

The Modernization of Honor in Eighteenth-Century Political Theory

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

In this dissertation, I investigate the efforts in eighteenth-century political theory to modernize the sense of honor. Contrary to the belief that influential thinkers of this century—Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, and Immanuel Kant, in particular—deviate from the tradition of honor and transform honor from a public matter of defending one’s reputation against disrespect and injustice into a private matter of maintaining one’s integrity, I argue that they not only faithfully inherit the medieval legacy of chivalric honor passed down to them via Thomas Hobbes, Bernard Mandeville, and Montesquieu, but also significantly democratize and secularize it and improve its compatibility with the modern state characterized by equal citizenship, centralized government, and the rule of law. Honor is understood as a uniquely structured motivation, which combines an individual’s sensitivity to and independence from social opinion into an integral whole. In modernizing honor, eighteenth-century thinkers attempt to preserve it as a political motivation for modern individuals to balance their spirits of resistance and law-abidingness so as to stand up to injustice without themselves becoming unjust in the process. Thus, honor can help liberal-democratic citizens today to fulfill their civic responsibility.

For my parents,

who support my aspirations to lead an honorable life

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Chronology and Abbreviations (Selected)

- 1640 [1650] Hobbes: *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* (EL)
- 1642 [1651] Hobbes: *De Cive*
- 1651 Hobbes: *Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil* (Leviathan)
- 1714 Mandeville: *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (FB)
- 1725 Mandeville: *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (EOH)
- 1748 Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws* (SL)
- 1754 [1755] Rousseau: *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men (Second Discourse)* (SD)
- 1758 Rousseau: *Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre* (D'Alembert)
- 1759 Smith: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS)
- 1762 Rousseau: *Emile, or On Education* (Emile)
- 1764 Kant: *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (Observations)
- 1783 Rousseau: *Emile and Sophie, or The Solitaries* (EAS)
- 1790 Smith: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments (Sixth Edition)* (TMS)
- 1797 Kant: *The Metaphysics of Morals* (MM)

* Years in square brackets are the years of actual publication.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Preface

It was October 10th, 2008. Lakeville, Minnesota. John McCain, then presidential candidate, was meeting with his supporters, responding to their questions and concerns. Unsurprisingly, one of the biggest concerns among them was his competitor, Barack Obama, even whose identity was a controversial topic. At least two of McCain's supporters were seriously worried about the Obama presidency. A man said he was scared of it, and a woman expressed her lack of trust in it. Attentive to her concern, McCain nodded and tried to empathize with her. But once she claimed that this lack of trust was based on her reading that Obama was an "Arab," McCain shook his head and took the microphone back: "No ma'am, no ma'am. He is a decent family man, citizen that I just happen to have disagreements with on fundamental issues, and that's what this campaign is all about."¹

More than a decade has passed, but this moment remains fresh in our memory. With the new presidency of Donald Trump and with McCain's controversial appearances in and noteworthy disappearances from the public eye in the last two years of his life, the interest in the Lakeville incident and how it revealed the political and

¹ I by no means endorse the possible prejudice against the Arabic community expressed or implied in this conversation.

personal character of McCain was only deepened. Some praised the incident as a moment of “statesmanship.” Some criticized it as a sign of his “collaboration” with the competing party. But no matter if this incident is seen as eminent or notorious, it is difficult to deny that what McCain did and said on that Friday in Lakeville had something to do with a motivation which, throughout his life, he tried to earnestly cultivate and (at the very least) appear to cherish: the sense of honor. Apart from his numerous mentions of it in his public speeches, honor is the first quality of character discussed in his *Character Is Destiny* and appears multiple times in his *Why Courage Matters*. There is no doubt that, immediately after his death, one major theme around which public discussions of his legacy revolved was the sense of honor of this person as a soldier, a citizen, and a politician.

McCain’s own words on his 2008 campaign and particularly on Lakeville can be found in *The Restless Wave*, his own account of the last ten years of his political life:

“Win or lose, I didn’t want anyone ever to have fair grounds to criticize us for resorting to any kind of racist dog whistling. I wanted to win. I wanted to be President. But I, too, recognized the social progress Obama’s candidacy represented, and I didn’t want to impede it by inciting, even with a wink and a nod here and there or with language that had double meanings, the prejudices that have marred our history... Every now and again I had to chastise someone introducing me or warming up the crowd or asking me a question for what could be construed as at least an implicit racist remark. Emphasizing Obama’s middle name. Claiming he was a secret Kenyan or Arab or Muslim, and somehow disloyal to the country. Questioning his patriotism, his parentage, his travels and experiences as a young man. The occasional vulgar or cruel or racist shout from the crowd. I condemned them when I heard them” (2018, 46).

McCain wanted not only a victory but also one that he and many others could feel proud of. As a result, he was motivated not only to participate in activities aiming at victory, such as running the campaign, but also to refrain from activities that could defile the nobleness of victory, such as courting the approval of his supporters by resort to cheap and base bigotry and racial profiling. He indeed desired the approval of his fellow citizens for his victory, but when seeking such approval would foreseeably diminish the fairness in the victory, he was capable of retaining his independence from the opinion of his fellow citizens despite their boos and hisses. The Lakeville moment, therefore, is one of the many manifestations of how McCain's thoughts on honor can unfold in reality.

Because of many of these qualities found in McCain's sense of honor, even people completely rejecting his "deeply reactionary" policies—for good reasons—nevertheless admitted that "actions motivated by honor are not necessarily aristocratic or reactionary" and that "his fealty to that honor clearly resonated with many—even those who found his politics abhorrent" (Farber 2018). The appeal of honor in modern political life should not be simply ignored.

1.2 Honor and Its Problems

It is not clear if McCain spent time reading any scholarly work on honor, but the academic interest in the phenomenon of honor in Western civilization has indeed surged

in recent decades. Academia has witnessed a number of books directly on, or closely related to, honor written by scholars from the disciplines of social psychology (Nisbett et al. 1996; Brown 2016), history (Nye 1998; Taylor 2008; Goldberg 2010; Thomas 2017; Smith 2018), literature (Braudy 2005; Bowman 2006; Robinson 2006; Welsh 2008), law (Kaufman 2012), philosophy (Appiah 2010; Sessions 2012; Cunningham 2013; Olsthoorn 2015; Sommers 2018), and political theory (Krause 2002; Faulkner 2007; Bagby 2009; Avramenko 2011; Oprisko 2012; Johnson 2012, 2016). There have also been multiple anthologies discussing honor from interdisciplinary perspectives (Drévilion et al. 2011; Strange et al. 2014; Johnson et al. 2016), let alone numerous journal articles focusing on specific aspects of honor.²

However, this dissertation is not an unreserved praise of McCain's honor, and despite the merits of the above academic works, our understanding of honor can still be improved. Specifically speaking, both McCain's honor and scholarly accounts of honor are exposed to three major problems related to the nature of honor and its political implications in modern societies.

The first problem is formal: it is not clear what honor exactly is. According to Sharon Krause's helpful analysis, the phenomenon of honor includes three aspects: "(a)

² Recent academic interests in honor's real or purported cousins, such as reputation, fame, pride, and masculinity, can also be found in disciplines including, but not limited to, history, philosophy, political science, economics, management studies, and gender studies.

public honors in the form of external recognition; (b) codes of honor; and (c) honor as a quality of character, the ambitious desire to live up to one's code and to be publicly recognized for doing so" (2002, 2). Among philosophers and political theorists, the academic interest in honor lies predominantly in the third aspect,³ which is also my interest. Thus, in this dissertation, unless otherwise noted, whenever I speak of honor, I mean the sense of honor, a motivation for individuals to act honorably. However, since a sense of honor without a code is a motivation devoid of substantial content and a code of honor without a sense is a set of principles that motivates no one, the sense of honor and codes of honor are necessarily entangled with each other in reality, making it difficult to dissect the particular honor of a particular individual. McCain's sense of honor lies in his devotion to values such as human rights, freedom, and openness, which, as he perceives, are fundamentally American values but should be defended by every honorable person. But is the attachment to these values integral to the sense of honor *as such*, or only to *his* own sense of honor embedded in his particular code of honor? With the help of historians and anthropologists, we can easily confirm that these values are seldom upheld as honorable in the past. They are not even distinctively "American" because for a long time the Southern honor was founded on completely

³ Oprisko 2012 is an exception. He understands honor as a social process which relates different individuals and groups to different value systems and explains how this relation is maintained or challenged. As a result, his work is more descriptive than prescriptive.

opposite values such as racism and even slavery (Krause 2002, 97-131; Wyatt-Brown 2007).

Moreover, the more abstract a particular code of honor is, the more difficult to disentangle the sense of honor from it. In his *Character Is Destiny*, by telling the stories of five moral exemplars, McCain dissects honor into five parts: honesty, respect, authenticity, loyalty, and dignity (2017, 3-58). Similarly, some scholars attempt to understand the sense of honor—not honor codes—by first dissecting it into multiple parts and then studying these parts one by one (Oprisko 2012; Cunningham 2013; Olsthoorn 2015). To some extent, studying honor *synthetically* as these scholars do is justifiable. As William Sessions states, “There is a thin but recognizable common code of honor... across vastly different honor groups” (2010, 29), such as the ones that McCain enumerates. However, even if it is granted that the five components constituting McCain’s honor appear to be so abstract and formal that any sense of honor has to motivate, the synthetic understanding of honor cannot tell us how honor should be understood *analytically*. Differently put, it can only show us what honor may be comprised of but not what honor *per se* is. A doubt thus necessarily ensues: instead of studying each of its components separately, why should we study the sense of honor at all? To transform this doubt into a constructive question: what is so unique in the sense of honor that constantly connects everything in the “thin” code of honor into a single

whole? Without resolving the problem about what honor is, our investigation into the wider application of honor beyond the local context (such as McCain's personal belief) as well as into comparisons and contrasts among notions of honor in different contexts will be severely limited.

The second problem is practical: it is not clear what honor exactly motivates. On the one hand, honor seems to be a restraining motivation. The noble victory that McCain wanted to attain reflects an intuitive moral conviction: the ends do not always justify the means. In fact, we tend to abhor those who openly claim—let alone practice—the opposite. This is why “Machiavellianism” is rarely understood as unreserved praise, and people who actually practice it tend to cover it up. A better illustration of the reason that our abhorrence is justified is found in war conventions. Even if one country is defending itself from the aggression of a patently unjust invader, the struggle of life and death is not a normative justification for this country to freely and indiscriminately slaughter the non-combatants of the invading country, such as innocent civilians and surrendered soldiers. If norms apply even to activities as cruel as wars and regulate the behaviors in actual combat so as to distinguish wars from psychopathic murders, there is no reason to insist that they should not apply to political competitions and struggles in the domestic context, which, even in their most extreme and cruelest forms, are just as bad as wars. As a result, if McCain's honor indeed motivates him to refrain from

resorting to unjust means to win his campaign, then we should definitely appreciate the role that honor can play in political competition.

On the other hand, honor seems also to be a provoking motivation. To clarify, let us begin with one undeniable fact: McCain eventually lost his campaign. In comparison with Trump who won it eight years later at the cost of decency, it may not be too hyperbolic to say that McCain retained his personal nobleness at the cost of victory. Is this a cost too high? To be sure, insofar as Obama was indeed a good and just candidate who merely happened to have “disagreements” with him, as McCain said in Lakeville and reaffirmed many years after that (2018, 324-5), being defeated by Obama would be regrettable but not disastrous. From this perspective, the ethics of honor is a matter of fair play. However, politics is no football match, and in many cases, failure is neither practically nor morally acceptable. Again, the ethics of war is helpful to illustrate this. Indeed, in a war against unjust foreign invasion, if soldiers defend their country by unjust means, then their war is no longer completely just. But if they aim only at fighting justly, then they risk losing the war and thus giving up their freedom, which is especially true when a powerless though just country has to defend itself from a powerful but unjust invader. Between what McCain’s honor helped him to achieve (or not achieve) in his campaign and what honor is expected to achieve when people have to confront injustice, the gap is evident. It is one thing to accept a glorious defeat in a fair

competition between good and better, another to give way to injustice in order to remain noble.

Existing scholarly opinion largely reflects this view. Many scholars claim that the fight against insults, disrespects, and, ultimately, injustice is what honor always motivates, and it is only in a modern, perhaps bourgeois, society that honor becomes “internalized” and “privatized” in the sense that it is more and more portrayed as a matter of personal dignity and integrity. This claim indeed corresponds to some common understandings of honor that many people hold today. Think about college honor codes: more often than not, they require students to remain honorable members of their community by not cheating and plagiarizing, that is, by obeying rules and maintaining their own integrity, rather than by actively fighting disrespect, insult, or any kind of injustice that others impose on them. Unsurprisingly, then, in the eyes of many scholars, “honor proper” should be the one found among warriors who spiritedly risk their lives to defend their community from invaders or among duelists who angrily fight each other to defend their reputation in the face of disrespect, and since the modern notion of honor is so internal, it, at best, is a severely distorted notion of honor and, at worst, has nothing to do with honor at all. This understanding is famously advanced by Peter Berger in his essay entitled “On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honor” (1983), who prefers modern dignity so much as to refuse to call it honor at all,

and can also be found in the works of famous philosophers such as Charles Taylor (1992) and Stephen Darwall (2013). Some defenders of honor (Pangle 1999; Faulkner 2007, 227-35; Sommers 2018, 15-44) also hold this view, the difference between them and Berger being that they are doubtful about modern dignity and integrity so much as to refuse to call it honor at all. As a result, two of the most comprehensive theoretical accounts of honor, one developed by Krause and the other by Kwame Anthony Appiah, focus on how honor motivates people to resist injustice, rather than to preserve integrity alone. According to Krause (2002), honor can and does motivate democratic citizens to fight the tyranny of the majority, as shown in her reconstruction of Tocqueville's political theory of honor and her studies of the role that honor plays in the political thought of several leaders of social movements for racial and gender equality. According to Appiah (2010), honor is able to promote moral progress by mobilizing actions against injustice, and changes in honor codes contribute to the end of duels in England, the abolishment of foot-binding in China, and the rejection of Atlantic slave trade.

“When victory means the defeat of aggression, the question is not only important; it is painfully difficult. We want to have it both ways: moral decency in battle and victory in war; constitutionalism in hell and ourselves outside” (Walzer 2015, 48). This is what Michael Walzer says on the practical purpose of the ethics of war. Likewise, if honor is going to be politically relevant, it has to motivate not only the noble insistence

on one's own integrity but also the spirited fight against injustice. But the practical problem, which parallels the formal one explicated above, hence arises: instead of relying on motivations for spirited resistance and for the preservation of personal integrity respectively, why should political actors seek recourse to honor at all? To reformulate this problem in a constructive way: what is so unique about honor as a political motivation that people in their political lives should not do without, even if they can cultivate their spiritedness and their love of personal integrity separately from each other? To render honor practically attractive, we have to resolve this problem. Moreover, as "moral decency in battle and victory in war" can conflict with each other, spirited resistance to injustice and the preservation of personal integrity can also be in tension. If honor can and should motivate both, it has to be clarified how this tension can be relieved.

The third problem is historical: it is not clear how honor, a pre-modern legacy, can be easily passed down to modern societies and applied to the political life of ordinary citizens free and equal. This problem troubles honor despite McCain's belief that honor is a sanguine motivation for good politics in liberal democracies and that everyone has access to an honorable life. As a valuable motivation for aristocrats, honor in history seems to be too exceptional and too elitist. It is founded on a social hierarchy that discriminates between honorable aristocrats and honor-less people and thus could

not be equally distributed to all. McCain is not an aristocrat, but his honor is not entirely free from the need of similar discrimination. He enjoyed great political eminence, which enabled him to gain and display honor in grand national political arenas, but clearly, most citizens throughout their lives do not have a presidential campaign to run. How, then, are they able to access honor in the same way as McCain does and make use of it for constructive political purposes?

Moreover, it is even doubtful whether the political purposes that honor in history serves have much to do with modern liberal democracy. Honor used to motivate aristocratic warriors either to maintain secular order or to advance religious causes. While the former culminates in fighting for the monarchical rule, the latter culminates in fighting for the Catholic Church. Neither fight, however, is compatible with liberal democracy. In fact, they are in conflict with this modern regime type, which replaces the sovereign of the king with the sovereign of the people and which insists on the separation of church and state. Moreover, among other things, modern liberal democracy is also characterized by equal citizenship, centralized government, and the rule of law. These characteristics foreign to pre-modern regimes pose additional challenges to honor in the modern world.

Because of the above and others gaps between the historical context of honor and the reality of the modern society and politics, it is unsurprising that scholars usually

conclude that honor has to lose much of its normative appeal in the historical transition from an old aristocratic world to a new democratic one (Bowman 2006, 95-232; Cunningham 2013, 36-50). Quite a few scholars plainly reject honor (Berger 1983; Taylor 1992; Darwall 2013; Brown 2016)—if it is discussed at all—and some defenders of honor agree that honor can be defensible today only when it appears in its modern forms (Sessions 2010, 155-71; Cunningham 2013, 51-68). As a result, if honor can indeed be compatible with modern societies, it must be shown that honor can be modernized so that its accessibility is democratized, and its purpose redirected.

1.3 The Plan of the Dissertation

As the foregoing sections reveal, honor remains a motivation that constantly excites quarrel. On the one hand, it receives much praise in both public discourses and scholarly discussions for its possible moral and political function. On the other hand, it is troubled by serious problems concerning its formal structure, practical impact, and historical legacy to the extent that it rouses confusion, fear, and rejection in the minds of people—scholars and non-scholars alike. Hence, to a certain degree, Haig Patapan’s observation on the awkward position that honor occupies in modern political theory and reality is insightful: “Modern honor appears to be distinguished by two contradictory impulses, a neglect or even disdain of honor, and an ambition to elevate and promote it as dignity, self-esteem, and recognition” (2018, 459).

What Patapan suggests here is that these two contradictory impulses are external to honor, as if people who hold different understandings of honor—in Patapan’s case, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and their followers—try to interpret honor in their own ways and thus quarrel with those who understand it differently. But if this is indeed true, then the quarrel about honor actually does not have much to do with honor *per se* but with conflicting ideologies of honor, and there would thus be no good theoretical reason to explain why honor is significantly more susceptible to such quarrel today than many other concepts such as dignity, which carries conflicting meanings throughout history too. Instead, I believe that the reason why honor remains controversial must be found within this unique moral and political motivation, and this belief motivates this study.

To be sure, it is not realistic to resolve all the three problems with honor explicated above—formal, practical, and historical—in this dissertation. What I am going to focus on here is the historical problem, i.e., how the aristocratic legacy of honor can be reformed so as to become compatible with modern societies and serve as a motivation for citizens today to tackle injustice. As a result, the academic virtue that readers should reasonably expect from this dissertation is its faithfulness to historical texts and its innovation in establishing meaningful links among these texts, rather than the kind of conceptual clarity that defines analytic moral and political philosophy. This being said, in dealing with the historical problem, I still try to shed light on the formal

and practical problems, as they are crucial to any theoretical account of honor and thus constantly appear in the historical accounts of honor.

To this end, I examine how several eighteenth-century European thinkers understand and develop their ideas of honor. The eighteenth century is a time when people remained under the influence of aristocratic cultures but were increasingly compelled to acknowledge that the rise of the modern state was inevitable. This century is usually perceived as a theoretically impoverished century for honor. It is claimed that, in their own ways, the most influential thinkers of the time, especially Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, and Immanuel Kant, lay the theoretical foundation for the ethics of the modern society and undermine the theoretical foundation of honor. In particular, Rousseau theorizes a modern idea of authenticity, which is at odds with the social approval that characterizes honor; Smith elaborates a case for the morality of open commercial society, which is at odds with the closed feudal society on which honor thrives; Kant puts emphasis on reason, universal moral laws, and the value of equal human dignity and respect, which is at odds with the passionate and socially contingent nature of honor. If they do contribute anything to theories of honor, then their contribution is nothing but the “internalization” and “privatization” of honor, the death sentence issued to “honor proper.”

However, this scholarly challenge is also an invitation to a reevaluation of the

above thinkers' thought on honor. If it can be proved how important honor and its modernization are in the social and political theory of each of them, it will help us understand how honor can be made compatible with the modern society and why honor can and ought to remain a vital political motivation in such a society. This is what I attempt to do in this dissertation.

As suggested in my explanation of its practical problem, honor may motivate two different things—a spirited fight against injustice and a noble preservation of one's own integrity—which are equally important for individuals participating in political activities but may not appear compatible with each other because the urgency of one tends to override the necessity of the other. I argue that, among Rousseau, Smith, and Kant, none understands honor as a motivation for personal integrity alone. Instead, they all aim at achieving a combination of the spirit of resistance and the love of integrity via honor. This understanding of honor is not their invention but a legacy that can be traced to the Middle Ages and passed down to them through Hobbes in the seventeenth century as well as Mandeville and Montesquieu in the eighteenth century. Thus, I refute the claim that, by "internalizing" and "privatizing" honor, Rousseau, Smith, and Kant eliminate "honor proper," understood as the motivation for the spirited fight against injustice. In fact, this understanding of "honor proper" is itself inaccurate because honor in the history that I examine is always perceived as a motivation for both the spirit of

resistance and the love of integrity, rather than for either of them alone. Far from undermining honor, those eighteenth-century thinkers more faithfully inherit its essence from its history than many later scholars. They actually show us that what honor uniquely motivates is the balance between the spirit of resistance and the love of integrity, which renders it possible for individuals to fight injustice without themselves becoming unjust in the process.

Furthermore, the reason why the combination of the spirit of resistance and the love of integrity may be attained via honor is that honor has a unique formal structure that distinguishes it from other motivations: it is characterized by the sensitivity to social opinion and the independence precisely from social opinion. As is to be shown, eighteenth-century theories of honor largely converge with each other in that they understand honor to have this formal structure, but what makes these theories more interesting and nuanced is that, in the eyes of different thinkers, the formal structure of honor corresponds to its practical effect in very different ways, thereby providing us with multiple ways to understand the mechanism of honor and leaving us with new questions to further investigate.

Finally, while eighteenth-century thinkers faithfully inherit the legacy of honor, their reason for doing so is not reactionary but progressive. The innovation in their accounts of honor lies in its modernization, as all the thinkers discussed in this

dissertation together help to democratize honor, secularize honor, and render honor compatible with the modern state characterized by equal citizenship, the rule of law, and centralized government. Thus, honor can be compatible with modern societies and politics, and it should play a bigger role in the lives of all citizens today who have a duty both to abide by the rule of law and to resist injustice that may originate exactly from a tyrannized majority or an arbitrary government.

The dissertation is organized as follows. In the rest of Chapter 1, I provide a brief account of chivalric honor in the Middle Ages. Although the modernization of the world soon challenges its social, political, and moral foundation, chivalry provides us with a prototypical notion of honor that has a specific historical origin, a specific set of practical effects, and a specific formal structure. This idea of honor serves as an instrumental definition of honor for us to refer to in the following examination of the eighteenth-century modernization of honor. With this reference point, we are able to measure how faithful the reformers are to the tradition of honor and how modern their own notions of honor actually are.

In Chapter 2, I examine three early attempts at modernizing chivalric honor in the works of Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu. This modernization consists of three tasks. First, since it is based on feudal societies but not compatible with a modern centralized state, chivalric honor has to be adapted to this modern regime type. Second,

since it is too exclusive and elitist to be applicable to ordinary people, it has to be democratized. Third, since it is too much entangled with the Catholic Church to appeal to people in an era when Catholicism, if not religion in general, loses its moral authority, it has to be secularized. Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu all try to carry out these tasks in their own ways. While the theory of each strengthens some weaknesses in the theory of the others, they all leave new problems unsolved to their successors. In particular, Hobbesian honor deviates from the tradition of honor that perceives it as motivation for the balance between spiritedness and obedience. Mandeville corrects the Hobbesian tendency to reduce honor to the motivation for submission alone. However, his notion of honor is not democratic enough, as it relies on the discrimination between ignorant people, who are motivated by honor, and prudent politicians, who manipulate honor and thus stand outside the influence of honor. Montesquieu corrects Mandeville by separating specific monarchs from monarchy and arguing that even monarchs should be subject to honor, but Montesquieuan honor presupposes the discrimination between the nobility and the people and thus remains insufficiently democratized.

In Chapters 3, I turn to study Rousseau's account of honor developed mainly in the *Letter to D'Alembert*, *Emile*, and *Emile and Sophie*. Rousseau remains faithful to the tradition of honor that balances the spirited resistance to disrespect and the preservation of personal integrity. However, it is he, rather than his predecessors, who truly initiates

the modernization of honor, as he aims at thoroughly democratizing honor so as to render it accessible to not only kings and aristocrats but also ordinary people. Unlike his predecessors, whose ideas of honor ultimately serves monarchical rule, Rousseau argues that honor is incompatible with monarchy. His modernized notion of honor motivates individuals living in modern societies to combat not only disrespect from others but also their own over-sensitivity to disrespect, both of which originate from the desire for esteem intrinsic to socialized individuals. However, while it may be actualized in the domestic context and motivate private individuals to give a principled response to disrespect, Rousseauian honor does not seem to be political enough as to motivate effective resistance to injustice beyond that context.

In Chapter 4, I investigate Smith's honor ethics developed in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Central to this honor ethics is a sentiment called love of praiseworthiness, which is different from both the love of praise and the love of virtue but is uniquely helpful to motivate individuals living in modern commercial society and under a modern centralized government to tame their resentment. In Smith's terminologies, resentment is a distinctively political passion that motivates individuals to stand up to injustice in general. However, while too little resentment leads to acquiescence to injustice, too much leads to unjust responses to injustice. In rendering individuals both sensitive to and independent from the judgment of others, the love of praiseworthiness

helps them balance their self-command and self-esteem, keeps resentment at a proper level, and thus makes it possible for them to stand up to injustice without themselves becoming unjust.

In Chapter 5, I reconstruct Kant's theory of honor found mainly in his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* and *Metaphysics of Morals* and elaborate its political implications. Like Smith, Kant further politicizes the modern notion of honor. His political theory is premised on an imperfect world and treats disrespect as a constant threat to the order of civil society. In this context, I examine the tension and connection between the two aspects of Kantian honor, aesthetic honor (the passion of honor) and ethical honor (the virtue of honor), and argue that the Kantian reform of honor combines the content of ethical honor with the form of aesthetic honor and thus renders honor a viable motivation for individuals to participate in the principled fight against disrespect. Moreover, in light of his conviction that the rule of law and the universal moral principles are compatible with each other, Kantian honor can remain compatible with the rule of law even when it motivates citizens to disobey some particular laws so as to fight disrespect.

In Chapter 6, I conclude this dissertation with a brief discussion of the relevance of honor to civic responsibility in liberal democracies today and with some unresolved questions about honor for us to examine in the future.

Before moving to chivalric honor, I need to remind my readers of a couple of things that this dissertation is not going to discuss. First, I am not dealing with honor in the social history of the eighteenth century. Consequently, it is not my task to explain in details how the eighteenth-century public actually accepts or rejects various notions of honor. As a political theorist, I examine instead how some of these notions are developed in the eighteenth century and become theoretically compatible with modern society and politics, leaving the topic of the public reception of honor to social and cultural historians. Second, I am not tracing how exactly eighteenth-century thinkers influence the views of honor of each other. To be sure, this is not to deny the attractiveness and usefulness of intellectual history, but a conceptual history of modern honor is not only interesting in itself but also better helps us see how the political implications of honor can reach beyond its narrowest context.

1.4 Medieval Chivalric Honor and Its Legacy

The discussion of honor⁴ can be traced all the way back to ancient Greece, the beginning of the Western history of political thought. Achilles in Homer's *Iliad* is depicted as an angry man loving honor more than his life. The guardian class in Plato's *Republic* is a group of citizen-soldiers motivated by their love of honor to defend their city. The magnanimous man in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* strives to be not only

⁴ For historical overviews of pre-modern ideas of honor, see Jones 1959, 1-122 and Watson 1960, 19-75.

virtuous but also great and honorable because of his virtues. This Greek interest in honor is succeeded in the Roman world, as we can see in Cicero's extensive discussion of honor in his *On Duty*.

However, one historical development foreign to the ancient world essentially alters the landscape of honor and provides the historical context for the modern reform of honor: the rise of Christianity. In its glorification of God, the Christian tradition dismisses mortals' competitions for worldly honor as vain and petty. These vain competitions originate from the love of pride, a sinful self-aggrandizement that blinds mortals from divine grace and renders them evil. This paradigmatic Christian criticism of honor is famously launched by Augustine and succeeded by scholastics such as Aquinas. Throughout the Middle Ages, it never loses supporters affiliated with the Catholic Church.

That being said, Christianity is by no means the only influence on the understanding of honor of the time. For centuries, the Church and its doctrines are in need of secular powers to protect them just to survive. In early medieval Continental Europe, these secular powers, despite differences among them, share one label due to their purportedly same origin: "Germanic." The Germanic tradition is basically militaristic, centered on fighting and victory. This warrior tradition once helps Germanic peoples overthrow the Western Roman Empire and is then strengthened in the ninth

and tenth centuries when waves and waves of invasions of the Vikings from the north, the Magyars from the east, and the Arabs from the south, threaten the security of present-day Western Europe. A set of new socio-political and military institutions, the sum of which is later labeled “feudalism,” thus comes into being, aiming at effectively organizing the Carolingian and immediately post-Carolingian Western Europe so as to fend off these invasions. Feudal societies are characterized by a hierarchy of knights, who fight under the command of their lords and receive support from their fiefs. These are primarily military societies, whose survival hinges on defeating invaders and on capturing new lands and populations, granted to victorious knights in the form of fiefs as their prizes. The love of victory, which motivates combatants to fight and thus always accompanies military cultures, remains intact because of the military nature of medieval societies.⁵

In the meantime, the Church never ceases to claim its moral superiority over the secular powers that protect it. On the one hand, in the face of external threats posed to it, the Church is compelled to acknowledge the importance of the love of victory, a motivation for knights to fight invaders and protect the Church. Thus, it has to soften its criticism of knightly pride and permits fighting for holy purposes. On the other hand, despite its need for secular powers, the Church is also aware that the untamed violence

⁵ For historical studies of the secular origin of chivalric honor, see Crouch (2005, 29-95), Keen (2005, 18-43), and Kaeuper (2016, 63-84).

of knights can easily turn against it. Moreover, following the Augustinian criticism, the Church is not able to completely give up its fundamental rejection of worldly honor as vain and sinful. Therefore, with their literacy and knowledge as leverage, generations after generations of Christian scholars and pastors attempt to modify the warrior honor, central to which is the love of victory. The result of this interaction between Germanic and Christian traditions that lasts for centuries in the Middle Ages is a peculiar code of conduct called chivalry. As David Crouch notes, unlike terms such as feudalism, the notion of chivalry is “not an invention of scholars”; rather, “men once knew it, felt it, explained it to each other and practised it, after their fashion” (2005, 7). It has a real impact on the medieval world⁶, and, as I illustrate in the rest of this dissertation, chivalric honor is the model of honor that all the eighteenth-century protagonists of this dissertation try to appreciate and reform for modern purposes.

I draw on one example to illustrate what chivalric honor is supposed to look like. Geoffroi de Charny, an educated French knight in the fourteenth century, is famous to his contemporaries for his chivalric life and his *Book of Chivalry*, in which he examines “the various conditions of men-at-arms,” the best among whom “go constantly forward to reach and achieve the highest honor” (1996, 85). On the one hand, Charny clearly inherits the Germanic warrior love of victory on the battlefield, claiming that “one

⁶ For a comprehensive historical study of the Christian influence on chivalry, see Kaeuper 2009.

should value and honor men-at-arms engaged in war more highly than any other men-at-arms" (89) and that "it is from good battles that great honors arise and are increased" (91). The measurement of honor, therefore, is "prowess" (103). From honor knights "gained recognition, rise in status, profit, riches and increase in all benefits" (107). The more prowess they have, the more honor they attain. Since the way to learn honor is an education based on imitations and examples (101), the more honorable knights are, the more responsibilities to their peers they shoulder, as "they are closely observed as examples of good manners and behavior" (109). Thus, they ought to maintain their honorable reputation among their peers, and "it is necessary that... in no way can anything dishonorable be perceived nor said concerning" (109) these manners and behavior.

