

## KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

### **Kinship:**

Kinship studies were initiated by an American lawyer, Lewis Henry Morgan, who lived in western New York State. He was intrigued by the kinship system of the Iroquois Indians and with their extended forms of kinship terminologies which allowed brothers and sisters and extended cousins of the same generation to be labeled as “father” or “mother” by a child of the succeeding generation.

### **Descent and Inheritance:**

Marriage establishes affinal relationships between the kin, or “consanguines” of the wife and those of her groom. *Affines* are thus people who are married to our *consanguines*. Consanguines are those who are related to us in a “kin” like way, or through blood. “Kinship” is defined as the network of relationships created by genealogical connections, and by social ties *modeled on* the “natural” relations of genealogical parenthood.

In many societies, the ideal result of the union of marriage is children and a posterity. Children from marriage represent social, as well as physical, continuity and collateral. Their identity is henceforth bound up with those of their parents, family, lineage, and so forth. Children will be recognized as members of a specific “descent” group. Descent refers to social recognition of a common parent or ancestor. Sometimes the actual relations are known and emphasized; other relations, or fictive kinship, base their behaviors on the model of descent even though there may not be any actual blood ties. By a convenient fiction, persons are transformed into kinsfolk and assimilated within the community’s common ancestry. Since they are treated like kin, they become kin in a real sense.

### **Patrilineal Descent:**

Patrilineal descent is present when rules of identity and inheritance state that a child belongs to his or her father’s clan. This means that all offspring of a man belong to his clan, as he belonged to his father’s clan. A daughter belongs to her father’s clan; but her children do not. The belong to the clan of their father.

One well-known example is the **Tallensi**.

1. Every Tallensi belongs to his or her father’s patrilineal descent group (sometimes called a “corporate group,” or corporation.)
2. All political and religious rights are obtained are transmitted through the patrilineage.
3. A man must marry a woman from another patrilineage.
4. Members of many patrilineages recognize a common ancestor. When a sacrifice is made to the ancestor, persons from these lineages are entitled and sometimes obliged to attend.

5. Persons of the same patrilineage are obliged to hold certain economic and religious responsibilities toward one another. They share unique ties of kinship which bind them together in ways which are not found among non-kin. Thus, Fortes has called kinship the “axiom of amity.” (Similar to Frost’s “Hired Hand:” ... “Home is a place, where when you go there, they have to take you in.”)

### **Matrilineal Descent:**

In matrilineal societies, a child belongs to the clan of his or her mother and not that of the father. This kind of descent and inheritance is found among the Asante of West Africa, the Trobrianders of Melanesia, and the Navajo Indians of N.A. Among the Trobrianders, the continuity of the clan is not through a man’s own children but through those of his sister. When descent is traced through the mother’s lineage, or matriliney, the men nevertheless monopolize all the positions of power; a man’s closest relative is his sister and his most immediate heir and successor is her son. In such systems, therefore, the maternal uncle serves as more of an authority figure than does a child’s own father. Even marriages are considered weaker or less important than the perpetuation of the ties of the matrilineage. Within such marriages, men possess few rights, beyond general sexual access to their wives; and within such families, men own few obligations to their wives and their own children. In Asante, marriage is even regarded as somewhat of a necessary inconvenience; and in-laws are considered to be somewhat of a menace. Traditional Asante households, at least during the first years of marriage, have the wife and her brother(s) under one roof. The woman’s husband maintains his own household nearby. He visits his children from time to time, and gives them minor gifts. But his real allegiance is to his sisters’ children. They will inherit from him. After a few years, if the marriage survives, the husband and wife will eventually co-habit under one roof. By then the identity of the children is firmly established within the matrilineage. Needless to say, Asante marriages are hardly stable and do not often last long.

### **Marriage and Forms of Alliance:**

Assuming that unions between the closest kin are excluded by incest prohibitions, there are basically three possibilities:

1. One can marry whom one likes.
2. One must marry *outside* one’s own immediate group.
3. One must marry *inside* one’s own immediate group.

