghazālī and Aquinas seem to, sometimes slightly, sometimes overtly, distance themselves from Aristotle’s opinions on self-assessing emotions. These, of course, are not frameworks held only by these thinkers, but are, for the most part, held in one way or another by most Christian and Muslim thinkers throughout the centuries. What has made these thinkers and not others the center of my attention, as I mentioned in the introduction, is their curiosity in pursuing the topic of shame and pride within their virtue ethics and taking these metaphysical stands into consideration when morally evaluating these emotions. As such, I also revealed the various ways in which al-Ghazālī and Aquinas’s views on shame and pride might contribute to contemporary philosophical discussions, thus uncovering some advantages to the analysis of emotions and virtue theory through the eyes of religion.

What has become clear in this chapter is that ethics, for these thinkers, cannot and should not reside merely within the realm of beliefs about and actions toward others, but should also regard one’s beliefs about oneself. This is the root and the effect of the part of

ethics that is directed outward, yet one that is often neglected. That Aristotle, al-Ghazālī, and Aquinas did not neglect these topics contributes to the reasons for their genius.

Conclusion: The Virtue of Shame and the Vice of Pride

This dissertation started off with the assumption that it is worthwhile to ask deeper questions about self-assessing emotions in the field of philosophical and religious ethics. And throughout the first three chapters, the reasons for this became evident. These three heavyweight thinkers—Aristotle, Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī, and Thomas Aquinas—place these emotions in central positions for moral and spiritual formation. In what follows, I will give a summary of the main arguments and conclusions of each chapter.

In the first chapter, I surveyed Aristotle's views on shame and pride. In the section on shame, I concluded that Aristotle, though disregarding the possibility of shame being a moral virtue, considered it a praiseworthy passion that aids the moral agent in their development of the virtues and is a clear sign of the person's love for what is good. However, Aristotle discusses two main reasons why shame is not to be considered among the virtues. The first reason is that the lack of voluntariness embedded in the nature of a passion makes it less than a virtue. Shame understood as a passion, according to Aristotle, cannot be a disposition (*hexis*). The second and strongest reason Aristotle cites for denying the virtuous nature of shame is because it presupposes wrongdoing. Because of this, shame is qualifiedly praiseworthy: it is praiseworthy in the young, who are still in the process of trial and error in the moral journey, yet blameworthy in the elderly and the fully virtuous who are not expected to be in a position to fail morally. As I showed, part of this second reason is motivated by his apparent conflation of prospective and retrospective shame. Since shame encompasses both, he cannot suggest that only prospective shame is a virtue and retrospective is not. Despite the pessimism on

classifying shame as a virtue, I argued in that chapter that shame, for Aristotle, should be *more like* a virtue than a passion because it does not arise from mere desire for pleasure or avoidance of pain, which is characteristic of the passions, but arises from desire for what is noble. I also showed that Aristotle considers great-souledness a virtue of those who are greatly virtuous, know they are, and seek the honor that is due to them. He fits this virtue within the doctrine of the mean by arguing that the great-souled does not think too little or too much of himself, but correctly thinks of himself worthy of great honor. This great self-assessment, I showed, results in Aristotle's characterization of the great-souled as people who accept honor only from powerful and rich figures, but who disdain honors given by the lowly, have a justified (according to Aristotle) contempt for 'inferior' people, and who strive for superiority in occasions of reciprocity. I showed, in sum, that it is the great-souled's desire for public recognition, attitude of arrogant superiority, and lack of humility that makes *megalopsychia* come under fire among some contemporary commentators and make it fit under our common understanding of pride. I concluded the chapter arguing that Aristotle's shame and pride provide fascinating points of comparison with the views of religious thinkers who are later influenced by his ethical theory.

