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Understanding Oughts by Assessing Moral Reasoning or Moral Emotions

Leo Montada

Psychological Indicators of Moral Oughts

As an empirical science, moral psychology does not claim to establish a universal ethic. Instead, it investigates differences between groups, cultures, or individuals, as well as changes within these entities. Differences and changes are observed and analyzed with respect to the contents and structure of moral norms, their generality or specificity, the flexibility or rigidity with which norms are applied, their development, processes of moral socialization and internalization, reasons given for norms, reactions when they are violated, and their influences on experiences, judgments, and actions. Before we investigate these questions, we need to understand how moral rules are represented psychologically. What does it mean to say that we should act in such and such a way or that we are not allowed to act thus and so (Tugendhat, 1984, p. 3)?

Here we may recall Kant's (1959) distinction between the three kinds of rules (maxims or imperatives) that are the basic forms of human action: technical rules (skillfulness), pragmatic rules (prudence), and rules of morality. Technical and pragmatic rules are not ends in themselves but are relative to the goals of the subject. Therefore, they are more or less functional or dysfunctional for a goal, which means that they will be good or bad only conditionally or hypothetically with respect to the goals of the subject. In contrast, moral rules are ends in themselves, they are good in themselves, which means that their value is not derived from their

utility for some external ends. They are good categorically, not conditionally or hypothetically.

What psychologically represents this quality of being categorically good and bad? What are the psychological indicators that a moral rule exists in a person? We can read what a philosopher considers to be universally valid oughts, and we can see from the legal code of a society what legal norms are enforced under penalty. But how do we learn what moral rules a person "really" has? What are the oughts a person considers categorically valid?

In psychology, moral norms have the status of "theoretical constructs," which means they are not directly observable or assessable by asking people. Instead, their existence and their content must be inferred from observable indicators resulting from the moral norms people have adopted, internalized, or built up. There is some debate about the question of what is an adequate indicator of an effective or operative personal morality. Is it knowledge about the existence of moral or legal norms in society? Is it behavior or action according to norms? Is it moral reasoning in Kohlberg's sense of that term? None of these alternatives seems adequate. Knowledge about the social existence of moral (and legal) norms is not an adequate indicator, since knowledge does not imply a personal approval or acceptance. Criminals, for instance, know about the established social norms, but this does not mean they approve of them or consider them obligatory for themselves.

Norm-abiding behavior is not indicative, for two reasons. First, the very same behavior can be morally motivated or can have technical or tactical reasons. Only an analysis of a person's motivation will give us a valid diagnosis. We may abstain from killing our enemies because we obey a moral norm, or because we don't know how to do it, or because we are afraid of revenge or legal punishment, or because we want to represent ourselves as magnanimous, or because we need them, and so forth. Second, deviant behavior does not prove that moral convictions do not exist. Before we can consider deviant behavior to indicate missing moral norms, we have to clarify at least (a) whether there was a moral dilemma and whether the subject decided to act according to a second norm to which he or she gave priority, (b) whether or not deviating from the norm has aroused guilt feelings in the subject, and (c) whether the

subject feels responsible for the behavior in question and whether he or she makes excuses or denies responsibility.

From Kohlberg's perspective, the subject's level of moral reasoning is no indication, since even contradictory norms can be justified by arguments of the same level, and since the same moral norm (in terms of its behavioral realization) can be argued for on different levels in different ways, and, above all, since reasoning to ground a norm does not imply a personal obligation: we can understand the arguments and present them without accepting the norm as obligatory.

Whether a person has psychically internalized effective or operative moral rules is not based on their ethical foundation; it does not presuppose reflections about whether they universally apply to all rational beings or whether they impartially regard all those concerned as having equal rights. Consequently, a personal moral norm may prove to be wrong in an ethical discourse. Nonetheless, it may function as a categorical imperative that is perceived and experienced as being obligatory for oneself and for others. How moral norms can be grounded is certainly an important question not only for moral philosophy but also for moral psychology, since any moral norm should be objectively true, and what is true must be grounded by reasons and arguments. A moral norm that the subject cannot convincingly justify is a candidate for change. However, at a given point in time a norm may be operative without the subject's having reflected about its reasons.