How the group is defined and constructed varies from society to society. The second approach (out-marriage or exogamy) is common when the members of a group are already strongly united and feel little need for further social integration. Lineages and clans are often, though not always, fiercely exogamous, taking brides from those considered to be non-kin, and even enemies. Where this is the case, in-marriage is discouraged by a definition of incest that precludes marriage within the group. Incest is regarded with an almost universal disgust and

repudiation throughout the world. The incest taboo both prohibits sexual partners and promotes out-marriage. Denial of marriage and sexual access to women of one's group makes them available as partners to males of another group.

Where marriage within the community is strongly valued, making out-marriage prohibited, is endogamy. This principle applies to the various divisions of the Indian caste system, and to various religious groups, including Mormons. In the caste system, the rigid purity of a particular caste is preserved by marrying within the caste; although an infinite number of sub-castes makes marrying "up" or marrying "down" a routine possibility. These practices are known as hypergamy and hypogamy, respectively. Many Muslim societies of the Middle-East follow a less exacting forms of endogamy, strongly favoring marriage between the sons and daughters of brothers (known as patrilateral cousin marriage). This preference is sometimes so great that a man possesses a right to marry his father's brother's daughter. Such a daughter is not free to marry another suitor unless all such males have renounced their claim on her.

Other rules regarding marriage concern numbers of spouses. Most societies like our own practice **monogamy**, or one spouse. However, in the U.S., a noted alteration on monogamy is serial monogamy, in which persons have a succession of spouses. This is due to the frequency of divorce and remarriage. No state legally allows more than one spouse at a time. But some people have numerous spouses, one after the other.

There are a handful of different kinds of **polygamy**, or plural spouses. **Polygyny** refers to plural wives. When sisters are involved, the term used is **soral polygyny**. Polygyny was common in the Old Testament, and was practiced by Jacob and others.

Much more rare than polygyny is the practice of **polyandry**. This refers to the marriage of one woman to several more than one man. When brothers are involved, the term used is **adelphic** or **fraternal polyandry**. Today, among ethnic Tibetans in northwest Nepal, the ideal form of marriage is fraternal polyandry. The oldest brother in this case is the senior husband, and is regarded as the father of all the children, even though he is not likely the real biological father.

### **Marriage Transactions:**

In many societies, marriage is somewhat of an exchange. In small scale societies, the reproductive capacities and domestic services of women are recognized and acknowledged at marriage by the transfer of property. When payment of goods, usually cattle or other domestic animals, is passed from the husband's kin to the wife's kin, this transaction is known as **bridewealth**. Many societies in Africa recognize cattle as the preferred form of bridewealth. The Bantu have a saying, "Cattle beget children;" which means that cattle are given in bridewealth for a sister who will provide children — another form of status and "wealth in people" — to the lineage of her husband.

### **Residence:**

**Neolocal** residence: The newly married couple forms a new independent household, with no residential affiliation to either the groom's family or the bride's family. This is common in America and in northern Europe. Societies with **bilocal** residence requires the new couple to live with either the groom's family or the bride's family. Bilocal residence is found on Dobu Islands near New Guinea and Borneo in Indonesia.

**Virilocal** residence: This common form of residence is where the newly married couple go to live in the household of the groom's parents. This helps to incorporate to some degree the new bride among the groom's kin. Virilocal marriage is common throughout the Mediterranean, especially North Africa, and in many places in tropical Africa.

## Religion

How is religion defined? What is religious practice and experience?

### Some definitions:

What if we said that religion was whatever involves a stated belief in spirits, gods, or mystical entities of some sort? With this definition, however, there are two problems.

1) The first is that the anthropologist Rodney Needham of Oxford tried to apply and translate the word “belief” into the religious language of the people in Indonesia with whom he lived for some time. Needham claimed that there was no equivalent in their language for our concept of religious belief.

2) The second problem deals with what may be viewed as entities of a existence which is not part of this everyday world.

What is called “**religion**” may therefore look very different from one society to another. There may be an emphasis on religious belief, on religious practices such as certain kinds of rituals, or an emphasis on shared emotions. For our purposes we will consider religion as “an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings.” This definition was originally given, in part, by E.B. Tylor a Oxford 100 years ago; and it has been reiterated by current scholars such as Jack Goody, Robin Horton and Mel Spiro.

