

Dr. David D. Gilmore

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SEEDS OF HONOR, FIELDS OF SHAME

Carol Delaney

Introduction

It may be questionable whether a village in the central Anatolian steppe can be considered a Mediterranean society or part of Mediterranean culture. Only a few people from the village have ever seen the Mediterranean, most have never seen a body of water larger than the small pond below the village. The Taurus mountains to the south raise a formidable barrier separating the temperate and benevolent climate of the coast from the severe as well as austere environment of the high inner plateau. The difference is as great as between southern California and Montana, and any person displaced from one to the other would no doubt agree that environment affects temperament. Anatolian Turks would be puzzled to think of themselves as a Mediterranean people, and indeed they possess few of the qualities popularly used to characterize them.

Nevertheless, the system of ideas, sentiments and practices related to honor and shame, long held to be a distinctive feature of Mediterranean societies, are as much a part of life in Anatolia as along the shores of that sea. Perhaps it is the honor/shame complex that gives shape to what is considered Mediterranean rather than the reverse. Still the fit is a loose one. Like the baggy *galwar* that women in Turkish villages wear, not only is the outline of the body concealed, but there is much room for expansion. That is to say, it has been a little difficult to determine what is essential and what is extraneous to both the concept of Mediterranean culture and that of honor and shame.

The notions of honor and shame are not uniform and constant throughout the Mediterranean area. The use of the English gloss, "honor and shame," tends to fix them as if they were stable and unalterable, when in fact they cover a variety of terms, meanings and practices. This tendency to reification has led Herzfeld to raise the question of whether they are analytically useful or counterproductive (1980:349). At the same time, to dispose of them altogether when they appear to encapsulate something of existential importance is equivalent to throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. The mistake has been to interpret the honor code somewhat like a dress code—as a set of rules and regulations—focused on superficial conformity. Instead, I propose that it is more like a kind of genetic code—a structure of relations—generative of possibilities. An analogy from botany may prove germane. In the way that genetically similar seeds sown in different soils produce phenotypically varied fruits, so do I believe that encoded in the honor/shame complex is a specific theory of sexuality and procreation that produces slightly different permutations in practice depending on the environment

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in which it takes root. They key to unlocking the code lies, I suggest, in an examination of sexuality and procreation.

Some contributors to this volume and to the literature in general would disagree that honor and shame are rooted in sexuality, but most would, I think, agree that sexuality is a prominent feature. Yet it is precisely this aspect of honor that is peculiar to and perhaps distinctive of Mediterranean societies (see also Gilmore, 1983). Honor in the sense of reputation, prestige, rank, or precedence has far more widespread, if not universal currency. "Honor and shame are social evaluations . . . the reflection of the social personality in the mirror of social ideals" (Peristiany 1974:9). Peristiany goes on to say that since "all societies evaluate conduct by comparing it to ideal standards of action, all societies have their own forms of honor and shame" (1974:10). On the other hand, honor and its obverse, shame, in relation to sexuality, is far more circumscribed. In this article I shall concentrate primarily on the restricted but not residual form of honor. In Turkish, the different forms of honor are specified by the terms *şeref* and *namus*, respectively. A man who is *namussuz* (without honor) cannot possibly have *şeref*, but a man who is *namuslu* (with honor) does not necessarily possess *şeref*. In other words, *namus* (honor related to sexuality) may be the more basic. The confusion or conflation of these interrelated but separable forms of honor has marred the discussion of this topic. This conflation has resulted in attempts to explicate the system of values, sentiments, and practices indexed by honor and shame by focusing on social structure, politics, economics, and ecology (e.g., Peristiany 1974; Davis 1977; Pitt-Rivers 1977; Bourdieu 1979; and Schneider 1971), rather than on sexuality itself! All of these factors may contribute to an understanding of how the system works, but have yet to explain why it is that honor is primarily an attribute of men and shame of women, or why male honor is so inextricably tied to women.

Part of the problem is due, I believe, to the general or promiscuous use of the term *sexuality*, which has rendered any precise identification of meaning difficult, if not impossible. The way it is used also betrays the Western preoccupation with sex detached from the entire process of procreation. Implicit in much social science writing is an assumption that male and female, sexuality and reproduction, are biological givens rather than cultural constructions. Although the concept of gender has mitigated this tendency somewhat, sexuality and reproduction are more recalcitrant. Typically, reproduction is viewed as a natural process associated with women, and as a universal biological given, its relevance for any particular culture has seemed minimal. At the same time, it must be granted that while reproduction may be a universal physiological process, understandings of it are neither naturally determined nor universal. The way it is represented and understood varies considerably. In contrast, by procreation I mean the beliefs related to the question of how life comes into being, beliefs that, because they engage major categories of meaning, cannot be confined only to the physiological process. Sexual relations and reproduction always occur in a context of meaning. Whatever else they may be, they are also symbolic practice. In this article I am concerned with the way procreation is symbolically constructed, perceived, and embedded in a wider system of beliefs about the world. Briefly stated, I suggest that honor and shame are functions of a specific construction of procreation which, in turn, is correlative with the religious concept of monotheism. We are speaking of genesis at two levels.

