The Pursuit of Honor

Novel Contexts, Varied Approaches, and New Developments

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Abstract

Why are people around the world willing to sacrifice for honor? This chapter addresses that question with a focus on the little-researched cultural context of Turkey. When compared to European Americans from northern US states, Turkish people have richer conceptions of the concept of *honor*, and they perceive that a greater variety of situations are imbued with honor-related implications. They respond to honor-relevant situations with more intense emotions and are more sensitive to sharing content in social media that could lead to shame or disrepute. This research replicates previous findings of the link between honor and aggression, and it showed that honor threats impair goal pursuit more among Turkish participants. Turkish participants react more strongly to a charge that they behaved dishonestly (i.e., an honor threat) than to a charge that they were incompetent, compared to European American participants in northern US states. This research provides an important extension to previous research focused on the southern states in the United States.

Key Words: culture of honor, Turkey, goal pursuit, honor threat, dignity culture

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview of the Chapter

Why do people fight and die for honor? That question is part of a larger question: What is honor, and how does concern for honor influence behavior? In

this chapter, we outline our research on a culture of honor that the field of cultural psychology has largely overlooked: Turkey. Until recently, cultural psychologists have paid relatively little attention to this part of the world and to the values, beliefs, and ideals that shape patterns of behavior in this region.

We begin the chapter by situating our work in the context of the bigger picture of cultural psychology as a field and in the particular domain of earlier research on cultures of honor. We will first walk the reader through the initial work by anthropologists. Then we will provide a quick survey of theory and research on the origins of cultures of honor and their distinctions relative to the other cultural logics of dignity and face, which sets a foundation for our foray into understanding honor in the Turkish context.

Next, we will introduce the reader to our work through five key themes. The first theme describes bottom-up, or *emic*, approaches that we have used to understand the indigenous conceptions of honor in Turkey compared to European-heritage people in the northern United States (encompassing states in the Northeast and upper Midwest, primarily). These studies employ proto-type approaches and situation sampling to discover lay beliefs about honor and to begin investigating the cultural similarities and differences in perceptions of the ways that honor-related situations impact individuals and their families. Our next theme acknowledges the existing theories of cultures of honor and examines their generalizability to the Turkish context (an *etic* approach). We apply theories of the distinctive emotions (i.e., shame and anger) that underlie responses to honor threats and investigate the honor–aggression link among Turkish samples. Next, we seek to extend theories of honor's influence on behavior by differentiating types of threats and by examining a new outcome—goal pursuit. Throughout these studies, we have paid attention not only to negative consequences of a concern for honor (as has been the focus of much of the honor-focused research) but also to the positive roles that honor plays in morality and social behavior. This review also highlights the diversity of methodological approaches and paradigms that are part of a cultural psychologist's toolkit. We conclude with suggestions of additional useful techniques and measures, and important questions for researchers to consider.

B. Cultural Psychology at the Turn of the Century

In the early 2000s, the field of cultural psychology was based primarily on comparisons of East or South Asians with Westerners,[1] with a focus on differences in self-construal, cognition, emotion, and motivation. At that time,

the research literature had documented that East Asians tended to define the self in terms of close others and group memberships, in contrast to the focus on individual traits, attitudes, beliefs, and goals that defined the self-views of members of Western-heritage societies (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; for a review, see Cross & Lam, 2017). Building on this foundation, researchers demonstrated that East Asians and European Americans make different assumptions about the world, leading to important differences in attention, memory, attribution, and judgment (see Spencer-Rodgers & Peng, 2018, for a review of this literature). These differing patterns of self-conception and cognition are associated with differences in emotional experiences and motivations (e.g., Mesquita & Leu, 2007; Morling & Lee, 2017; Tsai, 2007). This East versus West theory and research laid a key foundation for cultural psychology to build on, and it framed the experiences that we, Susan Cross and Ayşe Üskül, brought to bear in our work.

This foundation based on East–West comparisons excluded much of the world. Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East were largely overlooked in these developments although they were assumed to be similar to the "East" (for exceptions at the time, see, e.g., Adams, 2005; Greenfield, 1997). By the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, however, researchers had begun to examine a particular cultural category that held promise for helping us understand the psychology of members of some of the cultural groups outside the East–West vector: cultures of honor. As described in this chapter, cultures of honor are thought to shape psychological processes in Mediterranean and North African countries, Latin America, parts of South Asia, and the southern and mountain states of the United States. As social psychologists who believed that our field should be a global science, we saw the developing social-psychological research on cultures of honor as a path into the study of often overlooked regions of the world. We were also motivated by our own backgrounds as members of cultures of honor: Uskul was raised in Turkey and lived and worked in different countries, which provided her with a comparative perspective, and Cross was raised in the southern US state of Texas and had some connections to the Middle East. We were both concerned that although the eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries of the world played important roles in world events, they did not have commensurate representation in social-cultural psychology. Yes, Turkish psychologists had established themselves as a leading voice in the region, but the interpretation of findings obtained in that context did not always take cultural characteristics into consideration (although exceptions, of course, exist, e.g., Kagitcibasi [1994]

and Wasti & Erdaş [2019], to give just two examples). Given the fundamental, explicit, yet sometimes contested importance of honor in Turkey, we seized upon this theoretical formulation as a means of making progress in unfolding the social psychology of Turkish and other honor culture populations.

C. What Characterizes Cultures of Honor?

Anthropologists working in the Mediterranean societies of Greece and Spain were the first to identify honor as a key cultural concern. Observing the relations among residents of a small Spanish village, Julian Pitt-Rivers (1965) described honor as "the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society" (p. 21). In the language of contemporary psychology, this definition marries concern for self-esteem with a concern for one's reputation or social image—how one is viewed by others. Pitt-Rivers does not articulate in this statement the dimensions upon which individuals base their self-esteem and social image, but others have identified culturally specific moral codes, gender-related roles, and economic and social status as the primary sources of these evaluations in traditional cultures of honor (Campbell, 1964; Gilmore, 1987; Peristiany, 1965). A person's honor is maintained by adherence to these codes and roles; by achievement of educational, economic, and social gains; and by swift and firm responses to threats to one's honor. Importantly, honor—especially the respect of others—is easily lost in these contexts, and once lost, it is difficult to regain (Stewart, 1994). Consequently, members of honor cultures have been described as especially attuned to potential insults or threats that challenge their reputation and as prepared to vigorously defend themselves in the face of such threats. The importance of reputation and social respect as a key concern or attribute to be prized, protected, and defended is expressed in the traditional Arabic saying "Honor before bread."

How do cultures of honor arise? The socioecological origins of cultures of honor can be found in subsistence patterns in local environments. Historians (Fischer, 1989; Gastil, 1971; McWhiney, 1988) and anthropologists (Edgerton, 1971; Goldschmidt, 1965) argue that cultures of honor arise in ecological contexts with two primary characteristics: (a) subsistence based primarily on herding animals (or other forms of portable wealth) and (b) weak or absent law enforcement. Picture the rugged terrain of the Scottish Highlands (or the Mongolian steppes where nomadic Turkic peoples originate) prior to the Industrial Revolution: The ecology is mountainous and rocky and therefore not conducive to farming, so people raised cattle, sheep, and pigs to feed their families. These animals could easily be stolen by "rustlers." The herder whose

livestock was stolen often had little recourse to legal systems for protection; getting a message to the nearest law enforcement agency could take a day or more. By that time, one's livestock was rebranded, butchered, or hidden away in a remote location. Consequently, the owner of livestock (typically men) had to protect his and his family's livelihood by cultivating a reputation for being a person who was quick to respond to any threat to his property and was unstinting in his retaliation against a threat. He had to cultivate a "tough" persona, so that thieves would choose not to tempt fate by absconding with his herd.

This conception of cultures of honor first proved useful when American sociologists and historians attempted to explain how the US South differed from other parts of the country, particularly the North and Midwest. In particular, scholars noted that the US South was more violent than the northern and midwestern regions of the country (Gastil, 1971, 1989; Hackney, 1969). The initial explanations of this difference focused on differences in climate, poverty rates, and the history of slavery in the region (Anderson, 1989; Loftin & Hill, 1974; de Tocqueville, 1835/1969). Others, however, noted that the European origins of the settlers of the southern region of the United States differed from the origins of the settlers of the northern regions. Whereas the North and Midwest were settled by Anglo-Saxons and northern Europeans, the South was initially settled by large numbers of Scots who originated from the southern border with Britain. As Brown (2016) describes, these settlers came from a region where generations of warfare between British and Scottish forces left the environment decimated and social institutions in shambles. The chief means of subsistence was open-range herding of animals for meat (Fischer, 1989; McWhiney, 1988; Wyatt-Brown, 1982, 1986; see Brown & Osterman, 2012, for a review), which created an environment conducive to the development of a culture of honor.

Consequently, Scottish settlers in the US South brought with them an honor code that included the social principle of *lex talionis*, or the rule of retribution. As a historian of the US South put it, "lex talionis . . . held that a good man must seek to do right in the world, but when wrong was done to him, he must punish the wrongdoer himself by an act of retribution that restored order and justice in the world" (Fischer, 1989, p. 765). In an environment in which state-run enforcement of rules and laws is weak, individuals (especially men) must cultivate a reputation for quick and strong responses to threats to their honor to ensure that others do not consider insulting or aggressing against them, their families, or their possessions. The person who fails in this

effort may be easily taken advantage of, disregarded in community decisions, or written out of opportunities for advancement or profit because others do not believe that the person is a trustworthy ally or a responsible caretaker of resources (Cohen et al., 2018; Nowak et al., 2016). Thus, honor cultures are marked by strong norms of reciprocity or payback: The honorable person reciprocates both good things (help and hospitality) and bad things (insults, affronts, and injustices) (Cohen & Vandello, 2004; Leung & Cohen, 2011). Some consequences of this cultural heritage in the US South are high rates of violence among the White population over relatively minor affronts, high levels of gun ownership, high levels of endorsement of violence for self-protection, and other phenomena that fit together into the logic of honor (Brown, 2016; Gul et al., 2021; Nisbett, 1993; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996).

1. The Cultural Logic of Dignity and Face

The theoretical differentiation of honor cultures from other cultural logics has been articulated by Leung and Cohen (2011), who compare three cultural syndromes: honor, dignity, and face. They describe these cultural syndromes as "constellations of shared beliefs, values, behaviors, practices and so on that are organized around a central theme" (p. 508). This organization takes on a sort of internal logic, in which the various components (values, beliefs, practices, institutions, and so on) fit together in a coherent whole, at least from the perspective of insiders in each cultural group.

Societies that share a western European heritage represent what Leung and Cohen (2011) describe as *dignity* cultures. This cultural logic is premised on the belief that a person's worth is inherent and unalterable; it is based on Enlightenment notions of equality and human rights that are accorded to all people, independent of their status in society (at least ideally). In dignity cultures, at least theoretically, a person's worth does not depend on other people's opinions or respect. Good behavior is not driven by worries about what other people think but by one's own values, moral stances, goals, and beliefs. Individuals do not have to rely on a reputation for toughness or payback because an accessible legal system guards individuals' rights and possessions. Payback is a responsibility of the state, not the individual, and so norms of reciprocity or retaliation are relatively weaker in these societies (Miller, 1993; for comparisons with face cultures, see Boiger et al., 2014; Leung & Cohen, 2011).

