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Being thought of well by others seems to belong to our basic social needs. And social esteem seems to be somehow connected with how well we think about ourselves—although the exact nature of this connection may be far from obvious. Perhaps these issues were never entirely absent from ethical and political thought; but in the early modern period they were debated in a particularly vivacious and illuminating way. The early moderns were sensitive to how our everyday dynamics of esteem and self-esteem can be distorted—be it due to the pleasure experienced in denigrating others, or to the misleading workings of imagination and the emotions, or to the inclination toward duplicity and manipulation, or to the negative effects of comparing personal achievements and competing for status. Many early moderns connected conceptions of justified esteem and self-esteem with considerations about what is naturally good for beings of our kind. According to their views concerning justified esteem, striving for excellence in what is naturally good may still be a comparative and competitive matter, but the effects of comparison and competition may be more acceptable for everyone. This is so because such excellence will have socially beneficial, and hence widely welcome, effects. Also, everyone may be capable of realizing a moderate degree of natural goodness, thereby offering the possibility of acquiring esteem and self-esteem in a non-competitive, and perhaps even co-operative way.

Of course, views about the nature of natural goodness diverged, ranging from theories of natural rights to accounts of what is good in personal relations to accounts of what is good in the life of a political community. Hence, it is no surprise that views concerning the nature and extent of the ensuing esteem-related duties also diverged widely, and these approaches are worth exploring in some detail. The articles collected in this special issue offer a series of case studies. The source materials covered here stem from the sixteenth century and the "long" seventeenth century (including the first third of the eighteenth century). This is not meant to imply that the later periods of the eighteenth century do not offer much that is of interest. The contrary is the case, as fascinating material by Christian Wolff, David Hume, Adam Smith, Gabriel Bonnot de Mably, Claude-Adrien Helvétius, Paul-Henri-Thiry d'Holbach and Jean-Jacques Rousseau shows. But it seems fair to say that this part of the story has already found careful attention from commentators,[1] in contrast to many of the topics covered in this special issue. They

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belong to five distinct fields: Spanish scholasticism, Italian reason of state theories, German natural law theories, the French moralists, and the British moralists.

1. Duties of esteem in Spanish scholasticism

One of the most prominent sixteenth-century debates about duties of esteem can be found in late scholasticism. Much of these debates derive from Thomas Aquinas's precept that one ought "to tend toward" thinking well about others.[2] Aquinas gives a hint as to the relevant sense of "tending toward" when he uses the notion of presumption to characterize the duties connected with the interpretation of doubtful signs: "one may believe that in all probability there is no fraud unless there be evident signs thereof; because we must presume good of everyone, unless there be proof of the contrary"[3] But does this advice recommend that we actually form positive judgments as long as no contrary evidence is available?

As Thomas de Vio Cajetan (1469–1534) argues, derogatory judgments about intentions are typically connected with contempt.[4] Because contempt profoundly affects the life of others, he regards derogatory judgments about the intentions of others as acts of injustice, if they are based on doubtful indications. Cajetan also maintains that positive judgments based on doubtful indications may be an obstacle to forming the right expectations about the future actions of others and, hence, to acting prudently.[5] As Cajetan suggests, the adequate attitude towards another in the presence of doubtful evidence is caution.[6] In his view, caution, unlike contempt, in the presence of doubtful evidence does not do injustice to the other, because in such situations there is no obligation to think anything in particular about the other.[7]