The views presented here are the result of the conjunction of previous academic study of monotheistic traditions, training in anthropology, and almost two years of fieldwork in a Turkish village. Since it is the perspective from that village that will be described, some sense of place is necessary.

The Locale

There are more than 30,000 villages in Turkey varying in size from a few households to 2,000 people, after which it is no longer officially a village. Each village has its distinctive character and it is not possible, if even desirable, to find a typical or average village. Nevertheless, I believe the central ideas are generalizable, although certain specifics of practice vary as does the environment which is exploited. The village in which I lived and worked from August 1980 through June 1982² is located approximately 80 kilometers from Ankara on the skirt of one of the highest mountains in the province. Although relatively close to the capital, this area is one of the most sparsely populated in all of Turkey. Yet the village itself was relatively large, composed of about 850 people, evenly divided by sex.

Since the dirt roads leading down the mountain to the nearest highway 30 kilometers away can be treacherous at certain times of the year and occasionally impassable, no one from the village commutes outside of it for work. The few who work outside remain there for varying lengths of time and return to the village periodically. It is also not a village that has been decimated by the out-migration of men to Europe or urban centers in Turkey. With the introduction of tractors in the 1950s there was a brief period of migration out of the village. While this continues, the population has remained fairly stable for the past twenty years.

The inhabitants all profess to be Sunni Muslims and consider themselves true Anatolian Turks, descended from the original Turks who migrated westward from Central Asia. They are *yerli* (natives) as opposed to *göçmen* (immigrants, but to villagers, also ethnic minorities). Villagers think of their village as an interrelated and close(d) community. During the 1950s, when immigrants from Bulgaria were being resettled, a few families were placed in the village. After several months it became clear that they would not be absorbed, and like the foreign bodies they were, they were ejected from the community.

It is a viable village in terms of people and resources. The primary forms of livelihood are wheat cultivation and animal husbandry—sheep, goats, and cows. Wheat provides flour for bread, which is the staff of life both literally and figuratively. The surplus is sold for profit in government depots. Sheep and goats are raised for their wool and world-famous Angora (Ankara) goat hair, and to be sold as meat. Along with cows they provide villagers with occasional meat, but are valued especially for their milk, which is used in the forms of yogurt, butter, and cheese. Milk products form the second major component of the village diet. In addition, most people have access to vegetable gardens and fruit trees; that is, those who do not own them have relatives who do. There is no market in the village—only a couple of small shops (*bakkal*), which consist of a room in a villager's house set aside for selling sugar, cigarettes, matches, thread, and cookies. There is a market each week in each of two towns about an hour away by village *dolmuş* (literally "filled," but meaning a shared vehicle, in this case a Ford or Chevy van).

The village is a prosperous one but not rich. While there is a considerable difference in wealth between the richest family and the poorest, the distribution of wealth forms a continuum, and most families fall in the middle. There are no real class divisions.³ Similarly, there are status/prestige differentials, but these are relative and do not necessarily depend on wealth. The most important differences and divisions are those of sex.

Procreation: Monogenesis

In the village, male and female are defined by their role in procreation, and procreation, culturally understood, defines gender. Villagers understand and discuss procreation in terms of seed and soil and sometimes cite the Koran to support this view. There it is written: "Women are given to you as fields, go therein and sow your seed" (Sura 2.223). Note that this is a directive from God to men in an I-Thou relationship, women are objectified. This image of procreation should be familiar since it is common throughout the Old and New Testaments, and has also been the dominant folk theory in the West. What is not often recognized today is what this theory has implied.

The male role in procreation is to plant the seed; the female role is to transform and bring it forth. *Döllenmek* is the Turkish word that means "to inseminate," and it incorporates the word *doi*, which means seed, fetus, child. It is almost the exact equivalent of the English "inseminate" (literally, to put the seed in). *Döllenmek* does not mean to fertilize the ovum or to provide half the genetic contribution to the child; it means the whole thing. By way of the *doi yolu* (seedpath or vagina) the *doi* is inserted into the *doi yatağı* (seedbed or womb).

