Varieties of Honour and Dishonour

distinguishing intrinsic honour from honourable externalities

Annex 1 of: Honour Essential to Psycho-social Integrity: challenge to the nameless of dishonourable leadership

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Varieties of honour

Complementary qualities of honour: In endeavouring to distinguish the fundamentally integrative role of honour, the following can be considered, both in their "positive" and "negative" connotations. Of particular interest is the way in which honour is not automatically associated with certain "positive" attributes, and honour may be accorded despite their absence, transcending any corresponding "negative" attributes.

Table 1: Attributes essential (or non-essential) to honour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Necessarily essential attributes of honour?</th>
<th>Honouring transcendence of negative attributes?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>trustworthiness: under all circumstances?</td>
<td>untrustworthiness: honour may transcend trust?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrity: essential to identity of what is honoured?</td>
<td>inconstancy, shamelessness: creative artists?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credibility, veracity, honesty: only incidental?</td>
<td>deceitfulness: honouring roughness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respectability: necessarily respectable?</td>
<td>unrespectability: creative eccentrics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reputation, renown, notability: only incidental?</td>
<td>disrepute, unrenowned: honouring the disreputable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>status, prestige: only incidental?</td>
<td>unprestigeous: honouring the unrenowned?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glorious: but only within a context?</td>
<td>ignominious:</td>
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<tr>
<td>presence, charisma, impressive</td>
<td>unimpressive: honouring the ordinary?</td>
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<tr>
<td>dignity:</td>
<td>undignified: ability to act foolishly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grace, beauty: natural, but only incidental?</td>
<td>ugliness: for the reality it constitutes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>praiseworthy, estimable: relative and not for others</td>
<td>contemptible, uncommendable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seniority, experience: only incidental?</td>
<td>inexperience: for effort?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power: only incidental?</td>
<td>weakness, impotence: honouring the weak?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment, dedication: only incidental?</td>
<td>indifference, apathy: nihilists?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>altruism, selflessness: only incidental?</td>
<td>selfishness: those who &quot;know what they want&quot;?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inspiration, wondrousness: possibly only relative?</td>
<td>as a negative exemplar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operacy, efficacy: only incidental?</td>
<td>inopency, inefficacy: non-essential to style?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craftsmanship, style: only incidental?</td>
<td>honouring what is behind lack of any style?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above attributes may be configured as aspects around the core notion of honour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significance: but only relative?</th>
<th>Insignificance: honouring the insignificant?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courage, valour: imprudence?</td>
<td>Cowardice: precautions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiness: honouring the secular?</td>
<td>Unholiness: enemies may also be honoured?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circular configuration of qualities of honour

Honour may be variously expressed as indicated in Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offering a token</td>
<td>Gifts, awards, flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>Admirers, fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worshipful attendance</td>
<td>Puja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowing sacredness</td>
<td>Beatification, sanctification, sacred animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commemorative celebration</td>
<td>Veterans parade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned</td>
<td>Qualifications, degrees, medals, awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance</td>
<td>Titles, family name, property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomination</td>
<td>Honours list, designated successor, transfer of mantle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Acknowledgement, reincarnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>Gesture of respect, &quot;doing someone the honour&quot;, genuflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
<td>Insult, snub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oath taking, pledging</td>
<td>Perjury, lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is useful to distinguish (as tentatively in Table 4) forms of honour in terms of the respective roles of the honoured and the honouring in any operative system of status (see also Table 5: Tentative Relationship between Forms of Honour in Dialogue). Associated forms of dishonour may further clarify this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Symmetric and asymmetric conditions of honour (by status)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Dis) Honoured party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waterhole dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totems, mascots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultures</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Honour in practice

Honourable gestures and their status: The acknowledgement of honour due, and duly given, is evident in practice in a range of formal gestures and rituals. These include:

- gestures of respect typically taking the form of giving precedence, notably to the elderly, to seniors, or possibly (depending on culture) to those of the opposite gender. They are most evident in movement and placement. Lists of precedence **on formal occasions are designed to indicate to whom honour is due by whom. Those considered to embody spiritual insight may evoke patterns of ritual in their honour (eg puja), or in honour of the spirit that communicates through them. Individuals may be
specially honoured on their namedays or birthdays. Those acquiring power may be formally recognized in ceremonies of allegiance involving particular gestures (kissing a ring, etc). Special foods may be offered to honour a guest, such that refusal to partake is deemed to bring dishonour on the host. Similarly, in some cultures, a wife or daughter may be offered in the same spirit.

- collective ceremonies may be used to honour and celebrate identity. These may take the form of ceremonial parades or specially dedicated musical or other performances (odes of praise). On such occasions tokens, such as medals, may be ceremoniously presented.

- honouring the memory of those absent or deceased, represented by images, mementos or memorials, may take the form of gestures of respect or commemorative ceremonies. This is notably the case with respect to ancestors or those who died in conflict. The importance variously attached to this is illustrated by the major diplomatic incident in Sino-Japanese relations in 2005 arising from the continuing "honouring" of Japan's military dead (including Class A war criminals) by its prime minister at the Yasukuni Shrine [more | more | more]. This is to be contrasted with the negligent honouring of the the UK's own military dead at the Westminster Cenotaph (Maev Kennedy, *No banners, no balloons, just a single Thank You*. The Guardian, 9 May 2005).

- oaths taking may be one of the ways in which the honour underlying and binding a relationship is given form. This is most evident on formally taking office, or in marriage ceremonies. It is notably important in some legal systems as an affirmation in court proceedings that only truth is to be spoken. Binding oaths may be taken by individuals to celebrate the honourable nature of the bond between them. They may include phrases such as "on my honour", "honour bound", etc.