Dignity and honor cultures both differ from so-called face cultures, largely found in East Asian societies that are based on Confucian, Buddhist, or Daoist philosophical traditions. Leung and Cohen (2011) describe face cultures in

terms of three *H*s: hierarchy, harmony, and humility. In face cultures, one's social worth or respectability is maintained by diligently enacting one's proper role in one's in-groups or social hierarchy and by safeguarding harmony in one's relationships and in-groups. Face cultures are marked by strong social norms and attitudes that focus on avoiding conflict. When an individual is the target of an insult or derogation, they are not obligated to respond immediately or retaliate, as in an honor culture. Instead, the offender is punished by other group members or higher-status individuals. The respectable person does not brag about their achievements or status in an attempt to gain others' admiration; instead, the humble, modest person gains face when a higher-status person calls out their achievements or admirable behavior. So, although both honor and face cultures may be characterized by a collectivist social orientation, they differ in the means by which one gains or maintains reputation and social respect (through retaliation in an honor culture versus humility and harmony in a face culture [see Kim & Cohen, 2010; Kim et al., 2010]). Although the honor, face, and dignity conceptualization provides a valuable framework for investigating cultural patterns of behavior, our focus in this chapter is comparison of honor and dignity cultures (for a comparison of honor, face, and dignity cultures, see e.g., Boiger et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2021).

Much of the research testing theoretical differences between honor and dignity cultures has focused on European-heritage people in the United States who have been socialized into the honor culture of the southern and mountain states or the dignity culture of the upper midwestern and northern states (e.g., Brown, 2016; Cohen et al., 1996; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Vandello et al., 2009). Yet vast geographic regions of the world are likely marked by the cultural logic of honor, but they have largely gone unexamined.[2] We have sought to extend culture of honor theory to a relatively less investigated part of the world: Turkey.

2. Turkey as a Culture of Honor

There were several reasons we chose to focus on Turkey in this line of research in comparison with other cultural groups. First, one of us (Ayşe K. Üskül) grew up experiencing the norms, values, and cultural contexts of Turkey; she is aware of the ways in which concerns for honor permeate everyday experiences in people's lives. Second, in the light of existing research in the social-psychological literature on cultures of honor conducted primarily in the southern United States, Spain, and Latin America (e.g., Brown, 2016; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Ramirez-Marin & Shafa, 2017; Rodriguez Mosquera et al.,

2002a, 2002b; Vandello & Cohen, 2003; Vandello et al., 2009), the Turkish context presents stark differences in terms of its religious and cultural background, geographic location, and the prevalence of honor in individuals' daily social affairs. Turkey hosts individuals of different religious backgrounds, with the majority of individuals identifying themselves as Muslim. Due to its geographic positioning, Turkey has been at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, which resulted in its shaping by traditions and customs originating from different religious and cultural practices. Its position in the region also made Turkey home for many of the displaced, contributing to its ethnic and cultural diversity. Finally, it is more collectivistic and tight (e.g., having relatively strict enforcement of social norms) compared with other regions studied within the cultures of honor framework (e.g., US South and Spain).

It is in this broad context (which is to some extent similar to neighboring southeast European and Middle Eastern cultural groups) that researchers have pointed to the importance of honor in shaping interpersonal and other social processes (Bagli & Sev'er, 2003; Kardam, 2005; Ozgur & Sunar, 1982). The variety of Turkish terms used to refer to different aspects of honor (e.g., *onur*, *namus*, *seref*, *haysiyet*, *nam*, *san*, *izzet*) (Sev'er & Yurdakul, 2001) and practices that help protect and maintain honor (e.g., the incidence of honor crimes; laws that protect national honor) all attest to honor's influential position in this society. This is in strong contrast to, for example, how honor is backgrounded in the southern US context, where honor is not as explicitly cognized and articulated.

Third, despite similarities in the importance of honor to other cultural groups in the region, we argue that the Turkish context is also different from other Middle Eastern and North African contexts that researchers have recently started investigating (e.g., Alvaro et al., 2018; Aslani et al., 2016; Gelfand et al., 2015) in terms of its imperial past (i.e., the Turkish republic emerged following the abolition of the Ottoman monarchy), its relationship with the "West" (e.g., it is a member of the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; it has a customs union with the European Union), and its position as a country of emigration and immigration (e.g., hosting large number of immigrants from the Balkans and, most recently, large number of refugees from countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan; having a large diaspora settled in western European countries such as Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands). These characteristics position Turkey as a gatekeeper country with strong links to Europe.

Finally, we were cognizant of the fact that little systematic and experimental research on honor had taken place outside of the US South, and we aimed to advance this literature by focusing on an understudied cultural context with a starkly different background. Focusing on Turkey would also open the gateway to understanding other understudied cultural groups in southeastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa that share certain characteristics with Turkey. This would also contribute more generally to the literature in cultural psychology, where the vast majority of comparative evidence is based on the investigation of psychological processes of individuals in Western contexts, on the one hand (e.g., North America, western Europe), and East Asian contexts, on the other (e.g., Japan, Korea) (De Almeida & Uchida, 2019). Although Turkey has not been systematically studied in comparison with East Asian contexts before, we know from other research that both individualistic and collectivistic orientations exist in the Turkish context (especially in urban settings [see Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2005, 2015; Uskul et al., 2004]) and that Turkish individuals do not always handle conflict harmoniously, as one would expect in East Asian groups (e.g., Cingöz-Ulu & Lalonde, 2007). Thus, by focusing on Turkey, we also aimed to shed light on a different configuration of the self and pattern of relationships through the study of honor.

II. MAJOR THEMES IN OUR RESEARCH

Our research to date can be characterized by several themes. Some of these themes organize our findings into particular categories, whereas other themes cut across categories. We briefly describe these themes in this section and then spell out our research with respect to them.

A. Bottom-Up Approaches

What characterizes the cultural logic of honor in Turkey? We were reluctant to assume that the lay understanding of honor and the situations, practices, and norms in which honor is embedded were the same across all cultural contexts. Thus, we began our adventure studying honor cultures with a bottom-up assessment of the everyday experience and conception of honor in Turkey. This emic approach investigated the everyday lay understandings of the meaning of honor among individuals from Turkey and northern US. In this work, we sought to identify both cognitive representations of honor (through the identification of prototypes and dimensions that underlie the prototypes) and situations that carry honor-related expectations for behavior.

B. Top-Down Approaches

At the time that we initiated this research, most social-psychological theories of honor cultures were developed with a focus on the US South or Spain. These societies differ from Turkey and other Middle Eastern honor cultures in many ways. Thus, we used an etic approach that tested existing theories in the novel cultural context of Turkey to examine their generalizability.

C. Extending the Reach of the Theory of Honor Cultures

If the pursuit of and maintenance of one's reputation or honor are core motivations in places such as Turkey, then a wide range of activities, relationships, and decisions may be influenced by these motivations. Thus, we have sought to extend the theory to new outcomes and situations, with a goal to expand the literature beyond its common focus on the honor–aggression link. In particular, we have examined how concern for honor can have consequences for individuals' attention to and pursuit of other goals. Furthermore, we have sought to distinguish honor-related motives and behaviors from other types of motives. For example, we have examined how responses to honor threats differ from responses to other kinds of threats (e.g., threats to competence) among members of honor and dignity cultures.

D. Positive and Negative Consequences of Concern for Honor

When we started this line of research, the literature had accumulated considerable evidence on the negative role of honor (e.g., how it can lead to aggressive behavior), while very few studies had examined positive aspects of honor. Yet the concept of honor in contexts such as Turkey is very far-reaching; it includes the value of hospitality, reciprocity, being trustworthy and honest, and adherence to other culturally endorsed codes for positive behavior (Cohen et al., 2018; Leung & Cohen, 2011; Uskul et al., 2019). With a goal to address this limitation, in our research, we recognized both the negative and positive consequences of honor and designed studies to understand both sides of the medallion.

E. Using Multiple Approaches, Methods, and Paradigms

Our final cross-cutting theme is that we aimed to examine cultural conceptualizations of honor and its consequences for a variety of social-psychological

processes using a diverse set of approaches, methods, and paradigms. Cultural beliefs, values, motives, and ways of thinking are transmitted and embodied in many different ways: through individuals' attitudes, self-views, and actions as well as through norms and expectations for how one should behave. When we initiated this program of research, the existing literature focused heavily on group comparisons, using national or regional background as a proxy for culture of honor. We focused not only on group differences but also on social norms around honor and situations in which honor is experienced, as well as individual differences in honor endorsement. Thus, one cross-cutting theme in our work is a focus on complementary levels of explanation.

We have also used a variety of methods, paradigms, and outcome variables to examine the cultural logic of honor. These include qualitative methods, survey methods, and experimental methods in both the laboratory and online. We have used self-report outcomes tapping into different cognitive and emotional responses as well as behavioral outcomes to test our hypotheses. Some of our work has combined culture-level analysis with individual differences, in recognition that individuals do not uniformly endorse the values, beliefs, and expectations of their societies (Kitayama et al., 2009). These individual difference measures of the endorsement of honor-related values are used in some cases to explain cultural differences in behavior (as in a mediation model). In other cases, we adopt the Culture × Personality × Situation [CuPS] approach, articulated by Leung and Cohen (2011). This approach does not assume that cultural differences in behavior lie entirely in the individual; instead, it recognizes that a particular individual attribute (e.g., concern for one's reputation) may predict different outcomes in honor, dignity, or face cultural contexts in interaction with different situational characteristics.

In the remainder of the chapter, we articulate how these major themes framed our past and ongoing program of research in cultures of honor and the contributions of this research to our understanding of culturally shaped patterns of behavior.

III. BOTTOM-UP APPROACHES

A. Prototypes of Honor

When you think of the concept of *honor*, what comes to mind? Do you consider how much other people respect you, your perceived morality, or the degree to which you live up to your assigned roles and norms? Or do you think of an award, some sort of recognition, or a person in an esteemed position (as in "Your honor, the judge")?

Our early work on bottom-up approaches investigated lay prototypes of honor, in part as a response to differing theoretical definitions of the construct. As mentioned previously, the initial description of cultures of honor by the anthropologist Pitt-Rivers (1965) articulated a dual theory of honor, which included individuals' feelings of self-worth along with their worth as judged by others. Some scholars have focused primarily on the latter component of Pitt-Rivers' definition—others' judgment and opinion of the individual (Bowman, 2006; Salzman, 2008). In some research, honor is presented as primarily a function of the individual's place in the social dominance hierarchy (Henry, 2009), whereas others have focused on reciprocity as the key feature of an honor culture (Cohen et al., 2018; Miller, 1993; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Lay beliefs and prototypes of a construct such as honor may differ in important ways from expert or theoretical perspectives, yet both approaches are important for a thorough understanding of the phenomenon. Examination of lay prototypes of honor can help researchers and theorists articulate the critical components of the construct and capture what people mean when they invoke the construct to explain their own or other people's behavior. This examination can also uncover unexamined assumptions or biases in the existing theories or research, and it can be used to test competing theories (Fehr, 2005). Furthermore, the features and dimensions of the construct identified through a prototype approach can be used to develop new measures. Finally, identification of the prototypical features of a construct in differing cultural contexts can help researchers articulate the foundations of cultural differences in behavior (see Lam et al., 2016).

1. Feature Frequency

The goal of the first step in this process of identifying lay prototypes of a construct is to delineate the range of attributes ascribed to the concept of *honor* in each group. If participants within a cultural group seldom generate the same attributes in describing a concept, one would conclude that there is little agreement or consensus on the meaning of the concept in that group; if many people generate the same attribute(s), then we could conclude that there is considerable consensus about the meaning of the attribute. Given the theoretical and ethnographic research that suggests that honor is a more important motivator in Turkey than in the northern United States, we expected the Turkish participants both to generate more features of the construct and to have more consensus about the features of the construct.