The child comes from the seed—*tohum dan göçük gelir*. (*Tohum* is a more common word for seed.) The female body, like soil, is a generalized medium of nurture that any woman can provide, given that she is not barren. Barrenness (*kısrık*), as in Euro-American culture, is a quality that describes both soil and women.⁴ Blood in the womb and milk at the breast provides nutrients necessary for growth and development; they swell the being of the child but in no way affect its essential identity. That is a matter of seed. As another villager put it:

If you plant wheat, you get wheat, if you plant barley, you get barley. It is the seed that determines the kind of plant that will grow, while the field nourishes the plant but does not determine the kind. The man gives the seed, the woman is like the field. [Meeker 1970:157]

It should be clear that men engender females as well as males.⁵ Women do contribute to the substance of a person and their capacity to do so is valued. However, it is substance that derives ultimately from males and is, in any case, temporal substance applicable only to this world. It does not carry the essential, eternal identity of a person, nor is it generative. As we shall see, that is the quality of seed that allies men with the creative ability of God. The theory of procreation is what I have called "monogenetic," for there is only one principle of generation.⁶

Although women's function is to provide the fertile soil, villagers more commonly use the word *field* to describe their role. This distinction helps to clarify the meaning. A field is not a field merely because it is cultivated. It is still a field whether the soil has just been turned, whether it is fallow, or about to be harvested. The important distinction between soil and field is that a field is enclosed or "covered" by ownership. Analogously, the female soil must be enclosed if a

man is to know unquestionably that the produce, that is, the child, is his own. I methods of "enclosure" will be taken up below. A woman's value, in Turk village society, therefore depends not so much on her fertility, her intrinsic nature but on whether she is able to guarantee the security of a man's seed. To focus women's reproductive potential as a valuable resource over which men compete as is argued in much of economic anthropology, Marxist or otherwise, is to miss this crucial point, and is analogous to missing the difference between soil a field. Fertility is not the primary issue, since all women are presumed fertile or proven otherwise. Similarly, if fertility were the most important issue one might expect less emphasis on the virginity and purity of women. The primary issue suggests, is a woman's ability to guarantee the seed of a particular man; it is the cause of this that she becomes valuable.

Within this construction of procreation, it is men who give the life, women merely give birth. It should be clear that a different construction of procreation would be associated with different values and different gender definitions. In that case, however, women are imagined as vessels through which life is made manifest. The life incorporated in seed is theoretically eternal, provided men produce sons to carry it down the generations. "A boy is the flame of the line, a girl is embers of a house." Seed is a kind of living torch that is passed from father to son, *ad ignitum*. *Salkile*, the Turkish word for patriline is, according to Rahma derived from Arabic and means reproductive semen. Rather than the spark that perpetuates the line, women are the fuel consumed in the process. If a man has no sons, it is said, *ocagi sönmüş*—his hearth has extinguished. It is a fate worse than death.

The penis is thus the generative organ, and it is an object of much attention. On ritual that concentrates and reinforces this is *şınaret* (circumcision) which, in Turkey, takes place between the ages of seven and twelve. *Şınaret* is considered the first test of manliness (see also Erdemir 1959:40). A boy who survives this ordeal without crying gains a sense of pride. Conversely, pride is focused on the penis. Pit-Rivers believes that the "private parts are the seat of shame . . . yet as means of procreation they are intimately connected with honor, for they signal the extension of self in time" (1968:505). There is confusion here because Pit-Rivers has not explored deeply enough the polarization of meaning of sexual difference in procreation. The female genitals, as we shall see, are the seat of shame precisely because they do not have the ability to perpetuate the self in time. In contrast, the penis, as source of the male's ability to do so, is a source of pride.

Much more than pride, however, is involved. One man pointing to his grandson's penis asked: "What is it that men can do that women can't?" The young boy answered correctly: "Go to the *camii*," that is, to the mosque. Vividly expressed, the penis was explicitly denoted as the ticket of admission to the realm of the sacred. The possession of this member seems to be what qualifies a person for full membership in the brotherhood of Islam. Male generativity and the secret are closely associated and mutually reinforced by such practices. But it is the theory of procreation that helps to illuminate the interrelations between "power, sex and religion, hierarchy, endogamy and the sacred . . . the three principles that come together in the notion of honor" (Pit-Rivers 1977:viii), all of which shall be taken up in the following sections.