### Pollution and Purity:

Many religions stipulate not just things people should do, such as sacrifice and ritual, but also things they should not do: eating certain foods, wearing certain clothes, coming into contact with people of other religions or of lower status, etc. Prohibitions and “taboos” are some of the most fundamental aspects of religion, in part because they distinguish and often socially separate, persons of different religions. They bring religious life into everyday social existence by restricting, sanctioning and prohibiting social interactions and behaviors.

Proscriptions and taboos regarding food and clothing are common aspects of many religions. They often served to keep distinct and apart people and things deemed to be importantly different: men and women, impure people (menstruating women, unclean men) and pure people, high and low-status people, meat and milk products, etc. Rules about food — what to eat, when to eat it, with whom to eat it — are of central importance in many religions.

In the religions of the Middle East (Islam, Judaism, Christianity), meals serve as key symbols of religious affiliation and as a means through which religious acts are carried out. During the Passover Seder, the house must be cleansed of all leaven; throughout Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, Muslims may not partake of food from sun-up to sun-down; and the importance

of the Last Supper of Jesus is conveyed over and over in the tokens of his body and blood taken in forms of communion or sacrament in many Christian religions. Often, the individual forsakes food for a period in order to obtain a higher level of religious purity. Eating together is a primary means of achieving peace everywhere. Comensality implies harmony and unity. One does not eat with unequals or with whom there is social discord. On the other hand, feasts in New Guinea people “fight with food,” seeking to outdo each other in the ability to host a big feast or moka.

The Abominations of Leviticus: Mary Douglas has argued that prohibiting certain foods was a way of carving up the natural world into the pure and the impure, and thereby creating a model for thinking about the purity of the Divine. In fact, many Biblical prohibitions are of things that are partial, maimed, or blemished. Animals being sacrificed must not have a blemish; no one who has a physical defect may become a priest; even fields should be sown with only one kind of seed, etc. Prohibitions on food thus represent a means of creating order within the theology of the times. Certain animals served as models of the divine order. Cattle and sheep were most familiar; and the law stated that these animals represented orderliness. Beasts lacking the characteristics of these animals were considered disorderly. Thus, pigs, camels and other animals were impure. Other prohibitions also have to do with species that fall outside of three main categories of animals: those that fly in the air with wings, those that swim in the water with fins and scales, and those that walk or hop on the land with four legs. A comprehensive reading is given in Leviticus and in Deuteronomy.

Douglas claims that the Biblical focus on order, makes the dietary rules “like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity, and completeness of God.” Religion is thus a means of figuring out man’s place within nature. To understand pollution ideas and taboos is to comprehend the cultural notions of dirt. Dirt is a “by-product of the systematic ordering and classification of matter.” Thus, Douglas claims that taboos — “ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating, and punishing transgressions” — have as their primary function to impose order on an inherently untidy world.

### **Ritual and Rites of Passage:**

In all societies people mark transitions or life stages by carrying out certain “transition rituals” or “rites of passage.” These rituals often contain a religious dimension; and they usually center on critical points in a person’s life: birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Passage into adulthood often involves endowing a person with a new identity or social status (passing out of Moran as noted for Maasai and Samburu). Death rituals are meant to transfer the non-material remains of the person to another kind of existence in a supernatural realm. Thus, at the end of the funeral mass for Princess Diana, the clergy spoke to the spirit by declaring it to “leave this world peacefully,” and to “depart” into an eternal world.

The word **ritual**, and its synonym “rites,” has been used by a variety of scholars in a variety of ways. Here, ritual may be considered as social action; its performance requires the organized cooperation of individuals, directed by leaders. Rules define which individuals should

participate and on what occasions. Ritual performance also is social in that it must follow proscribed patterns, including bodily movements, words, the use of colors, singing, prayer, and so forth. While changes in ritual do occur, there is a general consideration that the structure of ritual is fixed. Also, where ritual is performed, it is considered morally and socially necessary that it must take place.