What should we use, instead, as indicators that a moral rule is psychologically operative? I propose considering "moral emotions" as indicators of operative personal moral norms. The term "moral emotion" may be misleading. I do not mean to classify emotions as moral or immoral. What I mean is that some emotions indicate the existence of moral oughts.

Moral Emotions

Salient emotional reactions to deviations from moral norms include guilt feelings when the subject has violated one of his or her personal moral norms, and moral outrage or resentment when another person has violated a duty that the subject normatively expected that person to meet. There may also be emotional

responses when actions are performed in accordance with moral norms: moral satisfaction about one's own acts (or omissions) and moral admiration for the acts of others.¹ Satisfaction about atonement, deserved punishment, restitution, or apologies by the deviator also indicates existing moral norms: it shows that the violation of moral norms creates a need for atonement and justice, which might continue until satisfied.

Before discussing moral emotions, let me briefly recall Kant's view of emotions and feelings. Kant argued (1) that emotions and feelings are transitory, changeable, and capricious, (2) that emotionally motivated conduct is therefore unreliable, inconsistent, unprincipled, and even irrational, (3) that to clearly see the rights and wrongs in a situation, we must abstract or distance ourselves from our feelings and emotions, (4) that we are passive with respect to our feelings not under our own control and therefore beyond our responsibility, and (5) that emotions are directed toward particular persons in particular circumstances and therefore do not have the generality and universality required for rational morality: they are not based on principles, and thus they involve "partiality" (Kant, 1959).

I mention Kant's conception to avoid a misunderstanding. I do not want to base moral norms on emotions, as, for instance, Blum (1980) convincingly did for altruism, which he based on feelings of empathy and friendship. I only want us to consider emotions as indicating the existence of moral norms, the rationality, impartiality, and universality of which remain open to question. From a psychological point of view, it is not useful to speak of moral norms only in cases when they are rationally reasoned and universally valid. Most people have operative personal norms that they have never impartially and rationally reflected on before. Nevertheless, these personal norms function as categorical imperatives.

Besides this, I do not agree with Kant's conception of emotions. I see emotions not as being capricious, inconsistent, and unreliable but instead as predictable and understandable evaluative responses to cognized or imagined "facts." During the last few years the cognitive core of emotions has become more and more recognized (Epstein, 1984; Lazarus, Averill, and Opton, 1970; Montada, 1989; Solomon, 1976). We can conceive of emotions as a specific category of evaluations based on specific cognitions of an object or a

situation. The object may be an event, an achievement, an act, a person in a specific situation, and so forth. Each emotion will be aroused by a specific pattern of cognitions, which I will sketch for guilt and resentment.

Cognitive Models of Guilt and Resentment

Guilt feelings arise when subjects think they have violated a personal moral norm by action or omission and view themselves as responsible for the violation. Responsibility presupposes freedom of choice between the alternatives, as between action and omission. Objectively, subjects bear no responsibility when internal or external conditions such as psychopathology, inability, or physical coercion cause their behavior. In such cases the "subject" is not an agent but an object of causes. Responsibility is a necessary prerequisite of guilt but not a sufficient one. Responsible deviation from a moral rule does not provoke guilt when it is justified by good reasons, for instance, to prevent an even greater wrong.

How intensely one experiences guilt will depend on several facts that are morally marginal or even irrelevant, for instance, on whether or not someone will suffer by the immoral act or omission, and who will suffer. Everyday observations show that people experience more guilt when another person is suffering and the other person has a close relationship to the subject (agent). When subjects themselves are victims of their own deviant acts, they may perceive their action as more or less expiated by the suffered harm or loss, and this often reduces guilt feelings. Imagine a drunken driver who causes an accident. It makes quite a difference whether or not someone is injured and who is injured: a stranger, a loved one, or the driver himself.

