



Muslim women's perspectives on honor

Missiology: An International Review

1–12

© The Author(s) 2023

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/00918296231189113

journals.sagepub.com/home/mis**Louise Simon** 

Angelina Noble Centre, Australia

Abstract

The concepts of honor and shame have been extensively explored in cultural anthropology, psychology, biblical studies, and missiology. Yet there is still comparatively little written about how Muslim women, as distinct from Muslim men, experience honor and shame, and even less that amplifies the voices of Muslim women themselves. This article examines how honor is perceived and experienced by Muslim women around the world, based on their discussions with Christian women. It then explores implications for Christian engagement with Muslim women.

Keywords

honor, Muslim women, biblical honor, Muslim women's perspectives, shame

Introduction

Missiological writing and reflection on honor and shame, particularly in Muslim contexts, has increased over the last couple of decades. Influential books by Roland Muller (2000), Jackson Wu (2012), Jayson Georges and Mark Baker (2016), and Christopher Flanders and Werner Mischke (2020) have served to highlight the necessity of understanding contexts where consideration of these values are more pronounced. These works use the language of honor/shame *cultures*, following on from Ruth Benedict (1946) and Eugene Nida (1954), drawing on Margaret Mead's (2003/1937) distinction between cultures that use shame as a key external sanction and those which depend on guilt as an internal sanction. However, as later writings have pointed out (e.g., Cozens, 2018; Dale, 2020; Merz, 2020), a reliance on these typologies of culture masks the

Corresponding author:

Louise Simon, Angelina Noble Centre, Auburn, Sydney, NSW 2144, Australia.

Email: l.simon@ridley.edu.au

reality that all cultures have the values of honor and shame. The perception and weight given to them vary according to variables such as age, context, social status, level of education, and gender.

In the 1960s, anthropologists began to write extensively about the concepts of honor and shame within Mediterranean societies. John G. Peristiany (1965) edited a volume of collected essays on the topic, many of which argued that honor and shame are gendered—honor being associated with men, and shame being associated with women. Bruce Malina (1981) and David DeSilva (2000) extended this scholarship to focus more specifically on honor and shame in the Mediterranean cultural context of the New Testament. Malina's (2001: 31, emphasis in original) definition of honor as "a claim to worth *and* the social acknowledgement of that worth," which echoes that of Pitt-Rivers (1965: 21) remains central to a contemporary understanding of honor. Malina (2001: 48–49) also affirmed a gendered understanding, arguing that while a general definition of honor as "the basis of one's reputation, of one's social standing" holds for both males and females, "[a]ctual conduct, daily concrete behavior, always depends on one's gender status. At this level of perception . . . honor is always male, and shame is always female."

This gendered perspective has been challenged in anthropological writing. Unni Wikan (1984: 643–44) discovered that an Omani woman who was a known adulterer was afforded respect, kindness, politeness, and hospitality by her neighbors, because the value of "neighbourhood solidarity among women" was so primary that to do otherwise would be "shameful." Lila Abu-Lughod (1986: 110) asserts that "women are admired for many of the same qualities as men in Bedouin society . . . they are expected to express most of the same honor-linked virtues" as men. Diane Baxter (2007: 747) argues that for West Bank Palestinians, "honor and shame are familial . . . women, as well as men, are subject to honor and shame which they may gain, maintain, or lose based on local norms and beliefs."

Yet, missiological writing appears to lag behind anthropological studies in this area, with Muslim women's distinctive experiences of and perspectives on honor and shame only recently emerging (e.g., Dale, 2021; Frank, 2019). This article builds on these recent writers' perspectives, demonstrating that Muslim women can indeed gain honor, and honor is not simply a value connected to men. Through the When Women Speak (WWS) network¹ over the last eight years, approximately 153 Christian women around the world have been intentionally engaging with Muslim women (both in majority Muslim and diaspora contexts), seeking to understand Muslim women's experiences of Islam in a variety of different areas. These Christian practitioners then gather to relay and reflect upon what they have heard and observed, and brainstorm what gospel responses can be offered. This article draws upon the collated knowledge, experiences, and stories of Muslim women in roughly 46 countries who have shared their insights on honor with these Christian women,² as well as on casual conversations I have had with Southeast Asian university students.