On the other hand, Charny's account of honor is always tempered by the Christian criticism of pride and by his faith in God. While honor is won by one's prowess, "you can see clearly and understand that you on your own can achieve nothing except what God grants you" (133). Thus, "you should first thank and praise Him who gives you these things and preserve them without arrogance, for you must understand that where there is arrogance, there reigns anger and all kinds of folly... You should preserve what you know and the honor you have without arrogance" (133). Those "who are and ought to be supreme among all lay people," therefore, are not the

ones who have prowess alone. They also need to place faith in God to become truly worthy, and “[those who perform deeds of arms more for glory in this world] than for the salvation of the soul, may sometimes gain honor and renown, but the souls will profit little, and the renown will be the briefer for it” (177). As a result, knights should only fight for divine justice, and those “who want to wage war without good reason, who seize other people without prior warning and without any good cause and rob and steal from them, wound and kill them” are people “who use arms in... dishonorable way” (178-9) and who will incur dishonor when they live and damnation after they die (181). A knight must not acquiesce to dishonor that originates from injustice because “he does mischief enough who helps mischief” and “consenters” to these unjust deeds done by others render themselves “not worthy to live or to be in the company of men of worth” (179).

Charny’s *Book of Chivalry* helps us substantiate three features of chivalric honor. First, in terms of its historical origin, chivalric honor is indeed a fusion of Germanic and Christian traditions. While the former contributes the warrior love of victory, the latter provides the criticism of pride.

Second and more important, in terms of its practical effect, because of its combination of the warrior love of victory and the Christian criticism of pride, chivalric honor motivates both spiritedness and integrity. This is what essentially distinguishes it

from its ancient counterpart, which resembles a pure love of victory, exemplified by Achilles' anger. To be sure, that ancient honor resembles a pure love of victory does not mean that ancient thinkers do not criticize this understanding of honor. In fact, for Plato and Aristotle, Achillean honor is definitely not the highest end for an individual to reach. In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates rejects Polemarchus' notion of justice based on an honorable soldier's loyalty to his comrades and hostility to his enemies (332e-336a). Despite his claim that spiritedness is indeed superior to the appetite for sensual pleasure, Socrates concludes that, since honor alone is not able to stop a guardian from tyrannizing his own city, the guardian class ought ultimately to obey the rule of reason symbolized by the rule of the philosopher-king, who is not willing to share the "labors and honors, whether they be slighter or more serious," of his compatriots (519d). In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle proposes three possible happy lives: the life of sensual pleasure, the life of honor and virtue, and the life of study. Like Plato's Socrates, Aristotle firmly rejects the first as a base way of life. While it is debatable whether Aristotle thinks the last to be the best form of life, his doubt on the life of honor is evident. For him, honor is too superficial, as it depends on the opinion of others and thus cannot be self-sufficient (1095b15-1096a10). However, Plato's and Aristotle's criticisms of honor betray their acceptance of Achillean honor as the prototypical honor as well as their belief that honor is by nature problematic. To solve the problems

intrinsic to honor, they rely on means *external* to honor, the most notable of which is reason. In contrast, chivalric honor is supposed to deal with the problems of excessive love of victory by means *internal* to the notion of honor. Whereas the love of victory is a provocative power that motivates a knight to be aggressive toward injustice, the Christian criticism of pride gives rise to humility and serves as a restraining power that motivates him to refrain from becoming himself unjust. In the High Middle Ages, this Christian criticism does not aim to restrain—let alone subdue—honor from without but to modify it and make it self-restraining. This emphasis on self-restraint distinguishes chivalric honor from ancient honor.

Third, in terms of its formal structure, since chivalric honor requires him to set an example for his peers, an honorable knight ought to hold the high standards of chivalry. This means that he ought not only to show sensitivity to the honorable opinion of his peers, which expects him to meet these high standards, but also to remain independent from any unworthy opinion, which expects him to abandon these standards. Both the sensitivity and the independence mentioned here serve one common purpose: to avoid dishonoring himself. Since the opinion to which a knight should be sensitive and the one

from which he should be independent are different, there is little contradiction between the said sensitivity and independence.⁷

With the above three features, Charny's account of chivalric honor paints an idealized image of knight, but, as Richard Kaeuper claims, the notions of chivalric honor found in medieval literature are usually "reform ideas, prescriptive rather than descriptive. We know they do not describe how knights actually behaved" (1999, 156). According to Kaeuper, the Middle Ages are constantly troubled by knightly violence, and the noble ideal of chivalry only reflects the gap between it and the gloomy reality of cruel aggression (1999, 129-88; 2016, 7-24). As a result, it may be questionable how successful the Church's effort to turn violent knights into holy knights actually is. Among intellectual historians, Albert Hirschman's view represents this doubt about the effect of Christian influence on honor: "striving for honor and glory was exalted by the medieval chivalric ethos even though it stood at odds with the central teachings, not only of St. Augustine, but of a long line of religious writers, from St. Thomas Aquinas to Dante, who attacked glory-seeking as both vain and sinful" (2013, 10-11). However, the ideal of chivalric honor must not be understood as mythology completely detached from

⁷ Elster perceptively observes that the idea of honor can be interpreted in two interrelated but significantly different ways. According to the first way, honor is a zero-sum conception in the sense that one either gains honor for oneself at the cost of someone else's or loses one's honor to the benefit of someone else's. According to the second way, however, honor needs not to be a zero-sum conception, as honor is something that can only be lost, not gained (1990, 867-8). As reflected in later chapters, the second way of understanding the nature of honor is crucial to the modernization of honor.

the reality of the life of medieval knights. To begin with, Charny himself is an exemplary knight aspiring to the ideal of chivalric honor.⁸ Moreover, despite the turn toward a secularist interpretation of chivalry in the 1980s among historians of medieval history⁹, what these historians emphatically deny is the romanticized exaggeration of the Christian influence on chivalric honor, not this influence per se. For example, while both Keen (2005, 44-63) and Kaeuper (2009, 66-93) argue that chivalric honor is fundamentally the Germanic love of victory reluctantly modified by Christian doctrines and that knights choose to accept Christian doctrines in a highly selective manner, they also admit that Christian ascetic ideal has an undeniable influence on knightly behaviors and ways of thinking and directs them toward self-restraint. More interestingly, multiple studies conducted by Strickland (e.g., 1996; 2006) and Gillingham (e.g., 2011; 2012) conclude that the cruelty in medieval wars done to enemies and civilians is indeed reduced thanks to the emergence of chivalric honor, thereby confirming the Christian influence on the conduct of knights. Indeed, according to Crouch, accepting a realist perspective on chivalry “is not to admit that clerical influences were of no moment” (2005, 91). Rejecting both naïve romanticism and cynical realism, Kaeuper warns us that “the temptation to hold medieval people to an impossible standard, to see them exclusively in primary colors—admirably bright or depressingly dark—is nowhere more

⁸ For a detailed account of Charny’s life and work, see Kaeuper et al. 1996, 3-64.

⁹ See Crouch (2005, 21-8) for a literature review related to this turn.

out of place than in the study of chivalry” (2016, 20). Instead, he argues that medieval knights should be understood as lay believers, never completely submissive to the Church’s teachings yet never completely independent from these teachings either.

These studies and comments from historians help shed light on an important aspect of chivalric honor seen from a theoretical point of view. In its acceptance of both the Germanic love of victory and the Christian criticism of pride, of both spiritedness and restraint, chivalric honor appears a fragile concept. However, to admit the fragility of chivalric honor is to presume that the two essential components of honor are by nature “dichotomic” in the sense that they are entities completely foreign to each other, unbridgeable with each other, and that any attempt at unifying them will thus necessarily fail.¹⁰ As the history of chivalric honor reveals, however, medieval societies are able to combine the provocative power in the love of victory and the restraining power in Christian humility in creative ways. For centuries, these combinations consistently reflect some important aspects of the practices of people and inspire them to improve their practices. Just as Johan Huizinga in his classic *The Waning of the Middle Ages* concludes his study of chivalric culture, “that reality has constantly given the lie to these high illusions of a pure and noble social life, who would deny? But where should we be, if our thoughts had never transcended the exact limits of the feasible?” (1927, 94)

¹⁰ This understanding of dichotomy is inspired by the distinction that Young (2011) makes between dichotomy and difference.

If honor is indeed a valuable motivation for medieval knights to balance their love of victory and their rejection of pride, to fight injustice and refrain from themselves becoming unjust, and to render them both sensitive to and independent from social opinion, then maybe it can work for modern citizens, who also have the need to balance their resistance and obedience. However, there are many seemingly insurmountable gaps between medieval and modern conditions that must be bridged in order to mobilize the sense of honor in modern societies despite its medieval origin. Historians (e.g., Kaeuper 1999, 298-310, Kaeuper 2016, 121-54, and Keen 2005, 238-49) concur with each other not only on the impact of chivalry on medieval knights but also on the causes of its collapse. Among these causes, two are particularly important. First, new technologies of weaponry emerging around the sixteenth century and new modes of combat that ensue soon render chivalric warfare outdated and chivalric prowess useless. Elitism, which originates from knights' exclusive access to legitimate violence and thus appears intrinsic to chivalric honor, gradually loses its ground. Second, with its increasing power, rising modern monarchies in Western Europe increasingly demand the centralization of power and the monopoly of violence, leading to the irrevocable demise of feudalism as well as of chivalry based thereupon. Moreover, secularization, a new condition that emerges much later than the demise of chivalry, adds a third difficulty to any effort to harmonize honor with the modern world. How can the sense of

honor survive under these modern conditions and keep inspiring people to fight injustice without themselves becoming unjust?

With this question, I conclude this short review of the long history of chivalric honor, which serves a theoretical purpose for this dissertation. Chivalric honor was indeed an ideal, but not one completely detached from the reality of the Middle Ages. It was a way of life that a considerable number of knights indeed aimed to follow. As a motivation, chivalric honor has a tripartite character. As to its historical origin, it is a fusion of the Germanic love of victory and the Christian criticism of pride. As to its practical effect, it motivates restrained aggression toward injustice. As to its formal structure, it is a combination of one's sensitivity to and independence from social opinion. In this dissertation, these three features of chivalric honor serve a vital instrumental role. They help us measure the extent to which any modern notion of honor succeeds in inheriting and reforming chivalric honor in the modern context.

2. Prelude to the Modernization of Honor: Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu

“As the power, so also the Honour of the Sovereign, ought to be greater, than that of any, or all the Subjects. For in the Sovereignty is the fountain of Honour.”
—Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

“My Conjecture concerning Honour, as it signifies a Principle from which Men act, is, that it is an Invention of Politicians, to keep Men close to their Promises and Engagements, when all other Ties prov’d ineffectual.”
—Bernard Mandeville, *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour*

“There is nothing in monarchy that laws, religion, and honor prescribe so much as obedience to the wills of the prince, but this honor dictates to us that the prince should never prescribe an action that dishonors us because it would make us incapable of serving him.”
— Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*

2.1 Introduction

No matter how influential chivalric honor was in the Middle Ages, the rise of modern conditions undeniably undermined its social foundation. From the sixteenth century onward, guns began to shred lances into pieces, and centralized monarchies kept on replacing decentralized feudal aristocracies in Western Europe. In addition, the rise of capitalism seriously challenged the fundamentally agricultural economy that provided for knights. Abandoned by these historical changes, knights could neither win their battles nor retain their fiefs. They thus lost both political authority and the luster that used to distinguish them from ordinary people. Chivalric honor, the value that defined knights, was also under attack. The gap between the nobleness of this ideal and the wretchedness of knights in reality only exacerbated its follies. In the early seventeenth century, Miguel de Cervantes led the mockery of chivalric honor to its

climax. In his *Don Quixote*, the quest for honor was ridiculed as an anachronic farce of a mad man, and even this mad man was eventually able to realize his foolishness.

Moreover, another historical development that further threatened the fate of chivalric honor unfolded almost simultaneously with the fall of knighthood. The Reformation challenged the moral authority of the Catholic Church. To be sure, this challenge did not immediately menace Christianity itself in Western Europe, but it revealed that obeying the commands from the Vatican was no longer necessary. The Peace of Westphalia in the mid-seventeenth century further confirmed this development by legalizing the principle of state sovereignty. From then on, centralized monarchies in Western Europe could justifiably assert its power over churches within its border, thereby expediting their advancement toward absolutism and even unknowingly paving the road to secularism. Chivalric honor thus appeared more outdated than ever, as the defense of the Catholic Church and its doctrines, which used to be an integral part of chivalry, no longer made sense. With the possibility of secularism in sight, it may even be questioned whether the religious aspect of chivalric honor would also become meaningless in no time.

Despite the disappearance of knights, the mockery of chivalry, and the decline of Catholicism, the interest in honor did not die out. In their efforts to develop a modern theory of politics, multiple post-Reformation thinkers attempted to make a case for honor. In this chapter, I will discuss three pioneers: Thomas Hobbes of the seventeenth

century and Bernard Mandeville and Montesquieu of the eighteenth century. Despite their different origins, the theme shared by their thoughts on honor justifies an examination of the three thinkers together. They all aim at defending the political usefulness of honor in and for a monarchy that is particularly modern: centralized, powerful, arbitrating (in a purportedly impartial and thus just way) conflicts among people who are treated more as subjects than as cooperators. Thus, all of these three thinkers can be read as conscious reformers of the chivalric legacy of honor in the modern context. Although none of their theories turns out to be a sufficient reform, their efforts to try and their disagreements with each other serve as a prelude to the modernization of honor that Rousseau, Smith, and Kant truly carry out.

2.2 Hobbes and the Dictation of Honor

No study of Hobbes' idea of honor can be separated from his idea of glory and pride. According to him, the love of glory is not only a major cause of rebellion inspired by the "false doctrines" and examples in ancient literature (*Leviathan*, 368-9; *De Cive*, 138), but also an integral part of human psychology that constantly threatens peace and civil order. The irony in the love of glory is that it ends up testifying to the equality of human beings in the state of nature: all of them equally think of themselves as superior to others and thus are equally vain (*Leviathan*, 184). As a result, pursuing glory in the state of nature is nothing but pursuing a mirage that constantly haunts them, and this vain pursuit leads to mistrust and chaos. To rescue people from such mistrust and chaos,

Hobbes insists that the love of glory of every single individual must be subdued by the fear of the sovereign evidently more powerful than each of them. In the light of this attack on glory, it may appear that, for Hobbes, honor is no less culpable than glory in perpetuating social disorder and thus should be equally subdued. Haig Patapan is the most recent example of scholars who hold this view. According to him, Hobbes' "strong medicine, the depreciation of honor, is needful, he would claim, because it is the only remedy for destroying the seeds of pride or vaine-glory" (2018, 467). In this section, I argue that this confusion of honor with glory is at best partially true and at worst misleading. For Hobbes, honor is not the same as glory, but the admirable sense of honor can even counterbalance the dangerous love of glory.¹

Indeed, Hobbes often speaks of the struggle for honor in the same manner as he deplores the struggle for glory, but he never gives up explicating the difference between glory and honor.² To begin with, glory is a matter of *self-evaluation*—the "Joy, arising from imagination of a mans *own* power and ability." Vainglory is the kind of glory either "grounded on the flattery of others; or onely supposed by *himself*, for delight in the consequences of it" (Leviathan, 124-5, emphasis mine; see also EL, 50). Among these two

¹ The view that Hobbesian honor supports rather than undermines absolute monarchy is common in francophone academia, but in English world, there are only a few interpretations that accept it, such as Fuller 1988. Oakeshott's long essay "The Moral Life in the Writings of Thomas Hobbes" (2000) is another exception defending the positive function of pride to peace and civil order.

² See also Slomp 2000, 38-40 and Bagby 2009, 18-9.

kinds of vainglory³, Hobbes' emphasis is clearly on the second, which "consisteth in the feigning or supposing of abilities in *our selves*, which we know are not" and which "is most incident to young men, and nourished by the Histories, or Fictions of Gallant Persons" (Leviathan, 125, emphasis mine). As "a foolish over-rating of their *own* worth," vainglory is one of the passions "that most frequently are the causes of Crime" (Leviathan, 341, emphasis mine).

In contrast, honor originates from the acknowledgment of *someone else's* power. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes claims that power determines the "value" of a man and that "the manifestation of the Value we set on *one another*, is that which is commonly called Honouring, and Dishonouring" (Leviathan, 151-2, emphasis mine). Elsewhere in *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that "Honour consisteth in the inward thought, and opinion of the Power, and Goodnesse of *another*" (Leviathan, 399, emphasis mine). In *De Cive*, Hobbes' claim is even more succinct: "honour... is simply putting a high value on *another man's* power" (De Cive, 110, emphasis mine).⁴

This difference between glory and honor sheds light on some crucial facts about honor. While glory can be vain because it can exist with no ground in society, honor is based on power dynamics, which are necessarily relational and thus social, and the

³ In *The Elements of Law* (EL), Hobbes calls the first kind "false glory" and the second kind "vain glory" proper (EL, 50-1).

⁴ It should also be noted that the emphasis on the power of *another* in Hobbes' definition of honor in *De Cive* and *Leviathan* is added to the initial definition of honor in EL where honor is simply defined as "the acknowledgement of power" (EL, 48). This revision further reveals Hobbes' intention to differentiate honor from glory.

existence of honor hinges on the weak's acknowledgment of the power of the strong. To be sure, since power comes from a variety of sources such as physical strength, intellectual wisdom, and social status, it is not uncommon to say, for instance, that wisdom is power. However, it must be noted that having such strength, wisdom, or status is not enough to be powerful. According to Hobbes, power is by nature relational, making sense only in the interaction between at least two people. This relational nature of power is made evident in EL: "Because the power of one man resisteth and hindereth the effects of the power of another: power simply is no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another" (EL, 48).⁵ Differently put, only the residue of power that someone still possesses after subtracting someone else's sum of power from his sum is power proper. Since power is relational, honor is also relational. Since power cannot be a purely subjective imagination, honor cannot be such an imagination either.

⁵ See Slomp 1998, 557 for a similar argument for the relational nature of power. Following Strauss, Bagby argues that, "the power Hobbes is referring to [in EL] is power that comes from within—the actual abilities and attributes of the person under discussion" and that "Hobbes' thought on honor had not yet been reduced to seeing it as solely a product of physical power" (2009, 30). This understanding is the basis on which she argues that Hobbes' attitude to honor changes from a mixed one in EL to an "entirely negative" one in *Leviathan* (40-1). According to her, Hobbes still accepts "genuine" honor in EL because at that time he thinks that there are many honorable qualities other than raw physical strength, but this acceptance is largely abandoned when he turns to *Leviathan*, and from then on, honor becomes a matter of competition. While Bagby is right in acknowledging the diverse sources of power, she mistakenly understands the sources of power as power proper and thus thinks that Hobbesian power in EL is something absolute. Thus, she misses the relational nature of power that Hobbes insists even as early as in EL. In fact, Hobbesian honor is *always* a matter of competition because power is always so. According to Bagby (2009, 13-47) and Strauss (1952, 44-58, 114-6), Hobbes in *Leviathan* is disillusioned with honor because of its relational nature that he does not realize when writing EL. I think instead that Hobbes' appreciation of honor has to be understood when we take his relational understanding of power and honor into account.

Being the acknowledgment of someone else's power, honor, in contrast to glory, is a sign of deference, and such deference is important to a peaceful relationship between two individuals, as it overrides their desire to glorify themselves and look down upon others. This is best illustrated in Hobbes' depiction of vainglorious individuals, who, in the face of danger, "will rather hazard their honour... than their lives" (Leviathan, 164) because their confrontation with a stronger power exposes them to their own weakness and fragility. They thus submit to that power, forfeiting their own honor, either real or presumed, in exchange for their lives. As Hobbes puts it, "To obey, is to Honour; because no man obeyes them, whom they think have no power to help, or hurt them" (Leviathan, 152). Therefore, while the love of glory blinds individuals to the power of others as well as of their own, the sense of honor opens their eyes to the reality of power dynamics between themselves and others.

This understanding of honor holds even truer in the relationship between the sovereign and its subjects. In principle, nothing forbids individuals in the state of nature from honoring each other. However, given the roughly equal natural power of every single individual, there is hardly anyone that deserves being honored. Since the honorable person has to be the one who has superior power, God "Almighty" shall be the first receiver of all the honors from human beings (Leviathan, 399-407). Leviathan, the artificial demi-God, the "King of the Proud" (Leviathan, 362), ranks second. By showing deference to the sovereign, subjects acknowledge its superiority over every

single one of them and give up the claim to their own glory. Thus, the sense of honor, i.e., the sense of the superior power of others, is a psychological basis for their obedience to the state.

So far, I have only discussed the sense of honor from the perspective of the weak. If we adopt the perspective of the strong, then it turns out that the sense of honor motivates honorable people to refrain from perpetuating the state of nature, which is exactly the opposite to what the love of glory inspires. Hobbes claims that the “Laws of Honour” play the role of the laws of nature where the sovereign power is absent. These laws of honor demand individuals “abstain from cruelty, leaving to men their lives, and instruments of husbandry” even when individuals grouping together into small bandit communities think of successful robbery as an honorable deed (Leviathan, 224).⁶ The basis for this claim is not casual anthropological observations. In EL, Hobbes explicates the reason that the laws of honor necessarily rule the state of war:

“For nothing but fear can justify the taking away of another’s life. And because fear can hardly be made manifest, but by some actions dishonourable, that bewrayeth the conscience of one’s own weakness; all men in whom the passion of courage or magnanimity have been predominated, have abstained from cruelty; insomuch that though there be in war no law, the breach whereof is injury, yet there are those laws, the breach whereof is dishonour. In one word, therefore, the only law of actions in war is honour, and the right of war providence” (EL, 104).

⁶ Strauss claims that, “what [Hobbes] formerly esteemed as ‘honour’ [in EL] he has now [in Leviathan] detected as fundamentally unjust and a pretext for injustice” (1952, 114). This claim is plainly wrong as it completely misses Hobbes’ positive assessment of honor such as the one cited here.

According to this explanation, since honor is a sign of one's superior power, and since what motivates an individual to kill another is the fear of being killed, an honorable individual who possesses superior power and thus does not fear others has no need to kill another. Being cruel to others is a sign of fear, a sign of the lack of superior power. A truly honorable individual necessarily refrains from cruelty.⁷

To summarize, in contrast to glory, a psychological source of rebellion, honor is conducive to peace and civil order in two ways. First, individuals who honor the sovereign recognize its superior power and submit to its jurisdiction. Second, genuinely honorable individuals are free from the vicious circle of mutual fear and mistrust and therefore are able to refrain from showing cruelty to others. However, these two effects of honor conducive to peace and civil order are not necessarily in harmony. On the one hand, if genuinely honorable individuals submit to the superior power of the sovereign, then their own power is reduced to nothing, and their honor is nullified. This total submission to the sovereign is the exact aim that Leviathan, with which "nothing... on earth [can] be compared" (Leviathan, 362), is supposed to achieve. But as its result, the sovereign may no longer benefit from the restraining effect on individuals that honor produces. On the other hand, if genuinely honorable people do perceive themselves as honorable, then they no longer, nor have to, see themselves and others as equals, but

⁷ We may even speculate that the reason why Hobbes never seems to worry about an absolute monarch abusing his power has something to do with this understanding of power and honor. With the greatest power, an absolute monarch is most honorable and has no need to fear any subjects of his. He thus has no need to abuse his power because such abuse is just a sign of his insecurity.

such inequality marks nothing but the beginning of the end of any civil order, as it opens the door to vainglorious imposters who groundlessly believe themselves to be honorable. This is why Hobbes' prescription against "pride" in the laws of nature is that everyone ought to "acknowledge others for his Equall by Nature" even if "Nature have made men unequall" (Leviathan, 211; see also De Cive, 50; EL, 93). For some scholars, this consistent prescription against pride is even seen as his "logic for rejecting honor as not socially and politically useful" (Bagby 2009, 32).

Hobbes harmonizes the above two effects of honor in the following way: the state shall first centralize and then redistribute honor to its subjects according to how well they obey the sovereign and its laws. Since the power of the sovereign is greater than any of its subjects, "so also the Honour of the Sovereign, ought to be greater, than that of any, or all the Subjects. For in the Sovereignty is the fountain of Honour" (Leviathan, 238). As this "fountain of honour," the sovereign rewards his subjects with honor and enforces the laws of honor (Leviathan, 235-6). Thus, the honor of subjects is premised on the acknowledgment of the authority of the sovereign and is based on civil instead of natural inequality, which the sovereign creates and legitimizes, and which always remains under his control (Leviathan, 385). It motivates honorable individuals even to benefit and help inferior people, and when they do harm to the commonwealth, their honor only exacerbates the extent of their crimes and incurs severe punishment because, given the power that the sovereign grants them, "they have least need to

commit" these crimes (Leviathan, 386). As to who deserves this honor, Hobbes makes it very clear in *De Cive* by citing Horace: "Good men are those who respect the decisions of the senate, and respect laws and rights" (De Cive, 148).

As a result, Hobbesian honor cannot be a satisfactory reform of chivalric honor. To be sure, from Strauss to Bagby, it is widely accepted that Hobbes' account of honor deviates from the medieval tradition of chivalry. I agree with their conclusion, but for completely different reasons. On the one hand, according to them, Hobbes reduces everything to a matter of power and thus abandons qualities innate to an individual as an independent measurement of honor. Honor is thus in effect identical to glory despite apparent differences between them, as they both motivate the struggle for power and undermine peace and civil order. In the light of my account of chivalric honor in the previous chapter, these scholars would argue that Hobbes rejects honor because his version is fundamentally the Germanic love of victory that the Christian criticism of pride fails to restrain, but an account of honor that refuses to accept fusing the Germanic and Christian traditions cannot be chivalric. On the other hand, according to my analysis, pitting honor against glory for the sake of peace and civil order, Hobbes attempts to impose the Christian criticism of pride on the Germanic love of victory and thus to enable the sovereign to subdue the latter. His account of honor is un-chivalric because it plainly rejects the love of victory as an essential part of chivalric honor, and this un-chivalric honor is exactly what he wants to cultivate in an absolute monarchy. As

the history of the seventeenth century unfolds, in practice, the Hobbesian proposal to reform honor indeed favored absolute monarchs and served them as a way to weaken aristocrats and strengthen the power of their own. Louis XIV of France, for example, was famous for luring aristocrats away from their land to the grandeur of Versailles, thereby taking away their power and rendering their honor and dignity dependent on the will of the monarch.⁸ Hobbesian honor, far from being a source of rebellion and disorder, helped the rising centralized monarchy to perpetuate the obedience of its subjects. Therefore, the danger of Hobbesian honor, far from causing the excessive resistance of subjects to the state, is causing their excessive obedience. In the next two sections, I show that both Mandeville and Montesquieu refuse to accept an honor that is unable to help strike a balance between obedience and spiritedness.

Nevertheless, Hobbes still helps pave the road to a modernized account of honor. First, Hobbes insists on the political usefulness of honor in an absolute monarchy, thereby providing us with a reason to believe that honor may survive in a modern world despite the death of feudalism. Second, Hobbes undermines the theoretical basis for the elitism intrinsic to chivalric honor, as he renders every single individual fundamentally equal in the state of nature and designates the imperatives of the absolute monarch as the only source of honor in a civil society. This is not to deny Hobbes' conviction that honor cannot be equally distributed among all, but his theory indeed makes honor

⁸ See Halévi 2011, 112-4 for a similar view.

equally accessible to everyone and thus negates the monopoly of honor by the nobility in the High Middle Ages. Third, Hobbes sets honor free from the Church, whose role in maintaining the restraining power in chivalric honor is now replaced by the sovereign state, powerful enough to keep everyone in awe. This by no means suggests that Hobbes goes so far as to secularize honor, but it is he who makes it possible for us to imagine a notion of honor that may be elaborated in non-religious terms.

2.3 Mandeville and the Manipulation of Honor

Even in the sixteenth century, a century before Hobbes theorizes honor, there is the prediction that honor may favor centralized monarchies and undermine the pursuit of republican freedom.⁹ Similar attitudes toward honor can be found in post-Hobbesian writings as well, such as *Cato's Letters* in the early eighteenth century.¹⁰ But the first systematic account of honor in the eighteenth century is Bernard Mandeville's theory developed in *The Fable of the Bees* (FB) and *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour* (EOH). Although Mandeville shares Hobbes' view that human beings are fundamentally driven by their passions and that honor can be conducive to peace and civil order, his take on the nature of honor is drastically different and reveals how difficult it is for anyone to dictate the distribution of honor.¹¹

⁹ See Pocock 2016, 153-4 for this view pronounced by Lodovico Alamanni, an Italian writer lamenting the decline of military virtue in Florence.

¹⁰ See Pocock 2016, 474-5 for a brief analysis.

¹¹ For a comprehensive account of the difference between Mandeville's and Hobbes' thought in general, see Tolonen 2013, 41-102.

The fundamental difference between Mandevillean and Hobbesian honor is ontological. By defining honor as the acknowledgment of power, Hobbes confirms the reality of honor, as the difference in power between individual and God or between individual and the sovereign is real. Honor becomes chimerical only when equal individuals vainly and mistakenly believe that they are more powerful and thus better deserve honor than others. In contrast, Mandeville insists that honor is nothing other than “the good Opinion of others” (FB, 98), and reputation does not need at all any objective ground such as power. All that is necessary to construct the “reality” of honor is to let people believe in it. In EOH, Mandeville refines his definition of honor. He differentiates two usages of that word. The first is “a Compliment we make to Those who act, have, or are what we approve of,” a way to please the self-liking of others (EOH, 9). The second is “a Principle of Courage, Virtue, and Fidelity” (EOH, 14). While the first usage can be traced to ancient times, the second is “much more modern” (EOH, 14) and “an Invention of Politicians, to keep Men close to their Promises and Engagements, when all other Ties prov’d ineffectual” (EOH, 30). By “politicians” Mandeville means, “All that, having studied Human Nature, have endeavour’d to civilize Men, and render them more and more tractable, either for the Ease of Governours and Magistrates, or else for the Temporal Happiness of Society in general” (EOH 40-1). Either way, honor is an “Art of Flattery” (EOH, 42), utilized to manipulate people. And if our concern is the second usage of honor, the “invention of politicians,”

which is also Mandeville's concern in the entire EOH, then there is no doubt that honor is simply "imaginary" (FB, 98), "a Chimera without Truth or Being" (FB, 212), whose sole purpose is to render individuals "tractable."

It follows that Mandeville and Hobbes see the way to inspire the sense of honor very differently. For Hobbes, what is necessary for an individual to sense honor—either one's own or another's—is to sense power, and what is necessary to sense the power of another is to sense fear. For example, individuals sense the power of God when they fear "power invisible" (Leviathan, 124), and the power of Leviathan when they fear its punishment. In contrast, while Mandeville agrees with Hobbes that fear inspires honor, he decisively rejects the notion that this fear should be ultimately directed to anything external. Instead, honor is inspired by shame, in the fear of which "we are afraid of our Selves" (EOH, 41). That is to say, honor is founded on one's good reputation in social opinion *as one believes it is*. Mandeville even goes so far as to say that honor cannot originate strictly from the *actual* opinion of others. For that would deprive the sense of honor of all its effects on the actions of men. To have these effects, the sense of honor has to exist before actions are taken. If its basis is the actual opinion of others, then honor would exist only after certain actions are done and judged, making it impossible for it to affect actions (EOH, 41-2).

Consequently, Mandeville and Hobbes take completely opposite perspectives on the method for "politicians" to achieve peace and civil order via honor. For Hobbes,

one's honor can be conducive to these achievements only after their love of glory is subdued by their fear of both the cruel state of nature and the overwhelming power of the sovereign. No longer daring to glorify themselves, they submit to the sovereign and accept an honor that the sovereign distributes back to them according to how well they obey him. In contrast, Mandeville argues that politicians must "flatter" rather than subdue self-glorification: "The Invention of Honour... was an Improvement in the Art of Flattery, by which the Excellency of our Species is raised to such a Height, that it becomes the Object of our own Adoration, and Man is taught in good Earnest to worship himself" (EOH, 42).¹² In specific: First, politicians should instill into men's minds the notion that noble men are able to do noble deeds and that noble deeds deserve noble rewards. In this way, men, who are by nature proud, will be motivated to glorify themselves and believe that their nobility is manifested in doing noble deeds (FB, 223-4; EOH, 85-6). Second, politicians should punish dishonorable deeds with ignominy. The fear of ignominy motivates honorable men to refrain from doing dishonorable things (FB, 224). This second step is prepared by the first but more important than the first. By heightening their opinion of themselves, politicians heighten honorable men's fear of themselves. As Mandeville claims, there is no fundamental difference between

¹² The difference between Hobbes and Mandeville here resembles the one that Hirschman makes between "repressing" and "harnessing" the passions (2013, 14-20).

pride and shame¹³ because the more pride one has for oneself, the more shame one suffers from losing pride (EOH, 11-2; FB, 222-3). At its peak, this carefully cultivated fear of one's own noble image even overcomes the natural fear of death (FB, 222). Third, politicians should make it concrete that honor consists of both spiritedness and civility and that dishonor, of both cowardice and barbarism (EOH, 230). The highest ideal for an honorable man ought to be a military man with "a Spirit of Gentility" (EOH, 232). Thus, honorable men aspire to become "gentlemen soldiers" (FB, 229) and avoid becoming less than that. They protect peace and civil order by being aggressive to enemies from without and polite to friends from within, without the consciousness that they are manipulated.

