THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF PRIDE
AN INTRODUCTION

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1. PRIDE: A BACKGROUND

1.1. *Research Context*

Pride is—among other things—a central aspect of the human condition. As social history has overwhelmingly indicated, pride has been and continues to be an important explanation for morally as well as intellectually significant human behaviour, from subaltern movements such as black pride and gay pride to the rally-round-the-flag nationalism now on the march throughout Europe and other parts of the world.

Even so, there is little consensus on some of the most basic issues concerning the nature of pride: For example what sort of thing *is* pride, and why do we care about it? Does being prideful lead us to act in particular ways, and if so, which ways? How do people become proud? Can one be proud only of one's own achievements and characteristics, or is it at least conceptually possible to be proud of the achievements and characteristics of others, such as those with whom one identifies? Generally speaking, is pride a good thing or a bad thing? Why?

That there have thus far been few agreed answers to such questions is, we suspect, at least partly due to the compartmentalized means by which questions about the nature, value, and psychology of pride have traditionally been investigated. On the bright side, we think that this problem has the potential to be overcome by investigating pride from the interdisciplinary methodology of *moral psychology*—viz., in particular, by bringing together the conceptual resources that have been refined within professional philosophy with the empirical scrutiny that is distinctive of the human sciences, and the papers in this collection reflect this overarching goal. The present

volume will accordingly explore some of the most important issues connected to the topic of pride in a way that utilises the theoretical resources of philosophy, psychology, sociology, religious studies, and anthropology.

1.2. Pride: Key Themes

Discussions of the nature and value of pride (including moral, conative, intellectual and social dimensions) feature many distinctions drawn between different *kinds of* pride, as well as between different aspects of pride. It would be convenient if any one such distinction were clearly more fundamental than any of the others. However, different distinctions to do with pride tend to cluster around different kinds of research questions, and some of these research questions overlap (sometimes considerably) with others.

In what follows, we offer a brief survey of some of the key research themes that have guided some of the key contemporary discussions of pride. Each paper in the volume addresses either directly or indirectly at least one of these themes. We note explicitly that in many cases, the kind of philosophical stance one takes on one of these themes can (but won't always) determine the kind of stance one is in a position to take on one or more of the others.

1.2.1. Pride, emotion and virtue

Pride is often discussed as an *emotion* but perhaps equally often as a kind of *character trait* or agential *disposition*. Emotions are, in the most general sense, reactions to matters of apparent importance or significance[1]. Different kinds of characteristic reactions line up with different emotions, and these reactions generally involve certain kinds of distinctive feelings and appraisals[2]. A theory of the nature of the emotion of pride will thus be a theory of what such characteristic reactions include and *why* we should think pride includes these kinds of reactions rather than others. Furthermore, to the extent that the emotion of pride involves certain kinds of appraisals (and not just feelings), we may ask what is, to use Richard Lazarus's (1991) term, pride's *core relational theme*. This point can be perhaps made best by analogy: Envy's core relational theme is wanting what someone else has. The

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[1] See for example Brady (2013, 11).
[2] According to the James-Lange theory of emotion, emotions simply *are* certain kinds of feelings, a view that is contested by (among others) cognitivists about emotion. For a discussion and taxonomy of such differences, see de Sousa (2014).

core relational theme of guilt is having transgressed a moral imperative. A theory of the emotion of pride will have something to say about pride's core relational theme. Finally, emotions themselves can be appraised as more or less appropriate in light of the circumstances under which they are manifested: what circumstances are *befitting* a response of pride? Is pride ever morally (or intellectually) forbidden? A satisfying account of the emotion of pride will likely tell us something about the appropriateness of pride as an emotional response, and how this appropriateness can be accounted for with reference to specific features of the emotion of pride (e.g., its distinctive feelings, appraisals, core relational theme, etc.)

Whereas emotions are actual reactions to matters of importance or significance, character traits are stable *dispositions* to behave in typical ways when certain kinds of considerations are present. When these ways are conducive to or constitutive of human flourishing, they are classed as 'virtues', *moral* virtues (e.g., benevolence, compassion, kindness, courage, temperance) in the case of moral flourishing, *intellectual* virtues (e.g., open-mindedness, intellectual honesty, curiosity, fair-mindedness) in the case of intellectual flourishing[3].

