COMPREHENSIONS ON HEALTH AND DISEASES IN A BLACK SEA VILLAGE

BİR KARADENİZ KÖYÜ'NDE SAĞLIK VE HASTALIKLARA YÖNELİK KAVRAYIŞLAR

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Abstract
This paper discusses the disease patterns of the villagers who live in Village Akıncılar located in Araç county of Kastamonu, and their perception of diseases. The purpose of the paper is to examine the ways in which the villagers express diseases, and demonstrate their approach toward modern and folk medicine/traditional medicine, and to reveal the place of both medical practices in rural area life. According to findings of the research although staying healthy is paid great significance by the villagers the manner in which the villagers assess their diseases vary depending on the type of disease. Although the villagers usually try to solve their health problems through modern medicine, traditional practices including magic are deemed to be significant part of medical pursuit today. Despite the villagers' account in which they pointed out not to have anything to do with magic in their daily lives, magic could be deemed the source of certain incidents and psychological problems, and could determine the framework of their life stories. This study draws attention to the fact that magic has psychological, cultural and social functions in the village, claiming that magic has a significant function in explaining certain facts deemed as extraordinary in the village.

Öz
Bu makalede, Kastamonu'nun Araç ilçesinde bulunan Akıncılar Köyü'nde yaşayan köylülerin hastalık örüntüleri ve hastalıklara yönelik kavrayışları konu edildi. Makalenin amacı, köylülerin hastalıkları nasıl ifade ettiğine yer vererek modern ve halk tıbbı/geleneksel tıbba yaklaşımlarını göstermek ve her iki tıbbi uygulamanın da kırsal alan yaşantısındaki yerini ortaya koymaktır. Yapılan araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre sağlıklı kalmak köyde oldukça önemsenmekle birlikte köylülerin, geçirdikleri hastalıkları değerlendirme biçimi, hastalığın türüne göre çeşitlilik göstermektedir. Köylüler sağlık sorunlarını çoğunlukla modern tıptan cevap alacak şekilde çözmeye çalışsa da köyde günümüzde büyü gibi geleneksel uygulamalar da tıbbi arayışların önemli bir parçası olarak görülmektedir. Köylülerin gündelik yaşamlarında büyüyle temas kurmadıklarını belirtmelerine karşılık büyü, başa gelen kimi olayların ve psikolojik sorunların kaynağı olarak görülebilmekte ve yaşam öykülerinin çerçevesini belirleyebilmektedir. Bu çalışma, büyünün, köyde psikolojik, kültürel ve toplumsal işlevleri olduğuna dikkat çekerek büyünün köyde olağan dışı olarak görülen kimi olguları açıklamada önemli bir işlevi olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

Introduction

The history of humanity is marked with diversified searches for good health. Not all of the diseases defined by modern medicine may be interpreted as “illnesses”. Cultural differences have significant role in providing and increasing this diversity. Disease is not only related to biology of human groups but it is also related to their environment, social relations, value patterns, technology and world view (Emiroğlu 175). Although disease is recognized as a universal fact culture has a significant place in comprehension of disease. Comprehensions related to health indicate that diseases are constructed culturally and are not experienced independent from culture (Bates 493; Koçyiğit; Kottak 550). How diseases affect the communities and reactions against diseases channel the researchers (for a few centuries) to perform researches on how diseases are comprehended.

According to the World Health Organization, "health" is both lack of disease and exhaustion and situation of complete physical, mental and social welfare (Lindemann 25). Modern medicine specialists agree on the difficulty of realization of "full welfare condition" (Hayran 82). Diseases are explained in many societies in the manners different from those explained by modern medicine. Anthropologic perspective did not deem those explanations independent from "what is religious" and concentrated on the question related to the "origin of religion" at first sight. In this context, theories of animism, animatism and totemism come to the forefront as of the nineteenth century (Özbudun and Uysal 174). Edward B.Taylor deems animism as the oldest one of the religions in his classical work titled *Primitive Culture*. According to Taylor, animism had developed experiences of the first humans on situations including sleeping, daydreaming, waking, dreaming and death. And this led to the belief of a "spirit" (anima) that could be separated from the body. Accordingly the spirit continues to live after death since it enters in dreams, follows the alive in memories and daydreams and creates visible effects on destinies of people. Belief in ghosts, spirits of the dead, immortality and a world of dead arose in this manner. Briefly, animism has developed as the philosophy and religion of "primitive" human (Malinowski 8; Özbudun and Uysal175; Temren 305).