Language matters

There is rarely an exact equivalent of our single English word "honor" in other languages. Instead of trying to find one, we should discover what terms are used to

describe a person who behaves properly according to a society's highest standards, and investigate how they are used and for whom. Words such as "kind-hearted," "generous," and "good" are used by Muslim women in various locations. Terms that denote honor in Central Asia include "clean-skirted" (to describe people who behave well, do not lie, and show respect to others), "good-named," and "high-headed." Women in Cairo and Oman use the words "good, nice, beautiful" to denote women who are not "shameful" (Wikan, 1984: 641). A Christian worker in Central Asia recounted her conversation with a local Muslim friend about the difference between "respect" and "honor":

Respect can be bestowed on others and given to others, including God. Honor cannot be given to others, since it is not currency and belongs personally to each person (and it definitely can't be given to God, since he is not affected by humans and has no need of anything from them). When I asked about gaining honor, my [Muslim] friend said, "If I were to get it, who would I take it from? It is already with me." My friend explained that she works to keep her honor, but she can't earn or be given more.

At times, the language of honor is not explicit. Using the correct titles for people can give them the honor they are due. A person's family "name" is not just their label, but also a communal identity marker, referring to their public reputation, status, and authority (Tvarberg, 2018). Publicly praising someone for what they have done to help others, or for the ways they are generous and hospitable, can bring that person honor. The lack of gossip in a community about a person can also be an indicator of the honor that person holds. Behavior, body language, and other non-verbal cues can show who, and the degree to which, someone is honored. For example, in East Africa, the person who is invited to speak first is automatically known to be the most honored. In many contexts, gatherings do not start until the most honorable people have arrived. Seating arrangements at gatherings also denote honor.

What brings Muslim women honor?

As Malina (2001: 32) pointed out, honor can be either ascribed or acquired. Ascribed honor is that which someone receives because of who they are, not because of anything they have done. Sources of ascribed honor for women include their family's social status (both historical and current), their own position in the family, and their age. Achieved honor is that which someone attains because of what they do. For women, sources of achieved honor include marriage, motherhood, education, occupation, generosity, and, most importantly, behavior.

Social status and family position

Women are often known as the "daughter/wife/mother of . . .," demonstrating that they are anchored in a collective identity. Cultures in North Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East place importance on knowing one's lineage as far back as possible, and lineage can trump other considerations when affording a woman honor. A Christian

working in Central Asia reflected that: “At a hospital we used to work in we had two cleaners. One was descended from the prophet, and this put her above others, even though she had a low position.” Mothers-in-law are also afforded honor and respect in many cultures. Those who are viewed as “strong” in character are to be emulated in South Asia, and in rural areas they are looked to as sources of knowledge. A Christian health worker in rural South Asia reported that there could be problems “if we teach daughters-in-law new methods of health, and they then start telling their mothers-in-law ‘you’re wrong.’”

Age

As women age, more respect and honor may be given to them. It is not until women are post-menopausal that they are free from all the bodily functions that make them impure (menstruation, childbirth, and child-rearing messes, such as vomit and feces). They can then engage more in practices that bring honor—spending time in prayer, reading the Qur’an, and attending the mosque. Furthermore, even single woman may be honored because of their combined age and actions: a single older woman in North Africa was afforded a certain status and voice because she gave generously from her position of wealth.

Marriage and motherhood

Marriage gives a woman a degree of honor that she would not be afforded if she stayed single. However, it is motherhood, particularly for those who bear sons, which gives women an even greater position of honor in the family. A Central Asian Believer of Muslim Background (BMB) stated that “you don’t get honored if you don’t have a son.” In West Africa, a Christian worker observed that the honor of a young woman who is engaged rests on her ability to bear children prior to her marriage:

Already “engaged” young girls could, once they were 15 or 16, be loaned to their husband for some months. It was a good sign if she got pregnant during that time. She’d return home, bear the child, wait until the day of the marriage (at about 17 or 18 years old) then move and settle into the husband’s home.

Mothers are often held responsible for the way their children behave, and any honor a child receives reflects on them. Thus, they frequently boast about their children’s, especially a son’s, academic or work achievements, income, or position in society. A Christian woman working in Southeast Asia reported that “a mother here gains honor if her children are strong in their religious fervor and practices.”

Education and occupation

A woman’s status, and thus honor, in society can also be influenced by her educational level, occupation, and wealth. Teachers, doctors, and midwives are respected in

locations such as Southeast and Central Asia. A Muslim woman in the Middle East shared that while she does not like her current profession, she does it because it honors her family. Women who learn to recite the Qur'an and who are seen as educated in Islam are afforded honor in some parts of the Middle East, Southeast, and Central Asia.