Honor

Minimally, the value of males derives from the social perception of their ability to engender; it is the foundation upon which honor is built. At the same time, this understanding of procreation engenders an extreme anxiety about the "legitimacy" of a child. "Legitimacy" here means not so much that a child is the product of a legitimate marriage, but that he or she can be legitimately attributed to a particular man. The entire structure is precarious for it can be shaken by the behavior of women. In other words, the ability to generate seed is a source of pride for men; however, a man's honor depends on knowing that a child is from his own seed. This assurance entails the control of women.

Meeker, who also worked in Turkey, has suggested that honor is essentially concerned with the legitimacy of paternity (1976:264) but he did not draw out its specific meaning. The concepts of paternity and maternity are so taken for granted, so commonplace in our own culture, that their implicit meanings have not been examined. Closer inspection reveals that the meanings in our own culture are not so different from what they are in Turkey. Maternity is not the equivalent but obverse of paternity. The images and associations conjured up by the simple phrases: 'to father a child' and 'to mother a child' convey the semantic differences quite clearly. Despite the close connection between mother and child, maternity has been associated with giving birth and giving nurture, while contrary to the evidence of the senses, paternity has meant the creative, life-giving role. Paternity is overdetermined, and in proportion so too are the social measures constructed to ensure the legitimacy of paternity. These have ranged from infibulation and clitoridectomy, harem and eunuchs, veiling and seclusion, early marriage and even murder, to less dramatic but no less effective psychological restrictions. The practices vary from region to region and even within one region, and their logic must be worked out within each society. At a more general level, however, they can be interpreted as various methods to enclose the human fields, like earthly ones, in order that a man be assured that the produce is unambiguously his own. Not surprisingly, a threat to the boundaries of either field provokes a similar response. (A man's honor is, thus, related to his power to protect the inviolability of what is his.)

Shame

Women, on the contrary, are, by their created nature, already ashamed; the recognition of their constitutional inferiority constitutes the feeling of shame. Shame is an inevitable part of being female; a woman is honorable if she remains cognizant of this fact and its implications for behavior, and she is shameless if she forgets it. A man's birthright is honor; he can lose it if he cannot protect the boundaries of "his" women. At the most reduced level, the boundary of a woman is her hymen. It is reserved for and is the possession of the husband. In breaking it, he possesses the woman. Once broken, only he can come and go as he pleases, as he, but no one else, may enter his fields with ease. If the boundary of what is his has been penetrated or broken by someone else, he is put in the position of a woman and is therefore shamed.⁷ Thus, male honor is vulnerable through women. Women's constitutional inferiority is attributed to a number of interrelated factors. Woman was created second. In the Garden, Eve's act of disobedience

against Allah and her inability to resist the temptations of Satan are thought to have brought *pislik* into the world. *Pislik* means dirtiness, but here refers to metabolic processes such as urination, sweating, and defecation that signify the mutability, corruption, and decay of earthly life as opposed to eternal life. In addition, women were given menstruation to signify their deeper immersion in and identification with earthly life. While menstruation heralds the possibility of life in this world, it is also a primary symbol of mortality.⁸ Menstruation is often regarded as the stigma of female impurity, a mark of inferiority and therefore shame. For example, Saadawi, an Egyptian physician speaking of her own experience but reflecting on that of the women she treats, says, "I was led to understand that in me there was something degrading which appeared regularly in the form of this impure blood, and that it was something to be ashamed of, to hide from others" (1980:45). At the same time, it must be noted that although women appear to accept the tenets of the dominant ideology, they do not have wholly negative views concerning menstruation. It is felt that it is a cleansing process that rids the body of accumulated impurities and leaves the womb an immaculate ground for the reception of seed.

In any case, the feeling of shame goes much deeper than menstruation. Women's shame, I suggest, is related to the theory of procreation in which she does not have the seeds of honor within her. That is, she lacks the power to create and project herself, she lacks a core of identity and autonomy, the possession of which is, according to Pit-Rivers, the essence of honor (1968:506). A woman is not self-contained, her personal boundaries are diffuse and permeable, and these physical attributes take on moral qualities. The belief that female intelligence is thought to be less sharp than the male's suggests that she lacks the proper equipment to discern the ambiguities of life; her emotional lability makes her less able to discern the boundaries between right and wrong. Women's shamefulness is basically a kind of indiscriminate fecundity which can only be redeemed by constraining and putting limits around it.