Mandevillean honor helps strengthen one severe weakness in Hobbes' political theory. Since the fear of both the state of nature and the sovereign is ultimately based on the fear of sudden death, the motivation for Hobbesian individuals to take decisive political actions is self-preservation in its narrowest sense, similar to what Mandeville calls "self-love" (as opposed to "self-liking") (EOH, 8-9) and what Rousseau calls "*amour de soi*" (as opposed to "*amour-propre*"). As a result, if what motivates Hobbesian individuals to perpetuate the state of war is their love of glory, which has to be subdued by their sense of honor for the sake of peace and civil order, then it is difficult to see how

¹³ Initially, Mandeville differentiates shame and pride in FB, but he corrects this view in EOH and claims that this differentiation is simply an error (EOH, 12).

these individuals can be driven to take self-sacrificial actions to defend their community in war. Premised on the acknowledgment of power, Hobbesian honor is contingent on power dynamics and may even motivate subjects to abandon their sovereign if he appears to them less powerful than his opponents. In contrast, Mandeville states that “the Valour and Steadiness of Men of Honour are the grand support of all States and Kingdoms” and that “not only the Peace and Tranquility, and all the Blessings we enjoy, but likewise the King’s Crown and Safety would be precarious without them” (EOH, 71-2). By founding honor on an intersubjective basis and turning the sense of honor inwards, Mandeville completely rejects anything objective as the basis for honor. In this way, Mandevillean honor becomes the “artificial courage” (EOH, 60; FB, 223) that motivates individuals to overcome their fear of death and hence their instinct for self-preservation despite the power of their opponents.

To be sure, from a Hobbesian point of view, by showing how honor helps individuals learn to fear themselves and motivates them to overcome their fear of death, Mandeville actually begs the question. When individuals no longer fear death, they are able to bravely fight not only those who threaten the sovereign but also the sovereign himself. Then how can Mandevillean honor be truly conducive to peace and civil order? Mandeville is aware of this problem, as shown in his claim that, “if Man could conquer all his Fears, you would hear of nothing but Rapes, Murthers and Violences of all sorts, and Valiant Men would be like Gyants in Romances” (FB, 229). His answer seems to be a

purely prudential one: it depends on politicians' wisdom. On the one hand, the Catholic Church, corrupt notwithstanding, knows well how to provoke knights' sense of honor and motivate them to protect the Church from kings and emperors (EOH, 48-51, 112-3). Another example of exemplary "politicians" is Oliver Cromwell. He skillfully manages the honor of his soldiers so that it remains a combination of spiritedness and civility (EOH, 231-2). On the other hand, protestants completely fail to make use of honor, thereby letting loose the love of glory in its worst form. Fueled with an uncontrolled love of glory, trivial differences in beliefs breed bigotry and conflicts, leaving Europe in horrendous religious wars for years (EOH, 98-129).

However, behind this prudential answer to the Hobbesian challenge is Mandeville's theoretical concern: To "flatter" the love of glory is neither to subdue it (as Hobbes would love to do) nor to indulge it. Honor, the art of flattery, is supposed to guide the powerful passion of glory to serve peace and civil order. It operates on the premise that this passion is both dangerous and necessary—so dangerous and necessary that both our indulgence in and suppression of it will only end up to the detriment of society and its members. Thus, for Mandeville, the purpose of honor is to inspire disciplined aggressiveness instead of Hobbesian strict obedience. Honor is a compromise between individuals' intractable inclination to attain personal greatness and society's need to maintain peace and civil order among these proud individuals. Politicians may manipulate honor, but they can never dictate it—as Hobbes suggests

they should—because honor by nature motivates aggressiveness *despite* religious principles and laws (EOH, 43, 82-84, 92-93; FB, 232-3).

Combining spiritedness and obedience, Mandevillean honor is much more in accordance with chivalric honor than Hobbesian honor. This restoration of the essence of chivalric honor is the greatest contribution that Mandeville makes to the modernization of honor, as it corrects the tendency in Hobbesian honor that reduces honor to a convenient tool for absolute monarchs to secure the absolute obedience of their subjects. Moreover, Mandeville goes even further than Hobbes in eradicating the religious element in the concept of honor. In fact, in his claim that honor is supposed to motivate people especially when religion fails, Mandeville explicitly secularizes honor.

However, in the eyes of Mandeville, as a compromise between spiritedness and obedience, honor remains highly volatile. Without diligent and smart management, honor can hurt the people who attempt to exploit it. According to Mandeville, an individual who conspires with others to murder their king and who, when caught, does not give away his accomplices is also a man of honor (FB, 212). Mandeville is wary of this possibility that honor can actually turn against the monarch, thereby in effect retreating to Hobbes' position that prioritizes obedience over spiritedness. Moreover, this heavy reliance on the prudence of politicians leads us to suspect that, while Mandeville is often interpreted as a thinker pioneering the idea of harmony between free market and social wellbeing—as reflected in the notorious subtitle of FB, "Private

Vices, Publick Benefits” – the implications of his account of honor are not actually in harmony with this interpretation. Rather, the Mandevillean “market” of honor is a fake market that appears spontaneous to those who are in it but cannot function continuously without the constant interference from prudent politicians outside.¹⁴ Thus, although Mandeville believes that the sense of honor can motivate not only aristocrats but also “Men of the lowest Capacity” (EOH, 44),¹⁵ his account of honor remains elitist. To render honor more democratic, he has at least to show that it can play a positive role in modern politics even when there are no such prudent and superior politicians manipulating it from behind the scene. Mandeville never does this—nor does he appear to want to do so. It is Montesquieu who tells us that, in the face of despotism, a volatile honor that cannot be manipulated—not to mention dictated—by any power need not be a bad thing.

2.4 Montesquieu and the Market of Honor

Montesquieu’s account of honor shares many similarities with Mandeville’s. Like Mandeville, Montesquieu agrees that honor is a compromise between spiritedness and

¹⁴ See Pocock 2016, 465-7 for a perceptive comment on the false consciousness that Mandevillean honor aims to create.

¹⁵ In FB, Mandeville states that “The Excellency of this Principle [of honor] is, that the Vulgar are destitute of it, and it is only to be met with in People of the better sort, as some Oranges have Kernels, and, others not, tho’ the outside be the same” (FB, 212-3), indicating that honor is exclusive to better people. However, he seems to give up this position in EOH, where he argues that the sense of honor can be cultivated through “an artful Education” (EOH, 40, 85-6) and that, historically, “the Notions of [honor], by degrees, were industriously spread among the Multitude, till at last all Swords-men took it in their Heads” (EOH, 51-2). Thus, honor seems to be learnable by a great number of people.

obedience and that it essentially keeps monarchies stable and functioning by motivating the nobility to be obedient to the monarchs.¹⁶ He also understands the mechanism of honor as something similar to the market mechanism.¹⁷ However, as noted above, Mandeville's account of honor only has an appearance of a free market, as politicians hidden behind the scene are always needed to carefully manage the "market" of honor in order to secure their subjects' obedience and thus maintain peace and civil order. In contrast, the economy of Montesquieuian honor is more "marketized" in the sense that, in order for it to benefit a monarchical government, it is less necessary to manipulate—let alone dictate—honor than Mandeville thinks it should be. But to fully appreciate this difference, we need first to tease out the other differences between Montesquieuian and Mandevillean honor.

(1) The first difference between Montesquieu's and Mandeville's accounts of honor, like that between Mandeville's and Hobbes', is ontological. While Mandeville claims that honor has no reality at all and thereby indicates that "true honor" does not exist at all, Montesquieu retains a traditional distinction between true and false honor. According to him, "speaking philosophically," the honor that sustains monarchies is "false honor" (SL, 27) and that a monarchy can "continue to exist independently of...

¹⁶ For the most comprehensive account so far on how honor motivates obedience to monarchy in Montesquieu's theory, see Mosher 2001.

¹⁷ See Spector 2010, 1-143 for discussions of Montesquieu's marketized system of honor. Hulliung even claims that "Mandeville's fable equating private vices with public order was acceptable to Montesquieu with the single revision that it is much more relevant to aristocratic France than to bourgeois Britain" (1976, 29). A similar claim is found in works as recent as Bandoch 2017, 93-4.

desire for true glory" (SL, 25).¹⁸ However, Montesquieu never elaborates on the meaning of true and false honor. Brooke speculates that false honor is false because its basis is aristocratic privileges arbitrarily distributed, whereas true honor is based on achievements that "contribute to the development of the arts and sciences, or in other ways to the public welfare" (2018, 397-8). This speculation, or at least the part on the meaning of true honor, is in conflict with Montesquieu's claim that even false honor "is as useful to the public as the true one would be to the individuals who could have it" (SL, 27). Thus, what distinguishes between true and false honor cannot be whether it contributes to public welfare or parochial privilege. Another speculation is that false honor requires from individuals nothing more than the appearance of virtue, whereas true honor requires them to be really virtuous. This speculation reflects an old criticism of honor that perceives honor as essentially hollow within and thus pointless and is echoed by Rétat (1973). But it is unlikely that Montesquieu accepts it. Take his discussion of frankness as an example. Honor in monarchies always requires frankness from its bearers, and Montesquieu claims that the nobility driven by honor indeed tell the truth. What distinguishes their truthfulness from the truthfulness of ordinary people is that they tell the truth in order to appear fine and great, whereas ordinary people do so just for the sake of "only truth and simplicity" and thus are despised by the nobility (SL, 32).

¹⁸ While Hobbes indeed distinguishes between honor and glory, this does not seem to be the case for Montesquieu. In places like this, he uses these two words interchangeably.

It follows that even false honor in monarchies does not merely motivate the appearance of virtue. Rather, it motivates virtuous deeds in order for its bearers to attain a noble appearance. But from this understanding follows the third possibility to distinguish true and false honor, similar to what Pangle (1973, 68) proposes: in addition to doing virtuous things, true honor requires the intention to be virtuous, whereas false honor is always accompanied by selfish motives such as the desire to appear noble. However, this remains an unlikely interpretation. According to this speculation, true honor is a combination of virtuous deeds and virtuous intentions. Thus, it is hard to tell the difference between true honor and virtue.¹⁹ But according to Montesquieu, virtue requires so much self-denial to the extent that it conflicts with honor²⁰, which he illustrates in his discussion of demotion in an army. His opinion is that, in a republic, virtue requires citizens to accept such demotion if this is necessary for the purpose of the state because it “asks for the continuous sacrifice to the state of oneself and one’s aversions.” In contrast, honor will motivate a citizen to reject such demotion because “in monarchies, honor, *true or false*, cannot suffer that which it calls degradation” (SL, 69, emphasis mine). Therefore, it is evident that true honor cannot be the same as virtue, especially not civic virtue.

¹⁹ “In well-regulated monarchies everyone will be almost a good citizen, and one will rarely find someone who is a good man; for, in order to be a good man, one must have the intention of being one and love the state less for oneself than for itself” (SL, 26).

²⁰ See Krause 2002, 34-8 for an account of the conflict between self-confirming honor and self-negating virtue as Montesquieu understands them.

I propose a fourth interpretation of Montesquieu's distinction between true and false honor.²¹ In the chapter where he discusses the education in despotic states, Montesquieu claims that the despotic prince, "accustomed to meeting no resistance in his place, becomes insulted at that offered him by armed men; he is, therefore, usually moved by anger or vengeance. Besides, he cannot have an idea of true glory" (SL, 59). A despot usually enjoys obedience from others who do not resist him. When being resisted, he not only becomes angry but also feels "insulted," as if his honor is damaged. However, what Montesquieu seems to say here is that this honor at risk is false. For true glory or honor cannot be thought of in the absence of resistance from others, but the superiority that the despot enjoys over his subjects is rooted exactly in the usual absence of challenges raised by his subjects. This superiority is thus unsubstantiated. If we generalize this observation of the false honor in despotic states, then Montesquieu's understanding of true and false honor may be this: honor marks one's superiority, but anyone who thinks of oneself honorable yet refuses to compete with others for the title is essentially holding false honor because true superiority can be substantiated only via competition. True honor understood in this way corresponds to the purest warrior concept of honor: honor originates from victory, and victory originates from fight. A

²¹ Kingston (2011, 149-63) provides a context-based interpretation of Montesquieuian honor different than all the above text-based interpretations. She argues that the text of SL is not coherent because Montesquieu is exposed to competing understandings of honor equally accessible to his contemporaries and his account of honor reflects the competition among these understandings. Despite her context-based interpretation, Kingston nevertheless admits that "a more rigorous examination of the text" (151) may still help resolve some inconsistencies in Montesquieu's account of honor.

purported victory without a fight cannot be truly honorable. This interpretation is supported by Montesquieu's discussion of the point of honor, in which he argues that the custom of validating honor via actual fighting originates from Germanic warrior traditions (SL, 559-60). Moreover, this way of distinguishing between true and false honor applies perfectly well to the situation of the nobility in monarchies. "The nature of honor is to demand preferences and distinctions" (SL, 27). The purpose of aristocratic honor is, and ought to be, to distinguish its bearers from ordinary people even when it demands its bearers to do the same virtuous things as ordinary people may also do (SL, 31). In addition, in a functioning monarchy, aristocratic honor is so systematized as to leave no room for ordinary people to contest it. It is premised on a static society, where social inequalities and ranks persist long enough to maintain the "prejudice" that comes from them (SL, 27). Laws have to render honor hereditary and protect the privileges of the nobility, on which their honor is founded. "All these prerogatives will be peculiar to the nobility and will not transfer to the people, unless one wants to run counter to the principle of the [monarchical] government" (SL, 55). Thus, essential to aristocratic honor is its claim to aristocratic superiority over the people without trying to substantiate this superiority via competition with them. As long as it remains exclusive in this way, aristocratic honor is always victory without fighting, hence always false.

If my speculation is correct, then Montesquieu's distinction between true and false honor brings back to the theory of honor some elements of Hobbesianism, which

Mandeville ontologically abandons. Whereas Montesquieu's idea of false honor corresponds to Mandevillean honor, which is nothing other than flattered narcissism and has no basis external to its bearers at all, his idea of true honor echoes Hobbesian honor, which is based on the difference of power between two parties that can be known only via competition. By accepting both true and false honor in his account, Montesquieu prepares for his disagreements with both Mandeville and Hobbes regarding the political implications of honor, which will become clear below.

(2) The second difference between Montesquieuian and Mandevillean honor follows from the first. It is concerned with the political implications of shame, the other side of the coin. For Mandeville, since there is no need to distinguish between true and false honor, there is no need to distinguish between true and false shame either. Shame, according to him, is "a sorrow Reflection on our own unworthiness proceeding from an Apprehension that others either do or might, if they knew all, deservedly despise us" (FB, 99). Like the judgment of honor, the judgment of shame depends not on whether something is *really* shameful but on whether it is believed to be so. To make others feel ashamed of themselves, we just need to convince them to think so: "We are endeavouring to make them have an ill Opinion of themselves, and raise in them that sincere Sorrow, which always attends Man's reflecting on his own Unworthiness. I desire, you would mind, that the Actions which we thus condemn as vile and odious, need not to be so but in our own Opinion" (EOH, 10). Thus, Mandeville finds the fear of

shame to be very useful for an army. It keeps soldiers in line as long as each of them believes that their comrades feel it shameful to act otherwise—even if none of them in private finds anything wrong in deserting their squad or colluding with their enemies.

In contrast, Montesquieu evaluates shame with a critical eye and differentiates between two sorts of shame. For him, shame is a motive “that serve[s] as restraints and so can check many crimes. The greatest penalty for a bad action will be to be convicted of it” (SL, 82). Like Mandeville, he agrees that shame is a more powerful penalty than death for soldiers who desert their troop, and he prescribes that “Let us follow nature, which has given men shame for their scourge, and let the greatest part of the penalty be the infamy of suffering it.” However, Montesquieu also notes that not all sorts of shame are conducive to good politics. Immediately after the claim above, he adds that “If there are countries in which shame is not an effect of punishment, it is a result of tyranny, which has inflicted the same penalties on scoundrels as on good people” (SL, 85). By “tyranny” Montesquieu means two things: “a real one, which consists in the violence of the government, and one of opinion, which is felt when those who govern establish things that run counter to a nation’s way of thinking” (SL, 309). What is relevant here is the latter sort of tyranny. Shame as the result of this tyranny of opinion is hostile to moderate states. Since it derives from the opinion that tyrants want to impose on the

nation, it has no root in social opinion, where genuine shame should come from.²² As a result, this shame is essentially false and tends to corrupt the mores of a people, subvert their values, and thereby confuse “scoundrels” and “good people” as they are conceived in social opinion. To maintain a moderate state with liberty, this sort of false shame must be resisted.

(3) From the above second difference between Montesquieuian and Mandevillean honor arises the third. While Mandeville thinks that the political usefulness of honor lies in the artificial courage that it inspires in soldiers and motivates them to defend their monarchies by fighting enemies from without, Montesquieu is clear that honor also motivates the nobility to defend their monarchies by fighting tyrannical monarchs, the enemies from within. Honor is “dangerous” to despotism (SL, 28) because it rejects the willfulness and lawlessness that characterizes a despotic state. Specifically, in the light of my previous arguments, honor motivates the nobility to resist false shame imposed on them by tyrannical monarchs who plan to transform monarchical states into despotic ones. Honor, “the prejudice of each person and each condition” (SL, 26), is subject to three “supreme rules” (SL, 34) in a monarchy. The first rule highlights the value of honor over life: “we are indeed allowed to give importance to our fortune but that we are sovereignly forbidden to give any to our life.” The second rule highlights the

²² See Montesquieu’s comment on censorship: “In monarchies there must be no censors; monarchies are founded on honor; and the nature of honor is to have the whole universe as a censor. Every man who commits a breach of honor is subject to the reproaches of even those without honor” (SL, 71).

importance of living up to one's position in society: "when we have once been placed in a rank, we should do or suffer nothing that might show that we consider ourselves inferior to the rank itself." The third rule highlights the conflict between honor and law: "what honor forbids is more rigorously forbidden when the laws do not agree in proscribing it, and that what honor requires is more strongly required when the laws do not require it." Together, these rules motivate the nobility to defend their ranks, along with all the accompanying privileges, with little care about their life and death especially in the face of laws arbitrarily imposed on them. However, in order for these rules to be effective, honor has to have its own basis that supports all its "eccentricities" (SL, 30). Consequently, it relies on a system that perpetuates the ranks of the nobility and differentiates the nobility from the people, in ways explicated earlier in this section, so as for the nobility to defend this system from tyrannical wantonness. Thus, according to Montesquieu, the honor that empowers the nobility not only is, but also has to be, false honor that does not open to contest from the people. Behind the triumphalism intrinsic to false honor is the confidence in one's capability and dignity, which in turn motivates the nobility both to stand up to tyrannical monarchs in defense of monarchies and, alas, to aggressively defend their privileges.²³

²³ See also Brooke's detailed analysis of the nobility's aggressive resistance against tyranny in defense of their privileges. According to him, this "arsehole aristocracy" depicted by Montesquieu, "however self-aggrandizing, might nevertheless be conducive to good government, the defense of liberty and the rule of law" (2018, 406). He and Krause (2002) negate the long-held opinion, advanced by Pangle (1973, 66-9) and Hulliung (1976, 27-38), that Montesquieu firmly rejects monarchy and its ideology of honor. However, the

The consequence of this stance of Montesquieu's is significant, as it marks his decisive difference not only from Mandeville but also from Hobbes.²⁴ For both Hobbes and Mandeville, there is no essential difference between monarchy and monarch. Thus, an individual either obeys both his monarch and the monarchy in which he lives or resists both of them. As a result, the only legitimate use, if any, of the spirit of resistance found in honor is to motivate brave fighting with invaders from without, and honor becomes troublesome to both Hobbes and Mandeville when it is turned against one's own country and its rulers. In contrast, by separating monarchy from monarch, especially tyrannical monarch, Montesquieu shows us that honor can be a motivation for the nobility to correct the wrongs in a monarchy without overthrowing it.

With these three differences in mind, we can now return to the difference between the Montesquieuian and the Mandevillean "market" of honor. Montesquieu claims that, in monarchies, "honor makes all the parts of the body politic move; its very action binds them, and each person works for the common good, believing he works for his individual interests" (SL, 27). Accordingly, and as Mandeville would agree, social

difference between Brooke's and Krause's interpretations is significant. Unlike Brooke, Krause argues that Montesquieu remains critical of false, hereditary honor for its enervating effect on the nobility that may ultimately render them incapable of defending their honor from manipulative monarchs (66). Bandoch (2017) highlights another reason for the necessity of maintaining noble privileges. Without an exclusive access to resources, the nobility easily lose their independence from the monarch, leading to the corruption of their honor (96).

²⁴ See Sullivan 2017, 50-76 for an analysis of Montesquieu's disagreement with Hobbes.

wellbeing in a monarchy is a spontaneous order, arising from the selfish pursuit of honor by its members. However, the major difference between the Montesquieuan “market” of honor and the Mandevillean is highlighted in Montesquieu’s claim that honor “reigns like a monarch over the prince and the people” (SL, 30). This claim illustrates that, instead of being a tool for actual monarchs to freely manipulate the nobility, as Mandeville would like it to be, honor serves monarchies but to a great extent refuses to yield to the willfulness of actual monarchs. Even though honor indeed requires the nobility to obey their monarchs, it “dictates to us that the prince should never prescribe an action that dishonors us because it would make us incapable of serving him” (SL, 33). With multiple concrete examples, Montesquieu even warns monarchs of “misfortunes that have befallen princes as a result of insulting their subjects” (SL, 211). Therefore, honor resembles price, of which every actor in a market, even the most powerful monarch, has to take heed. The “fundamental maxim” of monarchy, according to Montesquieu, is: “no monarch, no nobility; no nobility, no monarch; rather, one has a despot” (SL, 18). Honor, as the “principle” (SL, 27) of monarchies, maintains a political system where monarchs and the nobility check and balance each other out of selfish motives, preventing it from deteriorating into despotism. With this respect, Montesquieuan honor is more democratic not only than Hobbesian honor, which leads to the total submission of subjects to their sovereign and his dictation, but also than Mandevillean honor, which cannot function without

politicians manipulating it from afar. This is a decisive step for the reform of honor, as it improves the compatibility of honor with the modern centralized monarchy by illustrating how honor as a combination of obedience and resistance is able to protect monarchy from tyrannical monarchs. The implications of this step are even more far-reaching, as Montesquieu in effect embraces Lockean, hence liberal, traditions, which make it possible for citizens to spiritedly stand up to their rulers without undermining rules, foreshadowing the transformation of honor as the combination of spiritedness and obedience in a monarchy to honor as the combination of resistance and law-abidingness in liberal democracy.

However, from the perspective of democratic citizens, the limit of Montesquieuian honor is both obvious and odious. While it equalizes monarchs and the nobility, Montesquieu's account of honor alienates the nobility from *the demos*. The honor that motivates the nobility both to defend monarchy and to fight tyrannical monarchs has to be false honor, premised on the arbitrary exclusion of the people and perpetuating a system where preferences and distinctions are hereditary. With this respect, Montesquieuian honor is even less democratic than Hobbesian and Mandevillean honor. Thus, although Montesquieu significantly contributes to the modernization of honor, there is still a lot more to be done.

2.5 Conclusion

Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu carry out the task of reforming the medieval legacy of chivalric honor in an age when knights are long gone and when modern conditions become consolidated. This is a complex task. On the one hand, they need to retain the essence of chivalric honor, i.e., the combination of spiritedness and obedience. On the other hand, they need to modernize chivalric honor by democratizing it, secularizing it, and rendering it compatible with the modern centralized monarchy. This chapter has shown that each of them achieves some part of this complex task but fails in some other part. First, concerning the preservation of the essence of chivalric honor, Hobbes completely fails because he treats honor as the antithesis of spirited resistance, whereas Mandeville and Montesquieu succeed because they acknowledge that honor is and should be a motivation for individuals to be both spirited and obedient.

Second, all the three contribute to the democratization of honor, but in completely different ways. Hobbes and Mandeville, in theory, render honor accessible to every individual, but they stop in front of the monarch and his sovereignty and try to make his subjects either consciously submit to his dictation (Hobbes) or unconsciously submit to his manipulation (Mandeville). In contrast, Montesquieu marketizes the mechanism of honor and breaks the barrier between the nobility and their monarch—but at the cost of consolidating the barrier between the nobility and the people.

Third, the most successful reform that all the three achieve is the secularization of honor. The restraining power in chivalric honor used to come from the doctrines of the Church. Hobbes replaces these doctrines with the overwhelming power of the sovereign; Mandeville, with the fear of shame; and Montesquieu, with established mores. Thanks to them, their successors no longer have to take pains to tackle the issue of secularization.

Finally, all the three try to show the political usefulness of honor in defense of a modern centralized monarchy, but the most meaningful breakthrough should be attributed to Montesquieu. For both Hobbes and Mandeville, there is no difference between defending a monarchy and defending its monarch. In contrast, for Montesquieu, monarchy and monarch can be distinguished from each other, making it theoretically possible for honorable individuals to resist tyrannical monarchs without undermining monarchy and thus opening the door for them to resist injustice without undermining the rule of law in future liberal democracies.

Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu indeed fail to modernize honor, but they fail gloriously, as they point out the direction for the modernization of honor that their successors will follow. The next few chapters will recount the stories of these successors.

3. Rousseauian Honor in the Face of Disrespect

"The firmest of men is not in a position to prevent someone from insulting him, but he is in a position to prevent anyone's boasting for long of having insulted him."

— Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*

3.1 Introduction

Mandeville and Montesquieu follow Hobbes in seeking to reform honor in the modern context but correct the tendency in Hobbes' theory that treats honor as a motivation solely for obedience. However, their reform efforts remain at best partially successful, as they both stick to some ideas about honor that were suspended in the modern world. In this chapter, I argue that it is Jean-Jacques Rousseau who develops their theories and truly initiates the eighteenth-century modernization of honor.

There are few scholarly writings on Rousseauian honor (Trousson et al. 1996, 418-9; Welsh 2008, 127-37; Spector 2011; Johnson 2012, 137-178) or relevant concepts such as heroism (Cameron 1984; Kelly 2003) and the sense of dignity (Stewart 2017), and none of them situates it in its broader historical and theoretical context. Thus, this chapter is one of the pioneering works in the study of Rousseauian honor and its place in the history of political thought.

The rest of this chapter consists of four parts. Section 3.2 forms the first part, in which I clarify the difference between honor and glory in Rousseau's works so as to show that the former cannot be reduced to the latter but must be treated independently.

In the second part of this chapter, which consists of Sections 3.3 and 3.4, I examine Rousseau's motive behind his modernization of honor. In Section 3.3, I reconstruct Rousseau's most focused treatment of honor in his *Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre*. In his discriminating defense of honor, Rousseau reveals his ambition both to restrain the violence associated with honor and to democratize honor thoroughly. While the former ambition keeps him in line with the tradition of honor passed down from the Middle Ages via Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu, the latter decisively distinguishes him from them. In Section 3.4, I explain the role that honor can play in a democratic society. This explanation is based on Rousseau's general assessment of the nature of human society found mainly in the *Second Discourse* (SD) and concludes that honor is necessary for individuals to regulate their desire for esteem, which is intrinsic to socialized individuals and unavoidably frustrates them with disrespect, either real or imagined.

Sections 3.5 and 3.6 form the third part of the chapter, in which I study *Emile* and its sequel, *Emile and Sophie* (EAS), to illustrate what Rousseau's modernized honor looks like and how it is able to motivate individuals to deal with disrespect in a proper way. In Section 3.5, I illustrate the two aspects of Rousseauian honor. On the one hand, in this modernized sense of honor, we find a sense of independence from social opinion, which prevents the feeling of being disrespected from becoming resentment. On the other hand, Rousseau also believes that an honorable individual ought to remain sensitive to

social opinion and firmly respond to disrespect from others. Section 3.6 explains how these two seemingly conflicting aspects of honor—a sensitivity to social opinion and an independence precisely from social opinion—can be integrated into a single whole. To this end, I examine Rousseau’s depiction of Emile in EAS, whose honor motivates him to give a principled response to Sophie’s disrespectful betrayal.

Section 3.7 is the fourth and last part of this chapter, in which I conclude my examination of Rousseauian honor. While Rousseau indeed advances the modernization of honor more than his predecessors do, his theory risks depoliticizing honor and leaves us wondering if Rousseauian honor is a sufficient motivation for modern individuals to stand up to injustice in the political context.

3.2 Honor and Glory

Before reconstructing Rousseau’s account of honor, it is imperative to distinguish it from his account of glory. At first glance, honor and glory do not seem very different from each other, as both can be understood as the high esteem that people strive to acquire from others. Furthermore, given Rousseau’s extensive discussion of glory in his distinctively political works such as *Social Contract*, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, and *Plan for Constitution for Corsica*, it even appears that the notion of honor can be subsumed under the notion of glory. Accordingly, honor may not seem to deserve our particular attention.

This view, however, fails to notice the difference between honor and glory in Rousseau's works. While honor and glory indeed share a family resemblance, each is used by Rousseau to grapple with a distinct problem. On the one hand, Rousseau's discussion of glory focuses on the survival and prosperity of a political community, whose members are seen as citizens. The very nature of the works in which this discussion takes place is sufficient to illustrate this view. The citizens, or would-be citizens, of Poland, Corsica, and the ideal republic need national glory as a common bond to unite them. Their pride for being members of their own community sustains their mutual identification and thus purges them of their craving for domination over each other. Glory, therefore, perpetuates the condition for a society not to fall into corruption from within. Yet such a perpetuation requires the perpetuation of other conditions that make sanguine glory possible. For example, the community has to have a self-sufficient agricultural economy so as to be immune to the corruptive effect of commerce. It is even better if this community is not only poor but also geographically isolated so that it does not have to get involved in international affairs but remains independent of other countries.¹ Without these conditions, glory easily deteriorates into vanity and resentment.

On the other hand, Rousseau's discussion of honor is based on different premises. As to be seen later in this chapter, honor applies to individuals who have to

¹ See Plattner 1997, 191-4 for a fuller explanation.

deal with each other in ordinary lives not as fellow citizens but simply as private individuals. Even if an entire community shares a particular code of honor, the purpose of this code is to arbitrate when conflicts among individuals arise. Honor, therefore, is realistically premised on the potentiality of conflict. While glory is supposed to maintain harmony among individuals in order to eliminate conflict, honor teaches them what to do exactly when conflict among them is inevitable. In this sense, honor is much more relevant than glory to an investigation into human conducts in a non-ideal world.

Moreover, Rousseau's account of honor is premised as much on conflict as on the inconstancy of human life. It aims to keep an individual as much to oneself as possible despite the fact that one's fate is not completely under one's control. *Emile*, in which Rousseau presents an exemplar of his ideal of honor, is written for readers who live on the brink of profound social transformation: "Are the blows of fate so rare that you can count on being exempted from them? We are approaching a state of crisis and the age of revolutions" (Emile, 194). As we shall also see in this chapter, because of his sense of honor, Emile is tuned to live such a life, a life in which unexpected disrespect is bound to be abundant. In contrast, glory requires the perpetuation of other social conditions so as to perpetuate harmony. But given the inconstancy of human life, it appears questionable whether the perpetuation of glory's conditions is possible.

Despite similarities between them, Rousseauian honor is not glory. To investigate what motivates an individual to combat disrespect without abandoning one's

principles, we should pay attention to Rousseau's nuanced account of honor, which is designed precisely to tackle the fatefulness of disrespect.²

3.3 Rousseau's Reform of Honor and His Motive

Having clarified the difference between honor and glory, my investigation into Rousseauian honor turns to *D'Alembert*, in which Rousseau provides his most concentrated treatment of honor that best reveals his intention.³ At the end of this section, it becomes clear how Rousseau's account of honor differs from Hobbes', Mandeville's, and Montesquieu's and thus why he, instead of the other three, should be seen as the person who truly initiates the modernization of honor.