There are cases of guilt feelings that Schneider and I (1989, 1990) called "existential guilt." In these cases, guilt feelings are aroused not by one's own reproachable actions but by experienced lucky advantages. Not everybody can feel happy about being the one who survived a disaster, who escaped persecution, or who lives on the sunny side of the world. Some of these lucky people feel guilty, as can be observed, for instance, with survivors of concentration camps (von Baeyer, Haefner, and Kisker, 1964) or of the Hiroshima bomb (Lifton, 1967). They saw their relative privilege as infringing

on solidarity and justice, and they could not enjoy it. Following Hoffman (1976), we used the term "existential guilt" to describe the feelings of people who suffer a bad conscience because they find themselves in undeserved advantaged positions or life circumstances in comparison with the disadvantages of others.

When others violate a moral rule, one's emotional response might be resentment, moral outrage, or anger. Again, for this to happen, one must view the perpetrator as responsible. Excuses from responsibility alleviate one's moral outrage. Responsibility does not imply blameworthiness when reasonable justifications are offered and accepted. As with guilt, it is relevant who the victim is: the subject will more likely experience resentment when the deviant act or omission has caused negative consequences for the subject or for others with whom the subject sympathizes. Resentment motivates a desire to punish the perpetrator, which might even be stronger than one's desire to compensate the victim (including oneself) and impose justice in that way.

Moral emotions are embedded in a network of antecedents and consequences. Using such cognitive models, we may suggest hypotheses about antecedents and motivational consequences of emotions. Antecedents, like biases, contribute to the formation of relevant cognitions on which the emotions are based, and motivational consequences like reproaches or retaliation in case of resentment. I will outline this network later in more detail. For the time being, let me point to the crucial role that perceived responsibility plays for the emotions of guilt and resentment. Whether we attribute responsibility may depend on the perpetrator's attitudes, apologizing arguments, and so forth.

Our attributing responsibility follows certain rules that we have become aware of (Tedeschi and Ries, 1981; Semin and Manstead, 1983). We may deny responsibility using the following arguments:

- Denial of causation ("It wasn't me.")
- Denial of agency ("What looks like an action was only the effect of physical causes, fatigue, drugs, inability, and so forth.")
- Denial of foreseeability ("I couldn't foresee the outcome.")
- Denial of intent and volition ("I didn't intend these outcomes of my activity, and I did not want them.")

But even if an agent accepts responsibility, this does not imply that he is blameworthy, since he may have justifications. Justifications do not deny responsibility; they deny blameworthiness. We may distinguish two categories of justifications (see also Semin and Manstead, 1983; Tedeschi and Ries, 1981):

- Pointing to the responsibility of others, such as authorities
- Justification of an action by pointing to more important values and goals, such as justice (e.g., actions serving as punishment or acts of atonement or retaliation), survival, or political, moral, and religious values

In moral dilemmas we need to distinguish two further categories of justification. In the first, one justifies violating a moral rule by pointing to a second moral rule given priority in the specific case. In the second, one restricts the field of applicability of a moral norm: one puts moral obligations into perspective to "justify" self-interests aimed at protecting one's own security, self-image, and so forth.

Resentment may also arise when the victim refuses to accept claimed excuses and justifications, and it can be reduced by proffering a complete apology (Goffman, 1971). For an apology to be complete, the perpetrator must (1) express emotional distress because he or she violated a moral norm, (2) accept responsibility for the violation and liability for blame, (3) express willingness to observe the moral rule in the future, and (4) acknowledge that it is up to the victim to accept or refuse the apology and that forgiving is a grace granted by the victim.

The Authenticity of Emotions as Indicators of Moral Rules

The subject experiences an emotion as a state provoked or aroused in him or her, as an uncontrolled, involuntary reaction to an inner or outer reality. Again, the subject experiences an emotion not as active conduct but as aroused and instigated by a given fact or reality. The subject might have contributed to this reality, as, for instance, in cases of guilt, but once the fact exists, the subject perceives it as causing the emotion. And again, the subject perceives him or herself as passive with respect to the emotion.