By contrast, Domingo de Soto (1494–1560) takes the precept that "what is doubtful has to be interpreted toward the better side"[8] as a starting point—a precept that expresses a central idea from the last chapter of the *Digest*, "On the Rules of Law". Particularly relevant is *Digest* 50.17.56: "In doubtful cases, always what is more benign has to be preferred."[9] Soto understands the duty of interpreting doubtful signs for the better as a duty belonging to the natural right to be held in good esteem until contrary evidence emerges.[10] One origin of this right derives from Soto's account of ownership. Soto accepts Aquinas's view that we possess *dominium* with respect to our actions,[11] arguing that good reputation is the outcome of our actions,[12] thus we possess *dominium* with respect to our good reputation.[13] He argues that there is a right to live a life in society (a natural right because humans are by their nature social beings),[14] and that there is a right to live a life of ethical virtue (a natural right because humans are by their rational nature capable of being virtuous).[15] Since being held in good esteem is a necessary condition both for functioning well as a member of a society and for cultivating ethical virtue, withholding esteem without sufficient evidence is an instance of injustice. For Soto, the natural right of having a good reputation implies that there is a sense in which even raising suspicion about the qualities of the other can be morally wrong.[16]

This is the intellectual context of the late scholastic debate over the ethics of historical judgment that **Daniel Schwartz** analyzes in his contribution. Often, historians will have to deal with doubtful evidence; when they are lucky, they will find evidence that supports true derogatory judgments about historical personalities. How does the ethics of historical judgment relate to the duty to abstain from judgment in the presence of doubtful

evidence? How does it relate to the duty to abstain from expressing derogatory judgments in the absence of public interest? Historians were seen to be at risk of committing detraction, the sin of destroying somebody else's reputation without good reason. The ethics of historical research, therefore, was understood as a special case of the ethics of dealing with secrets. Some reasons for revealing secrets—their relevance for criminal justice, for instance, or their relevance for spiritual guidance—are clearly absent when it comes to gathering information about deceased historical figures. But late scholastic thinkers defended the value of historical knowledge by drawing attention to its function in the moral improvement of readers and by defending the epistemic value of historical knowledge.

2. Esteem and reputation in Italian reason of state theories

While the late scholastic debate about duties of esteem was largely normative, the debate about the political function of reputation in Italian reason of state theories combines empirical and normative aspects. Reputation there is understood as a special kind of esteem. For instance, Giovanni Botero (1544–1617) defines it thus: "I think that to repute is nothing other than to rethink or to reconsider a matter more profoundly, and that a man of reputation is one whose *virtù* cannot be easily understood or comprehended and merits to be frequently considered and esteemed; this is what reputation is."[17] The relevant sense of *virtù* is related to the good functioning of a political community. For instance, Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540) writes: "Who seeks honour and fame in his native city … by striving to be accounted wise and able, and by rendering good service to his country, is a praiseworthy and useful citizen."[18] Thus, reputation itself is one of the factors that supports the functioning of a political community. Botero gives an analysis of how loss of reputation by political leaders is one of the causes of the downfall of states and how establishing the reputation of political leaders is one of the causes of the growth and stability of states.[19] He is also aware that distributive justice with respect to the reputation in which citizens are held is one of the origins of the reputation of political leaders, because rewarding merit with honors supports virtuous actions.[20]

Restricting the sense of virtue to political aims, however, leads to apparent tensions between what political virtue demands and what ethical virtue demands. For instance, Guicciardini advises that a political agent should not be insincere habitually; but "when, in any extreme emergency, he resorts to simulation, he will draw all the greater advantage from it, because from his reputation for plain dealing his artifice will blind men more".[21] Guicciardini also notes that to be esteemed in political life remains a matter of "happy chance that opportunities should at the right moment present themselves for displaying to advantage those talents or qualities wherein a man excels".[22] And Guicciardini notes that reputation, even for persons of high birth, is largely an effect of "superficial accomplishment as dancing, singing, and playing; nay, even of writing a fair hand, knowing how to ride, how to dress becomingly, and all other like arts, which savour more of show than substance".[23]

