
CULTURE OF HONOR, CULTURE OF CHANGE:
A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF HONOR KILLINGS IN RURAL TURKEY

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ABSTRACT This paper proposes a feminist analyses of honor killings in rural Turkey. One of our main goals is to dissociate honor killings from a particular religious belief system and instead, locate it within a continuum of patriarchal patterns of violence against women. To this end, we first provide a summary of the defining characteristics of honor killings and discuss the circumstances under which they are likely to occur. Second, we discuss the modernization versus the traditionalism in Turkey, emphasizing the contradictory forces in a culture of change. Third, we discuss conflict orientations in understanding violence against women, starting from some of the assertions and assumptions of the Marx/Engles hypothesis, and socialist feminism. Then we compare and contrast the radical feminist orientations with the materialist orientations. Fourth, we give examples of honor killings in Turkey that have been recorded in the recent years, specifically highlighting the common threads among these heinous crimes. The patterns we observe are more supportive of the radical and socialist feminist orientations than the Marx/Engles hypothesis. The paper ends with some modest suggestions about breaking the cycle of violence against women. We emphasize the personal, social, structural and global links in engendering positive change.

The Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing (Long talks, 1995) turned the global spotlight on a wide range of violence women and girls suffer across the world, and approved an Action Plan to enhance women's status (Bunch and Frost, 1997). Unquestionably, one of the most extreme forms in the identified continuum of violence is "honor killings." An honor killing is a generic term to refer to the premeditated murder of pre-adolescent, adolescent or adult women, by one or more male members of her immediate or extended family. These killings are often undertaken when a family council decides on the time and form of execution due to an allegation, suspicion or proof of sexual impropriety by the victim (Amnesty International Report (AIR), 1999; Pervizat, 1998). The family council often includes the father and brother(s) of the victim, and may also include uncles, grandfathers and male in-laws. Definitions of impropriety can be extremely amorphous, often subsuming sexual or sensual acts, allegations or rumours. Acts or accusations may range from going to movies without approval or a chaperon, to kissing, holding hands, dating or having intercourse with a man who is not one's culturally or legally sanctioned husband (Pervizat, 1998). In one extreme case, the husband has dreamt about the unfaithfulness of his wife and used his dream as a justification to arrange her murder (AIR, 1999). The decision for executions may be
given in cases of eloping with a lover, even if the girl/woman may have legally married the man. Executions may also take place after an incestuous, acquaintance or stranger rape, even if the girl/woman may have been extremely young and/or had been forced to marry the offender after the rape. Executions may even be carried out when the rape victim is mentally challenged and/or seriously injured during the assault (AIR, 1999).

Indeed, since the mid 1990s, numerous humanitarian organizations such as the Amnesty International, United Nations (UN) and its branch that deals with women's issues (UNIFEM) have devoted time, energy and money to raise awareness about these gendered atrocities. Respected agencies of mass-media have joined the compassionate chorus by publishing newspaper articles, news reports and television series on this heinous crime (Sawyer, 1999). Thus far, the hub of the international inquiry and media attention has been honor killings in Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, Aman and a few other Islamic states. This attention is well placed when one considers the estimate of 200 to 300 women annually falling victim to honor killings in Pakistan alone. It is reported that each of Jordan, Egypt and Aman record anywhere between 25 and 30 killings a year (Goodenough, 1999; Sati, 1997). However, these numbers may grossly under-represent the reality. Like most other violent crimes against women and girls (i.e., wife abuse, rape, child sexual abuse), the reported cases of honor killings may constitute only a small fraction of a culturally submerged iceberg (AIR, 1999; Sev'er, 1998; Solomon, 1992).

Another bias in the humanitarian reports also needs mention. Although these reports are written with sensitivity towards religious differences, they nevertheless leave the impression that there may indeed be something wrong with Islam or with its practice. Especially in the televised reports, a sobering discussion about honor killings is frequently juxtaposed over a silhouette of a mosque or a sound-track of a Moslem call for prayer. The outcome of these visual and auditory cues is to inseparably tie the crime with the already negatively stereotyped Moslem world. In fact, honor killings pre-date Islam and are not consistent with the Qur'an (Goodenough, 1999; Muslim Women's League, 1999; Queen Noor, 1999; Rodgers, 1995; Sati, 1997; Turgut, 1998). Moreover, what we will argue in this paper is the fact that honor killings are not confined to a few, fragile, non-secular democracies such as Pakistan or the patriarchal monarchies such as Jordan. Honor killings is one extreme in the worldwide patriarchal violence against women. They also occur in better established, developing, democratic and secular states, and regretfully the incidence of such killings may be on the rise. We do not need to harp on Islam (or another religion) to understand the epistemology of killing women for honor. Instead,
we can seek an in-depth understanding of honor killings (as well as other forms of killing women and female children) through a careful application of feminist perspectives, without invoking religiosity or religion. We will use Turkey to exemplify these assertions.

TURKEY: CONTRACTIONS BETWEEN TRUE MODERNIZATION AND PATRIARCHAL CONTROL OF WOMEN

1920s Surge in Modernization in Women's Status

For the majority of North American public and intellectual inquiry alike, Turkey remains a less than understood enigma in the global puzzle. With the exception of negative stereotypes fuelled by controversial films such as the "Midnight Express," and more recently, some pity due to the wrenching images of three devastating earthquakes in its heartland, Turkey remains obscure.

In fact, Turkey is a vibrant democracy (Arat, 1996). Within the past 77 years, Turkey has moved away from an imperialist, non-secular, patriarchal and increasingly corrupt Ottoman Empire and its successive male sultans to a democratic, secularized (since 1924) republic (since 1923) with a modern constitution (since 1924). Both the multi-party political governance and the educational institutions (since 1924) have been completely dissociated from the Islamic rule and law (Shari'ah) despite the fact that more than 99% percent of the Turkish population is Moslem (Worldmark, 1998, p. 790).

For the purpose of this paper, the social, cultural and legal modernization of Turkey is as important as its political transformation. Between 1926 and 1928, Turkey has adopted (with modifications) and successfully implemented: civil, family and contract laws from Switzerland, criminal law from Italy, business administration laws from France and commerce laws from Germany. Again, this systematic Westernization in political and legal thought and practice has set Turkey apart from other primarily Moslem states that have retained much closer links between religion and other institutions including politics, education and justice systems (Arat, 1996; Orucu, 1996). Moreover, the modernization in Turkish women's rights needs underscoring (Arin, 1996). Through the adaptation and implementation of the Swiss originated civil and family laws (1926), bigamy, betrothal and bride-price (common practices under Ottoman rule and in many contemporary Islamic countries since permitted under Shari'ah) have been outlawed. Moreover, the modernized civil and family laws have allowed equal rights to women and men in education, employment and inheritance, and further equalized women and men’s rights and obligations in case of a divorce (see Arin, 1996). In contrast, under Ottoman rule and in the
majority of the Islamic world, divorce was/is strictly a male prerogative, with devastating social, cultural and economic consequences for women.

Turkish law also sees the family as the cradle of the society, and thus harshly criminalizes violence among close family members. For example, assault of a family member increases the codified term of punishment for common assault anywhere between one third to one half (Arin, 1996, p. 132). This means that if killing a non-family member will bring a 10-year sentence, killing a family member may bring up to 15 years. The law even protects women and young men from public harassment/stalking by criminalizing both of these activities (Arin, 1996, p. 134).