In the first step of this process, 84 Turkish participants (56 women) and 106 European American participants in northern US states (52 women) enrolled in public universities were asked to think about the ways that the word *honor* is used. They then responded to two questions: (a) What comes to your mind when you think of an individual's personal honor? and (b) What does it mean to be a person with honor? In this and other research we have conducted in Turkey, we use the Turkish term *onur* as the translation of the English term *honor*. Other scholars have argued that it is the most similar in meaning to the northern US understanding of honor (Sev'er & Yurdakul, 2001), and it is gender-neutral in its usage.

Coders identified the unique features listed by two or more participants in each context (see Cross et al., 2014, for a description of this process). As expected, Turkish participants generated more individual features of honor than did northern US participants (M_{Turkey} = 7.42, *SD* = 3.2; M_{US} = 4.97, *SD* = 2.49; *d* = 0.85). There was also more agreement among Turkish participants in the features of honor: 40% of the sample generated a feature related to honesty, and 20% mentioned the term *namus* (which can refer either to women's sexual behavior or to reliability). In contrast, the most frequently generated terms among the northern US participants, *doing the right thing* and *being respected*, were generated by only 15% of the sample. Thus, as we hypothesized, Turkish participants not only had a richer conception of honor (i.e., it was characterized by more attributes) but were more likely than US Northerners to share a relatively consensual understanding of the concept of *honor*.

We also examined the overlap between the features generated by the two groups. After translation and backtranslation, the degree to which the two groups' prototypes shared common features was assessed using the *index of inter-prototype similarity* (Cantor et al., 1982). This is simply a ratio of shared to unique attributes in pairs of feature lists; in the Cantor et al. (1982) study of prototypes of situations, the similarities ranged from 0.00 to 1.30. In our study, only 16 of the total set of features (*N* = 145) were found in both lists, for an index of 0.14. This relatively low score indicates considerable differences in the features of honor generated by these two groups. Furthermore, there was a qualitative difference in the two sets of features: Turkish participants generated more negations such as *not cheating* (30% of the unique features) than did northern US participants (4%). This finding supports the argument that members of honor cultures are highly attuned to actions and behaviors that can lead one to lose honor, with the goal of avoiding these behaviors.

2. Centrality of the Features

In Step 2 of this process, a new sample of participants was invited to rate the combined Turkish and American features for their centrality to their conception of honor. Features that were high in frequency (i.e., generated by a large proportion of the Step 1 sample) and highly central are considered prototypical. For both groups, *honesty*, *trustworthiness*, and *self-respect* were highly prototypical features of honor. The two groups differed, however, in the extent to which specific moral behaviors were rated as highly central. Turkish participants, as mentioned previously, were more likely to view specific moral behaviors that one should not do (*not telling lies*, *not to steal anything*) as very prototypical, whereas the northern US list of prototypical features included relatively vague statements about morality (*doing the right thing*, *having morals*).

We then examined whether there were similar underlying dimensions in the centrality ratings of the combined set of features. Exploratory factor analyses revealed three dimensions that were similar for both Turkish and northern US participants: Moral Behavior (with items such as *to be helpful to others*, *to be honest*, *not to cheat*), Social Status and Respect (e.g., *to be respectable in society*, *to be highly regarded by others*, *to reach a certain status in society*), and Self-Respect (e.g., *to feel proud of myself*, *to have self-esteem*, *to be confident*). In short, these results support the dual perspective on honor articulated by Pitt-Rivers (1965) that included a person's value in their own eyes and in the eyes of others in society, but they also go beyond this definition to highlight the importance of moral behavior in conceptualizations of honor in these two cultural groups.

In summary, a lay prototypes approach can help researchers flesh out the ways that a construct is understood in differing cultural contexts. In the process of providing an important "bottom-up" perspective on the components of honor, this work has also contributed to another theme of this chapter: the need to address positive aspects of honor in addition to negative aspects of honor. Honor concerns motivate individuals to keep their word, to be helpful to others, and to be willing to sacrifice for others. Most definitions and theoretical conceptions of *culture of honor* have focused on social status and respect or the role of payback in maintaining others' respect (Leung & Cohen, 2011; Peristiany, 1965); researchers and theorists often understate (or simply assume) the role of moral behavior (with the exception of women's sexual behavior; see Gilmore, 1987; Rodriquez Mosquera, 2016; Saucier et al., 2015; Vandello & Cohen, 2003).

These findings bolster other observations that suggest that members of honor cultures are more likely to have a prevention motivational focus (Gelfand et al., 2015; Higgins, 1996). The generation of negatively phrased features, such as *not to tell lies* and *not to cheat*, supports the contention that honor is easy to lose and difficult to regain when lost (Stewart, 1994). Thus, individuals focus on those behaviors that are most likely to cause one to lose honor (e.g., *not to lie*, *not to steal*). One might expect a US Southerner to list *Don't be a wuss*. In contrast, in a dignity culture, where the occasional lie or moral misstep is not an indicator of one's inherent worth (Leung & Cohen, 2011), individuals may be more likely to focus on the self- and socially enhancing aspects of moral behavior, such as *doing something good for others* and *doing the right thing*. In our follow-up research, we are currently investigating how the dimensions of honor uncovered in this work are related to other attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

B. Situations in Everyday Life

A different way of thinking of the concept *honor* would be to visualize it in more concrete terms as experienced within specific situations. What kinds of experiences are thought of as impacting one's honor, either positively or negatively? Or how do individuals envisage honor being threatened or enhanced in different situations? To complement the studies designed to identify lay prototypes of honor and their underlying dimensions described in the previous section, we employed a situation sampling approach to examine the types of honor-relevant situations afforded by the Turkish and northern American cultural worlds. This approach was inspired by previous research (e.g., Kitayama et al., 1997; Morling et al., 2002) that was based on the premise that cultures leave their traces both inside and outside of our heads, not only shaping what we think, feel, and do but also guiding the everyday practices and scripts, norms, and customs that we follow (Kitayama, 2002; Morling & Lamoreaux, 2008). And it is through experiencing different types of situations that we come to adopt certain ways of thinking of ourselves and the world around us (Markus & Hamedani, 2019). Thus, examining social situations in different cultural contexts can give us important insights into the kinds of experiences individuals regularly encounter in different cultural groups and how frequent these experiences are. Once these situations have been identified, they can then be utilized to examine affective or behavioral responses to these situations by individuals from the same cultural group or other cultural groups. To some extent, this methodology allows researchers to circumvent one difficulty

experienced in cultural-psychological research, which is the ethically impossible alternative of randomly assigning individuals to experience situations that are encountered in other cultural contexts.

In this research, we followed the situation sampling methodology in a two-step process. In Step 1, we asked Turkish and European American participants from northern US states to list honor-relevant situations (Uskul et al., 2012). In Step 2, we asked new participants to evaluate a subsection of these situations for their impact on their own and close others' feelings, and acquaintances' feelings about their family. We will cover findings from Step 2 later in the section on emotions (see Section IV.A.1). In this section, we limit our focus to the analysis of situations generated by Turkish and northern European American participants, as part of our attempt to understand cultural conceptions of honor in a bottom-up process.

We asked 84 Turkish participants and 97 European-heritage participants from northern US states to list situations that they considered as most effective if someone wanted to (a) attack or insult somebody else's honor or (b) enhance or increase somebody else's honor. We then coded the situations generated by participants in both samples for the kinds of incidents to which they referred (e.g., false accusations, praise) and for who the situations involved (e.g., themselves, close others, groups, audience). We purposefully asked participants to generate situations that focused on somebody else's honor-related experiences, rather than their own, as we aimed to get an insight into culturally common (vs. idiosyncratic) situations that were viewed as effective in either threatening or enhancing honor. Our first observation in this study pointed to group differences in the frequency with which participants generated honor-relevant situations. Independent of the honor-attacking or honor-enhancing nature of the situations, Turkish participants (M = 2.81, SD = 1.82) generated significantly more meaningful units (i.e., independent units of analysis consisting of unique meaning statements such as *saying that he is a liar*) than did northern European American participants (M = 2.03, SD = 1.37, d = 0.48).

1. Honor-Attacking Situations

When we coded honor-attacking situations for content, we found that, overall, honor-attacking situations generated by members of both groups mainly referred to incidents that involved humiliation, false accusation, sexual or physical attack, challenge or criticism, a person being attributed negative character or behavior, or lack of achievement. There were both similarities and differences between the two cultural groups in the frequency with which these

situations were generated. On the one hand, Turkish (28.5%) and northern US (31.4%) participants generated comparable numbers of honor-attacking situations that involved an insult or explicit humiliation of another person. On the other hand, Turkish participants generated 8 times more situations that involved false accusation or unfair treatment and 3 times more situations that referred to physical or sexual attacks than did northern US participants. In contrast, northern US participants were 5 times more likely than Turkish participants to generate situations that involved a criticism of a person's ideas or character or situations that focused on a person's lack of integrity.

Coding honor-attacking situations for the target that they involved revealed that, on the one hand, Turkish participants (11.6%) generated significantly more honor-threatening situations than did northern US participants (3.5%) that involved a relational target (e.g., calling someone's sister a liar). On the other hand, the northern US participants (95%) generated a greater number of situations than did Turkish participants (88.4%) that involved an individual target (e.g., accusing someone of being dishonest). Percentage of units involving a collective target (e.g., national group) did not differ across the two groups. In addition, Turkish participants generated a greater number of honor-attacking situations that involved an audience (25.3%), referring to a close other (e.g., mother or sister, 7.8%), or referring to a social group (classroom or sports team, 17.5%) than did European-American participants (4.8%, 0.7%, 4.1%, respectively). These differences highlight the more relational nature of honor as experienced in the Turkish context and point to the need for an integrative understanding of honor which takes into account different cultural dimensions (e.g., individualism–collectivism).

2. Honor-Enhancing Situations

The conception of honor reflected in the types of honor-enhancing situations generated by Turkish and European-American participants from northern states also showed similarities and differences. On the one hand, both groups generated to a similar extent situations that showed integrity or consistency in one's behaviors and situations that revealed positive characteristics and behaviors of a person (Turkish [TR] = 13.2%, US = 8.7%). On the other hand, the largest proportion of situations generated by Turkish participants involved being praised, admired, or appreciated by others (39.6%), as well as a person achieving positive outcomes (20.8%), whereas the largest proportion of situations generated by US participants involved helping or serving others (33.7%). Coding honor-enhancing situations generated by the two groups for the target[3] and audience that they involved did not reveal significant

differences across the two cultural groups. The vast majority of honor-enhancing situations generated by both groups focused on the individual, and a very small percentage of them involved an audience.

These findings point to some agreement between the two cultural groups in the honor relevance of different situations (e.g., that a person's honor can be attacked through situations that involve insults and other forms of humiliation and that a person's honor can be enhanced through integrity and consistency in one's behavior). There was, however, considerable disagreement as well. For example, US Northerners seemed to view one's honor being attacked or enhanced primarily through one's own character and behavior (e.g., immoral behavior or having bad character), whereas Turkish individuals seemed to view honor as being impacted to a greater extent by others' negative or positive actions and appraisals (e.g., being attacked by another person, being praised by someone). Turkish participants were also more likely to generate situations that were stronger in terms of the likely consequences they would evoke for the participant and individuals associated with them (e.g., sexual and physical attack, false accusation; see Table 4.1). These findings also highlight, in line with previous findings documenting culturally shaped forms of honor, that European-heritage individuals from northern US states are more likely to experience honor as a person-bound construct, whereas individuals of Turkish background are more likely to experience honor as a more relational (and collective) construct. Finally, the types of situations described as honor-attacking or honor-enhancing varied between the two groups, suggesting that the cognitive representations of honor are likely to show differences.

This initial set of studies that focused on prototypes and situations as units of analysis using a bottom-up approach provides a glimpse into how the concept of honor is understood and lived in the Turkish and northern United States cultural groups. These studies also constituted an important base for our research that followed, in which we relied on the initial studies for selection of situations that would be meaningful to study in both cultural groups.