Still, Guicciardini downplays the role of deception and illusion: "He who is not in truth a good citizen cannot long be thought so."[24] Likewise, Botero holds it to be certain that "in the long run, reputation depends on being, not on appearing".[25] Is this

way of defending the non-illusory nature of reputation persuasive? **Sergius Kodera** discusses some relevant issues in the work of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527). As Kodera argues, Machiavelli's views on how pretending to be virtuous could create esteem are to a large extent motivated by political concerns about how to achieve not being dominated by others and not being stigmatized by infamy. Machiavelli's precepts for how esteem could be upheld through deliberate deception—whether by finding scapegoats that could be blamed for unpopular measures or misleading the public about the merits of those who get rewarded through reputation—should be seen from this perspective. Machiavelli thus draws attention to the possibility that manipulating the imagination of citizens, together with a realistic self-assessment of those in power, could use the dynamics of esteem to stabilize a political community.

3. Duties of esteem in German natural law theories

Much of the debate about duties of esteem in German natural law theories revolved around the question of how the presumption of goodness could be understood. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Reformed jurist and historian Marquard Freher (1565–1614) devoted two lengthy books to esteem, glory, and infamy that combined considerations drawn from the Roman law tradition with philosophical considerations concerning natural law. Freher refers to the definition given by the Roman jurist Callistratus according to which esteem is to be understood as "the standing of undamaged dignity, approved by laws and customs, which by our delict is diminished or exhausted on the basis of the authority of laws".[26] As Freher explains, what matters here is:

> … standing with respect to dignity, according to which some are held to be honorable, suitable, legal, worthy of trust, above all suspicion and (as it is called) authentic; others are held to be notorious, suspect, infamous, shameful, and excluded from testimony: and the verdict about reputation is introduced partly through laws and the edicts of the magistrate, partly it depends on the habits and good customs of the individual localities".[27]

Evidently, according to this definition, laws and other legal documents play a role in determining dignity, but so also do other social conventions.

As to why one should presume that individuals exemplify these varieties of goodness, Freher offers some teleological considerations: "I do not know how nature itself brought it about in the minds of everyone that they give great weight to the opinions of others about themselves and that they direct a great part of their lives toward this opinion."[28] In this sense, it is a brute fact of human nature that social esteem is a source of happiness, more so than self-esteem. But for the very reason that being held in good esteem is a natural need, Freher holds it is one of the needs that have to be taken into consideration in natural law. In addition to such teleological considerations, Freher argues that the presumption of goodness can be derived from general observations concerning human nature. It is exactly this possibility that Freher has in mind.[29] In this respect, he understands verisimilitude as what is in agreement with the demands of natural law: "The verisimilitude of the thing usually recommends good reputation if the reputation concerns those things that are in agreement with nature, such as the probity and innocence of someone, in favor of which one should form a presumption … "[30]

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, two concepts of "good esteem" (*existimatio bona*) were distinguished, one of which can be described as juridical, the other as ethical. According to the juridical concept, a citizen who has not been convicted of any wrongdoing is in the possession of full civic dignity, understood as the possession of full civic rights (such as being capable of holding political office or capable of testifying at court).[31] The right to being held in good esteem in the juridical sense thus consists in the right of being presumed not to have violated the laws in the absence of contrary evidence. By contrast, the ethical concept of esteem ascribes virtuous character traits to individuals, and a different presumption is recommended: "Everyone … is presumed to be bad until he has given the proof of the contrary through what he has achieved in life, or through a truly virtuous life."[32] This conceptual distinction originates in the school of Christian Thomasius (1655–1728), became highly influential in the second half of the eighteenth century and left its traces in Kant's lectures on natural law.[33] One argument for the presumption against ethical goodness invokes Thomasius's notion of stupidity, understood as the inability to gain insight into necessary causal connections.[34] If most people are stupid in this sense, then they are incapable of esteeming what deserves to be esteemed; this makes them incapable of avoiding exaggerated self-esteem and of developing the desire for ethical self-cultivation.[35]

