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Public shame and private honour: women, patronage and migration
in an Abruzzese village

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the social positioning strategies of Abruzzese women in terms of the 'private' and the 'public', categories that define a dynamic system of social mapping for all behaviours without regard to gender. I argue that modernisation policies undermine the private aspect of social relationships centred on clientelism, leading to more women to redefine their strategies of marriage and residence. (Italy; Abruzzo; migration; modernisation; clientelism; patronage)

In this paper I would like to discuss several issues emerging from the experience of modernisation in a small village in Abruzzo, an Italian region long dominated by the Kingdom of Naples.[1] In particular, I would like to address some aspects of modernisation insofar as they have changed the social status and political position of women in a so-called 'traditional' peasant community and led people to reinterpret 'new' possibilities of social positioning in favour of 'old' strategies. Despite its location on the Adriatic coast, Italians, including government officials who deal explicitly with issues of modernisation, generally consider it part of the cultural and political space called "the South", the politically-defined zone that was the subject of a concerted government effort that began in the early 1960s (which officially ended in 1992) to develop the region and favour political integration in the name of democracy (cf. Schneider 1998).

Although a discussion about the modernisation movement of the early 1960s may seem anachronistic in light of recent debates on post-modernity, post-colonialism and globalisation (cf. Appadurai 1996), after nearly forty years of explicit political engagement and financial investment by the government, "the South" is still relatively less developed economically than the north and certainly has a much more limited role in national agendas than other regions, though I will suggest below that this should not necessarily be read as a failure of government policy. I also believe that many aspects of the debate on modernisation – even if this takes the form of 'humanitarian' intervention on the political margins of Europe – still take for granted the implicit primacy of economic and technological factors: the decentralisation of industrial production and the development of 'assembly plant' economies, the computerisation of finance capitalism leading to the automatic transfer of capital unbeknownst to investors, and so on, at the expense of what can be called the morality or social aesthetics of strategic positioning by individuals (cf. Schneider 1998, especially articles by Pandolfi and by Piattoni). There is also the

question of a shift in what are considered 'margins' as the globalisation and post-colonialism debates encourage (if not cause) a shift in anthropological perceptions (cf. Waswo 1997). Forty years ago, southern Italy was 'at the margin' of modernity; now the margins of globalisation are elsewhere, despite that selected local conditions once interpreted as causes and proofs of marginality may not have changed. In general, Italian political rhetoric has slightly shifted from invoking economic markers of marginalisation in the 1960s to invoking cultural reasons for underdevelopment (cf. Piattoni 1998:225), falling into line with the anthropological tradition launched by Banfield's classic inquest (1958) into southern poverty and 'backwardness' and, eventually, playing into the hand of contempory theories of transnationalism and of globalisation. Given the various essentialising fictions found everywhere in Western nations that naturalise culture and transform it into a mystically-unmoveable 'tradition', this shift is a measure of the degree to which southern marginalisation is deeply rooted in the Italian political consciousness (cf. Schneider 1998) despite some clear improvements in living conditions.

I must also stress that my examination of modernisation does not consider the impact on local values of the injection of money or of strategies of economic development in the sense that these have had an effect on 'tradition' or 'traditional culture', neither of which, for reasons that I hope will become apparent, I believe to be useful categories since Italian peasants have long been incorporated into a system of regional and transnational politics and meanings. As a corollary, I do not believe in the folklorising postulates that social life in the early modern era of western Europe in general or in Abruzzo in particular was characterised by stability and extended collectivities that were necessarily eroded or destroyed by capitalism, individualism, internal colonialism and all the other ills often attributed to modernisation; that is, like Verdon (1998), I think "tradition" and "culture" are terms that do not go together automatically, and, like Bell (1979) and Kertzer (1984), think that the evidence for extended and more intimate Italian peasant collectivities destroyed or weakened by modernisation is thin or nonexistent, especially in the Abruzzo area. In other words, modernisation is a term that refers to an ongoing process linking, first, people's perceptions of their community position vis-à-vis the outside and, second, individual strategies of social positioning. Seeing modernisation as a temporally-limited *economic* intervention that produces *political* polarities between the centre and the margins leading to the weakening of 'folk' attributes (extended families, community rituals of solidarity

and life cycles, etc.) and to a strengthening of clientelism and other 'corrupt' practices is a superficial reading fueled more by theories than by ethnography.[2]

In the past, poverty in the mountainous regions of Abruzzo was not, on the whole, produced by a regime characterised by exploitative absentee landlords, as in Sicily and Reggio Calabria, but by flinty soil, a relatively short growing season and poor crop yields that did not improve radically with mechanisation in the late 1960s. In other words, most of what little money peasants had, in the era before modernisation, apparently tended to stay in the region and even in the community rather than leave as a consequence of a local elite's strategies of exploitation. Abruzzesi during the epoch of the Papal States had a long-established practice of temporarily working in Rome, often as restaurant-keepers or travelling merchants, and so undoubtedly brought some money back to their home villages – it is impossible to say how much though the amounts must have allowed surivival but not capital accumulation. However, even if modernisation in Abruzzo did not represent a political rupture with an exploitative regime as such, Abruzzesi were generally as enthusiastic as other southern Italians when the the government's modernisation strategies of the early 1960s emphasised improved health care and education, which offered concrete possibilities of social advancement for their children.

Nonetheless, two questions remain unanswered in the literature: why the dramatic upswing in emigration, precisely at the moment, in the early 1960s, when modernisation policies were enacted and money and jobs poured into the region yet people left in search of better job opportunities and money, and why did so many women leave when standard approaches suggest that in 'traditional' and 'patriarchal' cultures (southern Italian peasants are a classic example, according to this stereotype) it is the men who leave in search of money and jobs? In fact, the massive outpouring of women during this period has been tossed into some sort of intellectual and historical black hole, largely unacknowledged in the literature on development and not mentioned in Italian popular and political discourse on the South and its political and economic problems. The problem is particularly interesting because 'development' as it was often put into practice by Western governments often set in motion changes that directly benefitted women's living conditions and social status: better health care, education for their children, improved educational and job opportunities, the possibility of legal recourse for some 'traditionally' hidden aggressions (for example, rape), and so forth. In effect, these augmented possibilities meant

women did increase their social status vis-à-vis men, but it also meant they had to re-negotiate their social positioning strategies, which in turn meant emigration in some cases.

Peasants and others

'Development' implies a transfer of goods and services, from some dominant centre to a marginal hinterland in the interests of closing an economic gap. The result is often short-term economic integration in some sectors but long-term political polarisation that eventually consolidates the domination of the centre vis-à-vis the hinterland or provinces. In the past, such polarisation has often been interpreted as a series of fundamental dichotomies between the centre and the periphery: colonialisers versus colonialised, urban elites versus rural 'folk', civilised cultures versus 'backwards' traditional cultures, and so on (see Kearney 1996:106). Today, polarisation is often interpreted as leading to resistance to the centre's strategies of politico-cultural hegemony, a resistance that takes many forms, one of which is 'local transnationalism' as marginal people seek to avoid political marginalisation by appropriating and localising for their own purposes (see Herzfeld 1997) outside instruments of hegemonic representation and positioning. Ironically, this often inadvertently facilitates the political and economic domination of the centre since both parties now play the positioning game by the same rhetorical rules of engagement but on an uneven political playing field.