- the process of apologizing, or presenting formal apologies, may be explicitly recognized as an honourable gesture following action deemed to have been dishonourable or to have dishonoured another in some measure

- resigning from a position in society may be recognized as the "honourable thing to do" following failure to respond appropriately to a situation, or as a result of having been associated with (and to a degree complicit in) the dishonourable actions of others

- committing suicide may, in some cultures, be understood as an honourable means of "damage limitation" in avoiding further exposure of one's associates to the consequences of an act deemed dishonourable.

Honourable obligations: The nature of honour is perhaps most directly felt in the following obligations, whether willingly accepted without question or not:

- to parents, whether through unquestioned love or primarily through a sense of honourable duty (possibly under pressure of the expectations of others in the family or community that obligations should be honourably fulfilled). Although possibly independent of any sentiment, it may even be independent of any sense of respect. It is notable that some radical approaches (some sects, communism, etc) to social reform may specifically focus on breaking any obligation to parents, whereas other approaches to social organization may strongly stress such obligations in the form of "family values".

- to ancestors as guardians of the honour of the family, by extension of the process through which parents are honoured, possibly extending back over many generations **Mormons**.

- to unrelated elders, by association with the process through with parents are honoured

- to children as the vehicle through which the future is assured, and whereby the honour of the family will be sustained

- to a spouse, notably in fulfillment of marital vows through which the other is to be honoured

- to women and children (whether relatives or not), especially in perilous situations where safeguarding them (despite risk to oneself) is deemed the most appropriate and honourable action.

- to the family, whose honour must necessarily be protected, possibly at any cost, notably:
  - to women of one's family where their honour and, by implication, the honour of the family is placed at risk through unseemly, dishonourable association with others, notably symbolized by adulterous relations and premarital intercourse (and dishonourable loss of virginity)
  - to ensure an honourable marriage for any children, which in certain cultures may call for a daughter to be killed where she is deemed to have irreparably dishonoured the family (as with so-called "honour killings")
  - to avoid association with son's who have dishonoured the family by refusing to submit to parental authority and are consequently "disowned" or disinherited
  - to those for whom one is responsible, whether on some form of "sinking ship" or a failing corporation placing employee livelihoods at risk, whether the honourable thing" is for the "captain" to leave only after every effort has been made to safeguard others.
  - to peers and companions, as at "reunion" gatherings of alumni bodies, veterans celebrations, or encounters of survivors of shared traumatic experience
  - *giri***

Institutionalization of honour

Honourable career: A particular career path may be recognized as being honourable, or more honourable than others. In conventional society, the professions, the civil service, banking, etc may be so considered -- in contrast with the arts or theatre, for example. In the UK service in such a career may be acknowledged on the "honours list" -- by which the individual may be entitled to the appellation "Right Honourable". Members of Parliament may also be named with that title. Irrespective of career, the "honours list" may specifically recognize a wide variety of careers in service to the community.

A quite different understanding of honour is expressed by nominations for the Right Livelihood Award.

On retirement from a long career with a company, an employee may also be honoured.

Honour in hierarchies vs networks: Membership of voluntary societies, notably semi-secret societies, may also be honoured to various degrees. Typically this is associated with rising through a hierarchy over the years, perhaps associated with a succession of
rights of passage or initiations into higher levels of understanding that are honoured by those who aspire to them. Distinct from hierarchical patterns of honour are those accorded between members of interrelated networks. Here honour is associated with long-term engagement or activism in response to an issue. It is the honour accorded to companions on a journey whose values others may not appreciate.

**Honour: symbols, surrogates and trappings:** Obvious examples that are associated with pursuit of status include

- work-related status symbols: quality of furniture (size of desk, carpet, etc), corner office, executive facilities, automobile
- dress code: quality of clothing, decorations, symbolic headwear (rare feathers, etc)
- military medals, parades and "triumphs" (eg Nuremberg)
- operatic representations
- ceremonial recognition
  - law courts
  - spiritual and religious leaders (papacy, gurus, etc)
- honorific appellation
  - law courts ("Your Honour")
  - diplomatic titles ("Your Excellency")
  - "Right Honourable"
- expressions of honour
  - "do me the honour"
  - "honoured to be here", "honoured to be invited"
- awards, prizes and career service awards
- academic degrees "with honour" (*summa cum laude*)

Time brings in another dimension with regard to the nature of honour recognized by a defeated enemy, as with awards of the Iron Cross by the Nazi regime -- perhaps now to be viewed as dishonourable by the victors, but would naturally now be regarded as honourable by neo-nazis. Britain's most prestigious military honour, the Victoria Cross, is normally only awarded posthumously. Recipients of lesser orders consider it an honour to stand beside living recipients. Perhaps more striking is the contrast between the honour accorded "living" gods, through worship and via their intermediaries, in contrast with the honourability of "dead" gods of societies of cultures of the distant past (cf the 2500 deities in Michael Jordan. *Encyclopedia of Gods*, 1993).

**Honour: "Nomenklatura" and titles:** In many cultures, the name of a family or an individual may be associated with a particular degree of honour, possibly recognized explicitly by titles as in the case of the nobility (*Almanach de Gotha*, *Debretts Peerage***). With the diminishing role of the traditional aristocracy, honour may be directly associated with "old" family names and dynasties. Other kinds of title have been recognized, with each of which a degree of honour may be due from those that acknowledge their significance:

- Government and head of state:
  - Designated honours: These are honours designated by a government or the head of state. In the UK they are associated with the "Honours List". They may result in entitlement to a set in the House of Lords. In France, membership of the Legion d'Honneur may be accorded, for example. A poignant example is the creation of a whole set of aristocratic titles in Haiti on its liberation in 18***. Duke of Marmalade
  - Diplomatic titles may be accorded by government to their representatives to foreign countries.-- accreditation lists
  - Land titles: Titles may be accorded, or purchased, to estates and domains.
  - Bureaucratic (*nomenklatura*) -- book
  - Government officials
  - Elected reps MEPs 14-16 april guardian
  - Military titles