Descriptions of emotions—such as "You are making me angry," "He is falling in love," "She is consumed with envy"—point to this passive, reactive experience of emotions. We do not say, "I want it to make me angry," or "I will now start to feel guilty," or "I have some time left to feel sympathy with the victims of the earthquake." All through penal law, affects are accepted as causal explanations of behavior that are not under the control of the subject and, therefore, as excuses that reduce responsibility and blameworthiness when they result in law violations.

According to the common view, moral emotions are authentic indicators of a person's moral rules since people usually do not pretend to have emotions. The common belief that emotions are passively experienced, that they just happen to a person, may contribute to this view, although I suspect this belief might often be a biased attributional view.² Focusing on the control of intense affects and their reduction or modification, I have elsewhere stressed how the views a subject has taken and that he or she principally can change contribute to the arousal of emotions (Montada, 1989).

A second feature of emotions contributes to their authenticity. Emotions are instigated by, or imply, specific views of the reality that occasion them. An emotion is not a hypothesis about reality but an assertive cognition. The man who feels guilty assertively knows that he has violated a valid norm, that he is responsible, and that he does not have convincing justifications. The adolescent girl who resents her parents' demand to be back from a party by 11:00 P.M. will not ask whether they have good reasons for their demand: she assertively knows that it is her right to decide autonomously, that her parents' reasons are irrational, and therefore that she might even refuse to listen to them. I have proposed that one can reduce the intensity of an emotion by replacing the implied assertive judgments with hypothetical judgments or questions (Montada, 1989). The above mentioned girl would reduce the intensity of her resentment by asking whether her claim for autonomy is justified and whether her parents' reasons may have some validity.

A third feature of emotions, important in this context, is that emotions presuppose or imply cognitions but are not identical with cognitions. The usual question in this respect is, How will cold

cognitions turn into hot emotions characterized by raised physiological arousal? From a cognitive point of view, the usual answer is that one is responding to a reality of personal concern and importance (Arnold, 1960). Lazarus's concept of primary appraisal in the emotional response means that the given situation concerns oneself, that the situation is relevant and important to oneself. Primary appraisal is followed by a secondary appraisal of the possibilities for dealing with the situation (Lazarus, Averill, and Opton, 1970). Thus, emotional responses indicate that one's very own self is concerned and that the concern is an important one.

These three features of emotions make them indicators of operative personal moral norms. Experiencing guilt or resentment implies that the subject's own moral rule has been violated, and the subject experiences this fact as an important issue. The emotional reaction proves the personal involvement, which in turn provides evidence that the violated norm is a relevant part of the self, that the subject is really affected and concerned.

An emotional response is more than lip service or mere intellectual approval of a moral rule: it indicates that the subject has internalized and integrated the rule into his or her moral self, and reveals various commitments that go beyond mere intellectual approval. It is for this reason that many schools of psychotherapy adopt the rule of focusing on the emotions of clients, since they indicate the really significant issues and problems. In sum, moral emotions imply that the subject's self is significantly affected.

A person's morality necessarily involves self involvement and commitment. Having a morality means experiencing it as obligatory. And experiencing it as obligatory means that one experiences or observes deviations as affecting one personally. Otherwise, it would not be *my* morality; maybe it is someone else's, but not mine. The operational definition of "obligatory" is that the subject is liable to blame and sanctions when he or she deviates from the rule (unless the deviation is excused or warranted). Feelings of guilt mean self-blame; resentment means to blame others.

Moral Emotions as Cues for Moral Norms of the Self

Moral emotions serve only as cues for the operative existence of norms. The observation of moral emotions, if it is a valid observa-

tion, only proves that moral norms exist. It does not reveal their contents and structure, however, or the structure of the arguments grounding them. The norms themselves have to be assessed and analyzed in a different way. Frequently subjects do not know their moral norms, in the sense of possessing a verbal knowledge of their content, or the scope of their applicability, and having reasonable arguments for grounding them.