IV. TOP-DOWN APPROACHES

A. Application of Theories of Honor Culture to Turkish Participants

1. Emotional Consequences of Honor Threats
Both ethnographic and social-psychological evidence so far has shown that honor-relevant events evoke strong emotional responses, especially among

TABLE 4.1: **Categories of Most Commonly Generated Honor-Attacking and Honor-Enhancing Situations by Turkish and Northern US Participants**

	Description (Example)	TR (%)	US (%)
Honor-attacking situations			
Humiliation	Calling someone names, insulting, explicitly humiliating (*Disgrace the name of someone's parents or family*)	28.5	31.4
False accusations	Being falsely accused for acts one has not committed and being subjected to unfair treatments one does not deserve (*Accuse someone of cheating*)	34.3	4.4
Sexual/physical attack	Physically attacking someone (e.g., slapping, hitting), sexually attacking someone (molestation, sexual harassment) (*Sexually harass someone*)	9.5	3.6
Challenge/criticism	Challenging someone, criticizing or attacking their ideas or character features (*Attack their views and morals*)	6.6	29.2
Negative character	Lacking integrity, consistency, and stability in ones' actions (*Prove that the person has the wrong motives*)	0.7	7.3
Achievement/ negative	Not being able to achieve/accomplish as expected or where the person is outperformed by others (*Outperform the person in an area that is important to them*)	0	5.1
Revealing negative behaviors of a person	Pointing out someone's negative behaviors (*Catch them in a lie about a serious matter*)	10.2	17.5
Honor-enhancing situations			
Praise	Praising someone's qualities, showing admiration and appreciation (*Praise someone in words or with actions*)	39.6	26.9
Achievement/ positive	Achieving/accomplishing positive outcomes/being rewarded for them (*Make the honor roll at school for high grades*)	20.8	3.8
Positive character	Showing integrity, consistency, and stability in ones' actions (*Be an honest person*)	13.2	8.7

(*continued*)

TABLE 4.1: **Continued**

	Description (Example)	**TR (%)**	**US (%)**
Helping	Helping other people, serving in the community (*Encourage them to do voluntary community service*)	8.5	33.7
Revealing positive characteristics and behaviors of a person	Pointing out someone's positive behaviors, attributes, and characteristics (*Make them look like a great person in how they fight for what they believe in*)	13.2	18.3

Adapted from Uskul, A. K., Cross, S., Gercek-Swing, B., Sunbay, Z., & Ataca, B. (2012). Honor bound: The cultural construction of honor in Turkey and the northern US. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *43*, 1131–1151. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111422258

members of honor cultures. Until recently, comparative studies have focused primarily on the negative emotional consequences (e.g., shame, anger) triggered by honor-attacking situations. This was perhaps the most logical starting point as negative emotions such as anger have the capacity to mobilize the individual subjected to an honor attack to retaliate against the perpetrator with a goal to restore their honor in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. Similarly, shame attracted considerable attention in this literature as it plays an important functional role in cultures of honor by signaling that one is attached to the honor code and underscores concern for others' appraisal of oneself. Moreover, research so far has primarily used honor-relevant situations that were either set up in the laboratory by researchers, generated by researchers based on examples of participants' real-life experiences, or recalled by participants themselves (e.g., Cohen et al., 1996; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000, 2008). We built on this existing work and extended it by investigating both negative and positive emotional responses to honor-attacking and honor-enhancing events that we collected in a systematic manner in the early phases of our research program and focusing on the role of the cultural origin of the situations in individuals' emotional responses to these situations (Uskul et al., 2012). This approach allowed us to examine how honor is implicated in daily life, as observed in situations typically encountered by members of honor and dignity cultures.

In one set of studies, we capitalized on the honor-attacking and honor-enhancing situations generated by Turkish and northern US participants in Uskul et al. (2012, Study 1) and presented a random subset of these situations to a new sample of Turkish (*n* = 81) and European-heritage participants from northern US states (*n* = 76) who evaluated these situations in terms of

their likely impact on their own feelings ("How would this situation make you feel about yourself?") and the feelings of their close others ("How would your family and friends feel about themselves?").[4] Participants were presented 160 situations, selected considering the type of situation (honor-attacking vs. -enhancing) as well as the cultural origin (Turkish vs. northern US) and gender (female vs. male) of the participant who generated the situations.

We found that when evaluating honor-attacking situations, Turkish participants, compared with their northern US counterparts, rated their own feelings and close others' feelings about themselves more strongly, especially when they imagined themselves in situations generated by their Turkish peers. When evaluating honor-enhancing situations, this difference held only for close others' feelings about themselves. Furthermore, Turkish participants rated the implications of honor-relevant situations similarly for themselves and their close others, whereas US participants rated the implications of these situations more negatively for themselves than for their close others. Importantly, we also found a significant effect of cultural origin of situations such that both honor-attacking and honor-enhancing situations generated by Turkish participants were evaluated as producing more emotional impact on both themselves and their close others. This finding underlines the more "extreme" nature of the situations generated by Turkish (vs. northern US) participants.

In a different set of studies, we followed up these findings with a goal to extend the study of emotional responses to honor-relevant situations to a large set of meaningful negative and positive emotions (rather than simply asking participants to evaluate the impact of situations on unspecified "feelings" [see Uskul et al., 2014]). We did this also to further investigate the reasons underlying the more potent evaluations that we observed among both Turkish and northern US participants of the situations generated by Turkish participants compared with situations generated by northern US participants. Specifically, we asked whether the potency of Turkish situations was due to their association with stronger positive or negative emotions. To test this possibility, we recruited Turkish ($n = 168$) and European-American participants from northern US states ($n = 228$) and asked them to indicate the degree to which honor-threatening or honor-enhancing situations would trigger a large set of emotions. Again, we selected these situations from a list of situations generated by participants in Uskul et al.'s study (2012, Study 1). Before conducting this study, we asked a separate sample of Turkish ($n = 200$) and northern US ($n = 167$) participants to rate these situations for how prototypical

or central they are to their conceptions of situations that would enhance (or attack) a person's sense of honor. We did this with a goal to examine the role of situation centrality in the emotional responses triggered by honor-relevant situations.

We found that centrality of situations as well as cultural origin of situations played an important role in individuals' emotional responses to honor-attacking situations: Highly central honor-attacking situations (M = 4.39, SD = 1.04) elicited stronger negative emotions than did less central situations (M = 3.73, SD = 1.00; d = 0.65), and situations generated by Turkish participants (M = 4.17, SD = 0.93) elicited stronger negative emotions than did those generated by northern US participants (M = 3.95, SD = 1.02). In addition, the effect of situation centrality depended on situation origin, such that the difference in the intensity of emotions elicited by highly versus less central Turkish situations (d = 1.15) was greater than highly versus less central US situations (d = 0.23). Also, Turkish participants responded similarly to the highly and less central situations generated by US Northerners, suggesting that they did not distinguish between these situations in terms of their emotional consequences.

This pattern held for honor-enhancing situations. Highly central situations elicited stronger positive emotions (M = 4.74, SD = 0.81) than did less central situations (M = 4.58, SD = 0.79; d = 0.20), and situations generated by Turkish participants elicited stronger positive emotions (M = 4.80, SD = 0.79) than did those generated by northern US participants (M = 4.53, SD = 0.83; d = 0.33). Overall, these findings show that Turkish situations were viewed as being associated with stronger emotional consequences than US situations by both Turkish and northern US participants. Perhaps not surprisingly so, given that Turkish situations contained more "extreme" relational characteristics such as accusing someone falsely or sexually or physically attacking them (Uskul et al., 2012).

Findings from these sets of studies designed to focus on the emotional consequences of honor-relevant situations highlight a few important distinctions between the Turkish and northern American cultural worlds in terms of the strength and the nature of the emotional responses evoked by honor-relevant situations. First, in line with previous literature, we found that, in comparisons with members of a dignity culture, members of an honor culture responded more strongly to honor-attacking situations. Second, providing further evidence for the relational nature of honor-related experiences in the context of an honor culture, the findings demonstrated a spillover effect

such that the consequences of honor-relevant situations for oneself and close others were evaluated similarly by Turkish participants. Third, both Turkish and US participants evaluated situations generated by Turkish participants as producing more impact on both themselves and their close others than situations generated by US participants, showing that honor is implicated by more potent situations in this cultural group. Fourth, this seemed to be due to the fact that Turkish situations were seen to be associated with stronger negative and positive emotions. Fifth, the prototypicality or centrality of honor situations moderated emotional responses. Overall, the situation sampling approach and the prototype approach that we took to examine honor-relevant situations provided us with an opportunity to examine the construct of honor from the perspective of both participants and the cultural origin of situations and highlighted that individuals' responses (regardless of their cultural background) can be strongly grounded in the characteristics of the situations they encounter.

2. Aggressive Responses to Honor Threats

At the time we started our research in Turkey and the northern United States, there was considerable evidence demonstrating differences between members of honor versus non-honor cultures in their responses to honor-threatening events. In a nutshell, this literature had shown that, when facing an honor threat (e.g., in the form of an insult or another type of offense), members of honor cultures tended to react in retaliatory ways, expressed mostly in violence, aggression, and negative emotions such as anger, and at times, perhaps counterintuitively so, politeness (for a review, see Uskul et al., 2019). Studies that provided this evidence based their predictions on a core theme in honor cultures which revolves around the need to create and maintain reputations for strength and toughness and a preparedness to engage in actions necessary to protect honor when it is under threat.

In our work, we examined whether this prediction would receive support in a different cultural context by asking how members of Turkish cultural contexts (in comparison with European American US Northerners) would respond emotionally and behaviorally to threats to their honor. In our attempts to examine the generalizability of previously observed findings in this domain, we also incorporated in our designs the observations that we made in the studies in which we took a bottom-up approach. Specifically, taking into consideration the relational features of honor as demonstrated in the bottom-up studies that we have summarized previously, we asked how individuals would

respond when honor attacks are relational (i.e., when directed to one's close others). We examined retaliation using behavioral measures to overcome limitations associated with using imaginary situations or recalled honor threats that tend to be idiosyncratic. Finally, we also capitalized on the finding that different situations were perceived as honor-attacking by members of honor and dignity cultural groups and examined whether type of honor threat might result in different responses. This allowed us to expand existing research on honor threats beyond the commonly employed threats to masculine honor.

In two studies, we investigated retaliatory responses to an honor threat which took the form of accusing the person of being dishonest (vs. neutral feedback) in a task that involved producing an essay where participants explained the role of honesty in their lives. We chose this particular form of an offense based on our initial studies where we observed that individuals of Turkish and northern US backgrounds reported viewing honesty as central to their lay conception of honor (Cross et al., 2014). In both studies, we found that Turkish participants retaliated more aggressively than did northern US participants against the person who challenged their honesty. Two behavioral measures provided evidence for this. In one study (Uskul et al., 2015, Study 1), they assigned this person significantly more difficult tangrams to solve than easy ones and made it less likely for the participant to be eligible for a prize linked to the number of successfully solved tangrams (see Figure 4.1). In another study (Uskul et al., 2015, Study 2), Turkish participants assigned significantly more intense and potentially painful stimuli (in both studies participants were asked to choose these tasks for the [bogus] participant to complete in an unrelated study that was about to follow). When feedback was neutral (i.e., not honor-threatening), the two groups did not differ from each other, indicating that Turkish participants did not show a generalized tendency to be retaliatory in the absence of threatening feedback. These results, in line with previous research, show one more time that honor threats are more likely to be responded to in a retaliatory manner by members of other honor cultures compared with members of non-honor cultures.