Sex and Marriage

McMerriss (1975), among others, has argued that female sexuality in the Middle East is viewed as inherently insatiable and therefore needs to be restrained. However, this does not accurately capture village views. There, female sexuality is not so much insatiable, if indeed, women can be said to have a potent or agential sexuality of their own, but rather that it is indiscriminate. Left to herself, it is believed that a woman has no resistance, she is open to men. The externally imposed restraints are felt to be her only shield. For example it is believed that if a man and woman are alone together for more than twenty minutes they have had intercourse, and this constitutes reason for divorce. It is not just that the woman has been overpowered by the man or her own desires, but that she is thought to have no power of discretion or resistance. Thus, she must not be in a position where she is unprotected. "Independent, or unprotected women proclaim themselves defiled or defiable" (Douglass 1984:248). As one neighbor explained to me: "Women are as easily seduced as Eve was by Satan in *Cenzer* (Paradise)." It is because women are thought to be so vulnerable, so open to persuasion, that they must be socially closed or covered.

Ideally, women should be enclosed in the house, but women's enclosure is also expressed by the voluminous clothing they wear and especially by the headscarf.

Female genitals, unlike the male's, are not a source of pride but a reminder of her shame. Instead, the focus of female sexuality is displaced to the head. A girl's luxuriant hair, symbolic of the entanglements by which men are ensnared, must be controlled. Around the age of menarche when sexuality ripens, it must be enclosed. The headscarf, which a girl dons at this time, covers and binds her hair and symbolically binds her sexuality, which is henceforth under the protection of her father and brothers until transferred to her husband upon marriage.

Marriage, as sexuality, is also under the overt control of men, though the covert negotiations are made by women. Marriages are arranged between the parents of the girl and boy, though it is unlikely today that a girl would be forced to marry a particular boy against her will. While the thought of an arranged marriage is greeted with horror by most American women, it does have the advantage, not often recognized, of leaving the girl (and to a lesser extent, the boy) emotionally free; she is not so identified with her choice. Under the mantle of men most women live full and satisfactory lives, and develop strong personalities quite separate from men. They are not isolated separately in their homes as are middle-class American women in suburbia. Instead, houses are the realm of women; there is much visiting back and forth and sharing of work and companionship. That is to say, these constraints and restrictions are not necessarily felt as such by women in the village. They are simply part of the accepted way of life. A girl who is not properly covered or about whom there are rumors of promiscuity loses her chances of marriage, if not her life. While no "murder of passion" occurred in the village, the newspapers frequently reported such cases. The "passion," it must be noted, is not that of love but of jealousy aroused because the male's right of "possession" has been usurped.

Most girls want to marry since it is the only means of achieving something like a social identity. Through marriage her existence is socially acknowledged; unmarried women are socially invisible.¹⁰ Thus, most women participate in their own seclusion. A woman who wears the headscarf indicates she is *kephir* (covered, closed), whereas a woman who walks about *egrik* (open, uncovered) is felt to be openly inviting advances from men and is considered common property. This was made strikingly clear to me by villagers' remarks that men who allow women to go about *egrik* must be communists, for they believe the latter to hold both land and women in common. (Note that the communist is assumed to be male.) This state of affairs is anathema to villagers, for it would confuse both the source of and the rights to the produce.

Sex is said to take place inside the woman but outside the man. "The innate vulnerability of women—defined in terms of their ability to be physically penetrated—is commonly cited to explain and justify their strict surveillance" (Giovannini 1981:411). But the surveillance and control of women involves much more than the capacity to be penetrated; it is related to the entire theory of procreation. Since seed carries the essential identity of a man, it leaves an indelible imprint which no amount of washing can erase. A woman who has sexual relations with any man other than her husband becomes physically polluted, and through her, her husband's honor is stained. She becomes permanently defiled, while a man, since he receives nothing from a woman is not so defiled" (Engelbreksson 1978:137). It is sometimes assumed, retrospectively, that a woman who has had a series of miscarriages or given birth to a deformed child, has been defiled.

A woman's value is related to her noncontamination by men. The slight shadow of a doubt causes suspicions about the security of a man's seed. Social intercourse between unrelated men and women is almost equivalent to sexual infidelity after marriage. The social recognition of a woman's purity, however, depends on and is exhibited by the men under whose protection she is. In the extraordinary case of the sultan and his harem of concubines, the control of fidelity was managed by the institution of eunuch guards who provided the assurance that the virgin fields were plowed only by the Sultan. In this way, he could be certain that the children were his. On a less exalted plane, legitimacy of paternity is assured by monogamy for women.

