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Honor and Moral Revolution

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Abstract Western philosophers have generally neglected honor as a moral phenomenon worthy of serious study. Appiah's recent work on honor in moral revolutions is an important exception, but even he is careful to separate honor from morality, regarding it as only "an ally" of morality. In this paper we take Appiah to be right about the psychological, social, and historical role honor has played in three notable moral revolutions, but wrong about the moral nature of honor. We defend two new theses: First, honor is an emotional and moral form of recognition respect that can hinder or aid moral progress. Second, honor, so conceived, can play a rational role in progressive moral change, as it did among the working class in the British abolition of slave trade, when the pressure of moral consistency moved them to protest American slavery as an affront to their honor without change in their moral belief that slavery is wrong.

Keywords Honor · Respect · Morality · Moral judgment · Moral progress · Hybrid theory · Consistency reasoning

Until recently, honor has been neglected among Western moral philosophers, perhaps because it connotes old fashioned or regressive values associated with status in a stratified social structure. We contend, however, that honor is an integral part of morality and can be an engine of rational and progressive moral change. On the view we defend, to be honorable is to merit feelings of moral respect in virtue of one's social identity. Though honor often fails to achieve the liberal ideal of full and equal respect for all persons (cf. Krause 2002; Cunningham 2013), changes and expansions in the scope of honor can drive moral progress.

To develop our view of honor we draw on Kwame Anthony Appiah's recent book *The Honor Code*: *How Moral Revolutions Happen*. Appiah's historically important examples of moral revolutions include the disappearance of honor dueling among the aristocracy in nineteenth-century England, the eventual success early in the last century of the long campaign

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against female footbinding in China, and the British suppression of the Atlantic slave trade that lasted from the 1780s to its abolition in the empire by 1840, achieved in significant part through the opposition of ordinary citizens in England and America. In each case a morally unacceptable practice was sustained to a significant degree because it was rooted in a set of norms governing honor or "honor code." In each case, too, the overthrow of a morally unacceptable practice depended on, among other things, a broad appeal to a new, transformative understanding of honor, so that honor was used, paradoxically, to discredit and overthrow the existing honor code that came to be seen from a new perspective as dishonorable. Appiah applies this analysis to the long-standing and still prevalent practice of honor killing. He hopes that appeals that are being made to a deeper, more fundamental sense of honor will undermine this immoral practice and produce a revolution in moral attitudes and behavior among those whose feelings of honor continue to be tied to it.

Obviously, Appiah's central claims about honor and moral revolution are broad-based empirical hypotheses. Consequently, their evaluation requires equally broad-based historical, psychological, and sociological analyses. To his credit Appiah does not shy from undertaking such an evaluation and we find the result highly plausible and consistent with research on the psychology of honor (Nisbett and Cohen 1996). Our methodology will be to assume that Appiah's empirical claims are roughly correct but advance and defend a philosophical conception of honor that differs from his. We argue that honor is an inherently moral attitude and also that it has the capacity to play a rational role in revolutionary moral change. We defend, in particular, two theses. First, honor is comprised in part by an *emotional* and *moral* form of recognition respect that can hinder or aid moral progress. Second, honor, so conceived, can play a *rational* role in progressive moral change through the need to be consistent in feelings of honor, as we shall argue it did in the British abolition of the slave trade.

1 Why Think That Honor is not Distinctly Moral?

Psychologists, anthropologists, and other social scientists characterize "honor cultures" as those in which honor is a central moral value. In these cultures members of a given social class have the right to be honored, although they can perform actions that entail losing that right—they can bring dishonor upon themselves. They must also defend their honor and often this demands that they act with integrity, or defend the weak from exploitation by the strong, or respond aggressively to attacks, threats, and insults (see Sessions 2010; Oprisko 2012; Cunningham 2013; Demetriou 2014 for philosophical reviews). Many other moral duties likewise stem distinctively from a sense of honor, such as the duty to pay respects to a fallen comrade.

Appiah argues, however, that honor is not a moral value (see also Sessions 2010). He believes that honor is not part of morality and his reasons revolve around two kinds of cases. In one kind a sense of honor motivates a person to act contrary to a belief about how morally one ought to act. In the other kind a person believes for some time that something morally ought to be done but is moved to act only after a sense of honor is aroused.