At the political arena, Turkish women received the right to vote, elect and to be elected in municipal, state and federal elections between 1930 and 1934. After the 1935 national elections, there were 18 elected women ministers in the Turkish Parliament.<s>5 This number translates into 4.5% women parliamentarians in 1935, as opposed to only 1.7% women parliamentarians in 1991 (Kidog, 1997, p. 8). These are noteworthy developments if one considers the fact that women’s right to vote was legalized in England in 1928. French women had to wait until 1944, and their Quebec sisters until 1940 for the same political right (Kislali, 1996; Nelson and Robinson, 1999, p. 87). It should also be noted that in the early 1990s, Turkey had a female prime minister (Tansu Ciller), even before an advanced society such as Canada had one<s>6 and in contrast to the U.S. which is yet to select a female president or a vice-president.

_Inhibiting Forces Against Modernization in Women's Status_

The above summarized 1920s head start has not assured Turkey a secure place among the First World countries, neither has it assured Turkish women parity with their male counterparts. Some of the lag can be understood through the disadvantages in its demographics. Turkey occupies a land equal to 7.8% the size of Canada or 8.3% of US, with a population density of 78.2 people per square kilometer. The population is approximately 64 million, and the country is plagued with a very high growth rate (see United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1997). Per capita annual income is around US$ 1,400 and per capita gross domestic product is slightly over US$ 2,200. Like other economically struggling nations, the population distribution is flat and disproportionally bottom-heavy, with approximately 30% of the total population consisting of people under age 15, and less than 4% of the population over 65 years of age. Life expectancy remains substantially lower than highly industrialized societies (66 for women...
and 63 for men), and infant mortality rates remain high (39.9 per 1000 live births, see United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1997). Although the literacy rate is reported as 80% for people over six years of age (89% for men and 72% for women, Kidog, 1998, p. 3; also see UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1999), older people, rural people and women are significantly more likely to be illiterate.<s>7

Correlated with the disadvantages in education, women's labour force participation is also problematic for two reasons. First, although the participation rates reach 50% in rural areas, women's work frequently involves unpaid contributions to the family farm or small business that are under men's control (Orucu, 1996). Second, while the labour participation rate for men reaches 98% in urban areas, women's rate is only 35% and women work in sex segregated, low paying service jobs (Kidog, 1998, p. 6). Turkish customs explicitly emphasize the family related role for women and deem secondary any work/career related aspirations they may have (Orucu, 1996, p. 45). Having been carefully socialized into gendered divisions, most girls/women learn to curb their career involvement or revisit their level of commitment after marriage. Until 1999, the legal retirement age for women was 45 years of age. Even for educated and career oriented women, this incredibly low cut-off point left very little time to establish independence after the natural process of child-bearing/rearing that almost all Turkish women see as a must (Orucu, 1996). Although the age of retirement for women has been now raised to 58 (Sabah, 1999), the cultural expectations which cast women to a tangential relationship with the work world will continue to impact their choice (or lack of choices) for many generations to come.

Inhibiting forces to modernization can also be understood within cultural forces, especially (but not exclusively) those that are rooted in law and customs. Although the official stance of the republic is committed to "gender equality" and secularism, these professed ideologies have not been able to dismantle the strong customary expectations about the mutual exclusivity of the public and private domains. Despite the rubric of equality, an overwhelming emphasis is placed on the care giving, nurturing and self-sacrificing roles of women. Marriage and motherhood are still the ultimate path to status attainment. According to Arat (1996, p. 48), 49% of men who reside in western Turkey (60% eastern) still believe that they are smarter than women, 56% of men residing in western Turkey (73% of eastern) believe that they should have "absolute authority" over women, and 36% of western (57% of eastern) men believe that they have the right to "punish" women if they are challenged by them. These are far from egalitarian attitudes.

Not surprisingly, there is a cultural preoccupation with female propriety. Many patriarchal mechanisms and rituals exist for sexual and
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reproductive control of women (Yurdakul, 1999). Although patriarchal expectations such as insistence on virginity before marriage colour all Turkish gender relations, they are particularly fierce and non-forgiving among rural populations. Rural populations, especially in eastern regions, often occupy the lowest rungs in the socioeconomic stratification, are most likely to be undereducated or illiterate, and are most vulnerable to religious and cultural misconceptions or even extremism.

The Turkish legal system which was progressive and revolutionary at the time of its inception (1926) has remained stagnant, and thus has not kept up with the gender-based advances taking place in the modern world. Men are still considered to be the "providers" for the family. Although rape is considered a very serious offence, marital rape is not covered unless corroborated by serious injury (Kaya, 1996). Until very recently, the victim was the only one who could lay charges against an abusive partner (Amn, 1996). In a patriarchal society, such separations of ownership and marital property are seen as contrary to the cultural norms. Women's dependence on men is reinforced by legal stipulations which require a husband to report abuse against his wife. In practice, almost all property is registered in men's name in a male-dominated society. Sexual separations of property rights are seen as incompatible with the cultural norms. Women's dependence on men is legally entrenched by separate ownership legislation. The existing family law, which recognizes different types of family arrangements, has no provisions for alternate forms of family arrangements. Absent from Turkish law is an effective legal protection for women who have been abused. The process of law enforcement is even more problematic than the gender ramifications of legal statutes. The frontliners like the police and gendarme (federal police/army combination) and the major players of the criminal justice system are either exclusively or disproportionately men (like lawyers, judges, and police). Although patriarchal expectations are still enforceable, the police and gendarme (federal police/army combination) and the major players of the criminal justice system are often neither fair nor unbiased. Although unrealistic or religious, cultural misconceptions or even stereotyping, are most likely to be undereducated or illiterate, and are still present in the socioeconomic regions, women occupy the lowest rungs in the socioeconomic ladder, and are often feudal populating groups. They are particularly fierce and non-forgiving. In the Turkish gender relations, they are patriarchal, and thus have the power to control all reproductive control of women (Yurdakul, 1999). Although patriarchal.
legislators). Most of these men hold strong patriarchal perceptions and expectations. Even in clearly abusive situations, father's or husband's right over his children/wife is seldom questioned and rarely criminalized. In a recent study, 66% of the police stated that women are responsible for attacks against them since they dress or act in provocative ways (Polis tecavuzde, 2000). In Turkey, the total respect for the privacy of the family and men's culturally legitimized superiority within it is an iron cage for many women and children. In extreme cases, the privacy of the family hides even the darkest customs such as honor killings (Farac, 1998). Patriarchal discretions about "family honor" allow men to receive reduced sentences (1/4 to 1/8th of the original term, Campaign, 1999; Turgut, 1998). The irony of the latter needs emphasis in terms of the contradictions in the Turkish law: As mentioned earlier, violence toward a family member (men or women) increases the punishment anywhere from a third to a half. However, if it is an honor related violence (i.e., honor killing of women), the sentences may be reduced by as much as 7/8ths (Arin, 1996).

Detrimental Forces Against Modernization in Women's Status:

Cultural Equation of Men's Honor, Family Honor And Sexual Propriety of Women And Girls

In the west, "honor" is often defined as moral integrity, the esteem accorded to virtue or talent. Both the depth and the breadth of an eastern understanding of "honor" is very different (Abu-Lughod, 1986). In its purest and most desirable form, "honor" is an integral dimension of the eastern culture, where one's honorable deeds are looked upon as a valued possession. In a way, neither the rich nor the poor are exempt from trying their very best to lead honorable lives and to protect their own as well as the family name from insinuations or open charges of dishonor. Again, in its positive manifestation, honor is a non-tangible path for social status which can equate a very poor man or woman with a very rich one, at least on one culturally esteemed dimension. The negative side of this generally admirable eastern tradition is when honor becomes an obsession, a biased scale men use to judge some men and both men and women use to judge all women (Brooks, 1995; Goodwin, 1994; Yurdakul, 1999). Interestingly, the poor are even more possessive about their honor, since they have little else in the rigidly stratified societies they are a part of. It is in an extreme of this continuum that judgments about honor can become fatal.

