

European Journal of Political Theory

<http://ept.sagepub.com/>

Honour, Face and Reputation in Political Theory

Peter Olsthoorn

European Journal of Political Theory 2008 7: 472

DOI: 10.1177/1474885108094056

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://ept.sagepub.com/content/7/4/472>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *European Journal of Political Theory* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://ept.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://ept.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Sep 11, 2008

[What is This?](#)

Honour, Face and Reputation in Political Theory

*European Journal
of Political Theory*

Peter Olsthoorn *Netherlands Defence Academy*

© SAGE Publications Ltd,
Los Angeles, London, New Delhi
and Singapore

ISSN 1474-8851, 7(4) 472-491
[DOI: 10.1177/1474885108094056]

ABSTRACT: Until fairly recently it was not uncommon for political theorists to hold the view that people cannot be expected to act in accordance with the public interest without some incentive. Authors such as Marcus Tullius Cicero, John Locke, David Hume and Adam Smith, for instance, held that people often act in accordance with the public interest, but more from a concern for their honour and reputation than from a concern for the greater good. Today, most authors take a more demanding view, maintaining that people are to be just solely from a love for justice, not from a fear of losing face. In this article today's prevailing view, which sees honour as something obsolete and archaic and not as a legitimate motive, is contrasted with the older view that honour is important for both knowing what moral is and acting on it. Subsequently, it is argued that the ethics of honour, especially in the form it took in the works of Hume and Smith, can still be of value, exactly because it is *less* demanding.

KEY WORDS: *autonomy, honour, reputation, shame, virtue*

Introduction

The question what someone would do if he or she were invisible has been a recurring theme from Plato's tale of Gyges' ring to Paul Verhoeven's movie a few years ago, *Hollow Man*. Both Gyges and the main character of the movie, scientist Sebastian Caine, seem to prove the truth of John Locke's words from the 17th century: 'Robberies, murders, rapes, are the sports of men set at liberty from punishment and censure' (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, I.ii.9). Locke's belief that man has no innate moral rules made him value something we today would call a conventional ethic: people generally behave well, but mainly because they are sensitive for peer pressure and concerned about how their behaviour might look in the eyes of others. It is this visibility, which conventional ethics depends on, that is also its Achilles heel: morality is potentially reduced to a matter of not being caught. Most authors today are therefore probably not too

Contact address: Peter Olsthoorn, Dept of Sociology, Netherlands Defense Academy, PO Box 90002, Breda, 4800 PA, The Netherlands.
Email: PHJ.Olsthoorn.01@nlda.nl

upset that honour, the archetypical instance of conventional ethics and central to this article, gave way to more modern notions such as dignity and conscience.

Dignity, a descendant of the Latin *dignitas*, or social honour, replaced honour in its role of status in a hierarchically ordered society.¹ Dignity differs from honour, something not everyone shares in and without meaning when equally distributed, in the important aspect that it is inclusive and lacks gradation,² with the only noteworthy exception that a person can lose his dignity by behaving too reprehensibly. Although this loss of dignity is something most people would wish to avoid, dignity does not have a function in steering our conduct in the way honour and conscience can, and it should therefore not concern us here. In other aspects, especially as a guide in matters of morality, honour has been replaced by conscience.

Particularly in its popular understanding as an 'inner voice', conscience is more demanding than honour, presupposing moral autonomy – it might prompt someone to go against social norms.³ Honour, contrary to conscience, has an important external component as it concerns both the value that someone allocates to himself *and* the value others place on him.⁴ For this latter element of honour, political theorists of earlier days distinguished essentially two functions: first, the articulated opinions of others may be of help in finding out what is the just thing to do. Second, and probably more importantly, the good opinion of others constitutes a reward, forming the, for most people, much-needed motivation to actually do what is right.

Especially the idea of it being a reward for virtuous behaviour brought discredit upon the notion of honour in modern times; we rely on our conscience to inform us on what is the right course of action, and knowing what is just ought to be enough motivation in itself to act upon it. We accordingly believe that a virtuous act undertaken for honour hardly deserves to be called moral – the term seems somewhat out of place in such a case. In addition, we often think that the distribution of honour, status, respect and reputation is unfair, and that these good things are often bestowed upon the wrong people. What was a concern for nearly all philosophers from antiquity and an insight to Machiavelli, namely that reputation does not always follow virtue, and that people can gain glory without deserving it, has today become a truism.⁵

Educating for Autonomy

John Rawls's view on moral development, self-respect and status in *A Theory of Justice* is illustrative of the view that people are to be virtuous from a love for virtue, not from a concern for their reputation.⁶ According to Rawls, the fear of losing face still has a role in our conduct in the earlier phases of our moral development, in which stage the motive for complying with the principles of justice 'springs largely from his ties of friendship and fellow feeling for others, and his concern for the approbation of the wider society' and 'moral conduct is based in

large part on wanting the approval of one's associates' (§72). Rawls, however, thinks that we, after some time, can reach the phase of moral autonomy, in which 'moral attitudes are no longer connected solely with the well-being and approval of particular individuals and groups, but are shaped by a conception of right, chosen irrespective of these contingencies' (§72). Although the opinions of others have a role in the earlier phases of moral development, in the end 'moral education is education for autonomy' (§80).

Rawls, of course, saw that approval is crucial for most people; although self-respect 'first of all includes a person's sense of his own value', it also rests on 'finding our own person and deeds appreciated and confirmed by others'. Yet, self-respect lies within everyone's reach regardless of the life plan he or she chooses, because 'for the purpose of justice [we are to] avoid any assessment of the relative value of one another's way of life' (§67). According to Rawls, self-respect is perhaps the most important of the primary goods; shame, defined as the loss of self-respect, is consequently of limited moral value (§67). Even if Rawls does see a positive role for shame, it is rather restricted: a lack of those virtues someone prizes as his excellences and which are required by his chosen plan of life can occasion shame. More importantly, and not so easily avoided by choosing your plan of life carefully, a deficiency of 'general virtues', such as 'self-command and its attendant excellences of strength, courage and self-control', is also a source of shame (§67). For Rawls, however, justice ranks higher than the teleological striving for the good, which is the domain of saints and heroes. To him the role of shame lies in the extras – 'in particular, the moralities of supererogation provide the stage for shame' (§73).