An instance of the first kind of case is a duel by pistols on a field at Battersea between the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Winchilsea on March 21, 1829 (Appiah 2011: 3–12). Wellington had challenged the Earl to a duel on the ground that he had falsely accused Wellington of plotting an assault on the Protestant constitution in order to allow Catholics to sit in the British Parliament. Wellington was then the British prime minister and a war hero in

the victorious campaigns against Napoleon. Despite his success as a general, he knew himself to be a poor shot and ill-matched against the Earl who was 20 years his junior. Were the Duke to be killed in the duel it would be bad for his country and his party. More than that, the practice of dueling was now illegal (and finally on the decline after being around for some three centuries). If Wellington succeeded in killing the Earl, the Parliament would be faced with having their prime minister tried for murder. Wellington knew all this, but more relevant to our point, he knew that Christian teaching in general and his own Catholic Church in particular, of which he was a loyal and devout member, strongly condemned dueling as morally wrong. In short, Wellington had overwhelming reasons, prudential, political, and moral, not to duel, and yet he felt compelled to meet the Earl on the dueling field that morning in order to defend his honor. Appiah puts it this way:

> In sum, dueling was contrary to Wellington's own inclinations, to civil law and to Christian teaching, and, so it might seem, to political prudence. So what was the first minister of a king who was also head of the Church of England doing out there in Battersea at eight o'clock that brisk spring morning? What on earth was he thinking? Well, as anyone in the small knot of curious bystanders could have told you, Arthur Wellesley, Knight of the Bath, Baron Douro of Wellington, Viscount Wellington of Tavavera and of Wellington, Earl of Wellington and of Douro, and the Duke of Wellington (to supply his full battery of titles) was defending his honor as a gentleman (Appiah 2011: 12).

As this example appears to make unmistakably clear, honor—and in this case, the honor of a gentleman—while a powerful motivator is a force that is distinct from, and indeed in this case utterly opposed to, moral judgment and even rational reflection. It is not as if Wellington secretly thought he was doing the morally right thing and believed that Christian teaching was mistaken about the morality of dueling. As a good Catholic he too believed it was wrong, but he felt compelled even so to defend his honor as gentleman, despite its wrongness and its clear irrationality from a political and personal perspective.

As it turned out, Wellington missed and the Earl deliberately fired in the air and offered a full written apology. This result could not have been known beforehand or predicted with any confidence, and none of it makes the duel any less morally wrong. Though a potent motivating force, honor seems plainly in this example and others like it to be entirely separable from moral belief and motivation.

Appiah's other case concerns the immoral millennium-long practice in China of footbinding young females among the educated literati class (Appiah 2011: 55–100). The practice hobbled the women subjected to it so that they could not go far from the family and the men who controlled them. Besides curtailing their freedom, the practice also deformed their feet and was extremely painful. Organized resistance to the practice from missionaries, but also from within the elite classes, based on moral objections, did not develop until the mid-nineteenth century, and even then the practice hung on until the first two decades of the twentieth century. When it finally disappeared the transformation took place within one or two generations. On Appiah's analysis what finally killed it was not the perception that the practice was morally unacceptable, a perception that had been around for some time, but rather that it disgraced China in the eyes of Westerners to whom Chinese culture was exposed, especially after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

In this case national honor was the strong and finally decisive factor. But then it seems plain that moral attitudes by themselves did not and could not eradicate the immoral practice, and it

may therefore be difficult not to infer that the element of honor that was needed to create the moral revolution is not itself part of morality. Though other factors helped, such as the previous spread of the practice into the lower classes, undermining its ability to mark the social superiority of the literati, this factor like the influence of national honor may appear to have nothing to do with the immorality of the practice as such.

2 What is the Connection Between Honor and Respect?

To honor someone is to feel or express respect toward that person, and to feel unworthy of honor or, in a word, dishonorable, is to feel unworthy of respect. Honor is thus intrinsically tied to respect and the worthiness to be respected (Stewart 1994). Differences emerge, however, over what entitles someone to respect. On one view we owe persons respect according to their authority. Parents are owed respect by their children, judges by those in their courtroom, conductors by their orchestras, and so on. Jonathan Haidt (2012, 142–6, 225), for example, views the attitudes of respect or honor elicited by positions of authority to be one kind of basic moral disposition or "moral foundation" shared across all peoples. On another view honor is respect earned by those who are successful in norm-guided competitions for prestige (Demetriou 2013a). Theorists with a Kantian bent, on the other hand, take worldly authority and prestige with their attendant honor to be irrelevant to moral respect, since persons are worthy of equal moral respect solely because they share the same fundamental capacity for rational choice.

