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ARTICLE

Between Passions and Pseudo-Passions: Thomas Aquinas on Shame

Ryosuke Matsumura

Faculty of Humanities, Fuji Women's University, Sapporo, Japan
Email: rmatsu@fujijoshi.ac.jp

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Abstract

In this paper, I argue that shame (*verecundia*) functions as a key passion, revealing the complex structure of human affectivity and shedding new light on the understanding of Aquinas's theory of the passions. In numerous passions, such as sadness, fear, or pleasure, the appetitive motion and the accompanying bodily changes follow the same direction – expansion or contraction – according to a common sensory basis. In contrast, shame presents a clear exception: while the appetite contracts inward, vital spirit and heat expand outward, producing blushing. According to Aquinas, passions are motions of the sensitive appetite accompanied by bodily change. Although shame retains this structure, its change is nevertheless formed through the *redundantia* of the higher faculties, which leads me to argue that it occupies an intermediate position between 'passions properly speaking' and 'purely intellectual pseudo-passions'. By analyzing shame in this light, I demonstrate that human passions should be understood not as purely natural or rational, but as complex intersections of both.

Keywords: body–soul relation; passions; pseudo-passions; shame; Thomas Aquinas

1. Introduction

Thomas Aquinas's theory of the passions is currently attracting remarkable scholarly attention, as scholars shift from his general framework to the study of individual passions such as love, hatred, and fear.[1] Within this context, the passion of shame

[1]The following studies focus on Aquinas's theory of the passions; the list is not comprehensive. Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of* Summa Theologiae *1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Nicholas E. Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010); Alexander Brungs, 'Die passiones animae (S. th. I-II, qq. 22-48)', in Andreas Speer, ed., *Thomas von Aquin.* Die Summa theologiae (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 198–222; Peter King, 'Late Scholastic Theories of the Passions: Controversies in the Thomist Tradition', in *Emotions and Choice from Boethius to Descartes*, ed. by H. Lagerlund and M. Yrjönsuuri (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), pp. 229–258; 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', in Peter Goldie, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 167–188; Letterio Mauro, «Umanità» *della passione in S. Tommaso* (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1974); Dominik Perler, *Feelings Transformed. Philosophical Theories of the Emotions, 1270-1670*, trans by Tony Crawford (New York: Oxford

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(*verecundia*) receives renewed interest, particularly regarding its ethical significance within the Aristotelian tradition.[2] Yet shame exhibits a distinctive structure that cannot be fully understood through ethical studies alone. In most passions, appetitive motion and bodily change proceed in the same direction – either through expansion or contraction – reflecting their common foundation in sensitive nature. Shame, by contrast, shows a clear difference: while the appetite contracts inward, spirits and heat diffuse outward, producing the blush. This discrepancy between appetitive motion and bodily change highlights the distinctiveness of shame, yet it remains largely neglected in studies that emphasize its ethical dimension.[3]

In this paper, I argue shame through the dynamic interaction of appetitive motion and bodily change. This perspective provides a crucial lens for understanding human passions as a domain where nature and reason intersect in complex ways, rather than being reducible to either alone. Aquinas defines passions as motions of the sensitive appetite accompanied by bodily change, which is shared by humans and animals. Shame, however, differs from other passions insofar as appetitive motion and bodily change fail to correspond. By contrast, in the intellectual appetite – which we share with God and the angels – there are motions resembling passions, though without bodily change. Peter King names these analogues of the passions 'pseudo-passions' or 'dispassionate passions'.[4] Shame, however, cannot be classified as a pseudo-passion, for it retains bodily change. I argue that shame, while preserving the fundamental structure of passion, is formed through the *redundantia* of the higher faculties, so that it occupies an intermediate position between passions and pseudo-passions.

This paper proceeds as follows. In Section 1, I explain how, in individual passions, appetitive motion and bodily change correspond with one another. In Section 2, I turn to shame, demonstrating that this correspondence does not always hold. In Section 3, I consider, in light of the distinction between the natural and moral domains, why shame exhibits a more complex structure. In Section 4, I argue that shame functions

University Press, 2018), pp. 23–72; Kevin White, 'The Passions of the Soul (Ia IIae, qq. 22-48)', in *The Ethics of Aquinas,* ed. By Stephen J. Pope (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), pp. 103–115. In recent years, studies on Aquinas's theory of the passions have shifted from the general framework to individual passions. Christopher Bobier, 'Aquinas on the Emotion of Hope: A Psychological or Theological Treatment?', *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly,* 94 (2020), 379–404; Daniel Gordon, *The Passion of Love in the* Summa Theologiae *of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2023); Nathan Luis Cartagena, *The Theology of Fear in Thomas Aquinas's* Summa Theologiae (New York: Lexington Books, 2024).