Having in this manner secured equal self-respect for everyone, Rawls does the same for status: in a just society status is not based on income, but on 'the publicly affirmed distribution of fundamental rights and liberties. And with this distribution being equal, everyone has a similar and secure status when they meet to conduct the common affairs of the wider society' (§82). Although general opinion has it that an egalitarian distribution of honour and status would render these notions meaningless,⁷ Rawls takes a different stance: because status is no longer a necessary incentive after the education for autonomy has been successfully completed, inequalities in status do not have to occur in a just society.⁸

To the objection that he based his philosophy on an erroneous view of human nature,⁹ Rawls, following Kant, replied in *Political Liberalism* that his moral psychology is not 'originating in the science of human nature' because 'beyond the lessons of historical experience and such bits of wisdom as not relying too much on scarce motives and abilities (say, altruism and high intelligence), there is not much to go on'.¹⁰ Most social scientists, on the other hand, count among their 'bits of wisdom' that face and reputation are important factors in human behaviour,¹¹ while some political theorists, too, have suggested that honour might not have disappeared, but still exists in the form of the need for reputation, fame, praise, dignity, distinction, status and, above all, recognition.¹² If there is some

truth in this suggestion, this means that, from a Rawlsian point of view, most of us are still on a 'lesser', conventional level of moral development.

Still, how bad is it, to be on this suboptimal plane? Not that bad, it will be argued here. If societies also go through different phases of moral development, as it is sometimes thought,¹³ this means that those living in an age when honour still reigned were like children 'in a Piagetian tale of moral development'.¹⁴ Yet, in the works by Marcus Tullius Cicero (most certainly belonging to a society in which honour was deemed very important), and that of some of his intellectual heirs from the 17th and 18th centuries, we find a form of conventional ethics that is, albeit less demanding, as moral and as subtle as modern accounts of morality that give centre stage to the notion of autonomy.

Cicero on Conventional Ethics

The demanding view that honour is neither needed as an incentive, nor as a heuristic tool to discover what is just, is, although it became the dominant view only quite recently, not of modern origin: it has always had its adherents, and in antiquity this then counter-position was defended by the Platonists, the Cynics, the Epicureans and the Stoics.¹⁵ In his philosophical writings, Cicero opposed the Epicureans and the Stoics who tried to convince their fellow citizens that honour was something not worthwhile pursuing. The Epicureans held that happiness and peace of mind were the two things to be valued in life, and that the competition for honour and glory put those very things at risk. In Cicero's polemic, Epicurean philosophy was mistaken in seeing men as essentially self-seeking. The Stoics were equally hostile to the notion of honour, partly for reasons put forward by the Epicureans, and partly out of a more demanding view of man, holding that people potentially love virtue, and should be able to act accordingly. An act undertaken in exchange for a reward, for instance honour or fame, was not virtuous in any way – below this level of perfect virtue everything was equally bad. Although Cicero described himself as being Stoic on some instances in his work,¹⁶ this was in his opinion an impossible and even dangerously strict definition of virtue that takes away the incentive for trying to be virtuous from those who may not be without faults, but mean well.¹⁷ Hence, where Epicurean philosophy asks too little, Stoic philosophy asks too much.

Honour might provide a middle ground between Epicurean hedonism and Stoic strictness, Cicero argued. Although far from selfish, people cannot be expected to perform their duties from a sense of duty alone; no one will put aside his own interests for the greater good if there is no fame or honour to be earned (*Tusculan Disputations* 1.32, 2.58).¹⁸ He believed this applied to all; those who claimed to be insensitive to fame and glory were not to be believed (*De Officiis* 1.71).¹⁹ And although it is imaginable that someone perfectly wise acts virtuously for virtue's sake, such individuals are rare – Cicero had never met one (*Tusc. Disp.* 2.51). For the not so wise a little help from the outside, consisting of the judge-

ments of peers and the concern for reputation, might be of help. Not only does the concern for reputation motivate to behave virtuously, it also helps to actually see what the virtuous way to behave is.

We observe others and from a glance of the eyes, from a contracting or relaxing of the brows, from an air of sadness, from a outburst of joy, from a laugh, from speech, from silence, from a raising of a lowering of the voice, and the like, we shall easily judge which of our actions is proper, and which is out of accord with duty and nature. (*De Off.* 1.146)

Not unlike painters, sculptors and poets, we should consult the judgements of others to find out what to do and what to leave undone, and what to improve or alter (*De Off.* 1.147).

Although the only incentive to high endeavour in 'this brief and transitory pilgrimage of life' (*Pro Archia Poeta* 28), and a necessary check on our behaviour at the same time, Cicero was not blind to the numerous drawbacks of the honour ethic. The Stoic belief that there is no relation at all between honour and virtue was not shared by him; quite the contrary, he was convinced that they were intimately connected (*De Legibus* 1.32).²⁰ Cicero did see, though, that if honour was reduced to a matter of 'not being caught', everything was permitted when no one was around. He further acknowledged that an excess of striving for fame and glory could be dangerous, because 'the higher a man's ambition, the more easily he is tempted to acts of injustice by his desire for fame' (*De Off.* 1.65). So, honour could not only work in the public interest, but also against it; Roman history includes some telling examples of young, ambitious men, such as Coriolanus and Catilina, who brought the republic close to disaster by putting their own personal glory above state interest.

To counter these problems, Cicero deemed it necessary that honour be internalized: the actual presence of others was then no longer needed, and the gaze of imaginary others sufficed for honour to function (*De Finibus* 2.52–3). In addition, Cicero distinguished between 'true' and 'false' honour, and maintained that 'true' honour served the public cause, not some personal end (*Tusc. Disp.* 3.3–4). While the idea of 'internalized' honour, serving a greater good, tackles most of honour's drawbacks, it also brings it closer to the Stoics, as Cicero himself very well saw. Even though 'true and philosophic greatness of spirit regards the moral goodness to which Nature most aspires as consisting in deeds, not in fame, and prefers to be first in reality rather than in name', taking the moral high ground brings us 'on very slippery ground; for scarcely can the man be found who has passed through trials and encountered dangers and does not then wish for glory as a reward for his achievements' (*De Off.* 1.65).

Cicero's view, although somewhat ambiguous, does point to the fact that the honour ethic only works if it consists of more than how the behaviour will look in the eyes of others. If not, something like moral courage, the type of courage that generally brings moral disapprobation, would never be attained; honour did not consist of the applause of the masses, but was the 'agreed approval of good men'

(*Tusc. Disp.* 3.2).²¹ Cicero therefore explicitly warned that, especially when we are doing well, we should not listen to flatterers suggesting that we are entitled to praise when we actually are not – for this might lead to the worst kind of blunders (*De Off.* 1.91).²² Ironically, he himself could do nothing more than witness the hunger for fame and glory for all the wrong objects, causing the end of the Roman republic (and Cicero's life) when Caesar started a civil war because of perceived offences to his *dignitas*.