- Organization titles:
  - Honourary societies:
    - The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple
    - Honourable Company of Master Mariners
    - Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons
  - Knights of ...
  - Corporate titles CEOs, VPs
  - NGO titles
  - IGO titles: excellency
  - Honourary member of professional society

- Secret society titles:
  - Masonic degrees
  - Order titles
  - Imperial Dragon

- Academic degrees

- Performance titles:
  - Black belt, dan
  - Championship titles chess, Wimbledon
  - Miss Universe
  - Record holders: Guiness Book
Employee of the week
Stakhanovite?
Repute: gangs, criminals, Billy the Kid
Laureates: Nobel, Right Livelihood
Naming: geophysical, astrophysical, species (slime molds), notations, equations, theories, Mandelbrot, problems, buildings, roads, errors, devices, Occam
Temporal titles day, week, etc Cycle Lifetime Eternal
wikipedia
internet game titles

Titles may be understood as a mark of honour, institutionalizing honourability and ensuring its protection in some measure. They may determine orders of precedence (placement in ceremonies) and other entitlements. Distinguishing appropriate precedence, and therefore the honour to be accorded or recognized, may be the delicate task of a Court Chamberlain. Typically those with some form of title are recognized in works such as a Who’s Who, possibly in a specialized domain (eg Who's Who in International Organizations; Marquis Who’s Who in Science and Engineering).

A notable characteristic of some of the honourably titled is the expectation that their entitlements should include privileges such as immunity to prosecution. Examples include:

- (diplomatic) immunity against prosecution
  - Le Pen
- government immunity
- bureaucratic immunity
- corporate immunity
- military immunity
  - military (cable car, Okinawa,) Rainbow Warrior
  - piece-getting forces
  - licensed to kill

Although there are naturally Who’s Whos of various kinds, it is to expected that there is no Who is Not Who in a democratic society

- do you know who I am
- cover-up to protect collective honour
- EC resignation
- Eurostat
- covered with honours (talking up the value of honour)
  - Adam
  - Michelangelo’s David

**Honour in international declarations**: Honour is recognized in several key international declarations as follows, with notable exceptions:

- The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948):
  - Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.
- The *Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights* (1981):
  - Foreward: These rights aims at conferring honour and dignity on mankind and eliminating exploitation, oppression and injustice.
  - Preambule: Whereas the human rights decreed by the Divine Law aim at conferring dignity and honour on mankind and are designed to eliminate oppression and injustice. . . conditions shall be established such that the institution of family shall be preserved, protected and honoured as the basis of all social life;
  - VIII. Right to Protection of Honour and Reputation: Every person has the right to protect his honour and reputation against calumnies, groundless charges or deliberate attempts at defamation and blackmail.
  - XVII. Status and Dignity of Workers: Islam honours work and the worker and enjoins Muslims not only to treat the worker justly but also generously. He is not only to be paid his earned wages promptly, but is also entitled to adequate rest and leisure.
  - Article 11. Right to Privacy: 1. Everyone has the right to have his honor respected and his dignity recognized. 2. No one may be the object of arbitrary or abusive interference with his private life, his family, his home, or his correspondence, or of unlawful attacks on his honor or reputation.
  - Article 14. Right of Reply: For the effective protection of honor and reputation, every publisher, and every newspaper, motion picture, radio, and television company, shall have a person responsible who is not protected by immunities or special privileges.
  - No mention of “honour”
  - No mention of “honour”
Dramatic manifestations of honour -- and its dramatisation: Honour tends to become evident in the dramatic situations engendered by the possibility of dishonour. These dramatic dimensions are the fabric of a charged psychosocial reality. They are the stuff of literature, theatre and movie scenarios which cultivate a sense of honour develop insights into its nature. Examples include:

- romance and courtship as mutual honouring, ideally to be reflected subsequently in making love
- honourable nature of heroic response to an enemy (including the possibility of collective suicide as at Masada)
- honouring a defeated enemy, whether through the surrender processes (eg saluting of Confederate Army) or in the judicial procedures brought against them (Saddam***), or in the approach to execution (including the possibility of allowing an enemy to commit suicide)
- recognition of the appropriateness of an "honourable death", notably including the rural practice in some cultures whereby the eldest leave the food-starved homestead in order to die to reduce the number of mouths to be fed
- dramatic scenarios whose credibility turns on the central role of honour, its protection, its betrayal and subsequent vengeance. Archetypal interactions between protagonists in popular movies (westerns, crime, martial arts, etc) typically explore the dramatic tensions between honour and dishonour.

"Cultures of honour", "Honour systems", and "Honour codes"

Cultures of honour: Anthropologists contrast "cultures of honour" with "cultures of law". Cultures of honour typically appear among nomadic peoples (Bedouins, herdsmen, cowboys, etc) with limited recourse to the protection of the law and who are obliged to transport their most valuable property with them. Fear of rapid revenge for theft or other abuse may then be adopted as an effective strategy. They may also develop among aristocratic families who perceive themselves to be framers and upholders of law and order. Such cultures also emerge in criminal underworlds and gangs. Conceptions of honour vary widely between such cultures. A notable example is the acceptability of honour killings (usually female) if the "family's honour" has in some way been "defiled". [more | more]

Honour has been of greater importance in the past as a guiding principle of society. Codes of honour required a "man of honour" to defend his own honour (possibly as a "gentleman"), the honour of his wife, of his (blood-)family or of his beloved. Its importance has apparently declined in modern secular societies. A form of honour is portrayed as surviving in so-called "hot-blooded" cultures (Italian, Arab, Hispanic ...), in more "gentlemanly" "southern" societies, and in feudal or other agrarian societies, where land use is of more importance than in deracinated industrial societies. Paul Robinson (Sword of Honour, 2003):