In the Italian context, however, the analysis of such local resistance (which includes emigration) cannot use some of the ideas and concepts associated with contemporary approaches to transnationalism, globalisation and the deterritorialisation of people and ideologies: first, there are few demographic and economic statistics demonstrating unequivocally that the new world order is radically different from the mass migrations, ideological vacuums and the branch-plant economics that marked (and often destroyed) the lives of millions of Europeans in the first half of this century and, in the Italian case, virtually obliged one third of the population to emigrate in the four decades following unification in 1870; second, a significant number of Italian 'migrants' do not feel they are migrants in any sense but merely that they are people who live and mostly work elsewhere from their place of origin, nor are they treated as returning migrants (quasi-emigrants) by the community when they visit or return permanently;[3] third, many 'true' migrants from Italy have been emerging from the social margins for centuries and have happily adapted to and even thrived in marginal conditions in the receiving country precisely because the political

fact of their double marginality, at home and abroad, allowed them to work in the interstices of each society and use an unfavourable social and political identity to their own economic advantage;[4] fourth, even before modernisation and the consequent political and economic integration of the hinterland into a relationship of dependency on the centre, many people have constructed identities, sought social entitlement and situated themselves vis-à-vis others, willingly, unwittingly, or reluctantly when they have little choice, by using fragments of the same ideologically-legitimated pool of values as were available to so-called dominant national and regional elites – to assert otherwise is to assert that peasants were cut off from ideological centres in the face of the overwhelming evidence that they were not (see Sarti 1985) even though they were generally disempowered; and fifth, local appropriation of transnational discourses and rhetorical figures that accompany modernisation are fueled by the concrete improvements in living standards afforded by new educational opportunities and better health care services, both of which are eagerly welcomed not only for their positive effects on the local politics of social positioning within a framework of clientelism but also because they allow people to live better and longer lives (i.e., for men and women: speaking standard Italian, which opened up some opportunities for economic advancement; for women: insistence that children go to school and receive good health care instead of working in the fields strengthened women's control of private familial space). This latter point I believe to be particularly important, since these aspects of modernisation altered local definitions of male and female private and public spaces and therefore modified the interplay of metaphors of the public and private in relations of clientelism. In particular, the time between 'traditional' poverty and contemporary 'post-modern' deterritorialisation was so brief and so untouched by 'modernity' that the impact and importance of local identities have not weakened for most people, partly because these identities were relatively unimportant compared to their economic problems.

Of much greater and more immediate importance was the question of local hierarchy and how it created and maintained economic disadvantages for many people at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Although deterritorialisation may be an important marker in some transnational processes (cf. Appadurai 1996), it must be understood in the context of what territoriality as a cultural category and dynamic may have meant locally. In the case of Abruzzese peasants, no matter how much modernisation may have 'freed' them from a traditional dependence on land, it only strengthened their attachment to their villages of origin. In particular, I would suggest

(after Verdery 1998) that any question of flows of people, goods and ideas must be interpreted through their impact on local hierarchies, including moral hierarchies (cf. Pardo 1996).

I argue that, in the Italian peasant universes, male (public) and female (private) spaces are metaphoric fields, in which the signifieds of local politico-economic hierarchies intersect the metonymic universe of the Self, and that it is precisely these spaces that have been redefined as the modernisation strategies of industrial subsidies, job creation programmes, increased social services and pro-consumer advertising by the government work their effects, usually through the agency of patronage. In the Abruzzo case, local patronage hierarchies are not seen as exclusively political but as the result of the engagement of what people consider to be 'cultural' markers of identity; that is, patronage is sometimes viewed as a 'personal' and therefore amicable relationship (albeit hierarchical) from which strategic benefits flow. While individual goals may be seen in purely instrumental terms, the mechanisms and rituals that bind patrons and clients are seen as the ethical counterpart to the private morality of the self as it emerges in family discourses of honour and shame.

The ritualisation of power

Without going into much detail here, I think that many standard models of clientelism seem to take as a given that just because state bureaucracies (which ostensibly control access to resources) are tightly locked into locally-rigid hierarchies of power and of rhetoric such that citizens must mobilise the *right* cultural tokens to negotiate their way into state-controlled resources (a process Herzfeld calls [1998] the social poetics of the nation-state), this must invariably mean that the major players in the power game – politicians, ideologues, leaders of industry and finance, movie stars and publishers – are taking for granted that the State is a unitary construction with a *single* centre of power always metaphorically motivating its actors to work towards political and cultural unity: hence, the necessity of clientelism in a State such as Italy in which unity and centralisation are imperfectly enacted compared to standard stereotypes. However, as Sabetti (2000) points out, the available evidence supports the view that founders of modern Italy and their political descendents were not working towards the creation of a national myth of unity that could somehow, miraculously, completely eclipse the centuries-long intimate presence of seven independent and often warring states and of the Vatican in individual views of how the social ('Italy') is constituted. Compared to other Western European countries, the

founders' political vision of modern Italy had less recourse to the myth of 'Italian' statelets coalescing by means of their natural or shared affinities, of Italian culturally-based 'spirit' overcoming superficial political differences to emerge triumphant as modern Italy. Early national myths of the "fatherland" were therefore semiotically-aimed at a very small segment of the polity: in other words, early nationalising myths shortened the amplitude of the message to increase its sociological, geographical and especially political reach among this relatively privileged polity. Peasants, the landless and industrial workers were simply ignored except as sources of potential problems to be controlled by law and gun, not by giving them a political stake in the polity. In this framework, clientelism, far from sabotaging the workings of state semiotic and bureaucratic practices, in fact provides a mechanism of widening the polity while leaving intact (and largely empty) the *original* rhetoric of national unity, thus also appending a (completely artificial) temporal dimension of continuity to state rhetorics. The paradox then, as it is now, is that Italians, no matter how nationalist they may be, can hardly make use of essentialising rhetorical strategies of 'natural' *cultural* unity leading to the emergence of a centrally-unified *political* creation without undermining the alleged and much-professed primacy of the political at the expense of the cultural. In other words, clientelism is not a failure of the nationalist project but the communicative grease that makes a multi-centred model work. Paradoxically, 19th century state myths of integration that ignored peasants tended to create the very image that 20th century anthropologists would later seize as 'typical' of peasant society: endogamous, closed-minded, wary, with little interest in regional or national issues.[5]

In the introduction to her analysis of political and economic change in two Abruzzese villages, Carolyn White states (1980:1), "The word peasant is synonymous with land. The peasant derives his livelihood from the land which he cultivates. But he is often dependent on others for access to it or for the capital to make it produce." White's definition situates the problem of power, the relationship between the small household producer (cf. Chayanov 1966) and what Redfield (1956), Wolf (1955), and Foster (1965) and others more or less call the 'outside', the larger economy.[6] 'Larger' in this context means 'more powerful'. In fact, when defining peasants it is the hidden relations of power that are generally taken into consideration, the impact of a centralised political culture of control, especially through the manipulation of national representations on the local, less powerful group.