Endogamy

Given that monogamy, at least for women, is entailed by the theory of procreation, the question arises as to why there is a preference for and a practice of endogamy. This is another theoretical issue that has preoccupied the anthropologist in this area. It is my belief that this too is intimately related to the honor/shame complex, which is grounded in the theory of procreation. Although it is generally assumed that marriage is for the purpose of legitimate procreation, rarely has particular theory of procreation been examined for the light it sheds on specific marriage practices. In the literature on endogamy in Mediterranean-Middle Eastern societies, the focus has been almost exclusively on patrilineal parallel cousin marriage, more commonly referred to as father's brother's daughter marriage (FBD). Indeed, calling it FBD misplaces the emphasis; father's brother's son (FBS) marriage would more accurately reflect the desire, expressed by all villagers, of keeping daughters within the group (see also Pitt-Rivers 1977:161 Bourdieu 1977:4; and Antoun 1968:693). In any case, patrilineal parallel cousin marriage accounts neither for most marriages nor for the more widespread practice of endogamy. Various explanations have been put forth about how that type of marriage helps to consolidate groups for political purposes or to keep land in the group (see Keyser 1974, for a review of this discussion). While it may serve these functions in some societies, it did not do so in the village where I worked. Patrilineal parallel cousin marriage is, I suggest, an exemplar of the more pervasive symbolic logic of sexuality, that is, the culturally perceived notions of male, female and procreation that are epitomized in honor and shame.

Those women whose purity a man can be most assured of are those who are closest—namely the daughters of relatives or fellow villagers. Secondly, I believe the practice of endogamy expresses a desire to keep the human fields and the fruit of thereof, as earthly ones, for the benefit of the group. It is not that women inherit land (which they rarely do), but that women are land. Both are sources of sustenance for the perpetuation of the group, both have been cultivated and the fruit of this labor are to be kept within the group. Endogamy ensures this and patrilineal parallel cousin marriage is the most perfect expression. Marriage between patrilineal parallel cousins is an attempt neither to alienate the female field nor to have an *et* (alien, outsider) as mother of the children; in this case both the seed and field have come from the same source.

In the narrowest sense, then, the group is the patrilineal kin. However, the same logic persists, albeit in widening circles of inclusion, until the boundary of the

village group is reached.¹² Of forty-one marriages that took place while I was in the village, all were endogamous. Half were with relatives, a quarter with first cousins equally distributed, and the rest were with fellow villagers. The same pattern of marriages held for other years of which I was able to obtain records. It is as inconceivable for a villager to give a daughter to an outsider as it would be to give away a field; the alienation of either would diminish the livelihood and honor of the group. The honor of the group is enhanced by its ability to retain and increase its reproductive and productive resources for its own use.¹³

Because of the practice of endogamy for generations, villagers see the village as an interrelated and integrated group, as one body in relation to all others and symbolically female. Access to it is limited and under surveillance. The village, like a woman, is perceived as *kapalı* (closed, covered) and *temiz* (clean and pure), as opposed to the cities (as well as Europe and America) which are *gık* (open), *pis* (dirty) and *bulasık* (tainted, contaminated). Those who protect and represent the honor and integrity of the village are men. In other words, the notions of honor and shame, grounded in the sexual nature of male and female, also apply to the way the house, village, and even the nation, are perceived. A transgression against the boundaries of any of these culturally discrete but homologous entities is an affront to the sense of honor of those whose duty it is to protect them. Endogamy itself is only one expression of the wider system in which it is embedded. As villagers say: "By thinking about procreation, one learns the order and meaning of Creation."

Creation: Monotheism

Intimate activities thus speak to ultimate realities. Procreation, it must be stressed, is not just the fact of physiological reproduction, but the way it is symbolized and understood. Nor can it be confined only to the symbolism of gender and the relation between the sexes, for it is felt to contain in microcosm something fundamental about the macrocosm.

The seed-soil theory of procreation encompasses the way both birth and death are conceived. While children are greatly desired, especially sons, and procreation is what male and female were created for, birth itself is a somewhat shameful affair. The entrance to life in this world is through the female genitals, which, as we have seen, are the seat of shame. But the shamefulness of birth must also be understood in relation to the second and higher order birth which is death.¹⁴ The body buried in the earth's soil is likened to seed in the womb. After a brief period of incubation, it is born into the other world (*öbür dünya*). In this cosmological system the material, unregenerate, and eventually perishable aspects of life and women associated with it are devalued in relation to and encompassed by the creativity and spiritual essence of men and God. It is not a relation of opposition and duality, for that would imply separate but potentially equal status; instead, it is a relation of hierarchy, dominance, and encompassment. As the world is dependent on and encompassed by God, so too are women dependent on and encompassed by men. In this world men are God's representatives.

Villagers say: "A man is the second god after Allah." The creative ability of men is compared to God. Allah is author of the world; men in their procreative roles are authors of children, and it is from this that their authority derives.