The Transformation of the Honour Ethic

The Stoic view that peace and peace of mind are to be valued most in life, would gain in popularity during the tumultuous days that followed the end of the Roman republic and in the period thereafter. The competition for honour and glory, together with human vanity, was seen as endangering those very values. This does not mean of course that the end of the Roman republic also brought an end to the honour ethic; the notion of honour, for instance, still played an important role in the code of chivalry of the Middle Ages, and in the Renaissance the rediscovery of classical thought gave the ethics of honour another impulse. In 1341 Petrarch declared honour to be the highest good for a man of letters, starting the development of an ideology prescribing that the young should be educated to be enthusiastic seekers after honour.²³

This ideal stayed very much alive until, in the 17th century, 'with his bristling code of honour and his continual thirst for glory, the typical hero of the Renaissance began to appear slightly comical in his wilful disregard for the natural instinct of self-preservation'.²⁴ In that century, Thomas Hobbes, who in his *Leviathan* (1651) tried to establish a science of man modelled after the natural sciences, stated that people are driven solely by self-interest, thus reducing honour to an important yet selfish motive, hard to distinguish from vanity. This 'withering critique', denouncing the goals of the honour ethic 'as vainglory and vanity, as the fruits of an almost childish presumption', proved successful in undermining the ethic of honour.²⁵ It was so successful that less than a century later, Bernard Mandeville could in his *Fable of the Bees* write about honour as being a chimera with instrumental value at best, mockingly stating that 'the Reason why there are so few Men of real Virtue, and so many of real Honour, is, because all the Recompence a man has of a virtuous Action, is the Pleasure of doing it, which most People reckon but poor Pay' (*Fable of the Bees*, I.246).²⁶ Honour in Mandeville's view was an essentially selfish, though socially useful, motive, necessary as a check on man's behaviour.²⁷ Both his and Hobbes's texts combine the classical idea that honour is an important motivator, and the modern view of man as self-seeking. At about the same time, the contemporary view of honour as something with no apparent relationship to virtue had a foreshadowing in the work of Montesquieu, who saw honour as the principle of monarchies, a form of government wherein virtue is replaced by honour, defined ('philosophically false',

as Montesquieu himself admitted) as preferences, rank, distinction, etc., leading to fine actions nonetheless. The principle of virtue governs in democracies, their flourishing or falling depending on its citizens' calibre of virtue.²⁸

Less than two centuries after Hobbes, Alexis de Tocqueville noticed that people in his day and age saw only self-interested motives at work in their own behaviour, even when it was clear that more altruistic motives were at play. In Tocqueville's view, however, those who, as Montesquieu did, held that there was no place for honour in democracies, mistook what was only a species, in Montesquieu's case the honour of the court, for the genus. Honour still performed its function, though with rules less odd and less numerous, and its workings less visible. Also, it were now, as Tocqueville put it, the 'quiet virtues' that were held in honour, at the expense of the 'turbulent' ones that bring glory but also trouble to a society.²⁹ For Cicero, in its ultimate form honour meant the choice between life and death, the honourable choice being often, but not always, the choice against life.³⁰ In the work of some political theorists from the 17th and 18th centuries who drew heavily from Cicero, we see less of honour in its more dramatic forms; honour was now deemed important to promote the quiet virtues Tocqueville spoke of. Yet, similar to the way Cicero opposed the Stoics, they opposed those who in their time held views comparable in strictness with the Stoic view, and held that morality was not served by the claim that only behaviour springing from a pure sense of duty was to be called moral.

The Art of Governing Man

The role of honour in the political philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries is an important one, more important than is usually thought and greater than the familiar idea of 'an unbroken tradition of liberalism', from Locke to Mill, suggests.³¹ Instead of stressing the modern aspects of these authors, it may be more fruitful to look away from the present in our attempt to understand them.³² Doing so shows that they drew heavily from antiquity, predominantly from the Romans, and of the Romans, Cicero was the 'real favourite', whose writings influenced them to a large extent.³³ That this influence is somewhat neglected is, in the words of Quentin Skinner, presumably due to our tendency to write a 'history of philosophy conceived in terms of our own philosophical criteria and interests'.³⁴ Cicero's influence is one that is not difficult to discern, however: the quest for honour and reputation, and the guiding role of pride, shame, and the fear of losing face are recurring themes in their work.

John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* is a call for the rule of law and the freedom from government interference in our private lives.³⁵ In his less known *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* we nonetheless read that this freedom of the citizen should have its limits in his concern for his honour and his reputation. That makes the latter book not so much a work on education as on 'the art of governing man',³⁶ a skill that makes extensive use of the love of praise and a good

reputation, as well as the fear of disgrace.³⁷ This sensitivity for praise and blame is 'the great secret of education',³⁸ and works for children and grown men alike (§§55, 56). For Locke, this was not something that lessened the freedom of the citizen: to act from a concern for reputation was still to act freely and from something within (§42).³⁹

Today, if we say that someone acts from 'something within' we mean that he or she follows an inborn moral principle. Not so for Locke, who wrote in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that the only inborn principles we have are the selfish longing for happiness and the equally selfish fear of pain, and that they have to be checked 'by rewards and punishments that will overbalance the satisfaction anyone shall propose to himself in the breach of law' (I.ii.13).⁴⁰ Among the punishments to be taken into account, there is first that of God, consisting of a long and painful stay in hell; as we seldom think of this punishment, it has little influence. Subsequently, there are the sentences inflicted by the government; their weight is equally limited, because most of the time we imagine we can get away with our misbehaviour. There is one punishment we cannot escape, however, and that is the censure from our fellow citizens. And, more importantly, less than one in ten thousand is insensible enough to 'content himself to live in constant disgrace and disrepute with his own particular society' (I.ii.12). According to Locke, we fear the opinions of others more than we fear hell or jail.