The point that Rousseau wants to make in his discussion of honor in *D'Alembert* is that social opinion, from which honor arises, is a more powerful ruler of the conduct of individuals than force and law. According to him, "If our habits in retirement are born of our own sentiments, in society they are born of others' opinions. When we do not live in ourselves but in others, it is their judgments which guide everything" (D'Alembert, 67). In claiming so, however, Rousseau does not want to argue that whatever the prevalent public opinion judges to be honorable ought to be revered as the

² However, this distinction between honor and glory does not distinguish honor from heroism. On the contrary, it highlights that honor and heroism are indeed equivalent to each other. In this chapter, I occasionally refer to Rousseau's discussion of heroism to support my arguments on honor.

³ Céline Spector also discusses Rousseau's account of honor in *Julie* where Julie tries to persuade St. Preux to accept the stupidity and uselessness of dueling for honor. Spector admits, however, that the account of honor and public opinion in *D'Alembert* is more complex, which "is here no more an object... of a simple critique" (2011, 134).

truly honorable. Instead, he wants to show, firstly, how difficult it can be to change the prevalent public opinion even if people are coerced to do so, and, secondly, what is the right way to reform a particular code of honor when that code is no longer fitted for new social conditions.

Rousseau uses honor in duels as his example. While France established the tribunal of the marshals as the institution to suppress the practice of dueling, the prevalent social opinion still held highly of duels as gentlemen's way to defend their honor in the face of offenses. Rousseau argues that, in order to make the tribunal effective, we have to learn the nature of honor first and then try to reform it accordingly: "neither reason, nor virtue, nor laws will vanquish public opinion, so long as the art of changing it has not been found" (D'Alembert, 69). To "change the point of honor by violence" only compromises the political authority that wants to change it, and renders laws contemptible (D'Alembert, 73).

Why so? Because honor is linked to bravery (D'Alembert, 73), and if an offended person himself does not do anything to defend his honor, he will appear a coward in the eyes of others and thus become disgraced. Even if the political authority forcefully intervenes to protect the honor of the offended, it cannot wipe out the disrepute associated with the dishonored person. What is worse, taking advantage of the power of others is a further proof of his lack of bravery: "the man, passing then for a poltroon who wants to be honored by force, will be only the more despised" (D'Alembert, 68-9).

Finally, even if people no longer feel it necessary to get revenge on those who offend them, “it is not the same when the honor of persons is attacked with whom our own is connected” (D’Alembert, 69). That is to say, if our parents, siblings, or companions are insulted, it looks dishonorable if we do nothing on their behalf.

Thus, there are strong motivations in honor that prevent both coercion and reason from weakening it,⁴ and Rousseau provides accordingly four suggestions to the tribunal in order to effectively reform the code of honor and abolish the practice of dueling. The first three are very straightforward. First, the tribunal must detach itself from the use of force. Even its name must be changed to “Court of Honor” so as to eliminate the hint of coercion in the word *tribunal*. Neither corporeal punishments nor fines ought to be imposed on those who act dishonorably. Lack of honor must be met only with disgrace (D’Alembert, 67-8). Second, judges of the tribunal must themselves be honorable individuals, who have real authority over people when judging what is honorable and not, because they are revered as embodiments of honor and their judgments thus appear more likely to be in accordance with what honor requires of people (D’Alembert, 68). Third, it follows that the tribunal, along with all of its judges, must appear to be subject to the same code of honor as the one accepted by public opinion. No attack on honor is permitted, even in the indirect form of religious

⁴ The same theme appears again in the chapter on Roman censorship in *Social Contract* (SC, 141-2).

preaching or secular reasoning against it, because that will only distance the tribunal from public opinion and hence weaken the authority of the tribunal (D'Alembert, 68-9).

What would the tribunal do, if it did adopt these three suggestions? Rousseau speculates that, by accepting the authority of the public opinion on honor and dishonor, the tribunal would firstly centralize the judgment of what counts as honorable and dishonorable. It would not forbid all duels. Rather, it would respect and permit them, so as to instill in public opinion that the tribunal is the only legitimate judge of honor. Private duels without the permission of the tribunal would little by little become unfashionable: "By this means, all secret challenges would surely have fallen into disrepute, since, honor offended being able to defend itself, and courage being able to show itself on the field of honor, those who had hidden themselves to fight would have been quite justly suspect, and those whom the Court of Honor judged to have fought badly would have been turned over to the criminal courts as vile assassins" (D'Alembert, 70). Having centralized the judgment of honor and acquired the authority over public opinion exactly by submitting to it, the tribunal would then tighten its grip on duels, "until the legitimate occasions had been reduced to nothingness, the point of honor had changed principles, and duels were entirely abolished" (D'Alembert, 70-1).

I am not going to assess the feasibility of Rousseau's specific plan to reform honor in duels. What appears more interesting is the spirit of his plan: centralizing the judgment of honor so that no single individual can claim himself to be the judge of his

own honor. At first glance, this appears the Hobbesian way to render honor innocuous to peace and civil order, i.e., making people transfer their private judgments of honor to their monarch until their honor hinges completely on his will. Yet Rousseau claims exactly the reverse: his suggestions on reforming honor in duels aim “to rid the public of an idea rather difficult to do away with... which is, that in the affairs which pass before them, they follow less their own sentiment than the will of the prince” (D’Alembert, 70). Rousseau wants people to *feel* that they are willingly defending their own honor, even if the judgment of honor *is* gradually concentrated in the hand of the tribunal. It follows that, while a Hobbesian monarchy forces its subjects to give up their private judgments of honor, a Rousseauian monarchy manipulates them to do so by means of propaganda.

Thus, Rousseau’s account of honor appears more similar to Mandeville’s than Hobbes’. Both Rousseau and Mandeville prefer the manipulation⁵ instead of the dictation of honor, and the motive behind this preference is similar. As seen in the previous chapter, Mandeville rejects Hobbesian honor, which renders individuals completely submissive to their monarch and results in the loss of their spiritedness. Instead, he appreciates the spiritedness that honor can motivate in individuals and wants to strike a balance between this spiritedness and the obedience to the monarch. This is particularly true in Mandeville’s explication of France’s attempt at abolishing

⁵ As Shklar (1985, 127-64) and Grant (1997, 102-41) point out, the hidden authority manipulating instead of following public opinion is essential to Rousseau’s solution to social and political problems.

dueling, the exact topic that Rousseau discusses in *D'Alembert*: "The Difficulty they labour'd under was, that they would abolish the Custom of Duelling without parting with the Notions of Honour; destroying of which must have been certain Ruin to a warlike Nation, that once had received them" (EOH, 65). Likewise, Rousseau believes that the manipulation of honor is the way for the French not only to purge honor of "the wildest and most barbarous opinion which ever entered the human mind, namely, that bravery can take the place of all the duties of society" (*D'Alembert*, 73), but also to avoid undermining the notion of honor itself. This motive is illustrated in an interlude between his first three suggestions to the tribunal and the last: "In truth, all this effort did not have to be taken, but also a useless institution was founded" (*D'Alembert*, 71). That is to say, the tribunal was not even necessary at all, because in reality, the change of opinion on honor in duels "comes from entirely different causes" (*D'Alembert*, 71) than the establishment of the tribunal. According to Céline Spector's analysis, Rousseau's denial of the usefulness of the tribunal marks his pessimism about the possibility of changing the point of honor by openly confronting the ideology of the nobility. Rousseau claims that "If duels are rarer today, it is not because they are despised or punished, but because the mores have changed" (*D'Alembert*, 71). What he witnesses in reality is that "after so many ill-conceived pains, any gentleman who does not get satisfaction for an affront with sword in hand is no less dishonored than before" (*D'Alembert*, 71). Whether the tribunal was there or not, therefore, made no difference in

changing the public opinion on duels. Thus, according to Spector, if the tribunal really wanted to make a difference, it would have to follow this public opinion, “at least for a time,” that treats “duel as act of independence, honor as ideology of resistance,” and then secretly sabotage this ideology from within (Spector 2011, 136). While Spector’s portrayal of Rousseau’s reform of honor acknowledges its manipulative aspect, her Rousseau appears similar to Hobbes in that they both ultimately aim to eradicate the “ideology of resistance.” However, Spector misses Rousseau’s criticism embedded in his explanation of the real reason that duels lost favor. As indicated in the quotes above, this loss of favor is not because people came to believe that duels were dishonorable, but because they became indifferent to honor. While it is a change for good if people no longer think that they have to respond to an affront with a sword, it is an entirely different thing if they no longer think that they have to respond to affront at all. In his most sarcastic tone, Rousseau claims that “In this age of enlightenment, everyone knows how to calculate to the penny the worth of his honor and his life” (D’Alembert, 71n).⁶ Honor, accordingly, becomes something exchangeable with interest, which is nothing but a sign of the softness and shamelessness of modern men. Therefore, the unregulated flow of public opinion in a corrupted modern society leads to the extinction of duels at the cost of honor itself, and Rousseau’s point is that, while it is right to restrain the

⁶ On the tension between honor and interest, see also Rousseau’s claim in a piece of his unfinished writings: “As much as virtue, honor, even honors and praise, raise up the heart, pecuniary rewards debase it” (Political Fragments, 36-7).

violence in honor, honor itself ought to be preserved. It cannot be something to which reformers must temporarily acquiesce so as to eliminate once and for all.⁷

Despite the similar motive behind their reform of honor, Rousseau's and Mandeville's accounts of honor are remarkably different. The decisive difference between the two is also found between Rousseau and Montesquieu. As shown in the previous chapter, while Mandeville believes that honor ultimately serves the interest of monarchical rules and that prudent politicians should manipulate honor from afar in order to achieve this purpose, Montesquieu claims that honor relies on the distinction between the nobility and the people, a distinction that any monarchy has to maintain so as to defend itself from tyrannical monarchs. Thus, Mandeville and Montesquieu agree with each other that honor fundamentally belongs to monarchy and that a certain kind of discrimination within the entire population is necessary for honor. In contrast, Rousseau's fourth and last suggestion on the reform of the tribunal points to a democratic prospect of honor missing in the works of all of his predecessors, and this is why this fourth suggestion has to be studied separately from the other three. Here, Rousseau prescribes that "no man being able to live civilly without honor, all the estates

⁷ See also Rousseau's direct attack on Augustine's Christian criticism of honor in a piece of his unfinished writings: "I am annoyed by the jokes St. Augustine dared to make about this great and beautiful act of virtue. The Church Fathers were unable to see all the harm they did to their cause by thus tarnishing all the greatest things that courage and honor had produce. By dint of wanting to elevate the sublimity of Christianity, they taught Christians to be cowardly men..." (Political Fragments, 38-9), and another, entitled "On Honor": "The Church fathers claimed to have much scorn for the virtues of the ancient pagans which—according to them—had no principle other than vainglory. Nevertheless, I believe they might have been extremely perplexed to prove such a reckless assertion solidly" (39).

in which one carries a sword, from prince to private soldier, and even all the estates in which one is not worn, ought to be under the jurisdiction of this Court of Honor” (D’Alembert, 71). Accordingly, the Rousseauian reform of honor aims to eliminate the difference not only between aristocratic warriors and ordinary people, but also between monarchs and their subjects.⁸ Rousseau wants both the rulers and the ruled to be subject to the power of honor, which for him is the only way to preserve it: “To limit this competence to the nobles and the soldiers is to cut the shoots and leave the root; for if the point of honor makes the nobility act, it makes the people talk; the former fight only because the others judge them” (D’Alembert, 71). If the tribunal is successful, then “the grandees and the princes ought to tremble at the very name of Court of Honor... [T]he king himself would have been summoned when he threw his cane out the window for fear... of striking a gentleman” (D’Alembert, 72). Therefore, the centralization of honor is not meant to be an authoritarian project for monarchs to manipulate their subjects. Rather, when everyone is equally “manipulated,” “manipulation” simply becomes the expression of public opinion. For Rousseau, the equality in the face of honor essential to his proposed reform of honor reveals that this reform is compatible only with democracy but “entirely contrary to the spirit of monarchy” (D’Alembert, 73),

⁸ To some extent, this democratization includes expanding the scope of honor to women. Rousseau claims that democratizing honor “will never succeed... without bringing about the intervention of women, on whom men’s way of thinking in large measure depends” (72). But perhaps a better illustration of woman’s honor is in *Julie*. As Spector analyzes, Julie dissuades St. Preux from dueling with Edouard by claiming her own honor in the same manner as soldiers claiming theirs (2011, 129).

suggesting that his plan for the tribunal either would bring down the French monarchy (Spector 2011, 138-9), or could never succeed as long as France remained a monarchy.

To conclude, Rousseau's reform of honor is intended to retain the essence of honor in a distinctively modern context. On the one hand, he not only rejects the connection between honor and brutality⁹, but also dreads a modern, "enlightened" society where people reject that brutality at the cost of their sense of honor in the face of disrespect.¹⁰ He thus aims to find a notion of honor that combines the spirit of resistance to disrespect and the obedience to an authority higher than oneself so as to motivate self-restrained reaction to disrespect. Motivating individuals to balance their spiritedness and obedience, Rousseauian honor clearly belongs to the tradition of honor passed down from the Middle Ages via Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu. On the other hand, Rousseau cuts the tie between honor and monarchy and unreservedly democratizes honor. In this sense, his notion of honor is truly modern and distinguishes him from Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu, the three pioneering reformers of honor who modernize honor incompletely.

⁹ Cf. Johnson 2012, Chap. 6.

¹⁰ In *Emile*, Rousseau makes a strong claim rejecting indifference as a path to peace: "If atheism does not cause the spilling of men's blood, it is less from love of peace than from indifference to the good... Philosophic indifference resembles the tranquility of the state under despotism. It is the tranquility of death. It is more destructive than war itself." In comparison to such indifference, Rousseau would rather choose fanaticism, which, "although sanguinary and cruel, is nevertheless a grand and strong passion which elevates the heart of man, makes him despise death, and gives him a prodigious energy that need only be better directed to produce the most sublime virtues" (*Emile*, 312).

3.4 Rousseauian Politics and the Prevalence of Disrespect

In previous sections, I explain the difference between honor and glory in Rousseau's works as well as the motive behind his modernization of honor. However, this explanation leaves one question unsolved. Honor is different from glory because it is designed to help individuals solve conflicts among them, but one reason why Rousseau wants to reform honor is that honor can lead precisely to violent conflicts among individuals. Thus, to restrain the spirited aspect of honor and thus purge honor of excessive violence, it seems better to eradicate honor itself so that people will not fight each other at all out of this vain belief in one's value. To be sure, Both Mandeville and Montesquieu reject this total eradication of honor because they acknowledge the importance of honor in defending monarchy. But this does not apply to the case of Rousseau, who aims precisely to disconnect honor from monarchy. Apart from honor's aesthetic appeal, why is honor so useful in a modern democratic society that Rousseau is worried about its disappearance? In this section, I try to answer this question. One aspect of the answer is found in Rousseau's general assessment of human society: since the feeling of being disrespected is inseparable from human society—monarchical or democratic alike—no individual can be completely indifferent to disrespect but has to live with it, in one way or another.

While portraying Rousseau as a utopian, hence politically dangerous, thinker remains tempting (Blum 1989; Berlin 2014), there is no doubt that this portrayal is no

longer the only canon today. Many scholars have tried with much success to illustrate various pragmatic aspects of Rousseau's political thought.¹¹ In this section, I will follow this path. But rather than arguing that one or two works of Rousseau's or one or two aspects of his thought reveal his pragmatism, I want to point out that Rousseau's vision of politics and society is itself anti-utopian in that he sees disrespect as an inevitable danger inseparable from social life that can only be restrained rather than exterminated, even in a democratic society where everyone is treated as equal.

The *Second Discourse* (SD) is a good starting point. Needs, according to Rousseau, motivate human actions. The reason why needs can be motivating, however, is not found in needs themselves, but in human psychology that always pushes man to meet his needs in order to preserve himself. This psychological force is self-love. Rousseauian self-love has two dimensions: *amour de soi* and *amour-propre*. While the former is man's absolute love of his existence, without comparing himself with anyone else, the latter is his "relative" love in the sense that he cares about his relative position in comparison to others with whom he identifies. While it is reasonable to say that the distinction between *amour-propre* and *amour de soi* lies in different senses of "self" corresponding to them—for *amour de soi*, a narrow self, for *amour-propre*, an extended self—what essentially

¹¹ While Grant (1997, 104-10) argues that Rousseau exhibits in his practical political writings evident pragmatism, Kelly (1987) holds that the highly complex way explicated in *Social Contract* that the Legislator has to follow in order to successfully educate the people is based on Rousseau's equally complex understanding of human nature, thereby painting this symbolically utopian book with a realistic—if not pessimistic—hue. For an opposite opinion, see Shklar 1985, 14-5. She claims that Rousseau's apparent realism shown in such writings as *Poland* "makes it the most visionary, pejoratively utopian, of his works."

distinguishes *amour-propre* from *amour de soi* is comparison. After all, it is comparison (interpersonal ones, in particular) that extends the self. Accordingly, it is *amour-propre* that moves us to meet our need for respect from others. Primitive man in the state of nature driven only by *amour de soi* needs no such respect. Nor does he suffer from the loss of it. He does not care because he simply does not compare. Socialized man, in contrast, because of his *amour-propre* inevitably developed through interaction with the world and through socialization in society, cannot avoid comparing himself with others. Respect from others, that is, the acknowledgment of his value from others, thus becomes constitutive of his perception of his self and hence essential to his happiness that *amour-propre* tries to preserve. Loss of respect from others hurts his *amour-propre*. In order to relieve the pain, he is motivated to revenge so as to balance the pain—not by killing his own pain, but by adding pain to whoever does not respect him. As a result, a society of individuals driven by *amour-propre* tends to become a world of resentment and retaliation.

The above story of man, to be sure, is familiar to readers of Rousseau, who nevertheless differ from each other over its interpretation. The lesson that this story teaches, according to N.J.H. Dent (1989) and Joshua Cohen (1997), is that, in order to maintain a peaceful society, individuals shall pay equal respect toward each other. In this way, *amour-propre* of no one will be hurt, and the motivation toward resentment and retaliation will thus be eliminated. Frederick Neuhouser (2010, 59-70), however,

challenges this interpretation. While he agrees with Dent and Cohen that the lack of respect from others is indeed a source of the "inflamed *amour-propre*" that leads to resentment and retaliation, Neuhouser contends that equal respect cannot solve the problem of resentment because Rousseau's point is that human happiness in society requires not only being treated as equals but also receiving positive esteem from others. I think Neuhouser's interpretation is more compelling than Dent's and Cohen's. For one thing, there is abundant textual evidence in Rousseau's works that supports this reading. In *SD*, for example, Rousseau claims that, "the one who sang or danced *best*; the *handsomest*, the *strongest*, the *most* skillful, or the *most* eloquent came to be the *most* highly regarded, and this was the first step at once toward inequality and vice: from these first preferences arose vanity and contempt on the one hand, shame and envy on the other" (*SD*, 166, emphasis mine). In *Emile*, for another example, Rousseau claims that "the first sentiment aroused in him [Emile] by this comparison [between Emile himself and his fellows] is *the desire to be in the first position*. This is the point where love of self turns into *amour-propre* and where begin to arise all the passions which depend on this one" (*Emile*, 221, emphasis mine). According to Rousseau, individuals simply want to be above everyone else.

If this interpretation is indeed more faithful to Rousseau's works, then human happiness in society will appear almost a mission impossible. Positive esteem intrinsically requires evaluating different persons differently. Without this

differentiating evaluation, esteem becomes equal respect and thus dissolves. Therefore, demanding positive esteem from others necessarily means demanding others to value you higher than them. This demand, however, is impossible to fulfill simply because other individuals, equally driven by *amour-propre*, will also demand positive esteem from you, that is, demand you to value them higher than yourself. The competition for positive esteem, therefore, turns into a zero-sum game: all individuals want to be the champion and refuse to share the championship with others. My *amour-propre* hurts when I am not acknowledged as the only champion. Loss of high esteem and loss of equal respect thus lead to the same mental pain, and while the pain related to loss of respect may be alleviated from without by society-wide equal distribution of respect, the pain related to loss of esteem cannot be alleviated in the same way because esteem by nature cannot be equalized.

Therefore, both types of loss lead to the *feeling* of being disrespected, and here lies Rousseau's unique insight into the nature of social life. Rousseau does not see disrespect merely as something imposed by the disrespectful, something "out there" that can be exterminated as a gnawing bug, but as a feeling within the heart of the disrespected. Even in a society where equal respect is guaranteed, the need for positive esteem and the inevitable frustration of this need are still able to lead individuals to feel as if they are disrespected, thereby perpetuating disrespect even when there is no active, aggressive disrespect "out there." Unlike a few contemporary moral philosophers, who

would argue that the feeling of being disrespected (or any feeling) has no moral significance if it cannot be (rationally) justified, Rousseau is serious about the fact that this feeling, justifiable or not, is long-lasting and can be dangerous to the wellbeing of both society and individuals living in it. Disrespect understood in this way is inseparable from human society, which originates from interpersonal comparisons and leads to more comparisons. Lack of justification for some forms of disrespect cannot alleviate the danger within them. In fact, Rousseau's political and ethical theory is characterized by the task of constraining disrespect rather than justifying and promoting respect. Rousseau wants to build not even a "realistic utopia" (Rawls 1999, 128), simply because he is anti-utopian in that he always keeps in mind social evils and their inevitability.¹²

In the eyes of Rousseau, as long as they live with each other, individuals can never give up their desire for esteem. Even in a democratic society, individuals still have to live with the unavoidable frustration of their *amour-propre*, and honor thus remains necessary for them to deal with the outcome of this frustration—disrespect, either real or imagined. Interestingly, honor is also a type of *amour-propre*, as Rousseau claims, "*amour-propre* is only a relative sentiment, factitious, and born in society, which inclines every individual to set greater store by himself than by anyone else, inspires men with all the

¹² For similar arguments, see Shklar 1985, 1-12. Shklar understands Rousseau's images of utopian societies merely as tools for social criticism. They can never be actualized. Likewise, Melzer refers to Rousseau's attitude as "idealistic realism" (1990, 26).

evils they do one another, and is the genuine source of honor" (SD, 218). But if honor is able to overcome the evils that originate from the desire for esteem, then it has to be different from the desire for esteem in certain ways despite their close relationship with *amour-propre*. To illustrate this difference between the sense of honor and the desire for esteem and how Rousseau envisions the way in which his reformed honor helps individuals tackle disrespect, I turn to *Emile* and its unfinished sequel, *Emile and Sophie*, the life-stories of a young man who, no matter how righteous he is, has to defend his honor in the face of both his own feeling of being disrespected and real disrespect from without.

3.5 *Emile and the Nature of Rousseauian Honor*

The best way to investigate the difference between Rousseauian honor and the desire for esteem is to examine Rousseau's depiction of the kind of people who are driven by the desire for esteem without a sense of honor. *Emile* is full of such depictions, and I will pick the most symbolic one just to make my point. In Book IV, Rousseau portrays a corrupted young man, who, having had his countless desires triggered and satiated, becomes miserable whenever the fulfillment of any of his desires is hindered. No longer able to feel continuous happiness, he is easily distracted and frustrated by the acts and opinions of others: "the disturbing glances of a serious man, the scoffing words of a caustic one are not long in reaching him. And were he despised by only a single man, that man's contempt instantly poisons the others' applause" (*Emile*, 228). For him,

disrespect exists everywhere due to his over-sensitivity, and this over-sensitivity leads him to resent the world: "He covets everything; he is envious of everyone. He would want to dominate everywhere. Vanity gnaws at him. The ardor of unbridled desires inflames his young heart; jealousy and hate are born along with them. All the devouring passions take flight at the same time. He brings their agitation into the tumult of society" (Emile, 229).

What would the man with the sense of honor do in competition for esteem? In Book V, Rousseau's depiction of Emile's jealousy serves as an answer to this question. In competing with other suitors for Sophie's love, Emile is competing for esteem, not equal respect. After all, Sophie can only have one companion, and once she makes her decision, all the other competitors become losers. Emile, therefore, will indeed be jealous of other competitors, and Rousseau does not want to deny this at all. However, Emile's jealousy is not the kind found in the heart of the corrupted young man.

"When he is in love and jealous, Emile will be not quick to anger, suspicious, and distrustful but delicate, sensitive, and timid. He will be more alarmed than irritated; he will pay far more attention to winning his mistress than to threatening his rival. If he can, he will get rid of him as an obstacle, without hating him as an enemy. If he hates his rival, it will not be for the audacity of contending with him for a heart to which he has laid a claim, but for making him run the real danger of losing her. His unjust pride will not be stupidly offended by someone's daring to enter into competition with him. Understanding that the right of preference is founded solely on merit and that honor is to be found in success, he will redouble his efforts to make himself lovable, and he will probably succeed" (Emile, 431, emphasis mine).

While this depiction deserves the suspicion of objectifying women, its spirit still teaches us something important and useful if we read it as an allegory. Emile is aware of

his competitors, but his focus is not entirely on them. He treats them as adversaries rather than enemies, in the sense that he does not locate his own happiness in defeating these competitors, but in attaining his true goal—Sophie’s love. Competition itself does not offend him. On the contrary, it only motivates him to improve himself, rather than actively to destroy the competitors. The cause of this benign jealousy lies not in Emile’s insensitivity to competition and its outcome. On the contrary, it is exactly his sensitivity to that outcome that forms his sense of honor. He takes that outcome as his "honor," and his strong sense of it prevents him from hating his competitors.

Rousseauian honor, therefore, is objective-oriented rather than competitor-oriented. Both the sense of honor and the desire for esteem may put individuals in zero-sum games. However, while the former fixes our sight on what we truly can get from the games, the latter turns our attention to beating other gamers.

The essence of Emile’s education of honor lies exactly in freeing him from concern over his position relative to others. What the tutor does, however, is not numbing his sense of that position, which is impossible due to the persistence of *amour-propre*, but giving him a position that has intrinsic values difficult to diminish. In Book III, the tutor decides to teach Emile carpentry. In this part, Rousseau repeatedly talks about honor, and it is noteworthy that, by choosing carpentry as Emile’s trade, the tutor aims to fight the common prejudice that manual labor is dishonorable, which prejudice endangers men’s ability to stand up against disrespect toward the right thing to do: “If

any man, whoever he may be, is ashamed to work in public armed with a cooper's ax and girded with a leather apron, I see in him nothing more than a slave of opinion, ready to blush at doing good whenever decent people are ridiculed" (Emile, 200). While it is not necessary for Emile to "practice all the useful professions in order to honor them all," by learning carpentry, Emile will be brought to see that these professions are not "beneath" him (Emile, 200). Carpentry is an honorable trade, not because social opinion widely judges it honorable, but because it is a combination of usefulness and taste (Emile, 201). More importantly, manual labor is the ultimate locus of one's self, which, however one's social position changes, cannot be deprived. There, deprived of all of his social positions, "when there remains nothing for him to show except himself, he is not nothing, he is something" (Emile, 195). This independence from others is the basis of Rousseau's two apparently conflicting ideals, good man and good citizen: "A man and a citizen, whoever he may be, has no property to put into society other than himself" (Emile, 195).

True honor for Rousseau, therefore, is associated with independence. Having the self as its basis, the sense of honor is self-oriented, though this does not mean that honor is detached from society. Like the desire for esteem, the sense of honor drives men to attain goals in society and permits men to actively compete with each other. What differentiates it from the desire for esteem, however, is that it never gives away the self to society and therefore never transforms into resentment toward others. In comparison

to the corrupted young man, Emile will be less susceptible to the feeling of being disrespected, and this insensitivity to disrespect is possible only when Emile cultivates a strong sense of honor in himself.

However, even if it is true that Emile needs the sense of honor to fight the devil within, we are still left wondering how he may react to the devil without. In fact, there is an apparent gap between honor in *Emile* and honor in *D'Alembert*, which is reconstructed in Section 3.3. While Emile's honor keeps him to himself and hence prevents him from actively harming others, duelist's honor demands that he defend himself in the face of real insults done by others. Is Emile able to defend his honor when others are really being disrespectful to him? What would he do to respond? Rousseau provides us with two accounts that appear in tension.

First, given Emile's independence from social opinion, it is not difficult to imagine that he simply ignores disrespect from others. In the later part of Book IV, Emile is guided into society, which is full of corrupted youths driven by unbridled desires and mocking those who are not like them. Because of his independence from their opinions, Emile will not be affected. "Who is less governed by ridicule than the man who has no prejudices and does not know how to concede anything to those of others? I [the tutor] have worked for twenty years to arm Emile against mockers. They will need more than a day to make him their dupe; for in his eyes ridicule is only the argument of fools, and nothing makes one more insensitive to mockery than being above opinion" (Emile, 331).

Later on, Rousseau depicts his Emile living in the midst of the corrupted youths: "What people think of him hardly bothers him, and ridicule does not frighten him in the least. The result is that he is always serene and cool and never troubled by shame" (Emile, 336). While Emile "will have the pride to want to do everything he does well, even to do it better than another," being admired "does not appeal to him very much" and "he will hardly seek advantages which are not clear in themselves and which need to be established by another's judgment... still less will he seek those advantages which are not at all connected with one's person, such as being of nobler birth, being esteemed richer, more influential, or more respected, or making an impression by greater pomp" (Emile, 339). Emile is a man so different from others because of his good sense and, inevitably, "one may very well try to insult him by this title" (Emile, 339), but "he will stick to it and always feel honored by it" (Emile, 339). As a result, Emile reacts to insult by doing nothing in return, because his independence frees him from caring about how social opinion judges him. For the sake of simplicity, I call this account *honor as independence*.¹³

Second, as several scholars point out (Spector 2011; Johnson 2012), in a long footnote in the early part of Book IV, Rousseau claims that Emile is not going to be a

¹³ This ideal of honor as independence is reflected also in Rousseau's image of heroes characterized by "strength of soul" (Heroes, 314-6). See Kelly's analysis (2003, 94-5). See also his claim in a piece of his fragmental writings: "A few women will perhaps die for that apparent honor which consists in the opinion of others, but show me one capable of dying for the genuine honor which consists in purity of actions" (Political Fragments, 39).

man indifferent to bully. This is such an interesting passage that deserves to be fully quoted:

“Who is safe from a slap or from being given the lie by a bully, a drunk, or a brave scoundrel who, in order to have the pleasure of killing his man, begins by dishonoring him? That is something else. Neither the honor nor the life of citizens must be at the mercy of a bully, or a drunk, or of a brave scoundrel, and one can no more secure oneself from such an accident than from the fall of a tile. To meet and put up with a slap or being given the lie has civil effects which no wisdom can anticipate, and for which no tribunal can avenge the injured party. The insufficiency of the laws, therefore, gives him back his independence in this. He is then the only magistrate, the only judge between the offender and himself. He is the only interpreter and minister of the natural law. He owes himself justice and is the only one who can render it, and there is no government on earth so mad as to punish him for having done himself justice in such a case. I do not say that he ought to fight a duel. That is a folly. I say that he owes himself justice, and that he is the only dispenser of it. If I were sovereign, I guarantee that, without so many vain edicts against duels, there would never be either slap or giving of the lie in my states, and that this would be accomplished by a very simple means in which the tribunals would not mix. However that may be, Emile knows the justice he owes to himself in such a case and the example he owes to the security of men of honor. The firmest of men is not in a position to prevent someone from insulting him, but he is in a position to prevent anyone’s boasting for long of having insulted him” (Emile, 250n).

We first see from this passage further support to reading Rousseau as an anti-utopian thinker stressing the pervasiveness of disrespect and the impossibility to eliminate it: even if Emile is never going to disrespect others thanks to the delicate education he receives, “one can no more secure oneself from such an accident than from the fall of a tile... the firmest of men is not in a position to prevent someone from insulting him.” Moreover, we see how Rousseau’s thought about honor and duel in *Emile* is connected to what he says in *D’Alembert* published four years before: while

resorting to duel as the way to defend his honor is “a folly,”¹⁴ Emile must not remain silent in the face of insult exactly because of the necessity to defend his honor: “neither the honor nor the life of citizens must be at the mercy of a bully, or a drunk, or of a brave scoundrel.” Contrary to his (lack of) reaction to mockery and ridicule, Emile is going to “prevent anyone’s boasting for long of having insulted him.” Despite the fact that “Emile dislikes both turmoil and quarrels, not only among men but even among animals” (Emile, 250-1), he will not avoid turmoil and quarrels when his honor is at stake, which is “something else” not to be sacrificed for the sake of complacent peace. I call this account *honor as reaction*, again for the sake of simplicity.