[2]Heribertus Dwi Kristanto S.J., *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 & Biblical Press, 2019); 'Aquinas on Shame, Virtue, and the Virtuous Person', *The Thomist,* 84 (2020), 263–291.

[3]The following studies focus especially on the bodily changes in the passions. Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, 'Aquinas's Natural Heart', *Early Science and Medicine,* 18 (2013), 266–290; Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of* Summa Theologiae *1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Carsa Casagrande, 'Transmutatio corporalis. Le corps et les passions selon Thomas d'Aquin', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques,* 103 (2019), 649–671.

[4]Peter King, 'Aquinas on the Passions', in *Aquinas's Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann,* ed. by S. MacDonald and E. Stump (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 105, n. 7; 'Dispassionate Passions', in Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro, ed., *Reason and Emotion in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 9.

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as a key passion that discloses the richly structured character of human affectivity and thereby sheds new light on Aquinas's theory of the passions.

2. Appetitive motion and bodily change

First, I would like to clarify Aquinas's understanding of the relationship between appetitive motion and bodily change in individual passions. In the *Summa Theologiae*'s discussion of the passions, considerations of this relationship focus on sadness and on irascible passions such as fear and anger.[5] Regarding one of these, namely fear, Aquinas states the following:

> Now, as to the appetitive movement of the soul, fear implies a certain contraction (*contractio quaedam*): the reason of which is that fear arises from the imagination of some threatening evil which is difficult to repel, as stated above. But that a thing be difficult to repel is due to lack of power, as stated above: and the weaker a power is, the fewer the things to which it extends. Wherefore from the very imagination that causes fear there ensues a certain contraction in the appetite. ... It is in resemblance to this contraction, which pertains to the appetite of the soul, that in fear a similar contraction of heat and vital spirits towards the inner parts takes place in regard to the body.[6]

What is noteworthy is that the soul and the body together form a single motion of *contractio*, which characterizes the passion of fear. Fear is a motion directed toward a future evil, difficult and irresistible.[7] When such an evil is apprehended, the appetite contracts inward upon itself. At the same time, heat and spirits are similarly withdrawn into the body's interior, leaving the surface cold. Trembling of the limbs and paleness of the face arise as the result of this inward motion of heat and spirits. Thus, for Aquinas, fear cannot be reduced to either soul or body alone but is rather a body-soul phenomenon that involves the contraction of the whole human composite inward upon itself.

This correspondence between appetitive motion and bodily change is not limited to fear. In contrast to the contraction caused by fear, pleasure produces *dilatatio* (expansion or enlargement) in both appetite and body. Pleasure arises from the acquisition of a appetible object. As Aquinas notes, when the appetite rests in the good, the affections of human beings are enlarged by pleasure.[8] When a person enjoys the possession of the suitable good, the affection expands by incorporating the good into

[5]For instance, refer to the following passage. *Summa theologiae* I-II, q. 24, a. 2 ad 2; q. 33, a. 1; q. 37, aa. 2 and 4; q. 38, aa. 2 and 5; q. 44, aa. 1, 3 and 4; q. 45, a. 3; q. 48, a. 2 and 4. All subsequent texts of Aquinas, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the Leonine edition, and translations are taken from Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica* tr. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Maryland, Christian Classics, 1947). Hereafter, references to the *Summa Theologiae* are indicated as *ST*.

[6]*ST* I-II, q. 44, a. 1.

[7]*ST* I-II, q. 41, a. 2.

[8]*ST* I-II, q. 33, a. 1: The other requisite for pleasure is on the part of the appetitive power, which acquiesces in the pleasurable object, and rests therein, offering, as it were, to enfold it within itself. And thus man's affection is expanded by pleasure, as though it surrendered itself to hold within itself the object of its pleasure.

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itself. Correspondingly, spirits and heat move outward to the body's surface, producing visible changes such as blushing and perspiration.