The century between Freher and the school of Thomasius did not see any publications in the German-speaking world primarily dedicated to esteem; but in the context of debates about concrete natural rights, such as the right of forming confederations, one does find approaches to esteem-related topics that were not touched upon by Freher. **Andreas Blank** traces the issue of duties of esteem in diplomatic relations in the work of Christoph Besold (1577–1638). Besold draws both on the reason of state tradition when he describes the political function of reputation and on legal humanism when he searches for the natural-law foundations for duties of esteem in international politics. Both strands of thought are closely connected because only the factual importance of matters of reputation explains why fulfilling the natural goals of political communities requires the fulfilment of certain duties of esteem. One controversial duty concerns the recognition of envoys of political communities as ambassadors. On first sight this may seem to be a matter of protocol, but the issues run deeper: recognition of ambassadorial status implies recognition of sovereignty. Besold argues that such duties of esteem are closely bound to the question of whether political communities can fulfil functions according to the law of nations, such as international mediation and arbitration and the formation of confederations.

Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694) is another thinker who maintained that some duties of esteem could be grounded in natural rights. Pufendorf recognized duties of esteem based on the natural equality of all human beings, understood as an equality of shared natural rights that derives from shared features of human physiology.[36] Also his reflections about duties of esteem based on the political agency of sovereigns in defining a hierarchically structured order of social positions bind such duties to the demands of natural law.[37] **Katerina Mihaylova** investigates the ontological foundations of Pufendorf's account of duties of esteem, developed in his theory of moral estimation as a kind of "moral entity"—an entity that is not a physical reality but rather comes into being by being ascribed to persons, thereby regulating their social relations. As Mihaylova argues, keeping these ontological foundations in mind helps in understanding the sense in

which Pufendorf regarded duties of esteem to be obligatory, and also in understanding the way he treated extreme cases such as the possibility of esteem for enslaved persons.

4. Esteem and self-esteem in the French moralists

The debate about esteem and self-esteem in early modern France was shaped by both the reception of Augustine's theology and critical responses to Augustinianism. This debate was initiated by the denial of the ethical value of the desire for esteem in Cornelius Jansen's *Augustinus* (1640). This denial derives from the Augustinian analysis of concupiscence (*concupiscentia*): "Concupiscence is nothing other than the love of perishable things."[38] Jansen comments that love for temporal things expresses the inclination to enjoy oneself; in this sense, concupiscence is a form of self-love.[39] As he explains, what is bad about loving creatures for one's own sake is that it is impossible to love something without experiencing rest once the desired object has been attained.[40] And when this experience concerns creatures, then it is not directed toward God.[41]

The dichotomy between loving creatures at the cost of forgetting God and loving God at the cost of giving up self-love is prominent in both Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) and Pierre Nicole (1625–1695). Nicole describes the desire for esteem as what prevents us from searching for God.[42] And he regards self-esteem as the origin of this vice: "It is rather natural that those who esteem themselves desire to be esteemed by others, as well; and this is why the desire for honour and esteem was also one of the character traits of the Pharisees."[43] Nicole thus starts from a theological conception of concupiscence to show what is wrong about desiring to be esteemed for worldly qualities.

By contrast, Pascal develops a series of arguments that question the idea that we are capable of identifying what is naturally good for us; and if so, then we seem to be unable to identify what deserves to be esteemed. This is how his discussion of distorted esteem forms part of the plan that he formulated for the first part of his projected work: "That nature is corrupt, proved by nature itself."[44] His remarks about how the imagination influences what we esteem form a part of this argumentative strategy. Famously, he holds that "while it is more often false, it gives no indication of its quality, indicating in the same way both truth and falsehood".[45] If what reason tells us feels exactly the same as what imagination tells us, then this has the consequence that there is no standard according to which we could check the esteem that we have for things: "Reason may well complain, it cannot put a price on things."[46] Imagination therefore determines both self-esteem and the esteem in which we are held by others:

> Those skillful in imagination are more pleased with themselves than the prudent can ever reasonably be pleased with themselves … Their vivacious expression often wins over the opinion of their listeners, such is the esteem those wise by imagination have with their like-minded judges.[47]