- In the modern era, honour is generally considered obsolete.... However, it is only the language of honour that has vanished, not the idea. Carrying out research for a book on the subject of war and honour, I have repeatedly found that, although the details of what constitutes honourable behaviour have changed over the centuries, its essence has not.
- In the case of the American South, for instance, honour was once based on race.... Things now are rather different.... But as the Michigan experiments demonstrated, southerners retain two vital aspects of the old honour system: a high degree of sensitivity to insults and a tendency to respond with violence and aggression.
- From the earliest days of the American Republic, honour played a vital role in the political process.... The code of honour was strongest, though, in the South... Sensitivity over one's honour was more than a purely personal matter. It was southern honour that caused the War of 1812.
- Some 50 years later, the South seceded from the Union. Opponents of the Confederacy generally argue that it did so to preserve slavery.... As the historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown has pointed out, slavery provoked the secession crisis, but 'southern honour pulled the trigger'.
- Letters from Confederate soldiers make it clear that, once fighting started, they considered it a matter of honour and duty to join the colours.
- The honour code dictates that one loses face if one does not respond to an insult, but one does not always know whether something is an insult. So it is always best to treat it as if it were... precisely the logic of the 2002 US national security strategy.
- As the ancient Greeks knew, the pursuit of honour often leads people to attack others, to drive them down, in order to inflate themselves. The Greeks called such behaviour hubris, and believed that hubris inevitably resulted in disaster. It certainly did for the Confederacy.

Given the underlying importance that honour seems to continue to play in society, there is a case for exploring past treatises on honour produced in societies where its role was more explicitly and formally recognized. How has "honour" evolved into the present day in the Hispanic, Arabian, Germanic and Nipponese cultures, for example? The Hispanic cultures were notable for their concern with honour and its reparation through duel, to the point that a papal encyclical was written in 1891 to check its excesses [more]. Such insights could be fruitfully contrasted with those that prevail in regions where family and tribal feuds -- arising from matters of honour -- continue to affect relations. In the case of females, honour historically related to sexuality, with preservation of "honour" equated primarily to maintenance of virginity, or at least to preservation of exclusive monogamy. It is believed that feminism may have changed some linguistic usage in this respect.

Such understandings from the past could be usefully contrasted with various modern efforts to formulate systems of global ethics. The question is the extent to which these emphasize "watered down" understandings of honour through euphemisms such as "tolerance" or "respect".

Steven Dutch (The World's Most Toxic Value System, 2001) argues that descriptions of honour in other cultures may lead to gross misunderstandings -- aided by what amounts to mistranslations:
Almost everybody will react to an attack on their honor, but in many societies people are expected to restrain their impulse to get revenge: to forgive or simply ignore insults, and most members of those societies succeed to a greater or lesser extent. But in societies dominated by the "honor" ethic, it's permissible, often demanded, to seek revenge. In many places, this cycle of revenge creates blood feuds that last for generations, or results in periodic flareups of mass violence or ethnic cleansing. If there's a single attribute that defines the "honor" mentality, it's the notion that private killing over personal grievances is acceptable.... While these concepts in other languages may overlap some of the elements of what we term honor, the "honor" mentality just as often impels people in other societies to do things that are grossly dishonorable by our standards.....

Dutch carefully distinguishes thar from bushido:

One of the most profound consequences of mistranslating foreign terms as "honor" is a tendency by many people to regard Japanese society as similar to the thar cultures of the Balkans and the Middle East. Japan is not a "shame" culture - Japan and the West are the two great "guilt" cultures of the world...The Japanese code of Bushido indeed placed great emphasis on personal honor but also on obedience no matter what.... In sharp contrast to thar, Bushido was an internalized code of honor. One could be shamed in Bushido even if nobody else knew.

Clearly such criticism must be assessed against counter-criticism of western understandings of honor. The most radical and influential of these is perhaps that of Sayyid Qutb who argues of western civilization that "material production is regarded as more important, more valuable and more honorable than the development of human character." (Luke Loboda, The Thought of Sayyid Qutb: Radical Islam's Philosophical Foundations).

Aristocratic honours systems: Ancient Japan for example, and feudal England both had immensely complicated honour systems for the nobility. The social self in Japan notably developed through indigenous ideas of loyalty and honour developed within the Japanese samurai or warrior class. Honours were traditionally bestowed upon people the ruling Monarch by a ruling for some valuable service to the Crown. Noble Titles (such as Knight, Dame, Lord, Earl, Countess), when given in this way, or by recognized Orders of Chivalry, resulted in the recipient being admitted as a titled personage to a Royal Court, the establishment, and/or so called ruling class, and carried numerous social, business, political and other privileges, as well as immense status to the holder.

An interesting evolution of such a system into the current period is the status of honour in European Orders of Chivalry and Papal Orders (awarded by the Holy See or founded by Papal Bull). In the case of the Knights of the Sovereign Teutonic Military Order, to meet the needs of the Order into the 21st century and encourage new giving, a prestigious honours programme has been developed. Rather than conferring Knighthoods, as an honour for services on the battlefield, it now uses its ancient Fons de Noman rights enabling it to confer a Noble Title, or Order of Chivalry on financial benefactors, or on people who have performed other great services in support of its global philanthropic and humanitarian ideals.

Awarded "honours": Various awards and honour systems have evolved and been used for decades or even centuries [see a collection]. States, through their president or monarch, or by action of the prime minister, may award a wide variety of honours, of different levels of prestige, according to specified criteria. Some may be hereditary. In 2003, it was however revealed that in the case of the UK, nearly 300 citizens had declined to accept the highest of such honours, including knighthoods and CBES.