Yet while appetitive motion and bodily change correspond to one another, they are not identical. Aquinas's description of the appetitive motion as '*contractio quaedam*' already indicates this distinction. The '*quaedam*' is not trivial. Strictly speaking, expansion and contraction presuppose spatial extension, which appetite, as an immaterial power, does not possess. Thus, while spirits and heat undergo a literal spatial motion within the body, appetite expands or contracts only according to a metaphor (*secundum metaphoram*).[9]

Still, if appetitive motion and bodily change belong to distinct orders, why do they appear in such close correspondence? For Aquinas, bodily change follows causally from the action of the sensitive appetite on the heart (*cor*), the body's center, from which the effect is transmitted to the members.[10] Yet he insists not merely on causal sequence but also on a real correspondence between appetitive motion and bodily change. In the text above (*ST* I-II, q. 44, a. 1), he provides an explicit account of this correspondence.

> In the passions of the soul, the formal element (*formale*) is the movement of the appetitive power, while the bodily transmutation is the material element (*materiale*). Both of these are mutually proportionate (*unum alteri proportionatur*); and consequently the bodily transmutation assumes a resemblance to and the very nature (*similitudo et ratio*) of the appetitive movement.[11]

In this passage, Aquinas assigns the terms *formale* and *materiale* to the motion of the appetitive power and to bodily change, respectively, and on the basis of the contrast between them explains why appetite and body undergo corresponding alterations. Strictly speaking, the terms 'form' and 'matter' properly designate the constitutive principles of *substantia*;[12] so, their application to the inner structure of passions is not exact. The very fact that he employs such terms with a certain ambiguity seems to reflect this. His aim in analogically applying these ontological categories seems to be to understand passion, with its dual structure of appetitive motion and bodily change, as one unified movement.[13]

What, then, is the 'proportion' between *formale* and *materiale* in this context? The text above does not provide a direct explanation. Yet proportion here cannot be understood as a merely quantitative relation. Rather, matter is by nature indeterminate, while form gives existence upon it; matter in turn receives this existence and realizes it within itself. Thus, form and matter are conceived respectively as 'that which gives existence' and 'that which receives it', and between them arises a correlative relation ordered to one and the same existence. This *habitudo ordinis* constitutes the proportion that Aquinas has in view.[14]

[9] *ST* I-II, q. 33, a. 1.
[10] *ST* I-II, q. 24, a. 2 ad 2.
[11] *ST* I-II, q. 44, a. 1; *De motu cordis* (Marietti ed., 462).
[12] *De ente et essentia*, 1.
[13] Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions*, pp. 45–46.
[14] *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* III, d. 1, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3 (M. F. Moos ed., 10): 'Proportion is said in two ways. In one sense, proportion is the same as the certainty of measurement between two quantities, and such a proportion cannot exist except between two finite things, one of which exceeds the other in some

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Seen in this light, the correspondence between appetitive motion and bodily change arises from their relation, which is analogous to that of form and matter: appetite provides the inner determination, while the body, as the receptive substratum, realizes this determination through appropriate physiological change. Consequently, appetite and body are not merely linked by causal sequence; rather, they operate together as a unified motion under an ontological proportion, which explains why their changes naturally coincide.

3. The passion of shame

Aquinas states that in all the passions of the soul, the bodily transmutation is *conformis et proportionatum* to the appetitive movement, indicating that this correspondence extends to every passion.[15] Yet, when one examines individual passions, appetitive motion and bodily change do not always correspond in a clear way. A particularly striking example of this is the passion of shame. As I show below, in shame appetite and body form a unified response at a deeper level, while on the surface their changes appear to stand in opposition. I argue that this very structure shows the passions to be not simple motions of the soul but complex movements arising from the interplay of appetite and body. For this reason, I maintain that shame, by virtue of its complex structure, occupies a significant place in the understanding of Aquinas's theory of the passions. Aquinas describes the appetitive motion and bodily changes that occur in this passion as follows:

> Mortal perils are contrary not only to the appetite of the soul but also to nature. Consequently, in such like fear, there is contraction not only in the appetite, but also in the corporeal nature: for when an animal is moved by the imagination of death, it experiences a contraction of heat towards the inner parts of the body, as though it were threatened by a natural death. Hence it is that 'those who are in fear of death turn pale' (*Ethic.* iv, 9). But the evil that shame fears, is contrary, not to nature, but only to the appetite of the soul. Consequently, there results a contraction in this appetite, but not in the corporeal nature; in fact, the soul, as though contracted in itself, is free to set the vital spirits and heat in movement, so that they spread to the outward parts of the body: the result being that those who are ashamed blush.[16]