Not all French moralists accepted the view that we are unable to identify genuinely estimable qualities. One attempt at defending justified esteem for personal qualities, even while endorsing skepticism concerning ethical knowledge, can be found in René Descartes (1596–1650). For him, the use of free will is the only thing that can lead to justified esteem, because only actions that depend on the use of free will can be the object of praise and blame.[48] This idea is built into his notion of generosity, understood

as a character trait "which causes a person's self-esteem to be as great as it may legitimately be". In his view, this character trait consists of only two components: "The first consists in his knowing that nothing truly belongs to him but his freedom to dispose his volitions … The second consists in his feeling within himself a firm and constant resolution to use it well."[49] This characterization had led to widely diverging interpretations, depending on how the idea of using free will well is understood. One possible interpretation—deriving from Descartes's idea of "never to lack the will to undertake and to carry out whatever he judges to be best"[50]—places Descartes in the context of heroic ethics that regards resolute adherence to one's own decisions to be the core of virtue.[51] Another possible interpretation derives from Descartes's idea of a "provisional ethics" that, even in the absence of ethical judgments all things considered, gives guidance to what could be ethically good in situations of uncertainty.[52]

François de La Rochefoucauld (1613–1680) challenges the idea that generosity could fulfil the function of grounding self-esteem: "What seems to be generosity is often merely a disguised form of ambition, which disdains small interests in order to pursue great ones."[53] As an alternative, he develops a conception of an attitude toward the self that can be described as self-acceptance:[54] the value of knowing one's own character faults may contribute to an attitude that liberates one from the effort of deceiving oneself and others. An esteem-related advantage of sincerity is that, by being open about our faults, we become less ridiculous in the eyes of others: "The qualities that we have never make us as ridiculous as those we pretend to have."[55] In his eyes, this is a serious problem because "[r]idicule dishonours more than dishonour does".[56] Being open about our moral faults could thus genuinely improve our social relations by reducing the occasions when we become the object of ridicule—and avoiding something that is naturally bad for us (being ridiculed) can itself be seen as something that is naturally good for us.

While other more secularly oriented moralists such as Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), Jeanne-Michelle de Pringy (1660–1709), and Anne-Thérèse de Marguenat de Courcelles, Marquise de Lambert (1647–1733) continued to explore the value of the desire for esteem in social life, especially for building up friendship and aging well,[57] the Augustinian critique of the morality of striving for esteem remained highly influential. **Dániel Schmal** traces this influence, and some critical responses to it, in the *amour-pur* debate. A central figure in this debate was Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon (1648–1717), who argued that selfish interests disguise their purposes so well that accurate self-representation becomes impossible. This is why she regarded a Christian culture of love to be incompatible with a project of moral self-cultivation. Accordingly, she took reflection to be the origin of inflated self-esteem and sought for a kind of spiritual experience devoid of self-representation. This idea met strong resistance even from within Catholicism. Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704) took a state devoid of reflection to be unnatural, recommending reflection as an instrument of spiritual self-care and self-control. He argued that self-knowledge and the desire to meet social expectations are natural capacities given to humans by God with the purpose of supporting the pursuit of virtue.

Baruch de Spinoza (1632–1677) builds his discussion of esteem on a notion that has much in common with Descartes's notion of generosity: the notion of satisfaction with oneself (*acquiescentia in se ipso*), understood as "a joy born of the fact that a man

considers himself and his own power of acting",[58] or "a joy, accompanied by the idea of some deed which we believe we have done from a free decision of the mind".[59] **Francesco Toto** argues that Spinoza was aware both of the anti-social consequences of self-satisfaction and of its potential for stabilizing social order. As to the former, Spinoza emphasizes the illusory nature of belief in free decisions, which implies that, by its very nature, the esteem (*existimatio*) individuals have for themselves is always an act of the imagination that leads them to think more highly of themselves than is just. If so, they believe that they deserve to be loved by others, do not deserve any complaints, and do not have reason to be grateful to others. As Toto points out, Spinoza has seen the possibility that it is exactly the illusory nature of esteem that can have a stabilizing function in politics: namely, in asymmetrical social relationships where the exaggerated self-esteem of the powerful is complemented by the equally unfounded humility of their inferiors.