Generosity

A woman known in her community as having a character of abundant generosity is highly valued in many contexts. This generosity can be shown through hospitality, generous giving of wealth, being open-hearted and kind to neighbors. Those who work for the good of a community performing charitable deeds such as taking care of the poor or being involved in a variety of social work can also be honored. The heads (male and female) of local neighborhood areas in Southeast Asia are responsible for keeping the neighborhood safe and running smoothly and harmoniously. When someone is chosen by the residents of the area for that position it is an indication of the honor in which he or she is held.

South Asian women who are involved in micro-credit ventures are allowed to leave home and are afforded some respect because they are earning money—a family's economic needs override any religious constraints on them. A North African BMB woman of limited means went to great lengths to borrow funds for expensive medicine for a sick family member and maintain positive esteem within her familial circle.

Behavior

A woman's position, achievements, or age, however, are not as significant as her behavior in determining how she is perceived. Boys are often presented with a positive "carrot"—you will be honored if you behave appropriately. Girls, on the other hand, are taught from a negative "stick" perspective—your appropriate behavior ensures you do not bring shame upon yourself, your family, and the wider community. Girls are consistently taught about what brings shame and are strictly disciplined in how to dress, talk, and act. Women in the Middle East speak about their need to avoid doing things that would result in a loss of honor and argue that men have more ways to actively achieve honor. These Middle Eastern women bemoan perceived "double standards" where it is acceptable for boys to have girlfriends, but not the other way around: "boys who date girls never marry them because they can't trust that they haven't had other boyfriends prior to them, and because they wouldn't want to marry girls with such loose morals."

While Muslim women can gain honor in the ways described above, it remains true that a woman's honor is most often shown through modesty and sexual propriety. An Arabic expression sums up this emphasis: "A man's honor lies between the legs of a woman." A man's, and therefore the family's, honor lies in a woman's chastity. Thus, the men in a woman's life—her father, brothers, uncles, husband, and sons—are predominately concerned with ensuring that she acts in a way to preserve the honor of the

family, particularly through preventing her from doing anything that could lead to an accusation related to sexual shame. Egyptian doctor, writer, and feminist Nawal El Saadawi (1994: 43–44) emphasizes that for the men in a family “[t]he stigma of dishonour, of losing one’s honour, could only be washed off by blood.” She proceeds to vividly describe a woman’s wedding night where a midwife pierces the bride’s hymen and shows the blood as “the mark of an intact honour . . . honour meant the honour of the male, even if the proof of it was in the body of the female.”

For a woman, even a suspicion of sexual impropriety can “wreak havoc with her family’s honor” (Baxter, 2007: 747). The wealth of journal articles about Muslim women and “honor killings” or “honor violence” demonstrates the high value placed by Muslim men on maintaining their honor in the community through female sexual propriety. The men of the family are not the only members who are responsible for the behavior of the women. Baxter (2007: 751, 752) states that in Palestine, older female relatives are also expected to monitor a woman’s behavior, and that her “performance of daily, mundane activities” is “observed and evaluated” for appropriateness.

Women are expected to cover, or hide, their “*awrah/aurat*,” the “shameful” or “naked” parts of their bodies, the interpretation of which varies across the Muslim world according to local contexts and interpretations of Islamic law. For some, covering their bodies with loose-fitting long clothes, is enough. Some advocate covering the ankles, feet, and hands. For many, a head-covering of some sort is prescribed, but what kind of head covering is also debated. Southeast Asian university students expressed surprise when they saw a video of a fashionable Muslim in the UK wearing a turban-like head covering (rather than a hijab), saying “the requirement is to cover the neck.” Other Southeast Asian students felt free not to wear a head covering of any sort, with some indicating that context is more important:

in some rural villages if you don’t wear one [a hijab] people will think you are not good and not polite. In the city, however, no-one can tell if you are a “good” girl or not: some girls wear one for show, to hide something that would be shameful, like a tattoo or the fact they are really prostitutes.

For other Muslims, it is not just the body that needs covering but the voice as well—they must ensure that their voices are not an allurements to men. Women are taught not to bring attention to themselves in public and to act appropriately around men by speaking quietly and sparingly, and by being modest and demure—sometimes the word “shy” is used. Modesty in the Horn of Africa is shown by keeping one’s eyes down, covering one’s mouth when one speaks, smiles, or laughs, and not shaking hands with men. Women must not be too extrovert, or too social around men. Women in South Asia are careful about what they wear, who they talk to or associate with, and how they talk, especially to men outside of their homes. One South Asian Muslim said women “should walk slowly, with small steps, not swinging their arms.” A polite, well-mannered woman in Southeast Asia is said to be one who “sits properly, does not speak loudly or rudely, does not make noises with her spoon when she eats, and does not wear sexy clothing.” A woman’s name should not be called out in public in some

Middle Eastern contexts, since honorable women are meant to be “unseen.” The women in a family are sometimes not even spoken about by the men—to the extent that other men may not know if a friend of theirs has sisters.