Considering how, in "traditional" cultures, diseases are explained through their relationality with "the religious", most noticeable are accounts made in terms of "the supernatural". And those trials are explained with mystic, animistic and magical causality theories. According to the mystic theory, the diseases are explained through destiny, bad luck and mystic punishing as a consequence of the acts and experiences of the person. Animistic theory was created on the basis of explanations that diseases arise from spirit rhythm and aggression of spirits. Magic-based theory on the other hand suggests that disease is the expression of sorcery, witchcraft of a bad, jealous person or magical attempts that a magician performs secretly (Güleç 35-36).

James Frazer who objected Taylor's limiting the essence of "primitive religions" with animism defends in his study titled *The Golden Bough* that there are three stages in intellectual development of human culture, namely magic, religion and science. Frazer detects that religion arises from the efforts of first humans to explain their experiences with their environments and lives and to make the same meaningful (Temren 305). Frazer claims that magic rituals have two features namely law of homeopathy and law of contagion and that all sympathy rituals are

magical and suggests that magic made up mystic and scientific life of the "primitive" human (Mauss 56-57). Homeopathy functions as applying any result desired to be obtained on any object representing the person who is desired to be affected or imitating with acts and contagion functions as applying magic on any element of the target person according to the detection of Frazer with respect to magic rituals (Özbudun and Uysal 179).

Frazer defends that animism was not the unique or dominant belief in "primitive" societies. According to Frazer, humans try to control the processes of nature through rituals and magic for practical reasons. He deems magic which is based on the belief that humans can directly dominate the nature as relative of science with this aspect. Many anthropologists who criticize this theory of Frazer and develop at the same time have attracted attention to the fact that magic cannot be reduced to sympathy, magic which is derived from tradition existed in a mystic atmosphere, to its secrecy, to the fact that it is performed by carefully selected persons or hereditary successors and arises from designation of a specific secret power. Accordingly the essence of religion is not animism but *Mana* (secret power) and *Mana* is the essence of magic. Consequently magic is completely different from science (Malinowski 8-10; Mauss 58). Although Frazer divided "primitive" and "modern" societies on the basis of the thought that magical and scientific thought dominated subsequent researchers revealed that magical thought was a part of daily life in all societies as it is seen (Özbudun and Uysal 179). Mauss who sees magic as some sort of religion created to respond ordinary needs of family life defends that there are spirits in magic and even the gods could take place in magic (67-68).

Mana is particularly the power of spiritual beings namely, the spirits of the ancestors and the souls in the nature. It creates magical beings using these. *Mana* is not a simple power or being, it also refers to an action, quality and situation. The power of the magician contains social thoughts including magical quality of something, magical thing/being, having magical power, bewitching and affecting through magic. What is magical determines the religion, even the social value. Social position of individuals is directly proportional to significance of the *Mana* they have (Mauss 156-158). Totemism defined by Frazer as the relation between a group of people with blood relation and the totems of the group of people which are specific natural or artificial objects made it possible to make anthropological and sociological inferences for comprehending all initial forms of worshipping.

"Primitive" human is much more dependent on the group which it has direct relation with due to practical collaboration and spiritual solidarity. Durkheim who sees totemism as the most primitive form of religion on the other hand identifies "the religious" with "the social" and sees "totemistic principle" which is identical with *Mana* and the god of the clan as the clan itself (Malinowski 10-12).

Bronislaw Malinowski who defends that there is no folk without religion and magic also remarks that religion, magic and tradition provide traditional and spiritual "escapes" in order to cope up with tension and offer psycho-social mechanisms. Therefore the magic, eventually flourishing, gives men confidence and peace when risks cannot be controlled and thus it ritualizes the optimism. (Malinowski 7; Morris 241-242; Temren 307). Evans Pritchard states in his study titled *Witchcraft, Oracles And Magic Among The Azande* that the only idea that could define the Sudan Azande as "religious" is limited to magic which is thought to be effective in all areas of life. The "religious" lives of the Azande consist of the measures against the destructive effects of hereditary mangu (in the small intestine) which is found in the bodies of the witch persons inherited from the parent with the same sex and which is activated when the person loses her temper or when she is affected excessively (Özbudun and Uysal 174, 180).