As a standard for the distribution of praise and blame Locke sometimes hinted at utility (II.xxviii.11), making the honour ethic somewhat less particularistic. This standard was to play a more prominent role in the work of David Hume, who held in his *A Treatise of Human Nature* that we generally praise just acts because they contribute to the common good; whether someone tries to do good to us, our neighbour or China, is indifferent to us (III.iii.i).⁴¹ Furthermore, because one does not control the circumstances that decide whether an act will bear the fruits its actor expected, we praise the intention to do well, not the actual consequences, whatever they may be. This goes, however, for our judgements concerning the conduct of others; it does not necessarily mean that we also *act* justly from a sympathy with the public interest, and it has been remarked that Hume has no answer to the question why we should act justly, other than that we should do so out of a love of virtue.⁴² If that really were the only answer he gave, it would be a rather unconvincing one, since that Hume wrote in the same work that self-interest is the original motive to the establishment of justice (III.ii.ii). At several places in this work, however, Hume explained that, even though we in general do act justly, we do so not from a love of virtue or concern for the public interest, but from a concern for our own reputation.

According to Hume, 'there is nothing, which touches us more nearly than our reputation, and nothing on which our reputation more depends than our conduct', and politicians and parents put this love of reputation to use in bolstering the esteem for justice, as well as inducing man to behave accordingly (III.ii.ii). Here, it is not so much the intention but the consequences that count. That the

motive underlying just conduct – a form of vanity – is often not so noble seems to have been unimportant to Hume. He believed this is the best we can do, and disagreed with those who, like the Stoics of earlier times, wanted man to be just for the sake of justice and not for the sake of his good name.⁴³ Similar to Cicero, whose *De Officiis* he had in mind when he was working on his *Treatise*,⁴⁴ Hume thought that vanity and the love of fame were closely related to virtue (II.i.xi, II.ii.i), and are for that reason better not called vices.⁴⁵ In his *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* he concluded that by the pursuit of ‘a name, a reputation in the world, we bring our own deportment and conduct frequently in review and consider how they appear in the eyes of those who approach and regard us’ – a habit that is ‘the surest guardian of every virtue’ (concl. i).⁴⁶

This theme is further elaborated in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* by Adam Smith, who likewise held that the praise and blame of our fellow citizens are ‘the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct’ (III.1.5).⁴⁷ Smith, who found inspiration in the work of Stoics such as Aurelius and Epictetus, and, above all, Cicero,⁴⁸ started from the assertion that man suffers from a serious lack of self-knowledge: he tends to esteem himself too highly,⁴⁹ and is incapable of truly judging his own conduct objectively. Imagining how a well-informed impartial spectator would judge it was, according to Smith, the only way to correct ‘the natural misrepresentations of self-love’ (III.3.4).⁵⁰ Such an impartial spectator is not only aware of our conduct, but also of our intentions. Man therefore not only wants praise, but also wants to be praiseworthy, and ‘nature, accordingly, has endowed him, not only with a desire of being approved of, but with a desire of being what ought to be approved of; or of being what he himself approves of in other men’ (III.2.7). Applause from our peers does not mean much to us if we know that a better-informed impartial spectator would disapprove,⁵¹ and morality is consequently not a matter of not being caught; the virtuous man ‘almost becomes himself that impartial spectator, and scarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel’ (III.3.25). In this respect, the impartial spectator somewhat resembles the ‘divine spark’ which the Stoics thought we all carry within ourselves.

Yet, to Smith, the impartial spectator is not almighty, and it is here that we see Cicero’s influence. In a telling passage Smith quotes Cicero: ‘Many people despise glory, who are yet most severely mortified by unjust reproach: and that is most inconsistently’ (*De Officiis* I.71). Smith, though, added that

This inconsistency, however, seems to be founded in the unalterable principles of human nature. The all-wise Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or less pleased when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or less hurt when they disapprove of it. (III.2.30–1)

To function well, the impartial spectator in the breast ‘requires often to be awakened and put in mind of his duty, by the presence of the real spectator’ (III.3.38).

Also, the impartial spectator does not represent some inborn rule that goes against the norms of society; the conventions of society often make it difficult for

someone to go against the confounding judgements of ignorant and weak men, in which case he sometimes acts 'rather to the human, than to the divine, part of his origin' (III.2.32). More often even, men's motives seem to be a mixture of the human and the divine element: like Cicero and Hume, Smith held that virtue and the love of praise were closely intermingled, and that 'there is an affinity too between the desire of becoming what is honourable and estimable, and the desire of honour and esteem, between the love of virtue and the love of true glory' (VII.ii.4.10).⁵² Although a love of virtue might seem the more pure of the two, even in that passion there is 'some reference to the sentiments of others', because he who does not care about the opinions of others cares very much about how other *should* think of him, and this is 'the great and exalted motive of his conduct' (VII.ii.4.10).

Smith further realized that we are not always able to conform to the verdict of the impartial spectator. Especially when our passions are overwhelming and our partiality to ourselves is strong, this may ask too much from us (III.4.5–6). In these instances we should follow the 'general rules' of society: we know through 'our continual observations upon the conduct of others' that some actions could render us 'the objects of universal disapprobation' (III.4.7). We therefore lay down to ourselves, first, as a general rule 'that all such actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or punishable, the objects of all those sentiments for which we have the greatest dread and aversion'. And, second, the general rule to perform those actions that are generally honoured and rewarded, exciting the love, gratitude and admiration of humankind we all desire (III.4.7). Only with those general rules are we able to correct 'the misrepresentations of self-love concerning what is fit and proper', while without such rules, 'there is no man whose conduct can be much depended on' (III.5.2).

Smith's limited trust in the impartial spectator also shows in his concern about modern industrial, urban society. A gentleman 'is by his station the distinguished member of a great society, who attends to every part of his conduct, and who thereby obliges him to attend to every part of it himself . . . He dare not do anything which would disgrace him or discredit him in it.' The man of low condition is only taken notice of as long as he lives in his small rural village. However, 'as soon as he comes into a great city, he is sunk in obscurity and darkness. His conduct is observed and attended to by nobody, and he is therefore very likely to neglect it himself, and to abandon himself to every sort of low profligacy and vice' (*An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, V.i.g.12).⁵³ There are spectators in great cities, though if we do not know them, and they do not know us, we do not care for their opinion, and a necessary check on our conduct disappears. This again illustrates that the impartial spectator, for its proper functioning, stands not only in need of real spectators, but spectators that matter to us.

Honour Today: What to Honour?

Cicero, Locke, Hume and Smith did not so much dispute that we can be brought to accept the principles of justice on an abstract level, but held that in concrete instances our strong passions, our partiality to ourselves, and our inability to be a good judge of our conduct, prevent us from both seeing and acting on what is just and virtuous, and that honour, in the sense of public recognition, is a necessary incentive both to make us see and to actually do what is right. Especially in this latter, motivational, aspect conscience appeared somewhat impotent to them.