Emotions are based on cognitions or contain them as preconscious constituents. Moral emotions consist of cognitions about one's own moral rules, cognitions about which actions conform to or violate which norms, and cognitions about an agent's responsibilities. These cognitions are not always considered, verbalized, and conscious. There is a general consensus among scholars on this point. Epstein (1984) and Ellis (1979), for instance, speak of preconscious cognitions, Solomon (1976) of pre-reflections, Beck (1976) of automated cognitions, and Arnold (1960) of intuitions. By bringing preconscious cognitions to the fore, the experience of moral emotions offers a subject a chance to enhance the knowledge about one's own morality. The analysis of emotions, Epstein (1984) and I agree, is the royal road to preconscious cognitions of the self. Using observed moral emotions as a starting point for exploring a person's moral norms has definite advantages.

By focusing on moral emotions a researcher can inductively identify the operative moral rules of a person. When a person is directly asked for his or her moral maxims, the answer will be at a rather abstract level, whereas moral emotions are evaluations of concretely realized, described, or imagined situations. Moral emotions prove that a moral maxim is operative in a given situation, while statements about moral maxims on an abstract level do not allow predictions about which situations they will apply in.

When a spectator in a soccer game is outraged about a referee who did not punish an obvious foul, we can formulate several hypotheses about the moral rules of the spectator. To give a few examples: the referee should impartially punish every violation of the rules of the game; the referee should not disadvantage the spectator's favorite team; the referee should punish a player who has repeatedly fouled; the referee has the duty neither to privilege nor to disadvantage one of the teams. Our predictions of the spectator's resentment in a second case will vary a lot, depending

on which of these hypotheses we choose. According to the hypothesis we choose, we may predict on the basis of who was fouling, the previous fouls of the offending player, the previously avenged fouls of the other team, or the proportion of punished and unpunished fouls by both teams.

Of course, identifying moral rules by observing emotional responses presupposes their repeated observation in different situations. On the other hand, I doubt that asking people abstractly, by which I mean whenever they are not involved in a concrete situation, would lead to identification of their operative moral rules: respondents will tend to formulate general rules without being able to specify occasions for their application, exceptions, warrants, excuses they would be willing to accept, the impact of attitudes toward the actors and the victims, and so forth.

Moral emotions not only indicate the existence of moral rules. They are evaluations of a complex constellation encompassing more components than a moral rule alone. This shows that besides the moral rules themselves, there are rules for applying them in specific cases. Let me take moral outrage about a slanderer as an example. What further appraisals are relevant besides knowing that another person has violated a moral rule by defaming me? Here are a few: The other person is sane and responsible (that is, not mentally ill, e.g., not suffering a paranoid delusion). The other person's act was not caused by an internal condition (e.g., hate) or an external condition (e.g., extortion) but was freely chosen; a bad outcome of the action for me was intended, or was at least foreseeable. There are no warrants for the act, as there would be if, say, I had previously insulted the slanderer. The outcome is or could be really bad for me: if, for instance, nobody believed the calumny and everybody blamed the slanderer as being a liar who invented the story out of envy or revenge, gloating would be a more likely emotional response than resentment.

Thus resentment implies more appraisals than only the one of violating a moral rule (to respect my social integrity), and not every violation of a moral rule will incite resentment. Moral emotions are evaluations not of abstract rules but of rules within the context of action and interaction. These contextual aspects are manifold: perceptions of people, attributions of causes and responsibilities, hypotheses about the effects of the violation, attitudes toward

actor and victim, one's self-concept, aspects of the social system, and so forth. While the violation of a rule is necessary for resentment, lack of resentment does not indicate that there is no violation: perhaps one of the other prerequisites is absent, and this results in a reduction of the moral relevance of the case.

The "or" in the title of my chapter does not mean that cognitive judgments and moral emotions are mutually exclusive. I am convinced that emotions have cognitive judgments as prerequisites. As I already stated, these judgments need not be explicit, they need not be objectively apparent, they need not be verbalized, conscious, and communicable. Nevertheless, they are functional in producing emotional responses. Explicating the cognitions implied in emotional responses may be a way to rationally specify them, to test whether they are realistic, whether they are shared with others, whether they are verified or should better be given the status of unproven hypotheses, whether there are equally or even more reasonable alternative views, and so forth.