Different cultures of honor involve different grounds for respecting persons. What is critical to understanding honor in a given culture is what entitles one to respect in the culture in question. Appiah summarizes his position along just these lines:

> Here, then, is the picture: Having honor means being entitled to respect. As a result, if you want to know whether a society has a concern with honor, look first to see whether people think anyone has a right to be treated with respect. The next thing to look for is whether that right to respect is granted on the basis of a set of shared norms, a code. An *honor code* says how people of certain identities can gain the right to respect, how they can lose it, and how having and losing honor changes the way they should be treated (Appiah 2011: 175).

Respect, as Appiah rightly notes, comes in more than one form. Stephen Darwall (1977) distinguishes between "appraisal" and "recognition" respect. Appraisal respect is due persons because they meet a standard of excellence to a particularly high degree and their success is owed in some part to their character. Such persons held in high esteem include war heroes, sport stars, distinguished scholars, excellent musicians, exemplary teachers. Like Appiah, we are primarily interested in the other form of respect. Recognition respect is not due to people, even in part, because they excel by a certain standard of excellence, but rather because of some social fact about them. The particular form of recognition respect that is linked with honor in Appiah's central examples is respect for persons based on who or what they are, specifically how they are identified socially, not on their competence in meeting a standard of excellence. Thus, the Duke of Wellington felt he was owed honor in virtue of his status as a gentleman in nineteenth-century Britain. In early twentieth-century China, the literati, identifying themselves as a superior social class, feared that the practice of footbinding was dishonoring them as citizens of China in the eyes of foreigners. These and other examples in which honor plays a

key role in progressive moral change, or in resistance to change (such as the persistence of honor killing), are all cases of what Darwall calls recognition respect.

We should pause to consider the bearing of this form of honor on cultures that embrace what Daniel Demetriou terms an "agonistic" conception of honor (Demetriou 2013a, b, c, 2014), given that agonistic honor depends on being worthy of appraisal respect. While we accept Darwall's distinction between the two forms of respect, we hold that those cultures of honor in which respect is earned through successfully competing for higher prestige ranking encompass both kinds of respect but do so differently. On the one hand, successful competitors in cultures that are socially structured around competition (cultures in which social identity depends on prowess as a warrior, academic prestige, or entrepreneurship, to give a few of Demetriou's examples) achieve appraisal respect by winning in competitions. They earn appraisal respect, however, only if these competitors are already recognized as worthy to compete, and they are worthy only if they abide by a code of honor that sets the preconditions for agonistic honor. For example, in such honor cultures it is dishonorable not to seek the highest rank you deserve (so you must challenge those of slightly higher rank) but likewise dishonorable to challenge those of much higher rank or to challenge those of lower rank. Furthermore, to be honorable you must not decline legitimate challenges to your own rank and follow rules of fair competition. In effect, being worthy of recognition respect, in these cultures being someone who plays by the honor code, is a necessary condition for being worthy of appraisal respect when he or she wins a competition. In sum, recognition respect is the more basic form of honor in agonistic honor cultures; it is also more general, applying to examples identified by Appiah in which appraisal honor is not at issue.

Honor, as a form of recognition respect, is more than a belief; it is also a motivating attitude imbued with feeling, like moral attitudes in general. Thus, in nineteenth century England, to feel honored as a gentleman, or to honor someone as a gentleman, is to be moved, in light of certain perceived facts about oneself and others, such as being part of the landed aristocracy, to feel respect for one's station or that of another and to behave in appropriate ways. It is also to experience indignation if one is not accorded proper respect, and shame if one does not act as befits one's station. Typically one will, of course, have certain beliefs, such as the belief that one is a gentleman or that someone else is, and that being a gentleman is worthy of respect, but honor is not reducible to a state of belief. Moreover, the way honor or an honor code functions in society cannot be explained purely by reference to such beliefs. On the contrary, emotion and motivation in response to these believed facts are central to any explanation of the way honor and the code in which it is embedded can be expected to function (see Krause 2002). Wellington did not merely believe that not challenging the Earl would reflect badly upon him; he felt indignation toward the Earl and anticipated shame and loss of respect. It follows that if Appiah's reasons for regarding honor as being not part of morality, as they are set out in the last section, were sound, they would be reasons for regarding the emotions and motivation appropriate to honor as being not part of morality.