In the second chapter, I brought forth al-Ghazālī's views on shame and pride. In the section on shame, I concluded that, though al-Ghazālī includes shame among the sub-virtues of temperance and thus portrays it as a praiseworthy trait that should be encouraged and habituated from childhood, he is hesitant to consider shame before other humans virtuous in all situations and in all kinds of people because, as I argued, it can manifest as an unvirtuous passion or as a full-blown virtue. In occasions when shame is

felt before other humans in an irrational manner, mixed with other blameworthy attitudes, or understood as a less noble moral motivation in comparison to love for virtue, al-Ghazālī is describing the passion of shame. On the other hand, I showed how al-Ghazālī considers the virtue of shame before God unquestionably present in pious people. Shame before God is the result and the cause of knowledge of oneself and of God, and every Muslim has the duty to habituate this virtue daily by practicing Islamic rituals. I also concluded that the vicious positive self-assessment of superiority and self-admiration—pride—is the result and cause of ignorance about the true human and divine nature. More specifically, I showed that pride, for al-Ghazālī, betrays ignorance regarding God's creative power in bringing about all human accomplishments, ignorance about the depth of human defects, and ignorance about the condition of other people's hearts. I demonstrated that, even though al-Ghazālī lists greatness of the soul among the virtues and thus seems to contradict the centrality he gives to the virtue of humility, he did not believe it possible to know that one is truly superior to others and thus to in fact be self-consciously great-souled. For him, pride must be shunned and humility must be habituated. This is only possible through knowledge of one's true condition and of God's far superior nature and through humble acts that aim at eliminating the object of one's pride.

In the third chapter, I examined Thomas Aquinas's views on shame and pride. In the section on shame, I concluded that he considers shame a praiseworthy emotion because it flows from a rational movement of the will that seeks to avoid morally evil actions—a reliable sign that the agent recognizes what is good and detests what is evil.

However, I also pointed to the clear fact that, due to Aquinas's conception of passion and due to his characterization of shame as including an evil act (either in the past or planned for the future) and that it lacks explicit references to repentance, he does not consider shame a full-blown virtue. Though not a virtue on its own, he considers the affection of shame a precondition, or first foundation, for the virtue of temperance, one that inclines the person to fear the past or future evil action and the reproach that results from it, and heed to reason when overwhelmed by immoderate passions. Finally, I argued that, upon close analysis, Aquinas's gift of the Holy Spirit 'fear of God' can be seen as a kind of 'spiritual shame,' that is, shame felt before God. Spiritual shame, I concluded, is a fear of God's reproach in response to sinful behavior or fear of alienation from God due to the human's sinful nature. There is, after all, a kind of shame that Aquinas considers even more highly than a moral virtue, a trait that can only be achieved perfectly through the infusion of the Holy Spirit. In the section on pride, I concluded that Aquinas considers the vice of pride as an inordinate desire to excel and inordinate positive self-assessment. Because this vice implies, in its very definition, an affront to God's sovereignty, displacing him from his rightful position as the foremost object of human love and subjection and, instead, placing the "excellent" self, it is the first and principal of all sins. I also highlighted Aquinas's placement of pride as the opposing vice of the virtue of humility, which is the virtue of moderate desire to excel and of true self-assessment. This virtue, for Aquinas, can be achieved both by knowledge of one's true condition as sinful and by habituating humble acts, such as fasting, vigils, and mendicancy. Finally, I concluded that, while Aquinas maintains magnanimity among the virtues, he modifies

Aristotle's *megalopsychia* to the point that it becomes compatible with humility, virtually eliminating its aspect of positive self-assessment and focusing, instead, in the great acts of virtue performed by the magnanimous person. Both a disposition to spiritual shame and humility (shunning of pride) allow the human to have true reverence for God and are part of the character traits of those who achieve the beatific vision.