The tension between honor as independence and honor as reaction in the face of disrespect is evident. On the one hand, the general theme of *Emile* is about the independence from social opinion, about being true to oneself no matter how Emile’s fate changes in the ebb and flow of society. Therefore, Emile’s honor requires him to be insensitive to disrespect from others. On the other hand, Emile’s indifference to disrespect is never reduced to undignified submissiveness. He will be sensitive to disrespect and defend his honor when needed.¹⁵

¹⁴ Johnson claims that in this footnote, “Rousseau comes down on the side of allowing duels to take place” (2012, 167). This claim is simply inaccurate.

¹⁵ When disrespect is at stake, it can even be said that Rousseau is skeptical of honor as independence because it too much resembles the Christian spirit of submissiveness. In *Social Contract*, Rousseau claims that a good Christian “does his duty... but he does it with profound indifference to the success or failure of his efforts. Provided he has nothing to reproach himself for, it does not much matter to him whether all goes well or ill down here on earth” (SC, 148). In a non-ideal world, such a spirit only benefits usurpers of power, and fighting them “accords ill with a Christian’s mildness” (SC, 148).

This tension is not insoluble according to Rousseau. On the contrary, it is exactly in the solution of this tension that Rousseau shows us how his reformed honor is able to incorporate the sensitivity to and the independence from social opinion into a single whole, and thus to balance the spiritedness and integrity of an individual. His solution is best manifested in the sequel to *Emile*, in which Emile has to deal with disrespect even from Sophie, his beloved companion.

3.6 Honor and Principled Response to Disrespect

Rousseau's *Emile and Sophie* begins with the collapse of the happy life of the hero and the heroine. Suffering from the loss of family members, the couple moves to Paris in hope of diverting their attention from their life tragedies, realizing only too late that this journey corrupts their hearts. The peak of the corruption is reached at the moment when Sophie reveals to Emile that she is pregnant with the child of another man. What follows is a detailed self-reflection of Emile's that at last leads him to his decision: abandon Sophie once and for all.

This entire drama is particularly interesting because it revolves around Emile's honor, rather than Sophie's. While Rousseau indeed links the woman's losing her chastity to losing her honor (Emile, 391), it is not his concern here. Again, like many other notes that Rousseau makes on honor, this one seems to many of us today outrageously paternalistic and outdated. Yet even if betraying one's partner, regardless of gender, is no longer deemed an absolutely vicious act, neither is it held as virtuous.

Moreover, in view of the contrast between Emile's reaction to Sophie's act of disrespect, on the one hand, and the then widely held view that the wife's betrayal is most dishonorable to the husband, on the other hand, Rousseau's discussion here reveals how the two accounts of Emile's honor elaborated in the previous section can be possibly combined and motivate a principled response to disrespect. Unlike Johnson's pessimistic view that Sophie's betrayal suggests Rousseau's self-consciousness of the unattainability of his modernized version of honor (2012, 174), I argue that Emile's reaction to Sophie's betrayal manifests how his sense of honor makes it possible for him even to learn, as Dent puts it, "what it is like to suffer desperately" (1992, 111) and to react to such suffering in the right way, when his tutor no longer holds his hands.

To begin with, Emile confirms that his honor is indeed damaged: "It is certain, I said to myself, that wherever morality is valued, the infidelities of women dishonor the husbands" (EAS, 212). But he immediately turns to question himself why the honor of a man has to depend upon his wife. He questions himself: "Must her misfortune shame him? And can he be dishonored by the faults of others?" (EAS, 212) To make these questions more relevant to his own education, Emile keeps asking himself: "whatever judgment people made of my conduct, if I followed my own principles, was I not above public opinion? What did it matter what they thought of me, provided that in my own heart, I did not cease to be good, just, and decent?" (EAS, 212) Here arises the tension between honor as independence and honor as reaction. On the one hand, having

confirmed that he is indeed disrespected by Sophie's betrayal, Emile believes that he must do something to defend his honor. On the other hand, he doubts whether his honor is really damaged if he remains independent from public opinion, and whether Sophie's wrong has anything to do with his own honor, provided he remains true to himself. To give more credit to his doubt, Emile even says that it "appears to conform better to reason" (EAS, 212)

However, Emile soon removes his doubt by criticizing the apparent reason behind it: "When undisguised passions cannot defeat us openly, they don the mask of wisdom in order to trap us, and it is by mimicking the language of reason that they make us renounce reason itself. All these sophisms deceived me only because they flattered my inclination" (EAS, 213). Emile still wants to believe that Sophie will remain with him, and this wishful thought betrays his "cowardice," which in turn tries to persuade him to believe that Sophie's betrayal has nothing to do with his honor. However, being betrayed is dishonorable once, and tolerating the betrayal is dishonorable twice: "in such a case this failure to punish demonstrates in the offended party an indifference to decent behavior and a baseness of soul unworthy of honor" (EAS, 213). With the doubt dissipating, Emile comes to see an even darker side of his tolerating Sophie's betrayal: "Shall her insult remain unpunished? If the unfaithful woman loves another, what harm do I do her by freeing her from me? I am punishing myself, not her. I am fulfilling her wishes at my expense" (EAS, 215). What follows is

Emile's desire for revenge: "Does injured honor show resentment in that way? Where is justice, where is vengeance?" (EAS, 215)

Yet it is at this moment that Emile's thought turns again. Once he links defending honor to resentment and vengeance, Emile begins to regret his thought: "Wretched man, why do you seek vengeance? You seek to avenge yourself on her whom, to your deepest despair, you can no longer make happy. At least do not be the victim of your own vengeance. If possible, hurt her in a way that will not hurt you. There are crimes that one must leave to the remorse of the guilty; to punish them is almost to sanction them" (EAS, 215). While the thought of justice comes with the thought of resentment and vengeance, Emile disregards it entirely in his further reflections, revealing his awareness that justice here may be nothing more than another "mask of wisdom" that the passion of resentment makes use of to deceive him. At last, Emile makes up his mind. He is still troubled by the thought of his son and the child of another man, but that thought does not distract him from his decision: leave Sophie and be alone again.

Emile's self-reflection reveals to us many interesting aspects of Rousseau's idea of honor in the face of disrespect and how his two accounts of Emile's honor can be reconciled. Like his implicit criticism in *D'Alembert* of the "honor" of enlightened men, Rousseau rejects indifference to honor, claiming such indifference to be nothing but rationalized cowardice. Honor is important, and Emile must care about it and defend it, which is what Rousseau prescribes in his account of honor as reaction. Thus, Emile must

not tolerate Sophie's insulting betrayal. However, defending his honor does not mean that vengeance of whatever kind is justified. First, it occurs only once to Emile that someone's death (his son's) is a necessary punishment to Sophie, and he immediately abandons this anger-driven thought (EAS, 215-6). To defend his honor by something similar to a duel is completely unthinkable to him. More importantly, vengeance is entangled with resentment. Seeking vengeance drags Emile easily down into the trap of his inflamed *amour-propre*, caring more about deepening the unhappiness of others than about promoting one's own happiness, even if such resentment and vengeance arise from reaction to real injustice. Therefore, while Emile does not tolerate Sophie's betrayal, he feels no need to avenge her aggressively either. Seeking happiness from the unhappiness of others is in effect letting one's own happiness depend on others. Thanks to honor as independence, Emile is not going to be put in a wretched situation like that. He simply leaves Sophie. In comparison to staying with her as if nothing happened, this act forms an honorable resistance to her disrespect.¹⁶ In comparison to endless revenge against her, even killing her, as so often seen in the notorious practice of honor killing today, it is indeed principled.

To be sure, it can be reasonably argued that Emile leaving Sophie counts as an effective response to her disrespect only if and when she is not fully corrupted and thus

¹⁶ Shklar claims that Emile's decision of leaving Sophie marks his "indifferen[ce] to suffering." (1967, 59) I think this is inaccurate. If he were really indifferent, then he would accept the "corrupt" view that whatever his wife does has nothing to do with his own honor, and simply ignore the dishonor that Sophie brings him.

still feels the guilt in her betrayal. Otherwise, what Emile does is just saving huge trouble for the adulterer, letting her feel relieved as there will be no more need to deal with him. Perhaps this is true, but the truthfulness of this possibility in turn substantiates Rousseau's point that the sense of honor must be preserved and democratized so that everyone is subject to the same power of honor and shame. Moreover, what I find most interesting here is how Rousseau tries to show that honor as independence and honor as reaction can and ought to be reconciled so as to motivate a principled response to disrespect, which is prevalent in a non-ideal world. On the one hand, since disrespect is unavoidable, individuals have to confront it instead of shy away, and honor as reaction is a provocative power that motivates them to overcome their cowardice and take certain actions to fight back, actions that they would not otherwise take if motivated only by their complacency with their independence. On the other hand, honor as independence sets principles for the defense of honor, always reminding individuals that their real happiness should not be dependent on others and that their defense of honor should be for the sake primarily of defending oneself, rather than avenging others. It restrains the tendency in honor as reaction that may culminate in resentful and violent response to disrespect.

Shklar claims that Emile "is... prepared to face victimhood as part of the natural order of things, as a necessity" (1985, 59). According to my analysis, it is exactly his reformed sense of honor that makes it possible for him to handle the necessity of

victimhood. To be sure, Emile is by nature not a genius, but an ordinary person. Yet because of this ordinariness, his honor shines as admirable heroism that Rousseau believes every one of us living in a modern world has the potential to attain.

3.7 Conclusion

Similar to Mandeville and Montesquieu, Rousseau aims to maintain both spiritedness and integrity in his notion of honor. Unlike them, he attempts to thoroughly democratize honor so that everyone in a political community has access to it and is subject to its jurisdiction, as he believes that honor remains a useful motivation for individuals living in democratic societies to combat not only disrespect from others but also their own over-sensitivity to disrespect, both of which originate from the desire for esteem intrinsic to socialized individuals. Rousseauian honor is characterized by a sensitivity to social opinion and an independence from social opinion. While the former provokes an individual to react to disrespect, the latter tones down one's over-sensitivity to disrespect and restrains one from resorting to violent and resentful means to defend one's honor. Freeing honor from monarchy and balancing its provocative and restraining potentials, Rousseau truly initiates the eighteenth-century modernization of honor in hope that it motivates modern individuals to stand up to disrespect without themselves becoming disrespectful.

However, Rousseau's account of honor is unsatisfactory in one crucial aspect. While his motive behind the modernization of honor revealed in *D'Alembert* may be

political, his depiction of this modernized honor appears detached from politics. Emile's principled defense of his honor is set against a domestic background, and it is hard to see how this defense can be adapted to fighting disrespect in a political world. In *EAS*, after abandoning his wife, Emile becomes a sailor and is later captured and enslaved by pirates due to the betrayal of his captain. In his captivity, Emile remains calm and feels no pain of slavery because he feels that his heart remains independent and free. He resorts to revolt only when his life is at risk, and as a leader of the revolt, he manages to gather far fewer comrades than the other leader, a knight, who embodies a fervent love of victory and whose passionate and eloquent rhetoric easily rouses the indignation of other slaves about the injustice imposed on them (*EAS*, 221-9). Accordingly, Christopher Kelly argues that, while honorable heroes are indeed necessary for free politics because citizens can be motivated by their examples and imitate them in fighting against usurping government, Emile's honor is insufficient to this anti-authoritarian purpose, as it leans toward independence and integrity more than toward resistance and therefore becomes political only at the time of desperation (2003, 96-7).

To be sure, Kelly's analysis misses one subtlety in *EAS*. Realizing the betrayal of his captain, Emile kills the traitor immediately before he is captured by pirates, as he believes himself "to be judge and executioner, avenging [his] comrades in slavery by purging humanity of a traitor and the sea of one of its monsters," but he is also aware that he serves justice by an unjust means and thus willingly hands the saber to the

captain of pirates and asks for execution: "I have just done justice; you can now take your turn" (EAS, 225). To some extent, Emile indeed looks like a hero who resists injustice in the firmest possible way without rationalizing his unjust means, and this instance shows that Rousseau does not necessarily want to portray Emile in the way with which Kelly concludes. Moreover, Rousseau's attitude toward honor in his own life seems to negate Kelly's interpretation. At the beginning of his *Letter to Beaumont*, Rousseau responds to Beaumont's condemnation of his heresy in this way: "If you had attacked only my Book, I would have let it pass, but you also attack me personally. And the more authority you have among men, the less I am permitted to remain silent when you want to dishonor me" (Beaumont, 21). Standing up to the personal insult of the Archbishop of Paris and defying his authority, Rousseau turns a private matter into a public one.

However, it is undeniable that Kelly's analysis of EAS makes sense and that it is difficult to make Rousseau's different depictions of Emile's actions in EAS completely coherent with each other. Since EAS is an unfinished work, there is little we can do to further argue for the coherence of the image of Emile. Rather than studying how Rousseau may politicize honor, it is better to turn to another thinker of the eighteenth century and find a different account of honor that is not only modern but also distinctively political.

4. Resentment and Praiseworthiness in Adam Smith's Honor Ethics

“In almost all cases, it is better to be a little too proud,
than, in any respect, too humble.”
— Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*

4.1 Introduction

While the role of honor in Adam Smith's theory of moral sentiments has been acknowledged in many recent scholarly works (Welsh 2008, 168-82; Darwall 2013, 30-49; Corsa 2015; Olsthoorn 2015, 48-51), their emphasis is on the moral instead of political implications of Smith's honor ethics. This is not surprising, as *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS) is usually considered to be a work of moral philosophy instead of political theory, and scholars interested in the latter usually refer to either *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (LJ) (e.g., Haakonssen 1981) or *The Wealth of Nations* (WN) (e.g., Fleischacker 2004; Smith 2006) while using TMS only as a supportive text. In this chapter, I examine how Smith in TMS develops an account of honor that helps to tame a particularly political sentiment called "resentment" and thus to render modern individuals capable of resisting injustice without themselves becoming unjust. This examination reveals the political aspect of TMS. Through this examination, I also want to push against a trend in recent Smith scholarship that gives a great deal of weight to the role of virtue in Smith's thought (Griswold 1999; Hanley 2008, 2009). Instead, I show how Smith democratizes honor by distinguishing it from virtue and how honor is more compatible than virtue with the modern society and thus can better motivate modern

citizens to stand up to injustice in a non-vengeful way. Thus, this chapter reveals the importance of Smith's works for the eighteenth-century modernization of honor that Rousseau initiates. Smith not only politicizes honor, which Rousseau fails to do, but also systematically theorizes what democratic honor looks like and how it can come into being.

I begin in Section 4.2 with Smith's attitude toward modern society and politics and his reluctant rejection of civic virtue in order to establish a background for Smith's honor ethics. On the one hand, civic virtue is not compatible with modern commercial society and centralized government, as the spirit of civic humanism condemns commerce as the source of corruption and tends to provoke conflicts and factions. On the other hand, Smith worries that self-command and self-estimation (by which he means self-esteem) may vanish with civic virtue. In Section 4.3, I further examine the relationship of self-command and self-estimation to justice, thereby paving the way for an analysis of the political implications of Smith's honor ethics. Central to Smith's theory of justice is the task of taming resentment, which is necessary for an individual to sense injustice but can result in more injustice. While both virtuous self-command and appropriate self-estimation are crucial to taming resentment, they can be too demanding for ordinary people to acquire and their inferior versions may even exacerbate resentment. I then turn to Smith's honor ethics to show his innovative way of integrating the merit of self-command and self-estimation into a single moral sentiment friendlier to

ordinary people than the love of virtue. The essence of this honor ethics is the role that the love of praiseworthiness, or the Smithian sense of honor, plays in bridging the gap between the love of praise and the love of virtue. After distinguishing praiseworthiness from both praise and virtue in Section 4.4, I examine in Sections 4.5 and 4.6 the merit of the love of praiseworthiness despite its inferiority to the love of virtue. For Smith, the love of praiseworthiness is identical to the sense of duty that guides individuals to follow what he calls "the general rules of conduct" or simply "general rules." These rules are not only nobler than the social opinion immediate to individuals but also less demanding than virtue proper. It is in the love of praiseworthiness that the simulacrum of virtuous self-command found in the character of "the vain man" and the simulacrum of appropriate self-estimation found in the character of "the proud man" can be synthesized. It motivates ordinary people to attain what Smith calls "noble and generous resentment." In Section 4.7, I conclude this chapter with a brief comment on the unique nature of Smithian honor ethics in contrast to Rousseau's that I reconstructed in the previous chapter.

4.2 Smithian Politics and His Reluctant Rejection of Civic Virtue

A study of Smith's account of honor and its political implications makes better sense when it is situated in the theoretical and historical context of Smith's thought. As hinted at in Montesquieu's writings, the modern notion of honor appears similar to but is fundamentally distinct from republican civic virtue. One of the reasons for this

distinction is the distinction between the modern society, in which commerce plays an important role, and the classical republican society, in which commerce is perceived as a source of corruption. In this section, I argue that, because of his general assessment of the modern society and of the role that government ought to play in it, Smith, "the last of the civic humanists" (Pocock 1985, 123), rejects civic virtue. However, this rejection is reluctant, and Smith endeavors to find its replacement that not only preserves the merit of civic virtue but also is compatible with modern society.

To this end, it is illuminating to briefly compare Smith and Adam Ferguson, whose *Essay on the History of Civil Society* "is perhaps the most Machiavellian of the Scottish disquisitions" (Pocock 2016, 499) on the topic of civic virtue and its corruption. For Ferguson, the division of labor and the commercialization of society, the consequences of social development notwithstanding, are at odds with the civic spirit of republicanism. While the division of labor leads to the specialization of professions and ultimately the replacement of citizen-soldiers with a professional army, the commercialization of society magnifies the material desires of citizens and thus lures them away from public life. The modern society, accordingly, corrupts the morals of men. In contrast, a republican society nourishes the sociability of men and cultivates their civic virtue.

Smith is also concerned about moral corruption, but unlike Ferguson, he argues that the immediate source of this corruption is not commerce but sympathy, the very

mechanism of human sociability. As a faculty intrinsic to human beings, sympathy is triggered immediately when one encounters another member of the same species (TMS, 13-4, 134, 167). What distinguishes Smith from his contemporary theorists of sympathy—Rousseau, for example—is his argument that we tend to sympathize more with the happiness of others than with their sorrow (TMS, 55-62). Moreover, since wealth and status appear to be closely connected to happiness, it follows that human beings naturally sympathize with the rich and the great and thus admire and even try to emulate them (TMS, 62-5). However, since the true happiness of men lies essentially in virtue and wisdom, which lead to the tranquility of mind, rather than in wealth and status, which keep men in the state of restlessness, our admiration of the rich and the great and efforts to emulate them tend only to obscure the source of true happiness and render us indifferent to virtue and wisdom. Moral corruption thus takes place (TMS, 73-8).

The influence of commerce is absent from the above analysis of the source of moral corruption.¹ Even if we may reasonably argue that commercialization renders human beings more sympathetic with the rich, moral corruption would still happen in a

¹ Phillipson argues that TMS “appears not simply as an account of moral behaviour in general but as an account of the peculiar moral constraints which are placed on the citizens of a commercial society” (1983, 188). Thus, it seems that Smith’s discussion of sympathy and the moral corruption associated with it is embedded in, rather than independent from, the context of a commercial society. Although there is no apparent reason to suppose that Smith’s idea of human sympathy with the happiness of others cannot apply to non-commercial or pre-commercial societies, Phillipson’s argument may be an interesting challenge to mine and I would like to take note of it here.

society where commerce plays little role, as our sympathy with the great can be equally corrupting. In fact, for Smith, by freeing ordinary individuals from social bondage, which used to render them slavishly dependent on their superiors, it is precisely commerce that mitigates the pernicious effect of our sympathy with the great. With commerce comes the interdependence among men that replaces the dependence of the inferior on the superior (WN, 508; LJ, 333). No longer in need of begging for favors from their masters, ordinary people, whom Smith deems to be better able to acquire virtue and wisdom than the rich and great (TMS, 75-6), are liberated. This positive assessment of the social implications of commerce distinguishes Smith from Ferguson and other Scottish civic humanists.²

What follows from this assessment of commerce is Smith's criticism of patriotism and ambition, both of which are essential to the ideal of civic virtue.³ While Smith indeed praises patriotic spirit (TMS, 269), he worries that ambitious patriotism is the source of not only conflicts with foreign countries but also factions within a country (TMS, 68-69, 270, 273). Moreover, Smith does not seem to care much about the autonomy

² See Winch (1978, 70-102) for a detailed account of how commerce is conducive to justice. See also Griswold (1999, 292-301), Fleischacker (2004, 87-90), and Rasmussen (2008, 71-6) for extensive analyses of the unique sources of moral corruption in commercial society such as the division of labor. That being said, even Rasmussen accepts that Smith defends commercial society in "a sober and thoughtful" way, and "viewing him as anything but an advocate of commercial society requires willful disregard for the substance of his thought" (91).

³ The content of this paragraph heavily relies on the debate between Winch (1978, 103-20) and Fleischacker (2004, 246-57). Fleischacker supports the view that Smith's enthusiasm for republicanism is only "lukewarm" (249). He is also against Winch's republican interpretation of Smith regarding Smith's interest in local militia as a means to cultivate civic virtues and his attitude toward national glory.

of the community. As a Scot of the eighteenth century, he welcomes England's annexation of Scotland. This distinguishes him further from the civic humanist tradition and his contemporaries such as Ferguson, who is more attached to the Scottish identity and who thus advocates for local militias and is firmly against their replacement with a professional standing army. While Smith is not necessarily against militias of citizen-soldiers, his advocacy of a standing army is evident, which incurs criticisms from his civic humanist friends. For Smith, while local militias indeed may cultivate the civic virtue and public spirit of citizen-soldiers, professional soldiers are much more efficient in fighting wars in modern commercial conditions. Thus, by supporting commercial society and a professional standing army, Smith can even be seen as undermining the social basis of civic virtue.⁴

An efficient standing army belongs to the machinery of government, and Smith's preference for it reveals his thought on the proper role of politics and government in modern society. While it is not necessary for the state to refrain from moral education of its citizens (TMS, 98) and while it is debatable whether the Smithian state is as libertarian as it has been famously interpreted to be⁵, the primary role of modern government is

⁴ Phillipson even claims that, from Smith's perspective, "Scotland's independence could best be preserved by strengthening the economic and moral bonds of Scottish society. And the act of participating in such a process would be sufficient to release the virtue of the patriot" (1983, 201).

⁵ For a recent libertarian interpretation of the limited function of government in Smith's political theory, see Craig Smith 2006, 64-7. The problem with this interpretation lies in its detachment from Smith's context. Smith holds a more genial attitude toward a centralized government than his contemporary Scottish civic humanists.

clearly protective and preventive. Government, rather than the individual citizens themselves, is meant to protect the rights and private activities of individuals from insults, offenses, and interruptions (TMS, 218, 257, 263; WN, 274; LJ, 5, 399).⁶

Accordingly, the prime virtue of citizens shifts from a passionate love of the community to a strict obedience to the rules and laws of the state (TMS, 106-7, 273), especially those regarding justice that are supposed to be preventive, precise, immutable, and thus discoverable through the science of natural jurisprudence (TMS, 99, 202-3, 257).⁷

So far, Smith seems to rely on commerce and a protective government to prevent moral corruption and protect the freedom of individuals. Civic virtue, which in the eyes of republicans is the cure, or at least the antithesis, of moral corruption and the guarantee of the liberty of the community and its citizens, may appear to play no significant role in the modern society. However, it must be noted that Smith's rejection of civic virtue is reluctant. If civic virtue is cultivated in militias, then its sublimity is manifested in the character of excellent patriotic soldiers. Despite his preference for the standing army to local militias, Smith greatly admires soldiers who fearlessly sacrifice themselves to defend their countries (TMS, 155-6, 159-60, 222, 278; WN, 211). The

⁶ Boyd (2013) argues that, characterized by "the replacement of the rule of force with a basic system of law" (447), the modern civil society is distinguishable from any "rude" or "barbarous" societies in human history.

⁷ Haakonssen (1981) argues that Smith's "whole history of the development of private law is the record of mankind's Herculean task in providing such a check on people's excessive resentment and craving for the punishment of their fellows. This attempt only met with some success once governments became strong enough to put real force behind the impartial spectators, who in the process had become judges" (115). This is even truer in Smith's account of the sovereignty and public law that are necessary to protect individual liberty (127-33).

qualities that Smith finds admirable in the character of soldiers is what he calls "self-command" and "self-estimation"⁸, and in the next section, I turn to examine Smith's account of these two qualities. Despite his rejection of civic humanism in favor of modern commercial society, Smith worries about the lack of self-command and self-estimation in modern society. One important reason for this worry is related to resentment and its implications to justice and political order.

4.3 Self-Command, Self-Estimation, and Resentment

4.3.1 Justice and Resentment

Once the discussion of Smithian ethics turns to the political topic of justice and injustice, the sentiment of resentment becomes its focal point.⁹ Resentment is directly concerned with justice. It is hence a political passion. In particular: first, resentment is the proper reaction to injustice. According to Smith, "the violation of justice is injury" and "is, therefore, the proper object of resentment, and of punishment, which is the natural consequence of resentment" (TMS, 96). Resentment is thus distinguished from hatred, which is the reaction to the kind of impropriety that does not do real injury to others, such as our disappointment in the face of ingratitude (TMS, 95-6). As a result, to

⁸ See Monte (2004, 76-8) for an elaborated argument for the connection between self-command and martial virtue.

⁹ See Rushdy (2018, 124-145) for another account of Smithian resentment and how it is located in the British moral tradition on resentment. However, claiming that "Smith is much more circumspect than [Joseph] Butler in his regard for the potential benefits of resentment, and much more attentive to its dangers" (137), Rushdy underestimates the importance of resentment to justice. Just like sympathy, which is the sentimental basis for both human virtue and moral corruption, resentment is the sentimental basis on which we are able to tell injustice from justice.

restore justice when it is damaged, resentment is required from individuals who are unjustly treated. Second, resentment prompts an individual not only to desire retribution but also to actively punish unjust offenders. While hatred can be satisfied with the pain of the hated person and thus is itself merely a desire to *see* this person suffer, resentment "would prompt us to desire, not only that he should be punished, but that he should be punished by our means, and upon account of that particular injury which he had done to us" (TMS, 83). Thus, while hatred does not have to excite us to take punitive actions, resentment necessarily motivates us to do so: "Resentment cannot be fully gratified, unless the offender is not only made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that *particular wrong* which we have suffered from him" (ibid, emphasis mine). Consequently, resentment, which ought to be for the purpose of restoring justice, may become excessive and thus lead to two kinds of injustice: we may be driven by excessive resentment either to punish a person who may be the object merely of hatred (for example, injuring a person who shows no gratitude to us while he should), or punish a person disproportionately to the particular injury he did to us (e.g., maiming a person who is responsible only for stealing a loaf of bread from us).

It is due to this complex connection of resentment to justice that resentment itself becomes a problematic passion, and Smith indeed exhibits an ambivalent attitude toward resentment. On the one hand, Smith confirms that resentment is an "unsocial passion" always disagreeable unless further justifications for it can be provided (TMS,

15-6, 42-8, 89), and that its excess, which Smith calls “vengefulness,” is a common source of injustice (TMS, 93). On the other hand, Smith insists that resentment is “the guardian of justice” (TMS, 44) that “prompts us to beat off the mischief which is attempted to be done to us, and to retaliate that which is already done” (TMS, 96), and its defect, which Smith calls “mean-spiritedness,” lacks propriety as much as its excess does (TMS, 43, 93, 166, 206, 287, 288). What Smith wants, therefore, is a “noble and generous resentment” (TMS, 31, 48). Neither suppressed nor indulged, it is the mean between vengefulness and mean-spiritedness. The problem is, how to attain this “noble and generous resentment?” In what follows, I develop what Smith means by vengefulness and mean-spiritedness, and explain his answer to this question: to restrain vengefulness by self-command and mitigate mean-spiritedness by self-estimation.

4.3.2 The Strength and Weakness of Self-Command

Restraining vengefulness, the excess of resentment, requires self-command.¹⁰ There is hardly any doubt that self-command is central to Smith's account of virtue. Among the four cardinal Smithian virtues (justice, prudence, benevolence, and self-command), self-command is unique in that it is necessary for an individual to maintain the other virtues. As Smith says, “the most perfect knowledge of those rules [of justice,

¹⁰ Montes (2004) argues that Smithian self-command is different from self-restraint in that it “must be seen as related to individual free choice, in a positive way that gives moral autonomy to the individual” (83). However, given textual evidence, self-command is mainly restraining in the particular case of dealing with resentment. This does not have to conflict with Montes' argument, as he also admits that, despite the broadening of its meaning, self-command exhibits different features in different cases (84-5).

prudence, and benevolence] will not alone enable [an individual] to act in this manner: his own passions are very apt to mislead him... The most perfect knowledge, if it is not supported by the most perfect self-command, will not always enable him to do his duty" (TMS, 280). Thus, the virtue of self-command by nature restrains odious passions. It is "not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principal lustre" (TMS, 284).

This restraining nature renders the virtue of self-command the perfect weapon against the excess of resentment: "we cannot avoid conceiving a considerable degree of esteem and admiration for one who appears capable of exerting so much self-command over" resentment, "one of the most ungovernable passions of his nature" (TMS, 93). One aspect of self-command is to command one's anger. It makes "just indignation" possible, which is "nothing but anger restrained and properly attempted to what the impartial spectator can enter into" (TMS, 283). Thus, central to one's self-command and the restraint it puts on resentment is the obedience to the perspective of the impartial spectator. For a self-commanding person, "the injustice of other people must never provoke him to injustice" (TMS, 293).

It is not hyperbolic even to say that the primary purpose of adopting the perspective of the impartial spectator is to restrain anger.¹¹ The first time that the term "the impartial spectator" appears in TMS is where Smith compares mere anger with "the

¹¹ See Griswold (1999, 144) for a similar argument.

noble and generous resentment, which governs its pursuit of the greatest injuries, not by the rage which they are apt to excite in the breast of the sufferer, but by the indignation which they naturally call forth in that of the impartial spectator... which never, even in thought, attempts any greater vengeance, nor desires to inflict any greater punishment, than what every indifferent person would rejoice to see executed" (TMS, 31). Similar claims on the relationship between restraining resentment and the impartial spectator can also be found elsewhere (TMS, 84, 257, 309). Thus, self-command is necessary for individuals to restrain their resentment when injured by others, hence to follow the call of justice.

However, the restraining effect of self-command is the source of both its strength and weakness. Smith distinguishes between anger restrained and anger subdued. When anger is merely restrained, it is "not always subdued, but often remain[s] lurking in the breast with all [its] original fury." It follows that a man who restrains his anger "does not lay aside his anger, but only reserves its gratification for a more safe opportunity," and only when it is subdued can "the passion becomes really less than it was before, and less capable of exciting him to the violent and bloody revenge which at first, perhaps, he might have thought of inflicting" (TMS, 309-10).

An individual who restrains rather than subdues his resentment resembles what Smith calls "the vain man." Since he completely relies on the judgment of others to confirm his own worth, the vain man does everything to conform to social opinion.

Thus, he is "not sincere": "Far from despising your esteem," he "courts it with the most anxious assiduity" (TMS, 300). He even willingly "reduces himself to poverty and distress" just to "support this foolish imposition" of being worthy of the respect of others (TMS, 301). The self-command of the vain man comes from his obedience to social opinion, and it forces him to always abide by the judgment of others and conceal his insecurity and dissatisfaction.

The same criticism of insincerity and of forcing oneself to obey social opinion¹² appears at least three times elsewhere in TMS. First, Smith claims that, while more self-commanding than "civilized" men, "savages"¹³ living in harsh conditions tend to be less "frank, open, and sincere" because they, "being obliged to smother and conceal the appearance of every passion, necessarily acquire the habits of falsehood and dissimulation." Consequently, though a "savage" "seldom shows any symptoms of anger, yet his vengeance, when he comes to give way to it, is always sanguinary and dreadful" (TMS, 243-4). Second, Smith states that in times of civil disorder "amidst great provocations, apparent tranquility and good-humour may sometimes conceal the most determined and cruel resolution to revenge" and he calls such command of anger "dark

¹² Griswold (1999) notices a similar argument in Smith's criticism of the political implications of organized religion in WN. He argues that, in illiberal political communities, religious people become fanatics full of hatred because it "seems likely that fanatical religious sects will find fertile ground among people who harbor a particularly acute sense of resentment, and the suppression of one religion by another seems, in Smith's analysis, to cause the hatred in question" (286).