The text above belongs to Aquinas's response to an objection (*ST* I-II, q. 44, a. 1 obj. 3) which argues that, since shame is a kind of fear but results in blushing rather than contraction, contraction cannot be attributed to fear. Aquinas answers that, even if

determinate and definite respect. In another sense, proportion is said to be a relation of order. Thus, we say that there is a proportion between matter and form, because matter stands in order to be perfected by form, and this according to a certain proportionality. Just as form can give being, so matter can receive the same being;' *ST* I, q. 12, a. 1 ad 4. Hereafter, references to the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* are indicated as *Sent*.

[15] *ST* I-II, q. 37 a. 4: 'in all the passions of the soul, the bodily transmutation which is their material element, is in conformity with and in proportion to the appetitive movement, which is the formal element;' q. 44, a. 1; q. 48, a. 2.

[16] *ST* I-II, q. 44, a. 1 ad 3.

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fear sometimes drives heat and spirits outward and causes blushing, this does not prevent contraction from being the result of fear. For the contraction does, indeed, occur in accordance with the animal appetite (*Et ideo fit quidem contractio secundum appetitum animalem*).

What is more noteworthy for our concern, however, is that in shame there seems to be a discrepancy between appetitive motion and bodily change. Shame is the fear of disgrace or ignominy that arises from one's own faults.[17] When such faults are remembered, they are apprehended as an evil contrary to the appetite of the soul, so that the appetite withdraws from them and contracts within itself. Yet these faults are not evils for the body, since they cause no physical harm. For this reason, heat and spirits flow outward while the appetite contracts inward, producing a discordance in the direction of their respective changes. Nevertheless, this discrepancy is, in fact, only apparent. Aquinas adds the following clarification in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*:

> They (i.e., shame and fear) have particular differences, since people who are ashamed blush, while those who fear death turn pale. The reason for this difference is that nature sends the spirits and humors to the place where it senses a lack (*natura spiritus et humores transmittit ad locum ubi sentit defectum*). Now, the seat of life (*sedes vitae*) is the heart, and so when danger of death is feared, the spirit and the humors speed to the heart. Consequently, the surface of the body, being as it were deserted, grows pale. On the other hand, honor and confusion are numbered among external things (*honor et confusio in exterioribus est*). Therefore, since a man fears the loss of honor by shame, he blushes as the humors and spirits stream back to the external part of the body.[18]

The text above belongs to Aquinas's discussion of whether shame is a virtue in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* (and it is the very passage he had in mind in *ST* I–II, q. 44, a. 1 ad 3). According to Aristotle, shame is not a virtue but one of the passions, since, just as fear produces paleness, shame is accompanied by the bodily change of blushing.[19] Aquinas, however, expands upon Aristotle's explanation by offering his own account of the bodily mechanisms at work in fear and shame.

In the case of fear, heat and spirits are withdrawn from the face to the heart by the natural disposition of humans. When one fears death, the face grows pale because this disposition, in its defensive response, draws heat and spirits from the external parts of the body to the heart, the seat of life, in order to preserve it. Similarly, when confronted with the threat of dishonor, blushing arises as another defensive response. In this case, the natural disposition directs heat and spirits to the face in order to protect one's honor against reproach and insult from others. This same understanding is repeated in the *Commentary on the Psalms*. Commenting on the verse 'My face is covered with shame' (*Ps* 68:8, Vulg.), Aquinas writes: 'Nature withdraws to the place where something is lacking (*natura retrahit se ad locum ubi est defectus*). Thus, when one fears

[17] *ST* I-II, q. 42, a. 3 ad 4; II-II, q. 144, a. 1.

[18] *Sententia libri Ethicorum* IV, lect. 17 (Marietti ed., 870). The parenthetical clarification 'i.e., shame and fear' represents my addition to the text.

[19] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.9.1128b10-15.