In monotheistic religions, there is not a god and goddess whose sacred marriage brings forth the world, as in ancient Near Eastern traditions. Instead, Genesis¹⁵ inscribes the revelation that there is only one principle of creation, manifested on the human and divine planes, and only one god. The transformation from polytheism, in which the chief deity may be male, to monotheism is not merely mathematical, a reduction in numbers. It is a radical difference in kind. It is not just that there is only one God, but that divinity itself is creativity and potency and is defined as masculine. Women are perceived as lacking this power and ability. Women may be revered, as in the adoration of Mary, but it is precisely for the absence of potency-generativity. She is revered for her virginal and maternal qualities, that is, for her purity, success, mercy, self-effacement, and as the vehicle through which divinity was made manifest. She is the reification of the female role in these systems. She is not revered for her creativity and perpetuation of self, nor for putting her stamp on things. God created things, Adam named them, and men give identity to persons. Although the more emotionally conspicuous forms of worship may sometimes camouflage the structure of patriarchal authority, they do not cancel or deny the existence of such a structure.

The male role in procreation is felt to reflect, on the finite level, God's power in creating the world. Between notions of conception and conception of the deity, a whole world is constructed according to similar principles. Creativity is a continuum in the male line. Because of the symbolic alliance between men and God, men partake of divine power so that their dominance seems natural and ordained in the order of things. At the same time, a structural and symbolic association between women and the earth is established: both are perceived as created material. Rather than creative beings, women are the soil or raw material, like the earth, to be utilized for the creations of men. Both the earth and women are fields to be explored and controlled; both are fields from which the products are abstracted and appropriated and used as tokens in the game of honor. Wealth, I suggest, is a kind of symbolic currency, the evidence of generative power. It is not the cause, but the manifestation, of honor.

Mongogenesis and monotheism are two aspects of the same thing—an ideology that contributes to and supports men's superiority in all things social. The value of both men and women lies not in what they do but in what, culturally speaking, they are (cf. Peristiany 1974 [1966]:189; DuBois 1979 [1974]:100 ff.). What they are depends on their perceived role in procreation.

Conclusion

In summary, I am suggesting that in the lands that gave birth to monotheism, that is, the Fertile Crescent, procreation was already a source for the generation and expression of significant symbols by which the world was perceived, ordered, and reproduced. Monotheism continued the focus but changed the meaning radically. In turn, the embodiment of these symbols in the cosmological systems of monotheism perpetuates and legitimates male dominance and authority. At the same time, the honor/shame complex is not just a function of male dominance and authority. Rather it is a distinctive system in which power, sex, and the sacred are interrelated and seen to be rooted in the vertices of biology. The "truth" of biology is, in this case, the particular (and peculiar) theory of mongogenesis.

While the symbols of seed and soil may be used to describe the process of procreation in other parts of the world, one cannot assume identical meaning a priori.

It is necessary, says Lévi-Strauss, "to know the role which each culture gives them within its own system of significances" (1973:54). What is significant in this context is that they are utilized to portray a monogenetic theory of procreation that is consonant with monotheism.

While there are great differences between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the essential, central, and shared belief is that there is only one God who is Creator and who is implicitly or explicitly male. This is the pillar of faith on which all three monotheisms are staked and why attempts to change theological language, imagery, and institutions have met with such resistance. The cultures around the Mediterranean are united as much as separated by religion. As Muslims say: "They are all people of the Book." What they mean by this is that they all trace their common ancestry to Abraham, to whom God gave the covenant: "I shall multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand upon the seashore" (Genesis 22:17).

From the shores of the Mediterranean these seeds have scattered far and wide, yet wherever they have taken root some notion of honor and shame has been the offshoot. Surely these were the terms in which the relation between the sexes was perceived and discussed during my own adolescence in the 1950s.¹⁶ The difference was one of degree, not kind. The intense degree to which they remain in force in the Mediterranean area is certainly related to the political economy, social structure, education, and ecology of that area. These are not negligible factors, but are conditional rather than determinative. The significance and interrelationships between these analytically separate fields are, I believe, organized, animated, and reproduced at the symbolic level.

In this article, I have attempted to show how the specific theory of procreation is the key to unlocking the relations between the sexes that are encoded in notions of honor and shame. But, like Pandora's box, many other issues, unforeseen and unmanageable in the limits of this paper, have been released. The seed-soil theory of procreation has a generative logic that relates to far more than the small field of Mediterranean anthropology. But into this somewhat dry and unyielding soil, I hope I have been able to contribute a drop of a seminal thought to quicken the discussion!

Notes

¹⁶Duboulay (1979), Pitt-Rivers (1977), and Gilmore (1983; this volume) give sex and gender relations a more primary place, but their analyses do not examine the way gender definitions inhere in and are constructed within the whole theory of procreation.