When we examined responses to honor threats that were directed to close others (specifically to honesty of one's parents in the form of accusing them of behaving dishonestly; for procedural details, see Uskul et al., 2015, Study 2), we found that endorsement of honor values (measured by Rodriguez Mosquera et al.'s [2008] Honor Values scale) predicted retaliation in the relational honor threat condition among Turkish participants but not among northern US participants. Thus, Turkish participants who were concerned about their social
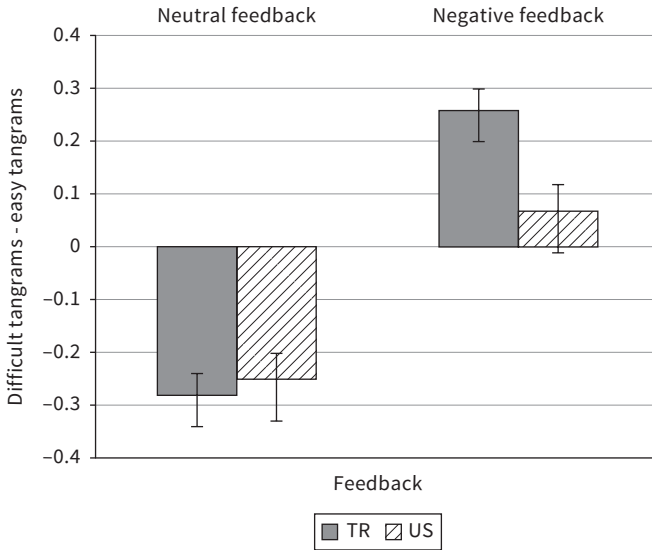
FIGURE 4.1: Difference in the number of difficult tangrams (relative to the number of easy tangrams) assigned to the imaginary participant as a function of type of feedback (neutral vs. negative) and cultural background (Turkish [TR] vs. US).

Adopted from Uskul, A. K., Cross, S., Günsoy, C., Gercek-Swing, B., Alozkan, C., & Ataca, B. (2015). A price to pay: Turkish and American retaliation for threats to personal and family honor. *Aggressive Behavior*, *41*, 594–607. https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21598

image retaliated more when their parents' honesty was attacked than did those who were less concerned about their social image. This finding points to the importance of differentiating between individuals who strongly versus weakly endorse a cultural value within a given cultural context and to the value of considering the three-way interaction between cultural context × person characteristics × situation (see CuPS approach by Leung & Cohen, 2011).

3. Responses to Differing Types of Honor Attacks

In a different line of studies, we examined evaluations of responses to hypothetical situations, once again informed by our initial bottom-up research on honor-relevant situations (Uskul et al., 2012). This time, our predictions were informed by past findings that demonstrated both retaliatory and polite or non-confrontational responses to honor threats. Despite sounding paradoxical, members of honor cultures have been shown to cultivate politeness and hospitality to avoid offending others, with a goal of preventing the start of a cycle of retaliation and retribution. For example, Cohen et al. (1999) found that US Southerners were slower to respond to a series of annoyances compared

with US Northerners, but when Southerners responded, their reactions were much more extreme and aggressive than reactions by Northerners (which they termed the "paradox of politeness" in southern states). Based on this, we examined the approval of different types of responses, specifically retaliation versus withdrawal, to honor threats that varied in potency (Cross et al., 2013). We compared participants' evaluations of different honor threat situations, in which the target was subjected to either a rude affront (less potent) or a false accusation (more potent) and the target chose to respond by either withdrawing from the situation or confronting the attacker. We found that Turkish participants were more likely than northern US participants to favor the person who withdrew from the rude affront and the person who confronted the false accusation. This pattern is in line with the notion that members of honor cultures may respond differently to different types of honor threats (e.g., weak in potency or minor annoyances vs. strong in potency or viewed as humiliating); they either avoid starting a cycle of violence (like the US Southerners in Cohen et al.'s [1999] study) or deal with it strongly to signal that the accusation is not correct. Furthermore, we found that endorsement of honor values was associated more strongly with justification and encouragement of confrontational responses among Turkish versus northern US respondents. These findings once again provide insight into the role of cultural norms and individual differences in the ways honor shapes behavior.

In this study, we also examined the normative context by asking participants to report how they thought others in their society would evaluate the target who attacked or withdrew in situations that involved a rude affront or a false accusation and how others in their society would behave in those situations. Furthermore, we assessed the extent to which individuals would encourage others to withdraw or confront in those situations. This approach allowed us to investigate (a) how participants' personal evaluations and behavioral tendencies might be shaped by their social perceptions of societal norms in honor-related situations and (b) how personal evaluations shape societal norms and expectations.

We found that, unlike the pattern observed with personal approval, Turkish participants perceived that other people in their society would be more likely to confront than to withdraw. They also perceived that other people would approve of the person who engaged in confrontational responses in the face of both rude affronts and false accusations. Northern US participants responded similarly; however, this difference in perceptions that others would approve of confrontation more than withdrawal was larger for Turkish than

northern US participants. Finally, consistent with the paradox of politeness, Turkish participants were more likely to encourage others to withdraw rather than to confront in the face of rude affronts and more likely to encourage confrontation rather than withdrawal in the face of false accusation (see Figure 4.2). Northern US participants encouraged withdrawal and confrontation at similar levels for rude affronts and were more likely to encourage confrontation than withdrawal in the face of false accusation situations.

This study builds a bridge between culture as represented in individuals' heads and their expectations of their society (for similar approaches, see Chiu et al., 2010; Zou et al., 2009). Based on our bottom-up work, we also recognized that honor-relevant situations can come in different shapes and forms and that responses to those (both personal and, as expected, from other people) can differ. These findings highlight the importance of not treating all honor-related situations similarly, both in research and in applied contexts. By focusing on different types of honor threats, perceived societal norms, and individual values, we tried to capture the complex dynamics that shape how honor operates in our social lives.

4. Honor Concerns in the Context of Social Media

In a fourth set of studies, we examined the consequences of culture of honor norms and values for a relatively new social phenomenon: interaction over social media. One's posts, pictures, and comments on social media have the potential to enhance or to ruin one's reputation, as evidenced by the frequent take-downs of celebrities and politicians based on their cruel, prejudiced, or simply insensitive posts on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media outlets. One critical key to the power of social media is the public shaming that can occur when an individual posts potentially inappropriate or scandalous content (or someone else posts about their inappropriate or scandalous behavior [Scheff & Schorr, 2017]). For the average person, this shaming may be limited to the individual's family, friends, and in-groups; but it can nevertheless result in gossip, ostracism, and a loss of reputation that can have far-reaching effects. In cultures of honor, individuals must be careful to guard not only their own honorable reputation but also that of their family. So, what are the implications of culture of honor concerns for everyday social media behavior?

That was the question addressed in studies that compared Facebook postings by Turkish and northern Euro-American students (Günsoy et al., 2015). The studies focused on students' attitudes toward posting content that was potentially scandalous or that might result in disapproval by family members
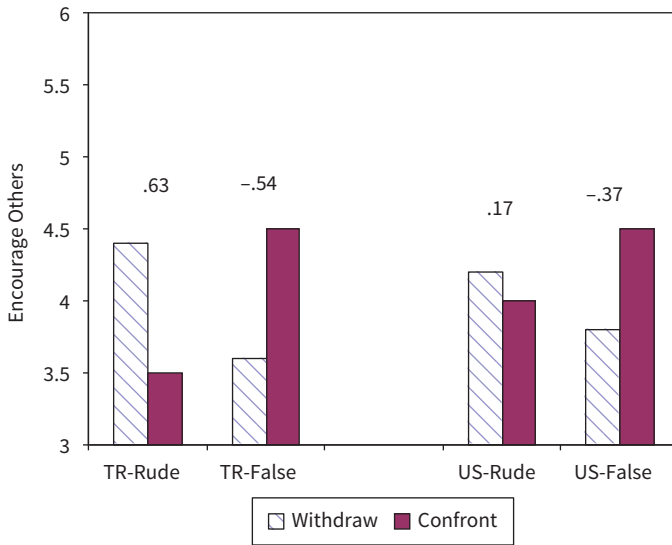
FIGURE 4.2: Responses to the question "Would you encourage your friend/son to behave similarly?" in withdrawal or confrontation and in rude or false accusation scenarios.
Note: Values above the bars represent the effect size (*d*) for the difference in the two conditions.
Adopted from Cross, S. E., Uskul, A. K., Gercek Swing, B., Alozkan, C., & Ataca, B. (2013). Confrontation vs. withdrawal: Cultural differences in responses to threats to honor. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, *16*, 345–362. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430212461962

or close others. In Turkish contexts, this could include posts related to parties and alcohol or pictures with romantic partners or with opposite-sex friends. As expected, the Turkish participants reported that they were less willing to post such pictures; if they did post such a picture, they reported that they would be less likely than their northern US counterparts to let their relatives see the pictures (see Figure 4.3). In contrast, there were no group differences in the willingness of Turkish and northern US participants to post content that could enhance their honor and reputation, such as pictures of winning an award.

Günsoy and her colleagues also requested permission to download 6 months worth of postings from these participants' Facebook pages. Coders blind to the study's hypotheses coded them into theory-relevant categories, such as achievement-related posts and posts about potentially dishonorable or improper situations (being at a party or holding a drink at a bar). When participants' scores on a commonly used honor values measure were correlated
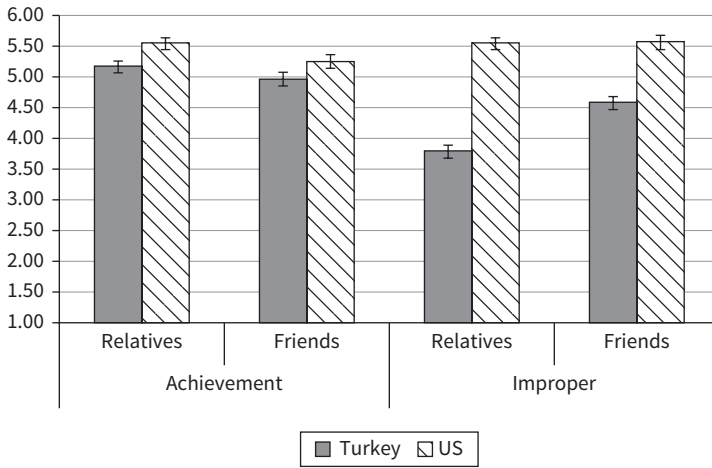
FIGURE 4.3: Willingness to let relatives and friends view one's achievement and potentially improper pictures. Error bars represent standard errors.
Adapted from Günsoy, C., Cross, S. E., Saribay, A., Olcaysoy-Okten, I., & Kurutas, M. (2015). Would you post that picture and let your dad see it? Culture, honor and Facebook. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *45*, 323–335. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2041

with their posting behavior, an interesting pattern emerged: For the Turkish participants, high scores on the honor values measure were associated with low levels of posting content that could be seen as improper, but they were not associated with rates of posting achievement-related material. For the US Northerners, however, scores on the honor values measure were positively associated with posting achievement-related material among women (but not men) but not to rates of posting potentially improper material. These findings show that endorsement of honor values has different consequences in different cultural contexts (as Leung & Cohen's [2011] CuPS model theorizes): In a context in which avoiding disrepute or scandal is highly valued (e.g., Turkey), individuals who are very concerned about their own and their family's honor will avoid social media behavior that could cause reputation loss. In contrast, in a cultural context in which self-promotion and self-enhancement are common and expected (e.g., northern United States), individuals who strongly endorse the importance of their own and their family's reputation will be more likely to post content that highlights their achievement and competence. Like a hydrangea flower that blooms blue or pink based on whether it is planted in acidic or alkaline soil, concern for one's reputation can result in different behaviors, depending on one's cultural environment.