Like other middle eastern and like other primarily Islamic cultures (Abou-Zeid, 1974: Abu-Lughod, 1986), the Turkish culture is also tightly
wrapped around sentiments of honor. The richness of the Turkish language in providing many different words for "honor" attests to its cultural importance. The term "onur" closely corresponds to the North American understanding of honor. "Seref" is linked to the glory derived from a man's (sic) own or one's male kin's accomplishments (Abou-Zeid, 1974, pp. 245-46) and thus represents an honor which is derived from an achieved status. In that sense, "seref" is almost exclusively possessed and controlled by men, an honor that they can increase (or lose) through their own or other male kin's accomplishments. "Haysiyet" is linked with an internal ability to feel shame, where "haysiyetsiz" refers to the absence of this quality. "Yuzsuz" literally translates into "faceless" which makes a visual connotation to the absence of honor with the ability to feel shame. "Ar" is yet another word that links the ability to feel shame with the blood that circulates in the body. "Ar damari catlamis" are words that imply the symbolic event of a "burst artery" (where all honor has spilled). "Nam" and "san" are words for an honorable renown, "gurur" is an honorable pride, "prestij" is a borrowed term to refer to the western concept of prestige, and "izzet" is yet another type of honor derived from being able to show generosity to others. "Gurur, onur, ar, prestij, izzet" types of honor are mostly gender neutral in their application, whereas "seref" is androcentric.

In contrast, "namus" is a type of sexual honor which presupposes physical and moral qualities women ought to have. This type is intricately linked to the shame of women as well as her family (Yurdakul, 1999). Women must protect their "namus" for the duration of their life cycle, more specifically, before, during and after marriage. Women are also expected to protect the "namus" of other women/girls that are related to them, i.e., their daughters and grand-daughters. Moreover, "namus" has an additional "hereditary" quality, where "... the shame of mother is transmitted to the children, and a person's lack of [namus] may be attributed to his birth, hence the power of insults, the most powerful of all [relating] to the purity of the mother. After this, the greatest dishonor of a man derives from the impurity of his wife" (Pitt-Rivers, 1974, p. 52). Even after marriage dissolution men may feel threatened by the sexual behavior of their former wives and how it may cast a shadow on their "namus". Thus, a woman's sexuality is deemed to be a force to be controlled by the woman herself. However, "namus" is much too important to be trusted to women alone (Brooks, 1995). Fathers and other male kin before marriage exercise full rights to sanction women who deviate. Husbands and their male kin take over this task during marriage and even after its dissolution. North American literature is already familiar with men's control of women's sexual behavior because of jealousy and possessiveness (see DeKeseredy and Hinch, 1991; Dobash and Dobash, 1979; 1998; Sev'er, 1997 and 1998). Yet, "namus" related control is substantially more all-encompassing since the latter is directly derived from cultural
perceptions, expectations and judgements and not based on controlling behavior of an individual man. Presumably, a "shamed" man and his kin (or hers), neighbours, sometimes whole communities and the agents of law enforcement act as biased judges and juries against the "offending" woman, either by actively enforcing severe sanctions or by remaining as stoic witnesses or by failing to investigate wrongdoings (Farac, 1998; Turgut, 1998).

Even though other types of honor can be related to a variation of acts or deeds, "namus" is related to virginity and chastity of women before marriage or being the subservient recipient (not the initiator) of the sexual desires and advances of husbands during marriage. Brooks (1995) links this fear of women's sexual desire to a Qur'anic interpretation that women are endowed with nine parts of sexual desire (as opposed to one part in men). Women are expected to protect their own as well as their husband's "namus" even if the husband may have died. The Islamic commonality among the middle eastern cultures contributes to the association of honor with women's bodies and selected men's right over them. A more secular understanding of the same phenomenon is the commodification of women.

Commodification of women is reflected in the preoccupation with virginity. In Turkish, "bakire" means untouched, and refers to a virgin (regardless of age). The term "kiz" means a girl, but also infers virginity. The term "kiz" makes a linguistic differentiation from "kadin" which means woman (a married woman) by connoting lack of virginity in the latter. There are no comparable words to differentiate virgin and non-virgin, or married or non-married men, since the sexuality or marital status of men are not stringently monitored. The culture is exclusively consumed with women's sexuality. Words such as "kiziligini bozmak" or "kiziligini kaybetmek" translate as "breaking or spoiling a girl's virginity"or "losing" virginity. Both terms imply the non-reversibility of the status passage. Terms like "kizin bozuk cikti" implies lack of virginity (translated as your daughter was spoiled or broken ). In short, the value of a girl is judged by the actual (as well as expected) intactness of her hymen. The word "dusmek" (fall) signifies a women's sharp decent in the continuum of "namus". The only way a fallen woman can clean the "namus" of her family is through killing the man who defiled her or by taking her own life. In a well publicised case, Sukran Gonenc (32) drenched herself in gasoline and burned herself to death in the presence of the Turkish media and hundreds of onlookers. The reason for this public suicide was her lover's refusal to marry her since she was not a virgin. In an interview, her lover said "how can she expect me to marry a woman like that? My family would never allow such a thing!" (Cakmagi caktigi an, 1999). Even when women kill themselves, they will remain "unclean" but help clean the namus of their families. Men can also clean family
The cultural obsession about women's sexuality in general and virginity in particular have created rich (and with western standards, very demeaning) rituals around men's initiation of the first sexual experience through marriage. Although there are wide variations according to class and geographic region, either symbolic or actual droplets of blood in "gerdek" (the culturally sanctioned nuptial night of losing virginity) are linked to the evaluation of the worthiness of women. In western Turkey and in most other affluent urban parts, the rituals are highly symbolic such as wearing white (only virgins wear white wedding gowns), and/or tying a scarlet red belt to the bride's waist (signifying the blood to be shed through penetration of the hymen). In more remote regions, the rituals can be much more graphic, where girls are subjected to arbitrary "virginity" examinations (Turgut, 1998) or where the bloodied sheets from "gerdek" have to be displayed on the clothesline or presented to the in-laws to prove virginity. There are reported cases of reversal of marital contracts due to lack of proof. Such reversals are deemed a grave dishonor to the woman and even a greater insult to the "namus" of her male kin. In such cases, numerous young women are known to have taken their own lives. Others kill children born out of wedlock (Bebegini Kurtlara Yedirdi, 1995). A few are killed by their male kin (Turgut, 1998).

The same cultural obsession about virginity manifests itself as an obsession against women's infidelity. In Iran, adulterous women can still be buried to their chest and stoned to death, and even the size of stones is carefully regulated (not too small to unduly prolong the suffering, but not too large to end it too quickly (Brooks, 1995, p. 46; also see İste Seriatin Gercek, 1997). Secular and modernized Turkish laws have banned such barbaric practices since the 1920s, however, the existence of laws are not always a safeguard against male aggression.