3 When is a Normative Response Generically Moral?

We will argue, against Appiah, that feelings of honor are moral feelings, but we must distinguish at the outset between a normative response (belief, attitude, emotion, and so on) to something being generically moral without necessarily being morally justified and a normative response being not only moral but also morally justified. Someone's condemnation

of homosexuality, for instance, can be moral in nature without being a moral stance that is justified. This distinction will be critical for the discussion to follow, since we will assume that an honor code, such as the code of honor among gentlemen of the nineteenth century British aristocracy, can be part of the morality accepted by a certain class without this honor code and the actions it requires of people being morally justified.

We will identify several features of norms that are widely recognized to mark them as moral (for more details see Campbell 2009; Kumar V (Forthcoming) Moral judgment as a natural kind. Philosophical Studies), without implying that norms with those features are justified morally. Norms in general, of course, share many features in common, such as being internalizable, such that those who subscribe to the norms are motivated to follow them more or less automatically. In this respect norms of etiquette, legal norms, and moral norms are not different. Moral norms, nevertheless, differ from other social norms in a number of familiar ways and tend to have most of these distinguishing features.

First, they are supposed, by those who have internalized them, to transcend social convention and consensus, so that it is possible that everybody could be mistaken about what ought to be done even when their collective opinion conforms to social convention. Relatedly, moral norms, when internalized, are felt to have their moral authority by necessity (whether their authority has a divine origin or some other deep foundation) so that a change in contingent facts, for example, that those in power reject the norms, does not alter their authority. Furthermore, they tend to have a seriousness or priority for those who have internalized them that at least normally outweighs conflicting non-moral demands that might be comparably urgent from other perspectives. Finally, while one can be moved to follow all norms in part for instrumental reasons, a characteristic motivation for acting morally is that it is worth doing for its own sake. The same is not true for norms of prudence, law, and etiquette except when their application has a moral dimension, though that is often the case. For the sake of future reference, we will call these features of moral response: consensus-independence, non-contingent-authority, normative-priority, and intrinsic-motivation.

Much more can be said about what makes a normative response generically moral, and has been said (cf. Brandt 1979: 164–70; Gibbard 1990; Copp 1995: 74–103), but the arguments in the following sections do not turn on points of detail. Moral, in the generic sense intended, is what is sometimes called a cluster or prototype concept that is defined not by necessary and sufficient conditions but by whether instances are sufficiently similar in relevant respects (Kumar V (Forthcoming) Moral judgment as a natural kind. Philosophical Studies). It is enough for the arguments to follow that we can distinguish roughly between different kinds of normative responses, whether in the form of belief, attitude, emotion, motivation, or some combination, such that we count them as moral in a generic sense when the underlying norm fits all or most of the above four criteria, but are not thereby necessarily morally justified.

4 Is Honor, as a Form of Recognition Respect, Generically Moral?

Does honor, as Appiah understands it, namely as a form of recognition respect, function socially as a moral norm in his examples? Is the set of beliefs, feelings, desires, and behaviors that comprise respecting someone for how they are identified socially, say as a gentleman in nineteenth-century Britain—and hence honoring them as such—moral in nature? Despite

Appiah's arguments to the contrary, it would seem that they meet the four criteria for being generically moral identified in the previous section.

Honor has a powerful grip on those who subscribe to its codes even in the face of social and legal opposition, and often principally for the sake of honor itself. The demand to act on the code of gentlemanly honor took precedence over other considerations for the Duke of Wellington and was seen by him as a matter that transcended the opinion of his peers and even the authority of the Catholic Church. For not only were his wellbeing and his political future of less importance, but also even at a time when his code of honor was in dramatic decline among his countrymen, Wellington felt compelled to follow its demands for their own sake. His felt need to defend his honor thus meets all four of the criteria for being a moral response, having normative-priority, consensus-independence, non-contingent-authority, and intrinsic-motivation. (Demetriou (2013a) independently offers a similar argument for the view that honor is a moral response. See also Gerrard (1994)).