Ritual performances, or rites, are directed toward achieving some result. It may be general, such as peace and tranquility, or specific, such as the healing of a sick child. The relation between ends and means in ritual is usually described by contrasting it with what has been called rational or technical action.

The first phase is characterized by the stripping away of the initial state, a kind of separation of the person from the ordinary social environment. It may involve rites to purify the body, seclusion, cutting hair, or acting as if dead. This phase often recognizes a natural event such as death or puberty. It may create a peer group and define a geographic space, such as the *moran* village among Samburu young men. This phase also often involves an exchange of clothing and the assignment of a new identity as with a name.

Then comes a stage of marginality, the transitional or *liminal* (“threshold”) stage during which the person is outside of normal social life. The liminal person may have to observe certain taboos, or be isolated, or be subjected to beatings and insults, or be elevated to temporary high status.

1. Radical transformation: (in manhood rituals in New Guinea, the young initiate is beaten by older boys; he comes out of the ritual with a new social and psychological identity).
2. Rebellion: (during liminality initiates experience a time of “anti-status” or “anti-structure” in which the normal distinctions of society are turned on their head, sometimes mocked and ridiculed, and even threatened to be destroyed. Outside of ritual this is witnessed in such events as Halloween or Carnival.)
3. *Communitas*: (liminality is a period in which all initiates have all things in common — a sort of shared existence. It is said that they are “betwixt and between” the normal rungs and statuses of society. Outside of ritual *communitas* is experienced in the Islamic Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca. During this time of pilgrimage, Sunnis and Shi Muslims - otherwise unable to sit in the same cafe together without quarreling or fighting — and men and women (otherwise highly stratified) are found parading together, wearing the same clothing and circling the great Ka’ba.

A third phase, aggregation or integration, ends the ritual. It represents the reintegration of the person back into social life. A girl may have become a woman, or a boy a man; a candidate is now a king; the loose soul of a dead man takes up its place in heaven.

Ritual removes the person from everyday life and provides time for people to define the event and its consequences; to transform the person in body, mind, and status, and then to define the new state — as fertile woman, or a soul proceeding to the world of the dead. Moreover, in those

sequences or changes in life which are expected, the liminal stage provides the setting for a dramatization of the individual's recasting into a new form, a statement that the old has passed and the new is born.

An elaborate example of rites of passage performed for an anticipated event is *chisungu*, a female initiation ceremony done publicly among the Bemba of Zambia. The expressed purpose of *chisungu* is to change girls into women, not merely by teaching them songs and dances, and showing them sacred emblems, but by transforming them in the course of the ritual experience. Overt emphasis of the rites is placed on marriage, a woman's responsibilities, her subservience to her husband, to senior women and all others in authority. The rituals are opened by the headman of the village but men play only a minor role. Audrey Richards noted that the full ritual is long, taking four weeks to complete in 1931. She was told that formerly it lasted several months, the rites intermingling with visits from kin, feasts and dancing. During this time, the girls remained as ritual initiates, learning about marriage, motherhood, and other features of socialization such as the power of men within the matrilineage, the role of chiefly authority in village life and some aspects of cosmology of mystical importance. A particular rite, called "begging for parenthood," displays these associations.

An important stage in the ceremony had now been reached — the lighting of the new fire. This might be described as the first of the rites of aggregation. The senior "father's sister" of one of the girls, wrinkled and bent with rheumatism, danced to the company and then lay down on her back. Nangoshye picked up the firestick and started twirling it round in the groove on the old woman's thigh, telling the two girl novices to copy her afterwards. Then the two old women set out to make fire in earnest. Women do not commonly make fire among the Bemba. The work needs skill and practice as well as considerable strength. The two old women rubbed the firestick in turns, sweating and groaning with the effort. The company swayed to and fro, moaning the *chisungu* fire songs:

We have come to get fire  
Lion we beg it of you

and

Scratch scratch (the grating of the firesticks)  
How many children have you born?