Thus, according to cultural mores, men cannot have "namus" by themselves, since their "namus" is always determined by the "namus" of their mothers, wives, daughters and sisters. Stated differently, men are vulnerable to the "violations" of their own "namus" through the impropriety of women in their current, extended or even former families. Turkish language again richly reflects the ceaseless fear about losing "namus" and men's predatory prerogative to make a restoration. "Namusa laf gelmek" translates as other people's gossip about one's "namus." "Namusu kirlemenmek" or "lekelenmek" refers to one's "namus" being dirtied or stained, and "namusunu temizlemek" is a man's attempt (and obligation) to clean it. "Namussuz" signals a total loss of "namus", and within the honor saturated nature of the Turkish culture, it is equivalent to a moral purgatory. The amorphous moral quality of "namus" has led patriarchal societies in general and rural parts of
Turkey in particular to develop extreme sanctions to keep the sexual behavior of women under control (Delaney, 1987; Farac, 1998). Under rare circumstances, these extreme sanctions do include premeditated murder as an attempt to clean a dirtied "namus" but perhaps more importantly, to re-establish men's brotherhood with other men and to deter other women from engaging in similar acts or behaviors (Sati, 1997).

Nevertheless, despite the overemphasis on honor:

The problem of "honor" killings is not a problem of morality or of ensuring that women maintain their own personal virtue; rather, it is a problem of domination, power and hatred of women who, in these instances, are viewed as nothing more than servants to the family, both physically and symbolically (Muslim Women's League, 1999, p. 1).

FEMINIST EXPLANATIONS OF WOMEN'S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE CONTROL

Traditional Marxism

According to Marx and Engels, men's patriarchal attempt to control women's sexuality and reproduction followed the advent of private property. In his controversial analysis, Engels (1993) argued that gendered relations were balanced in primitive hunting and gathering societies. If and when any deviation from this general balance occurred, it was in women's favour (matrilineal, matriarchal) due to their advantaged position in relation to their offspring. However, when rudimentary technology as well as knowledge about farming and domestication of animals allowed agrarian settlements, accumulation of wealth became a social preoccupation. Due to their physical strength and the skills developed in hunting wild animals, men were considerably advantaged in new agrarian settings. They accumulated wealth and they wanted to make sure to pass on their wealth to their legitimate offspring. Due to the long lapse between the sexual act and birth-giving, and in the absence of biological knowledge or technological skills, the only way to assure paternity was to control the sexual behavior of women. In this transformation, "[t]he overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children" (Engels, 1993, pp. 120-121, emphasis in original).

According to Engels, the process of industrialization and the ensuing accumulation of capital has not been kind to women either. In his view, the practice of monogamy and the equality it connotes is nothing but a
sham since monogamy "clearly reveals the antagonism between the man and the woman expressed in the man's exclusive supremacy" (p.131). Capitalistic marriages among the wealthy are merely a contract to preserve the capital and to ensure its smooth and undiluted transmission across generations. The bourgeois law makes sure that capital remains intact through monitoring work relations and inheritance (p. 135). For women, marriage is like prostitution where she "only differs from the ordinary courtesan in that she does not let out her body on piece-work as a wage-worker, but sells it once and for all into slavery" (p. 134). In short, women are seen as mere vessels in this inter-generational transmission of wealth and power within a capitalist system. The capitalist machine also exploits women's caring proclivities by making sure that they recondition men each night after a gruelling day of labour (Seccombe, 1980). Engels finds the salvation of women in their full labour force participation. "The emancipation of women will only be possible when women can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time" (1993, p. 221).

Radical Feminism

Marx and Engels never fulfilled the promise of developing a theory that fully accounted for the reproductive activity and patriarchy. Radical feminists define patriarchy as a universal propensity of men to dominate women and they see patriarchal control of women as the most important subjugation. Moreover, patriarchy is seen as invasively institutionalized within the cultural rules and practices and openly manifested in all aspects of everyday life (O'Brien, 1981). The worst manifestation of patriarchy is seen as being centered around the control of sexuality and reproductive powers of women (Brownmiller, 1975). Thus, radical feminism differs from a strictly materialistic analysis of power relations in a number of ways: First, radical feminists claim that patriarchy preceded the invent of private property, and continues to exist in all realms of micro and macro gendered relations regardless of wealth, property or historic period (O'Brien, 1981). According to Charlotte Bunch (1975, p. 37), men "conquered" women in pre-historical times. "We do not exactly know how this conquest took place, but it is clear that the original imperialism was male over female: the male claiming the female body and her service as his territory (or property)". Second, radical feminists see marriage and the family as "twin pillars" of all patriarchal cultures (Dworkin, 1989). This is quite different from the Marx/Engels focus on the relations between those who own the means of production and those who sell their labour power in exchange for wages. Third, radical feminists link the subjugation of women to their childbearing (O'Brien, 1981). Fourth, radical feminists do not see the "state" as mostly a benign power protecting and serving the
accumulation of capital (Tucker, 1978). Instead, they see state authority as masculine authority actively and forcefully defending male rights and privilege (Brownmiller, 1975; MacKinnon, 1982). In Dworkin's (1989, p. 18) words, "we see the joining together of politics and morality, coupled to produce their inevitable offspring --the oppression of women based on ... a rampant sexual fascism." Fifth, radical feminists differ from Engels's suggestion of full employment as a sufficient condition to emancipate women. Instead, salvation is deemed possible if and only if the chains of traditional, heterosexist marriage are broken down. A revolutionary change in reproduction which currently enslaves women is also considered a must (Firestone, 1970; O'Brien, 1981). Others prefer establishing strictly female units and communities to countervail power and to shelter women from male domination (Bunch, 1975; Dworkin, 1974 and 1989; MacKinnon, 1982; Rubin, 1975). Sixth, radical feminists see a dimension of patriarchal forces which is totally omitted in the materialistic analyses of gender relations. Namely, they argue that in times of social change and upheaval (examples might be economic upheaval, ethnic wars or globalization), patriarchal forces will tighten their control on women to re-establish historical male privileges (i.e., increased violence against intimate partners around economic slumps or mass rapes during ethnic wars such as Vietnam, Bosnia, Kosova, see MacKinnon, 1993), or to eliminate possible competition from women (i.e., violence inflicted on women workers in Mexican border-towns where US giants have set up shop to exploit cheaper labour, see Murder most foul, 1999). Contrary to Engels's thesis, social change such as an increased female labour force participation in traditionally patriarchal societies may increase violence against them rather than lead to their emancipation. Technological changes which bring challenging messages from a different gender order may also trigger men's attempts to push back "their women." In sum, although radical feminism may have many weaknesses and blindspots of its own (see Fox, 1988; Nelson and Robinson, 1999), it nevertheless provides a powerful framework for understanding violence against women (Solomon, 1992). Moreover, it is an ardent conceptual tool for understanding increased violence in times of internal turmoil or global change.

Socialist Feminism

Socialist feminists argue that both Marx and Engels and the exclusive reproductive labour focus of the radical feminists fall short of developing a theory that fully accounts for the interconnectedness of the productive and reproductive activity (Flax, 1976; Gravenhorst, 1988; Mitchell, 1973). In socialist feminism, both the patriarchal and class components are considered to be "inextricably intertwined" in understanding any social problem with the social order, including problems such as violence against women (Jaggar and Rothenberg, 1984). For example,
according to Mitchell (1973), women's problems can be analyzed in terms of four focal points: -production of goods and services to meet basic human needs, -sexuality and sexual domination, -reproduction as an insurance for the continuation of the species, -gender socialization especially in terms of the division of labour relating to production, reproduction and sexuality.

Like traditional Marxism, socialist feminists see the importance of class in determining the propensity of men toward violence (Rubin, 1975). Men who occupy the lowest rungs of the economic system, men who have very little power or say in the workplace or are cast outside of the economic system all together (unemployed) may indeed have a much higher propensity for conjugal types of violence. Like radical feminists, socialist feminists see the interaction of patriarchal patterns in male camaraderie. On the one hand, they see male bonding amongst equally oppressed men (such as all male labourers, lowest rungs of fighting soldiers, drinking buddies, male gangs, etc.). Not only these men are more likely to be socialized into seeing violence as a legitimate form of action, but they are also likely to ascribe to the belief that men are superior to women (Schwartz, 1988). The explosive mix can be due to the perceptions of superiority as men on the one hand, and the vulnerability they themselves feel in a capitalist/imperialist system which subjugates them. On the other continuum, privileged men who occupy much higher rungs in the society may not be as prone to committing blatant forms of sexism since they feel much more secure about their own position in the system. Nevertheless, they are in power positions to preserve the continuation of the historical privileges of men for all men (such as male law makers, judges, clergy, politicians, police, etc.).