However, it matters little if local relationships are played out against a matrix of outside power, since immediate choices are always constrained by local relations of patronage. In other words, it is not so important if Other is a monolithic and oppressive force in an imaginary space largely defined and controlled by the politics of Roman political patrons and their local brokers as are the opening and closing of particular doors depending on an individual's cross-cutting social obligations. Patronage and brokerage, even if their modern forms are largely dependent on Roman machinations, still function on the individual level by using rhetorical figures of a localised other to which access is limited and controlled by the limits implied in the 'private' traits with which such relationships are invested – honour, respect, duty, closeness, and so on.

In fact, the distinction between the powerful outside and the weak local is purely heuristic, since all representations are given form and made meaningful within local cultural praxis, which includes several important elements in the Abruzzese case: first, production largely organised around households (implicating a system of labour exchange with other households that often follows kinship and affinal networks); second, Roman Catholicism (including precise definitions of male-female roles linked to the Madonna complex: gender roles within the private social space of the household are in some ways identified as a mirror of the Holy Family, with mother as dominant, positively marked for gender vis-à-vis sons but neutral vis-à-vis father, while father is subordinate and sexually neutral vis-à-vis mother though positively marked vis-à-vis daughters,[7] and public roles are often an inversion of this ideologically-driven construction); third, *campanilismo* (a very localised expression of territoriality: 'my world' is defined by the extent that church bells – *campane* – can be heard, such that a clear division between outside and inside is implied). This latter is particularly important since the frontiers of village lands are the metaphoric equivalent of the limits to kinship that are invoked ("six degrees of seperation", third cousins) to allow village endogamy; last, a complicated blend of locally-interpreted national myths that filter and shape local images of the nation/centre, of which Pandolfi (1995) identifies three: 1) the Italy of genial individual inventiveness that overcomes the absence of functioning 'Weberian' institutions (contributing to the legitimation of local attempts ot bypass the state), 2) a political philosophy that manifests itself as a paradoxical blend of nineteenth-century secular anti-clerical republicanism and contemporary Christian-Democrat pro-church and pro-federalist ideals (respectively activating or disactivating dissonant and contradictory images of an anti- or pro- corporatist state), and 3) a form of nationalist sentiments expressed in terms of highly

abstract ideals usually formulated in public discourse in terms of individual values such as honour, honesty and sacrifice rather than in terms of the corporate morality normally found in nation-states that emerges as 'shared' language and ethnic origin expressed in terms of the *topos* of pseudo-kinship and descent (Herzfeld 1992). The obvious artificiality with which the Italian national myth is constructed and its semantic thinness leads to a 'true' (and politically legitimate) counter-interpretation in national political rhetoric, a secondary image of the 'two Italies', the socially progressive, industrialised North and the retrograde, agrarian South characterised by the sort of amoral familism so ably described (or invented, some would say) by Banfield (1958). In local terms, it means boundaries can be invoked and placed almost anywhere in the social field since peasants are rather like untouchables in the *varna* system – so beyond the political pale that they can legitimately open negotiations that ignore official hierarchies.

Whichever local point of reference is chosen to enter into negoiations, it is nonetheless placed into a hierachy of power that is mediated by patronage, and patronage is essentially the flow of services between two parties in very different positions of power that is mediated by a third party, the patron (or broker, in Boissevain's terms; cf. Boissevain 1979).[8] In fact, I would argue that patronage is a necessary instrument to conserve intact a formalised and hence virtually impenetrable hierarchy of power since the two parties indirectly exchanging services never engage in direct negotiation over 'favours' (usually not money as such). By displacing negotiations from the formal to the domains associated with social imtimacy, patronage ritualises negotiations that otherwise could alter the balance of power in such a way that no one 'wins', or has some access to the resources being distributed and put into local circulation. However, patrons and clients bring different cultural tokens to the ritual space because their respective views are conditioned by which aspects of private and public conceptualisations are involved.

The rituals of patronage involve the interpenetration of public and private metaphors. For example, it is precisely because relationships with persons outside the nuclear family can provide invaluable benefits that attempts will be made to make these 'public' relationships 'close'; that is, to engage in demonstrations of intimate ('private') behaviour in the public sphere of strategic relationships, such as kissing. It is no surprise that kissing between males, usually but not always mouth to hand, is the standard sign of public recognition of a patron - client relationship, and that the 'kiss of death' given to traitorous *Mafiosi* -- who are, after all, members of the ultimate patronage network -- is no mere Hollywood stereotype but a real though semiotically ironic

message based on a double inversion: the kiss as intimacy becomes disengagement rather than a rather literal metaphor for incorporative engagement (from close to far instead of far to close), and of course it is a feminisation of the (usually) male *persona* (from public to private instead of private to public) of the client or of the traitorous *mafioso*; at least, this was true until the Mafia discovered it preferred machine guns to pistols and shotguns and lost whatever few inhibitions it may have had about killing entire families rather than only its male black sheep.

Public and private, close and far, define all relationships that are interdependent and to a certain extent, in a relation of complementarity: what is public must inevitably move to what is private, and vice-versa, especially if one takes account of the time dimension -- what was private in the past (the intimacies of marriage that led to the creation of affinal kinship ties) becomes public in the future (affinal ties are 'weaker' than blood ties and are considered exploitable), and what is public now (the manoeuvres involved in creating strategic ties) is attributed a mythified past in which the two parties of the contractual arrangement invoke metaphors of kinship of 'undying' and 'eternal' friendship), a movement that is not completely mythical since strategic relationships often move from far to close by the strategy of marriage between two families. I am certain that in the gamut of peasant and clientelistic values, the possibility of a marriage between one's son and one's patron's daughter (or vice-versa, but this is rarer)[9] is regarded in almost fabulistic terms akin to winning the national soccer pools.

I must stress at this point that the gradients of far and close, public and private, are not a heuristic device on my part but real categorical oppositions to many Italians, peasant or otherwise.[10] In brief, public ('far') and private ('close') spaces define the mechanisms of conjunction and separation, as well as the apparent obsession with kinship, family and genealogy as historical memory. However, just as communion in a Catholic mass is a 'meal' ritualised by a metonymic shift from the typical overabundance of a festive repast to the reduced food value of the Host (see Bell 1992), constant references to the past (*la storia*) as an explanation of the present is a form of ritualising power relationships that limits the contamination of the public by the private to short term and instrumental instances.

The metaphors of social positioning

The division between North and South has long been a political and rhetorical reality in Italy, but its position in terms of the politics of modernisation has largely been defined since the

1960s by the political plans of the government that targeted 'the South' as poor and backward. Modernisation has been a convenient catch-all for a hidden agenda of political control by 'the north' or by 'the centre', depending on what flavour of political position is engaged in the rhetorical wars. The modernisation of southern Italy is so relatively recent that, although one can not consider it an example of West meeting the Other, one can say that it is a case of the West meeting its own past in the form of its alienated self (see de Martino 1977), a political confrontation between the centre and the periphery in some ways extreme enough that people were and still are obliged to make difficult decisions regarding their and their children's futures, with often unforeseen consequences, in light of cultural colonialism and its local effects on jobs and migration (cf. Long 1996).