The current anthropological works with respect to magic gradually exist from functionalist, structuralist or structuralist-functionalist understanding and began to concentrate on meaning. Clifford Geertz, the founder of interpretivist anthropology interprets religion as a cultural system. According to Geertz, religion which is the "summary" of culture offers a framework for interpreting life and environment (Özbudun and Uysal 168, 174).

The latest theoretical discussions underline the intertwinement of magic with religion and even with science, pointing at psychological, cultural and social functions of magic. In line with the increase in the interest of social sciences in disease theories particularly as of the 20th century, the paper by Forest E.Clements titled *Primitive Concepts of Disease* (1932) is accepted to be the first anthropological text in this field. Clements indicates in his study the scarcity of the common points between the forms of explaining of diseases by the communities and the explanations accepted by modern medical science (Güleç 34). Interest in the studies related to social meanings of diseases as much as health increases in the studies performed subsequently and the meanings attributed to diseases and social imagination of diseases continue to attract attention of anthropological theory. This

paper discusses the illness of the dwellers who live in Akıncılar, a village of the Black Sea and their comprehensions with respect to the diseases.

Kastamonu is one of the major cities that sends immigrant workers to Istanbul. And among these, Araç county is worth noting. Within the boundaries of this county Akıncılar Village has send immigrants around sixties in a vast scale. Therefore a field research[1] which predominantly focused on migration was conducted in Akıncılar in 2006. The field research performed within a period of three months consists of interviews performed using participating observation and interview technique. Interviews were performed with 108 individuals (56 males and 52 females) who lived continuously in the village in separate houses in winter and summer months and the vast majority of which were spouses.

This research has been conducted under Anthropology department of İstanbul University with the consent and confirmation of faculty of letters. An approval from the municipality of Kastamonu and district governorship of Araç is also obtained. Interviwee have been informed on the privacy of their identities and the aim of the study as to how and where the results will be used. As a result of detailed and clear acknowledgement the trust between the interviewer and the subject has resulted in a voluntary participation of the entire interviwee group. During the field research a written certificate warranting the secrecy of their testimony is proposed to villagers. However villagers have found it unneccessary to undersign a document with respect to their relationship of trust developed with interviewers and the official approvals of local authorities. Therefore at the time of the study no informed written consent is obtained.

One of the most important observations of this study is the Village's outstanding position for a reverse immigration. Under reverse immigration, the parallel existence of traditional and modern medicine is another distinguishing characteristic of this village. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate how the villagers express the diseases. Accordingly this paper is to focus on health and

[1] This field research performed with Gözde Gürler (Aksoy) and Ayça Sıcakkanlı (Çakmakçı). See for further information about the village: Ayça Sıcakkanlı. Kırsal Alanda Kadın: Kastamonu İli Araç İlçesi Akıncılar Köyü'nün Sosyal-Kültürel ve Ekonomik Açıdan İncelenmesi (Women in Rural Area: Examination of Akıncılar Village of the Province of Kastamonu County of Araç in Social-Cultural and Economic Terms) 2006. Gözde Gürler. Bir Kastamonu Köyü "Akıncılar" ("Akıncılar" a Kastamonu Village) 2006. Oya Topdemir. Köy Gerçeği: Kastamonu İli Araç İlçesi Sosyal Antropolojik Açıdan Akıncılar Köyü'nde Yaşam (Village Reality: Life in Akıncılar Village of the Province of Kastamonu County of Araç in Social Anthropological Terms) 2006.

hygiene in the village, illness patterns of the villagers and their comprehensions with respect to diseases and the alternative searches the villagers refer to while interpreting diseases. Parallel to aim and subject of the study try to demonstrate their approach toward modern and folk/traditional medicine and to reveal the significance of both medical practices in rural life. Furthermore the paper concentrate on the functions of magic, one of the means used in the village for explaining diseases and try to demonstrate how magic regulates the relations of villagers with themselves, with the nature and with one another.

During the research questions related to general health of the villagers were asked to all women and men interviewed. However more detailed questions related to health of the household members were only asked to women considering the care labor of women within the household and stipulating that they should have had better command on health issue compared to men. Observations performed during the field research, answers received from the villagers and sensitivity of women for following illnesses and treatments of the family members indicated that women had significant dominance over the field of health.