Unlike traditional Marxism, socialist feminists do not see the employment of women as a solution to all their power disadvantages, although they see economic independence of women as one of the key factors. However, they also acknowledge that both private and public spheres are problems. There are layers of inequalities in pay, promotions, child-care, house-work issues that need to be resolved before women's work can bring them to par with their male counterparts. Unlike radical feminism, socialist feminists do not see the dismantling of the family as a solution. Instead, they seek state commitment to relieve some of the problems families (especially women) face, such as access to education, health and child-care for women. Socialist feminists are also sensitive to issues of culture and global change.

**SOME EXAMPLES OF RECENT HONOR KILLINGS IN RURAL TURKEY**

As discussed earlier, honor in Turkey plays a forceful role in all types of
relationships, especially the relationship of women to men. Either real or presumed violations of honor of the "namus" kind may engender severe sanctions, especially among the rural segments where people are much more likely to be traditional, patriarchal, non-secularly married at an extremely early age and illiterate or undereducated (Acar, 1996; Arat, 1996; Elmaci, 1996). As Pitt-Rivers observes, "[t]he ultimate vindication of honor lies in violence" (Pitt-Rivers, 1974, p. 29, also see Farac, 1998; Ilkaracan, 1999). According to Pervizat's (1999) careful research on this topic, there were at least 20 reported cases of honor killings between 1997 and 1998 and since this is not a type of crime which can be easily identified, the number may be higher. Although this number may not seem too alarming in relation to what is happening in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc., we argue that even one case is already too many. In the following pages, we will review some of the incidents that have found their way into the social-scientific literature or the mass media.

Vezire Kaya (36) miraculously survived a murder attempt by her husband of 10 years. After a family council decision about her sexual impropriety (alleged adultery), she was driven to a remote place, her hands and eyes were tied and she was choked until she passed out. When her persecutors thought she was dead, they threw her into Firat (the Euphrates), which is notorious for its rapid-flow and strong currents. She survived her ordeal and went to the police. Her husband expressed no remorse and claimed that "he was just cleaning his namus" (translated from a news article: Aile meclisinin, 1998).

Gonul Arslan (21) was raised in a relatively modern way in a southern Turkish resort, but her father arranged her marriage to her cousin although Gonul was in love with another man. The cousin was from the conservative SanliUrfa. Gonul ran away from her husband/cousin but she was hunted down and returned to her father by her male kin. When she refused to go back, she was forcefully taken for a ride by her husband and other male relatives, strangled till she was presumed dead, and thrown into Firat. She survived and is currently living under an assumed name under state protection (Farac, 1998, p. 81-98). Her father, husband, and two other relatives stand charged.

Rabia Oguz (25) was considered a "spinster" in a village of SanliUrfa where women/girls are married off in early teens. When her family found out about a romantic affair, her brother was instructed to arrange a mock car-tractor accident to kill her (Koy meydaninda, 1995). Two cousins helped to stage the accident. They killed Rabia in the market place by repeatedly driving the tractor over her body. As it turns out, Rabia and her mother were taken for a ride, but the mother was dropped off shortly before the murder. At first, no witnesses came forward, and the killers went free. The police re-opened the case when anonymous tips they
received revealed that Rabia had initially escaped the mock accident, and ran into a small shop crying for help. Unfortunately, her brother and a cousin had grabbed her by her long hair and literally dragged her under the moving wheels of the tractor. After the Kafkaesque deed, the three men had celebrated their success by shooting bullets into the air. An autopsy showed that Rabia was still a virgin, but the killers received reduced sentences (from life to 12 ½ years) due to "severe provocation" (Farac, 1998, p. 39-53).

Fatma Geyik (22) was shot to death in the middle of a street. The execution order was given by a family council on allegations of Fatma's sexual relationship with a man and carried out by her father (Tore icin kizini, 1998). What is extremely interesting in this case is that Fatma had moved far away from her family of origin (from the east to the western part of Turkey), had gotten herself a job, and was fully self-sufficient and independent at the time of her death. Her father and her uncle had travelled from one end of the country to the other to hunt her down. In her uncle's words "whatever happened happened after she got herself a job. She "reduced our namus to a penny's worth" (Turkish saying, translated from the article: Tore icin kizini, 1998).

Sevda Gok (17) was publicly executed in the market area of SanliUrfa, immediately after a mid-day Friday prayer (a particularly holy time in Islam) at the local mosque. Allegedly, she was running away from home to go to the movies (Kuyas, 1996). Her adolescent cousin (14) cut her throat with a bread knife "like slaughtering sheep" (translated from Farac, 1998, p. 63). Her executioner was caught a few blocks away with blood-soaked clothes and a knife. An autopsy showed that Sevda was a virgin (Bir namus cinayeti, 1996). The adolescent cousin claimed that he loved Sevda, and had intentions of marrying her, but it was his duty to clean the family honor. At least a 100 people coming out of the mosque may have (must have) observed the slaughter but no one volunteered details of the crime (Farac, 1998, pp. 57-65). Although this murder was premeditated and the cousin expressed no remorse, he received only a seven-year sentence.

Hatice (12) and two of her female relatives had gone to a movie house, in the middle of the day. Her jealous and suspicious husband (17) "cut her throat like a chicken" and seriously wounded one of the other girls (translated from Farac, 1998, p. 73 and p. 77). Although the surviving girls claimed that they went to the movie house only to use its washroom facilities, the 17 year old husband claimed that his wife was turning tricks, and he had to clean his "namus." His sentence was reduced for "mild provocation" (Farac, 1998, p. 69-77).

Oruc Serin (16) was shot to death by her brother in the market area of
rural town of Gaziantep (a south-eastern province). The weapon was a hunting rifle. Just before her murder, Oruc had given birth to an out of wedlock child in a wheat field and had buried the infant amongst the crop. The baby was still alive when local farmers found her, approximately 36 hours after the birth. Oruc was taken into police custody for attempted infanticide, and the judge imposed a particularly large sum of bail, suspecting that she herself was in danger (honor killing). Nevertheless, her family managed to bail her out, locked her up without food for three days and when she eventually managed to escape, shot her to death (Torelerin kurbani, 1996).

Semse Kaynak (19) was killed after "allegedly" falling under a farm tractor that was being driven by her brother in a rural town of SanliUrfa (Yine tore vahseti, 1998). At the time of the incident, the victim's father, two brothers, sister in-law and the latter's infant son were also on board. First, her brother was charged with "reckless driving" and was released after a single day in gendarme custody (Farac, 1998, p. 101-112). Only after following an anonymous tip did the gendarme establish that this was yet another honor killing. In fact, the tractor had backed up a few times over Semse's body. Just before her murder, Semse was found to be pregnant, and had claimed that she was raped by her cousin. When confronted, the cousin agreed to marry Semse through a "religious ceremony." and had actually done so. However, when Semse's pregnancy became visible right after marriage, her male kin sought an abortion for her to end this embarrassment. When their request for an abortion was refused due to the fact that the pregnancy was in its 6th month, the father and the brothers decided to stage an accident to kill her. The fact that so many people were riding the tractor at the time of her murder (including the sister-in-law and her baby) was to reduce Semse's legitimate fear of her male kin and to provide numerous false witnesses for the so called "accident" (Farac, 1998).