Moral emotions have an experiential authenticity: they are assertive (not tentative) evaluations of an experienced event, action, or situation. This does not prove or mean that operative moral rules are right or good in an objective or intersubjectively consensual way. Only subjectively are they claimed to be right and obligatory. The neurotic described by Freud may have an immature morality; the member of a deviant subculture, as well as the member of the majority, may have moral rules that would be evaluated as immoral in an ideal power-free discourse.

How to develop and change the operative moral rules of a person is an interesting question. Various strategies of formation and change may result in different types of morality along the dimensions of strict versus flexible, reasoned versus unreflective, heteronomous versus autonomous, and so on.

How to change moral emotions is a second question. We can do it not only by changing moral rules but also by changing the rules for their application or by changing cognitions about specific cases. Again, we can choose various approaches to do this. Many cognitions contribute to the arousal of an emotion, and many factors contribute to the formation of cognitions (including personality traits, attitudes, worldviews, and heuristics for making judgments). Some are mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1

Frame for generating and specifying path models for the multivariate empirical study of "operative" moral rules

Background variables (distal predictors)	Cognitions about a specific case (proximal predictors)	Moral emotions	Resulting motivations and commitments
Verbally expressed moral convictions	What are the moral oughts in a given situation?	Moral outrage	To blame, to punish, to retaliate against the actor
Personal views about justice in general	Who has violated a moral norm?	Guilt	To blame the victim
Personal value orientations	Is the actor responsible?		To help the victim
General views about the world, human nature	Are there justifications?		To claim help for the victim
Attitudes toward the actor	Who is the victim?		To enforce the violated moral rule
Perceived traits of the actor	What are the bad outcomes?		To blame authorities for not having prevented rule violations
Attitudes toward the victim	Is the outcome unjust, or is it deserved?		
Aspects of self, e.g., centrality of fairness, social responsibility, self concept of competence, locus of control, conception of social duties	Is the victim responsible?		To change moral emotions, either by changing cognitions about the case (e.g., by attributing responsibility to the victim), or by changing relevant background variables (e.g., by changing one's attitude toward the victim, or by liberalizing one's attitude toward justice)
	Is the victim repenting?		
	Does the actor apologize?		
Traits of the subject, e.g., moral anxiety, authoritarianism, civil courage			

Note: To avoid an impenetrable web of arrows, I have omitted hypothetically expected paths.

Studying Moral Emotions Empirically

Because operative moral rules are not directly observable, we must infer them. Inferences from any single variable are more prone to error than inferences from a network of relationships among observable variables, for instance, among moral rules, moral emotions, norm-violating actions, attributions of responsibility, excuses and justifications, apologies, and various efforts to cope with norm-violating actions. We may use various sources of data.

The validity of any single variable is far more open to doubt than a meaningful pattern of relationships among variables. To give one example, the statement of a person that charity is an important personal norm may be subjectively true or false. If it is subjectively true, it does not specify the cases in which this norm applies and those in which it does not. These specifications may include such dimensions as group memberships, social attitudes toward the needy, the needy's own causal contributions to the current state, third parties' liability to help and support, one's own abilities and resources to support the needy, conflicting motivations and duties, and so on.

Few people can validly make these multiple specifications on an abstract level. Hence, asking for intentions to act and for actual charitable engagements in concrete cases, or observing these in concrete situations, will give us information that might be relevant for evaluating the truth of the initial statement. Also relevant are moral emotions and actions, because they are related to personal norms within a multicomponent theoretical network of thoughts and oughts.

We should also observe the motivational impact of moral emotions. Resentment may dispose one to blame the perpetrator, to punish him or her, to reinforce the rightness of the violated norm in general, to claim compensation for the victim, and so forth. Guilt may dispose one to apologize, to compensate the victim, or to perform good deeds for the benefit of third parties in order to atone for one's guilt. Both emotions are aversive and therefore may dispose one to various coping strategies.