V. EXPANDING THE THEORY OF HONOR CULTURES

One goal of our work has been to elaborate how concerns for one's honor shape behavior. In recent work, we have pursued that question in two domains. First, we have differentiated among types of threat, to show that for members of an honor culture, particularly Turkish participants, honor threats are construed differently than other kinds of threats. The second domain is in the area of goal pursuit. We have investigated how honor threats can derail goal pursuit among members of an honor culture.

A. Differentiating Honor Threats From Other Types of Threat

Most of the early work on responses to threats to one's honor focused on comparing responses to insults or affronts versus neutral or non-insulting situations. Typically, members of honor cultures respond more aggressively to the insult than to the neutral or non-insulting condition (Cohen et al., 1996). These findings raise the following question: Do members of honor cultures respond aggressively to any threat or criticism, or are they selective in their responses, responding to threats that implicate the components of honor (especially social respect) more strongly than other sorts of criticism?

Theoretically, members of an honor culture should differentiate between challenges that only affect their self-esteem or pride (such as not winning an award or performing poorly on an exam) and those that are related to the other components of honor: morality and social respect. It is these components—morality and social respect—that we expect to most strongly differentiate conceptions of worth in Turkey and other traditional honor cultures from those of dignity cultures. As our other studies have shown, honesty is a core component of the honor code among Turkish participants, and Turkish people respond strongly when their honesty is impugned (Cross et al., 2014; Uskul et al., 2015). A charge that one is dishonest should theoretically implicate a Turkish person's sense of honor or worth more extensively than a charge that one is incompetent, due to the centrality of morality in the honor code of the relatively tight Turkish context and the possibility that dishonorable behavior can be known by others and stain one's social respect. In contrast, for US Northerners socialized in a loose cultural context, a charge of dishonesty is less likely to threaten the internal and inherent sense of worth thought to characterize members of dignity cultures (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Given

that one's own self-evaluation is the primary basis of self-worth in dignity cultures, challenges to one's honesty or to one's competence may have similar consequences. We tested these hypotheses in several studies that differentiated threats to one's honesty from threats to one's competence.

1. Responses to True Accusations of Dishonesty Versus Accusations of Incompetence

Most of the existing research on how people respond to insults and accusations in honor and dignity cultures has relied on undeserved insults, false accusations, or accusations that can be discounted (e.g., "I don't think this essay is truthful" [Uskul et al., 2015; see also Beersma et al., 2003; Cohen et al., 1996; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2008; van Osch et al., 2013]). Sometimes, however, an accusation of misconduct or dishonesty is accurate or deserved. For members of cultures of honor, a rightful accusation of dishonesty may be especially harmful to social position because the "stain" of the dishonorable behavior is not easily removed or discounted. Compared to insults or false accusations, an accurate or true accusation of misconduct against a person is likely to lead to more distrust, less collaboration, and more ostracism of the immoral actor (Skowronski, 2002; Wojciszke, 2005). Given that honor must be given by others and not just claimed by the individual, a verifiable act of lying, cheating, stealing, or other immorality stains the person's reputation permanently.

In two studies, Günsoy, Cross, and colleagues focused on how members of honor and dignity cultures responded to true accusations of misconduct compared to negative competence feedback on performance. They hypothesized that among Turkish (honor culture) participants, a true accusation of dishonesty would be very honor-threatening, leading to strong, aggressive responses. For members of a dignity culture, however, one's own self-views are theoretically more important than others' opinions of the self, and dishonesty is perhaps more easily dismissed or minimized (Günsoy et al., 2018).

In the first study, participants read scenarios, where they were asked to imagine themselves as a member of a workgroup who is either rightfully accused of misconduct or given negative competence feedback on their performance by the leader of the group. For example, one scenario asks the participant to put themselves in the place of a member of a workgroup who either (a) plagiarizes a project and is called out by their boss (true accusation), (b) forgets to include an important element of a project and is confronted by their

boss (competence threat), or (c) is given neutral or slightly positive feedback on their performance on the project (no threat condition). Turkish and White northern US college students read two such situations in their native language and evaluated how negatively they perceived each situation, how they would respond emotionally, and how they would react in each situation. Specifically, participants indicated the extent to which they would want to retaliate against the accuser.

As we expected, the Turkish participants responded more intensely to the true accusation situations than to the negative competence feedback situations; they rated them as more negative ($d = 0.65$) and reported they would feel more anger ($d = 0.69$) and more shame ($d = 0.69$) in the true accusations compared to the negative feedback situations. In contrast, the US Northerners did not distinguish between the two types of situations as much as did the Turkish participants: They rated the two types of situations as equally negative ($d = 0.18$) and equally anger-inducing ($d = 0.03$). They only distinguished between the situations in their ratings of how ashamed they would feel: True accusations engendered greater reports of shame than did negative feedback ($d = 0.61$). Consistent with these reactions, the Turkish participants also said they would be more likely to retaliate against the accuser in the verifiable misconduct situations than in the negative feedback situation ($d = 0.55$). US Northerners, however, did not vary as greatly in their responses to the two types of situations ($d = 0.27$).

These findings provided initial support that true accusations of dishonorable behavior were especially potent for Turkish participants, but they bear the limitations endemic to self-report studies in hypothetical situations. So we followed up with an experimental study that manipulated the morality threat and the negative performance feedback and that allowed the participants to actually retaliate against the source of the threat. To set up the study, we ask you to put yourself in the position of a participant in the morality threat condition in the study.

> You come to the lab, where the experimenter describes the study as an investigation of teamwork, cognition, and decision-making. After signing the consent form and completing some brief questionnaires, you are placed in a room with another participant, given a worksheet with four difficult problems, and told to work individually on two problems and work together on two problems. The experimenter stresses the importance of not helping each other on the individual problems and the value of working together on the team problems. When the experimenter leaves, you and your partner begin working on the problems,

following the instructions to work together on two problems and individually on the others. The final problem is the most difficult, but you have been told to work on it individually. Your partner in this task, however, asks for help, and he pesters you until you give in and give him your answer.

Next, you and your partner individually complete a questionnaire about teamwork, while the experimenter scores your performance on the logic problems. After a few minutes, the experimenter returns, appearing flustered. "There seems to be a problem here," he says, and he asks your partner to go with him to another room. "What problem?" you think, and then the experimenter returns and says "I scored your logic problems, and you appear to have shared answers on one of the problems you were supposed to finish individually. You both had the same wrong answer to the last problem. I wasn't sure what to do, so I called the professor in charge of the study. She said this sounds like a case of cheating, and she would like to talk to you. She has something she has to complete first, but she said to go ahead to the next task while we wait for her."

The experimenter then describes the next task as designed to investigate the relations between emotions and decision-making. You complete a few short measures on the computer about your emotional state, then, after a coin flip, you (not your partner) are selected for the decision-making task with the experimenter. The experimenter explains that part of his payment for being a research assistant is based on this task and that you both could make money depending on the outcomes of the task.

The experimenter goes on to explain the task, which is based on the ultimatum game (Guth et al., 1982). He tells you that there are several rounds in this task, and on each round, he has been given a particular amount of money to divide between himself and you, the participant. For example, he may have $10, and he can give you any fraction of that $10 he chooses (let's say 25% or $2.50). If you accept the offer, you keep $2.50, and he keeps $7.50. If you reject the offer, you both receive nothing. The experimenter tells you that you two will communicate via computer, and that he will be in another room making the offers. He won't see your responses until the end of the task—so his offers are not responses to your decisions to accept or reject his previous offers. Finally, he describes how the computer-based program will randomly select the outcome of two rounds in the task to determine his payment and your payment. So if the computer selects two rounds in which you rejected the offer, you would both leave empty-handed. In contrast, if the computer selects two rounds in which you accept the experimenter's offer of $4 from a total of $10, then you would go home with $8, and the experimenter would leave with $12.

> After making sure that you understand the decision-making task, the experimenter goes to another room and begins the proposal–response sequence. You are still seething at the experimenter tattling on you to the professor and worried that the professor could tell others. Do you use this task as an opportunity to get back at the experimenter by rejecting his offers, even though it means you won't make any extra money? Or do you swallow your anger, accept his offers, and hope to go home with a few extra dollars in your pocket?

This was the predicament that one group of Turkish and White northern US participants faced in Günsoy et al.'s (2018) study (adapted from Russano et al., 2005; Scherr & Madon, 2012). Another group of participants was given negative competence feedback: They were told they had performed very badly on the logic problems and that the professor had been consulted and was coming to speak to the participant. Finally, a third group of participants was not given any feedback—neither that they cheated nor that they performed poorly.[5]

How did the participants respond, and did cultural background make a difference? Both condition and cultural background made a difference in the participants' decisions to accept or reject the high-stakes offers (i.e., those high in value). Compared to Turkish participants in both the negative competence feedback and the neutral feedback conditions, the Turkish participants in the true accusation condition rejected more high-value offers. Evidently, being called a cheater is worse than being called incompetent for members of a culture of honor. In contrast, among the northern US participants, there was no difference in the number of rejections of high-value offers by people in the true accusation condition and the negative feedback condition. Participants in both of these conditions rejected the offers more frequently than did participants in the neutral condition. In short, being told one is a cheater has the same effect as being told one is incompetent for northern US participants.

Furthermore, Günsoy and her colleagues (2018) found that the likelihood of rejecting offers in the morality threat condition was stronger among Turkish participants who highly endorsed an honor values measure (Rodriquez Mosquera et al., 2008). This was not the case for the northern US participants, however. In other words, members of an honor culture who strongly endorse the importance of maintaining one's social image were more likely to retaliate against their accuser than were those who did not.

Taken together, these studies show that Turkish participants differentiate between threats to their honesty/morality and threats to their competence more than do US Northerners. In a dignity culture, the "stain" of being called out for cheating or lying is only superficial; the basic dignity or inherent worth

of the individual is not contaminated by the behavior. In an honor culture, in contrast, an apology may make the stain of an immoral behavior more permanent because it indicates responsibility for the behavior.

If we map these conditions onto the components of honor identified by our earlier prototype study (Cross et al., 2014), a challenge to one's honesty addresses the morality component of honor. Furthermore, a charge of dishonesty may be more likely to impact others' respect for the individual. Individuals told they are incompetent at a task may experience decreased self-esteem, but this is not as likely to influence others' respect for them as a charge of dishonesty. Given that social respect is a key feature that distinguishes honor cultures from dignity cultures, a potential threat to one's social reputation should have more impact than a threat to one's self-esteem for members of this group. In the study we describe in the next section, we examined the emotional consequences of these two types of threat among members of honor and dignity cultural groups.

2. Emotional Responses to Social Respect and Self-Respect Threats

In one exploration of this question, we examined participants' emotional responses to hypothetical situations that could threaten their reputation compared to situations that primarily threatened their self-respect (Günsoy et al., 2021). Anger and shame are among the common responses examined in the face of reputation threats among members of cultures of honor (Cohen et al., 1996; IJzerman et al., 2007; Maitner et al., 2017; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002b). Anger activates the individual to respond to the source of the threat, whereas shame serves to alert the individual to potential dishonorable behavior and to motivate appropriate behavior in the future (Boiger et al., 2014; Leung & Cohen, 2011).

We hypothesized that Turkish participants would differentiate between the two types of situations more than would northern US participants. In particular, we expected that Turkish participants would view the reputation threat situations as more rude and humiliating than would the northern US participants. In addition, we expected that the Turkish participants would anticipate that they would experience more anger and shame in response to the situations than would the northern US participants.

In this study, Turkish (n = 52) and White northern US (n = 38) undergraduate research participants read brief descriptions of situations (derived from the situations generated in Uskul et al. [2012]). Three situations depicted

a reputation threat (e.g., being insulted in front of other people) and three situations depicted a self-respect threat (e.g., being criticized privately). Manipulation checks demonstrated that these two types of situations differed in the extent to which they could harm a person's reputation, but they were rated similarly in importance. Participants were asked to imagine each situation and to appraise how rude and humiliating they would find them and the degree to which they would experience anger and shame-related emotions if they were in the situation.