In many countries, women are not permitted to be seen in public with a male who is not a relative. This is to ensure that she does not do anything that could be conceived of as shameful, and to stave off any gossip that could arise from her actions. However, in one Southeast Asian context where there is freer mixing of males and females, a Muslim woman asserted that it is still important for women to “dress in a way that won’t arouse a man’s lust and not go from boyfriend to boyfriend or do something that would damage one’s reputation.” Males and females must not be demonstrably affectionate toward each other in public, even if they are married. Women will also ensure they are not seen anywhere that would bring them into disrepute. Southeast Asian university students said they would not go to karaoke bars or nightclubs. Similarly, in the Middle East, a Christian woman observed that:

there are certain cafes in my city where alcohol is served and/or people smoke water pipes, and my friends would never go to them. Not just because they don’t smoke or drink, but because they want to put themselves at a distance from any possibility that someone could accuse them of something dishonorable.

Religious and pious behavior can bring a woman honor. In the Gulf, one Christian woman reported that piety is less about clothing and more about knowledge—the ability to study, memorize, and recite the Qur’an is prized. In South Asia, a woman who behaves religiously, by getting up very early to pray, for example, is given more honor. Conversely, some Muslim women in Southeast Asia feel that “being more pious or giving the appearance of being more religious” (e.g., by wearing the niqab)³ does not bring a woman more honor. They said it is “sometimes embarrassing when people act piously in front of others.”

Other Muslim women have reported different behaviors lauded as honorable or respectable, including “obeying one’s husband’s wishes” or being “good to” one’s husband, and “not fighting back.” One South Asian woman commented that her sister silently endured domestic violence to honor her parents—if her parents had known and had brought her home, they would have been shamed. Modest women in Central Asia hide their troubles, not showing them to everyone but continuing to smile and have a “warm face.” Honorable women in the Gulf “have dignity even in the face of suffering” and are “empathetic and can mourn with others.” In West Africa, the first wife in a family, as well as the husband, are respected if they can “stay calm.” Taking time to walk through the village, to sit, and to talk to everyone in a “calm” way shows “you have everything under control, which is a sign to everyone that you’re trustworthy.”

Honor and God

So far, this article has demonstrated how women may attain honor in horizontal relationships—with their families, friends, community, and wider society. Honor before

God, however, can be perceived differently. In the daily life of Muslim women, the basic problem is that humans are ignorant of what we should do right; thus, the solution is to get right guidance. Muhammad is seen as the perfect example for humanity to emulate and bring to the right path of God. God is unknowable, and totally “other.” Honor cannot be given to him, and neither can he be shamed, since he is unaffected by humans’ actions or opinions.

According to women in Central Asia, a woman’s honor before God is based on her “sexual purity, emulating the lives of the wives and daughters of the prophet Muhammed.” If a woman’s honor is lost before God, she can ask for forgiveness and God will forgive her, but “she will still need to be punished for her wrongdoing.” A Southeast Asian woman observed that:

whether or not God forgives and restores a woman’s honor is something between that woman and God and is not for anyone else to judge . . . although we can tell if someone is truly repentant because they become more diligent in their religious practices and [there is an improvement in their] behavior and speech.

Other Southeast Asian women asserted that everyone “has the same honor before God—no-one is better than anyone else.” They argued that women who wear a full niqab are not more “modest” in God’s eyes, but rather just “want more praise from others.” Similarly, women in one Middle Eastern country were adamant that covering one’s face does not give you more honor before God, but “if [you are] not wearing it outside others will see you as dishonorable.”

In contrast, a South Asian diaspora woman quoted Surah Al-Israa 17:70⁴ and argued that honor “comes from cleanness of heart and honor in God’s sight . . . [the concept of honor is] rightly used when speaking of the dignity and honor with which God has formed and endowed humans.” She was adamant that:

[honor is] a form of arrogance when one supposes that their idea of “honor” or restoring honor is higher than God’s moral law. For example, in “honor killings” there is no honor in taking the life of another and supposing that what is only God’s to give and take should be usurped by mere men.