Hacer Felhan was one of 11 children of Mustafa who eked out a very marginal existence for his large family. However, through the radio and neighbours' television, Hacer was increasingly tempted by a different, more colourful and affluent existence. She sought out friends who gave her a glimpse of this "other" life, which involved fashion jewellery, high heels and colourful dresses. When one of her (female) friends dedicated a "love song" to her on a local radio program, her family considered it to be an insult to their "honor." Fearing to fall victim to an honor killing, Hacer staged a mock suicide by leaving a note and her slippers beside a well in her back yard and by seeking refuge at a friend's house. However, police found out where she was and returned her to her family, despite her protest that her family will kill her. Indeed, the family had decided to "clean" their "namus" and the executioner was chosen as her own 13 year old brother Muhammed. At his trial, Muhammed
Dr. Aysan Sev'er claimed that he did what he was told, and impassionately conveyed the long debate about which weapon he should use in order to make sure to kill her. The brother's sentence was reduced to 10 years due to his age and "provocation." He was released after serving two years (Farac, 1998, p. 25-36).

Aysel Dikmen (18) was executed by her father. She had run away with a man she loved, but was caught and placed in an orphanage by police because she was underage. When she was released to the custody of her father, he promptly took her life (Campaign, 1999).

Cezvet Murat killed two of his sisters (Ayten and Gulten) because they came home late and he assumed they were seeing men (Campaign, 1999). He said he was protecting his honor.

Suspecting infidelity, Abdullah Karadeve cut his pregnant wife's throat with a knife. His wife was expecting their 8th child (Campaign, 1999).

Salih Esmer (28) killed his sister Semra for dating. He also killed their mother for not keeping an eye on his sister (Campaign, 1999).

Hulya Yakar was killed by her 11 year old son for going out a lot (Campaign, 1999). The son claimed that his mother was smearing his family name.

Selma Demir (29) was stabbed 30 times by her father. The father said that he had to clean his "namus" since Selma was coming home late and she was separated from her husband (Eve gec gelen, 1998).

DISCUSSION

Although there are numerous other examples, the summarized cases will suffice to show a number of clear patterns. First, cultural elaborations of "honor" are gender based. Honor killings occur only on the basis of women's behavior, and in the largest number of cases, women are the only ones who get killed (although their assumed or acted upon "impropriety" always includes a male partner). However, women who may help or be around the target may also get hurt or killed (Hatice's friend, Semra's mother). Second, family councils, and the actual killers invoke a "cultural" understanding of honor rather than a religious one (at least, in Turkey). Of course, the sociological meaning of culture naturally subsumes all forms of belief systems, yet any connection between Islam and this heinous crime is by no means clear or direct. International coverage of honor killings that over-emphasizes the role of religion fails to look at the more prevalent patriarchal legitimation behind violence against women. After all, femicide is a
worldwide occurrence, whether it manifests itself as acid or so called "kitchen deaths" in India and Bangladesh, female infanticide in China, rape and kill rampages in Bosnia or Kosova or wife murders in every other part of the world including North America (please see note 4). The only common denominator among these diverse crimes against women is the talons of an aggressive patriarchal culture which subjugates women by depriving them of free choice, economic independence and by commodifying their bodies.

Third, almost exclusively, the plans for the honor murders are made and executed by men. Often, the killer is chosen as the youngest male member of the family in order to get the sympathy of the courts in case of a criminal trial. Hatice's killer was 17, Sevda's 14, Hacer's 13, Hulya's 11. Ironically, patriarchy also victimizes very young men by forcing them to commit heinous crimes against their own loved ones (Gunenc, 1991). An additional aspect of this pattern also needs to be highlighted: In pockets of rural Turkey, very immature youth are still being pushed to play adult family roles. Although it contravenes the secular laws of Turkey, early arranged marriages through "religious" ceremonies, and even polygyny are common (Elmaci, 1996). These patterns are related to lack of opportunities, lack of education, lack of an acceptable standard of living, which gives support to the socialist feminist conceptualizations. Moreover, and in line with the radical feminist conceptualizations, there is a continuing powerlessness of women in relation to men and an ease in transgressing their rights. In sum, there are rural pockets that seem to be caught in a time warp of destructive gender relations.

Fourth, the discussed cases strongly challenge the link between subjugation of women and accumulation of private property. Indeed, if there is any similarity between most men and women as perpetrators and victims is their sheer poverty. In these tragedies, the only "property" men seem to have consists of the lives and bodies of their women. Indeed, these observations give support to both the radical and socialist feminist conceptualizations of gendered subjugation rather than a strictly materialistic explanation.

Fifth, all victims are young or very young girls/women. Semse was 19, Aysel 18, Sevda 17, Oruc 16, Hatice 12 when they were killed. It is almost as if the patriarchal culture seems to be frightened by the emerging sexuality of young women and/or their challenge of male rules. As the radical feminist theory implies, cutting down a few women at the prime of their youth is expected to deter other young women from expressing themselves in a sensual way (Sati, 1997). The two clear messages are that women are untrustworthy, and women are dispensable. If other women partake in these tragedies at all, they are
there for tertiary purposes such as providing distraction, creating a false sense of hope or safety for the victim or serving as deceitful witnesses to the crime. Semse's sister-in-law and her infant son were taken for the murderous tractor ride just to provide a false sense of safety for Semse and to serve as a false witness to her murder. Rabia's mother was also taken for the ride for similar reasons, but then dropped-off just before her daughter's brutal murder. Both Semra and her mother were killed, the latter for not keeping an eye on her daughter. In other words, either as victims or as accomplices, women in these tragedies possess no personal, social or structural power to ask for justice or accountability. They are terrified victims or reluctant accomplices in male domination. They have neither the ideology of equality nor an economic independence to confront men.

Sixth, and very much in line with the assertions of the radical feminists, men who engage in honor killings act within the boundaries of male comradery. They get male kin support, community support (at least in the form of silence) and even support from the lower level police/gendarme and lawyers and judges (Krau, 1998; Moslem Women's League, 1999). Fathers, uncles, brothers, cousins and other male kin take on roles ranging from very active (in Fatma's, Rabia's, Semse's, Vezire's cases) to quietly supportive roles. Some murderers make a rudimentary attempt to disguise their heinous acts (the staged "tractor accident" in Semse's and Rabia's cases, or throwing Vezire and Gonul into Fırat after erroneously thinking they were dead). However, the deeply entrenched but misguided cultural norms and values which provide a fertile ground for these murders also make some men extremely blunt (Fatma was shot and Hatice's throat was slashed in the middle of a street, Sevda and Oruc were executed in the market place of their respective towns).

There are additional layers of patriarchy. In line with the radical feminist assertions, the state is not generally benign but can be a very biased force in preserving male domination and privilege. When women run away to hide (such as Hacer), police find and deliver them right back to their parents, even when they are warned by the victim or know from experience that her life is in danger (Oruc's and Aysel's cases, also see Ayse ve oglunu, 1996). When very questionable "accidents" or "drownings" are reported, police usually let go of men who may have played suspicious roles in the incident (Rabia's and Vezire's cases). The police may even fail to carry out full investigations unless there is public pressure to do so (Rabia's case). If these cases come to trial, male judges are inclined to accept the "honor dilemma" of the murderers as a mediating factor. Often, killers receive a very light sentence, and further benefit from reduced jail terms under the auspices of provocation or tender age (Sevda's, Hatice's and Hacer's cases). The fact that these
killings are decided and condoned by a group of men (family elders) but carried out by younger members of the family also allows a diffusion of responsibility, and thus provides further cover and legitimacy for killers of women. The killers may even receive a hero's treatment during incarceration (Campaign, 1999; Cancel, 1999). Sati (1997) suggests that the level of respect shown to the killer is proportional to the brutality of the killing.