Emigration is often considered a normal by-product of modernisation as the modern technologically-advanced sector is unable to absorb the excess work force generated by the withering of the usually labour-intensive and household-oriented traditional agricultural economy. However, since the late 1950s more women than men have left the Abruzzese village where I have been conducting my research, contrary to all expectations that have found their way into a largely economic-materialist approach in the literature dealing with modernising peasants. Furthermore, much of this is internal migration to nearby towns and villages where all major markers of social process -- job, social and educational opportunities, quality and quantity of goods and services -- are more or less the same as those in the village of origin. On the other hand, patronage (brokerage, clientelism) has increased enormously in scope and importance as massive amounts of outside money -- agricultural subsidies, employment income, transfer payments, specially-created government jobs, and so on -- have found their way into small villages in the region.[11]

Although patronage and especially emigration are both considered traditional features by locals, their contemporary forms cannot be considered as the inevitable political fallout of economic development and social progress emanating from the centre without taking account of individual strategies of social positioning that situate people in a web of legitimating symbols and hierarchies of power. Social legitimacy is of course attained by as many symbolic constructions and positioning strategies as there are people, but it is clear that some of the spaces people create will overlap to a greater degree than others, and within the overlap some

metonymic slippage will emerge. In particular, the familial and private metaphors of honour and shame will metonymically 'slip' in the public sphere of clientelism.

Honour and shame were once considered almost universal markers of Mediterranean cultures. The universality of these concepts has been disputed (especially by Herzfeld 1984), as has the cultural integrity of the Mediterranean region, but honour and shame are certainly part of the thought-world of many Italian peasants of the Abruzzo region. Shame and honour are related to female and male social roles, respectively, and are also linked to private and public spaces, which means that private spaces are linked to women and public spaces to men. As others have noted in other contexts and I myself heard (from a woman citing her husband), a man may tell his wife or daughter, "my honour is your shame", suggesting that any displacements of what is female and private (meaning, sex and its consequences, child rearing and, by metonymic extension, kinship and marriage) to the male public sphere of creating strategic networks brings shame upon, or weakens, the man's efficacy in negotiating strategic alliances in a social space dominated by the ethics and rituals of clientelism. By transferring the symbolic apparatus of the private to the public, a transgressive woman (for example, one who has an illicit relationship that becomes public knowledge) contaminates and therefore circumscribes her husband's efficacy in the public sphere, rendering male attempts at forming and manipulating strategic relationships less effective because the rhetorical and instrumental means by which men create social relationships is in fact quite limited – exchanges of services in kind (e.g., a mason may repair a house in exchange for carpentry work), promises of mutual help at harvest, and promises to betrothe each other's children. In the last few years, such strategic negotiations have become secondary to clientelistic obligations to vote along party lines in order to receive factory jobs and other economic benefits. In brief, 'shame' means that this ritualised space of male social contract is widened to include rhetorically-sanctioned possibilities normally limited to the priviate sphere, and these legitimate a much wider semiotic field of rhetorical possibilities than social contracts based on limited and strategic exchange. In practical terms, the private is normally characterised by behaviour and attitudes that explicitly deny exchange as a basis of social contracts. In practical terms, a cuckolded husband or the father of a 'loose' daughter is regarded as 'less of a man' who is 'unable to control his women', indications of a diminished capacity to make good on his promises of exchange in the public sphere of negotiated clientelistic contracts.

This analysis, however, is but a partial picture of the interpenetration of private and public spaces. The polluting effect a woman can exercise on the public is in fact limited to the parts of public space occupied, or appropriated, by her father, brother(s) and husband, suggesting that social space is a socio-processual dimension and not objectively defined for all participants; while honour and shame are real, they do not define 'peasant culture'. It also suggests that 'the family' is a political category and not a structural entity *per se*.[12] Finally, some instances of marital infidelity bring social resources into the household – gifts, facilitated access to public resources if the lover is a powerful patron, and so on. One must evaluate what 'strategic interests' means in the local context when addressing the question of honour and shame.

Metonymically, therefore, the opposition honour - shame alludes to a major axis of Abruzzese peasant life, the opposition between what is socially far and close, private and public, or, in other words, to networks that are relatively inflexible because they are inherited (expressed in terms of kinship and marriage in the past — one generation's alliance is the next's descent — and therefore semiotically part of female private social space in the present) and networks that are relatively flexible because they are seen as resting on the basis of common strategic interests (and therefore semiotically part of male public social space in the present). Not only can the same network move between these two poles, it is my contention that it is almost inevitable that they do so, and thus the flexible move to the inflexible, the private to the public, the close to the far, and so on. The reversals of tradition I have included in my title -- public shame and private honour -- refer to changes in the ways in which public and private starting points for the negotiation of identity are being redefined in the aftermath of modernisation, changes which nonetheless conserve intact the division between private and public spheres while redefining their semantic content.

In brief, I am proposing that it is this tendency to confer private symbolic traits on public relationships, to act out the public as private and engage all the psycho-emotional mechanisms and especially the semantic density of intimate relationships, that accounts for the obligation to acknowledge and repay patronage debts, thereby giving concrete substance to the rituals of clientelistic dominanation. It is not only a *strategic* decision to acknowledge one's debts and thus acknowledge a patron's power but rather a compulsion born from the way in which all relationships are constructed: all 'close' relationships must necessarily move from private to public in order to allow the future option of engaging mechanisms of separation, just as past

relationships ('kinship', ot at least a major component of kinship, in the Italian interpretation) can be invoked to further conjunction in the present, especially with a patron. In the same way, 'far' relationships (as when someone is initialising a relationship with a patron) must do the opposite and move from the public to the private in order to concentrate and hence maximise (by concentrating the 'aim' of the patron's gaze -- i.e., limiting the number of recipients) the potential benefits that accrue from the relationship. When modernisation increased the semantic load attached to clientelism, it also increased the metonymic capacities of metpahors to slip between the private and public spheres. In fact, a patron is as hard-pressed to disengage himself as the client is unable to ignore the ethical debt he has incurred by accepting not only the benefits promised by the patron (especially the votes of his family members) but also his subordinate role vis-à-vis the patron. The density of the semantic load of the private is such that obligations are metonymically shifted to love, duty and honour (which, not incidentally, is also the language of nationalist rhetoric; cf. Lanoue 2001b); these constitute the 'morality' of broad-spectrum relationships in the private sphere and the 'ethics' of narrowly-focussed strategic negotiations in the public sphere.