5. Esteem and self-esteem in the British moralists

In British moral philosophy, perhaps no one expressed a more optimistic attitude toward the beneficial effects of striving for esteem than John Locke (1632–1704). In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Locke recommends taking advantage of students' love of esteem and reputation to establish authority over children:[60] using this strategy has "all other good things as a consequence of it".[61] Probing the details of his educational views, however, brings to light problematic consequences. For instance, he recommends strengthening the desire for the reputation "of being brave and stout, to the avoiding a little pain, or the shrinking under it",[62] or weakening the desire for developing a reputation for poetic skills:

> … for if he proves a successful rhymer, and gets once the reputation of a wit, I desire it may be considered, what company and places he is like to spend his time in, nay, and estate too: for it is very seldom seen, that any one discovers mines of gold or silver in Parnassus.[63]

How detrimental the dynamics of esteem could be especially for women in early modern England becomes clear when one looks into the work of Mary Astell (1666–1731). Astell draws attention to how flattery can define gender roles that are characterized by the dependence of women on the will of men. What makes such flattery detrimental is not misrepresentation; rather, even if such flattery is perfectly truthful, it conveys esteem for qualities contrary to the rational interests of women. Astell asserts that such a mechanism is particularly relevant for the education of girls, who tend to be praised for achievements that do not reflect their own talents and thereby undermine female self-esteem at an early age.[64]

Giving a normative account of what justified esteem and self-esteem might consist in therefore became a pressing problem for the British moralists. One possible solution derived from the emergence of moral sense theory. Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), for instance, uses his moral sense theory to argue that we have an innate emotional capacity of perceiving moral excellence, which guides us toward justified esteem.[65] As an argument for the reality of this experience, Hutcheson draws attention to our admiration for persons in geographically remote regions or historically distant periods, who are not connected with our personal interest.[66] In his critique of Hutcheson, Archibald Campbell (1691–1756) points out that the intensity of this emotion decreases with

geographic and historical distance, and he maintains that justified esteem must be based on rational reflection. As he argues, "we love and esteem the Temperate, the Brave and Generous, the Prudent, the Just … only from *Self-Interest*, or because they minister to our *Pleasures*".[67] The esteem in which we are held by others depends upon how much we contribute to the fulfilment of their interests. Thus, Campbell takes our interest in justified self-esteem to function as a strong motivation for respecting the interests of others. For if we reflect on the consequences that our actions have for others, we know how much others have reason to esteem us.[68] This argument, however, leave us with the problem that the causal consequences of our actions may diminish with geographic distance. This is why it may be useful to pay attention to two thinkers who are less sanguine about our emotional and rational powers: Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733).

Hobbes emphasizes that the desire for glory is not only the cause of the greatness of political communities, but also an object of competition: "*Glory*, and the *Honour* that is built upon it, consist in *Comparison* and *Preference*; and so what belongs to every body, belongs to no body."[69] Understanding glory as a scarce good implies a conception of the worth or dignity of a person as "the value or price of a man, or as much as would be given for the use of his power".[70] While this could be understood as pointing toward esteem as leading to conflicts over status,[71] **Lars Vinx** reveals the more constructive role that Hobbes assigns to striving for esteem, one closely connected with the question of how to understand Hobbes's conception of the state as an artificial person. Vinx argues that it is the function of political representation to uphold a proper measure of self-esteem in all citizens that speaks against interpreting the person of the state as a fictional entity. If citizens are to own actions undertaken in the name of the state, then the person of the state should rather be taken to be constituted by relations of authorization, that is, by relations between concrete individuals.