When we say of someone that (for example) she is 'prideful' or a 'proud' person, we might grant that the individual is not (at the time of the attribution) *actually* reacting in any particular way distinctive of pride. The person might simply be the sort that, in the right kinds of circumstances (e.g., where certain kinds of reasons or values are present), she would be disposed to respond in certain pride-relevant ways. Furthermore, the proud person will have such a disposition not in some fleeting way, but in a way that is appropriately stable and integrated within her cognitive psychology.

On the Aristotelian conception of the structure of virtues, virtues necessarily have both a motivational component as well as a reliable success component[4]. For example, the honest person must be not only suitably morally motivated in ways that are characteristic of honesty but also must be reliably (enough) successful in bringing about the ends of such motivations[5]. The attempt to characterise pride, as a virtue, takes for granted that motivations that are characteristic of a proud person are grounded in a more basic or fundamental morally worthy motivations. However, the presupposition that pride *qua* character trait is a (moral) virtue is controversial on philosophical grounds. Pride is sometimes (and perhaps often) discussed *qua* character trait not as a virtue, but as a *vice,* and when theorised about in this way, the proud person will be understood (again, on the

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[3] For some recent discussions of the distinction between moral and epistemic virtues, see for example Brady and Pritchard 2003; Driver 2003; Carter and Church 2016; Miller 2014; Roberts and Wood 2007.

[4] The most notable development of this kind of picture in the case of intellectual virtues is Zagzebski's (1996).

[5] See Battaly (2008) for discussion.

broadly Aristotelian picture) as having certain characteristic motivations that line up with certain behaviour patterns, where the motivations are themselves are grounded in more basic morally unworthy motivations. We'll turn now to the issue of *positive* and *negative* pride—viz., pride (generally speaking) understood as admitting of positive and negative moral valence.

1.2.2. Positive and negative pride

Aristotle and Hume have both (for different reasons) famously viewed pride positively. In Hume's case, this is because he understood pride as a certain kind of satisfaction one has on account of one's accomplishments or possessions, the experience of which brings us well-founded enjoyment[6]. Likewise, for Aristotle, the trait of pride is a virtuous trait befitting the accomplished or great person who has a right or correct conception of her merits[7].

Other thinkers, however, have taken a considerably less favourable line. Take as a starting point St. Augustine's view that pride is the 'commencement of all sin[8]', a view that is deeply grounded in the Christian tradition, where pride is that which both turned the devil against God, and which was responsible for original sin. As it's put in Ecclesiasticus 10:12-13, 'The beginning of pride is when one departs from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker. For pride is the beginning of sin, and he that has it shall pour out abomination'. Similar cautioning against pride and its consequences can be found throughout the Western intellectual tradition, from Hobbes[9] to Jonathan Edwards[10] to Alexander Pope[11] to C.S. Lewis.

An important second-order question about pride (in its positive and negative guises) is whether in fact such opposing characterisations of pride (e.g., as it is praised by Aristotle and Hume, and disparaged by Augustine), in positive and negative terms, are best understood as in *competition* with one another, viz., as mutually exclusive characterisations of the same underlying phenomenon. Alternatively, one might reject such a second-order view for any variety of views on which these positive and negative characterisations do not preclude one another. Perhaps, for example, pride is

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[6] Hume, *A Dissertation on the Passions*, Section II.
[7] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* book 4 ch 3.
[8] Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian Writings.*
[9] Hobbes, *Leviathan.*
[10] *To Deborah Hatheway*, Letters and Personal Writings (Works of Jonathan Edwards Online Vol. 16) , Ed. George S. Claghorn.
[11] *An Essay on Criticism* (1709), line 203.

polysemous such that multiple meanings of pride correspond with emotions or traits that differ in their valences. Finally, perhaps pride can have multiple aspects with different valences even if pride itself is not polysemous. It is possible to give an account of pride as an emotion or virtue without taking a stand on this second order issue, though at various points in typical first-order accounts of pride, this second-order issue can become relevant.