General Characteristics of Akıncılar Village and its Dwellers

Akıncılar is a lowland village of congregate settlement. In the village a high level of reverse migration from the city to the village is observed. Dwellers are of Sunni sect call themselves as “yörük” (nomad). An average of three people per house is present and in more than half of them there's no children and average number of children is 2. Most of those who lived in the village were born within the provincial boundaries of Kastamonu and almost all of them were born in rural areas.

The ages of women interwiewed ranges between 25 and 85 and with average age of 55. Males on the other side range between 30 and 85 and their age average is 60 (Gürler 53, 59; Sıcakkanlı 102). The women and men interviewed are generally graduated from primary school. Among the interviewed all of the males and only a few of females have participated in a job. Among the jobs that the males do in cities, the majority are those like cooking, etc. The reason that the dwellers call this village “a cooks' village” is their specialization in the food sector.

High proportion of men (%71) have migrated from village to Istanbul for economic reasons and the majority have returned back with their wives after retirement. Currently main source of income of the dwellers are their pensions,

small scale farming and breeding. Nowadays there has been an increase in the number of workers, white collar workers and especially shopkeepers.

The desire to live the remaining years of life healthily is one of the most significant reasons for reverse migration to the village. What is meant here is both being able to subsist on the pension in the village and "health" offering structure of the natural village life, a quiet environment and healthy food.

Health and Hygiene in the Village

The most regular activity that the villagers perform in their daily routine to protect their health is to keep the village and their houses healthy and clean. Although they pay effort to protect their environments and eventually themselves, the problems of water, garbage, fly and tick are the most typical problems encountered in the village. Although the villagers have problem of water particularly in the summer, this village is in a better condition than the neighboring villages since it has water and a sewerage system. Nevertheless because of disposal of the garbage of the village into the stream nearby the village and small scale stockbreeding activities performed, there is the problem of fly and insects in the village. The villagers try to solve this problem by adhering adhesive papers on the ceilings of their houses as a method they developed themselves in order to prevent the infectious diseases that could be infected by means of flies. Another problem encountered in the village is the incidents of tick. The measure that the villagers take against such incidents to which they are accustomed is to apply to the health institutions in the county immediately after the incident. For example, in the case of a tick bite of a woman who had come to visit her relatives in the village during the field research, the villagers who were aware of the dangers that ticks may cause immediately intervened and took the woman to the doctor (Crimean Congo Fever is a deadly virus infection spread by ticks that has claimed the lives of many Turkish citizens living in nearby areas in the Black Sea region).

Housekeeping works could generally be performed only when the house get dirty. Women are responsible for cleaning the house and its environs, in the village. Women who start to clean their houses by sweeping the front side of the houses take care about inside cleaning of their houses more than exterior of the house. Sweeping is generally performed using a hand broom but a vacuum cleaner is also used if present. There are washing machines in many houses in the village and women generally do the laundry in the machine using detergent, bleacher and softener. The women stated that they boiled the laundry in the past, they have

abandoned this habit since they had a washing machine and they were not in the habit of ironing after doing the laundry. Daily life conditions in the village do not require wearing ironed garments depending on the agriculture and stockbreeding activities performed though small in scale. The garments of women who frequently enter in the stable and hayloft in daytime, take the animals to pasture and cook bread[2] get dirty and crease very fast while performing those tasks. Moreover wearing garments not ironed does not disturb since there are not many persons in the village who iron their garments[3]. The women also wash the dish in the village and they generally wash the dishes manually including those few persons who own automatic dish washers in their homes.

Health of the Villagers and Comprehensions in the Village with respect to Diseases

Looking through the health conditions of the villagers in more detail, it is necessary to state first of all that they contacted the county (Araç) to find a solution for health problems. Villagers stated that they solved their health related problems mostly in the health institutions in the county since the village is very close to it (3 km) and all villagers have social security covers. Villagers go to the city center of Kastamonu for treatment when the medical means of those institutions are insufficient. They continue their search for health in Ankara, even in Istanbul if necessary.

İllnesses of men and women living in the village showed significant similarity. For example, circulating system diseases (particularly cardiovascular) are the most frequently observed disease category regardless of sex. The research questions were prepared considering that the Region of Black Sea was the region of Turkey which was affected most by Chernobyl disaster that happened in 1986 in Ukraine. There are many arguments which provided an explanation that Chernobyl disaster particularly affected Eastern Black Sea Region in Turkey with the increase in cancer incidents ("Çernobil Nedir"; "Çernobil Nükleer Kazası Kurbanlarının Acı Hikayeleri"; "Çernobil'in etkisi hâlâ sürüyor"). Although various predictions are being made about the malignancy rates in Black Sea region concerning the

[2] Predominantly women perform such tasks.