These arguments still seem to hold. Although the more demanding notion of conscience is clearly on a par with the way most people see themselves, it could be argued that also today, without deep roots in our present-day vocabulary, the older notion of honour can yet be useful because it is *less* demanding. However, those who want to re-engage with the tradition of authors writing on honour are – this tradition being a long and diverse one – have to consider which authors and theories to turn to. Regarding the authors and theories central to this article, there seems to be more than merely time which separates us from Cicero's aristocratic notion of honour, while there is plenty we can still relate to in the works of Locke, Hume and Smith, closer to us in both time and outlook. Though all four agree on the functions of honour, they differ both on what they think honour should endorse and who these rules apply to.

According to Tocqueville, astute observer of the difference between aristocratic and democratic honour, the rules of honour in democratic societies tend to stay close to 'notions of right and wrong that are common to all the world', keeping far from the 'very exotic notions' endorsed by honour in earlier times.⁵⁴ To be sure, Locke, Hume and Smith all mentioned, as we have seen, familiar notions such as justice, obedience to the law and respect for property as main beneficiaries. At the same time, however, all three had a broad conception of virtue,⁵⁵ staying aloof from the exclusive focus on justice sometimes present in modern political theory, and on a more general plane they saw public interest, not only justice, as something furthered by honour – which everyone in all times and places would applaud. Indeed, although honour can reinforce rules and virtues alike and thus does not fit neatly into the rule-based ethics versus virtue ethics dichotomy,⁵⁶ it in general seems to make sense to see honour as something that is especially apt to promote not so much obedience to the law, as practising virtues which are not backed by legal sanctions, yet are important in people's private lives and for the functioning of society. Self-command, shunned by Rawls save for about six lines, is an example of such virtues, as are propriety and benevolence; all three are elaborated on more extensively by Hume and, especially, Smith. A bit more particularistic, though in tune with the present (which somewhat clouds its particularity to us), is that Hume and Smith especially saw productive virtues, rather than for instance military valour, as being advanced by honour, whereas such things as idleness should be discouraged by public opinion.

Even though what honour actually is expected to sanction differs from era to era, it is clear that, to perform well in helping us to see what is right, honour does need some substance in the form of a standard. Examples of such standards are utility, as in the work of Hume, or some general rules, with dos and don'ts, as Smith thought necessary, or a set of virtues, present in the work of both. Such a body of standards, rules or virtues is not only a prerequisite for honour to function, but the articulation of praise and blame – honouring and dishonouring – can be expected to contribute something to its formation.⁵⁷ Be it as it may, in democratic times the rules of honour are not only less far removed from common sense, but also less specific, and as a consequence they lose something of their force; democratic honour is less forceful because it is less peculiar. Although there are, according to Tocqueville, for a democratic people needs 'which give rise to common opinions concerning honor', they never present themselves 'with equal intensity to the mind of every citizen; the law of honor exists, but it is often left without interpreters'.⁵⁸ With such an indefinite law, less understood than the precepts of old and accordingly hard to apply, public opinion, 'the natural and supreme interpreter of the law of honor, not seeing clearly to which side to incline in the distribution of praise and blame, always hesitates in giving judgment'.⁵⁹

On the other hand: that in democratic societies the rules of honour are somewhat unclear (but also less martial, violent and more gentle and productive) is in itself a relatively small price to pay for the providential fact that democratic honour, somewhat analogous to the shift from *dignitas* to dignity, is less hierarchical and more inclusive than Cicero's aristocratic notion of honour. Democratic honour and its indefiniteness are the by-product of a more egalitarian society. Aristocratic honour concerned mainly those who were by birth destined to lead, and they had a stake in specific rules and a more violent conception of honour that helped them to maintain their privileged position, whereas in a democracy, with its citizens less keen on eccentric conventions and more disposed to gentle and quiet virtues because that is what benefits them most, it is the action itself that is praiseworthy or blameable; who performs it (or suffers from it) is irrelevant.⁶⁰ While in aristocratic society descent was very important, making honouring based on merit close to impossible, democratic honour is based on desert. Or so it should be; yet, in the real world, peculiarities – traces of more hierarchical notions – remain.⁶¹

In spite of the close relationship between honour and virtue, the 'disposition to admire, and almost worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition', persisted into modernity, and was according to Smith 'the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments' (I.iii.3.1). The rich and powerful often receive the respect and admiration 'due only to wisdom and virtue', while their follies and vices are looked upon with some forgiveness. The poor man, meanwhile, is ashamed of his poverty, and either feels that it 'places him out of the sight of mankind' or is looked upon with contempt. Whether overlooked or disapproved of, he is equally mort-

fied; 'as obscurity covers us from the daylight of honour and approbation, to feel that we are taken no notice of, necessarily damps the most agreeable hope, and disappoints the most keen desire, of human nature' (I.iii.2.1).⁶² Smith for that reason in all probability would have favoured a distribution of honour, detached from the distribution of wealth,⁶³ more according to merit and with a stage for everyone, yet would not have thought it possible, and – his era being less aristocratic than Cicero's though considerably more than ours – no doubt it was not.

With today's more egalitarian ordering, however, Michael Walzer for instance, deems such a redistribution of honour not only necessary but also realizable (although less so than a redistribution of money). Honour as public recognition could, for instance, serve as compensation for work that is important and socially useful yet not abundantly rewarded money-wise, provided that people can be brought to see this kind of work – not so much dishonoured as disregarded – as honourable. This in its turn depends on the possibility of detaching honour at least to some degree from professional status and other social goods.⁶⁴ It is legitimate that professional status does draw a certain amount of esteem, albeit in Walzer's view not in the amount it gets nowadays, and he sees a role for 'public honor' in educating 'ordinary citizens to look beyond their prejudgments and to recognize desert wherever it is found, even among themselves'.⁶⁵

However, despite Walzer's optimism on this point, it remains rather difficult to imagine how such a redistribution of honour could actually be achieved.⁶⁶ It means, in effect, not a – largely – equal distribution of honour and status, as Rawls proposed (an equal distribution of honour is, however, deemed a 'bad joke' by Walzer), but something going considerably further: a near complete turnaround of the existing distribution of these goods.