Last, I will discuss the aspect of social change, which indeed might be one of the most important elements in honor killings in a country which is truly on its way to modernization since the 1920s. As discussed, Turkish laws leave no place for blatant discrimination against women, let alone condone their murder; yet many die horrible deaths at the hands of their family members. It is our contention that the only way to make sense of this diabolic contradiction is to look at the perceived threat of social change, especially in backward, structurally disadvantaged and rabidly patriarchal rural pockets. A recent New York Times article addresses the severe impact of ethnic strife and internal migration on Turkish women's lives. According to the article, women in the South eastern part of Turkey are twice as likely to kill themselves as their male counterparts because of the resistance of their families to any kind of social change. Out of numerous examples, a 22-year-old woman killed herself after being severely beaten by her parents for wearing a tight skirt, and a 20-year-old woman killed herself to protest her arranged marriage. According to experts "they cannot control their lives, only their deaths" (Turkish women, 2000, p. 3).

Through technological achievements and globalization, even extremely isolated parts of the globe are being bombarded with images of a different world than the one they have "always known." Despite the burdens of her arranged child marriage and despite the economic destitution surrounding her life, Hatice (12) wanted to go to the movies with her friends. Sevda (17) was also infatuated by the movies, and wanted to see the different life they portrayed at the cost of running away from her home. Gonul (21) who was socialized in a tourist heaven, challenged her arranged marriage to her cousin from the rural SanliUrfa, and insisted on pursuing a love relationship. Hacer, unlike many generations of women before her, had the opportunity to listen to a radio, and experience the dangerous pleasure of hearing a love song dedicated to her. Fatma moved away from her repressive home, changed her city, found herself a job and became totally self sufficient. Yet, none could escape the patriarchal web. In rigidly codified patriarchal systems, the awakening wants, desires and independence of women are considered as threats. There may indeed be a rise in the crimes against women by men who resist this challenge and change. Like a wounded dinosaur, the patriarchal strongholds are extracting a few more
victims in the hope of preserving the status quo.

SOME IDEAS ABOUT BREAKING THE VICIOUS CYCLE

Although the radical feminist assertions can powerfully explain the threat women face in patriarchal pockets of the world, the type of remedies they foresee are not likely to help in the strongly entrenched Middle eastern cultures (i.e., dismantling the traditional forms of heterosexual marriage, dismantling the chains of reproduction, establishing exclusive women's circles to equalize balance, etc.). Engel's notion of increased labor force participation of women is also woefully simplistic. Socialist feminist ideas about state intervention in areas of education, health and child-care offer some hope, but are not capable of dealing with the strength of the cultural domination of men in developing counties. For example, women's paid work and independence without other safeguards may increase rather than decrease the backlash in patriarchal bastions (Fatma's case). It is our contention that the solutions to the genderized problems must be simultaneously sought at the personal/social/legal and cultural levels, and must somehow avoid destroying the social fibre of the societies these practices are cradled in. This is indeed a tall order since it demands multiplex interventions as well as an in-depth understanding of what works in a given society and what may produce a complete rejection. Even feminist remedies, be it of socialist or radical kind, that are advanced with the sole purpose of bettering women's lives cannot be transported to the non-western world without a serious realignment.

In Turkey, honor killings are very rare, but as we argued, even one is too many. They are localized in the most socio-economically depressed areas where incomes are extremely low, and where formal education is lacking and upward mobility is unthinkable. The epicentre of such killings are in rural areas with almost a feudal type of land ownership pattern (Turgut, 1998), where there are early, sometimes arranged marriages, unchecked reproduction, and very little regard to human rights or women's life. In these pockets of disadvantage, women are disposable. A few men and their kin hold almost all available land, leaving nothing to the majority of disenfranchised men (except power over women and children). In these pockets of feudal like existence, girls/women are "sold" like commodities under the "pride-price" norms even though this practice is illegal. Turgut claims "when she is dishonored, the family forfeits that income" (1998, p. 2), highlighting the link between patriarchal expectations and the materialist considerations. A complicating factor is that these areas are also ripe with ethnic strife (Turgut, 1998; Turkish women, 2000). The national and international attention on politicized issues (ethnic conflict, minority rights) has swayed attention away from genderized violence. Maybe, then, at the
structural level what must be done is to increase the standard of living and the socioeconomic opportunities in the area, by initiating land reforms to break the chain of feudal patriarchal systems, by job creation programs which will involve skilling or re-skilling components for all rather than just privileging the already privileged, and by pouring substantially more resources into basic and higher forms of education. These preventative measures may eradicate the destitution of the people caught in a time warp. The Turkish Government has already poured substantial money into the development of dams, irrigation facilities and hydro-electric generation plants in the area, but regretfully, very few seem to have benefited from this injection of new wealth (Turgut, 1998).

Reproductive education of both men and women is a must, and may be undertaken by both the formal educational institutions and the NGOs. Unchecked reproduction has untold difficulties for women and the children they bear, and additional mouths to feed exasperates the existing socioeconomic deprivation of the eastern regions. The preference for male children must be altered since it gives a life-long superiority to men in relation to women. At the state level, one way of assuring this difficult transformation is to install dependable and adequate old age pensions, benefits and health-care available for the aging populations. In the absence of such assurances, parents are bound to favour their sons as an insurance against the perils of their old age (Kagitcibasi, 1993). Moreover, trying to educate the young on these matters is not sufficient, if the reigning patriarchs continue to demand conformity and preserve the power to enforce their own rules. Education must target young and old, men and women, propertied as well as the poor. In raising awareness, active cooperation or at least a silent blessing of the respected members of communities must be sought, and the negative male peer group pressure on other men must be eased. A farmer who killed his daughter expressed the devastating pressure he felt in these words: "I would not have want (sic) to harm my own child, but I had no choice. Nobody would buy my produce. I had to make a living for my other children" (cited in Turgut, 1998, p. 3). These sentiments do not excuse the heinous crimes, but nevertheless represent the complexity of the issue for designing realistic intervention techniques.

The legal system in Turkey can also benefit from a serious make-over in terms of defining the family as a more egalitarian institution and by updating its rules in division of assets in case of marital break-up, custody and status of children. Another must is the abolishment of reduced sentences for honor related crimes, or better yet, making such crimes subject to a heavier penalty like the ones that apply for general violence among family members (see earlier discussion). Like the
Dr. Aysan Sev'er

changes Atatürk initiated in 1920s and 1930s, the law must again take on educative and standard setting functions rather than falling behind current human rights considerations.

Due to the unique leadership of Atatürk, the Turkish army has retained the unusual distinction of being the protector of Turkish westernization and modernization. There is no reason why the modern outlook of the army cannot be simulated in police and gendarme forces through the requirement of higher levels of education tailored to an understanding and respect for human and women's rights. It will also help if the Turkish army as well as police and gendarme went through a conceptual reform to allow women in these forces. Although this may be too radical a move to expect from a patriarchal society, it nevertheless may be one of the keys to erase the image of women's secondary citizenship, especially in rural domains. Enforcers of the legal system, like the police, gendarme and lawyers/judges must also go through gender sensitivity education as well as lessons about the dangers in women's lives (Krau, 1998; Polis tecavuzde, 2000). Pilot projects that attempt to raise awareness among legal and paralegal professionals are already underway in at least two mega universities in Turkey (Ankara Üniversitesi, 1998; Middle East Technical University, 1998). Of course, the hard work and the good intentions of these new initiatives need to be applauded. However, they are too few and too centralized in highly secular and urbanized locations to have any discernable impact on remote, rural locations where women are routinely victimized. We will go a step further and suggest that the establishment of a higher court system with specially trained judges/personnel just to oversee the lower court dealings in gender crimes will help to guard against male biases that may (and often do) seep into the delivery of "justice".