1.2.3. Appropriateness of pride

According to negative characterisations of pride, such as that which we find in Augustine, the question of the *appropriateness* of pride is foreclosed in advanced by the fact that pride is inherently vicious. On views that refrain from this sort of claim, without thereby embracing the strong opposite position that pride is always and everywhere a good thing, it is relevant to inquire into the *appropriateness* of pride.

One matter relevant to the appropriateness of pride is the object of pride and the agent's relationship to that object. On a first pass, one might submit that pride in something X is appropriate, for someone S to have, only if S has through S's own efforts or skill managed to bring about X, *and* X is suitably good. Such an (albeit strict) condition on the appropriateness of pride gets very simple cases right. For it rules out that it would be appropriate for you to feel pride in something that (say) someone socially unconnected with you accomplished before you were born, a result that aligns with our patterns of attributing pride. Further, it rules out that it is appropriate to be proud of a wicked accomplishment—viz., pride experienced as a result of cheating your friends. However, the simple condition on the appropriateness of pride under consideration does less well in other cases. For example, it often seems appropriate (or at least common and unobjectionable) to feel pride in one's family and one's children, and perhaps in their accomplishments, even though *we* ourselves did not bring about these specific accomplishments through any skill or effort of our own. Or, though more controversially, it might seem appropriate to feel pride in less-socially-connected entities such as sports teams as countries. Furthermore, a well-meaning individual might intuitively be appropriately proud of some *misguided* action, where the action itself is all-things-considered not suitably good. A satisfying account of the appropriateness of pride will aim to say something informative about the appropriateness of pride which is not too inclusive or exclusive.

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1.2.4. Objects and relations of pride

We should distinguish between the appropriateness of pride in other individuals and their accomplishments from the possibility of doing so, the latter of which is more or less uncontroversial. Typically, discussions of pride in philosophy as well as psychology have clustered around the kind of pride one has when the object of pride is primarily oneself or one's own accomplishments, the appropriateness of such pride and the social role this kind of self-regarding pride can play.

That said, the matter of to what extent what we say about self-oriented pride should apply *mutatis mutandis* to others-oriented pride constitutes an interesting and open question, one that can be helpfully explored by thinking about what it is in virtue of which one feels pride in others when one does, and how these considerations connect with one's attitudes about oneself.

For example, one might feel pride in another or her accomplishments *because* of some relationship that has individual has to oneself, and perhaps because the other's accomplishment (or existence) is taken to reflect well on oneself. Though the psychological profile of this form of others-oriented pride needn't match other kinds of others-oriented pride, such as the pride one feels in (say) a group (e.g., a social or political movement) that one is a member of, but which one knows that no one knows one is a member of. More fine grain distinctions are of course possible here, mapping on to different candidate objects (i.e., individuals, events, states of affairs, modal facts (e.g., pride in what one could have done or almost did[12]), the social distance between oneself and such objects (personal versus impersonal relationships, degree of agency mixed with the object of pride), our attitudes about these relationships (e.g., because they reflect well on us, because they reflect well on our social group, or on things we value), and how we regard ourselves as expressed or reflected in such relationships.

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[12] While modal pride might seem counterintuitive at first, there are reasonably compelling cases that seem to vindicate this phenomenon. In the case of pride in what one could have done, just suppose that one is watching the world chess championship and spots a winning combination that one of the players overlooks, and which would have forced a win. Such an individual might feel a great sense of pride knowing that, from that position, that player could have won the game, despite never being in a position to actually do so. In the case of pride in what one almost did, just take the plot of the movie *Rocky*, in which Rocky Balboa's objective was neither framed as actually beating Apollo Creed (the overwhelming favourite) nor for that matter being such that one *could* have beaten Creed. Balboa's objective was to 'go the distance' with Creed, viz., make it a close fight. It seems reasonable to grant that Balboa has well-founded pride in the fact that he kept it close, even though actually winning was not within his sights at least from his perspective.