Learning about honor

In seeking to understand how honor is experienced and perceived by Muslim women, we need to “study relationships generally and how they work out in real-life situations . . . through observing, participating, and sharing in other people’s lives” (Merz, 2020: 137). Questions we may ask include the following:

- Which characters demonstrate honorable behavior in stories, TV shows, and movies?
- What proverbs refer to honor? How are they gendered? (Dale, 2020: 14)
- Which women are women of honor in the community? What do they do, or not do, which makes them honorable?

- When a modest woman speaks, how does she speak and what can she say? Is this different for older and younger women?
- What and how do parents teach their children about appropriate behavior toward others? How is this gendered? (Merz, 2020: 137)

Points of connection and engagement

As Christians, we are often concerned about helping Muslim women find freedom from the negative aspects of shame and the fear of being shamed, and rightly so. However, it is important to also focus on honor itself, and what that means for women. In focusing on honor, we need to make a distinction between what Audrey Frank (2019: 57), in her book *Covered Glory*, calls “counterfeit honor” and “true honor.” “Counterfeit honor” relies on adherence to human rules, “breeds self-righteous pride or hopeless despair,” “separates and condemns,” “comes at the expense of other[s],” and “is temporary, destructive, and contradicts God’s purposes” (Frank, 2019: 57–58). “True honor”, on the other hand, “invites relationship with God” (Frank, 2019: 57). We acquire it because of what God has done for us in making us his “chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession” (1 Pet 2:9), “heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ” (Rom 8:17), and “children of God” (1 John 3:1–2). There are many passages in Scripture that can help women see what it means to be honorable in God’s sight. Starting points to explore can be found in Georges and Baker’s (2016) *Ministering in Honor–Shame Cultures* and Wu and Jensen’s (2022) *Seeking God’s Face*.

Aside from these, we can consider what specific examples of women there are in the Bible who retain or gain honor before others or before God. What stories can we point to that show BMBs how they might continue to act honorably as women in their own contexts as well as before God? What does it mean to be respected, or to behave in an “honorable” way (even if we do not use that language) in a Christian context?

Biblical generosity

Several women in the Bible act honorably through hospitality and generous use of their resources. Abigail seeks to restore David’s honor and turn away his act of revenge after her husband Nabal publicly insults (shames) him (1 Sam 25). Esther holds two feasts for the king and Haman (5:4–5, 7:1–2), an act that is seen as honoring (5:11–12) but is also her way of averting the destruction of her people. The woman who fears the Lord in Proverbs 31 “provides food for her household and portions for her maidens” (31:15) and “opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy” (31:20). Lydia offers hospitality in her home to Paul and Timothy during their travels (Acts 16:15). Phoebe is commended by Paul for her philanthropy (Rom 16:1–2).

Biblical behavior

Esther is honorable, dignified, and respectful in her behavior toward both Mordecai, her uncle who raised her and treats her as his daughter, and to King Ahasuerus, despite

the danger of arousing the king's displeasure. More importantly, she honors God through her faith and courage, not seeking "praise or glory for herself" but rather calling "the Jews to celebrate a religious feast to give glory and thanks to God (9:20, 29–32)" (Barrs, 2009: 220–21). The model woman in Proverbs 31 lives a self-sacrificial life of love, which blesses those around her (Barrs, 2009: 229). She is wise, kind, strong, dignified, and fears the Lord—and for the quality of her character, she is publicly honored and praised (v31). 1 Peter 3:1–6 details how women in that context were to behave with honor to win over their unbelieving husbands.⁵

"Honorable" Christian witness

Christian women need to think about our behavior as a reflection of Christ in a Muslim context. How are we being perceived, and how does the community's or individual's perception of us affect their willingness to accept our message? Are we seen as "honorable" in that context? Will we sully someone's reputation through their association with us (Musk, 2004: 268)? We must consider how we will make decisions about our behavior, our dress, our language. Will we need to change the way we speak, laugh, or even walk? Will we need to wear clothing that we find restrictive or confronting? How will we give and receive hospitality in ways that are generous and honoring? How will we demonstrate we are a "pure" or "pious" person? Will we need to use more "religious" language? Will we need to visibly (verbally and physically) show we are praying at the same time as they are performing their ritual prayers?