There were no cultural differences or culture by threat-type interactions in the evaluations of how rude or humiliating the scenarios were. We often find no differences between these groups in appraisals of the situation, indicating that differences in their responses are not due to different perceptions of aspects of the situation (e.g., rudeness or humiliation or, in other studies, negativity, commonality, or importance). Instead, our primary interest was in how these situations prompt differing responses by members of the two groups. Indeed, as expected, there was a significant interaction of cultural group and threat type for ratings of anger and shame (see Figure 4.4). As expected, Turkish participants were more likely to anticipate feeling anger in social respect situations than in self-respect situations, whereas US Northerners anticipated the same level of anger in both types of situations. Of note, there was also a simple effect of cultural group in the anger ratings for the social respect situations, with Turkish participants rating these situations as more anger-provoking than US Northerners ($d = 0.52$). There was no cultural difference for anger ratings of the self-respect situations.

Ratings of shame revealed marked differences for the two types of situations. Both Turkish and US participants were more likely to anticipate feeling shame in social respect situations than in self-respect situations, but the difference was much greater among Turkish participants than among northern US participants. Curiously, there was no cultural difference in anticipated shame in the social respect situations, but US Northerners anticipated feeling more shame than did Turkish participants for the self-respect situations.

These findings support the argument that members of an honor culture discriminate more between threats to their social standing and reputation versus threats to their self-esteem compared to members of a dignity culture. In a cultural context in which one's reputation is easily damaged by others, resulting in significant losses of other types, an angry response to a public insult communicates to others that the insult is off-base and untrue. The findings for shame reports were more extreme—the social respect situations were
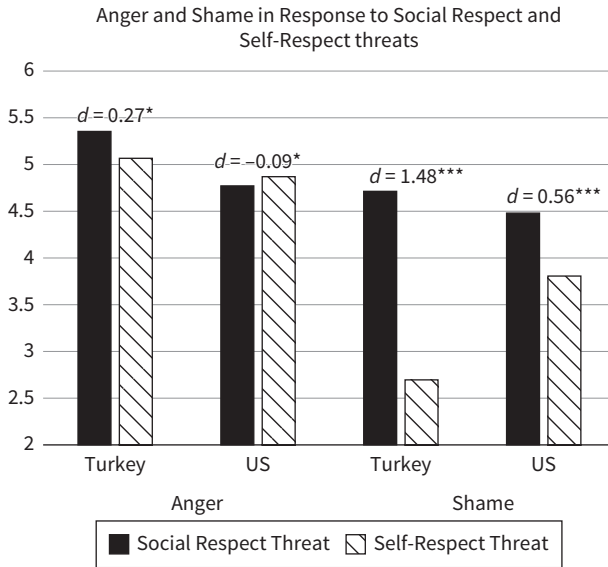
FIGURE 4.4: Turkish and northern US participants' emotional responses to scenarios depicting threats to social respect or self-respect (*$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.001$).

much more likely to elicit high shame ratings for the Turkish participants than were the self-respect situations. Shame is one of the primary emotional consequences of disrespect and dishonor; consequently, this pattern indicates that, for Turkish participants, a challenge to one's self-esteem is fundamentally different from a challenge to one's reputation. Whereas a challenge to one's beliefs about oneself or one's abilities may have negative consequences for performance, emotion, and other behavioral outcomes, the negative consequences of a threat to one's reputation are potentially far greater in an honor culture. An individual's dishonor can also stain their family members, resulting in social exclusion from important groups, in gossip and rumors, and in ongoing discrimination against the family (Uskul et al., 2012). These differences were much smaller for the US Northerners, suggesting that they view self-respect and social respect situations relatively similarly; the price of threats to one's competence for the US Northerners is a higher level of shame (compared to the Turkish participants).

B. Extending Theories of Honor to Goal Pursuit

In a more recent direction of our research, we were inspired by the literature on goal conflict and aimed to extend some of the predictions emerging from

this literature to the study of the role of maintenance and protection of honor acting in competition with other goals in cultures of honor. *Goal conflict* can be defined as a situation in which seemingly incompatible goals exert force in opposing or divergent directions (Kehr, 2003). Leung and Cohen (2011) asserted that the importance put on maintaining or asserting one's honor by members of honor cultures may override other goals, even when the honor-restoring actions are costly, thus leading to a goal conflict. They claimed that this is due to a salient characteristic of members of honor cultures as "dedi-cated to short-term irrationality in that [they] abhor cost–benefit calcula-tions" (p. 510). For example, it is likely that Zidane experienced goal conflict when he headbutted Materazzi in the World Cup final in 2006 for mentioning his sister in a heated moment. Was he going to respond to Materazzi as would be expected of him (i.e., not leaving an insult to his sister unanswered) or end his football career in a celebratory way? He chose the first and almost 15 years on, he is still remembered for the headbutt.

Following this theorizing and utilizing a goal conflict framework, we sug-gested that when members of honor cultures face an honor threat in the form of false accusations or insults, the goal of restoring honor may take prece-dence, and any other goal that they were working toward may become second-ary to the honor-relevant goal (Brunstein & Gollwitzer, 1996). In addition, we continued to examine the hypothesis that for members of honor cultures, threats to one's honor (in the form of an accusation of being dishonest) elic-ited different responses than a non-honor threat (in the form of an accusation of incompetence). Thus, this line of research helped us extend the reach of culture of honor theories by intersecting it with goal conflict literature as well as by differentiating how responses to honor threats differ from responses to other kinds of threats among members of honor and dignity cultures. Finally, we also expanded research on honor cultures by using two different honor groups: Turkish participants and US European-heritage Southerners.

1. Consequences of Honor Threat for Goal Delay

We first tested this prediction in a study where we examined goal delay in the presence of a threat to one's honesty, in the presence of a competence threat, and in a no threat condition. We hypothesized that members of an honor culture cannot let a threat to their honesty or honor pass; they must find a way to respond. Consequently, other goals may take a back seat to the goal of

restoring honor, leading the individual to delay initiating action toward them (termed the *predecisional* phase of goal pursuit by Gollwitzer [1996]).

Using a modified version of a laboratory paradigm designed to deliver honor-threatening feedback to participants (see Uskul et al., 2015), we first asked participants to report when (i.e., how soon) they would start working toward several goals (adapted from Guinote, 2007) after an accusation of dishonesty, an accusation of incompetence, or no threat. As predicted, we found that members of cultures of honor (Turkish and US European-heritage Southerners) were more likely to delay pursuit of a goal following an honor threat compared with a competence threat or no threat. They were also more likely to report goal delay in the honor threat condition compared with members of a dignity culture (US European-heritage Northerners [Günsoy et al., 2020, Study 1]).

2. Consequences of Honor Threat for Goal Derailment

To picture the situation participants encountered in this study, imagine yourself in a new workgroup, and one of your group members, Pat, has just insinuated that you are a liar. You are not able to respond immediately to this accusation, but later, you are in a situation in which you must choose a partner from the group to work on a problem-solving task. The best-performing groups will win a monetary prize. The task involves mathematical and statistical skills, and Pat, your accuser, is the only member of your group who has the background and training to perform well on this task. Your dilemma is this: Do you select Pat as a partner in order to increase your odds of performing well and so winning a prize, or do you snub Pat and choose someone else, therefore potentially derailing your own goal of a monetary gain?

This was the decision that faced participants in our second study related to goal pursuit. We set up an analogue of this situation in an online interaction platform (based loosely on the Ostracism Online Manipulation paradigm created by Wolf et al., 2015). Participants created an avatar in the online space, introduced themselves to the other group members with a short statement of their interests and achievements (others' behavior was pre-scripted), and commented on other group members' statements (these were pre-scripted by a computer program to appear to be other research participants). As part of the scripted interaction, other group members commented on the participant's statement. In the honor threat condition, a participant named Pat (or the Turkish equivalent) insinuated that the participant was lying about their

achievements. In the competence threat condition, Pat commented that the participant did not write well. In the no threat condition, Pat made very neutral comments on the real participant's introductory statement. Other group members also made scripted neutral comments. In all cases, Pat was presented as the best partner for the upcoming mathematical problem-solving task. The members of the pair who correctly solved the most problems could each win a $30 (50TL) gift card. The "real" participants were faced with the dilemma just described: Do they choose Pat to be their partner for the problem-solving task, and thereby increase their odds of winning a prize, or do they reject Pat due to the insult and choose someone else?

First, to determine that the situation was perceived similarly across all three groups, we examined the degree to which participants from Turkey, the southern United States, and the northern United States (US participants were all from White, European-heritage backgrounds) selected Pat in the no threat condition. This condition is an important manipulation check, to be confident that Pat was largely perceived as the best partner for the problem-solving task. As shown in Figure 4.5, 82%–93% of the participants in these conditions selected Pat as their partner.

As expected, the Turkish participants differentiated between the honor/honesty threat and the competence threat conditions; they were much less likely to select Pat as a partner in the honesty threat condition (32%) than in the competence threat condition (53%). The US Northerners, in contrast, did not differ at all in their rates of selecting Pat in the honesty threat (51%) versus the competence threat (54%) conditions. Finally, the US Southerners in the honesty threat condition selected Pat at about the same rates as the US Northerners (50%) but were somewhat less likely to select Pat as a partner in the competence threat condition (38%). The Southerners' rates of choosing Pat in these two threat conditions did not, however, significantly differ from each other. In short, a significantly higher number of Turkish participants chose to let go of their chance of winning a prize (the goal in the study) by distancing themselves from the person who threatened their honor.

These studies point to three important discoveries. First, Turkish participants let the goal of maintenance of honor take precedence by (1) pushing off other goals to a later time and (2) sacrificing the possibility of winning a prize by not choosing a person who threatened their honor but who could also help them win the prize. Second, members of cultures of honor, especially Turkish participants, differentiated between honor threats and other non-honor threats to a greater extent than did members of the dignity culture group.
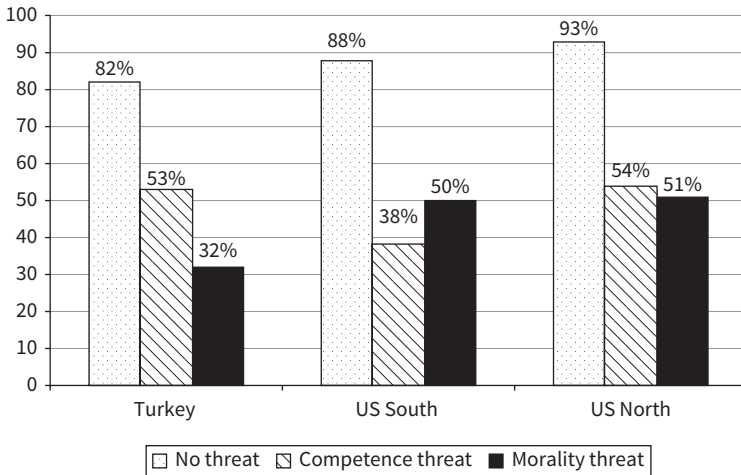
FIGURE 4.5: Percentages of Turkish, US southern, and US northern participants who chose Pat (the accuser in the threat conditions) in the no threat, competence threat, and morality threat conditions.
Adapted from Günsoy, C., Joo, M., Cross, S. E., Uskul, A. K., Gul, P., Wasti, S. A., Salter, P., Haugen, A., Erdaş, K. D., & Yegin, A. (2020). The influence of honor threats on goal delay and goal derailment: A comparison of Turkey, southern US, and northern US. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *88*, Article 103974. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2020.103974

Thus, we see that members of honor cultures are not affected comparably by different types of threat; specific threats to one's sense of being a moral person who is respected by others are the ones that are most potent and lead to goal conflict. Third, to our knowledge, these studies provide the first systematic comparison between two different groups of honor cultures: the US South and Turkey. In the goal pursuit studies summarized in this section, we observed both similarities and differences between these two groups, and we can only speculate at this point where these might originate. Reasons such as technical aspects of our studies (e.g., differences in the paradigms or dependent measures employed) as well as differences in the meaning and function of honor among members of different cultures of honor might be underlying these non-uniform patterns of responses obtained in our studies with southern US and Turkish samples. Although previous studies have firmly established differences between the southern and northern regions of the United States, these studies focused almost exclusively on aggressive responses to threats directed to masculine honor. In our studies, we shifted the focus to threats to honesty, and it may be the case that this aspect of honor does not play as important a role in the US South as it does in Turkish society in regulating social behavior.