¹³ I retain Smith's original and apparently racist expressions here. Pitts (2005, 34-40) provides a convincing argument that, unlike his contemporaries and later thinkers, Smith uses terms such as "savage" and "barbarian" analytically, "as descriptions of early stages of society, rather than evaluatively, as terms of moral rank or status" (34).

and deep dissimulation" (TMS, 284). But the most interesting account appears on the third occasion in Smith's criticism of "mean-spiritedness." A mean-spirited individual "tamely suffers other people, who are entitled to no such superiority, to rise above him or get before him" and thinks of his suppression of his envy as an act of magnanimity. However, this is no more than "a sort of ill-judged magnanimity" that "is commonly followed by much regret and repentance" and may "give place to a most malignant envy in the end" (TMS, 287). This attack on the "ill-judged magnanimity" of mean-spirited people can even be seen as a forerunner of Nietzsche's all-out offensive against *ressentiment*.

However, Smith's critique of self-command should be attributed not to any problem intrinsic to this virtue, but to ordinary people who are not able to fully attain the virtue of self-command. In TMS, Smith comes up with at least two reasons why such attainment is difficult. First, when self-command reaches the level of virtue, by definition it becomes something rare: "Virtue is excellence, something uncommonly great and beautiful, which rises far above what is vulgar and ordinary" (TMS, 32). Second, even if we ignore this issue with definition, the struggle to command one's passions "may be too violent to be at all consistent with internal tranquillity and happiness," but not all human beings are equipped with "a certain intrepidity, a certain firmness of nerves and hardness of constitution" to tolerate such violence (TMS, 289). As Smith says, "there is no greater tormentor of the human breast than violent

resentment which cannot be gratified" (TMS, 143). The virtue of self-command is not always sufficient to tackle the excess of resentment. It risks overly suppressing resentment and thus deepening it because all human beings cannot become virtuous. Therefore, for an ordinary individual, resentment cannot be simply restrained, but has to be somehow gratified so as to be ultimately subdued. This insight of Smith's leads us to discuss the way to mitigate the defect of resentment that hinders this gratification.

4.3.3 The Strength and Weakness of Self-Estimation

Mitigating mean-spiritedness, the defect of resentment, requires self-estimation. His praise of moderation and humility notwithstanding, Smith in TMS VI.3 surprisingly refutes the opinion that the defect of self-estimation "must always be less disagreeable than the excess" (TMS, 290). According to him, if an excellent individual underrates his excellence, then people "never fail to take advantage of his simplicity, and to assume over him an impertinent superiority which they are by no means entitled to" (TMS, 305). Moreover, if individuals indeed lack excellence, then they may "rate themselves still more below [the common standard of excellence] than they really are," and "this humility appears sometimes to sink them into idiotism" (TMS, 306). Consequently, they are "much more liable to every sort of ill-usage from other people" (TMS, 307). Smith thus concludes that, "in almost all cases, it is better to be a little too proud, than, in any respect, too humble; and, in the sentiment of self-estimation, some degree of excess seems, both to the person himself and to the impartial spectator, to be less disagreeable

than any degree of defect" (TMS, 308). Even in its excess, self-estimation motivates an individual not to quietly endure the "ill-usage from other people" but to stand up to such "ill-usage" and hence to injustice and disrespect from other people. Put differently, it motivates the offended individual to express his resentment and in this way supplements self-command, which tends to suppress such expression.

What, then, is the standard according to which we are able to judge ourselves and attain self-estimation? Smith identifies two standards of self-judgment: "The one is the idea of exact propriety and perfection, so far as we are each of us capable of comprehending that idea. The other is that degree of approximation to this idea which is commonly attained in the world, and which the greater part of our friends and companions, of our rivals and competitors, may have actually arrived at" (TMS, 291). The first is an ideal standard, whereas the second is a real standard.¹⁴ According to Smith, since the ideal standard leads only to the realization of our imperfection, it tends to trigger only our humility (TMS, 291-2). To rouse our self-estimation, therefore, the real standard is more important. Accordingly, we ought to compare ourselves with "that ordinary degree of excellence which is commonly attained by other people" (TMS, 294), which is easier to attain than perfection and on which it is easier to establish our self-estimation.

¹⁴ This distinction between the ideal and real standard of self-judgment parallels the one between the ideal and real standard of judging others (TMS, 33).

Therefore, self-estimation comes essentially from our comparing ourselves to real people rather than to the perfection of virtue. What makes this comparison noteworthy is not only that it lowers the standard of excellence, but also that it is based on the observation of what is really achieved by others rather than on the judgment of social opinion.¹⁵ To this extent, the source of self-estimation can be free from social opinion, and a self-estimating individual thus perceives his value independently of the judgment of others.¹⁶ Such self-estimation is the basis for our magnanimity, "a regard to maintain our own rank and dignity in society," which "is the only motive which can ennoble the expressions of this disagreeable passion" of resentment (TMS, 48).

However, the weakness of self-estimation lies exactly in its independence from the judgment of others. People indulged in judging themselves according to the real standard tend to disregard social opinion and even to despise it: "they have little sense of their own weaknesses and imperfections; they have little modesty; are often assuming, arrogant, and presumptuous; great admirers of themselves, and great contemnors of other people" (TMS, 294). Consequently, "amidst the intoxication of prosperity, their sober and just esteem falls so far short of the extravagance of his own self-admiration, that he regards it as mere malignity and envy" (TMS, 298). Such an

¹⁵ See also Raphael (2007), in which he argues that the real standard of self-judgment "is derived from the practice of others, not from their reaction as spectators of practice" (42).

¹⁶ According to Campbell's interpretation (1971), "prior to all morality and law, men naturally resent certain things being done to them; the spectator sympathizes with this resentment if it is reduced to a level into which he can enter" (191). Resentment, like sympathy, is natural and independent from social opinion, which only tempers its severity.

individual is what Smith calls "the proud man," who "is convinced of his own superiority" and thus, "if you appear not to respect him as he respects himself, he is more offended than mortified, and feels the same indignant resentment as if he had suffered a real injury" (TMS, 300).

As in his criticism of self-command, Smith takes issue with self-estimation not because it is intrinsically problematic but because an appropriate self-estimation is very difficult to attain. However, since self-estimation is necessary for an individual to respond to injustice, Smith is able to tolerate the excess of it, with one caveat: excessive self-estimation may motivate an individual to not only mitigate his defect of resentment but also indulge in his excessive resentment.

Thus, neither self-command nor self-estimation alone is able to render the resentment of ordinary people "noble and generous" in the conditions of imperfect ordinary people. Whereas mere self-command can too much suppress and thus deepen their resentment, mere self-estimation can nurture oversensitivity to resentment. Both outcomes are threatening to the political order of modern society, as resentment untamed leads directly to injustice. To attain "noble and generous resentment," it seems that we need self-command and self-estimation at the same time to balance each other. However, the difficulty of achieving the synthesis of these two qualities is obvious. First, it is already difficult to acquire either virtuous self-command or appropriate self-estimation, not to mention both. Thus, Smith cannot rely on the perfection of moral

virtues but seeks their simulacrum that nevertheless retain some of their merits.

Second, while the combination of the simulacrum of self-command and self-estimation can be found in civic virtue, Smith rejects this option in favor of commercial society. As a result, he has to find an alternative to moral virtue and civic virtue for ordinary people to tame their resentment. In the rest of this chapter, I show that Smith's modernized honor ethics is precisely this innovative alternative.

4.4 Praise, Praiseworthiness, and Virtue

Smith seeks a sentimental motivation for individuals living in modern society to both obey the rules of justice and remain spirited in the face of injustice. Specifically, he wants modern individuals to have "noble and generous resentment" in the face of injustice that motivates them to stand up to it without becoming themselves unjust. Now that virtuous self-command and appropriate self-estimation are too rare and demanding, Smith has to find a motivation that is friendlier to ordinary people but remains effective to inspire their "noble and generous resentment." In the following sections, I argue that this democratized motivation for ordinary people to tame their resentment is the "love of praiseworthiness." To reach this conclusion, I compare and contrast the love of praiseworthiness with the love of praise and the love of virtue. Smith's account of them is found mainly in TMS III.2 and VII.2.4. While the distinction that Smith makes between the love of praise and the love of praiseworthiness is well known, the distinction between the love of praiseworthiness and the love of virtue is

seldom emphasized. In the interpretive works of several scholars, the love of praiseworthiness is treated as identical to either the love of virtue or the acceptance of the impartial spectator's perspective.¹⁷ I argue that this view is not correct.

TMS III.2 revolves around the comparison between the love of praise and the love of praiseworthiness. The love of praise connects an individual to his fellows, but it "would not alone have rendered him fit for that society for which he was made" because it "could only have prompted him to the affection of virtue, and to the concealment of vice" (TMS, 140). Accordingly, the love of praise is closely related to vanity, prioritizing the praise and censure of some immediate others and motivating actions only to attain their applause or avoid their criticism. It even motivates them to cheat for the praise of others.

In contrast, the love of praiseworthiness "was necessary *in order to inspire* him with the real love of virtue, and with the real abhorrence of vice" (ibid, emphasis mine). For a lover of praiseworthiness, "to obtain that approbation of mankind, where no approbation is due, can *never be an object of any importance* to him" (ibid, emphasis mine).

¹⁷ Griswold (1999) claims that the love of virtue is "the love of that which is praiseworthy as distinguished from praised" (213), and in the section discussing praise and praiseworthiness, he uses praiseworthiness and virtue interchangeably (133). Raphael (2007) claims that the distinction between the love of praise and the love of praiseworthiness, which Smith introduces into the sixth edition of TMS, "was implicit in the second edition, where the approval and disapproval of real spectators may be opposed by the judgement of conscience that one does not merit approval or disapproval" (39). Since conscience *is* the perspective of the impartial spectator, Raphael's claim betrays his belief that the love of praiseworthiness is the obedience to conscience. Keppler (2010) is even more straightforward. In differentiating sympathy and impartial spectator as two distinct systems to assess human behavior, he claims that "[t]he separation line between them is defined by the distinction between 'praise' (for what *is* appreciated by humans) and 'praiseworthiness' (for what *should* be appreciated by humans)" (71).

He pays no attention to the undue applause of others, thereby having no motivation to cheat for applause.

However, this does not mean that the lover of praiseworthiness pays no attention to the praise of others at all. Smith continues: "To obtain that approbation where it is really due, may sometimes be an object of *no great importance* to him. But to be that thing which deserves approbation, must always be an object of the highest" (ibid, emphasis mine). In contrast to the "never ... of any importance" used in the previous quote, the "no great importance" here reveals that the lover of praiseworthiness is not insensitive to the opinion of others. When he does achieve something praiseworthy, he expects due praise from others, even though his achievement is not for the sake of attaining the praise. Since "to desire [praise] where it is really due, is to desire no more than that a most essential act of justice should be done to us," Smith calls the love of praiseworthiness "the love of just fame, of true glory" (TMS, 141).

It is noteworthy that, in a previous quotation, this love of praiseworthiness is supposed to be the basis on which an individual can be inspired with the love of virtue, indicating that these two types of love are connected but not identical. To better understand the difference between the love of praiseworthiness and the love of virtue, we should take a look at one passage in TMS III.2. While the lover of praiseworthiness cares about the just approbation of others, "he sometimes, however, neglects, and even despises it; and he is never more apt to do so than when he has the most perfect

assurance of the perfect propriety of every part of his own conduct. His self-approbation, in this case, stands in need of no confirmation from the approbation of other men... The love of it, *is* the love of virtue" (TMS, 141, emphasis mine).

Two things in this claim warrant our attention. First, a lover of virtue must be a lover of praiseworthiness to the extent that he cares about the praiseworthiness of his actions. The more assured he is with the propriety of his conduct, the more he disregards the praise of others—even the just one. Second and more important, the love of virtue is the love of *self*-approbation. It, "if not the only, is at least the principal object, about which he can or ought to be anxious" (ibid). In contrast, a lover of praiseworthiness still cares about his reputation. Again, it is true that, when he takes a moral action, he has the praiseworthiness of this action rather than the praise from others in mind, but after the praiseworthy action is taken, he still expects the praise of others in proportion to the praiseworthiness of the action. In contrast to the love of virtue, therefore, the similarity between the lover of praise and the lover of praiseworthiness is further revealed: they both take an interest in the approbation of some immediate *others*.

Moreover, the love of praiseworthiness is inferior to the love of virtue. According to Smith, "to show much anxiety about praise, even for praise-worthy actions, is seldom a mark of great wisdom, but generally of some degree of weakness" (TMS, 152). This explains an interesting paradox that Smith observes: an individual with true humility

and virtue tends to "impute [the merit of his conduct] chiefly or altogether to the mere love of praise," whereas an individual who thinks more highly of himself because of his merit tends to "impute it chiefly or altogether to the love of praise-worthiness" (TMS, 151). The latter individual is not satisfied with mere praise but strives to exhibit his praiseworthiness. However, this eager exhibition of his praiseworthiness also betrays his eagerness for praise. In contrast, the former individual, who is more virtuous, does not even care about the fame of being praiseworthy when doing praiseworthy things. Rather, he is so humble as to try to conceal his true praiseworthiness in the face of others by willingly identifying himself with the love of praise, the most inferior love among the three.

TMS VII.2.4 further confirms these conclusions. In this chapter, Smith criticizes Mandeville for his collapsing the love of virtue into the love of praise. He states:

"The desire of doing what is honourable and noble, of rendering ourselves the proper objects of esteem and approbation, cannot with any propriety be called vanity. Even the love of well grounded fame and reputation, the desire of acquiring esteem by what is really estimable, does not deserve that name. The first is the love of virtue, the noblest and the best passion of human nature. The second is the love of true glory, a passion inferior no doubt to the former, but which in dignity appears to come immediately after it." (TMS, 363, emphasis mine)

Smith thus introduces another tripartite distinction—vanity, the love of true glory, and the love of virtue—that parallels the distinction made in III.2. While the love of true glory is the desire of just honor, the love of virtue is the desire of being

honorable.¹⁸ While they are similar in that "both aim at really being what is honourable and noble" (TMS, 364), the difference between them revealed in III.2 remains the same: on the one hand, in the love of true glory still imbeds "some reference to the sentiments of others" (TMS, 365); on the other hand, "though he despises the opinions which are *actually* entertained of him," the lover of virtue "has the highest value for those which *ought* to be entertained of him," and one "great and exalted motive of his conduct" is "that he might think himself worthy of those honourable sentiments" (ibid, emphasis mine).

Moreover, VII.2.4 reveals another difference between the love of true glory and the love of virtue that is not fully developed in III.2 but well reveals the moral inferiority of the love of praiseworthiness/true glory to the love of virtue. Because of his expectation of the correspondence between the praise of others and his own praiseworthiness, even though the lover of praiseworthiness does not crave for the undue praise of others, he may not tolerate it if the praise due him is absent or, even worse, replaced by false ignominy and real damage. He is "in danger of being mortified by the ignorance and injustice of mankind, and his happiness is exposed to the envy of his rivals and the folly of the public" (TMS, 365). In contrast, since he is indifferent to whatever other people actually think of him and since he has faith in the righteousness

¹⁸ See also TMS, 159: Conscience is "the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and superiority of our own characters."

of the perspective of the impartial spectator, the lover of virtue is better able to remain unperturbed when he is not praised for his virtues and even when he is falsely accused of ignominy. Thus, the more profound difference between the love of virtue and the love of praiseworthiness lies in how it motivates an individual to tackle injustice done to him. While the love of virtue makes it possible for him to enjoy inner tranquility even in the face of injustice, the love of praiseworthiness renders him uneasy when treated unjustly.

It is now clear that the love of praiseworthiness is identical to neither the love of praise nor the love of virtue. Due to its similarity to the love of virtue, the love of praiseworthiness is morally superior to the love of praise. Due to its similarity to the love of praise, the love of praiseworthiness is morally inferior to the love of virtue. Praiseworthiness is thus a middle position between praise and virtue. In the next section, I argue that this middle position is the source of both the normativity and accessibility of the love of praiseworthiness, making this sentiment uniquely useful in the situation of ordinary people dealing with injustice and resentment.

4.5 The Love of Praiseworthiness and Smith's Honor Ethics

Having differentiated the love of praiseworthiness from the love of praise and the love of virtue, I turn to investigate the nature of the love of praiseworthiness. As it will turn out by the end of this section, the love of praiseworthiness is a sense of duty derived from the general rules of conduct. It is central to Smith's modernized honor ethics in that it plays a unique role that neither the love of praise nor the love of virtue

can take.¹⁹ It is the locus where the dialectic between the love of praise and the love of virtue takes place and reaches a sanguine synthesis.

To better appreciate the nature of the love of praiseworthiness and its relationship with the love of praise and the love of virtue, it is helpful to make use of the famous Smithian terms, "the impartial spectator" and "the real spectator." The impartial spectator is the abstract vantage point from which we judge the conduct of both our own and others. When applied to our self-judgment, it is also called conscience. In contrast, the real spectator is any existing human being actually observing and judging our conduct. If the love of praise is an individual's full submission to the opinion of the real spectator, and if the love of virtue is his full identification with the impartial spectator—or at least his most earnest attempt at it (TMS, 169)—then how should we comprehend the love of praiseworthiness in terms of the distinction between the impartial spectator and the real spectator? With this question in mind, I turn to Smith's discussion of "the

¹⁹ Hanley (2009) acutely notices the importance of the tripartite distinction among the love of praise, the love of praiseworthiness/true glory, and the love of virtue, but his account of the love of praiseworthiness and its weaknesses is difficult to follow. His argument begins with the point that the love of praiseworthiness remedies mediocre and petty individualism characteristic of the prudent lover of praise (135-50). Yet, since the love of praiseworthiness essentially *is* (or at least is supported by) the classic virtue of magnanimity (151-62), and since this virtue may in turn lead to excessive self-preference and indifference to others (162-74), the love of praiseworthiness has to be mitigated by the love of virtue supported by the virtue of beneficence (175-208). If Hanley's argument is right, then the love of praiseworthiness must be the origin of excessive self-preference, such as the one exhibited by vain politicians. However, it is difficult to see why, rather than from the love of praise, the love of "the loud acclamations of the multitude" (TMS, 294), this excessive self-preference originates from the love of praiseworthiness, which, according to Hanley himself, encourages "the recognition of one's equality with others" rather than bolster pride (150). Moreover, the relation between the love of praiseworthiness and the virtue of magnanimity is ambiguous. While magnanimity and the love of praiseworthiness appear one and the same in his above argument, Hanley elsewhere seems to distinguish them by claiming that "just magnanimity... regulate[s] the excesses of the love of true glory" (98).

general rules of conduct" (or simply "general rules") in TMS III.4 and III.5. The answer to this question is also the answer to the question of the unique political value of the love of praiseworthiness despite its moral inferiority to the love of virtue.

After his discussion in TMS III.3 of conscience, or the love of virtue, Smith begins his consideration of general rules with an account of self-deceit. According to Smith, an individual deceives himself either before or after he takes an action. In the former case, self-deceit motivates him to act without propriety, but what interests us more is the latter case, when the man who acted "is no longer agitated by the same passions which distracted the man of yesterday," when "we can identify ourselves, as it were, with the ideal man within the breast, and, in our own character, view, as in the one case, our own situation, so in the other, our own conduct, with the severe eyes of the most impartial spectator" (TMS, 181-2). In this case, it is precisely our conscience that triggers our self-deceit: "rather than see our own behaviour under so disagreeable an aspect, we too often, foolishly and weakly, endeavour to exasperate anew those unjust passions which had formerly misled us... we even exert ourselves for this miserable purpose, and thus persevere in injustice, merely because we once were unjust, and because we are ashamed and afraid to see that we were so" (TMS, 182).

This post-action self-deceit warrants our attention for three reasons. First, self-deceit implies that we are able to sense the impropriety of our actions taken, even without the reprimand from any real spectators. Second, it takes place precisely at the

moment when it is actually easier for us to judge ourselves with our conscience than before an action is done. Third, when it is triggered, self-deceit keeps us to the path of injustice simply because we cannot bear the pressure of our conscience and thus try to avoid it. Accordingly, Smith's account of self-deceit is not a criticism of conscience *per se*, but of the inability of ordinary people to endure the sight of the impartial spectator. Self-deceit, therefore, is a "fatal weakness of mankind" (TMS, 182). This criticism parallels his critique of self-command in that virtue is good in itself but too demanding for ordinary people to acquire.

It is at this point that Smith introduces the general rules of conduct: "Nature, however, has not left this weakness, which is of so much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has she abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love. Our continual observations upon the conduct of others, insensibly lead us to form to ourselves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided" (TMS, 183). Thus, general rules are remedial. Their significance lies not in any absolute nobility, which conscience alone possesses, but in their usefulness when ordinary people are likely to fail their conscience. They motivate individuals not to take unjust actions at all so that they do not have to struggle with their conscience and at last deceive themselves after placing themselves on the path that the impartial spectator condemns.

What, then, are general rules? First and foremost, they "are ultimately founded upon *experience* of what, in particular instances, our moral faculties, our natural sense of

merit and propriety, approve, or disapprove of" (ibid, emphasis mine). As Smith explains, general rules "can be formed no other way than by observing what actions *actually and in fact* excite them" (TMS, 184, emphasis mine). They are "fixed in our mind by *habitual* reflection" (TMS, 185, emphasis mine). Thus, general rules are the judgments of the real spectators around us.

However, this does not mean that obeying general rules is the same as being driven by the love of praise. What we learn from the actual judgment of others is about the merit and propriety of *particular* actions. This experience leads us to either "resolve never to be guilty *of the like*" or "become ambitious of performing *the like*" (TMS, 183, emphasis mine). Thus, whenever we run into a similar particular action either that others take or that we ourselves are about to take, in order to evaluate it, we no longer refer to the opinion of the real spectators on this particular action, but to the abstract rules that we have already formed: "We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions; because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconsistent with a certain general rule" (ibid). As a result, general rules transcend the immediate judgment of the real spectators.

That being said, general rules are not the judgments of the impartial spectator either, which are linked to the love of virtue, the conscious knowledge of the propriety of conduct. An individual motivated only by general rules is "no doubt, less sensible of the impropriety of his own conduct" before taking an unjust action "than afterwards,"

the moment when he is better able to judge himself from the perspective of the impartial spectator (TMS, 186). What gives general rules the restraining power is his experience that "he had never seen [general rules] infringed by others without the highest disapprobation, and of which the infringement, his own mind forebodes, must soon render him the object of the same disagreeable sentiments" (TMS, 185). He is constrained by what he observes to be the actual approbation and disapprobation that the real spectators are likely to grant. His concern, therefore, remains on the judgment of the real spectators than of the impartial spectator. He is, so to speak, eager for the praise of others for what he at the moment perceives to be praiseworthy, and afraid of the blame of others for what he at the moment perceives to be blameworthy. Thus, the regard to general rules is fundamentally inferior to the viewpoint of the impartial spectator, who judges the propriety of general rules themselves.

This account of general rules leads to the Smithian sense of duty, which is "the regard to those general rules of conduct" (TMS, 186). It motivates individuals to behave appropriately even without the conscious knowledge of the propriety of their behaviors.²⁰ They are the individuals of honor, who "perhaps, never felt the sentiment upon the propriety of which we found our approbation of their conduct, but acted merely from a regard to what they saw were the established rules of behaviour" (TMS, 186). According to Smith, the sense of duty, with its "sacred regard to general rules...

²⁰ See also TMS, 23.

constitutes the most essential difference between a man of principle and honour and a worthless fellow" (TMS, 188). Thus, "though not the very first of their kinds," which are the individuals of virtue, dutiful and honorable individuals "are perhaps the second; and if the regard to the general rules of conduct has been very strongly impressed upon them, neither of them will fail in any very essential part of their duty" (TMS, 187).²¹

If the positive judgment solely of the real spectators satisfies our love of praise, and if the positive judgment solely of the impartial spectator satisfies our love of virtue, then our obedience to general rules, the moral judgment that transcends the judgment of the real spectators yet remains inferior to that of the impartial spectator, satisfies our love of praiseworthiness. The sense of duty, which is based on general rules rather than the judgment of either the real spectator or the impartial spectator, is simply another expression of the love of praiseworthiness. As a result, Smith's distinction between praise, praiseworthiness, and virtue proves crucial to his moral theory. As moral

²¹ The most detailed discussion of Smithian general rules is found in Otteson 2002, 66-84. While his reconstruction is basically accurate, Otteson makes the same mistake of confusing praiseworthiness with virtue as the others mentioned above do and thus misidentifies Smithian general rules with the perspective of the impartial spectator. This mistake is best illustrated in his claim that "the truly virtuous person is the one who has so thoroughly adopted the opinions of the impartial spectator as the general rules of morality by which he leads his life that he regards them as sacred and inviolable" (77), in which he uses the term "virtuous" casually and by which he tries to interpret a paragraph in TMS on general rules that actually mentions neither "virtue" or "virtuous." Otteson might respond that by "the impartial spectator" he does not mean the abstract, ideal observer but a real spectator who is able to be impartial, like a sports umpire (58-64). As a result, the difference between the perspective of the impartial spectator and general rules formed through our habitual interactions with real spectators would be obscured, if not eliminated. While it is not possible here to discuss this in detail, I would like to point out, in a preliminary way, that, given the textual evidence utilized in this and the previous sections, the similar one that Otteson himself mentions (58-60), and his admission that Smithian morality may have a transcendent element (199-257), the question about the nature of the impartial spectator is far from being settled.

motivations for individuals, the love of praise is too base to restrain vanity, whereas the love of virtue is too demanding to be compatible with the human weakness of self-deceit. Neither works well in the situation of ordinary people. In contrast, the love of praiseworthiness strikes a balance. It is nobler than the love of praise but less demanding than the love of virtue. Therefore, the love of praiseworthiness is a promising moral motivation for ordinary people to do the right things.

The unique value of the love of praiseworthiness, which neither the love of praise nor the love of virtue has, reveals the nature of Smith's moral theory as honor ethics. Indeed, we have seen above that "honour" and "honourable" appear many times in Smith's discussion of the love of praiseworthiness.²² More profoundly, combining an individual's sensitivity to and independence from social opinion into one single moral sentiment and rendering it available not only to the few but also to ordinary people, Smith's account of the love of praiseworthiness presents this moral sentiment to be essentially identical to the modern notion of honor whose origin can be traced all the way back to medieval chivalry. It is thus not surprising that David Crouch, a leading historian of medieval chivalry, claims that Smith is the first to articulate the "intellectual kernel" of chivalric honor codes, which is that "social conduct is formed and transformed when the individual holds up his own modes of behavior to his own

²² As many as eighty times altogether in TMS.

internal criticism" (2005, 90). What is left to discuss is how the love of praiseworthiness, the Smithian sense of honor, is able to render resentment "noble and generous."

4.6 Taming Resentment with Honor

I have shown Smith's belief that modern citizens need both self-command and self-estimation to tame their resentment so as to stand up to injustice without themselves becoming vengeful and unjust. It follows that the way in which the love of praiseworthiness, the Smithian sense of honor, helps them cultivate their "noble and generous resentment" is to integrate the merits of both self-command and self-estimation into a single whole. Again, the self-command and self-estimation in question are not, and cannot be, those of the virtuous individual because virtue is too demanding for ordinary people to acquire. As a result, in order for ordinary people to tame their resentment, Smith needs to find the simulacrums of the virtuous self-command and appropriate self-estimation that are suitable for the love of praiseworthiness, which is superior to the love of praise but inferior to the love of virtue. Surprisingly, these simulacrums are found in two moral vices: vanity and pride.

In Section 4.3, I reveal the similarity between the excessively self-commanding individual and "the vain man" as well as between the excessively self-estimating individual and "the proud man." Despite the fact that both vanity and pride are vicious, Smith is aware of their moral potentials. According to him, "we are most frequently in the wrong" in our judgment of the moral unworthiness of vanity and pride, as "both the

proud and the vain man are often (perhaps for the most part) a good deal above" this judgment (TMS, 303). I scrutinize this claim below.²³

The vain man is initially motivated by his love of praise to seek applause from others, sometimes even the kind that the real spectator gives only out of "ignorance or mistake" (TMS, 137) while the impartial spectator refuses. It is the applause that the individual seeking it does not deserve. According to Smith, "To be pleased with such groundless applause is a proof of the most superficial levity and weakness. It is what is properly called vanity, and is the foundation of the most ridiculous and contemptible vices" (TMS, 138). Despite this harsh criticism, Smith also claims that the vain man has the "desire to oblige in all little matters, and sometimes with a real generosity in great ones; a generosity, however, which it often wishes to display in the most splendid colours that it can" (TMS, 303). Such a man is sensitive and amenable to the demand of social opinion, and his sensitivity is an essential quality for anyone to truly appreciate the virtue of self-command, as this virtue requires an individual to control the expression of his passions when social opinion takes this expression as inappropriate.²⁴ Given this potential of vanity to lead to virtues, Smith argues that "The great secret of

²³ Cropsey (1957, 48-55) is the only scholar I have seen so far who elaborates on Smith's distinction between vanity and pride. Boyd (2013) mentions this distinction briefly and concludes dismissively that "obviously these attitudes of pride and vanity are inconsistent with a modern commercial society in which people must interact, on a day to day basis, with others who occupy radically different—and sometimes unequal—social positions" (454).

²⁴ "Our sensibility to the feelings of others, so far from being inconsistent with the manhood of self-command, is the very principle upon which that manhood is founded" (TMS, 175).

education is to direct vanity to proper objects. Never suffer [the vain man] to value himself upon trivial accomplishments. But do not always discourage his pretensions to those that are of real importance. He would not pretend to them if he did not earnestly desire to possess them" (TMS, 304). Put differently, the vanity of the vain man only betrays his admiration of the quality that he pretends to have. It follows that vanity actually breeds the love of praiseworthiness, as the vain man is aware that, to attain praise from others, he has to exhibit what deserves their praise. This is why Smith claims that vanity "is very frequently no more than an attempt prematurely to usurp that glory before it is due" and that "the desire of the esteem and admiration of other people, when for qualities and talents which are the natural and proper objects of esteem and admiration, is the real *love of true glory*; a passion which, if not the very best passion of human nature, is certainly one of the best" (TMS, 304, emphasis mine).²⁵

In contrast, the proud man "is commonly too well contented with himself to think that his character requires any amendment. The man who feels himself all-perfect, naturally enough despises all further improvement" (TMS, 304). Consequently, he is blind to his own weaknesses. But again, despite this harsh criticism, Smith also claims that, "Where there is this real superiority, pride is frequently attended with many respectable virtues; with truth, with integrity, *with a high sense of honour*, with cordial and

²⁵ For an analysis of the positive role of vanity in Smith's understanding of economic activity, see Fleischacker (2004, 104-20).

steady friendship, with the most inflexible firmness and resolution" (TMS, 303, emphasis mine). With this "high sense of honour," the proud man even resembles the lover of virtue in a superficial way to the extent that he despises the praise from others: "He does not even... deign to explain the grounds of his own pretensions. He disdains to court your esteem" (TMS, 300) because he is sure of his superiority even if his self-judgment is not entirely accurate. Consequently, he is able "to act with the most determined and vigorous resolution upon all great and illustrious occasions," and "when he expose[s] himself to danger, he [is] altogether regardless of his life" (TMS, 304). Like an individual indulging in estimating himself only according to the real instead of the ideal standard, the proud man is free from social opinion to the extent that his self-estimation does not derive from the immediate judgment of others. Even though the really virtuous people may "secretly smile at those lofty pretensions" of the proud man, Smith admits that "Great success in the world, great authority over the sentiments and opinions of mankind, have very seldom been acquired without some degree of this excessive self-admiration" (TMS, 295), and that the proud man "is full of indignation at the unjust superiority [of other people], as he thinks it" (TMS, 302). Such a man estimates himself excessively, but again, as explained in Section 4.3, the excess of self-estimation can be more pleasing to the eyes of the impartial spectator than the defect of it. It is "better to be a little too proud."