Nonetheless, with the honouring of the rich and powerful not having diminished since Smith's days, there seems to be a message here, and a somewhat more 'free appraisal' such as envisaged by Walzer, giving precedence to desert over wealth, would be very much in place; otherwise, the aristocratic distribution of honour in our day would be replaced not so much by a meritocratic, but a plutocratic one. This is, in fact, essential; although we commonly associate honour with aristocratic times, an open evaluation, a precondition for honour to function properly, can only be arrived at in a democratic age.⁶⁷ When attained, it might very well lead to honour performing its two functions better today than in the past, thus making up for the ground lost by honour's rules having become more indefinite in our time. If there is some truth in this, it is all the more regrettable that modern theorists have ignored the topic.

Concluding Remarks

Although some domains of modern life, such as politics, business and sports seem difficult to understand without taking honour into account,⁶⁸ strands of thought stressing utility and autonomy have replaced the ethics of honour. In theory both

share, like Epicureanism and Stoicism, an animosity towards the ideal of honour, but in practice, the ideal of autonomy, as found in the work of the Stoics, Kant and Rawls, is more hostile to the notion of honour than the tradition that stressed utility; the latter is alien to honour only insofar as it sees man as essentially self-seeking. Our present-day understanding of ourselves, however, remains closer to the Stoic and Kantian stance,⁶⁹ holding that virtue should be its own reward and that honour is nothing but vanity and a source of turmoil and envy, and inauthentic on top of that. Honour's inauthentic side shows both in the fact that the opinions of others have a role in determining what is right and in the fact that honour often functions as a reward after one has made the right choice, in general between higher interests and self-interest. Honour encourages one to choose the former, although partly for reasons belonging to the realm of the latter.

Occupying the middle ground between self-serving and more altruistic motives,⁷⁰ in behaviour induced by considerations of honour the spheres of 'is' and 'ought' seem to blend. Although Hume provided for the most cited formulation of the is/ought distinction,⁷¹ he himself did not adhere to such a division in his own work, freely basing his prescriptions for man on insights into both motives and shortcomings. However, although at present sociology and psychology suggest that the quest for honour has not disappeared, but still exists in the form of the need for recognition, respect, approval and dignity, political philosophers, contrary to their predecessors, do not have much to say on the topic, and when they have, they limit themselves to explaining how and why honour has disappeared from the scene. The explanations given are remarkably similar, and in general based on the debatable view that honour disappeared with the disappearance of social stratification: as honour presupposes distinction, no distinction means no honour.⁷² As we have seen, the view that a social hierarchy with an essentially fixed distribution of honour hampers honour in its functioning is equally viable.

Nonetheless, the notion of honour has allegedly become obsolete,⁷³ and the term itself 'has acquired some archaic overtones'.⁷⁴ What is more, considerations of honour and reputation are generally considered to be on the wrong side of the line, but this loses sight of what makes human beings tick. Clearly, this is a loss: although many ethicists and political philosophers have strong ideas about how people ought to behave, any political theory that doesn't take actual human motives into account does seem a bit too academic. There might even be a more general lesson here, going beyond the topic of honour: to be prudent, and relevant, political theorists would be wise to look for a middle way between is and ought, or at least to avoid a too exclusive focus on the latter.⁷⁵

This was in effect the position of the authors central to this article, who did not expect people to be autonomous to an extent that was beyond their reach, without, of course, falling into the other extreme: viewing people as entirely controlled by the opinions of those who surround them.⁷⁶ They were all of the opinion that there is a close relationship between honour and virtue, if only because undeserved praise gives us little pleasure. So, perhaps we, too, could be somewhat less

stringent and accept that requiring the right intention is too ambitious. This would imply that we accept that virtues are often practised, not always out of a love of virtue per se, but sometimes because virtuous conduct is rewarded with praise, esteem and approbation, and that moral rules are followed, not only because they are moral, but also because not following them brings disesteem. Such an approach would raise the bar less high, and, contrary to theories stressing autonomy, has the advantage of being more consistent with human nature, at least as perceived by Cicero, Locke, Hume and Smith.

These authors all acknowledged, though, that honour should consist of more than maintaining outward appearances; in fact, even in paradigmatic shame cultures like the heroic society as depicted by Homer, shame was to a certain degree internalized, and it is a mistake 'to suppose that the reactions of shame depend simply on being found out'.⁷⁷ Although this makes the honour ethic again more demanding, it is still much less so than an ethic based on autonomy. The Stoic's objection, meanwhile, that a good action undertaken for honour does not in every respect deserve the predicate moral – which has in all probability never been considered a problem by those who benefited from good behaviour motivated by honour – has not been satisfactorily resolved by these authors. Nor was this of great concern to them: although less than altruistic, this notion of honour they deemed so important is not in the main a selfish motive either – in the end, it is a social motive.

Notes

1. Charles Taylor (1994) 'The Politics of Recognition', in A. Gutmann (ed.) *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, p. 27. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Peter Berger (1984) 'On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honour', in M.J. Sandel (ed.) *Liberalism and its Critics*, p. 151. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
2. Avishai Margalit (1996) *The Decent Society*, p. 43. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. The notion of conscience as an 'inner voice' has its most influential expression in the work of Rousseau, who, in the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* (part of *Emile*), wrote: 'Everything I sense to be good is good; everything I sense to be bad is bad. . . . Too often reason deceives us. . . . But conscience never deceives; it is man's true guide.' Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1991) *Emile*, pp. 267, 286 and 290. London: Penguin. See also Taylor (n. 1), pp. 28–29. Today, conscience as an inner voice is not only considered important because it tells us what is right; it has also become something with 'independent and crucial moral significance'. Listening to our moral feelings is 'something we have to attain if we are to be true and full human beings'. Ibid. p. 28.
4. See for instance Charles H. Cooley (1922) *Human Nature and the Social Order*, rev. edn, p. 238. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Julian Pitt-Rivers (1974) 'Honour and Social Status', in J.G. Peristiany (ed.) *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, p. 21. Chicago: Midway Reprint. In this article, the emphasis is on honour as public recognition. See for honour as a 'quality of character' and for honour codes: Sharon R. Krause (2002) *Liberalism with Honor*, pp. 2–3. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
5. See for instance Alasdair MacIntyre (1985) *After Virtue*, p. 196. London: Duckworth.