[3] We observed during the period when we were in the village that the dwellers (particularly the men) paid attention to wear ironed garments relatively in special days such as weddings and holidays or when they go to town.

Chernobyl Disaster, the villagers has not yet confirmed any outcomes of this disaster in Akıncılar which is located in the mids of this region.

The data obtained in the research revealed that the prevalence of diseases in the village resembled that of Turkey in general with cardiovascular diseases being the most frequently observed disease class. The circulating system diseases in this village are the most widely observed chronic illnesses. Villagers stated that they learnt the type of such diseases for the first time seeking for medical health as a consequence of complaints including pain, ache, burning sensation, exhaustion. According to the villagers operation should be realized when the disease burdens unbearably[4].

The illnesses that women and men suffer from differ in terms of sex-specific diseases. Women are administered medicine regularly for musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases (bone and joint)[5], digestive system diseases (particularly stomach and intestine), endocrinologic diseases in addition to circulating system diseases[6]. The types of illnesses that the first degree relatives of the women interviewed including their mothers, fathers and siblings suffer from particularly include circulating system (cardiovascular) diseases as well as endocrinologic, digestive (stomach and intestine), musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases (bone and joint), respiratory, neural system diseases and malignant (cancer) diseases.

Apart from the above listed diseases, evident differences between generations of women are observed on pregnancy and bearing characteristics. Accordingly total number of pregnancy of the elder women is particularly quite high. The method of birth control most frequently used by the women is intrauterine device and pregnancy and the number of children they have is lower than the women of previous generations. The women specified that when an unwanted pregnancy is

[4] The rate of those who have had no operation is quite high.

[5] Looking through sleeping habits of the villager, it is found that the time of waking up is five o'clock in the summer and six o'clock in the winter in general conformant to the village life and their time of sleeping is about ten o'clock in the summer and in the winter. Though the time that the villagers pass sleeping has specific length, the places they sleep are generally such places high from the ground such as divan (sofa) and bedstead. Habit of sleeping on the mattress has been abandoned.

[6] The persons who had any operation of uterus, eye, goiter, cyst and wen, gastrointestinal system, operations of orthopedics, tonsil and adenoid by order of frequency. Average of age when they have operation is 39.

present method of the first choice is to end this pregnancy by aborting the baby using their traditional methods.

The women interviewed generally gave birth in the state hospital in the county. All women became pregnant minimum once and experienced their first pregnancy in the first year of their marriage (at the age of 20 averagely). Generally there have been live births in the village although only a few women are reported who gave dead births. There are also women who lost their baby after a live birth. If the reason for death of their children is the result of a biological reason or a disease they easily expressed those reasons with words including "he was borne premature and he died" and "he died because of toxic diarrhea". Nutrition of the live children starts with breastfeeding till the age of two together with baby food support starting at the end of the six months.

The types of illnesses of the men are endocrinologic, urogenital system diseases (kidney) again particularly including the circulating system (cardiovascular) diseases. Although most of the men continue with their treatment, a significant portion of men do not continue with their treatment. Health search of the men and women living in the village differ at this point. Men continue with their treatment for a short time while women continue for much longer time. In other words, women's health search shows continuity. This result indicates that women are much motivated to live and to survive. Looking through the illnesses of the children living in the village the most frequent diseases in male children are neural system diseases. Whereas diseases in female children are musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases (bone and joint) and respiratory system diseases.

Looking through inter-generation diseases in the village circulating system diseases is genetic heritage from the previous generations and in addition to diseases of circulating system; diseases of musculoskeletal system which was again observed in the previous generations as well come to the forefront in women and endocrinologic diseases come to the forefront in men. Additionally, the neural diseases which were not found in the women and men interviewed but which were observed in the previous generations, particularly in male children who are the last generation were remarkable. The illnesses of the women and men were similar along the generations and such diseases observed in the past may reappear in their children.

One of the most remarkable things in comprehensions of diseases in the village is how diseases are expressed as one may see from the type of all those information that the villagers give with respect to their health. The relation between diseases and religion are revealed in those expressions. The villagers subjected the diseases to a specific classification while they talked about their illnesses and they performed information sharing with respect to diseases according to this classification. While they were more relaxed while they were talking about diseases they associated with modern medicine including diseases of circulating, digestive and respiratory system, they acted more cautiously when they talked about number of pregnancies, medical practices including curettage etc. and the neurological and psychological diseases which they had difficulty with explaining in modern medicine.