Thus, while vanity can be developed into the "love of true glory," pride can be accompanied by the "high sense of honour." While vanity motivates self-command, pride inspires self-estimation. While vanity prompts an individual to submit to social opinion, pride provokes him to enjoy some freedom from it. Finally, while vanity originates from the love of praise but implies something superior, pride resembles the love of virtue but remains something inferior. The Smithian account of vanity and pride, despite its generally critical tone, reveals the moral potentials of these vices that can somehow be combined with each other in the love of praiseworthiness. As Smith claims,

"The proud man is often vain; and the vain man is often proud. Nothing can be more natural than that the man, who thinks much more highly of himself than he deserves, should wish that other people should think still more highly of him: or that the man, who wishes that other people should think more highly of him than he thinks of himself, should, at the same time, think much more highly of himself than he deserves" (TMS, 305).

To be sure, what Smith reveals here is how the weaknesses of vanity and pride are often blended with each other. However, it also points to the possibility of blending their merits, of combining the "love of true glory" with the "high sense of honour." While the vain man needs some pride to become more assertive about himself so as to acquire the self-estimation of the proud man, the proud man needs some vanity to become more attentive to social opinion so as to acquire the self-command of the vain man. While the vain man has to transcend his love of praise by becoming less perturbed with the immediate judgment of others, the proud man has to tone down his seeming love of virtue by becoming more sensitive to what other people judge to be appropriate

and virtuous. Consequently, the self-command of the vain man that accompanies his love of praise and the self-estimation of the proud man that accompanies his love of virtue can meet with each other in the love of praiseworthiness, which better enjoys the merit of the independence from social opinion than the love of praise and better tolerates the dependence on social opinion than the love of virtue.

Indeed, the love of praiseworthiness motivates an individual to tame his resentment in the way suggested above. According to Smith's characterization of the lover of praiseworthiness in TMS III.2,

"A man of sensibility may sometimes feel great uneasiness lest he should have yielded too much even to what may be called an honourable passion; to his just indignation, perhaps, at the injury which may have been done either to himself or to his friend. He is anxiously afraid lest, meaning only to act with spirit, and to do justice, he may, from the too great vehemence of his emotion, have done a real injury to some other person; who, though not innocent, may not have been altogether so guilty as he at first apprehended. The opinion of other people becomes, in this case, of the utmost importance to him. Their approbation is the most healing balsam; their disapprobation, the bitterest and most tormenting poison that can be poured into his uneasy mind. When he is perfectly satisfied with every part of his own conduct, the judgment of other people is often of less importance to him" (TMS, 147).

Three things consistent with Smith's claims elsewhere stand out from this note. First, the honorable resentment at injustice and the spirit to retaliate against injustice are "passions" or "emotions" that are spontaneous—just like the young child, who, according to Smith, lacks self-command but is full of passions (TMS, 167). These passions are also called "dispositions to affections" (TMS, 287). They remain independent of social opinion until an individual feels the need to suppress their excess. The defect of these passions is

equally inappropriate, even in the case of the passion of envy, "which views with malignant dislike the superiority of those who are really entitled to all the superiority they possess" (TMS, 287), as its defect makes an individual "tamely suffer other people, who are entitled to no such superiority, to rise above him or get before him" (TMS, 287). An individual who is not envious enough is thus incapable of perceiving unjust advantages, not to mention suppressing his excessive sensitivity to such injustice.²⁶ This claim echoes Smith's view that the excessive self-estimation of the proud man is better than its defect because there is no way for an individual to learn to command himself if he does not experience the excess of his resentment at all. Second, to tame the excess of the "honourable passion" of resentment, it is necessary for an individual to heed "the opinion of other people" and accept its influence. Even if it is not noble enough to submit to the immediate social opinion that praises proper resentment and blames excessive resentment, an individual can nevertheless learn to command his resentment in this way. This view echoes Smith's judgment of the vain man, who is obsessed with the praise and blame of some immediate others but has the potential to become virtuous. Third, the tendency of an individual to be excessively sensitive to immediate social opinion should in turn be balanced by the tendency to be free from such sensitivity. Thus, he should learn to be satisfied with "his own conduct" so as to render the

²⁶ For a furiously resentful person, "the fury of his own temper may be such, that had this been the first time in which he considered such an action, he would undoubtedly have determined it to be quite just and proper, and what every impartial spectator would approve of" (TMS, 185).

judgment of others "less important to him." This satisfaction, however, is no longer based on his complete blindness to the lack of propriety of his wild resentment, but on general rules regarding the propriety of his resentment, which gradually comes into being through his interaction with immediate social opinion and which, though not as good as virtue, is good enough to regulate the resentment of ordinary people. Thus, vanity has to be overcome. After all, only "the dutiful and the virtuous" are truly able to obey general rules, whereas "with the dissipated, the profligate, and the vain, it is entirely disregarded" (TMS, 261). The merits of vanity and pride thus meet with each other in the love of praiseworthiness. They together make it possible for an individual to be both self-commanding and self-estimating and render his resentment "noble and generous," even if his self-command is not the most virtuous and his self-estimation not the most appropriate.

4.7 Conclusion

Smithian honor ethics revolves around the love of praiseworthiness, a sentiment located in between the love of praise and the love of virtue. On the one hand, this sentiment is less demanding than the love of virtue, thereby tolerating not only a less virtuous version of self-command, which is based on the sensitivity to social opinion, but also a less appropriate version of self-estimation, which is based on the independence precisely from social opinion. Ordinary people, who may not always attain virtue but who possess some moral potential even if they are vain or proud, are

within reach of these simulacrums of self-command and self-estimation. On the other hand, the love of praiseworthiness is nobler than the mere love of praise, and its nobility renders this sentiment a channel toward a noble and generous resentment that inspires individuals to stand up to injustice without themselves becoming so vengeful as to go against the rules of justice. In the modern era where the state becomes increasingly irreplaceable for protecting peace and civil order by maintaining the rule of law, and where individual citizens need to both obey the rule of law and cherish the sanguine spirit of resistance against injustice, Smithian honor replaces civic virtue as the primary motivation for ordinary citizens to harmonize their inclinations to obedience and resistance. Thus, Smith's honor ethics and Rousseau's account of honor explicated in Chapter 3 share the same ambition: democratizing this noble passion and bridging the gap between spiritedness and law-abidingness.

Despite this similarity between Smithian and Rousseauian honor, their differences are equally noteworthy. First, as a matter of moral philosophy, while the source of Rousseauian honor's provoking power is an individual's sensitivity to social opinion, the source of its restraining power is naturalistic and thus independent from social opinion. In contrast, Smith argues that self-command, the restraining power of honor, originates from the sensitivity to social opinion while self-estimation, the provoking power of honor, originates from the independence precisely from social opinion. Second, as a matter of political theory, by sharply separating glory and honor

from each other and discussing the use of honor in the domestic context, Rousseau purges honor of its political implications. Thus, his version of honor reflected in *Emile* and its sequel becomes a fundamentally private and non-political passion ineffective to motivate individuals under political circumstances. In contrast, Smith's account of honor focuses on the relationship between honor and resentment, which is a distinctively political sentiment directly connected to justice and injustice. Thus, Smith reverses the Rousseauian tendency of depoliticizing honor and makes sure that honor remains a politically relevant sentiment in modern society. In this respect, he is closer to Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu. As to be seen in the next chapter, Kant shares Rousseau's and Smith's interest in a democratized notion of honor that motivates individuals to harmonize their competing inclinations to obedience and resistance. He chooses to further Smith's project of politicizing honor but returns to a position similar to Rousseau's regarding the sources of honor's restraining and provoking powers.

5. “The Constant Companion of Virtue”: Kantian Honor and Its Political Implications

“Cervantes would have done better if, instead of ridiculing the fantastic and romantic passion, he had directed it better.”

— Immanuel Kant, *Remarks on Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*

5.1 Introduction

On a blank page in his own copy of *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* published in 1764, Immanuel Kant wrote a note that revealed a touching moment in his early personal history:

“I myself am a researcher by inclination. I feel the entire thirst for cognition and the eager restlessness to proceed further in it, as well as the satisfaction at every acquisition. There was a time when I believed this alone could constitute the honor of humankind, and I despised the rabble who knows nothing. Rousseau has set me right. This blinding prejudice vanished, I learn to honor human beings, and I would feel by far less useful than the common laborer if I did not believe that this consideration could impart a value to all others in order to establish the rights of humanity” (Remarks: 96).

From this note, we observe how a condescending genius who once despised the ignorant masses came to see his duty to not only respect other human beings but also commit himself to the establishment of their rights. The trigger of this turn was the transformation of Kant’s honor (*Ehre*) that Rousseau inspired. If this moment had not taken place in Kant’s life, then his image in our eyes could be quite different from what it is today. He might have been remembered as a conceited theoretical thinker whose works were of little interest to moral and political philosophers. Given the enormous, positive impact that Kant’s practical philosophy has had on the modern view of the

morality of mutual respect, it may not be hyperbolic to say that we are indebted to Kant's own sense of honor and the transformation that it underwent.

Scholars (e.g., Cassirer 1970, 1-2; Shell 1996, 81-7) revisit the above passage more than once, and in recent decades, there have been multiple attempts at defending Kantian honor (Knippenberg 1989; Anderson 2008; Welsh 2008; Shell 2009, 277-305; Makkreel 2012). These attempts are justified because, as "the constant companion of virtue" (*Anthropology*, 359), honor occupies important positions in both his aesthetic and ethical writings. However, they have not yet changed the view that Kant's morality of autonomy is an alternative to, even in tension with, the ethics of honor—even among defenders of honor (Pangle 1999, 213-6; Krause 2002, 3-4; Faulkner 2007, 227-35)—and the orthodox view remains that Kant helps replace the outdated aristocratic ethic of honor with the modern democratic morality of equal respect (Taylor 1992, 26-7, 41; Hill 2000, 64; Kuehn 2001, 280-2; Darwall 2013, 11-29). This view is equally justifiable, as Kant does depreciate the value of honor, claiming that honor's "maxim lacks the moral content of an action done not from inclination but from duty" (*Groundwork*, 11). Moreover, the notorious practice of dueling for honor in the eighteenth century that led to violence and bloodshed exacerbates the moral unworthiness of the quixotic quest for honor. Thus, it is not surprising to see the claim that Kant regards honor even as "the root of all evil" (Wood 1999, 290).

However, despite this exegetical debate concerning Kant's mixed attitude toward honor, the political implications of Kantian honor remain largely unexamined. As a critic of many suppressive aspects of his contemporary absolute monarchies and ultraconservative political views,¹ Kant believes that honor helps us attain a politics of mutual respect in an imperfect world where such respect is not yet commonplace. As he claims in *The Conflict of the Faculties*, in a rightful political society, "There will no doubt be more charity, less quarrels in legal actions, more reliability in keeping one's word, and so on in the commonwealth, partly from a love of honor, and partly from a lively awareness of where one's own advantage lies" (CF, 188). Among the very few scholars who try to deal with the political relevance of Kantian honor (Shell 2002; LaVaque-Manty 2006; Bayefsky 2013), Bayefsky is the only one who focuses on how this "love of honor," a motivation for individuals, directly contributes to the formation of a rightful society. The recent literature on Kant's virtue ethics does not guide scholarly attention to the connection between Kantian virtue and politics either, with only one exception (Roulier 2004). Given honor's resemblance to virtue, this fact further reveals the underestimation of Kantian honor and its political implications.

Therefore, in this chapter, I explore how honor motivates individuals in the imperfect world of Kantian politics to participate in the principled fight against

¹ See Maliks 2014 for an account of how Kant's political theory was developed in the context of the current affairs and public debates of the eighteenth century.

disrespect. In so doing, I not only reveal one political implication of Kantian honor, but also illustrate a way to resolve the exegetical debate concerning Kant's attitude toward honor. The reason that this debate is difficult to resolve is that there is indeed a dilemma in Kant's account of honor between the passion of honor and the virtue of honor, which leaves no space for the passion of honor in Kant's ethics. However, these two types of honor can be reconciled in Kant's political theory, a theory that attempts to reconcile the normative ideal of a rightful society with empirical and contingent presumptions concerning human nature.

To prepare for the discussion of Kantian honor in the context of his political theory, in Section 5.2, I establish the central role that legitimate coercion plays in Kant's political theory and its difficulties. I show that disrespect in the form of insult and offense is a constant danger to imperfect political societies that political authority, even a relatively just one, is ill-equipped to tackle. It is in Kant's discussion of honor and duels that all the difficulties related to proper punishment for disrespect are best revealed, and it is in his account of honor that these difficulties can be resolved. In Section 5.3, I reconstruct Kant's account of honor, which consists of two apparently conflicting parts: an aesthetic and an ethical understanding of honor. While both are characterized by an admirable moral strength necessary for any virtuous actions, the major conflict between aesthetic honor and ethical honor lies in their relationship to social opinion. Whereas aesthetic honor, or the passion of honor, heavily depends on public approval, ethical

honor, or the virtue of honor, demands precisely an independence from public opinion—hence arises what I call the dilemma of honor. In Section 5.4, I critically examine current efforts to resolve this dilemma, and provide my own solution by reading the Kantian account of honor in the political context as a reform that aims to combine ethical honor with aesthetic honor so as to motivate the principled fight against disrespect. Kant comments that “Cervantes would have done better if, instead of ridiculing the fantastic and romantic passion, he had directed it better” (Remarks: 72), and his account of honor reflected in his writings can indeed be understood as aiming to better direct “the fantastic and romantic passion” of honor. On the one hand, ethical honor, which confirms that the content of true honor ought to be human dignity, discourages murderous action as a way to fight disrespect. On the other hand, despite the bloodshed often linked to it, aesthetic honor remains necessary in motivating individuals to stand up to disrespect. What is necessary in the imperfect world of Kantian politics is to tame the dangerous tendency of aesthetic honor with the cultivation of ethical honor, and to utilize the active power of aesthetic honor to remedy the lack of such power in ethical honor. I conclude in Section 5.5 with an explanation of how placing honor in the context of Kant’s political theory helps resolve the exegetical debate concerning Kant’s attitude toward honor and a discussion of the role that Kantian honor serves in the eighteenth-century modernization of honor.

5.2 Kantian Politics and the Difficulties in Punishing Disrespect

Before investigating the relationship between Kantian honor and Kantian politics, we need to show that this very relationship is meaningful. Given that Kant insists on the separation between politics and ethics, between rights and virtues, how can the sense of honor, which at first glance appears a matter of ethics, have anything to do with politics? In this section, I establish the link between honor and politics. I begin with a brief note on the central role that legitimate coercion plays in Kantian politics in protecting the rights of individuals and then reveal the difficulties of coercion in protecting individuals from what I later call "unethical disrespect," difficulties that Kant's discussion of honor not only exposes but also remedies.

Scholars have already demonstrated that Kant's political theory, though in harmony with his system of moral philosophy, does not neglect the unique nature of political reality (Ellis 2005; Flikschuh 2010), and one distinguishing aspect of Kantian politics is the necessity of coercion. As Arthur Ripstein claims, while Kant's account of coercion is indeed premised on his moral philosophy and thus firmly rejects punishing individuals for instrumental purposes (2009, 300-24), Kant "formulates many of his arguments in terms of coercion" and should thus be distinguished from "most recent philosophers," who "assign a secondary role in law and politics" to coercion (2009, 3).² This claim is hardly surprising. Kant's political theory is premised on an imperfect

² See Höffe 2010, 81 for criticisms of Rawls and Nozick for their failure to account for coercion.

world with imperfect human beings.³ As he claims in an apparently Hobbesian fashion, "Man, even though he is not morally good, is forced to be a good citizen. As hard as it may sound, the problem of organizing a nation is solvable even for a people comprised of devils" (PP, 124). Given this devilish nature of humans, crimes and offenses are precisely what politics is supposed to confront. It follows that legitimate coercion, which is necessary only when there are crimes and offenses to be punished, is central to Kant's political theory. The purpose of coercion is to protect individuals' rights when the internal constraint that individuals set for themselves (i.e., virtue) can be neither relied upon nor enforced: "If a certain use of freedom is itself a hindrance to freedom in accordance with universal laws (i.e., wrong), coercion that is opposed to this (as a *hindering of a hindrance to freedom*) is consistent with freedom in accordance with universal laws, that is, it is right" (MM, 25).⁴ In civil society, the sole legitimate source of coercion is political authority: "punishment is not an act that the injured party can undertake on his private authority but rather an act of a court distinct from him, which gives effect to the law of a *supreme authority* over all those subject to it" (MM, 207, italics

³ See Ellis (2005, 112-54), who is aware of the gap between norms for an ideal state, which can be deduced without relying on any empirical facts, and norms for a real state, which must take into account facts pertinent to the particularities of that state. She thus argues that provisional right plays a central role in Kant's political theory, designed to tolerate some violation of rights without blocking the possibility of progress toward a fully rightful state.

⁴ As Riley (1983, 1-18) argues, in Kant's system of moral philosophy, politics ultimately serves ethics, but it exists where good will cannot be relied upon.

Kant's).⁵ Without this authority, men return to the state of nature, where neither private nor public rights are guaranteed.⁶

Its centrality to Kant's political theory notwithstanding, the account of coercion faces many difficulties, and Kant is aware of them. While certain types of disrespect can potentially threaten the order of civil society, it is difficult for political authority to mete out proper punishment in all cases.

At first glance, disrespect may not appear to be Kant's primary theoretical concern. What he cares about is its opposite, respect, which is most famously captured in the duty to treat others not merely as a means but also as an end (MM, 209). Indeed, in Kant's moral genealogy, this duty originates not from restraining disrespect of any sort but from the moral feeling of respect necessitated by the universal moral law (MM, 210). Thus, any failure to fulfill this duty may seem to be defined as disrespect. In practice, however, Kant holds that the duty of respect requires us more to *avoid* showing disrespect toward others than to actively exhibit respect (MM, 211, 213). The active exhibition of respect is called reverence, which we cannot exact from others: "[T]he respect we are bound to show other human beings... is only a negative duty. I am not bound to revere others (regarded merely as human beings), that is, to show them positive high esteem" (MM, 213). In this sense, disrespect *precedes* respect, and an

⁵ See also MM, 104. Wood 2010, 116-7 confirms this view.

⁶ According to Ellis, civil society provides the public sphere as the mechanism of moral progress. Therefore, public order must be protected (2005, 12-4).

understanding of disrespect proves important to understand the duty of respect in the political context.

In Kant's enumeration of it, disrespect includes arrogance, defamation, and ridicule (MM, 211-3). I call these forms *unethical disrespect* to distinguish them from *criminal disrespect*, such as murder and mayhem. Citizens who do not take respect toward others as their maxim can nevertheless be coerced to refrain from showing unethical and criminal disrespect to others because both types of disrespect violate the rights of others.

Coercion suggests punishment, and Kant's principle of retribution, which determines the appropriate amount of punishment, is simple: "equality," i.e., "to incline no more to one side than to the other. Accordingly, whatever undeserved evil you inflict upon another within the people, that you inflict upon yourself" (MM, 105). Based on this an-eye-for-an-eye principle, murderers shall be put to death. Similarly, unethical disrespect, which amounts to insult, shall be met with insult as punishment. Throughout *Metaphysics*, there are three cases relevant to unethical disrespect that Kant claims warrant punishment. I first discuss two of them. One case is found immediately in Kant's discussion of punishment: whoever injures others verbally shall apologize publicly (MM, 106). Another case is found in the discussion of the reputation of the dead. The dead have the right to good reputation, and whoever attacks this reputation is injuring the right that belongs to the dead and shall be punished by shame in the eyes of

the public (MM, 76). However, difficulties related to properly punishing unethical disrespect immediately emerge from these two cases.

First, according to the principle of punitive equality, a punishment for unethical disrespect can be effective only when it leads to shame. A fine, for example, can be imposed on the disrespectful, but if the disrespectful person is rich, then the fine means nothing but that he can simply pay to freely insult others (MM, 106). The effectiveness of punishment in the form of insult, therefore, hinges on the assumption that the person who is punished has a sense of shame. However, in an imperfect world where people may just be “comprised of devils,” how can we be certain that villains are not shameless? There is no such assurance, and Kant thus demands that moral education emphasize “the shamefulness of vice” (MM, 225). Educated otherwise, individuals will lose the sense of their dignity, believing that it is exchangeable with goods of equal price.

Second, Kant hesitates in regard to whether the political authority is the proper agent to shame the disrespectful. Although he who attacks my posthumous reputation is “as punishable as if he had done it during my lifetime,” he is punishable “not by a criminal court, but only by public opinion, which, in accordance with the right of retribution, inflicts on him the same loss of the honor he diminished in another” (MM, 76). Unlike the punishment of public apology that the court issues, punishments for disrespecting the dead should not involve the court at all.

Moreover, there is the third difficulty that unethical disrespect may indirectly lead to criminal disrespect—on the part of not only the disrespectful but also, and especially, the disrespected—which renders unethical disrespect evidently threatening to the order of civil society. For example, arrogance, which is one of the three forms of unethical disrespect, is a common source of malice that leads to vengeance and crimes: "It is the haughtiness of others when their welfare is uninterrupted, and their self-conceit in their good conduct... that generate this malevolent joy... The sweetest form of malice is the desire for revenge" (MM, 207). Therefore, even if the disrespectful person is punished by shaming, the seed of resentment may remain in the heart of those he disrespects and is likely to eventually grow into horrific crimes.

All three of these difficulties related to punishing unethical disrespect appear in the third case of Kant's discussion of punishing unethical disrespect: defending one's honor in a duel. A duel may end with the death of one of the two parties involved, but it does not begin as an act of murder. Rather, it is a reaction of the offended to the humiliating affront that he receives from the offender. Kant frankly admits that dueling leads to a "quandary" for penal justice. To begin with, the unethical disrespect of the offense provokes the offended to resort to the criminal disrespect of manslaughter, which Kant believes must always be punished by death. This matter is the third difficulty illustrated above. Moreover, penal justice against the offender can never be proper since legal punishment cannot "wipe away the stain of suspicion of cowardice"

(MM, 109) if the offended fails to respond to the offense. Political authority, even if a just one (or precisely because it is a just one), is thus not the proper agent to punish the offender; therefore, in a civil society, the offended still finds himself “in the state of nature” with the offender, seeking “punishment of the offender not by law, taking him before a court, but by a duel” (MM, 109). This matter is the second difficulty illustrated above. Finally, while it is thinkable that political authority may deter the offended from resorting to a duel by claiming that his honor “counts for nothing” (MM, 109), Kant firmly rejects this solution on the ground that it is an unfair treatment to the honor of the offended, which “is here no illusion” (MM, 109) and “is indeed true honor... incumbent as duty on” him (MM, 108). After all, attacking the sense of honor is equivalent to attacking the proper sense of shame that makes punishing unethical disrespect effective. Individuals without a sense of honor lose their sense of shame, which in turn leads only to the ineffectiveness of punishing unethical disrespect. This matter is the first difficulty illustrated above.

Thus, while political power is supposed to force even devils to respect the right of others, penal justice runs into difficulties when punishing unethical disrespect, which, if left unpunished or punished improperly, can lead to criminal disrespect and threaten the sense of shame, hence potentially threatening the order of civil society. Surprisingly, when accounting for the cause of these difficulties, Kant blames legislation instead of honor: “the legislation itself (and consequently also the civil constitution), as long as it

remains barbarous and undeveloped, is responsible for the discrepancy between the incentives of honor in the people (subjectively) and the measures that are (objectively) suitable for its purpose" (MM, 109). Ultimately, Kant defends honor even in cases least favorable to it. Disrespect must be fought, but the political authority may not always be the best enforcer of the moral law. The rest of this chapter will illustrate that, for Kant, honor remains a useful incentive for individuals to fight disrespect in an imperfect world.

5.3 Two Concepts of Honor and Their Dilemma

In this section, I reconstruct a nuanced notion of Kantian honor.⁷ Kant has two distinct accounts of honor. One is what I call *aesthetic honor*, found mainly in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* and the accompanying "Remarks." The other is what I call *ethical honor*, found mainly in *Metaphysics*, especially in *The Doctrine of Virtue*. While the aesthetic account studies honor as a passion with pathological origins, the ethical account treats it as a virtue exacted by the universal moral law. This difference reveals what I call *the dilemma of honor*: the sources of each of the two types of honor are in conflict with each other. I discuss the solution to this dilemma in the next section.

⁷ Denis' similar reconstruction (2014, 195-202) based largely on students' notes (especially Vigilantius's and Collins's) supplements my analysis. I disagree with one of her views that Kant never truly admits honor into his ethics (Denis 2014, 202-3). According to her, calling the ethical duty to oneself love of honor is merely an analogy of Kant's. While this interpretation is plausible, not only is it unable to explain why the analogy between the duty to oneself and the sense of honor has to be made at all, but it also downplays the ambiguity intrinsic to the phenomenon of honor. Nevertheless, even in *Metaphysics*, Kant does not fully endorse the honor based only on social opinion. Aesthetic and ethical honor thus remain in conflict with each other.

5.3.1 Ethical Honor

Ethical honor bears the following characteristics. (1) Love of honor (*Ehrliche*) is a duty of virtue to oneself. (2) It is also a universal moral feeling intrinsic to the human mind, encouraging individuals to always comply with the universal moral law. (3) The content of ethical honor is human dignity, which essentially lies in the moral law.

(1) Love of honor is categorized as "a human being's duty [of virtue] to oneself as a moral being only" (MM, 175). This categorization suggests what love of honor is *not* in three ways. First, love of honor is not a duty of *right*.⁸ As discussed in the previous section, while a duty of right is that which can be enforced by external lawgiving, i.e., positive law, a duty of virtue is that which can be set down only by internal lawgiving, i.e., the moral law in the human mind. Love of honor, therefore, cannot be made into an article of any written law code that justifies the imposition of external coercion against negligence and disobedience. Second, love of honor is not a duty to *others*. It issues such ethical commands as "Be no one's lackey" (MM, 188), but it does not directly order, for

⁸ Scholars (Shell 2002, 243; Ripstein 2006, 1399; Höffe 2010, 85-7) observe Kant's claim that "rightful honor" is one of the three divisions of the duties of right (MM, 29). Höffe even argues that claiming one's "rightful honor" is crucial to Kant's account of rights, as it is the premise for any individual to "be considered as a legal entity in relation to other human beings" (2010, 87). Given the strict distinction that Kant maintains between virtues and rights, it is not easy to harmonize honor as a duty of virtue and honor as a duty of right. However, the fact that Kant never again in the rest of *Metaphysics* discusses honor as a duty of right despite his promise to do so inclines me to think that we can dismiss the idea of "rightful honor" as insignificant. After all, it is unreasonable to punish someone just for failing to respect oneself. See Denis (2015, 22-25) for a fuller exposition. Moreover, Höffe's argument is flawed. If, as Höffe claims, an individual has to claim his rightful honor to be considered a legal entity, then the state is not justified in punishing him when he fails to observe the duty of rightful honor because this failure disqualifies him from being a legal entity and thus from being a proper object of meaningful punishment. If one is not punishable, then the failure to uphold one's rightful honor cannot be a failure to observe a duty of right, which is supposed to incur punishment.

example, that one ought not to lord it over someone else. While the categorical imperative asks one not to *use others* merely as a means—as is usually interpreted and emphasized—love of honor stresses a specific aspect of the categorical imperative: one ought not to *be used by others* merely as a means (MM, 29). Third, love of honor is not a duty to oneself as an *animal* being. While the duty to oneself as an animal being commands, for example, that one strengthen one's natural capabilities to preserve one's natural life, love of honor, as a duty to oneself as a moral being, commands instead that one strive to live up to one's transcendental human dignity. It is "a concern to yield nothing of one's human dignity in comparison with others" (MM, 211). Therefore, love of honor is essentially a duty of self-respect regarding one's practical reason: "his insignificance as a *human animal* may not infringe upon his consciousness of his dignity as a *rational human being*, and he should not disavow the moral self-esteem of such a being, that is, he should pursue his end, which is in itself a duty, not abjectly, not in a *servile spirit* as if he were seeking a favor, not disavowing his dignity, but always with consciousness of his sublime moral predisposition" (MM, 187, italics Kant's).

(2) Understanding love of honor as self-respect leads us to its second dimension: it is a moral feeling. In the introductory section of *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant claims that the universal moral law within a human being "unavoidably forces from him *respect* for his own being, and this feeling (which is of a special kind) is the basis of certain duties, that is, of certain actions that are consistent with his duty to himself" (MM, 162, italics

Kant's). Put differently, this claim holds that self-respect is a feeling that individuals must be presumed to have for them to be moral agents and to take moral actions accordingly. Therefore, Kant also understands love of honor *qua* self-respect as a moral feeling, an incentive in us that motivates us to obey the moral law. Moreover, as a *moral* feeling, a feeling "of a special kind," love of honor does not have an empirical origin. Rather, it is transcendental and intrinsic to our practical reason. Free from the empirical realm, this moral feeling is universal.

(3) It follows that the object of love of honor, or the content of honor, is essentially human dignity. As can be deduced from the discussion above, taken as a duty of virtue, love of honor directs one to live up to one's own dignity, as one is morally obliged to do so; taken as a moral feeling, love of honor is immediately triggered by one's own dignity. Since human dignity is derived solely from the universal moral law, the content of honor can also be viewed as this law.

Identifying the content of honor with human dignity and the universal moral law has two important theoretical implications.⁹ First, it reveals the pivotal role that honor is supposed to play in Kant's system of moral philosophy: love of honor is the basis of all other duties. Since it is directly related to human beings as moral beings, love of honor is the most important duty among the duties to oneself. Furthermore, its existence is what

⁹ Arguing that honor is "a sensuous demand" "expressing social norms" (2000, 184) and that "the pursuit of honor is not itself moral for Kant" (183), Uleman neglects Kant's entire account of ethical honor based on human dignity, even though she rightly notes that understanding Kantian honor as both moral and sensuous necessarily leads to a quandary, which is discussed below.

the existence of all duties to others has to presuppose. This fact is made clear in Kant's argument against the attempt at denying the existence of duties to oneself: "For suppose there were no such duties: then there would be no duties whatsoever, and so no external duties either. —For I can recognize that I am under obligation to others only insofar as I at the same time put myself under obligation, since the law by virtue of which I regard myself as being under obligation proceeds in every case from my own practical reason; and in being constrained by my own reason, I am also the one constraining myself" (MM, 173). Put differently, duties such as "I ought to help others" and "I ought not to hamper the outer freedom of others" can be duties *for* me only if I have already agreed that these duties are binding commands and hence if I have already upheld this agreement of my own. Love of honor, so to speak, is the duty of duties. Second, that human dignity is the essential content of honor reveals the non-contingent nature of ethical honor. As a virtue, love of honor is a duty to oneself and thus does not primarily focus on others. As a moral feeling, love of honor is innate to one's practical reason and thus does not originate from without. However, these aspects are insufficient warrants of honor's non-contingent nature. The reason is that it is possible that the content of any duty to oneself and the source of moral feeling may turn out to be sociological and pathological: "The depths of the human heart are unfathomable. Who knows himself well enough to say, when he feels the incentive to fulfill his duty, whether it proceeds entirely from the representation of the law or whether there are not many other sensible

impulses contributing to it that look to one's advantage (or to avoiding what is detrimental) and that, in other circumstances, could just as well serve vice?" (MM, 196). Now that Kant identifies the content of honor with human dignity derived from the universal moral law, which does not depend on the outer, empirical world, love of honor proves to be truly non-contingent. As a result, ethical honor avoids the social opinion on what is good and bad, moral and immoral, thereby giving individuals solid grounding in a fluctuating empirical world when making moral judgments.

In summary, Kant understands the ethical love of honor as a duty of virtue to oneself and a moral feeling. The true content of honor is human dignity derived from the universal moral law, thereby rendering honor the duty of duties and a duty that is non-contingent.

5.3.2 Aesthetic Honor

Apparently, ethical honor is equivalent to what we presently call integrity. As some historical accounts of honor suggest, the internalization of honor is a distinctive feature of modern bourgeois honor (Jones 1959; Nye 1998). In this light, Kant's acceptance of ethical honor may not seem to be an exception. However, the oft-ignored nuance of Kantian honor lies in his simultaneous insistence on aesthetic honor despite his criticism of it.

In contrast to ethical honor, aesthetic honor, or the passion of honor, appears at first glance to be highly problematic. Social opinion often determines the code of honor

that individuals follow, thereby creating several types of false honor that are harmful to morality.