Institutional honour systems and codes: These are a set of procedures under which persons are trusted to act without direct supervision in situations that might allow for dishonest behavior. They may be designed to ensure that none shall take unfair advantage of another. They are most widely used in educational institutions and prisons, notably in the USA (cf The Honor System at Duke University, 1978; Martha Allen, A brief overview of honor codes in higher education, 2004). According to the Center for Academic Integrity (Fundamental Principles of Academic Integrity):

Many institutions have sought to promote a climate of trust through honor systems, which are virtually unique to educational communities. Honor systems are a respected and long-standing tradition among colleges and universities, and there is empirical evidence of their positive effect on the behavior and attitudes of their students and faculty.

A review of academic codes in the USA (Honor Codes Across the Country) indicates that:

The honor code is a major part of life at colleges and universities across the United States. Although each college has its own way of preventing and dealing with cheating whether it be judicial committees, fundamental standards, or peer juries, most
incorporate some sort of honor system.... The honor code is a statement addressing issues such as cheating, stealing, and misrepresentation, made by a school or other institution in which its participants pledge to adhere to. Honor codes are self-regulating because under an honor code, students are required to turn in other students in violation of the code.

Honour systems are a characteristic of military academies, where a particular focus is naturally placed on the role of honour as noted by Maxwell D Taylor (West Point Honor System: its objectives and procedures):

Honor, as it is understood by the Corps of Cadets, is a fundamental attribute of character. Honor is a virtue which implies loyalty and courage, truthfulness and self respect, justice and generosity. Its underlying principle is truth.

Similarly (The Honor Concept of the U.S. Naval Academy, 1999):

Honor, personal integrity, and loyalty to the service, its customs and its traditions, are fundamental characteristics essential to a successful Naval Officer. Any midshipman unable to conduct himself at all times in a manner indicating the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and manliness, is unfit to hold a commission in the Navy or to enjoy the privilege of being a member of the Brigade.[more]

However, Ellen Deborah Ellis (The Honor System Re-examined, 1995) indication some limitations:

The introduction of the so-called honor system into the educational institutions of the United States must bear a large share of responsibility for the intellectual and moral turbulence and disregard for law that mark our student bodies today

A form of honour system is used in penal institutions whereby selected prison inmates ("trusties") are entrusted with some custodial responsibilities or perform other services assisting in the operation of the facility. Trusties may be an essential element in the government of the prison. The system does not preclude them using their advantages to brutalize other inmates.

Transactional honour systems: These involve situations in which the purchaser of a product or service is trusted on their honour to pay the due amount, without the payment or the amount being verified by the recipient. Examples include:

- **Unattended sales points**: Roadside stalls for produce in rural areas in which the purchaser leaves the requested amount, taking the product. Unattended newspaper sales points in urban areas.
- **Transportation tickets**: Where passengers buy tickets and board without being checked (although subject to a fine if challenged by occasional inspectors) they must show their tickets when challenged by conductors or face a stiff fine. Practice has shown that there are more honest people who don't get checked by conductors than dishonest people who escape spot checks.
- **Computer shareware**: Copyrighted software that is available free of charge on a trial basis, usually with the condition that users pay a fee for continued use and support. After having decided to use the software. Since no trace is maintained of those acquiring the shareware, they are on their "honor" to register and pay for the program.

Work-related honour systems: These involve operations within businesses or manufacturing operations. Examples include:

- **Employment time**: The move towards greater flexibility in the working hours of individual employee has resulted in the increasingly widespread introduction of honour systems for job hours whereby their individual states the time worked without systematic verification
- **Self-regulation by industries**: Situations in which industries agree to regulate their own practices rather than be subject to external regulators.

Complementary currency systems: Several thousand local currency systems have reportedly been introduced around the world (see review in Thomas H Greco Jr. Money: understanding and creating alternatives to legal tender, 2001). In part inspired by the Local Exchange Trading System (LETS) originated by Michael Linton, these may have elements of multilateral settlement in which each participant will open his/her account and trade goods and services spontaneously on an over-the-counter basis through change in account balance [more]. According to Makoto Nishibe (On LETS, 2001):

While LETS has economic purposes such as stimulation of local economy, establishment of cyclic economy, and prevention of credit creation as well as capital accumulation, it also has social, ethical, and cultural purposes: to rebuild cooperative and mutual-help human relations based upon the idea of reciprocal exchange, to bring about trust in region and community, to share values and interests, and to encourage interaction as well as communication.

From such a perspective a LETS-type system is a "trust currency" realized by commitment to the community and through trusts between participants – a trading atmosphere based on trust. It gives form to an honour bond between participants between participants.

Bernard Lietaer (The Future of Money: Creating New Wealth, Work, and a Wiser World, 2001) argues that:

The origin of the word "community" comes from the Latin munus, which means the gift, and cum, which means together, among each other. So community literally means to give among each other. Therefore I define my community as a group of people who welcome and honor my gifts, and from whom I can reasonably expect to receive gifts in return [more].
Communities of trust and networks of trust: Lee Komito (Communities of Practice and Communities of Trust: global culture and information technology, 1994) argues that communities of practice and communities of trust are two useful formulations, describing the individual's participation in global society -- especially in the light of efforts to re-create community through new technologies, addressing as it does the general issue of affective versus cognitive discussions of 'global culture'. He questions whether the new communications technologies are being used to create communities of trust out of communities of interest, or to maintain a sense of participation in communities that are geographically remote. The development of such communities has notably been studied in relation to open source software projects (Siobhán O'Mahony and Fabrizio Ferraro. Managing the Boundary of an 'Open' Project, 2004). Communities of trust webs emerge, mirroring the tight inter-relationships within social groups of various categories (eg. kinship or occupational groups), and the looser inter-community relationships (cf Alfarez Abdul-Rahman. The PGP Trust Model, 1996).