Appiah draws a familiar distinction between morality, about what we owe to each other, and ethics more generally, about how to live the good life (Appiah 2011: xiv-xv). Although morality on this view is part of ethics, it is not the whole of ethics. According to Appiah, honor is not moral since he claims that it concerns primarily how our social identities are wrapped up in living well rather than in fulfilling duties owed to others. For example, contrast the moral emotion of guilt with feeling shame. Guilt arises from failure to do what is right or just according to what we owe to others; shame, felt for example when one has failed to act honorably, comes from not living up to a standard of goodness. Rawls makes a similar point when he says: "In general, guilt, resentment, and indignation invoke the concept of right, whereas shame, contempt, and derision appeal to the concept of goodness" (Rawls 1971: 484).

We may suppose, for the sake of argument, that ethical norms, like moral norms, have the features of normative-priority, consensus-independence, non-contingent-authority, and intrinsic-motivation. In that case, Appiah might object that our preceding argument shows only that honor is a part of ethics and not necessarily morality proper. What distinguishes moral norms from the broader class of ethical norms, for Appiah, is that morality concerns what we owe to one another. However, this conception links morality exclusively with obligation and hence voluntary action, and is thus excessively narrow. A more general distinction, between authoritative norms that concern how to live the good life and a narrower subclass of authoritative norms that are other-regarding, is less controversial. The question then is whether norms involving honor are moral, in this broader sense, or instead merely ethical but non-moral. For Appiah, what matters is whether honor involves interpersonal obligation, but a better formulation of the question asks whether honor is *other-regarding*.

In order to be moral, norms must have all or most of our four features, but they must also involve relations with others rather than simply living well. Even then, however, honor codes seem plainly to be moral. For Wellington, honor demanded that he issue a challenge to the Earl. Following the moral revolution in Europe that eliminated dueling, new honor codes forbade violence triggered merely by insults. In China too how to raise one's children was, before and after the elimination of footbinding, a matter of honor. Honor is through and through a social phenomenon, and indeed other-regarding. As such, honor is moral and not merely ethical.

It may be tempting to think that honor codes cannot be properly moral, as opposed to merely ethical, if the dominant negative emotion is shame rather than guilt. The temptation undoubtedly arises because guilt figures prominently in Western moral philosophy as the appropriate moral response to violations of duties to others. This temptation, however, is

suspect, since anthropologists commonly inform us that many peoples of the world do not have a conception of guilt, yet recognize shame. It would be hard to escape the charge of ethnocentrism if we were to countenance as "moral" only normative systems tied to guilt (see Teroni and Bruun 2011 for further discussion).

As Rawls makes clear, guilt and shame are explained by different kinds of failures to be moral. Someone who cheats or gives into cowardice, to use Rawls' examples, can feel both guilty and ashamed, but for different moral reasons.

> He feels guilty because he has acted contrary to his sense of right and justice…Yet he also feels ashamed because his conduct shows that he has failed to achieve the good of self-command, and he has been found unworthy of his associates upon whom he depends to confirm his sense of his own worth. He is apprehensive lest they reject him and find him contemptible, an object of ridicule. In his behavior he has betrayed a lack of the moral excellences he prizes and to which he aspires. (Rawls 1971: 445).

Though feeling ashamed is clearly a distinct emotion from feeling guilty and arises from different sources, both are moral emotions, and the shame that would be felt if one gave into cowardice is the moral emotion that is apt if social aspects of one's character, for example, character traits upon which others depend, fall short. Shame is, indeed, the moral emotion that would be felt by anyone who has internalized and then broken one of the codes of honor implicit in Appiah's examples. The same can be said of honor codes that call for violent response to perceived insult, as in the codes of masculinity internalized among Southern whites in the United States, to be discussed shortly.

Clearly there are instances of being ashamed that do not reflect moral failure, such as being ashamed of one's height or country of origin. What makes the difference? It cannot be simply whether one is responsible for the failure, since one can be ashamed of aspects of one's character that one may not be responsible for but that are nonetheless moral failings. What makes the difference, we submit, is whether those standards against which one is found wanting and to which one subscribes are moral standards. For reasons already given, we hold that the relevant standards are moral only if they meet the four criteria (or most of them), when they have normative-priority, consensus-independence, non-contingent authority, and intrinsic-motivation. Our position permits many standards to be ethical in the broad sense that they bear on living well, but *they are specifically moral and not merely ethical standards when they seen by those who internalize them to be other-regarding*, as in Rawls' examples of cheating and giving into cowardice.