In the *Observations*, Kant shows that he is perturbed by the reality that honor is too often determined by social opinion because the social determination of honor leads individuals away from virtue. As shown in his note cited at the beginning of this chapter, the content of Kant's own honor changes. Through Rousseau, Kant realizes that misidentifying the content of honor leads only to false honors that are "blinding prejudice" (Remark, 96). Unsurprisingly, then, Kant presents in the *Observations* his most critical assessment of honor's role in morality, in which virtue and honor are explicitly separated from each other: "What happens from this impulse [the feeling of honor] is not in the least virtuous, for which reason everyone who wants to be taken for virtuous takes good care to conceal the motivation of lust for honor" (*Observations*, 25). In Herder's notes from Kant's lecture on ethics taken roughly during the same period of time, Kant goes so far as to claim that "The pursuit of honor is more harmful to morality than any other passion; all others have something real about them, but this one is a phantom of the brain" (Herder, 283-4).

Kant's concern regarding aesthetic honor is that it bases one's worth on the opinion of others. In *Metaphysics*, he calls this aspect the "tyranny of popular mores" (MM, 210). One's self-respect becomes dependent on social opinion when society determines the content of honor, and love of honor thus turns into lust or desire for

honor (*Ehrbegierde*).¹⁰ This lust for honor takes different forms, such as vanity, haughtiness, pride, pomp, and conceitedness (*Observations*, 55). In the *Observations*, Kant portrays a prominent model corrupted by this lust for honor: "the choleric person." This person is someone who acts in accordance with principles that are not "of virtue, but of honor" and who therefore "has no feeling for the beauty or the value of actions, but only for the judgment that the world might make about them." According to Kant, this person is either vain or foolish (*Observations*, 30).

Social opinion dictates aesthetic honor, whereas ethical honor is in accordance with the moral law. Nevertheless, aesthetic honor is not necessarily evil. Despite the harm that aesthetic honor may do to morality when its content is misidentified due to the influence of social opinion, Kant never rejects it. As he claims, "Honor wreaks much ill, and then it also serves as a means to prevent the greatest excess of the very same" (*Remarks*, 137). Even in his critical assessment of honor in the *Observations*, Kant argues that in terms of its form (that is, regardless of its material/content), aesthetic honor is not unfriendly to morality.¹¹

¹⁰ See also Kant's criticism of "the mania for honor" (*Anthropology*, 372-3).

¹¹ Makkreel distinguishes three types of honor in *Observations*, "feeling for honor (*Gefühl für Ehre*)," "desire for honor (*Ehrbegierde*)," and "love of honor (*Ehrliebe*)," and argues that the feeling for honor and the love of honor are not as morally condemnable as the desire for honor (2012, 101-6). Since Kant sometimes uses these three terms in apparently exchangeable ways (e.g., *Observations*, 25, 34), and since he also employs terms such as "drive for honor (*Trieb der Ehre*)" and "inclination of honor (*Neigung der Ehre*)" in *Remarks*, the distinction he makes between one type of honor and another may not be as rigorous as Makkreel asserts. Nevertheless, Makkreel's analysis is correct in that aesthetic honor indeed does not have to be evil.

First, Kant surprisingly claims that honor, despite its pursuit of inequality, is fundamentally premised on equality. Otherwise, "Would a savage search for another in order to show him his advantages? If he can be without him, he will enjoy his freedom. Only if he must be together with him, will he attempt to outdo him..." (Remarks, 102, 180, 202; Herder, 293) The acknowledgment of equality, which is in accordance with the universal moral law, is thus embedded in the drive for honor, even if those who pursue honor are not aware of it.¹²

More importantly, aesthetic honor leads to the sense of shame: "[P]rovidence has further placed in us a certain feeling which is fine and moves us, or which can also balance cruder self-interest and vulgar sensuality. This is the feeling for honor and its consequence, shame" (Observation, 25). Shame "is a secrecy of nature aimed at setting bounds to a most intractable inclination, and which, in so far as it has the call of nature on its side, always seems compatible with good, moral qualities, even if it is excessive" (Observations, 41). Honor and shame, therefore, give individuals some power to stand firm against the tide of vices originating from their inclinations and interests—or what Kant calls "pathological" causes in the empirical world. Aesthetic honor, therefore, can be "so highly valued because it indicates so much renunciation of other advantages" (Remarks, 103). Indeed, it is precisely because of its connection to shame that aesthetic

¹² See also LaVaquer-Manty 2006, 724-31 and Sommers 2018, 92-6 for further discussions of the relationship between honor and equality.

honor cannot be a virtue. More often than not, shame-driven behaviors are heteronomous. Nevertheless, because of the firmness that it provides to individuals, honor remains "the simulacrum of virtue" (Observations, 25; Herder, 285-6).

The striking similarity between aesthetic honor and ethical honor is thus revealed. Despite the difference in their origins, both types of honor exhibit the moral strength¹³ that is necessary for morality. On the one hand, ethical honor, which is itself a virtue, intrinsically requires moral strength. Kant considers the fight between virtues and vices a war and concludes that "The vices, the brood of dispositions opposing the law, are the monsters he has to fight. Accordingly, this moral strength, as courage, also constitutes the greatest and the only true honor that man can win in war" (MM, 164). On the other hand, this moral strength is also found in aesthetic honor because of the sense of shame that accompanies it. For this reason, Kant goes so far as to suggest that even when the specific content of certain aesthetic honors is *contrary* to the universal moral law, aesthetic honor itself should not be simply dismissed—not even legally—as completely vicious. This explains why the concept of honor in duels should not be taken by legislation as "count[ing] for nothing," even though the categorical imperative commands that the "unlawful killing of another... be punished by death" (MM, 109). The same holds true in the case of punishing rebels. Rebellion is wrong because it threatens

¹³ Loudon claims that the similarity between the two types of honor is that they "involve acting for the sake of an ideal that is larger than oneself; an ideal that often involves significant personal sacrifice and forfeit of pleasure" (2000, 150).

the civil state and thus violates the postulate of public right: "when you cannot avoid living side by side with all others, you ought to leave the state of nature and proceed with them into a rightful condition" (MM, 86). However, Kant thinks it inappropriate to punish rebels driven by honor in the same way as punishing rebels driven by self-interest because "the man of honor is undeniably less deserving of punishment than the other" (MM, 107).

The moral strength shown in aesthetic honor must be distinguished from the purported "strength of soul" shown in crimes.¹⁴ Kant denies that strength of soul is connected to crimes, since such strength belongs to healthy souls, whereas crimes are themselves marks of disease in the soul. Criminal "strength," therefore, is mere frenzy (MM, 148-9). The moral strength shown in aesthetic honor, in contrast, is not, because aesthetic honor is not a criminal motivation. In the case of honor killing, for example, honorable individuals think more of defending their honor than of committing a crime.

¹⁴ Critics argue that the moral strength of aesthetic honor is inferior to that of ethical honor because only the latter originates from moral causes. McCarthy's distinction between the *moral worth* of an action and the *virtue* of an action is helpful in refuting this argument. On the one hand, it is true that the moral strength of ethical honor indeed has moral worth that the moral strength of aesthetic honor lacks. Therefore, moral maxims ought to be based on the former rather than the latter (See also Frazer 2010, 115-8 for a similar view). On the other hand, these two types of moral strength can be equally virtuous, as they can equally motivate praiseworthy actions. See McCarthy 2009, 188-91. This seems to be what Kant means when he claims that, "although the lust for honor is a foolish delusion if it becomes the rule to which one subordinates the other inclinations, yet as an accompanying drive it is most excellent" (Observations, 34).

In Kant's view, the lack of any evil desire in honor killing thus makes such an act more innocent than a willful murder.¹⁵

To conclude, aesthetic honor relies on social opinion, and if this opinion is morally corrupted, then aesthetic honor is also corrupted. Nevertheless, aesthetic honor is always accompanied by a sense of shame. Despite being a sign of heteronomy, shame motivates individuals to exhibit moral strength that motivates them to fight vices courageously. This moral strength is what aesthetic honor and ethical honor share, making it possible for Kant to call both of them "honor" despite the difference between them.

5.3.3 Social Opinion and the Dilemma of Honor

Regardless of the similarity between ethical honor and aesthetic honor, the difference remains enormous. The source of ethical honor is the universal moral law that transcends social opinion. In contrast, the source of aesthetic honor is precisely social opinion. This difference actually raises a dilemma for Kantian honor that troubles contemporary scholars.

On the one hand, viewed from the perspective of ethical honor, an honorable individual ought not to judge the value of an action and henceforth whether he should take this action or not according to how social opinion would judge it. Rather, the only

¹⁵ In his critique of Wood's claim that honor is the root of evil, Makkreel draws evidence from the *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* to reach the similar conclusion that "the mere intent to act honorably is not evil" (2012, 108). He is also right that such an incentive may still lead to vices and thus needs proper cultivation.

authority that he ought to follow is his practical reason, which amounts to the universal moral law. It follows that even if social opinion takes as ridiculous whatever his practical reason judges to be worthy, this individual must remain unperturbed and do what the moral law demands him to do. As Kant explicates in the *Anthropology*, genuine courage is “aroused by reason,” and “to venture something that duty commands, even at the risk of being ridiculed by others, requires resoluteness, and even a high degree of courage; because love of honor is the constant companion of virtue, and he who is otherwise sufficiently prepared against violence seldom feels equal to ridicule if someone scornfully refuses this claim to honor.” Such an individual possesses the moral courage that “many who show themselves as brave figures...in a duel do not possess” (*Anthropology*, 359). He must therefore be indifferent to unethical disrespect—and social opinion in general—from others who attempt to lower his social status: “The virtuous one looks upon the rank of others with indifference, although if he refers it to himself, he looks at it with contempt” (*Observations*, 76).

On the other hand, viewed from the perspective of aesthetic honor, an honorable individual ought to be sensitive to social opinion. Particularly in the case of dueling, “when a junior officer is insulted he sees himself constrained by the public opinion of the other members of his estate to obtain satisfaction for himself” (*MM*, 109). The universal moral law that prohibits killing no longer speaks to him. On the contrary, he has to act against this prohibition to defend his military honor in the face of the offender

and his fellow soldiers. In fact, Kant holds that the opinion of others is definitely not irrelevant to one's honor. According to him, our total indifference to the negative opinion of others is not a sign of honor but of its forfeiture. It reduces us to the status of a slave who voluntarily accepts his master's disdain and becomes a "worm" that "cannot complain afterwards if people step on him" (MM, 188).¹⁶ In a nutshell, an honorable individual must be sensitive to social opinion and respond to it when unethical disrespect threatens his honor.

The dilemma of Kantian honor can thus be formulated as follows: an honorable individual must be not only indifferent but also sensitive to unethical disrespect from others. In this formulation, the calls of ethical honor and aesthetic honor conflict with one another. In the next section, I critically examine a few attempts at solving this dilemma and show that the locus at which a proper solution exists is the imperfect political world in which we all live.

5.4 The Kantian Reform of Honor

5.4.1 Critiques of Existing Solutions to the Dilemma of Honor

The dilemma of honor attracts a considerable amount of attention from Kant scholars, but none of their solutions is fully satisfactory.

¹⁶ See also Collins' lecture note: "Honor is the goodness of actions in appearance. Men's actions must not only be good, they must also seem good in the eyes of others. They must spring from a love of honor" (Lectures on Ethics, 176).`

The first and most intuitive response to the dilemma of honor is simply to dismiss it on chronological grounds. According to this response, while aesthetic honor is mainly developed in Kant's earlier works such as *Observations*, ethical honor is found in Kant's later works such as *Metaphysics*. There is a gap of thirty years in between the two and Kant might simply have changed his mind on the right way of understanding honor and largely abandoned his earlier acceptance of aesthetic honor. However, as shown in my analysis above, Kant criticizes aesthetic honor even in *Observations* and defends it even in *Metaphysics*, and he claims that honor can contribute to a rightful politics even in *The Conflict of the Faculties*, one of his latest monographs. Thus, it is questionable that Kant in his later life replaces aesthetic honor with ethical honor as the sole legitimate understanding of honor. As to be seen below, this dismissal of the dilemma of honor is based on the theoretical distinction between Kantian anthropology and Kantian morality, but this distinction does not always apply to Kantian politics, in which pathological motives do not have to be dismissed simply because they are non-moral.

There are also scholars who acknowledge the legitimacy of the dilemma of honor in Kant's practical philosophy and attempt to resolve it. By analyzing honor killing, David Sussman tries to capture the reason that Kant cannot sustain honor as complete independence from social opinion: "The dilemma [that the insulted soldier and the unmarried mother] share is that if they do not kill [the offender and the illegitimate child, respectively], they will be utterly disgraced, becoming little more than objects of

contempt or mockery for those with whom they interact... Kant considers contempt always to be morally inappropriate, but lack of objective justification will not change the social fact that someone who is disgraced will no longer be taken seriously as an agent, as someone towards whom justification might be owed, and who needs to be kept in mind as a significant source of challenges, protests or approval" (2008, 313-4). To solve this dilemma, Sussman distinguishes between an "ordinary insult" and "disgrace," and claims that the former "do[es] not diminish what is ours without our acceptance," while the latter diminishes our freedom "in that we lose a certain power to act regardless of our own 'inner' attitudes or acceptance" (315). Thus, an honorable individual ought to ignore an ordinary insult and stand up to disgrace. This solution makes sense but is difficult to apply to particular cases because the line between an ordinary insult and disgrace can be obscure; however, Sussman does not suggest in concrete terms how we may discern this line. Moreover, as an interpretation of Kant, Sussman's view is not well supported by Kant's works. Kant never makes distinctions between one form of ridicule and another in his discussion of unethical disrespect, and the reason is obvious: virtue is demanding and accepts no compromise.

Krista Thomason takes a different path and tries to explain that contempt from others is not necessarily a bad thing in Kant's view. Referring to Kant's claim in the *Critique of Practical Reason* that individuals ought to feel a certain type of humiliation before the universal moral law, which is called moral feeling, Thomason argues that an

individual deserves contempt from social opinion if he violates the moral law and thus puts himself in a dishonorable position, and that the sense of shame aroused by such contempt will be morally sanguine (2013, 230-3). There are three problems with this argument. First, Thomason argues that the dishonorable individual rightly feels ashamed because public contempt and the violation of the universal moral law converge with each other. However, the implication of this argument is that the origin of shame is fundamentally the moral law and that public contempt merely *triggers* shame. We are thus entitled to wonder whether this “shame” is shame at all or merely a synonym for guilt. After all, shame seems to be shame proper when it *originates* from the judgment of social opinion. Second, it follows that Thomason’s interpretation cannot explain Kant’s defense of aesthetic honor where codes of honor and the universal moral law do not converge. As shown above, neither the killing of the illegitimate child nor the killing of the insulting offender can be in accordance with the moral law, but it is still wrong to repudiate the sense of honor that the unmarried mother and the offended gentleman possess. Third, put in the political context, the convergence of social opinion and the moral law becomes even more problematic, as this convergence amounts to the premise that social opinion is always upright, which directly negates the premise of Kant’s political theory that civil society can remain rightful even if it is full of “devils.”

Rachel Bayefsky speculates that Kant’s toleration of aesthetic honor even in the case of honor killing marks his acknowledgment of the status quo of the imperfect world

and that he aims at “the eventual phasing out of such notions of honour” (2013, 830), replacing them with ethical honor.¹⁷ This interpretation is the nearest to Kant’s intention, as it treats Kant as a reformer of honor who is sensitive to social reality. However, given the nature of Kant’s politics, it is doubtful whether “the eventual phasing out” of aesthetic honor is desirable, as discussed below.

5.4.2 The Kantian Reform of Honor

Contrary to Bayefsky’s speculation, I argue that, while aesthetic honor does need reform to approach the ideal of ethical honor, it cannot be replaced by ethical honor in the Kantian political context. In previous sections, I argue that Kant’s political theory presumes an imperfect world, where coercion against disrespect is necessary and where unethical disrespect is difficult to punish by political authority yet threatening to the order of civil society. If the state is ineffective in punishing unethical disrespect, then individual citizens themselves have to act. They ought not only to refrain from exhibiting such disrespect toward others but also to deter others from being disrespectful to them. In the political context, ethical honor can be particularly powerful in regard to the former task, but aesthetic honor works better in regard to the latter task.

What renders ethical honor fundamentally superior to aesthetic honor is that it motivates our genuine respect toward others. As argued above, the duty of respect toward others is possible only when there is the duty of self-respect, i.e., love of honor,

¹⁷ For similar opinions, see Knippenberg 1989, 818.

which is the duty of duties, as I call it. That is, I must respect myself by acknowledging the possibility of self-constraint in order to willingly respect others. Moreover, since the content of ethical honor is human dignity—hence the universal moral law—and since the moral law demands that we respect others, honorable individuals must show respect toward others in order to live up to their own dignity. If they do not find it honorable, then respect toward others is mere subjection to the opinion of others: "a human being cannot carry his giving an example of the respect due others so far as to degenerate into blind imitation (in which custom is raised to the dignity of a law), since such a tyranny of popular mores would be contrary to his duty to himself" (MM, 210). Thus, ethical honor is necessary for the ethical duty of respect toward others. More importantly, as also argued above, ethical honor has a non-contingent nature. Thus, ethically honorable individuals do not rely on social opinion to make moral judgments and are thereby not subject to the "tyranny of popular mores." Owing to the moral strength found in honor, individuals insist on their own values even when they are tempted by popular mores to betray them. Consequently, it is their firm conviction in their inner values that constitutes honorable individuals' contribution to rightful politics. Because of this conviction, interpersonal comparison loses its moral importance—since my own value is universal and absolute and thus does not rely on the opinion of others, why do I need to compare myself to others to see my relative value?¹⁸ Respect derived from ethical honor

¹⁸ See Wood 1999, 136-9 for a similar view.

even frees individuals from a bad form of reciprocity, i.e., deciding whether I ought to take a certain virtuous action according to whether you have done it reciprocally. As Alexander Welsh claims, "in Kant reciprocity is sometimes absent, and respect need not be mutual" (2008, 160). That is, if I willingly respect you because I believe that doing so is an honorable deed, then I will respect you even if you are not respectful toward me. The value of my honor does not depend on your opinion about it.

However, when put in the political rather than the ethical context, ethical honor is ineffective at deterring disrespect. The sources of this ineffectiveness are developed in previous sections concerning the nature of Kantian politics, of disrespect, and of ethical honor.

First, Kantian politics presumes that virtues, though desirable, can be neither relied upon nor enforced. Therefore, as a virtue, ethical honor will always remain rare among citizens. In contrast, aesthetic honor is more common not only than ethical honor but even than the drive for self-interest. It is thus a more reliable motivation. As Kant claims, while "*few*" people act out of principles and while acting on self-interest is "*the most common,*" "*the love of honor is distributed among all human hearts*" (Observations, 34, emphasis mine). Indeed, this does not mean that aesthetic honor *per se* is superior to ethical honor. Yet, if aesthetic honor is not necessarily evil, and if it is more widely spread than ethical honor as a motivation to the reaction against disrespect, then there is no reason to have to reject aesthetic honor in the political context.

Second, even if ethical honor could be widespread, the reactions that it can motivate against disrespect are limited and often impotent. Driven by aesthetic honor, the insulted soldier cannot tolerate the shame of being insulted such that he attempts to kill the offender. For an individual who subscribes only to ethical honor, this reaction is unthinkable because ethical honor demands that he respect others and this demand in practice means not to disrespect them. Thus, an ethically honorable individual would certainly neither vindicate his honor by killing the offender, nor take any other actions that have disrespectful elements in them as his response to the disrespect that he receives. Indeed, he may respond to disrespect by openly condemning it or by going to court. Neither response involves disrespectful actions on the side of the offended. However, these solutions only drag us back into the Kantian "quandary" for penal justice when the defense of honor is at stake. Since "devils" in the imperfect world of Kantian politics may not even blush when condemned only with words, the effect of mere words in defending one's honor and deterring disrespect from others is weak. Since court is a third party, relying on its help rather than one's own action to vindicate one's honor in the face of unethical disrespect may still appear to be a less honorable response.

Finally, a key feature of ethical honor may even render an honorable individual more vulnerable to disrespect. Since his honor lies in his dignity as a rational being, which remains undamaged despite public ridicule, he is free from the "tyranny of

popular mores" and thus is indifferent to the opinion both of people who disrespect him and of people who think he has not done enough to vindicate his honor. However, in a world where social opinion permeates, individuals who are indifferent to it are usually not perceived as honorable individuals. Rather, their failure to be bothered with disrespect only motivates offenders to keep exploiting their principled insensitivity. In contrast, aesthetic honor drives us to take effective actions against disrespect. As Kant claims, "The opinion of others may have of our value and their judgment of our actions is a motivation of great weight, which can coax us into many sacrifices, and what a good part of humanity would have done... out of principles happens often enough merely for the sake of outer appearance, out of a delusion that is very useful although in itself very facile" (Observations, 25).¹⁹ Aesthetic honor moves us by the social opinion about honor and shame that we care about and thus motivates us to defend our honor. Such defense may be only for the sake of saving face, but it is still better than the vulnerability to further disrespect and the cowardly acquiescence to disrespect.

Nevertheless, as shown in the quotation above, aesthetic honor always involves "delusion." Moreover, even if the intention behind honor killing is not necessarily evil, unlawful manslaughter as its consequence is always morally wrong, and the usefulness of aesthetic honor cannot justify the atrocities that may accompany it. Therefore,

¹⁹ Sherman rightly argues that emotions as presented in *Metaphysics* help us identify morally relevant circumstances, motivate us to respond to these circumstances, and support our moral sense (1997, 271-8). See Anderson 2008 for a focused discussion of honor as one such emotion.

aesthetic honor needs reform so that citizens will come to see that killing is never genuinely honorable.

However, in the political context, this reform does not mean the replacement of aesthetic honor with ethical honor. The distinction between politics and ethics, between rights and virtues, is consistently maintained in Kant's political theory, and it leaves space for non-moral motivations that have moral effects to bridge the gap. Admittedly, actions taken out of the concern for social opinion are fundamentally heteronomous and do not have moral worth. Nevertheless, they do not have to be morally *wrong* either.²⁰ As "the constant companion of virtue," aesthetic honor is not only useful in the imperfect world of Kantian politics for individuals to stand up to disrespect, but also more compatible with virtues and morality than any other non-moral motivations such as self-interest, which may reduce the value of dignity and thus come into conflict with morality. As a result, even if we resort to aesthetic honor as the motivation to fight disrespect, it does not block our way to attain true ethical honor. Aesthetic honor becomes morally *wrong* only when its content is misidentified with vicious maxims. To avoid this misidentification so as to keep the justifiable fight against disrespect from deviating from moral principle, what is necessary for the reform of honor is to introduce the *content* of ethical honor, such as the equal respect toward others, into aesthetic honor.

²⁰ Kant is clear about the distinction between morally worthy actions, morally wrong actions, and actions that are neither morally worthy nor wrong (MM, 14-16).

Most citizens may not be virtuous, and some may even be devilish, but when the reformed honor of at least some groups is in accordance with the moral law, social opinion combines both the power of aesthetic honor that provokes firm responses to disrespect and the power of ethical honor that constrains such responses from deviating from moral principles. Dueling is no longer justifiable in the West not because Westerners have become more virtuous but because their codes of honor have changed (Appiah 2010, 1-51).

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter begins with Kant's emphasis on honor in his personal life and practical philosophy and with the exegetical debate regarding Kant's attitude toward honor. With the two types of Kantian honor and their dilemma elaborated, it is clear that this debate is difficult to resolve if we focus only on Kant's ethics and the moral worth of honor: there is obviously no place in Kant's ethics for aesthetic honor given its heteronomous nature. If we only emphasize Kant's praise of honor, then we run the risk of conflicting with the general tone of his moral philosophy. However, all these difficulties disappear when we turn to Kant's political theory, a branch of his moral philosophy that admits of empirical and contingent assumptions about human nature. Both aesthetic and ethical honor give people the moral strength necessary to stand up to disrespect that is inevitable in the imperfect world presumed by Kant's political theory. Aesthetic honor is not virtuous, but it works better to provoke citizens to defend

themselves from disrespect and thus serves a moral purpose in political life. Ethical honor, despite its moral worth, is not only too demanding for a rightful political life but also less able to motivate effective actions against disrespect. Nevertheless, the moral law intrinsic to its content proves necessary for citizens to follow moral principles when defending their honor from disrespect. With reformed social opinion that combines the content of ethical honor with the form of aesthetic honor, citizens who are not necessarily virtuous may still be cultivated to stand up to disrespect without deviating from moral principles. The two types of honor can coexist in Kant's political theory and work together to advance a political life of mutual respect by deterring disrespect in a principled way.

Like all his predecessors, Kant reforms honor so that it can motivate individuals living in modern states to balance their sensitivity to and independence from social opinion and thus to fight injustice in a restrained way. While the spirit of resistance arises from the sensitivity to social opinion, the obedience to principles originates from the independence from social opinion. Thus, in contrast to Smith, who argues for the other way around, Kant concurs with Rousseau in regard to the relationship between the formal structure and the practical effect of honor. In the meantime, Kant develops Smith's theory of honor in two crucial aspects. First, Kant's effort to further politicize honor culminates in the conclusion that honor remains necessary for citizens to resist disrespect even when the state in which they live is relatively just. Second, Kant accepts

Smith's emphasis on the rule of law as an essential feature of the modern state. He stipulates that the rule of law ought to be in accordance with the universal moral law and thus argues that citizens' fight against disrespect motivated by honor ought to aim at advancing a lawful politics of mutual respect, even if some specific laws remain outdated and may be disobeyed in order for citizens to defend their honor in the face of disrespect. As a result, despite the fact that honor may motivate citizens to disobey laws, it can remain compatible with the rule of law and hence with the modern state. Thanks to Kantian honor, law-abidingness and the spirit of resistance can coexist in the heart of modern citizen.

6. Conclusion

There is one famous modern idea or ideal of civic responsibility that can be traced to John Locke in the late seventeenth century and is later modified by various nineteenth-century liberal thinkers from different European traditions, such as Wilhelm von Humboldt, John Stuart Mill, and Alexis de Tocqueville. According to this ideal, a responsible citizen ought to not only respect the rule of law but also resist injustice originating from an arbitrary government and/or a tyrannical majority. From the perspective of personal disposition, this ideal suggests that a good citizen ought to cultivate both a spirit of law-abidingness and a spirit of resistance.

However, the fame of this ideal cannot conceal the fact that the harmony between the spirits of law-abidingness and resistance is difficult to achieve. Where there is an arbitrary government or a tyrannical majority, laws themselves and dominant social opinion can be the major source of injustice. It follows that the distinction between the rule of law and systemic injustice, a distinction that should be crystal clear in theory, can be fairly obscure in practice. Faced with this obscurity, on the one hand, citizens indiscriminately obeying laws risk slavishly acquiescing to injustice embodied both in unjust laws and in unjust dominant social opinion shielded by these laws from punishment; on the other hand, citizens resisting unjust laws risk recklessly discrediting the rule of law especially when they perceive that injustice has irretrievably permeated the entire society.

This conflict between the spirits of law-abidingness and resistance is clearly seen in American society today. On the one hand, despite the abolition of Jim Crow laws, the formal legal equality that everyone in the United States enjoys has yet to eliminate severe racial prejudices. Rather, it more often than not becomes a basis on which people exonerate themselves from their “color-blind” racism. On the other hand, recognizing the harsh reality of racism and concluding with the ineffectiveness of the rule of law in confronting this reality, movements such as Antifa arise as a radical reaction to White supremacists, attempting to bypass the rule of law and take direct and even violent actions in order to fight for racial justice.

We are thus justified in wondering how modern liberal-democratic citizens can fight unjust laws without compromising the rule of law, resist injustice without causing new injustice. Indeed, a great number of political theories on principles of civil disobedience are available today to help us ponder this issue, and even a defender of uncivil disobedience argues that disobedience needs to be principled (Delmas 2018). However, what is at stake here is not principles alone, but also the motivation for citizens to take the principles of civil and uncivil disobedience seriously when the importance of victory over injustice, the reasonable worry about dirty hands, the high risk of disobedience, the lack of courage, and numerous other factors constantly challenge the adoption of these principles in practice. As several scholars have stressed recently (Krause 2008; Kingston 2011; Nussbaum 2013), our understanding of justice and

endeavor to attain it cannot be separated from political motivations embedded in human psychology.

I argue throughout this dissertation that, in the eyes of several influential political thinkers of the eighteenth century, the sense of honor, if democratized and secularized, can be such a motivation for modern citizens to balance their aggressiveness and law-abidingness, their spiritedness and obedience, and their resistance to injustice and preservation of personal integrity. The reason that honor can motivate individuals to achieve this sanguine practical effect is that it has a unique formal structure and combines one's sensitivity to social opinion and one's independence precisely from it into a single whole. Medieval chivalry provides a prototypical notion of honor for later thinkers to modernize. In their unsuccessful reform attempts, Hobbes, Mandeville, and Montesquieu prepare for the modernization of honor by later thinkers. Rousseau thoroughly democratizes honor. Smith re-politicizes honor. And Kant at last renders the disobedience to laws in defense of honor from injustice compatible with the obedience to the modern rule of law. Except for Hobbes, all the thinkers above—even Rousseau, Smith, and Kant, whose political theories are widely understood as efforts to undermine the social, political, and moral foundation of honor—faithfully inherit the legacy of chivalric honor as a complex motivation that both provokes and restrains citizens' reactions to injustice. Thus, at least in the history of political thought, there is little reason to hold that "honor proper" is spiritedness, aggressiveness, or resistance alone,

that thinkers of the eighteenth century so internalize and privatize honor as to render it a mere matter of obedience, law-abidingness, or integrity, and that honor is unavoidably outdated in a modern world because it is intrinsically feudal, hierarchical, and violent.

To be sure, the eighteenth-century modernization of honor is neither a fully coherent story nor an achievement without weaknesses. First, although the said thinkers concur with each other in the opinion that the unique formal structure of honor leads to the practical effect of balancing resistance and law-abidingness, they differ from each other with respect to its specific mechanism. It is yet to determine whether the spirit of resistance is the result of the sensitivity to social opinion or the independence from it. In the cases of Rousseau and Kant, the answer is the former, whereas in the case of Smith, the answer is the latter. Even between Rousseau and Kant, the disagreement lies in the source of the independence from social opinion: is it the natural goodness of man, or the transcendental moral law? Personally, I lean toward Smith's position. However, I will not argue for it here but leave it to another occasion.

Second, none of the eighteenth-century reformers of honor treats the possible sexism in their notions of honor seriously. Although their efforts to democratize honor can, in theory, be universalized and thus apply to both women and men, none of them explicitly claims so in practice. On the contrary, in their rare comments on women, almost all of them accept the traditional view that feminine honor revolves around chastity and is in many ways different than masculine honor. To be fair to them, since it

can be so democratized as to become accessible not only to aristocrats but also to ordinary people, honor may not have to be intrinsically sexist. Moreover, that these thinkers prescribe different *codes* of honor to women and men reveals their belief that the *sense* of honor is equally accessible to all individuals regardless of gender. Nevertheless, to reach a solid conclusion, it is necessary to seriously examine the relationship between honor and gender, which also has to be left to another occasion.

Third, those thinkers say little about the ways to reestablish the social foundation of honor in the modern society characterized by great social fluidity, which renders any attempt at restoring the feudal organization of society impossible. To be sure, one or two individuals can endeavor to cultivate their honor under whatever circumstances, but the lack of social foundation necessarily limits the expansion of honor in practice even though in theory it applies to everyone. Nineteenth-century thinkers such as Tocqueville are conscious of this problem and provide us with some solutions, but, again, an investigation into these solutions has to be postponed to another time.

Despite these unresolved problems, I believe that honor still has the potential to motivate modern citizens to fulfill their civic responsibility and stand up to injustice without themselves becoming unjust in the process. The tradition of honor as a balancing motivation never truly fades. The political theory of the eighteenth century confirms this claim, and honor still shines today in the conduct of some soldiers who fight their enemies without disregarding rules of engagement, of some politicians who

fight their adversaries without resorting to disrespectful means, and of some activists who fight unjust laws without becoming domestic terrorists. Instead of persuading ourselves to accept the fragility of any combination of resistance and law-abidingness, perhaps we should take the past efforts of modernizing honor seriously and think about how we can better sort out the theoretical problems intrinsic to honor, further democratize honor, and more successfully reestablish its social foundation in the contemporary context—in hope that we can have more honorable citizens and, even better, that we ourselves can become such citizens.

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Biography

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