Building a community of trust is considered basic to the successful implementation of an honour system or code. Proposals are made for building trust into internet communications (cf The Augmented Social Network: building identity and trust into the next generation Internet, 2003) as exemplified by such networks as Friendly Favors. Such communities are made of complex overlapping networks of sub-communities based on differing degrees of trust. They are effectively "gated" by their willingness to honour trust (cf Dynamically Gated Conceptual Communities: emergent patterns of isolation within knowledge society, 2005).

Distortions of honour

Crimes of honour: These are a focus of the Project on "Strategies of Response to Crimes of Honour", jointly co-ordinated by CIMEL (Centre Of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law) and INTERIGHTS (International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights). The extensive annotated bibliography arising from this project includes:

L. Abu-Odeh. 'Comparatively Speaking: The 'Honour' of the 'East' and the 'Passion' of the 'West', Utah Law Review, (1997), 287-307. The author describes dishonouring as a 'collective injury' in which daughters and sisters, not only wives and girlfriends (or ex-wives and ex-girlfriends), are victims. In contrast, a crime of passion is an 'individual injury' and a result of sexual jealousy. Whereas Arab laws have tended, more recently, to diminish the relevance of emotion in penalty reductions for honour crimes, the 'West' has essentially moved in the opposite direction; a 'humanizing' movement toward accounting for emotions replaced a prior emphasis on more honour-based contexts of defence.

Sharon K Araji. Crimes of Honor and Shame: Violence against Women in Non-Western and Western Societies (University of Alaska Anchorage, 2000). The author concludes that male and/or family honour depends on the control of women's behaviour, arguing that honour systems legitimise patriarchy, and thus define the public sphere of life as dangerous and even off limits to females. Further, she adds that the honour cultural belief system legitimizes abuse, even the murder of women, as violations of honour codes in both traditional non-western and modernizing western societies. Finally, the author states that honour 'as an overt explanation for violence against women in modern western societies such as the US -- should not be negated' and that future research should consider the importance of honour systems to explain 'the antecedents and consequences of male violence against women in intimate relationships in Western countries.

Whilst the project focuses primarily on crimes of honour relating to women, such honour crimes may also be triggered by perceived insults, and "lack of respect" between men and territorial disputes (as in urban gangs in the West).

Honour among thieves: The phrase "honour among thieves" is widely used. The concept of their "code of honour" has been central to the challenges of obtaining information on the Mafia -- bound as they have been as "uomini d'onore" (men of honor) through an oath of allegiance to Cosa Nostra. Although framed as the antithesis of the code of chivalry, or at least a bizarre interpretation, the Mafia's arcane rituals, and much of the organization's structure, were orginally based largely on those of Catholic confraternities, Freemasonry, and even on certain practices associated with military-religious orders of chivalry like the Order of Malta [more]. The relationship between the Mafia and Freemasonry continues to be explored in connection with institutional corruption in the EU [more].

Conflation of patriotism and (dis)honour: Military propaganda has been highly successful in associating honour with patriotism -- irrespective of the acts perpetrated in the name of patriotism. "I serve my country" has been made synonymous with "My actions are honourable". Difficulties emerge when soldiers indeed serve their country, perceiving themselves to be acting honourably, and are then confronted with the realities of Auschwitz and Abu Ghraib for which they and their companions are judged responsible -- possibly under orders of the military command.

Complex arguments are then put forward whereby, provided a soldier was acting under orders, he is then in some way absolved of responsibility for dishonorable acts in which he may have engaged -- notably "in the heat of action" beyond the comprehension of those in whose name the action is undertaken. Curiously, exceptionalism is then simultaneously used to focus blame for dishonourable acts on "bad apples" in order to avoid any responsibility for successes for actions under their command. A particular concern is to ensure that the military as a whole emerges blamelessly and honourably from involvement in dishonourable action. This is notably achieved by cover-up, denial, and the use of technical reprimands ("slaps on the wrist"). A particular device is the appeal to "national security" interests, and the saving of "hundreds of lives", by the unfortunately necessary dishonourable treatment of those who may have vital information to offer (cf the "licking bomb argument").

Public relations is then used to launder any remaining taint on the honourable image of the military.

- value laundering
- matriotism?
- code of honour
Misapplication of military honour codes: The negative implications of honour systems and codes in the case of military academies, were the subject of a US Senate investigation (Honor systems and sexual harassment at the service academies, 1994) as part of more general concerns relating to harassment of women in the armed forces, highlighted by the US Naval Academy Tailhook incident in 1991 [more | more]. It led in the USA to the so-called Military Honor and Decency act of 1996, prohibiting the Department of Defense from selling, renting, or otherwise providing sexually explicit material to any individual [more]. A scandal involving the US Air Force Academy in 2003 was described as "deeper" than Tailhook [more | more]. For women military personnel, adherence to the military honour code means that they are effectively on their honour not to report any breaches of that code involving their own harassment or rape.

Various commentators have remarked on the level of impunity enjoyed by those in the military associated with abuses, even within the military. For example, Charles J. Dunlap, Jr (Melancholy Reunion: a report from the future on the collapse of civil-military relations in the United States, 1996):

> Officers had little to fear from the military justice system, however; by 1996 it was broken....What we were left with was a system incapable of handling the kinds of complex, high-profile cases that can affect civil-military relations. Consider, for example, that despite literally hundreds of witnesses, the Tailhook scandal resulted in not a single conviction. Likewise, military courts held no one accountable for the April 1994 'friendly-fire' shootdown of two U.S. Army helicopters in Northern Iraq, the cost of which was 26 lives... it is little wonder that a malignancy I call 'neopraetorianism' arose.

Many have commented on the "cycle of impunity" from which the military benefit. As noted by John S C Cooke (Military Law Review, June 1998):

> A cursory study of any history book reveals that impunity is not a new phenomenon. However the crystallization of the cycle of impunity is very much a twentieth century concept: perpetrators of massive human rights violations have been supported, rather than held accountable, by the international community. The result has been to encourage repetition by the perpetrators and by those who are inspired by their impunity. Perhaps the most infamous example is Hitler's observations to his senior officers in 1939: "Who after all speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?