Emigration and Women

Using this approach it is possible to construct a hypothesis about some very puzzling aspects of emigration from Liscia, a small village of approximately 950 people in the mountainous Vastese zone of Abruzzo. It is perched on a high hill surrounded by tiny and somewhat barren fields bounded by hedgerows or low fences built with the stones gleaned from the rocky fields. Liscia ('smooth') is said to take its name from the rounded stones (*lisciatelle*) people once gathered from the mountain to place on their roofs to stop the tiles from being blown off by the high winds that scour the village.[13] Today there are slightly fewer red roof tiles in town as modernisation progresses and modern designs and materials supplant the old, and only a few houses sport stones on the remaining roof tiles, and most of these are irregular and jagged.

The village is quite close to the town (Gissi) that the Italian press often labelled, in the days of the so-called 'First Republic' (pre-1993), the fiefdom of one of the more important Christian Democrat power brokers, "Uncle" Remo Gaspari. There is no question that local politics in Liscia were played out against the background of the corporate-style state power-brokerage of the old Christian Democrat empire.[14] The wide, single road that winds its way

around the mountain to the village, for example, is not only paved but of excellent construction, with concrete drainage ditches on either side and with more than adequate signs and mirrors warning of potentially treacherous curves.[15] It is not so important that local jobs or betterment projects like the new road may or may not have been allocated as part of a political pork-barrel; it is enough that locals believe this to be the case, that the 'system' works on the basis of a particular regime of power distribution over which individuals believe they have very little control.[16]

The village itself contains quite a few empty houses in its centre, since many emigrants send money from abroad to have houses built (or remodelled) for their retirement, when they hope to return to their village of birth. Many never return or have yet to return, but the houses stand as silent testimony to the destiny and the mixed identities of many Lisciani. Many of these old and rather architecturally plain houses show signs of recent wealth -- new aluminium windows and doors in freshly stuccoed portals, new cars parked outside, new wings and extra storeys, intricate television antennas sprouting from the roofs, and so forth, though several older people still keep a donkey or two in stalls below the living quarters of their homes. In brief, Liscia is typical in the sense of conforming to the stereotype of a village that has moved from tradition to post-modernity, from an internally-sensitive dynamic of social hierarchy to means of social legitimacy that partially depend on people's activities outside the village.

Many of the people who call themselves peasants and live off the land are over fifty years old. Most have reached a compromise with modernisation: they work in factories or in *comune* (township) jobs but keep a few hectares for olive oil and wine that they work evenings and weekends. Fewer grow their own grain, and still fewer keep livestock for milk and cheese. The latter tend not to work outside their small plots and earn little, on average about $15,000 per year. However, their economic autonomy means they manage to save approximately half their family income.

The peasants of Liscia, like many others in villages throughout the South who felt menaced by the modernisation of agriculture (forcing them to capitalise their land and to mechanise their farming operations), formed political organisations and used the new democratic rhetoric of the central government to put pressure on the local bureaucracy for subsidies in order to preserve a 'traditional' style of life. Ironically, one of their strategies was to appeal to the

sentiments once engendered by the old Fascist plan of the 1930s to be nationally self-sufficient in wheat, even though many of them are politically left of centre.[17]

But in some ways Liscia is not typical of what Italian and academic stereotypes define as 'the South', or define as the spaces at the disempowered margins of the new global order. Lisciani tend to see the outside in the virtualising terms of globalisation and therefore manage to use the rhetoric of marginality to their own advantage. Some of the younger people have left, for example, to pursue professional careers in bigger towns or get a university education, yet it is precisely these people who form a sizeable minority within the town council (they are in fact over-represented with respect to the population at large), manipulating their inability or reluctance to fully integrate themselves outside in order to more fully live inside but on their own terms, i.e., not as peasants but as young 'urban' professionals in an essentially non-urban environment. They have effectively transformed the peasant village into a 'non-space' (*pace* Augé) for the outside by reproducing within the village some of the aspects (a town council and its bureaucracy, various committees, make-work 'research' into village conditions, etc.) of State rituals of power. In brief, these Lisciani are able protect themselves from the things the central government wants to impose -- a bureaucracy of central control -- by appropriating its rhetoric and forms while substituting local content and concerns. None of them wants to leave the village, and even if they sometimes succumb to the siren song of modern life in the big city, they always seem to return. In this sense, by conforming to the rituals and forms of State power, they have also transformed the village into an engine for creating a 'non-time', a form of temporal stasis in which conformity to the political rituals of modernity allow them to give form to a vision of the village as an enclave supposedly dominated by 'tradition'.

But a few do leave, although not the young professionals. More women than men left the village with the advent of industrialisation, but there is a twist: between 1958 and 1991, 507 women and 470 men left the village, while 248 men and 283 women returned. The overall balance is that the village lost 222 men and 324 women in this period of industrial and monetary expansion. But people's destinations were very different: of the 507 women, 462 or 92.4% left the village but stayed in Italy; indeed, most stayed in the immediate region. Of the 470 men, only 342 or 72.7% stayed in Italy.

Furthermore, these are not recent trends. The statistics from 1877 to 1960 show that of a total of approximately 14,000 people (of which approximately 1,500 died under the age of

eighteen, mostly before 1940; another 800 left no trace in the documents), women still accounted for one-third of all emigration outside the country but two-thirds of marriages with men of other villages, which is only somewhat less than the rates for the later period of modernisation. In sum, the actions and strategies of women to a large extent contradict what standard theories of development and migration suggest, that men leave first and in greater numbers, and women follow as fiancées and wives 'called' by the men once established abroad. Clearly, the situation is more complicated.

Women's social space in Liscia is a complicated blend of the private and public, power and subservience. Traditionally, the area had a mixed economy that included pastoralism, especially of sheep and goats. Not surprising in pastoral economies in which many men are away for significant periods of the year, the women of Liscia are property owners who can inherit significant property of their own, a tradition that long predates federal laws governing (and forcing) equitable inheritance. In the past and, to a certain extent, in the present, the right to use a woman's property passed to her husband at the moment of her marriage, though in cases of widowhood the property returned to the woman and her heirs. There are other significant facts in the social economy of womanhood: it is not surprising that women did not consider themselves chattels belonging to their fathers and husbands, despite a patriarchal culture that dominates public space, nor that they worked in the fields next to the men. Average age at first marriage is high compared to Western Eurooean norms and, in many years for which I have data, women's ages were higher than men's (approximately 23.5 for women, 22.5 for men, compared to ………….). Nor is it surprising that women resisted marriage: wife capture was significant, at least in the local political economy of gender discourse.[18] In brief, women are reluctant to get married and reluctant to lose control over their property, which is to lose one of their few bases of personal autonomy.