- Michael Walzer (1983) *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*, p. 257. New York: Basic Books.
6. John Rawls (1971) *Theory of Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. According to one author, 'Rawls does not limit social wealth to concrete goods. In his view self-esteem (and thus apparently honor too) is a primary good. But Rawls ignores that the whole point of honor is to distinguish oneself from others . . . No distinction, no honor.' William Miller (1993) *Humiliation*, p. 129. New York: Cornell University Press. Margalit writes that 'social honor given equally to everyone will be empty' (n. 2), p. 42. According to Finley, 'when everyone attains equal honour, then there is no honour for anyone'. Moses I. Finley (1993) *The World of Odysseus*, p. 118. London: Penguin Books.
8. See also Bernard Williams (1973) *Problems of the Self*, p. 47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
9. See for instance Michael J. Sandel (1982) *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, p. 43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Allan Bloom (1987) *The Closing of the American Mind*, p. 30. New York: Simon & Schuster.
10. John Rawls (1993) *Political Liberalism*, pp. 86–7. New York: Columbia University Press. See also Sandel (n. 9), p. 9. Kant stated that his ethics should be free from all that 'nur empirisch sein mag und zur Anthropologie gehört' (*Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* BA VIII). Consequently, in Kant's ethical writings 'shame is on the bad sides of all the lines'. Bernard Williams (1993) *Shame and Necessity*, p. 77. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
11. Cooley and Goffman saw humans as essentially led by pride, shame and the fear of losing face, while Riesman portrays the modern employee as other-directed. See Cooley (n. 4). Erving Goffman (1958) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press. David Riesman (1950) *The Lonely Crowd*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
12. Walzer (n. 5), pp. 252–3. See also Taylor (1994, in n. 1); Margalit (n. 2), p. ix; Krause (n. 4); William Miller (n. 7).
13. Williams (n. 10), p. 5.
14. Ibid. p. 77. Rawls (n. 6), p. 461n., based his account of moral development partly on the works of Piaget.
15. See also Charles Taylor (1992) *Sources of the Self*, p. 20. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
16. See for instance *De Re Publica* 1.27, *De Off.* 3.33, 36 and 38, and *Tusc. Disp.* 2.52–3. All quotations from Cicero are taken from the Loeb Classical Library edns, Cambridge, MA.
17. *De Finibus* 4.21, 55, 63–8, 75–7; *Pro Murena* 61–5.
18. See also *Pro Archia Poeta* 28–9.
19. This also holds true for philosophers: 'Do they not inscribe their names upon the actual books they write about contempt of fame?' *Tusc. Disp.* 1. 34.
20. Elsewhere, he wrote about 'a thirst for virtue, which of necessity secures fame, even if it be not its object'. *Tusc. Disp.* 1. 91.
21. See also *De Off.* 1.65.
22. Honour caused more deaths than the plague, as John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers (1992) state in a foreword to their *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
23. Quentin Skinner (1978) *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols, vol. 1, pp. 100–1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
24. Ibid. p. 101.
25. Taylor (n. 15), p. 214. According to Taylor, 'we find this with Hobbes as well as with Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, and Molière'. However, 'the negative arguments in these

writers are not new. Plato himself was suspicious of the honour ethic, as concerned with mere appearances. The Stoics rejected it; and it was denounced by Augustine as the exaltation of the desire for power.'

26. Bernard Mandeville (1988) *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Publick Benefits*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.

27. Adam Smith wrote that

it is the great fallacy of Dr. Mandeville's book to represent every passion as wholly vicious, which is so in any degree and in any direction. It is thus that he treats everything as vanity which has any reference, either to what are, or to what ought to be the sentiments of others: and it is by means of this sophistry, that he establishes his favourite conclusion, that private vices are public benefits.

(1976) *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, VI.ii.46.12. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Smith concluded however that 'some of the articles, at least, must be just, and even those which are most overcharged must have had some foundation, otherwise the fraud would be detected even by that careless inspection which we are disposed to give' (VII.ii.4.14) and that the *Fable* would not have made such an impact, 'had it not bordered upon the truth' (VII.ii.4.13).

28. Charles Montesquieu (1989) *Esprit des Lois*, I.iii.1–7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
29. Alexis de Tocqueville (1969) *Democracy in America*, pp. 620–1. New York: Harper & Row. According to Fukuyama, the 'struggle for recognition has shifted from the military to the economic realm, where it has the socially beneficial effect of creating rather than destroying wealth'. Francis Fukuyama (1995) *Trust*, p. 7. New York: Free Press.
30. See also Leo Brady (2003) *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity*, p. 49. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
31. Donald Winch (1978) *Adam Smith's Politics*, p. 184. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
32. Ibid.
33. Peter Gay (1973, 1979) *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols, vol. 1, p. 105. London: Wildwood House. According to Gay, 'Cicero's reputation in the Enlightenment is hard to appreciate today: nothing illustrates our distance from the eighteenth century better than this.' Ibid. p. 106. See also Friedrich von Hayek (1985) *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, p. 122. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The Greeks were less inclined to the view that virtue needs a reward. Plato, for instance, held that 'the good are not willing to rule either for the sake of money or of honour' (*The Republic* 347b). In the concluding sections of *The Republic* Plato wrote that just conduct will be rewarded in this life with a good name (612–13), yet this reward is not presented as a necessary incentive. Name and reputation are necessary incentives however in Plato's *Laws* (738, 740d, 754e–755a, 764a, 784d, 926d), which is meant as a more realizable ideal. Aristotle held that a mature person does not need the sense of shame to keep him on the path of virtue. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1128b. On the other hand: according to Aristotle honour was the most important of the secondary goods. Ibid. 1123b.
34. Quentin Skinner and James Tully (1988) *Meaning and Context*, p. 292, n. 16. Cambridge: Polity Press.
35. John Locke (1963) *Two Treatises of Government*. New York: Mentor.
36. Nathan Tarcov (1984) *Locke's Education for Liberty*, p. 116. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
37. John Locke (1989) *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
38. See also Smith (n. 27), VI.iii.46 and Mandeville (n. 26): 'it is certain, that nothing . . . has