When at last the tinder caught fire it was greeted with relieved clapping. The father's sister plays the leading part in the ceremony and it is she who by tradition influences the fertility of the girl.

The interpretation of the songs was given as follows: the sticks are rubbed on the back of the girl's father's sister who can give or withhold parenthood (she represents the father's clan); the girl is told that she owes fire to the older woman whose hands ache from the rubbing; she must take over now. She must take her turn at the bearing of the children now; the lion is the bridegroom, the chief or the male principal throughout the ceremony; the bridegroom is begged



for fire. The whole rite is called “begging for parenthood.”

Bemba marriage is exogamous outside the clan. These statements of marriage thus also reenforce inter-clan alliances established through the exchange of sisters as marriageable women. The concern of girl’s initiation rites with marriage and maternity is thus not only a concern with reproduction. It is also a dramatic enactment of the moral order of society.

### **Symbolism:**

Religions involve actions, ideas, and rules, but they also provide images and symbols around which religious activity centers and coalesces. Objects and images have great power when endowed with mystical forces. For example, the Asmat of Irian Jaya, the western half of New Guinea, taking the heads of victims in war recreates mystical powers of the cosmos. Taking a head reenacts a sacrifice made at the beginning of time. In a widely told story, a being who was both god and man killed his brother and cut off his head, and when he did so he immediately caused the universe to come into existence, and all of culture along with it. Taking a head thus caused life to emerge because it is regarded that the skulls of the dead help bring about new birth. Men would often sleep on or near the skulls of wartime enemies claiming that they absorb something of the deceased’s power at night.

### **Witchcraft:**

Witchcraft involves people who by their very bodily or spiritual composition seek to harm others. Witches are people within the community; often they harm only persons who are immediate kin, such as in Asante only within the matrilineage. They typically attack out of envy, spit, or greed; but also, in recent times, witches are persons whose financial and material success is known to outdo others persons of the lineage or community. Thus, recent studies have linked witchcraft in Africa to money, commodities, financial well-being and, earlier in this century, to the rise of a middle class where persons consumed European goods on a conspicuous level. In fact, Apter has recently argued that the rise of the *Atinga* witch-finding cult in Yoruba was financed mostly by men who intended to direct accusations of witchcraft toward those women who were competing against them in the cocoa business in the 1940s.

Navajo trace the appearance of witchcraft to the First Man and First Woman. Those beings developed poisons and spells which inflict illness and death. Witchcraft has been a part of traditional Navajo religion; and Kluckholm’s description takes a psychological approach stating that few overt hostilities are allowed in Navajo society. But openly hating a witch is approved behavior and provides an emotional outlet.

The classic study of witchcraft is Oracles, Magic and Witchcraft among the Azande, by E-P. In E-P’s study of witchcraft in Azande, he made note of the fact that Zande were aware of the physical and biological causes of their daily world. Biological and physical processes were as familiar to them, he claimed, as they are to us in the western world. They may not comprehend

the scientific cause and effect of a phenomenon; but they understand that occurrences have particular physical causes or reasons for occurring. Nevertheless, he said, Zande also claim that unfortunate events are the result of witchcraft. These unfortunate events included illness, death, accidents, crop failure, the sudden death of animals, and so forth. If someone is sitting under a granary, and the granary collapses killing the person sitting there --- this is witchcraft. Zande know that the wood is old and that it may be rotted by termites. Yet the lingering question in such a death due to accident is, "Why did the granary fall on that person at that particular time?" In view of this kind of reasoning, E-P claimed that for Zande witchcraft explains unfortunate events. He writes:

A man hangs himself after quarreling with his brothers. Now, he was clearly prompted by the quarrel to take his life, but that explanation is insufficient, because people wuarrel every day but only very rarely hang themselves. The "second spear" of witchcraft is need to explain his actions.

Some people are shading themselves under a granary when the structure collapses, killing them. The cause, to a certain extent, is to be found int he termites who had eaten away the granary's foundations and caused the collapsed. But why was it precisely at that moment that it collapsed? Why was it those people who were killed rather than some others, or no one?