We asked such questions to the villagers at the end of the interviews since they abstained from answering. The reason for acting cautiously with respect to giving information on the number of pregnancies is the fact that the number of pregnancies offers information about sexual life and for this reason it is deemed "disgraceful" to talk about pregnancy. The reason for the attitude on curettage is the understanding of "It is a sin to claim a life that the God has given". Negative attitude toward a woman who has curettage in the village on the ground that she committed sin is the basic reason for that woman to see the method of ending pregnancy through curettage as the last resort. However the interesting point is that particularly women invited us to their houses and many women did not abstain from telling their stories of birth and curettage in the informal interviews where many women were together in those meetings. Moreover they told their own stories more comfortably when they were together being encouraged by the stories of one another. Despite this fact, the thing they continued to keep secret in the informal interviews was keeping the number of pregnancies[7]. Disclosure of the number of pregnancies of a woman meant disclosure of the number of live births she gave and at the same time disclosure of the number of abortions and curettages. Beliefs and ethic norms of the villagers explained the mysterious behaviors of women. Non-exclusion in the village and not bruising social integrity requires having behaviors conforming to beliefs and ethic norms and to know the limits of such behaviors as well.

[7] The women tried to conceal their problems and experiences of infertility as well.

Alternative Searches in Interpreting Diseases in the Village

Although contemporary sciences try to solve the problems today which magicians, sorcerers, doctors, shamans and artists (Saran 12), the aspect of folk medicine/traditional medicine methods which gives the community the feeling of safety provides continuity of those treatment searches (Lévi-Strauss 66). The villagers underlined during the interviews that there were persons who dealt with folk medicine in the village but now there is nobody dealing with such things. Consequently many villagers specified that they did not have any alternative health searches other than modern medicine. Although statements of the villagers are generally on this axis, different stories were found in deep conversations during the woman meetings held in the houses. The most striking types of diseases in those stories the reason of which is explained by the villagers as supernatural powers are neurological and psychological diseases. Although those diseases are rarely seen in the village, sensitivity of the villagers in this regard is striking. Magic is the most definite reason for those diseases indicated in addition to the biological reasons explained by modern medicine[8].

Malinowski defends that belief designs should be examined as parallel appearances of social relations (266). This study has revealed statements of villagers on belief and their cultural values. Specific belief norms of the villagers provide significant clues on how they explain diseases. For example, vast majority of the villagers (80%) told in the interviews that they did not believe in magic[9]. Though this is how the villagers expressed their ideas about magic, relations developed with the villagers on the basis of trust and bona fide caused the villagers to change their statements after a certain period of time. For example, the villagers believe that there are genies in the house of a person whose house burns twice and whose hayloft burns once. They think the fire which happened when the village burnt years ago had suddenly started from the house of that person. The explanations of the villagers on the meaning of magic explain why the villagers try

[8] People believe evil eye as well in the village and various practices are performed against evil eye. The dwellers do not conceal their opinions related to evil eye. Those practices as praying or have someone pray, pouring lead to repel evil eye, wearing blue bead and wearing amulet.

[9] Two thirds of those who express that they believe magic, though they are few consist of men who have little land in the village and who migrate to cities, particularly to Istanbul for this reason and then turn back to the village. This consequence indicates that the rural area is in close contact with certain beliefs and habits of humans as well as their economic features.

to keep magic related events secret. Performing magic or having the same performed is deemed to be a sin in the village. Moreover believing in magic or stating the belief in magic is seen as a sin in the village as much as performing magic or having the same performed.

Malinowski claims that a person refers to magic when he sees that his knowledge and rational methods are insufficient and defines magic as a series of pure practical action performed as a means of a purpose and discriminates it from religion. Depending on seeing specific powers of the nature and destiny including love, disease, war, weather under dominancy of magic powers; magic is generally seen in the affective areas of elements of luck and bad luck moving between hope and freight. For example Melanezians believe that each sexual attraction and the power of seduction are based on love magician (24-25, 69, 142, 145). Looking through the relations of the villagers with magic closely the union of marriage which the villagers pay high significance come to the forefront. Deterioration of the union of marriage can be explained on the basis of its realization by mans of supernatural powers.