This mixed economy of agriculture and pastoralism led to the emergence of a division between fixed (fields) and movable (animals) property, a division that came to be linked to another, between women and men and the private and public spheres. Paradoxically, men are thus more sensitive to issues of acquiring wealth and dowry and so conceive their strategic social space in terms of the public and the far since they, unlike women, do not automatically inherit land. Women, meanwhile, are more sensitive to strategic space imbued with the characteristics of the private and close since they have in theory more chances of acquiring property by staying

home and not marrying, or at least not marrying until the terms of their inheritance become clear (aging parents whose extent of inherited and acquired property is known; the number of adolescent younger siblings that have survived childhood). They are thus more attuned to the transmission of rights (the private, the near) than men. This is reflected in their marriage choices: unlike men, women who choose to marry outside the village of Liscia overwhelmingly prefer (over 50% of marriages for which I have data starting in 1866) two large places (one a large village and the other a small town), whereas men's choices are statistically scattered all over the map. In brief, there are two possibilities, both recognised by the women of Liscia. First, having put off marriage for several years, they marry men who live in richer towns to counter male strategies of using marriage as a form of acquiring control over their property, a form of hypergamy; second, having already acquired property (or at least the right to transmit it) they can engage other strategies to define their space and their identities, especially by (apparently paradoxically) insisting on the 'patriarchal' domination of the public sphere, leaving all that is private under their control.

As I mentioned above, there is a second dimension to this problem: many theorists of development suggest that industrialisation brings about a restriction of the web of kinship. Insofar as certain 'strong' family ties in the past are believed to have emerged as a reaction to poverty and political disempowerment, it is to be expected that an increase in economic opportunities associated with the industrialisation of the 1970s would favour the emergence of a more restricted kinship network, that the influx of wealth would set brother against brother, cousin against cousin, much like the movement from public to private domains in 'traditional' patronage ties. Indeed, if 'kinship' is considered in its strict biological dimension, there is some truth to this position, as Bailey and Silverman (1975) have noted in their studies: modern families are smaller, kin see each other less, and there is definitely less collaboration between members of related nuclear families. Similarly, the more recent erosion of the power of the colonising and corrupt Italian state and the public disgust with corruption might favour a widening of kin networks as less outside money flows into the local economy, traditional patrons like De Gaspari, for example, used EEC money rather than local money to finance their networks -- both sources have recently dried up. The regional economy's modern sector is still fragile and has been kept in a state of dependency as part of a deliberate government strategy to transform local poverty into national and so-called 'democratic' voting blocks by creating the conditions

necessary for direct and short term intervention -- in brief, various make-work projects like the recent facelift given to downtown Naples in time for the G7 conference of early 1995. In this second case, it could be expected that 'kinship' networks would expand as money and jobs become increasingly scarce.

However, if we use the criteria of the close and far, private and public aspects of relationships, another picture emerges of regional social dynamics and in particular, of emigration from Liscia. First, not only did the circle of relationships not shrink with increased wealth pumped into the region from the outside, but the opposite seems to have happened, that from women's perspective 'kinship'-type networks expanded in times of relative wealth as more and more marriages with non-Lisciani were contracted. As I have argued above, men and women have always played the marriage card in different ways, with men more sensitive to issues of acquiring wealth, women to issues of conserving and transmitting it. For example, in 1991, 7 women born in the village married; only one married a man from the village. The other 6 married men from villages within a 20 km. radius. The six women who left the village in 1991 all work in factories that are roughly equidistant from their village of birth and their present villages of residence (factories are located in the countryside rather than in towns for several reasons, for example, to encourage employment from several villages rather than from only one, and for reasons of easier transportation since Abruzzese villages are generally on or near the summits of the mountains and hills of the region). Nor would lack of marriageable men seem to be the motivating element, since there are generally more men than women in the village in all years sampled, given that more women have left the village since the late 1960s. Why, then, are local women marrying foreign men and local men tending to marry local women? I would suggest that the answer is precisely in the desire to widen networks, a desire that was realised, I repeat, in times of general economic well-being.[19] In other words, as wealth flows into the village, traditional male strategies of wide-ranging marriages are unnecessary and so they can choose to marry close to home, very far away (abroad), or not at all. If in the past women resisted marrying (delaying marriage) to preserve their autonomy, today they leave in ever-increasing numbers as local men have become richer because of development policies and have increased their social power. Women prefer to marry men from other, richer villages because they have a weaker claim over their wives' inheritance: although acquiring land no longer represents the difference between a confortable life and a miserable existence, it has

paradoxically increased its symbolic valence precisely because it is one of the few things that directly proclaims village identity as people increasingly transfer their social and cultural investments into the modern regional sector. As outsiders, these 'foreign' husbands have weaker moral claims, which in any case can only be expressed in terms of a traditional currency of symbolic exchange whose value keeps slipping, precisely because land has more than ever acquired a denser meaning as a symbol of local identity when government development strategies have redefined the local as part of the national and even of the international.

However, an explanation that depends solely on 'traditional' dynamics is partial at best since it does not specify how such an allegedly coherent cultural package, even assuming it can be and is in fact transmitted more or less intact, can influence people's marriage and residence choices within a political framework largely shaped by 40 years of 'modern' clientelism tied to state-level practices.

It is the paradox of development within clientelism that has encouraged some women to seek personal stability elsewhere. True, development initially seems to raise women's status because its policies work directly on issues within women's private domains, the health and education of children. In this sense, it empowers women. However, development also raises expectations relating to general well-being and so urges men, especially that segment without direct access to land, to go abroad and become richer. Furthermore, a local price must be paid since property-owning families must now pay new taxes that are beyond their capabilities to raise cash in the traditional economy's cash sector. Third, development directly undermines traditional legitimations for personal action, sometimes by directly outlawing (or enforcing an already existing law) against 'traditional' practices, in this case, capture marriage. Whatever the reason, men end up increasing their status and autonomy as more social and financial doors are opened. As a result, in the long run men gain more than women under development policies, and so women are in a relatively worse off position than before in terms of personal autonomy. It is only by emigrating to richer villages that they can escape men's attempts to play the 'tradition' trump card from their newly acquired stronger financial position.

The clientelism that emerges under development (whether it predates development or not is a moot point) also changes the picture. As traditional networks of collaboration disappeared as the economy moved from an almost entirely agricultural basis to a 'modern' mixed industrial economy (thus conforming to the classic development models advocating more restricted

egocentric networks as industrialisation proceeds), the range of networks actually widened: as men left the village to work abroad and industry moved into the area, wealth increased, or at least economic wealth. But two things have not been considered in most discussions of similar situations. First, access to outside wealth is in fact brokered though a very effective and oppressive system of local political patronage to which I have alluded but that I cannot describe in detail here. The point is that emigration to foreign countries -- usually male -- is the only effective means of bypassing this system and getting access to wealth without incurring overwhelming moral debts. If, on the other hand, one chooses to enter into a clientelistic relationship, and many do in fact choose this option, then inexorable changes to definitions of public and private social space ensue, with direct consequences for women's status and power.

As more men leave the village and traditional forms of collaboration become redundant (there are fewer crops to harvest), another source of wealth suddenly appears to be becoming increasingly scarce, human relationships. In particular, as kinship networks widen, there were fewer non-related ('far') people left in the village with which to construct strategic networks ('public'). Too many relationships in the village had become 'close' and 'private', and not only because of men marrying too close, too far or not at all.[20] The real culprit, of course, is patronage. As wealth from the outside continues to enter the village, more and more 'private' features entered public space and essentially came to dominate it, especially as patronage took on the symbolic apparatus of close and private roles/spaces. Paradoxically, it would seem, as more wealth becomes available, more men left the village to escape the patronage system.