This view of witchcraft is identical to that found in the Bocage region of western France. People in the Bocage understand that illness and death and calamity happen. Their singular occurrence is rarely considered noteworthy or peculiar. The loss of one animal, one illness, one bankruptcy, even one death, do not call for more than a single comment: "the trouble with him is that he drinks too much;" "she had cancer of the kidneys;" "my cow was very old."

### **Shamanism and Possession:**

Shamans, especially shamanic healers, are said to be possessed by spirits of deities, and to derive their power from this possession. In many societies, the shaman is the only kind of religious practitioner; that is, he practices all forms of ritual in such societies. Shamans generally are not specialized practitioners and they carry out their abilities in return for a gift or some fee.

Shamans possess several mystical qualities. They have access to the powers of spiritual beings, which are sometimes referred to as *spiritual helpers*. The effectiveness of a shaman in curing is believed to derive from the potency of his spirit helps and from his ability to contact them and get them to do his bidding. Contact is made through altered states of consciousness. This altered state (otherwise known as trance) is achieved through intake of drugs, ritual chanting and ecstatic movements, or the rhythmic participation with music. The spirits commonly entered the body of the shaman and/or of the patient in order to effect the healing of someone. In most societies, the major role of the shaman is curing illness.

When possessed, the shaman becomes a medium, or mouthpiece for the spirits. Instruction of the

spirits during possession is critical. The speech of spirits which are in them brings together the individual needs of the patient with the general norms and values of the society. This point is also relevant and accurate of spirit possession. Grace Harris describes what she calls “possession hysteria” among Taita women. These women induced themselves into possession trances in order to let the spirits speak to Taita those men who were encroaching on certain traditional forms of female labor and farming. The reason for the encroachment was the sudden and unexpected rise in lucrative value of the cash crop which was being produced by the women.

Shamans have greater inner powers, and they draw on these powers to keep people healthy and to increase their own social standing. They are considered heroes in their community, and people often seek to live near them. Wana have no written texts that prescribe certain doctrines or beliefs, and their narratives concerning the spirit world are often varied. Attendance at shaman possession rituals brings these people together, and there they relate their experiences to each other.

**Possession:** Spirit possession, or the possession of man by divinity, has been described as the most decisive and profound of all religious dramas. Almost always when a person is possessed by a spirit, there is some question of the health and well being of the person being possessed. Either the person is seized by a demon and must receive the ritual healing of a shaman — as is the case with Malaysian factory women; or the person seeks out the ecstatic state of trance in order to be possessed by divinity, and thereby healed. The latter form of possession is found among the Hausa of Niger, Nigeria and in *zongo* neighborhoods of Ghana and Togo, and is known as *Bori*. It is also found in areas of eastern Africa — Somalia and the Sudan, where it is known as *zar*. *Bori* deities compose a pantheon of some 200 individually named divinities which are related amongst themselves. The spirits are composed of a racked hierarchy. At the top is the “King of the *jinns*.” There are also lesser spirits known as “little spots.” While many spirits are beneficial, others inflict injuries and illness; and all known illnesses are attributed to certain named spirits. Some *Bori* spirits have developed hosts of devotees, almost exclusively women. These women enter into possession trace in order to seek the counsel of spirits in regards to their relations with their husbands and with other men of the clan. The themes of illness and of male domination and oppression in *Bori* spirit possession is quite similar to the themes of illness and gender and ethnic domination (Japanese men over Malaysian women) experienced by the young unmarried women in factories in Kuala Langat.

Indeed, Ong writes of how the electronics factories incorporated many of the modes of domination found in village *kampung* societies --notably gender, but also established hierarchies based on ethnicity and technical expertise. Unskilled operators in multi-national electrical companies (tasks filled by young Malaysian women) are at the absolute bottom of the organization hierarchy. These positions were filled only by young, single Malaysian females. The work place hierarchy and their conditions are as follows:

- Young, single Malay girls (about 15)
- Ong’s argument is this: conditions of ethnic and gender subservience in the labor arena,

combined with the transformation of rural society and the increasingly dehumanizing features of wage earning work, along with circumstances of near anonymity in which young women now experienced their lives — including the choice of potential marriage partners — all these represent a basis for understanding spirit possession of these women on the factory floor. Thus, on page 203, Ong states:

cultural conformity and covert resistance fed on each other as factory women in daily life fought for and held on to a residual space for the preservation of human dignity. However, the locker room and prayer room, as refuge from work discipline and surveillance, were also the places in which operators were seized upon by vengeful spirits.