The diseases associated with magic (being attacked by an evil eye and possession by a genie etc.) occur through factors including performing magic, violation of taboo, entry of disease object in the body, deterioration of spirit or loss of spirit. If blind love, madness in love, sudden negligence of the family and the children is in question, the concerned person is inflicted to genies and had several diseases (Türkdoğan 79, 85). Sultan[10], one of the young girls of the village (aged 20) explained a neurological disorder she had with magic which she stated to have been made for her and this magic was the reason for her separation from her fiancé at the same time. The young girl explained this magic which was performed by her uncle's daughter and which shaped her story of life as follows:

> I always have a headache. The daughter of my uncle (in fact granddaughter of the uncle) had magic made to separate me and my fiancé. I found the amulet which she had some written under my pillow. When I found the amulet the only person I was suspicious about was the daughter of my uncle because she was my only close friend and relative who enter in our house and who can even enter in

[10] Many interviewers told about that girl and her mother. Villagers said that they were highly interested in having magic performed as well as amulet. Nevertheless the mother told that she did not believe magic and she never dealt with magic. The names of the sample persons have been changed in the paper.

> my room. There was dog's hair, a rope with sixteen knots, tomb soil and the initial letter of my name. I could not recuperate since I got separated from my fiancé.

As one may see in this example, personal responsibility for not being able to establish or sustain marriage was rejected and this responsibility was attributed to a third person rather than the persons who would establish marriage. The happenings were not deemed to be natural events but were associated with something supernatural. The fact that the third person who had magic made was a person contacted frequently in daily life strengthens the magic based explanation.

Since marriage is deemed to be a relation to be sustained in the village[11] disruption of this relation for any reason is excluded from the capacity of the persons who would create this institution. Association of separation with magic makes on one hand it possible for the persons who would establish the institution of marriage to endure the event they suffer and preserves on the other hand honor of those persons and prevent them to conflict with the community and to be excluded from the community. Staying in the community further prevents the person to lose his/her chance to get remarried.

Another example of life story based on magic in the village is related to psychological disorders. Ms. Ayşe (aged 80) who lives together with her two sons of the ages of 40s and 50s[12] began to tell her life story underlining that his father who was a teacher made her get married at the age of thirteen when she was the only daughter of the family in order to be able to get married for the second time himself. She added that her father wanted her to go to school indeed but she rejected to go to school since she did not want to take her headscarf off and now she regretted very much not to have taken her headscarf off and go to school. The sad story of Ms. Ayşe who began to work at the age of twenty, worked as a room keeper firstly and then as tea maker and launderer and retired and turned back to her village[13] indicates how psychological disorder is explained:

[11] The villagers got married generally once.

[12] Ms. Ayşe who had one marriage does not have any blood relation with her dead husband. She bore totally nine babies and expressed that three of her children were not alive.

[13] I should express that I came unglued and cried throughout the interview. The style she used while she expressed her story of life was quite pathetic.

> One of my babies died before he was 40-days old. That was because of evil eye of my neighbor. The imam who washed my baby also said that my baby died because of evil eye. My younger son (one of her sons with whom she lived together) loved a girl and then lost his mind. When he was beaten by his teacher at school my son got even sicker. My older son (the other one of her sons with whom she lived together) began to lose his mind too. He got sick since he divorced fifteen years ago. He always puts his garments in order in the middle of the room. He got on very well with his wife in fact. But the neighbor woman made magic for them. The neighbor woman made magic for having my daughter-in-law fall in love with her own son. My daughter-in-law said to me 'Mom, I'm burning'. My daughter-in-law took her five children and married to that man (son of the neighbor). As far as I know that man cheats my daughter-in-law. Last year we gave one of those five children to a family to adopt. I'm very sorry about that child too. When it comes to magic, a cat which my daughter-in-law always sees was fed with meatballs cooked with magical water. The cat is still alive. As long as it is alive the magic cannot be broken. I went to the hodja to break the magic. The hodja said 'Never kill the cat, it should die a natural sudden'. That cat had many babies. Even the cat dies, the magic shall transit to the kittens since they will be alive. How could this magic be broken? I have a daughter. My son-in-law was found to be dead at home. Everybody thinks that my daughter did not love, want his deceased husband. My deceased husband was mentally ill too. It was me who even shaved him. Now I shave my sick sons at home as well.