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for life, blood and spirits are withdrawn to the heart, the principle of life; but when one fears something external, they are withdrawn to the external parts.'[20]

Seen in this light, the apparent discrepancy between appetitive motion and bodily change in shame is only superficial. In reality, shame is a twofold defensive response against evil. On the one hand, the appetite withdraws inward in order to guard itself against the apprehended evil. On the other hand, the body sends heat and spirits outward, reddening the face, in order to defend one's honor against external blame or insult.[21] Thus, even as they proceed in opposite directions, appetite and body coincide in their aim: both seek to defend the person against evil. They, therefore, constitute, beneath the surface of apparent discord, a unified and regulated response. By contrast, such a complex relation between appetitive motion and bodily change is absent in passions like fear or pleasure. Why, then, does shame alone give rise to this distinctive complexity? The answer lies in the fact that shame belongs to a moral domain distinct from that of either fear or pleasure – a domain that precisely accounts for its unique complexity.

4. The domains of nature and morality

In order to consider why the passion of shame gives rise to a complex relation between appetitive motion and bodily change, I first turn to the question of what kind of passion shame is. The following text provides a useful point of departure for this inquiry.

> We ought, seemingly, to apply to passions what has been said in regard to acts –viz. that the species of a passion, as the species of an act, can be considered from two points of view. First, according to its natural genus (*genus naturae*); and thus, moral good and evil have no connection with the species of an act or passion. Secondly, according to its moral genus (*genus moris*), inasmuch as it is voluntary and controlled by reason (*participant aliquid de voluntario et de iudicio rationis*). 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.[22]

Here, the contrast Aquinas draws between the domain of nature and of morality brings into sharp relief the difference between fear or pleasure and shame. In this passage, Aquinas says that shame is a distinct passion from fear and pleasure, according to its species (*secundum suam speciem*). Passions that belong to the domain of nature take as their object the good or evil with respect to sensory nature. As such, they are natural

[20] *Postilla super Psalmos* 43:8.

[21] The face blushes because it is situated close to the seat of the imagination. Based on the medical knowledge of his time, Aquinas locates the organ of imagination in the anterior part of the brain (*Sent.* II, d. 20, q. 2, a. 2 [P. F. Mandonnet ed., 513–514]; *De veritate*, q. 18, a. 8). Thus, when one imagines that reproach or contempt from others will follow upon one's deed, nature gathers spirits and heat into the face, which is near the imagination, in order to safeguard one's honor (*De veritate*, q. 26, a. 4 ad 5; q. 25, a. 4 ad 5).

[22] *ST* I-II, q. 24, a. 4.

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responses to external stimuli and can therefore be described as passions in the proper sense.[23] Yet the human being possesses higher powers such as reason and will, and by participating in their activity. Indeed, when an object is apprehended by reason as good or evil, the passions are moved on the basis of such rational evaluation. Whereas fear and pleasure belong to the domain of nature, shame is precisely a passion that belongs to the domain of morality.

Yet, passions as movements of the sensitive appetite are essentially situated within the domain of nature and do not, as such, involve reason. Aquinas therefore explains that passions can be related to the judgement of reason (*iudicium rationis*) in two ways: in an antecedent way and in a consequent way. The antecedent way occurs when reason is moved by a preceding passion – for example, when one is prompted by pity to perform an act of charity.[24] Shame, however, pertains to the consequent way. On this, Aquinas writes as follows:

> In the second place, consequently: and this in two ways. First, by way of redundance (*redundantia*): because, to wit, when the higher part of the soul is intensely moved to anything, the lower part also follows that movement: and thus, the passion that results in consequence, in the sensitive appetite, is a sign of the intensity of the will (*signum intensionis voluntatis*). ... Secondly, by way of choice (*electio*); when, to wit, a man, by the judgment of his reason, chooses to be affected by a passion in order to work more promptly with the cooperation of the sensitive appetite.[25]

When reason engages with the passions by way of choice, it does so in cases where reason employs a passion to support its own action, as when a person becomes angry for the sake of justice. Shame, however, does not arise as the result of a deliberate decision to act; rather, it is a reaction that precedes any determination about what one will do. According to Aquinas, shame relates to reason through this kind of *redundantia* (overflow).[26] However, the precise mechanism by which this overflow occurs cannot be identified from the text cited above. In particular, it remains unclear how rational judgment links with the operation of the will, and how these higher powers flow down into the lower powers. In the *De veritate*, Aquinas further distinguishes two modes of overflow.