The humiliation and torture perpetrated at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere might be said to have been effectively enabled by the honour system of those responsible. Various commentators have remarked on this relation [more] -- in some cases to make the point that, had the honour code been respected, the highly damaging publicity for the military and the USA would not have resulted.

Commodification of (dis)honour: Honour is a highly valued quality. As such it has been subject to normal market forces and exploitation. Examples include:

- qualifications (degrees, etc) are openly sold in various ways. They may be purchased following a token course of study, or without it. Counterfeit versions of the actual certificates may be purchased. In more reputable institutions, examination questions may be purchased in advance. Indeed, even the most reputable institutions may be prepared to offer the highest "honorary degrees" in exchange for appropriate financial donations.
- aristocratic and other honorary titles, like degrees, may be openly purchased, especially if they are associated with real estate.
- awards, again like degrees, may be attributed by juries under the influence of financial considerations
- advertising may be purchased to manipulate perceptions of honour, and those having honourable credentials may sell their services in support of dishonourable ends
  - honourability may be achieved through those with honourable credentials allowing themselves to be seen in the company of those seeking honourability -- for an appropriate consideration. Photo opportunities of audiences with the Pope may for example be arranged to this end.
  - honorable patronage, by the aristocratic, may be obtained through suitable financial arrangements ("rent-an-honorable"), as notably demonstrated in the case of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in connection with Lockheed
  - suitable investments may be made in negative political campaigns to taint opposition candidates by "mud-slinging" operations as demonstrated in the campaign against the presidential candidacy of John Kerry in 2004 in the USA
- honourability may effectively be purchased, as noted earlier, by purchasing weapons of a level of destructive capability necessary to get the attention of those from whom recognition of "honourability" is desired

Manufacturing (dis)honour? As implied above, any degree of honourability -- positive or negative -- may now be manufactured by appropriate news and image management. Sound bites and photo opportunities are used to promote those seeking to be honoured -- or to frame their opponents as dishonourable. Whatever the merits of the case against Michael Jackson, it can usefully be contrasted with cases against those protected by vested interests, such as Cardinal Law of Boston, or those responsible for the conduct of the military in Abu Ghraib.

One of the dangers of this approach is the emergence of groupthink as demonstrated by the insights provided by the most honourable academic think tanks in relation to assessment of the strategic threat of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Those opposed to the perspective of the Coalition of the Willing were simply discredited.

Honourability can be readily manufactured by team building processes -- at least to the point at which those in the team, or in their environment, perceive them to be honourable. This is notably the case in large corporations, but especially in the military. Such perceptions can be periodically reinforced through ceremonies and awards. Graduation ceremonies can be seen in this light.

An especially interesting variant is the process of beatification and sanctification of individuals, notably in the Catholic Church. Here the danger is the devaluation of honourability through multiplying the numbers so honoured, and undertaking such processes with unseemly
haste -- reinforcing the perception that this is done for political purposes rather than in recognition of any inherent honourability of the persons concerned.

The "manufacturing" of honour is clearly a response to the marked tendency towards "grasping" for honours. This can usefully be distinguished from any aspiration to intrinsic honour since the prime focus is on semblances of honour, whether through titles, awards, or commemorative plaques on buildings.

Most cruelly, a person or family may be dishonoured by ensuring that photographs are made of embarrassing or compromising situations typical of blackmail scenarios.

**Artificial valuation of honour:** The capacity to manufacture honour, and the commodification of honours, has resulted in a curious "market" for honour. This resembles in many ways the complex dynamics of the art market and the means whereby monetary value is attached to paintings. As with paintings, the recognition of honour in society is highly dependent on its promotion by those reputed to be the most honourable -- who have a deeply vested interest in sustaining their own honourability.

In the case of the art world, aesthetic value is attributed by extension of appreciation of iconic artists -- the grand masters -- whose merits are held to be unquestionable, other than by the ignorant. New works are attributed high value by being discovered and promoted by those with a need to sustain appreciation for their own sensibility and judgement amongst their peers. This context is profoundly affected by the vagaries of fashion and tendencies to uncritical groupthink through which the value of works can be artificially promoted. Those involved nevertheless seek to compete in demonstrating higher aesthetic sensitivity and insight to ensure their competitive advantage. There is therefore the question as to the extent to which aesthetic value is produced by this process rather than by the artists whose inspiration it is -- and may need to be complicit in the process to ensure their own success.

In this light, there is a marked tendency to "honour spin" by those who may themselves be less than honourable, if not downright dishonourable. Like the creative artist following the inspiration of a muse, the inherently honourable may find their products drawn into a market in which their genuineness is effectively devalued by those who use it to shore up those of questionable honourability. This is most obvious to those awarded medals for valour in combat situations -- who may have great difficulty reconciling the honourability of their own conduct under horrific conditions with the artificiality of those bestowing awards. Some are impelled to return their medals in protest.

The deliberate use of torture and mutilation by military forces that cultivate a reputation for acting honourably on behalf of their country may cause those aware of it to completely reframe any claims to honour by those involved, those responsible for them, or those complicit in justifying their actions. Torture is of course designed to humiliate and dishonour -- and ultimately has that effect on those who perpetrate it. Ensuring that torture is conducted by proxies in client countries does not mitigate the responsibility of those in whose name the torture is conducted. They too are dishonoured by the process and effectively devalue the honour behind which they skulk.

"Honourability" can thus be deliberately cultivated as an artificial condition to ensure immunity against any implication of dishonour.