In the fourth chapter, I brought all three thinkers together for the comparative part of the dissertation. There, my main focus was to provide some reasons for al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's more positive valence of shame and more negative valence of pride compared to Aristotle's. I sought to answer why the two religious thinkers classify shame as a virtue and pride as a vice, when their great influencer, Aristotle, does not. More generally, I argued that the dissimilarities between the religious thinker's views and Aristotle's on the self-assessing emotions resulted from their distinct metaphysical frameworks. More specifically, I argued that the three main metaphysical frameworks that sustained al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's view of shame as a virtue and pride as a vice were 1) Big God Theory; 2) deflationary sense of self; and 3) Theistic causal moral luck. Once these three frameworks are in place, the valence of shame, I showed, becomes unqualifiedly virtuous once the audience of the evil self is God, and not human beings, and pride becomes not only a vice, but a sin. I had "The Big God Theory" stand for al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's way of viewing the nature of God within their religious traditions. As a Big God, their God knows all, can do all, is perfectly good and just, and, most importantly, is highly invested in human moral and religious behavior. I argued that belief in these ontological features and moral acts of God created perfect conditions for understanding humility and

shame before God a religious virtue and pride, a religious vice. I then showed that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's shared deflationary sense of the human self also contributed to their valences of shame and pride. I argued that a deprecated view of the human nature or of human moral and spiritual tendencies led them to assert the need to habituate and have infused a perennial kind of shame before God along with the virtue of humility, no matter how great one's accomplishments. Finally, I applied the ethical theory of moral luck to al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's theological framework, referring to Theistic causal moral luck as God's supreme control over the broader human history and the specific human life being the factors that go beyond the agent's control and which, in turn, leads the agent to be praised or blamed (and feel shame and pride) for their actions. I argued that, for them, one of the reasons for understanding shame before God as a virtue and pride as a vice is because one can never claim full agency over the good things one does, and that motivates feelings of pride, and, even if one can claim some agency, that God is the ultimate decision-maker of human fate should, instead, instill feelings of shame.

My overarching argument in this dissertation has been that for all three of these thinkers being able to properly assess the self, both positively and negatively, and in relation to other human beings, is a great part of a successful moral journey. Furthermore, I have argued that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's adaptation of or, better, addition to Aristotle's initial formulation is that to properly assess the self in relation to *God*, is a great part of a successful moral *and* spiritual journey. From this, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas's contribution to Christian and Islamic virtue ethics is clear. By making these emotions either a moral aid to the believer in achieving greater closeness to God (shame)

or a moral inhibitor, creating greater distance from God (pride), al-Ghazālī and Aquinas place them within the more specific category of *religious* emotions that constitute a religious virtue and a religious vice. What, however, could be their contribution to non-religious ethics? The consideration of shame as a praiseworthy moral emotion or tendency is nothing new, of course, as I have shown in my last chapter. What their contribution might be, and that is new (yet, as we now know, very old), is the consideration of shame as a *moral virtue*, not merely a religious one.

One might reasonably ask how this could be their contribution to virtue theory, given that I have shown in this dissertation that Aristotle acknowledged the possibility, as did Aquinas, yet both of them ultimately denied shame can be added to the list of moral virtues, and al-Ghazālī, though he named it as such, remained rather reticent of doing so. I have argued in chapters 1 and 2, especially, that this resistance to consider shame a full-blown moral virtue has stemmed from Aristotle and Aquinas's narrow understanding of what can be considered a virtue—that is, only the dispositions that would be in the morally perfect human beings—and their (especially Aristotle's) grammatical constraints—that shame must imply both prospective and retrospective shame. As I close this dissertation, I would like to offer an initial sketch of how I imagine an argument in favor of a moral virtue of shame. In doing so, I am not attempting to hash out this argument entirely as I recognize that doing so would require a book length project. Nonetheless, below is a direction that this project invites us to go.

To defend that shame might be included among the virtues in our current moral and linguistic landscape remains as tricky as it was in the Medieval period, and arguably

much more so. Our Western society's valence of this emotion has been in flux.[1] Quite recently, shame was a taboo topic, to the point of its use in written work declining significantly until the 90's.[2] As far as I can tell, this changes radically in the United States with the self-esteem movement of the 80's, the famous Oprah Winfrey's attempts to evangelize "how to overcome shame" and, more recently, with the popularization of the work of social scientist Brené Brown on shame.[3] Brown's attempts to normalize the emotion, and to simultaneously propose ways to defuse its negative psychological power has clearly had a popularizing effect, which has spread to the self-help world rapidly. This popularization, however, has led to an even more negative valence of the emotion. According to her, "Shame is lethal, and shame is deadly."[4] Though recent studies on shame in philosophy, sociology, psychology, and neuroscience have done much to "save" the emotion from its taboo status and negative reputation, as I showed in chapter four, the prevailing popular assumption is that shame has little to no moral value. In what follows, I will attempt to show how al-Ghazālī and Aquinas give us avenues through which to consider shame, *clearly defined*, a virtue.