Mandeville places his analysis of the desire for esteem in the context of his conception of pride, understood as the desire for superiority, and the confirmation of this status through others through what he calls "submissive Veneration".[72] He is aware of how much self-love is vulnerable to self-deception: "every Individual values itself above its real Worth; this in us … seems to be accompany'd with a Diffidence, arising from a Consciousness, or at least an Apprehension, that we do over-value ourselves".[73] This explains why we need the approbation of others. **Sandy Berkovski** analyses Mandeville's account of how lawgivers can exploit the imaginary nature of esteem and self-esteem by rewarding citizens with "compliments", "flattery", and "honour" for those qualities that support the lawgivers' political agenda. In Mandeville's view, this strategy changes the values that inform the actions of citizens—not so much as a matter of being committed to these values but rather as a matter of wanting to create the public impression of being committed to them, because this is what is expected to be esteemed.

Together, these articles draw attention to a variety of ways in which justified esteem and self-esteem could be bound to what is naturally good. Some forms of natural goodness have to with goals deriving from human nature—such as the importance of being thought of well for social relations and the importance of thinking well of oneself for the relation that one has to oneself. Some forms of natural goodness have to do with personal qualities that are good for ourselves and others and therefore deserve to be esteemed and to be supported by social esteem. Some forms of natural goodness have

to do with beneficial consequences even of esteem based on illusions concerning the personal qualities of others. From a contemporary perspective, the early modern normative conceptions of esteem and self-esteem may be surprising. Much of the contemporary debate about these issues revolves around the idea that striving for esteem essentially takes the form of quasi-economic exchange relations. According to the conception of an "economy of esteem" developed by Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit, esteem is essentially a scarce good, and it is possible to influence the position that others have in the competition for esteem by letting them participate in the esteem that one has accumulated—for instance, by associating oneself with them, praising them, giving them recommendations, and so on.[74] Economic categories were by no means absent in early modern analyses of social relations—for instance, La Rochefoucauld took kindness to be "a form of disinterestedness that carries a usurious rate of interest" (maxim 250) and friendship to be a "trade" (maxim 94), "an exchange of favors" and "a commerce where self-love always expects to gain something" (maxim 83). But the early modern were also deeply concerned about the countless ways in which our everyday dynamics of esteem and self-esteem could go wrong—be it due to the inclination for derogation and self-deception, due to the distorting influence of imagination and passions, or due to manipulative political agency. It is exactly this concern with the pathological sides of the everyday dynamics of esteem that explains why the early modern were not content with analyzing these dynamics in quasi-economic terms. Rather, they sought stronger, normative accounts of esteem and self-esteem—accounts that tried to spell out how the detrimental effects of misguided forms of esteem and self-esteem could be overcome. This is a perspective virtually absent from the contemporary debate, and one that explains why the views of the early moderns still may be thought-provoking today.