To understand honor we have drawn on metaethical discussion about the nature of morality. To understand whether honor has the ability to support progressive moral change we will briefly consider the nature of moral judgment and the structure of moral reasoning.

5 Is Moral Judgment Belief or Emotion (or Both)?

In the past decade or so there has been a subtle but persistent shift away from the sharp dichotomy between moral cognitivism and non-cognitivism in understanding the nature of moral judgment (Copp 2001; Ridge 2006; Campbell 2007a; Prinz 2007; Schroeder 2009; Railton P (Forthcoming) The value of truth and the value of belief, in The value of truth). Indeed, the terms 'cognitivism' and 'non-cogntivism' function now as contraries rather than

contradictories (Campbell 2007a). Recent "hybrid theories," like those of David Copp and Michael Ridge, still identify the primary element in moral judgment as either moral belief or a state of moral motivation. However, we have separately and together defended a robustly hybrid theory of moral judgment (Campbell 1998: 196–175, 2007a, b, 2011, 2014; Campbell and Kumar 2012; Kumar V (2015) The empirical identity of moral judgment. Under review).

We call the theory "robustly" hybrid because it states that moral judgment *normally* consists in moral belief and moral emotion and that each plays equal and complementary roles in moral reasoning. This theory of moral judgment is consistent with the possibility that moral judgments reflect knowledge of moral facts and hence is consistent with moral realism (and with error theory). However, on a robustly hybrid theory moral belief is not always required for a moral judgment to have a rational basis. Though moral belief and moral emotion normally occur together, they can separate in periods of moral transition. For example, a person may feel intense resentment arising from unfair treatment at her workplace. Resentment is a justified moral response to the unfair treatment, yet the person may believe at first that she has not been wronged and that the emotion is irrational. On the robustly hybrid view the person makes conflicting judgments, one embodied in the moral emotion, the other in the moral belief, and in this case the moral judgment based on the unfair treatment is rationally justified (Campbell 2007a: 333–5, 342–3). The opposite situation can also happen if moral belief is rationally justified and the contrary moral emotion is not. Imagine someone who has been raised to regard gay sex as morally disgusting and arrives after a long reflection at the belief that there is nothing wrong with gay sex as such, but for a time still experiences the negative moral feelings induced by his upbringing (Campbell and Kumar 2012: 287).

To illustrate how the robustly hybrid view of moral thinking applies to the case of honor, consider an example documented by the psychologists Richard Nisbett and Dov Cohen (Nisbett and Cohen 1996). They show that there is a sharp discrepancy between the avowed moral beliefs of Southern non-Hispanic white men in the United States and their emotional responses to scenarios in which their honor is threatened. When asked in general if the protection of property takes precedence over human harm, they affirm that it does not and may cite Christian teachings (26–7). But when presented with situations in which a man uses lethal violence to protect his personal property, they tend to feel that it is morally justified because the man's honor is at stake (27–32). When reacting to perceived threats to their honor, body language, aggressive behavior, rise in levels of testosterone and cortisone, and verbal expressions of anger by the Southern white men reflect emotional readiness to risk violence to defend their honor, despite their avowed moral belief to the contrary (42–50). A plausible interpretation of this situation is that Southern white men express moral judgments in their feelings and behavior that are at odds with judgments embodied in moral beliefs.

A robustly hybrid theory of moral judgment also sheds further light on Appiah's examples and why his arguments based on them fail. In one case Wellington clearly believed that dueling was morally wrong (and against his personal and political interests) yet felt compelled to defend his honor. That would show that honor is not part of morality only if moral judgment is just belief and not also motivating feeling. Similarly the Chinese moral belief about the wrongness of female footbinding did not change yet their feelings about what is honorable did. Again we could conclude that honor is outside of morality only if moral judgment resides just in moral belief. Neither conclusion follows given a broader, robustly hybrid, and, we would contend, more plausible conception of moral judgment.