In brief, as human raw materials became scarcer the circle of relationships was widened; the exogamic frontier was pushed outward. There was an attempt to transform distant relationships into close ones, just as increasing demand for money necessitated exchanging political favours for jobs. While acknowledging the moral obligation to repay debt by casting votes as brokers dictated (thus effectively transforming the public into 'close'), the villagers also attempted to transform 'far' relationships into 'private' in order to narrow the circle of association and thus offset the moral obligations to their patrons they increasingly incurred in the public domain, the domain of patron-client relationships. In the terms defined above, women have become the patrons of public spaces and men the private, as women seek more and more to expand ties and men to hoard them. Added to this are the changes wrought by the young

professionals I mentioned above, who have successfully transformed the village into a private space by using public rhetoric, exacerbating the problem.

Of course, I am not suggesting that men and women think in terms of social strategies of preserving a so-called traditional way of life. Far from it. Yet by each pursuing his or her individual strategies -- men maximising strategic relationships and women preserving their social position by fighting for their private social space, men by operating in a public space that is increasingly conceptualised as near and increasingly private and women operating in a private space that is conceptualised as public -- men and women have unwittingly transformed and even inverted the semantic charge of their social roles while keeping intact the structure of social spaces.

There are other factors that are undoubtedly at work, including the presence of brokerage factions (thus attenuating some of the worse effects of political subservience to the outside), a long documented local tradition of military resistance to the outside, changing attitudes to the modern as a small but not insignificant proportion of emigrants return to the village. But what I have attempted to paint here is a very sketchy model of peasant feelings to the modern, a model that acknowledges their attempts to build and control their own world and that uses their categories and idioms of thought.

Notes

[1] The research on which this paper is based was conducted in Liscia, a small village in the central Vastese region of Abruzzo, at intervals between 1994 and 1997. Given the impersonal nature of the demographic data I am examining, I think it is unnecessary to adopt the all too often easily unmasked anonymity of a false toponym.

[2] Though the view of 'folk' peasants who become culturally impoverished by modernisation is enshrined in official positions; for example, see Massari 2000.

[3] Such 'marginal migration' cannot be analyzed as a purely economic phenomenon but as part of a wider strategy of social positioning that includes capital accumulation and transfer back to Italy (see Ong 1999). Furthermore, for many Italians residing in the provinces, 'migration' means leaving their village of origin, not Italy.

[4] A tendency that partial accounts for the fact that many 'Italians' in Canada are readily ethnically identifiable, whereas Germans and other northern European immigrants in North America often do not form identifiable ethnic communities; when Italians adopt a marginal status as protective coloration (due to the fact that they are comfortable with the strategic consequences of this status), they also turn to members of other marginal categories (other emigrant Italians) as their community of reference and use 'Italian' status to preserve their marginality and therefore flexibility (black market labour, etc.). Basing myself on my knowledge of the Montreal Italian immigrant community, unlike Kearney (1996) I do not think that migrants of this type automatically fall into a subversive category but are instead officially ignored by the state even though they might represent an affront to the state's classificatory abilities because of their tendency to work on the black market. The government seems to adopt a very Italian strategy of turning a blind eye to minor fiscal irregularities because such irregularities are an effective means of exercising local political control on the "ethnic" vote -- a pork barrel mentality works better when the co-opted category is relatively cohesive: a few local public works contracts, for example, can hire hundreds or even thousands of people from the same community. It is no accident that in Montreal and Toronto, each with one-tenth of the population of Italian descent, road works have largely been controlled for three generations by Italo-Canadians

[5] The same is true of the Italian families, allegedly an atavistic survival but in fact extended and given a higher semiotic charge after post-unification banking practices made it difficult for small enterpreneurs to get start-up loans. The near-impossibility of governing by practices established in other, longer-established Western countries that inspired the post-Unification political elite meant that the State established its corporatist tendencies early on. For example, the Italian government is a major shareholder in most banks, and the late 19th century established credit institutes to channel capital flows towards heavy industry, which was completely absent in central and southern Italy. The result meant tight credit for the emerging entrepreneurial middle class, who reoriented (and thus strengthened) kin networks into investment cooperatives.

[6] It is interesting that American scholars have often been eager to accept Kroeber's definition (1948:284) of peasants as "part societies and part cultures" while European research (except for the British; Firth [1946, 1951], for example, was highly influential in focusing attention on the indigenous qualities of peasant life) has tended to focus on the element of class relations between peasants and urban residents. Ironically, the positions seemed to have been reversed in the last few decades or so, as European scholars have sought to explain and legitimate (for political purposes) the existence of a 'class culture' that acknowledged peasant culture as something more than a culture of resistance (see, for example, Bronzini 1985), while American scholars in the 1970s moved from the identification of 'folk' traits to a semi-Marxist interpretation of conditions of economic production (see, for example, Dalton 1969). Recently, however, some Italian scholars may be moving back to a position of universal economic rationality (see, for example, Pavanello 1993) somewhat in the spirit of Burling (1962), Cook (1966), and Cancian (1966). On the peasant as Other, cf. Kearney (1996).

[7] Pitkin's description (1985) of a family disagreement seems to depict a serious attempt at imposing an autocratic authority structure on family politics within a modernising household, but his analysis reveals subtle quasi-sexual behavioural undertones between parents and opposite-sexed children that provide a demonstrable affirmation (as long as everyone plays by the rules of the game) of the father's relative lack of power as his daughters grow more capable of playing the traditional female role. In many peasant villages I have visited, mothers are not sexually neutral vis-à-vis their young sons, using sexual caresses, manual and oral, as forms of control, not to mention a widespread peasant 'urban legend' that it is the maternal aunt who should sexually initiate her nephew.

[8] Unlike Boissevain (and Wolf 1966), I do not believe that patronage shifted to brokerage as local economies became more complex and the strategic prizes richer, or that is is an inevitable expression of control of social margins by the centre (cf. Lemarchand and Legge 1972). Patrons always acted as brokers in that even if the patron is exchanging his personal resources for loyalty (instead of facilitating access to another's strategic resources), he is a client vis-à-vis someone else (Korovkin 1988).

[9] It is rarer because of the established practice of male-centred incorporation usually manifested by the woman taking her husband's name and by patrilocal post-marriage residence. A client's daughter who marries a broker's son is not necessarily 'lost' emotionally and geographically to her father, but access and her ability to influence will certainly be limited compared to a case in which a broker's daughter marries a client's son.

[10] However, I would like to stress that I do not think that public and private mean the same thing nor are divided along the same lines for everyone; see Lanoue 2002.

[11] In this I disagree with Piattoni (1998:236-7), who describes Abruzzo clientelism as limited and with strong opposition which keeps it relatively honest and sensitised to public (clientelistic) opinion and demands "virtuous clientelism" is the term she uses). To be fair, Piattoni is describing patronage within government structures while I refer to para- and quasi-governmental situations, such as in universities; see Lanoue 1999.