- by law
- inhibition by feminist

**Manipulation of honour:** As an artificially sustained market, based on a genuine (but intangible) value, honour is subject to every form of manipulation. Examples include:

- accumulation of honours by individuals, raising the question at what point the quantitative accumulation ceases to constitute a meaningful measure of the honourability of the person, rather than a devaluation of any honour they may embody
- appropriation of honour due to another, whether in combat situations, with respect to a discovery, or with respect to artistic creativity
- monopoly of honour where it is more appropriately shared amongst a group of people, as may be typical of a research team or a rescue mission
- honour blackmail in which a threat of dishonour is used to constrain the action of another
- deliberately dissociating from action deemed honourable may be justified as "not my problem"
- lying in all its forms (including perjury) may be undertaken and justified by manipulating any underlying sense of honour through which it is denied ("on my honour"); this is typical of "white lies" used to minimize offence to others
- action above and beyond the law may be justified by those claiming to be honourable, whether in their own interests ("I am the law here") or by reference to higher authority ("I am a patriot serving the best interests of my country")
- withholding aid to persons in danger?
- done to

**Honour and betrayal:** The most dramatic manipulation and devaluation of honour is through subterfuge and betrayal -- then seen as the epitome of dishonour by those betrayed. This may take a variety of forms extensively explored in dramatic representations:

- betrayal of a group bound together by a degree of honour, whether a team, a school, a military unit, a corporation, a political party; it may be considered highly significant where there is a "code of honour" as in the case of secret societies
- betrayal of a relationship held to be honourable, whether with respect to a parent, a child, a spouse, a lover, a friend or a colleague
- betrayal in business, through a breach of confidence, may be framed as a business risk or may determine the capacity of the "dishonourable" and "untrustworthy" to undertake future business -- especially where these depend on handshake agreements
- betrayal of a relationship with an animal is of considerable significance to those who see their relationship with an animal (usually a pet) as involving a degree of mutual honour and trust
- betrayal of a belief system or a system of values, as characterized by those renouncing a religion, or converting to another; this may also be characterized by betrayal of a family, tribal, or craft tradition
• betrayal of future generations through the overexploitation of nonrenewable natural resources

Curiously, in conflict situations, "going over to the other side" or "assisting the enemy" may be framed as honourable and courageous even when it may involve a high degree of betrayal. Examples include military and industrial espionage, adultery ("all's fair in love and war").

**Honour and credibility: "without honour"

**Credibility:** It is argued that in contemporary international relations, the concept of "credibility" resembles that of honour. When the credibility of a state or of an alliance appears at stake, honour-bound politicians may call for drastic measures. [more]

Interestingly credibility is also implicit in the common reference to "prophets without honour" deriving from the biblical quotation: "Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own relatives, and in his own house., notably in their own country'" (Mark 6:4). For example:


**Lack of honour:** Distinct from the credibility connotation is that of "lack of honour" or integrity as variously noted with respect to the Bush administration (2003), online gaming community, double standards, family life, legal enforcement, competition, religious icons, conduct of office, small arms demand.

In *Culture Shock: a World Christian's Manifesto* (1999) by Baruch, with respect to cultural conflict, lack of honour is seen as a key factor:

> The spirit of this age, even when not fully blown into racial hatred, manifests itself in the lack of respect for those to whom honour is due. You could say, it's one of the earlier symptoms of cultural animosity, but it happens within the culture between classes and age groups. Even during the 60s and 70s, while we all revelled in racial tolerance, there appeared a "generation gap", wherein the young lost their respect for the preceding generation. Could this be, in fact, a seed of more fully blown manifestations of hate further down the road? If it is, we had better learn the lesson of respect.

The other area in which the lack of honour can easily lead to social unrest, is between social classes. In a way, the social classes, such as the working class, middle class, professional, aristocratic, etc., are cultures in themselves. Masses of inner city working class people can just as easily turn against the middle and upper classes as they can minority ethnic groups. If, however, those of the upper classes took their cue from the book of James, and honoured those of the lower classes as their brothers and sisters, and vice versa, how many bloody ordeals could have been avoided altogether, such as the Bolshevik revolution, the French revolution, and the American race riots, just to name a few?

**Challenging cases for understanding honour:**

- Whistleblowers: notably in the light of their perception as "traitors" to their group, and their purported efforts to be acting in a higher cause
- Kofi Annan: in honouring (as UN Secretary General or as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) the various relevant UN resolutions and mandates, whether or not this resulted in human rights abuses and large-scale massacres
- *Pius XII*: in the light of divergent understandings of his relation to Nazism
- *Bill Clinton*: in the light of the scandal for which he was investigated
- Presidents, held in great honour in their country: *Jacques Chirac / Helmut Kohl / Silvio Berlusconi*: for the financial scandals (notably relating to their political parties) over which they have been variously investigated
- *George Bush / Tony Blair*: for their misleading presentations concerning weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and the deaths resulting from their intervention
- *Henry Kissinger*: as Nobel Peace Prize laureate of 1973, for his involvement in the war in Indochina, and other military interventions by the USA
- *Yasser Arafat*: as Nobel Peace Prize laureate of 1993, in the light of the corruption scandals with which he has been associated
- *Ariel Sharon*: despite his indictment on war crimes charges
- Dictators, originally held in great honour in their country: *Augusto Pinochet*, Fidel Castro, etc
- *Adolf Eichmann*: who considered himself to be acting honourably in following the orders of his Fuhrer
- *Marshal Philippe Pétain*, a hero of World War I who negotiated an armistice to salvage French honour and prestige, but was tried and imprisoned for collaboration with the Nazis. As noted by Magnus Linklater (*Imagine: Churchill the failure, Pétain the hero. Times*, 11 May 2005), the reputation of national leaders is often balanced on the knife edge of history
- Missionaries acting in good faith, and occasionally martyred, in their honourable efforts to suppress any trace of indigenous cultures and their associated belief systems
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