To classify shame as a moral virtue, we must take on the challenges set out both

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[1] And, though I will not get into the argument, one can argue that the same goes for pride among the moral vices. Pride has gone from an agreed-upon vice and a word that could only be uttered with purely negative connotations, to, today, a mostly positive tendency, associated with self-respect and satisfaction with one's own decisions, especially one's sexual orientation and race: pride month, pride march, a proud Latinx, a proud member of the LGBTQ community.
[2] What Scheff calls the "s-word" in "Shame in Self and Society" in *Symbolic Interaction* Vol. 26.2 (2003): 240.
[3] Firstly, with her famed TED talk and then with her, among others, bestseller *The Gifts of Imperfection* (Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing, 2010).
[4] Quote from an interview with Brené Brown conducted by Oprah Winfrey. "Dr. Brené Brown: 'Shame is Lethal' | Supersoul Sunday | Oprah Winfrey Network," YouTube, March 24, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEBjNv5M784

by the thinkers studied in this dissertation and by popular contemporary thought. I believe the contemporary negative valence of shame results, in part, from a tradition of positive self-evaluation, from disagreement on the authenticity of the audience that produces shame, and from the distinct norms that are the basis for shame. Regarding the first reason, the higher one's opinion of the self, the less likely one will be susceptible to shame. After all, shame emerges from a negative self-assessment—you look at yourself and see fault. The tendency to shun shame as a useless emotion results, in part, from a tendency to exalt the self and to freely justify its faults. Second, the more one places doubt in the audience that produces shame (e.g. parents, political authorities, followers on social media), the less shame is felt and the less the emotion is valued as having morally transformative properties. As a result, the tendency to shun shame as a negative emotion goes hand in hand with the tendency to devalue the opinion of onlookers. Merely human onlookers can be mistaken: they may not have all the facts, they may use the wrong criteria of judgment, be biased, and so on. Finally, shame relies on the social norms that are in place, based upon which the audience is able to morally evaluate the wrongdoer. Suspicion of these social norms (such as norms of the ideal body), I believe, is part of the tendency to view the shame that emerges from them as spurious. All of these reasons are, in one way or another, found in the reasoning of Aristotle, al-Ghazālī and Aquinas, though with very important nuances. Aristotle and Aquinas, in particular, add the problem of its nature as a passion, which precludes that it be a disposition and the problem that shame presupposes wrongdoing. My version of virtuous shame, then, will attempt to respond to all of these and other challenges.

To classify shame as a virtue, it first must be considered in broader terms than a mere act, or emotion. As I showed in chapter one, it is commonsensical to perceive shame not only as an occurrent emotion, but also as an internal disposition, what Cairns calls a "second-order disposition."[5] Though neither Aristotle nor Aquinas considered shame a potential disposition, I have argued that they should have, and I will here. Second, shame as a virtue must have a specific criteria of application. This is not, as John Bowlin has rightly noted in relation to the virtue of tolerance, to "distinguish the commitments, lives, and actions that deserve to" be named shameful, but to develop "persons who are attentive to those circumstances," who have identified, within their sphere of life, the good and the bad, and are "disposed by habit to offer right responses in reply."[6] Shame, then, can be a virtue despite the differences in norms that divide larger communities for it is a disposition to respond with shame in circumstances which rationally warrant the emotion. This, of course, entails that the person in possession of the virtue of shame would not feel ashamed by acts that are not, in their view, disgraceful nor acts that merely resemble a disgraceful act. Interestingly, most of the examples raised by Oprah and Brené Brown of the negative kinds of shame are those where the emotion is unwarranted, such as after sexual abuse. This description of the virtue of shame, then, circumvents this problem. According to Aquinas's criteria, it would be the work of right reason, habituating the emotion to cohere with rational deliberation. Because we do not need to hold as true Aristotle' elision of prospective and retrospective shame, we may