- a greater Influence upon Children, than the Handle that is made of Shame' (vol. 2, p. 78).
39. See also Tarcov (n. 36).
 40. John Locke (1975) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
 41. David Hume (1969) *A Treatise of Human Nature*. London: Penguin Books. In fact, utilitarianism's main protagonist, Jeremy Bentham, went further than Hume: while to Hume, utility was the standard we normally use for judging, for Bentham it was a standard we all *should* use: the concern for reputation has to keep the conduct 'of each in the line which promotes the general happiness'. John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham (1987) *Utilitarianism and Other Essays*, pp. 249–51. London: Penguin. The latter phrase is from John Stuart Mill, who, defending Bentham against the allegation that he made approval into the foundation of morality, wrote that public sanctions have their value 'not as constituents or tests of virtue, but as *motives* to it'. Ibid.
 42. Brian Barry (1989) *Theories of Justice*, p. 167. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
 43. In his essay *Of Moral Prejudices* we read that, according to Hume, too many of his contemporaries copied the Stoics, whose philosophy he regarded as utterly unsound. David Hume (1987) *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund. See for a similar opinion: Jeremy Bentham (1996) *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, XI. xvi. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
 44. Peter Jones (1982) *Hume's Sentiments: Their Ciceronian and French Context*, pp. 10–11. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Hume wrote that 'the fame of Cicero flourishes at present; but that of Aristotle is utterly decayed'. Hume (2000) *An Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*, §1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 45. Vanity is 'a social passion, and a bond of union among men'. Hume (n. 41), III.ii.ii. In his short autobiography *My Own Life* Hume (n. 43) called 'love of literary fame' his 'ruling passion'.
 46. David Hume (1957) *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Meril Co.
 47. Smith (n. 27).
 48. See also Gay (n. 33), pp. 54–5, and Charles E. Larmore (1987) *Patterns of Moral Complexity*, p. 17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 49. Hume wrote likewise: 'Men have, in general, a much greater propensity to overvalue than undervalue themselves; notwithstanding the opinion of Aristotle' (n. 46), VIII. See also Mandeville (n. 26), vol. 1, p. 125.
 50. 'We should view ourselves, not in the light in which our own selfish passions are apt to place us, but in the light in which any other citizen of the world would view us' (III.3.11).
 51. However, Smith called our tendency to judge by consequences instead of intentions a 'salutary and useful irregularity in human sentiments concerning merit or demerit, which at first sight appears so absurd and unaccountable' (II.iii.3.2).
 52. The love of true glory is 'a passion which, if not the very best passion of human nature, is certainly one of the best' (VI.iii.46).
 53. Adam Smith (1961) *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. London: Methuen. According to Hume, 'Honour is a great check upon mankind: But where a considerable body of men act together, this check is, in a great measure, removed' (n. 43: *On the Independency of Parliament*). According to Tocqueville, in modern societies with their 'constantly fluctuating crowd', honour is less binding because it 'is only effective in full view of the public, differing in that from sheer virtue, which feeds upon itself, contended with its own witness'. Tocqueville (n. 29), p. 626.
 54. Tocqueville (n. 29), p. 616
 55. See also Hume (n. 46), app. iv.

56. See also Krause (n. 4), p. 52.
57. A problem addressed by Mill is hampering this process in democratic times: although we have a right to warn someone if we think him at fault, or even a fool, 'it would be well, indeed, if this good office were much more freely rendered than the common notion of politeness at present permit, and if one person could honestly point out to another that he thinks him in fault, without being considered unmannerly or presuming'. John Stuart Mill (1993) *Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on Representative Government*, p. 145. London: Everyman. Rendering this 'good office' is in our day probably even more contrary to custom than in Victorian England; an honour-based ethic can however only function as a check when criticism does not amount to a narcissistic injury in its own right. See for the virtue of rudeness: Emrys Westacott (2006) 'The Rights and Wrongs of Rudeness', *International Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1: 1–22, esp. p. 13.
58. Tocqueville (n. 29), p. 624.
59. Ibid. p. 625.
60. Ibid. p. 617. Walzer (n. 5), pp. 251 and 267.
61. Tocqueville (n. 29), p. 618.
62. Compare Hume (n. 41), II.ii.v.
63. See for instance Smith (n. 27), I.iii.3.2–4.
64. Walzer (n. 5), p. 257.
65. Ibid. p. 266.
66. Walzer himself is of the opinion that such a redistribution of honour can be reached without a 'gigantic increase in social control'. Ibid. 257n.
67. See also Krause (n. 4), pp. 66–7.
68. See on politics and business Francis Fukuyama (1993) *The End of History and the Last Man*, pp. 229, 233. New York: Avon Books.
69. In that sense, we 'are all Kantians now'. Arthur W.H. Adkins (1960) *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values*, p. 2. Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press. Further, we often echo the Stoics' distrust of the urge to distinction. Leo Braudy (1986) *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History*, p. 148. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
70. See also Krause (n. 4), p. 11.
71. In this famous passage Hume was mainly bothered by the fact that the move from 'is' to 'ought' often goes without explanation, not with the move itself (n. 41), III.i.i. Hume 'assumed that the basic division in the fields of knowledge is that between physical and moral subjects. . . . Moral subjects are what we, for lack of better terms, probably would call, "the humanities" and the "social sciences"'. John B. Stewart (1963) *The Moral and Political Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 10. New York: Columbia University Press.
72. See for instance Berger (n. 1), p. 153; Taylor, (1994, in. 1), p. 27. Margalit (n. 2), pp. 42–3. Finley (n. 7), p. 118.
73. Berger (n. 1).
74. Pitt-Rivers (n. 4), p. 39. Today, only some 'quaint survivals' of honour are left, like the academic *cum laude*. Skinner (n. 23), p. 101.
75. However, 'the fact-value distinction is taken as a given by almost everyone today, no matter whether they are behavioral scientists or committed revolutionaries'. Allan Bloom (1980) 'The Study of Texts', in *Political Theory and Political Education*, p. 118. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Modern political philosophy 'belongs firmly to the Utopian genre'. John Dunn (1985) *Rethinking Modern Political Theory: Essays 1979–1983*, p. 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
76. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. In *After Virtue* MacIntyre presents Sartre and Goffman as respective representatives from these two extreme positions (n. 5), while, elsewhere, he states 'the virtue of Hume's ethics, like that of Aristotle and unlike that of Kant, is that it

seeks to preserve morality as something psychologically intelligible'. Alasdair MacIntyre (1969) 'Hume on "is" and "ought"', in W.D. Hudson (ed.) *The Is/Ought Question*, p. 50. London: Macmillan. Although shame in modern social science is still a factor, it has lost its moral overtones. In the opinion of the behaviourist Skinner, for instance, it is not the actor that deserves praise and blame but the environment that steers him. Burrhus F. Skinner (1971) *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, p. 21. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

77. Williams (n. 10), pp. 81–2. Without shame being internalized the idea of a shame culture would make no sense (*ibid.*), and although the internalized other is abstracted and generalized, 'he is potentially somebody rather than nobody, and somebody other than me'. *Ibid.* p. 84. This somebody is not necessarily the one in closest geographical proximity, i.e. it is not the opinions of one's neighbour that matter most. *Ibid.* p. 83.