To understand how changes in the scope of feelings of honor can have a rational basis, we will draw on an allied theory of moral consistency reasoning that we have developed

elsewhere (Campbell and Kumar 2012, 2013; Kumar and Campbell 2012; Campbell 2014). In consistency reasoning elements of moral belief and moral emotion that are in tension can be brought into unison through moral dialogue. Although consistency reasoning operates normally through both moral belief and moral emotion, the process can also work through either moral belief or moral emotion. We will argue that consistency reasoning applied to feelings of honor played a key role in the abolition of the British slave trade and did so without significant change in the moral belief that the slave trade was wrong.

6 How can Moral Emotion Justify Progressive Change?

A good illustration of how change in moral emotion can have a rational basis is found in the account Appiah gives of the change in British working class attitudes towards black American slaves in the early nineteenth century (2011: 118–36). We do not attempt to assess whether Appiah's non-moral, historical claims are plausible in light of all the evidence, but to our knowledge his story about the change in British working class attitudes is for the most part not in serious dispute. What is no doubt debatable is exactly why these attitudes changed. Here we will assume that Appiah's understanding of the change is at least psychologically plausible. We do so in order to address the philosophical question of whether the emotion of honor in this case could provide a rational basis for progressive moral change.

The workers evidently believed that slavery was morally wrong, given Christian teachings that guided their judgments in such matters, without at first being moved to participate in active protests against it. One can allow that in addition to believing it wrong they had negative attitudes toward the institution of slavery but at first they had it without their moral emotions being sufficiently engaged to arouse them to take the risks necessary to act. What eventually made the difference? On Appiah's view their self-respect and dignity eventually became threatened. Why? Their feelings of self-respect and dignity and desire to preserve them were tied on this view to their perception of themselves as laborers worthy of respect as such. In a word their *honor* was anchored in this understanding of themselves.

Given this mind set, when greater opportunities for organized protest against American slavery arose, many British manual laborers found themselves unable to see any relevant difference between black slaves and themselves as laborers that would explain how the slavery of blacks did not also dishonor them as laborers. They already believed that slavery was morally unacceptable for blacks in America, but later they came to feel dishonored as laborers by what was happening to black laborers in America. It was when they began to feel themselves dishonored as laborers because of the American institution of slavery that they were moved to protest it.

In Appiah's view, because both lived by their own labor and because for the white laborers living so was key to their identity, they felt dishonored by the treatment of black slaves in virtue of this shared identity. That is, they felt dishonored by American slavery because of the identity they saw themselves as sharing with the victims of the practice. As Appiah puts it:

> Sometimes in talk of honor, it is the self-respect of those seeking honor as much as the respect of others that matters. The concern for the dignity of labor among the laboring

> classes had as much to do with how they thought of themselves as with how they were regarded by others. For many of them slavery rankled. Not simply because, as Britons, they cared about the nation's honor, not just as a matter of Christian conscience, and not because they were in competition with the slaves (they were not). It rankled because they, like slaves, labored and produced by the sweat of their brow (Appiah 2011: 134).

We have already seen why feelings of honor and the desires that go with them are moral. The question now is whether this change in moral emotion and motivation could be rational, given that it occurred independently of the moral belief that slavery is wrong, which remained constant.

Here we will rely on a conception of moral consistency reasoning noted earlier. Such reasoning can be emotionally embodied in that moral emotions directed toward different situations are in practical tension when the differences between the situations are not morally relevant. For example, the white laborers in Britain could see no morally relevant difference between themselves and black Americans, as laborers deserving respect. They could not then without inconsistency fail to feel the same about their slavery as they would were they similarly dishonored by the landed class at home. Put another way, since they did not experience themselves as morally inferior to other classes in British society, they could not, without moral contradiction, respond to American slavery as if blacks in America were morally inferior to themselves, unless race itself was seen by them as a basis for moral superiority, which on Appiah's account was not the case. Their moral emotional and motivational response to the slavery of blacks, in short, could be no different from the response they would have if they were treated as slaves, since there was no difference in their worthiness of respect.

The transition from believing that the practice of slavery in America is wrong to feeling slavery to be dishonorable to all manual laborers and indeed to finding that it made them feel indignant and ashamed is based, if Appiah's assumptions are roughly correct, on moral consistency reasoning in which emotion and motivation are central. The British laborers already had a sense of honor, but it wasn't directed toward American slaves. Because of the need for moral consistency, the honor that they felt came to have a new scope and they began to feel a new and different motivation to protest the dishonoring of men and women with whom they had not previously identified. The process is largely independent of moral belief, since it is based on moral emotion and motivation that did not arise from moral belief. Consistency in moral feeling, not in moral belief, is what drove the change in moral feeling. The belief that slavery is wrong remained completely unchanged.