¹⁷The night I was finally settled in my own house in the village was the night the military took control of the government (September 12, 1980) after which all overt political activity was forbidden. Nevertheless, sex and religion are such intimate aspects of politics, the salient terms and issues in which formal political activity are cast are revealed by an examination of the micro-politics of everyday life in which honor and shame are integral parts.

¹⁸One could, of course, argue that within the political economy of the nation as a whole, villagers constitute a particular class.

¹⁹It is interesting to note the way sterility is differentially described for male and female. Males are impotent versus potent, females are barren versus fertile; one implies agency and power, the other a passive capacity.

²⁰But the seed that engenders females has often been thought to be deformed or deficient. The theory that it is the male who contributes the generative and formal principle is as old as Aristotle. Galen held that the male as well as the female contributed substance, but male substance was still held to be generative and formative.

¹This "monogenetic" theory of procreation is exemplified also in Aeschylus' drama *The Eumenides*, which states: "The mother is not the parent of that which is called her child, but only the nurse of the new planted seed." The parent is really the one who gives the seed (i.e., the male). One might also wonder whether the transformation of the Eriyases, who average crimes done to a mother, into the Eumenides, maidens of the hearth in a patriarchal household, are not also a sign of change of notions of procreation. See also Harris 1973.

²A man becomes shamed because he is no longer symbolically a man. Similarly, the passive homosexual is the most shameful, not so much because of homosexuality, but because he has allowed himself to be put in the position of a woman.

³These ideas are more fully discussed in my paper "Mortal Flow: Menstruation in Turkish Village Society."

⁴Mary Douglas's notion that the body is a rich source of symbols has been a rich source for theoretical elaboration. I cannot, however, agree with her that the "body is a model which can stand for any bounded system" (1966: 15), for the female body in Turkish perception is one that is relatively unbounded. In other words, I believe that the meaning and definition of the body as well as the parts focused upon are themselves cultural constructions. In addition, all cultures make distinctions between bodies that are female and bodies that are male, and each type of body has different meanings and may even be related to the concept of bodiliness differently. For example, in our own and Turkish culture, the female body is more associated with and represents corporality more than the male. Thus to speak of bodiliness in general terms misses the crucial point.

⁵Women are concealed linguistically as their bodies are by their beqey clothes, veils, and seclusion in the house. When you ask someone how many children they have, the answer is usually given only in terms of boys. Similarly, the population of the village is given in terms of *kane*, usually glossed as household, but which means the number of married men, for there can be several *hane* within one household complex. In a general sense, women are always socially invisible; they never achieve full social identity as men do, but marriage provides the closest approximation.

⁶This statement must be qualified somewhat. Although intercourse is forbidden during menstruation, that doesn't mean it never occurs. A man who has intercourse with a menstruating woman becomes temporarily defiled. However, he can be purified by performing an *aptes* (ritual ablution). While a woman must also perform an *aptes* after intercourse, she will not be purified if she had intercourse with a man other than her husband.

⁷The boundary of the village group does not necessarily coincide with its physical boundaries. Villagers also marry relatives and fellow villagers who have moved to town.

⁸In this case, villagers control and benefit from their own resources, the relation between their labor and its fruits is direct. When this relation is severed, as it is among the wage-earning working class, men are then structurally and symbolically in the position of women. They control neither resources nor their labor; instead they are controlled. This, it seems to me, helps to understand why workers in Spain talk of themselves in terms of shame rather than honor. If a bull can be symbolically female in a bullfight, as Douglas (1984) cogently argues, then surely physical men can be symbolic women, as in the case of the passive partner in a homosexual relationship. At the symbolic level there is no contradiction.

⁹In Christianity, the second birth is baptism, which has different consequences for orientation in life. Nonetheless, physical birth from women, in both Christianity and Islam, is devalued in relation to the spiritual second birth.

¹⁰Islam, for Muslims, is not a separate religion, but the one true religion given in the beginning. The stories of Genesis are incorporated in the Koran and Islamic traditions.

¹¹Too was taught the seed-soil theory of procreation, and I continue to hear it being used today. Although the ovum was discovered in 1826, its function was not understood until genetic theory was fully developed, knowledge of which did not become widespread in this country until the mid-twentieth century. I do not mean to imply that biology gives meaning, but since our notions of gender are so tied to biology, however conceived, changes in the understanding of biology are bound to affect gender definition. Rather than vessels for the male's seed, women learned that they are co-creators of a child. And, I believe, this awareness is closely related to women's demands for, among other inter-related things, reproductive autonomy.

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