1.2.5. Social Function of Pride

An important question in empirical psychology concerns the social role that pride in fact plays, and how different forms of pride potentially play different social roles, generating different kinds of social benefits. Pride based on our own accomplishments, for instance, might play a different kind of social role, with different kinds of benefits, than say, certain kinds of others-oriented pride. A correlative issue concerns social costs (i.e., of a given individual) of expressing certain kinds of pride: for example, are the social costs/benefits of expressing pride in moral achievements the same as expressing pride in competence-based achievements? Such questions can be fruitfully explored empirically, and such empirical results can be calibrated against theoretical models of pride. For example, *prima facie*, we want our theories of pride to potentially shed light upon *how* it is that expressing pride plays some of the socially adaptive roles that it does.

1.2.6. Moral vs Intellectual Pride

To the extent that pride is conceived of as a character trait as opposed to an emotion, there is an issue that cuts across the virtue/vice divide, which is the *moral/intellectual* divide. Generally speaking, pride is conceived of in discussions of virtue and vice as primarily concerning morally relevant behaviour and dispositions. Though there may well be a distinctive and interesting intellectual counterpart trait—viz., *intellectual pride*—which concerns primarily our cognitively/epistemically relevant behaviour and dispositions.

In recent discussions in virtue epistemology, a key theme has been the nature and value of *intellectual humility*, a trait that (on at least one prominent view[13]) involves a kind of intellectually virtuous owning of our cognitive limitations. To the extent that pride and humility are intuitively 'opposites', one might be inclined to suppose that pride, regardless of its valence as a moral trait, is vicious specifically within the intellectual sphere to the extent that humility, its opposite, is intellectually virtuous. Thus, it might be suggested that if intellectual humility is virtuous on account of something cognitively valuable about owning our intellectual limitations, then by parity of reasoning, intellectual pride is vicious on account of something disvaluable about failing to properly

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[13] (Whitcomb et al. 2015). For related discussion, see also Church and Samuelson, forthcoming; Hazlett 2012; Kidd 2016; Tanesini 2016.

own our intellectual limitations. This kind of reasoning, however, depends on several kinds of parity assumptions that might well be contested.

For one thing, it's far from clear that humility and pride are mirror images of one another (this at any rate would require argument). Secondly, even if they were opposites (in some relevant sense) when construed as intellectual traits, it's not obvious that what would make pride intellectually vicious would necessarily concern that which accounts for why humility is intellectually virtuous—viz., even if owning our intellectual limitations is the cognitive value underpinning the virtue of intellectual humility, pride (if vicious) might concern our intellectual *strengths* as opposed to our weaknesses. Thirdly, from the mere fact that pride and humility seem to stand typically opposed, the opposition in question might not, even if psychologically interesting, be reflected in their valence as character traits. For instance, even if intellectual humility is a virtue, it might be that intellectual pride is a virtue as well, one that has a characteristic psychology that mirrors in key respects the psychology of the intellectually humble person, and which also is conducive of some intellectual values.

While the above issues briefly canvassed consistently surface in contemporary discussions of pride (sometimes overlapping with one another) they are far from exhaustive. As further interdisciplinary work evolves on the topic of pride, we should expect new categories to emerge as a function of entirely new kinds of research questions. We hope at minimum that the above discussion provides a taste of the kinds of issues that the present volume explores and a sense of some of the relevant terrain surrounding these issues.

2. PRIDE: THE VOLUME

In 'The Appropriateness of Pride', Michael Brady explores three different types of cases in which we might attribute pride—ones in which pride is obviously appropriate, ones in which it is obviously inappropriate, and those in between in which pride seems possible but yet normatively dubious. He considers and rejects several ways to deal with these ambiguous cases, namely (i) that they lack a suitable connection to agency, and (ii) that they are merely instances of 'basking in reflected glory.' Ultimately, he argues instead that our sense that such cases of pride are inappropriate is rooted in prudential (rather than theoretical) considerations, and considers why it is a good policy to view such cases as illegitimate.

In his paper 'Pride Versus Self-Respect', Adam Morton argues that we are often mistaken in how we connect feelings of pride with attitudes a person has towards herself and others, and further, that this in part due to a tendency to ignore a central form of self-respect. The kind of self-respect Morton has in mind shares some abstract features in common with pride and other emotions of self-evaluation but also bears important differences.