The general pattern of moral consistency reasoning can be represented schematically as follows. Suppose that moral responses R and R* are compared for two situations X and Y. Imagine that R and R* are emotional responses that are opposed in the precise sense that were they responses to the same situation they would normally motivate actions that are jointly incompatible. For example, if a negative moral response R to the prospect of joining a protest in X normally would motivate one *not to join* and a positive moral response R* to the same prospect in Y normally would motivate one *to join*, then R and R* are opposing responses, since were there just one protest one could not both join it and not join it. When opposing responses R and R* are to situations X and Y *for which there is no morally relevant difference*, that is, no difference that could justify the opposition in responses, then R and R* are thus morally inconsistent responses to X and Y if they are opposing responses in the sense

specified. Because normally people are moved to avoid morally inconsistent responses, especially when they are socially recognized as such, examples that reveal moral inconsistency in emotions and motivation can motivate moral change.

While the British laborers morally condemned the slavery of American blacks, it may not have been immediately clear that they should make the effort to protest and, more importantly, take the risk of protesting. Notice that there is no question that they would have been motivated to protest the removal of their own right to freedom, though this assumption is unstated in describing their change in attitude. But herein lies the potential of moral consistency. Compare then their choice to protest the existing slavery and their choice in the hypothetical situation where their own freedom is at issue. Were they not to protest in the present case there would have to be a morally relevant difference to avoid inconsistency, and they were all too aware that none existed from their standpoint. Differences that might have occurred to them were experienced as morally irrelevant. What they saw in themselves as worthy of respect—what they honored in themselves and wanted others to honor—is their capacity to work "by the sweat of their brow" and in this fundamental respect they saw themselves as not different in any morally relevant way from those who were enslaved.

The issue of who should be honored is not simply a matter of will, such as whether to join a protest, but partly a matter of how to feel. Nonetheless, the scope of honor can broaden in unanticipated ways under the pressure of consistency reasoning. Feeling someone to be worthy of honor and wanting to honor them through expressions of honor are not moral beliefs, and emotions and motivation reflecting honor can conflict with moral beliefs or move one to act in accord with them when one was not moved previously. It is, we urge, this rational basis for moral change in feelings and motivation regarding honor that can justify moral change. Ultimately, when fully justified, honor becomes a form of recognition respect toward each as equals, but even before that ideal is achieved expansions in the scope of honor can be morally progressive and even revolutionary.

Resistance among some liberal thinkers to the idea that honor can be a morally progressive form of feeling and motivation may be due to the common association noted earlier between honor cultures and violence. For this reason it is worth observing that in the present instance moral consistency reasoning takes the feelings and motivation associated with honor in a different direction. Recognition respect for those who are manual laborers motivated not violence among the British working class, but instead a united and enduring opposition to the violence inflicted on American slaves (cf. Krause 2002). Though the psychology of violence in the cultures of honor discussed by Nisbett and Cohen is real, the present example is significant in showing that there is no necessary tie between honor and violence.

7 What of Honor?

We have argued that honor is a form of recognition respect pertaining to social identity. While appraisal respect can be part of honor, even then recognition respect is a precondition of honor. Furthermore, honor normally involves a motivating emotion. Honor is a moral response because it has most of the features that count for something being generically moral: it is intrinsically motivating, not dependent on mere convention or consensus, non-contingent authority, and tends to trump legal, prudential, and other demands. As we argued, too, honor fits the narrower moral category of being other-regarding rather than simply the ethical category of living a good life.

Appiah's study of honor highlights the psychological dynamics underlying episodes of moral progress. In situations of conflict and moral change, moral belief can be separated from and opposed to emotion. Moreover, emotion can operate independently of moral belief in reasoning that leads to significant, even revolutionary, progressive moral change. Though honor can be psychologically tied to a proclivity toward violence, the opposition of the British working class to American slavery exemplifies how honor as recognition respect can motivate opposition to violence against others. The emotion of honor on which this opposition is based is both moral and rational, and transformation in the scope of honor in this case constitutes a progressive moral revolution.

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