The global community must play a stronger leadership in engendering social change. In her insightful analysis of international human rights law and practice, Florence Butegwa (1999) claims that the international community has shortchanged "social rights" (which include women's rights to health, education, economic sufficiency and even life) by disproportionally emphasizing "civil and political rights." According to Butegwa, although the "universality, inalienability and indivisibility" of human rights as well as their "unisex" understanding are well established, most states have opted to defend only political rights (of freedom from torture, free speech, etc., also see Bunch and Frost, 1997). Butegwa claims that this may be because political rights are "cost free" rights which only require governments from abstaining from doing things which will violate them. In contrast, the protection and preservation of social rights (which threaten mostly women and children) require mammoth investments of money, time and commitment, which especially the third world countries cannot afford. Moreover, unisex
conceptualization of human rights has severely shortchanged women whose vulnerabilities arise from their culturally differential roles, biological differences and socialization processes (Bunch and Frost, 1997; Butegwa, 1999). On the basis of these insights, the developed world has a responsibility to share the economic burden of protecting social rights across the world, especially in countries which are too poor to finance humanitarian safeguards. Moreover, there must be a realistic and clear sequence of expectations or else there will be "a real danger of states feeling overwhelmed by the task and just dismissing the entire Covenant as a mere statement of ideals rather than creating legal obligations" (Butegwa, 1999, p. 7). The international community must also accept gendered violation as an unquestionable criteria for women's political refugee status. Amongst all developed nations, only Canada applies such a criteria (Canada Immigration and Refugee Board, 1993; Stanek, 1994).

To generalize some of the previously discussed ideas to Turkey, we suggest that rather than making utopic demands of "gender equality" or destructive criticisms of the state's failure to safeguard human rights, or seeing honor killings as a fundamental flaw in Islam, it is crucial for the international community to work with enlightened Turkish women and men to initiate changes that are respectful of the cultural mores without being enslaved by them. Due to their long and complex history, Turkish people have developed not only a deep-rooted pride about themselves, but also an equally deep-rooted suspicion about crude and self-serving foreign interventions into their affairs. For these reasons, effective women's rights solutions must be developed within the social system they are a part of rather than through top-down attempts or culturally ignorant demands for change. For example, the Turkish culture is not going to give up on its insistence on privatizing family matters, neither is it likely to dramatically alter the genderized role divisions within it. The Turkish culture is not likely to give up on its overemphasis on the concept of honor either, since honor is a fundamental part of its centuries old moral landscape. Nevertheless, there may be ways of dissociating conceptualizations of honor away from women's bodies and lives, and instead, associating "cowardice" and "dishonor" to violence against women and girls. The point is, it is more constructive to creatively activate the positive aspects of whatever is entrenched in the social system than to impose culturally irrelevant ideas or Eurocentric interventions. The best way to alter men's behavior is to make other men shame that behavior. So far, the shaming process is working to assure the subjugation of women.

The suggested social and legal transformation and an integrated respect for human rights require long term commitment, and unwavering national and international will. At the time of writing the current paper,
the United Nations is conducting its Millennium Summit in New York with 150 heads of state in attendance. Although political human rights is a major item on their agenda, social reforms dealing with women's rights is much less visible. We are still far from the provision of a globally funded protection for women from poverty, ill health and safety from violence. There is no internationally agreed upon safe passage like eligibility to refugee status on gender persecution. The onus of stopping violence against women belongs to the global world as well as the individual states.

In the mean time, women continue to need more immediate forms of help and protection at the local levels. One crucial form is to provide safe-houses for women, government sponsored programs of safe passage to other cities and towns under assumed names, and intensive counselling and skills programs for women to regain psychological health and economic sufficiency. There are a few "witness protection" like programs in Turkey, but the number of murders attests to the fact that there should be many more such efforts and a better coordination of the existing ones.

NOTES

- Even the term "honor killing" is an oxymoron, since honor and killing should be mutually exclusive rather than interrelated concepts. A more appropriate term to refer to these murders is "patriarchal killings".
- Wife burnings (suttee) in India have also received attention (see Daly, 1989). Indeed, wife burnings have some similarities with honor killings. For example, in both cases, the victims are young or older women and the perpetrators are members of the immediate or extended family. However, there are also important differences. In its most traditional form, wife burnings are initiated (at least on the surface, although the entrenched customs may not give women alternatives) by the widow of a recently deceased men who throws herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. More recent variations are found to be related to dowry disputes where women suffer "accidental" deaths such as kitchen fires, etc., while the husband and his family are conveniently freed to search for a new wife (and presumably a better dowry).
- According to Yusuff (1998), even if women commit adultery, its proof is virtually impossible under the Islamic Law, since the proof requires "four witnesses who would have to testify that they actually witnessed the sexual offense, i.e., copulation." Suspicions, rumors or hearsay are legally (according to the Shari'ah) inadmissible.
Historically, systematic murder of women abound in different cultures. For example, women/girls have been systematically raped and killed during ethnic wars. In recent cases, the victims were Moslems but the perpetrators were not (Bosnia, Kosova, MacKinnon, 1993). In China, female children are at risk (Landsberg, 1995 and 1996, also see Small steps, 1996), and Bangladeshi women are frequently disfigured by acid attacks (Acid attacks, 1999; Vicious twist, 2000). According to a 1991 Human Rights Watch, there are similar practices in Brazil (Sati, 1997). In India, female children are systematically aborted, and some women are still subjected to ritualized deaths (see Ritual death, 1999). In Saudi Arabia, adulterous women are stoned to death (see Zina yapan, 1995). Even in so called highly advanced societies such as U.S., U.K. and Canada, many women are stalked and killed by husbands/lovers/ex-partners (Sev'er, 1997 and 1998).

A detailed summary of Ataturk's political, social, legal, educational reforms can be found in http://members.tripod.com/tarihweb/ and http://www.Ataturk.com/index2.html/ In case the before their time nature of these reforms go unnoticed, one needs to be reminded that Canadian women were not considered "persons," and were not allowed to be elected into the senate until 1929.

Kim Campbell was never elected to office and served only three months after Brian Mulroney resigned as the Prime Minister of Canada.

See United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1997; UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1999 and http://www.Turkey.org/f_library.htm for these and additional information. Also see Arat, 1996:47 for the higher propensity of illiteracy of rural women.

At 5 per 1000 marriages, divorce is still very rare in Turkey, see United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1997.

Myths about and fear of women's unchecked sexuality and men's legitimacy to curb that sexuality is not unique to Islam, but is a reoccurring theme in all patriarchal, monotheistic religions. Although the emphasis here is on the middle-eastern culture in general and Turkey in particular, I would like to emphasize that the control of women's sexuality and cultural obsession with virginity, sexual purity etc. are not confined to the middle east. A glaring example of the overemphasis of women's purity is the 2000 year old attribution of "virginity" to Mary, mother of Christ.

I refer the reader to Fox's (1988) insightful and critical article on patriarchy.

Although marriages through a "religious ceremony" are not considered legal according to the secular Turkish laws, they are common among rural people.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1939) is a revered national hero and the founder of the Turkish Republic.
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