Notes

1. See Martin, "In Praise of Self"; Brennan, "Self-Esteem and Social Esteem"; Olsthoorn, "Honor, Face and Reputation in Political Theory"; Toto, "L'impensé de Claude-Adrien Helvétius"; Locke McLendon, "The Overvaluation of Talent"; Locke McLendon, "Rousseau, *Amour Propre*, and Intellectual Celebrity"; Blank, "Mably on Esteem"; Blank, "D'Holbach on (Dis-)Esteeming Talent"; Blank, "Helvétius's Challenge"; Blank, "Christian Wolff on Common Notions and Duties of Esteem"; Blank, "Wolff on Duties of Esteem in the Law of Peoples."
2. Aquinas, *Secunda secundae Summae theologiae*, q. 60, a. 4.
3. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, *The 'Summa Theologica'*, STh, *Suppl.*, q. 45 a. 4 ad 2.
4. See Cajetan's commentary on STh II-II q. 60 a. 4, in Aquinas, *Secunda secundae Summae theologiae à Quaestione LVII ad Quaestione CXXII*, 31.
5. Ibid., 29.
6. Ibid., 31.
7. Ibid., 30.
8. Soto, *De iustitia et iure*, 214.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Aquinas, *Prima secundae Summae theologiae*, q. 1 a.1 co; Soto, *De iustitia et iure*, 262.
12. Soto, *De iustitia et iure*, 454.
13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., 26.
15. Ibid., 451.
16. Ibid., 213; see Blank, "Aquinas and Soto on Derogatory Judgment"; Blank, "Domingo de Soto on Doubts."
17. Botero, *Reason of State*, 216–17.
18. Guicciardini, *Discourses*, § 223.
19. Botero, *Reason of State*, 14–15.
20. Ibid., 20.
21. Guicciardini, *Discourses*, § 104.
22. Ibid. § 274.
23. Ibid., § 179.
24. Ibid., § 224.
25. Botero, *Reason of State*, 58.
26. Freher, *Existimatio*, 9.
27. Ibid., 9–10.
28. Ibid., 14.
29. Ibid., 11.
30. Freher, *Fama*, 115.
31. Ludovici, *De praesumtione bonitatis*, § 11.
32. Ibid.
33. See Hruschka, "Existimatio."
34. Thomasius, *Fundamenta*, 53.
35. Schmidt, *De existimatione extra rempublicam*, 13.
36. Pufendorf, *De jure naturae et gentium*, 3.2.1–7; see Saastamoinen, "Pufendorf on Natural Equality."
37. Pufendorf, *De jure naturae et gentium*, 8.4.11–32; see Blank, "Pufendorf and Leibniz on Duties of Esteem."
38. Jansen, *Augustinus*, 2: col. 354.
39. Ibid., 2: col. 355.
40. Ibid., 2: col. 356.
41. Ibid., 2: col 369.
42. Nicole, *Essais de morale*, 2: 64 ["Danger des entretiens des hommes," 1.4].
43. Nicole, *Continuation des Essais de morale*, 7: 430–431 ["Sur l'Evangile du V. Dimanche d'après la Pentecôte," § 7].
44. Pascal, *Pensées and Other Writings*, 11 [fragment 40].
45. Ibid., 16 [fragment 78].
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., 17.
48. Descartes, *Passions de l'âme*, § 152.
49. Ibid., § 153.
50. Ibid.
51. See Lanson, "Le héros cornélien et le 'généreux' selon Descartes."
52. See Kambouchner, *Descartes et la philosophie morale*, 311–38.
53. La Rochefoucauld, *Collected Maxims and Other Reflections*, maxim 246.
54. See Blank, "Varieties of Excellence," sec. 2.
55. La Rochefoucauld, *Collected Maxims and Other Reflections*, maxim 134.
56. Ibid., maxim 326.
57. See Blank, "Anne-Thérèse de Lambert on Aging and Self-Esteem" and Blank, "Complaisance and the Question of Autonomy."
58. Spinoza, *Éthique*, 3DA25.
59. Ibid., 3DA26exp.
60. Locke, "Some Thoughts," §§ 42, 61, 108.
61. Ibid., § 58. See Johnson, *Locke and Rousseau*, chap. 2; Brady, "Locke's *Thoughts* on Reputation"; Stuart-Buttle, "'A Burthen Too Heavy for Humane Sufferance'."

62. Locke, "Some Thoughts," § 115.
63. Ibid., § 174.
64. See Blank, "Mary Astell on Flattery and Self-Esteem."
65. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, 89–90.
66. Ibid., 86.
67. Ibid., 264.
68. Campbell, *Enquiry*, 257–8; see Maurer, *Self-Love*, chap. 6.
69. Hobbes, *De cive*, 1.2.
70. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 10.16.
71. See Slomp, "Hobbes on Glory and Civil Strife."
72. Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees*, 2: 136.
73. Ibid., 2: 130.
74. See Brennan and Pettit, *The Economy of Esteem*.

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