### **Saints:**

Saints are found as part of religious practices throughout the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. In North Africa, their usual designation is “marabout.” But they may have local titles as well. Thus, Hart writes of the *imrabdhen* among the Waryaghar. Being *imrabdhen* is usually an ascribed title or position, and falls upon a member of certain lineages and clans. These are identified as *shurfa*; and they are regarded as being descended from the Prophet Muhammad. However, some saints known as *mrabtin* acquire their saintliness through the performance of miracles or merely good works. Generally, both categories are linked together as *imrabdhen*. The veneration held for both *shurfa* and *mrabtin* is recognized for both living and dead saints. The ritual surrounding the most important of the dead saints centers around their shrines, generally cupola-covered, where annual minor pilgrimages are held, and where their descendants receive the donations of the lay tribesmen or townsmen who show devotion as their followers. Most saints in Morocco have a shrine dedicated to them.

In Sicily, miracles are said to be performed by saints on behalf of persons who display, either individually or by virtue of belonging to the right kin group, manifestations of grace. Collective grace, like collective honor, belonged to the family and was transmitted from one generation to the next. Persons born to such families had portions of grace ascribed at birth; but they could also either develop greater religious fidelity and devotion or destroy it for himself and his family. Personal and collective grace was composed of: the request for a favor or miracle from a saint; fulfilling a vow of thanks to the saint for the miracle; the presence of persons at the saints sanctuaries before and after miracles are conferred; the existence in each community of acts of piety toward a patron saint.

Maria Pia di Bella notes that acts of grace may be reduced to the two institutions of Vow on behalf of the persons of honor, and Miracle on behalf of the saint. Adequate devotion, or Vow, is essential to the fulfillment of Miracles. On the other hand, if a Vow or Miracle goes unfulfilled, grace is easily turned into disgrace. In social terms this may mean dishonor for the person and for his family. Thus, when miracles are granted, it is important to announce the event through social means. Escaping unharmed from a terrifying accident; being cured from a debilitating

disease; escaping the attacks of thugs and hoodlums; surviving a shipwreck. All are announced as acts through which the intervention of a saint's grace is said to have occurred.

In many parts of Sicily, the preparation of an annual feast for San Giuseppe is a collective and public expression of gratitude for miracles granted. There are private feasts attended only by women, and public feasts attended entirely by men. At each feast, thanks are given to San Giuseppe for miracles granted in the past and for those which will be granted. A statue of the saint is taken through town in procession; cash is offered to the saint, and is adhered to the statue with glue; and donor's names are inscribed on a list of the devout. Answers to these demonstrations of Vow demonstrate grace; and this is translated into honor in social contexts. Moreover, lower class members of the community have access to private miracles, and therefore to grace; but they are generally kept out of the more public feasts. The publicity given by higher class members of their relations to the saints reaffirms their name in the public arena, thus entitling them to be honored as worthy members of the community and an adjunct to its fame.

Particular saints may receive a large number of requests by members of the community. This number may reflect upon the popularity of the saint in the region. This is indicated by the relics, pilgrimages, processions, feasts and regional cults dedicated to the saint. This compact of Vow and Miracle link the material world with the spiritual world through the personage of the saint. Grace is obtained by an alignment of these two realms. If a pact is broken by a devotee, the saint may withdraw his miracle, thus causing illness or misfortune upon the individual or group. Saints, too, may break the pact; and if this happens they are sometimes replaced by other saints. Collective rebellions occur when a saint fails to send rain, or when widespread calamity hits one region. For example, in Monterosso, the townspeople carried a replica of the saint to a horse pond and dropped it in the water. It stayed in the mud until rain, or "the grace of God" fell on the community.