What if moral emotions are lacking? This may indicate that relevant personal norms are lacking, that a personal norm has not been violated in the specific case, that moral emotions have been

reduced by appropriate acts (including atonement in the case of guilt and retaliation in the case of moral outrage), or that they have been reduced by appropriate coping strategies. The list of coping strategies is a long one that includes changes in personal norms, in specifications of applications, in attributions of responsibility, in thinking about justifications of norm violations, in forming good resolutions, and so forth. All these activities indicate that we are dealing with a psychological situation, which corroborates the personal importance of moral emotions.

We have conducted several questionnaire studies to test specific path models derived from the conceptualizations portrayed in Table 1, including cognitive judgments about specific cases, general moral convictions, and morally relevant dimensions of the self as well as moral emotions of guilt and resentment. We also assessed actions and commitments, discovering that moral emotions were significant predictors of actions and commitments and that they were based on morally relevant cognitions, general beliefs, convictions, and facets of the self (Montada, 1989, 1991; Montada and Boll, 1988; Boll, 1991). To generalize on the basis of these studies, it seems evident that the assessment of moral emotions significantly improves the predictability of morally driven actions and commitments.

Conclusion

Thus, the empirical study of morality should not be restricted to the study of moral reasoning and its development. Research in the tradition of Piaget and Kohlberg provides knowledge about the "naive" moral philosophy of people, especially about its ontogenetic development. There is, however, a hiatus between moral philosophy and moral actions (Oser and Althof, 1992). One way to explain this hiatus is by the fact that moral cognitions and moral motivations are often incongruent, meaning that insights about what would be the morally best solution are not always experienced as obligatory imperatives (Kohlberg and Candee, 1984; Nunner-Winkler and Sodian, 1988). Two sorts of discrepancies between moral reasoning and moral emotions should be distinguished. In the first case, a moral insight is not motivationally supported, meaning that violations or deviations cause no moral emotions. In

the second case, a moral rule is not considered rationally justified but remains nonetheless operative and emotionally relevant. These discrepancies may be due to the fact that the moral self is the result of socialization experiences as well as of rational thinking.

The inner experience of the obligatory validity of moral insights and solutions of conflicts psychologically represents what Kant called the categorical imperative and I have called the operative or effective moral rule. Moral emotions imply the component of obligation because they only emerge when the subject is really affected by a violation. The attribution of blame (to oneself in case of guilt, to another agent in case of resentment) reveals the obligatory character of the violated rule. The readiness to engage in retaliatory, compensatory, or expiatory activity demonstrates the motivational power of these emotions.

Moral insights and solutions are not operative or effective if their violations do not initiate moral emotions. They are, rather, moral hypotheses that the subject does not regard as imperative oughts. My own view is that the moral self is made up of imperative oughts, even though I am aware that many scholars accept moral relativism as a way of having a moral self. As I have used the concept of morality in this chapter, a consistent relativistic position (where "anything goes") is not a moral position at all. Morality involves imperative oughts, and imperative oughts are the basis of moral emotions.

Notes

1. Both emotions are more likely when there is a conflict between a moral obligation and a strong motive against fulfilling it: the dangerous rescue of a persecuted person and the refusal of an attractive offer that is incompatible with existing duties are prototypes of such conflicts. The greater the motivation for the moral alternative, the greater the moral achievement. Often, emotional reactions to (im)moral behavior are more salient in cases of violations of moral norms than in cases of norm- or law-abiding behavior. When an individual observes moral norms as a matter of course, he or she might entirely lack emotional evaluations. If, however, a subject obeys a moral norm in spite of immense inner resistance, risk, cost, temptation, and so forth, we naturally expect moral satisfaction or moral admiration and respect. Anybody who does not betray political friends in spite of torture will experience moral satisfaction and is worthy of moral respect. The alcoholic who, after swearing to stay dry, successfully resists a temptation might be morally satisfied too.

2. Jones and Nisbett (1971) describe attributional biases. A so-called dispositional error or fundamental attribution error means that observers tend to attribute behavior to others "internally": to personal attributes, competencies, and dispositions, etc. Subjects themselves, however, tend to explain their behavior by referring to the external situation. Subjects who have emotions have a strong bias to explain their own emotions by factual circumstances.

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