> From the apprehension of something by the intellect there can follow a passion in the lower appetite in two ways: (1) In so far as that which is understood by the intellect in a universal way is represented in the imagination in particular, thus moving the lower appetite. When, for example, the intellect of a believer assents intellectually to future punishment and forms phantasms of the pains,

[23] *ST* I-II, q. 24, a. 1 obj. 1 and ad 1. Cf. *ST* I-II, q. 6, prol.

[24] *ST* I-II, q. 24, a. 3 ad 1: 'The passions of the soul may stand in a twofold relation to the judgment of reason. First, antecedently: and thus, since they obscure the judgment of reason, on which the goodness of the moral act depends, they diminish the goodness of the act; for it is more praiseworthy to do a work of charity from the judgment of reason than from the mere passion of pity'.

[25] *ST* I-II, q. 24, a. 3 ad 1.

[26] *De veritate*, q. 26, a. 6; *Sent.* IV, d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 1 ad 4 (M. F. Moos ed., 675).

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> imagining the fire burning and worm gnawing and the like, the passion of fear follows in the sensitive appetite. (2) In so far as the higher appetite is moved by the intellectual apprehension, with the result that the lower appetite also is stirred up (*commovetur*) by the higher through a kind of overflow or through a command.[27]

The latter mode corresponds to the explanation found in the earlier text. What is noteworthy is that this second mode is clearly distinguished from the first.[28] That is, shame is understood to arise in the sensitive appetite in a way different from the first mode – namely, the way in which the lower appetite is moved through sensory images. The first mode refers to cases in which overflow occurs through the mediation of sensory representations and imagination. For instance, when one fears eternal punishment, one first understands intellectually the future punishment, and then imagines concrete images such as blazing fire or horrible worms. Yet the intellect does not itself produce such representations. Because the intellect is by nature immaterial, it cannot produce sensory images; they are instead formed through the particular reason.[29] When the future punishment becomes linked to such concrete images and these flow into the lower powers, the passion of fear arises.

By contrast, the second mode of overflow refers to cases in which the movement of the higher appetite – the will – flows into the lower appetite by reason of its proximity to the will. The powers of the soul participate in the activity of the will in proportion to their closeness to it, and the lower appetite is considered the closest to the will (*voluntati propinquissimum*).[30] Therefore, in the case of shame, when one judges one's own action to be base and worthy of others' reproach or contempt, the will strongly seeks to withdraw from such baseness. This movement then overflows (*redundat*) into the lower powers precisely because of their proximity.[31] Nevertheless, this second mode does not exclude the formation of sensory images. Since the human intellect is united to the body in this life, its acts of cognition necessarily involve some form of phantasm.[32] Thus, it is entirely possible that someone experiencing shame links the baseness of his action with concrete images such as another's gaze, rebuke, or scorn. Yet what distinguishes the second mode from the first is that the will plays the decisive role in the generation of the overflow. In other words, following the rational judgment con-

[27] *De veritate*, q. 26, a. 3 ad 13. Translation of *De veritate* is from *The Disputed Questions on Truth*, trans by Robert W. Schmidt, vol. 3 (Chicago: Henry Regency, 1954).

[28] Cf. Diana Fritz Cates, *Aquinas on the Emotions: A Religious-Ethical Inquiry* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), pp. 222–223; Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire*, pp. 90–91.

[29] *ST* I, q. 75, a. 1.

[30] *De veritate*, q. 25, a. 4.

[31] *De veritate*, q. 25, a. 4. James Baxter understands this second mode as a situation in which a universal apprehended by reason permeates the whole framework of one's perception, so that a passion is elicited by a motion overflowing from these higher faculties. For instance, if a monk firmly believes that 'God is always good', then even a poor meal or the chirping of a bird may appear as signs of God's goodness, and joy arises in his heart. In this way, the second mode refers to cases in which a universal judgment of reason transforms one's perception of the world and, through this, directs the sense appetite. James Baxter, O.P., *'The Church Shares Your Joy': A Thomistic Account of the Affections of the Will and Collective Worship* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Fribourg, 2023), pp. 47–54. Cf. Dwi Kristanto, *The Praiseworthy Passion of Shame*, pp. 193–214.

[32] *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7.