To assess the accuracy of these speculative interpretations of our results will require further comparisons between different cultures of honor, and we are currently conducting more research to tease apart and understand the ways in which these two groups are similar or different.

VI. THEMES, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

A. Summary of Major Themes of Our Work

In describing the progression of our research on cultures of honor, we have attempted to identify five major themes, either directly or indirectly. Our work began with bottom-up approaches that identified lay prototypes of honor in Turkish and northern US contexts (Cross et al., 2014) as well as situations that implicate honor in each context (Uskul et al., 2012). This approach acknowledges that honor ideologies coexist with and interact with other aspects of a particular cultural niche such as levels of individualism–collectivism, power distance, economic development, and gender equality. In this work we also addressed positive and negative aspects of honor, such as situations that enhanced or threatened one's honor and the positive and negative emotions elicited by these situations. At the time that we initiated this program of research, the focus of most of the existing scholarship was on negative consequences of the honor syndrome, such as retaliation for insults or affronts, honor killings, or domestic violence. Yet the honor complex sustains a variety of positive virtues and practices, and a complete research program should continue to examine both sides of the coin.

In another series of studies, taking a top-down approach, we have examined the generalizability of existing theories of honor cultures for Turkish participants. Following early studies with US Southerners, we conducted experimental studies of the effects of honor threats on the likelihood of behaving aggressively toward the source of a threat (Uskul et al., 2015). Framing honor in terms of concern for one's reputation, we found that members of honor cultures are more sensitive to sharing content in social media that can lead to shame or disrepute (Günsoy et al., 2015). Examination of social media posts also allows us to address cultural differences in both positive, honor-enhancing posts and negative, potentially dishonorable posts. Several of these studies examined the consequences of threats to one's honor for the individual as well as for their families, consistent with our focus on the relatively collective Turkish context. Other studies explicitly addressed the role of social

norms in perceptions of people who confront or withdraw from an honor-related conflict (Cross et al., 2013).

We also sought to extend the reach of theories of honor cultures, first by distinguishing between different kinds of threats. For members of honor cultures, for whom one's worth lies not only in their own eyes but also in the eyes of others, a threat to others' opinion of them should have more impact than a threat to their self-esteem that does not impact others' opinions. We found that in several different types of studies—lab experiments, online experiments, and responses to scenarios—Turkish participants reacted more strongly to a charge that they behaved dishonestly (i.e., an honor threat) than to a charge that they were incompetent. Some may claim that an accusation of incompetence is also a type of honor threat; but it does not implicate the morality component of honor that an honesty threat implicates, and it is less likely to damage one's social respect or reputation than an accusation of dishonesty. The US Northerners in our studies did not differentiate between these two types of threats as much as did the Turkish participants, indicating perhaps that the key component of these two types of threat for members of a dignity culture is the threat to self-esteem.

We also extended the reach of theories of honor cultures by examining the consequences of honor threat for goal pursuit. Most theories suggest that members of honor cultures should prioritize the maintenance of their honor over most other goals and that when their honor is challenged, they should delay or abandon other goals in order to address the challenge. In these initial examinations of this hypothesis, we found that Turkish participants were more likely to delay initiation of other goals and to abandon other goals when their honor (honesty) was called into question (Günsoy et al., 2018, 2020). We are continuing to investigate the mechanisms through which concerns for honor can impede the pursuit and achievement of other goals.

Finally, woven through this overview of our work thus far are descriptions of a multiple approaches, methods, and paradigms. We have employed a prototype approach (Fehr, 1994, 2005), situational sampling (Kitayama et al., 1997; Morling et al., 2002), laboratory experiments, online social interactions, social media behaviors, and scenario studies to capture a diverse array of concepts, environments, attitudes, and perceptions that create a culture of honor and a culture of dignity. In several cases, we have identified CuPS interactions, in which individual differences in endorsement of honor lead to differing responses, depending on the situation and the individuals' cultural context. These approaches have allowed us to draw conclusions about how honor

threats cause aggression or goal delay and about the role of individual differences in honor-related situations. They show how honor and dignity cultures are represented not only in the heads of individuals but also in the everyday situations they encounter.

B. Implications and Future Directions

There are other approaches, methods, and paradigms that could provide valuable insight into the dynamics of honor and dignity cultures. For example, unfolding how honor is embedded in cultural artifacts and reflected in different linguistic practices would further enrich our understanding of the mutual constitution of mind and cultural context. Recent work by Gelfand and her colleagues (2015) is an important step in this direction, which provides researchers with an Honor Dictionary based on interviews conducted with members of different honor cultures to examine how honor is talked about in terms of gains, loses, or prevention of loss.[6] Other scholars have fruitfully used a variety of archival data sets to test how honor influences behavior in the US South (e.g., Altheimer, 2012; Brown, 2016); international data sets may also provide valuable tests of the theories across a variety of cultural settings. There is also growing interest in manipulating honor to test causal mechanisms (e.g., Leung & Cohen, 2011; Shafa et al., 2015). Given that honor is a multifaceted construct, these attempts would have to choose in a theoretically driven way which aspect(s) of honor should be primed, according to the specific research question. Another growing area of research has focused on the development of different explicit and implicit individual difference measures designed to assess individual endorsement of honor, face, and dignity values, as well as different aspects of honor (e.g., Barnes et al., 2012; Guerra et al., 2013; IJzerman et al., 2007; Imura et al., 2014; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002a; Saucier & McManus, 2014; Saucier et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2017; Vandello et al., 2009). We are currently studying how some of these different measures predict theoretically meaningful variables associated with honor at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.

We have begun to examine similarities and differences in two different honor cultures, and this work needs considerable expansion. Two streams of research have contributed to the visibility of honor as a key cultural syndrome: One stream focused on Mediterranean societies such as Spain and Greece, and the other stream focused on southern regions of the United States (for a review, see Uskul et al., 2019). Other regions of the world, especially those based on pastoral subsistence norms and having unstable or inaccessible

legal systems, may also be characterized by the beliefs, attitudes, and norms that characterize cultures of honor. For example, research in Pakistan (e.g., Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2014), Poland (Krys et al., 2017), the Middle East and North Africa (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1999; Abu-Odeh, 1996; Aslani et al., 2016; Eisner & Ghuneim, 2013; Maitner et al., 2017), and Latin America (e.g., Vandello & Cohen, 2003; Vandello et al., 2009) has uncovered elements of honor in people's behavior, attitudes, and emotions as well as in social norms and cultural products. Most of these regions have received little attention from cultural psychologists, and insight into the diversity of honor cultures can contribute to the advancement of theories and methods in multiple ways. For example, diverse honor contexts may enable researchers to identify which aspects of honor play a bigger or smaller role in shaping responses to honor-threatening and honor-enhancing situations in different cultures of honor, may facilitate the pinpointing of how honor is associated differently with other cultural dimensions across these groups (e.g., looseness/tightness, individualism/collectivism), and may expedite the determination of how honor is construed differently across different groups along the lines of socially constructed categories such as gender, social class, religion, and ethnicity.

This work, while focused primarily on honor cultures, also sheds light on dignity cultural processes, especially those of northern European-Americans. Cultural psychology turns a lens on little-studied cultural groups and societies and their norms, beliefs, values, and behaviors. But it also turns the lens back onto the more frequently studied WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) societies and provides insights into the sources of behavior that are taken for granted or assumed to be universal. For many people in the world, the responses of members of dignity cultures to accusations of misconduct or to insults are perceived as exceptionally weird: It may seem unimaginable that a person would not respond quickly and aggressively to being called a liar or being the target of a crude epitaph. They may see dignity contexts as an odd social world in which an individual can simply shrug off, discount, minimize, or ignore such treatment and still be considered a good person. In fact, the ability to do that is considered by some in dignity cultures to be the mark of the "bigger" person, the more self-assured person, or the person with a confident sense of their own integrity. In a society influenced by ethical and religious traditions that implore individuals to "turn the other cheek" or "forgive your enemies," individuals who retaliate against insults or false accusations may be viewed as "hot-heads" or "thin-skinned" and disparaged by others. To members of honor cultures, however, failure to respond in these cases is assumed to imply acquiescence to the threat or weakness.

In our work, we have started taking the investigation of honor beyond its original foci (e.g., aggressive responses to masculine honor threats) by extending research into relational aspects of honor (e.g., threats being directed to the self vs. close others), different types of honor threats (e.g., threats targeting one's morality vs. competence), negative and positive aspects and consequences of honor, and different types of social interactions (e.g., cooperating with someone [or not] who has just offended you). Moreover, in more recent studies, we have been working on connecting the literature on cultures of honor with the mainstream social psychology literature by, for example, integrating honor into the goal conflict literature. Our attempts contribute to the increasing cross-fertilization taking place across different subfields of psychology in relation to honor (e.g., honor in the context of negotiations [Aslani et al., 2016; Gelfand et al., 2015], honor in the context of intergroup relations [Levin et al., 2015], and honor in relation to social identities [Maitner et al., 2017]).

While our research has so far shed light on various unknown cultural aspects of honor and its consequences for emotions and actions, it has also highlighted how much more basic and applied research is needed to better grasp this complex construct in its cultural context and to integrate the accumulating evidence into other subfields of psychology. Continuing to research honor in relation to different outcome variables in intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup levels of analysis and the underlying mechanisms will advance our understanding of the role played by honor in different domains of life. Further investigation into who pursues honor in varying situations, why honor is important, and how honor and other motivations and social norms interact to shape behavior can increase the integration of this work in mainstream psychological knowledge and increase its application in real-world settings such as education, health, violence, social work, and legal studies.

NOTES

1. *Westerners* are defined here as western Europeans or people with western European heritage living in North America, New Zealand, or Australia.
2. Exceptions to this include Rodriquez Mosquera's work in Spain and Pakistan (described in Rodriguez Mosquera, 2016), Travaglino's research on the Italian mafiosa (Travaglino et al., 2014), and Gelfand's work in the Middle East (Gelfand et al., 2015). Notably, work in African societies, some of which are likely to have cultures of honor, is missing from the social-psychological research on honor.

3. One exception was that we observed a trend toward northern US participants (5.3%) generating a slightly higher percentage of units focusing on close others than Turkish participants (1.2%), $\chi^2(1) = 3.55$, $p = .06$, Cramér's $\varphi = .14$.

4. We also asked participants to rate the situations for "How would others feel about your family?" Results pertaining to this question can be found in Uskul et al. (2012, Study 2).

5. The other "participant" in this study was actually a confederate of the experimenter. At the end of the study, all participants were carefully debriefed. They were also paid the maximum amount possible assuming acceptance of the two highest offers (15 Turkish lira in Turkey and $8 in the United States).

6. The dictionary is available at https://www.michelegelfand.com/honor-dictionary

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