[12] It also suggests that even "private" parts -- the sex organs -- of both sexes are metonymically part of female space, since they are considered, by both sexes, 'private', 'dirty' and 'wet', all feminine attributes. Over the years I have asked perhaps over one hundred women why Italian men often scratch their privates in public; not one has ever noticed (or admitted) that they do this. I have also asked them why men draw "*cazzi*" ('cocks') in public spaces (generally on the walls of public edifices, such as the subway, the train station, public restrooms, etc.). I generally received the same answer: "what are you talking about?" Once I showed an Italian woman illustrations from one of my books, on Algonkian rock art. The picture (Lanoue 1989, fig. 46) had three well-defined penises pointing at what was a female supernatural symbol. She wondered why the 'redskins' (it. *pellirossi*) had drawn flowers around a vagina! Is it possible that many Italian men are interested in their genitals in public as an attempt to reappropriate what is private and female, and that women are 'blind' to these attempts because they already have control over this domain? I have no doubt that the ancient symbol for warding off the evil eye (and suggesting that another man is '*cornuto*-ed', cuckolded), the 'horns' (hand upraised, forefinger and littlefinger pointing up, two middle fingers tucked into the palm), is a male symbol of women's open legs and sex organs.

[13] Obviously a 'just so' story, since rounded stones today and (I believe) in the past were only found in the valley below, not on the summit of the mountain. Not surprisingly for the people of a mountain village, there appears to be a metonymic code switching centred around hierarchy that involves 'summit', 'top' 'roof', 'head/face' and 'boss' on the one hand, and 'valley', 'bottom', 'anus/penis' and 'peasant' on the other. Having reread my list, I feel I should explain that 'head/face' and 'anus/penis' are not only part of the same corporeal code but are also paired in terms of strategic positioning in public space: "che figura di merda" (lit.: 'what a figure of shit', coll.: 'to lose face'), "testa di cazzo" (lit.: 'prick head', coll.: 'asshole'), or "testa di turco" (lit.: 'Turkish head', coll.: 'scapegoat'), and "ti faccio (or, "ti ha fatto") un culo così" (lit.: 'I'm making you such an ass', coll.: 'I'll fuck you over (in the ass)'). The elements in the first series are clearly positive, those in the second clearly negative, except for 'head/face' and 'anus/penis', whose semiotic charge in the context of social positioning depends on the status of the speaker (though they are positive and negative, respectively, when placed in the corporeal code). A peasant cannot usually "fare una figura di merda" since he or she is near the bottom of the social ladder, but can easily be given "un culo così (i.e., 'be fucked over)", so 'anus/penis' are imbued with his or her negative social standing. A member of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, can easily "fare una figura di merda" (a social gaffe) but is relatively facilitated by social standing when 'fucking over' ('fare un culo') another person.

[14] Votes, for example, were said to be controlled by the local bosses, who gave particular combinations of candidates on the slate to particular households. It is commonly believed that false candidates (i.e., party members who lend their names but with no expectation of holding office) were placed on the slate only to augment the number of candidates and provide the bosses with sufficient numbers of names to create individualised combinations of votes (each household would receive a list of three names, for example, with two 'real' candidates and one 'false') so that it was known, by the analysis of the combinations of votes at the level of the polling station, whether people had voted for the entire roster or not.

[15] Plentiful road signs are often the first evidence that a politician has taken the reins of power firmly in hand. When Ciriaco De Mita was Prime Minister, for example, the main North South highway from Rome to Reggio Calabria was richly dotted with new bright blue signs announcing that Avellino (a small and relatively insignificant town but De Mita's birthplace) was 57 km distant, then 42 km distant, etc., with no particular logic related to topography that

I could discern. The other road signs were faded, rusted and mostly hidden by overgrown bushes. Given my thesis of pendulum swings from public to private, far to close, it is not so surprising in semiotic terms that patronage is literally signalled by an inversion of the centre and periphery. All of sudden it is Avellino (population 50,000) and not Rome that becomes the centre, although De Mita of course became an effective patron by bringing the periphery -- Avellino votes -- to Rome.

[16] The irony is, of course, that they exercise a form of collective control since, in the words of one local boss that mirrors the thoughts of other power brokers I interviewed, "This is a democracy. These projects are for the people. We don't get rich personally." Of course, the latter is not completely true. Power brokers and other patrons often get very rich, but it is almost certainly true that they recalculate funds in the form of development projects more than they take out of the system. I say 'almost certainly true' because I have no exact figures on the extent of hidden riches. I do know, however, that local bosses lead relatively modest lives in terms of the their local possessions. Their clients expect, however, that they maintain an image of a degree of wealth and power. An ideal compromise is the one typified by Gaspari and other, more powerful bosses -- using government helicopters to ferry him around to parties in other towns, government cars for local travel, government jets for travel abroad, maintaining a council flat in Rome and paying only several hundred dollars rent per month (Roman council flats are usually the oldest and nicest buildings in the centre).

[17] In fact, what many today considered 'tradition', such as the growing of wheat at the expense of other grains and the large-scale abandonment of pastoralism, is the result of politically-motivated agro-planning of the 1920s and 30s by the Fascists that aimed for self-sufficiency in basic resources and commodities.

[18] It is sufficient to capture the woman a man desires and to remove her from the protective gaze of her family by bringing her to the nearby forest for a night, effectively removing her from a social space considered private to one considered to be in the public domain (even though, semiotically, the woman is hidden by the cover of the forest in the valley -- cf. note 12). Sexual contact, voluntary or not, was considered irrelevant to the rescue parties organised by the woman's father and brothers.

[19] It is interesting that in the story of the local patron saint (San Michele) is in a sense activated by a foreigner, i.e., a person not from Liscia, who is down in the valley on not up on the summit of the hill in the town (cf. note 12). In fact, there is no clue as to how Liscia enters into the story at all, since the grotto mentioned in this version of the story is equidistant between Liscia and San Salvo, although on the Liscia side of the river. Here is one version:

"It seems that a hunter from a neighbouring village, one of the several on the surrounding hills, was down in the valley. The river at that time had more water in it than now [in fact, the river had water till several years ago, but is now dried up]. Shepherds used to pasture their flocks in the valley. This hunter [poacher seems more likely] went to shoot a lamb that belonged to a shepherd of Liscia. As he shot the lamb, it raised its forepaw and stopped the bullet. The hunter was so amazed that he followed and it led him to a grotto that had been, until then completely unknown to the people (Lisciani) because it had been covered over by thick undergrowth and bushes [*arbusti e cespugli*, cf. note 19, with reference to the protective forest cover of public space]. There they saw the Archangel Michael, and since then he has been the patron saint of Liscia. Every year processions start from there and wend their way up to the village."

[20] Although traditional local customs denied that first cousins could marry, some did. At least six couples who married between 1968 and 1991 are first cousin marriages, as far as I can determine. But it is interesting that local customs permitted second cousin marriage, including two or more sisters marrying a set of two or more second cousins.

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