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cerning the baseness of the action, the will, moved to withdraw strongly from that evil, directly flows into the lower appetite and produces its own distinctive modification there. In this respect, shame differs from fear of eternal punishment, which arises through images; shame is instead a passion produced by the overflow of the strength of the higher powers into the lower powers.

Accordingly, the contraction of the sensitive appetite and the bodily change characteristic of shame – namely blushing – should be explained not primarily by the arousal of the imagination but by the aftereffect of the movement of the will; and based on this relation to the will, shame is understood to arise within the sensitive appetite as an effect and sign of good will (*effectus et indicia bonae voluntatis*).[33]

Seen in this way, shame is a distinctively human moral passion, arising when rational judgment and the movement of the will overflow into the sensory domain. This also explains why the relation between appetitive motion and bodily change is more complex in shame than in other passions. Since passions such as fear or pleasure are grounded in this common basis of sensitive nature, the appetitive movement usually corresponds with the bodily change. Shame, by contrast, fears a moral evil – that which is in discord with reason (*dissonum a ratione*) – rather than a threat to bodily survival. As a result, the motion of the sense appetite and the bodily change in shame are formed not by sensitive nature but by higher faculties, and, thus, differ significantly from those in fear or pleasure.

The bodily response of blushing in shame makes it clear that this passion belongs to a different domain than fear or pleasure. As seen earlier, when one fears death, the object of fear is that which would destroy one's bodily life. In this case, nature draws blood and spirits back to the heart, the source of life, in order to protect it.[34] By contrast, in shame, when they are directed outward to the surface, producing a blush, the movement serves the preservation of honor – a goal distinct from physical survival or physiological stability. Nevertheless, even while participating in the work of reason, shame is not wholly different from fear or pleasure. It still retains the basic structure of a passion: the motion of the sensitive appetite accompanied by bodily change. Yet, since its object is a moral evil apprehended by reason, and since the motion of the sense appetite and the bodily change are formed by the overflow of higher faculties, shame is clearly distinct from fear or pleasure.

From all this, the complex relation between appetitive motion and bodily change in shame may be seen as a sign that this passion is grounded in both nature and reason. When the natural basis is taken up into the operation of reason, appetitive motion and bodily change are transformed from a merely physiological reaction into something newly formed by reason. Shame is paradigmatic in this respect: it most vividly demonstrates that human passions arise at the intersection of natural inclination and rational judgment. What role, then, does this passion of shame play within the broader

[33] *De veritate*, q. 26, a. 6 ad 16.
[34] *ST* I-II, q. 37, a. 4.

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context of Aquinas's theory of the passions? To conclude this study, I turn now to this question.[35]

5. Between passions and pseudo-passions

According to Aquinas, passions are motions of the sensitive appetite accompanied by bodily change, which are shared by both humans and other animals. We, however, also possess intellectual affections, which do not involve bodily change and exist solely as motions of the soul within the intellectual appetite. What Peter King names 'pseudo-passions' or 'dispassionate passions' belongs to this purely intellectual domain of the soul.[36] As King himself acknowledges, these pseudo-passions do not involve motions of the sensitive appetite or bodily changes and, therefore, strictly speaking, are not passions.[37] At the same time, however, they indicate that human beings experience rich affective states that do not fit the definition of passions. For example, when one refrains from saying something hurtful or sells stocks out of fear that the market will fall further, such cases lack any perceptible bodily change, yet they still express real fear and aversion and engage us affectively.[38] King's observation thus distinguishes between passions rooted in the sensitive appetite and pseudo-passions rooted in the intellectual appetite, highlighting the complex nature of human affectivity.

However, as Leonard Ferry points out, this dichotomy risks oversimplifying the complexity of human passions. Human affectivity involves an intricate interplay of sensitive and intellectual elements, which cannot be neatly divided into two categories. Accordingly, Ferry emphasizes not only that Aquinas distinguishes passions from pseudo-passions but also that within passions themselves there are gradations depending on the degree of their connection with reason.[39] One illustrative example he highlights is the passion of anger.

[35]It seems that Aquinas does not mention any passion other than *verecundia* that displays such a complex relation between appetitive motion and bodily change. Yet we may expect that a similar structure arises in the case of love directed toward self-sacrificial action. When a person gives up his life in order to help another, his or her appetite perceives the good in such an act and moves toward it, whereas the body regards the act as a threat to its own life and thus contracts (*ST* II–II, q. 26, a. 5; q. 64, a. 5 ad 3).