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[5] Douglas Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 11.
[6] Bowlin, *Tolerance Among the Virtues*, p. 7.

allow prospective shame to be the full-blown virtue of the “perfected” humans in our society, yet retrospective shame to be a semblance of the virtue, fit for those who are *in via* toward moral excellence. Though both hold as key characteristics the negative self-assessments made by the agent, the former does so in a preventative manner.

Closely related to a call for shame among the virtues is one for the unity of the virtues, for alongside the virtue of shame must be the virtue of humility, prudence, and love. The negative self-assessment of prospective shame (e.g. “I cannot do x because I and others will consider myself a bad person if I do”) must be moderated by humility, a true understanding of oneself, both the good and the bad. Because humility moderates self-assessments, the shameful agent will not allow their shame of the bad to overshadow every good aspect of themselves nor be tempted to exaggerate the good in order to conceal the bad (in other words, to have feelings of pride). Concern for the former result of shame is championed by the Brené Browns of today, while concern for the latter was held by al-Ghazālī. Humility would allow one to be honest about one’s good qualities despite the misstep while also keeping in mind the ignorance and mistaken evaluations that are characteristic of humans. In contrast to Aristotle’s perfect virtuoso, this view of the virtuous would side with al-Ghazālī and Aquinas in acknowledging that no matter how good a person is, humans are finite and thus lack knowledge of everything that must be known for perfect decision-making. Shame that is coupled with humility in this way allows for proper self-evaluation—not too harsh and not too lax. The virtue of prudence would allow the agent to judge properly whether the norm for which one’s society tends to feel shame is rational. That is, though the shameful person tends to agree with the

social norms in place, prudence gives them the tools to be critical of those that do not conform to rational deliberation and to actively resist shame that arises in the face of non-compliance with the unreasonable norm. Resistance to the latter kind of shame is not a sign of the blameworthiness of shame itself, but testifies to the irrationality (and thus viciousness) of the kind of shame that arises from such an object. For example, a prudent and shameful person living in a racist community, though perhaps tempted to feel prospective shame for exhibiting their black body on the beach, will resist the emergence of such feeling after quick deliberation on her disagreement with the social norm in place and will discourage such feelings in others. Finally, as I have shown in this dissertation, shame is, first and foremost, about love. Love for the good, love for one's good reputation, love for the audience before which one feels shame, and love for the goods lost from the disgrace of shame. I would like to argue that virtuous shame is felt in conjunction with love that is felt for the right objects—truly good objects. In unity with love, which includes moderate self-love, virtuous shame precludes the potential devastating effects on one's self-esteem. In unity with love for others, virtuous shame precludes the consequences of violence toward others.[7]

This version of virtuous shame falls short of a proper Ghazalian and Aquinian version. To consider it a virtue as they did, considering God as the ultimate audience for one's wrongdoing, one must hold the same metaphysical and theological assumptions

[7] More on the clear association that scholars have made between shame and violence in James Gilligan, "Shame, Guilt, and Violence" in *Social Research* Vol. 70, no. 4 (2003): 1149-1180; Martha Nussbaum, *Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); H. Thomas, "Experiencing a shame response as a precursor to violence" in *Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* Vol. 23, 4 (1995): 587-593.

they did. For them, the concomitant virtue of love must, above all, love God and the concomitant virtue of humility must include knowledge of the sinful human tendencies. Nonetheless, even those who are not willing to sign up for the metaphysical and theological assumptions that al-Ghazālī and Aquinas held can see the moral and social advantages of shame and humility, especially when shame is bound by the specific description I laid out above. These two thinkers, then, provide us with some important avenues to properly viewing these social and moral advantages, as well as the appropriate descriptive confines within which to place the virtue of shame.

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