Single women, or those without children, will need to prayerfully consider how to demonstrate that they are "honorable" women in contexts where marriage and motherhood hold high cultural value. A single woman living far from her family can gain her identity through the relationships she forms in her community. A landlady/landlord, a local family, a church organization, or a nongovernmental organization (NGO) may give us an identity, social status, and position by virtue of association. We will also need to think and pray about how to respond to questions and scrutiny about our status as a single or childless woman. This scrutiny can be painful and confronting, as Audrey Frank (2019: 103–4) personally experienced. A Christian single woman who works among diaspora Muslims said she has "learnt not to hate that question [about single-ness] but to use it as an opportunity to talk about seeing God . . . trying to show the value is not in marriage but in Jesus."

Conclusion

Honor for women is not homogenous across the Muslim world. Muslim women do not only bear shame and are instead able to be ascribed and achieve honor. Social status, position in the family, age, motherhood, education, occupation, and generosity, can all provide a woman with honor—though their behavior is often a stronger determiner of honor than other variables. Honor before God appears to be less of a concern to most Muslim women than honor in the public eye. Christians would benefit from investigating the place of honor for Muslim women in any given context and work at providing

them with biblical and practical models of honorable women so that the good news about true honor found in Christ will be attractive and compelling.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Louise Simon  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8298-2006>

Notes

1. <https://whenwomenspeak.net/>.
2. Participants in the WWS Women's IView courses are working among Muslim women around the world. They read about each topic, explore questions with their Muslim friends, then meet virtually to discuss what they have learned and experienced. The participants give permission for the conversation contents to be shared for the sake of others' learning. All contributions are anonymized to protect participants' privacy. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes come from Muslim women or BMBs, or Christian women in conversation with them.
3. A niqab is a veil that completely covers a woman's face, with the exception of the eyes.
4. "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference" (Saheeh International version).
5. I acknowledge that the meaning and application of this passage is highly contested.

References

- Abu-Lughod L (1986) *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.
- Barrs J (2009) *Through His Eyes: God's Perspective on Women in the Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.
- Baxter D (2007) Honor thy sister: Selfhood, gender, and agency in Palestinian culture. *Anthropological Quarterly* 80(3): 737–75.
- Benedict R (1946) *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Cozens S (2018) Shame cultures, fear cultures, and guilt cultures: Reviewing the evidence. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 42(4): 326–36.
- Dale M (2020) Shame and honour: Blunt instrument or useful lens? *When Women Speak webzine* 6(1): 6–18. Available at: <https://whenwomenspeak.net/issue/vol-6-no-1-july-2020/> (accessed 23 February 2023).
- Dale M (2021) *Islam and Women: Hagar's heritage*. Oxford: Regnum.
- DeSilva DA (2000) *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- El Saadawi N (1994) *The Innocence of the Devil*. Trans. Hetata S. Berkeley: The University of California Press.
- Flanders C and Mischke W (eds) (2020) *Honor, Shame and the Gospel: Reframing Our Message and Ministry*. Littleton, CO: William Carey.

- Frank A (2019) *Covered Glory*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House.
- Georges J and Baker MD (2016) *Ministering in Honor–Shame Cultures: Biblical Foundations and Practical Essentials*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Malina BJ (1981) *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press.
- Malina BJ (2001) *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd edn. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Mead M (ed.) (2003/1937) *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Merz J (2020) The culture problem: How the honor/shame issue got the wrong end of the anthropological stick. *Missiology* 48(2): 127–41.
- Muller R (2000) *Honor and Shame: Unlocking the Door*. Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris.
- Musk B (2004) *Touching the Soul of Islam*. Oxford: Monarch Books.
- Nida E (1954) *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*. New York: Harper & Bros.
- Peristiany JG (ed.) (1965) *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Pitt-Rivers J (1965) Honour and social status. In: Peristiany JG (ed.) *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, pp. 19–77.
- Tvarberg L (2018) Biblically, what is your name? In: *HonorShame*. Available at: <http://honor-shame.com/biblically-what-is-your-name/> (accessed 23 March 2023).
- Wikan U (1984) Shame and honour: A contestable pair. *Man*, New Series 19(4): 635–52.
- Wu J (2012) *Saving God’s Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press.
- Wu J and Jensen R (2022) *Seeking God’s Face: Practical Reflections on Honor and Shame in Scripture*. Houston, TX: Lucid Books.

Author biography

Louise Simon has lived and worked in both East and Southeast Asia. She teaches at CMS-Australia’s training college, St. Andrew’s Hall, equipping cross-cultural workers and undertaking research and writing for the *When Women Speak* network. She is a mentor in the Angelina Noble Centre, is an adjunct lecturer in missiology at Ridley College, Melbourne, and holds a PhD in East Asian Studies from the Australian National University.