This example indicates that scientific knowledge and mystic knowledge could be interpreted together and gives an answer for solution of problems that cannot be anticipated. Ms. Ayşe defines the psychological disorder in her family as "mental disease" and associates this disease with modern medicine. In addition to this, she explains the events that happen with respect to this genetic disorder in her husband and children and transited from the family with evil eye, love, beating, divorce and most importantly magic. As one may see, the state of the son who is one of the persons in the family with psychological disorder and the daughter-in-law who left the house together with her five children is explained with a magic event which cannot be broken. It is striking that Ms. Ayşe explains the reason particularly for psychological disorder of this child among what is experienced by her family, divorce of her son and the reason for divorce with magic. Cheating of her

daughter-in-law was caused by intervention of a supernatural power by means of a third person. Effect of magic being eternal by means of the kittens shall explain the ground of psychological disorder which is a genetic heritage and which surrounds the family till the end of life. Continuity of magic was provided through its transition to kittens and in this manner interrogation of the reasons for cheating/being cheated/divorce was prevented. Magic assisted with ceasing of a social and psychological problem to be a "problem".

In both examples, the third parties who had magic made[14] are such persons who they came together frequently in their daily lives and the separation is explained by associating it with magic. The reason for separation is based on a third party rather than any psychological disorder. In other words, the source of social problems can be expressed in social context whether they are biologically originated or not. Those explanations rescue the families of those persons from trouble at the same time. Expression of the events -whether consciously or unconsciously realized- with a fiction based on magic plays a significant role in preservation of spiritual integrity and provision of internal peace against those events.

Although probable genetic and biochemical reasons for certain psychological disorders are known in many societies, social context is influential in recovery or deterioration of severe diseases including schizophrenia. Regional expectations or social oppression significantly determines course of psychological disorders (Bock 359). Magic based narrations in the village make it possible for the persons who establish marriage institution and even their families to endure the events they suffered.

We see that magic makes up a response to remaining social together with individual searches in Akıncılar where the study was conducted. Expression of the situations that persons live in and they could not explain due to social conditions by those persons with explanations based on magic is seen as a measure taken against remaining "marginal" in social sphere. Accordingly, magic functions as some sort of shield in struggling against "marginality".

Thinking the points indicated by the villagers together, perspective for health in the village and forms of expression of diseases suggest that it was deemed significant to sustain social togetherness without getting separated or being

[14] According to the samples, the persons who perform magic were persons with whom they had blood relations or neighborhood relations. The material for magic is obtained from plants, animals and humans.

separated in the village. The examples given above also indicate that magic is a cultural element which heals the community that the person lives together with the person to which it is directly related to[15] and which provides the members of the community to cling together. In other words, both examples that give idea about the social organization with the psychology, cultural values and the limits of the villager community is closely related to protection of health and honor of the person (and also community). This behavior significantly assists in being able to sustain togetherness of any community the members of which have blood relation with one another. Magic played a social role which connects the person to the community and the community to the person.

Conclusion

Though staying healthy is paid high significance in the village the manner that the villagers assess their illnesses vary depending on the type of the disease. Although the villagers usually try to solve their health problems with modern medicine, traditional practices including magic are deemed to be a significant part of medical searches in the village. Although the villagers told that they did not contact with magic in their daily lives, magic may be seen the source of certain sufferings and extraordinary events including being deceived and loneliness as well as psychological problems and may determine the framework of life stories.

One of the most significant factors that cause any disease not to be deemed as "disease" is attracting social attention to different directions as suggested in this paper. In such a case the disease in question may not be deemed a "disease" but a normal condition. Certain diseases being explained with reference to magic contributes on one hand to being able to talk about the disease which is not/cannot be talked otherwise in the social area and on the other hand to emergence of a conviction that the disease "realized in an ordinary course".

The resistance to incidents difficult to cope with through explanations based on certain folk medicine practices facilitates living in the community safely and sustains the life. It is clear that magic-based explanations assist with better explaining social world and "the cultural". Magic offers power to resist against extraordinary events and protection of the person both his/her psychological and/or social and cultural integrity by keeping all in balance. This paper argues

[15] Belief that magics are deemed therapeutic is found in many cultures. For instance ritual of herbal fertilization with magic and animal rooted miscarriage ritual is performed by the Pawnees in North America (Lévi-Strauss 102).

that today in Turkey the relation with the nature and supernatural continues to exist to be interpreted together.

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