Lisa Williams and Joel Davies engage with two forms of others-oriented pride in their paper 'Beyond the Self: Pride Felt in Relation to Others'—vicarious pride and group-level pride. Vicarious pride is experienced when a close other is successful, while group pride is experienced in response to the success of a social group with which one identifies. Williams and Davies review empirical research connecting the emotional experience of both of these forms of pride to thought and behaviour, exploring how pride helps us to navigate social situations involving success.

Duncan Pritchard and Jesper Kallestrup, in 'Intellectual Pride and Intellectual Humility', propose a view of intellectual pride on which it is understood as the vice of excess that corresponds to the virtue of intellectual humility. They use this contrast to elucidate a non-egotistical account of intellectual humility, focusing on the combined need for an accurate conception of oneself *and* certain other-regarding dispositions. Furthermore, they explore how the vice of pride inhibits the good life of flourishing.

Allan Hazlett, in his paper 'Intellectual Pride', argues that there is a virtue of intellectual pride or intellectual magnanimity, and considers how this is possible when there is a virtue of intellectual humility and it is intuitive to think that pride and humility are opposites. In so doing, Hazlett proposes a new diagnosis for the recent popularity of intellectual humility as a research topic—i.e., that it is a virtue that is more important for the intellectually privileged, while intellectual pride is a virtue that is more important for the intellectually disadvantaged.

Robert C. Roberts and Ryan West, in 'Jesus and the Virtues of Pride', propose that the absence of vicious forms of pride is what the virtue of humility consists in. However, they also explore *virtuous* pride as compatible with virtuous humility, and consider how Jesus can be viewed as the paradigm of both of these virtues. This helps to further illuminate the seldom-discussed "vices of humility", which themselves clarify the value of virtuous humility.

In 'Goal-Oriented Pride and Magnanimity', Christina Chuang analyses the concept of sinful (or demonic) pride in the *Gita*, comparing it to Augustine's criticism of pride and then considering why it might nonetheless by a virtue. With this groundwork in place, she moves on to compare pride in the *Gita* to the concept of magnanimity found in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and shows that

although there are similarities, the magnanimous man lacks a genuine care for others that is found in the proud person in the *Gita*.

In 'Moral pride: Benefits and Challenges of Experiencing and Expressing Pride in One's Moral Achievements', Neil McLatchie and Jared Piazza review the psychological literature on the nature, expression and outcomes of pride, and offer evidence for their view of moral pride as a social emotion that comes from appraising the social merits of our actions. They theorize that regulating moral pride is of critical importance to social functioning, and identify two specific challenges that arise when attempting to communicate pride related to moral achievements. They also delineate promising areas of future research in the psychology of moral pride throughout.

Antti Kauppinen's goal in 'Pride, Achievement, and Purpose' is to outline and defend a view of pride according to which feeling proud of something involves evaluating that thing as contributing to the meaning of one's life, and feeling motivated to take similar actions. Drawing on recent psychological research, he applies the distinction between authentic and hubristic pride and attempt to sharpen it in the service of developing a fuller philosophical account of pride. In particular, he argues that authentic pride in individual praiseworthy achievements is morally superior to hubristic pride in one's self.

In 'White Pride', Samantha Vice considers whether it is possible to "rehabilitate" historically privileged groups. Against a background exploration of whether race is an appropriate object of pride, she focuses in on the question of whether a white person might feel justly proud of their identity in an unjust world.

In 'Pride in Christian Philosophy and Theology', Kevin Timpe and Neal Tognazzini explore the role of pride in both historical and contemporary theology. To do this effectively, they first distinguish between several different types of pride that they view as positive, negative or vicious. Thereafter, they focus in on the history of Christianity, elucidating the relevance of both negative emotion and vice, and consider ways in which the concept of pride is relevant to two other topics in Christian theology—love and faith.

In 'The Practical Advantages of Pride and the Risks of Humility', Eva Dadlez is concerned with a defence of pride common to the philosophy of David Hume and the literary work of Jane Austen. In spite of the frequent treatment of pride as a vice, Dadlez submits that some aspects of pride are necessary to both a well-balanced life and character.

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