[36]King, 'Aquinas on the Passions', p. 105, n. 7; 'Dispassionate Passions', p. 9. Aquinas never use the term 'pseudo-passions' or 'dispassionate passions'. Nevertheless, the phenomena it refers to is clearly recognized. Indeed, Aquinas speaks of certain kinds of love and desire that, while he explicitly states they are not passions, can still be meaningfully distinguished from passions. *ST* I, q. 82, a. 5 ad 1: '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'.

[37]King, 'Dispassionate Passions', p. 28. Diana Fritz Cates argues that it is hard to conceive of anger as merely an act of the will, and that calling someone 'angry' when they show no disturbance or excitement stretches the ordinary meaning of the word. Cates, *Aquinas on the Emotions*, p. 94.

[38]On this topic, see Daniel Westberg, 'Emotion and God: A Reply to Marcel Sarot', *The Thomist,* 60 (1996), 110–115.

[39]Leonard Ferry, 'Pseudo-passions: Needless Categorization or Insightful Distinction?', *New Blackfriars,* 97 (2012), 119.

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> The thing to keep in mind, therefore, is that within the passions properly speaking – that is, with respect to those that Aquinas locates in the sensitive appetite – there is to be understood a spectrum along which the various passions are to be located. At one end of the spectrum are to be placed those passions that most fully satisfy the conditions of passion properly understood. In contrast, passions like anger, that will be located at the opposite end of the spectrum, still share in some sense key aspects of what Aquinas sees as central to the passions, but they are closer to the pseudo-passions. Nevertheless, anger can still be treated as an act of the sensitive appetite and as an act of the rational appetite.[40]

I agree with Ferry's concern. Nevertheless, if the aim is to highlight the multilayered character of human passions, shame seems more illuminating than anger. As Ferry himself notes, anger indeed involves reason more strongly than other passions. Yet reason's role in anger is limited, functioning, as it were, merely as a trigger at the outset of the passion. Initially, reason does no more than inform (*nuntiare*) the subject that another's action is unjust; it issues no direct command to the sensitive appetite. From that point on, the sensitive appetite – mediated by the will – takes over, generating an intense impulse for revenge. This impulse may, at times, exceed the bounds of the *regula rationis*, desiring a punishment greater than the harm suffered.[41] Thus, although anger involves reason somewhat more than other passions, it still belongs to the natural domain or *genus naturae*, alongside fear or pleasure.

Shame, by contrast, is grounded in the judgment of reason and arises through a certain overflowing or command (*quaedam redundantia vel imperium*) from higher faculties to lower ones, so that reason becomes constitutive of the passion itself.[42] Yet, as we have seen, shame preserves the fundamental structure of a passion, since it entails bodily change. For this reason, shame stands between passions and pseudo-passions. It shows most clearly that human affectivity is more than a sensory reaction to external stimuli; it is a reality in which reason, will, and body are deeply interwoven.

6. Conclusion

Thomas Aquinas's theory of the passions is currently attracting remarkable scholarly attention. By examining shame, I've clarified that human passions are multilayered phenomena arising from the intersection of complex dimensions. Shame preserves the basic structure of passion in that it involves bodily change, yet it is formed as a whole – both in its appetitive motion and in its bodily change – through the *redundantia* of the higher faculties. For this reason, it occupies an intermediate position between passions and pseudo-passions. By focusing on shame in this way, we can see that Aquinas's account of the passions does not reduce human affectivity simply to either nature or reason but instead presents it as a dynamic motion in which both are intricately

[40]Ferry, 'Pseudo-passions', pp. 119–120.

[41]*ST* I-II, q. 46, a. 4 ad 3: As stated in *Ethic.* vii, 6, 'anger listens somewhat to reason' in so far as reason denounces the injury inflicted, 'but listens not perfectly', because it does not observe the rule of reason as to the measure of vengeance. Anger, therefore, requires an act of reason; and yet proves a hindrance to reason.

[42]*De veritate*, q. 26, a. 3 ad 13: Insofar as the higher appetite is moved by the apprehension of the intellect, the lower appetite is thereby also moved along with it, through a certain overflow or command.

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interwoven. Hence, shame functions as a key passion that discloses the multilayered structure of human affectivity and sheds new light on the understanding of Aquinas's theory of the passions.[43]

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