Exploring Honour Killings through Literature: An Investigation of Motivations for Honour Killings

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Abstract

This thesis argues that the complex attributes of honour killings delineated in literary works can guide us to have a better understanding of honour killings as a social phenomenon. Literature vividly conceptualises the complex web of relations between individual and society while narrating actions in their social context. As literature narrates social group and individual behaviours from multiple points-of-view, it is an important tool in terms of understanding the dynamics of honour killings. The research I undertake is significant, indeed urgent, as it offers insight into a problem which ends thousands of lives annually.

Each chapter examines a literary text which foregrounds a key factor to do with the motivation for honour killings. In Chapter One, I analyse specific cultural constructions of purity in Turkish author Zülfü Livaneli's Turkish-set novel Mutluluk (2002)/Bliss (2007), in order to show how purity is championed and impurity is regarded as dishonour in the context of honour killings. In Chapter Two, I analyse the tension between individual and collectivist identity in British-Jordanian author Fadia Faqir's Levant/British-set novel. My name is Salma (2007), to illustrate how individualistic choices challenge collective identity and honour. In Chapter Three, I focus on diasporic identity in British Pakistani author Nadeem Aslam's British-set novel Maps for Lost Lovers (2004), demonstrating how cultural alienation and the threat of losing identity in a diasporic community can contribute to honour killings. In Chapter Four, I address the construction of masculinity in Turkish author Elif Shafak's British-set novel Honour (2012), examining ways in which victimhood and culpability are linked when honour killing is used as a way of proving masculinity. In Chapter Five, I provide further and more synoptic analysis of the

four novels dealt with in the previous chapters. Edward Said's method of humanist criticism provides me with an overarching approach to the texts. Said attributes a worldly quality to literary texts and acknowledges them in their relation to historical, political, social, and cultural human experience. Influenced by his insights, I analyse honour concepts as represented in literary texts in relation to surrounding social, political, legal, economic and cultural discourses on honour killings. In so doing, I provide an original investigation of how literary works challenge and/or reinforce notions of honour and honour killings and how these works, at the same time, illuminate and challenge our knowledge of the phenomenon of honour killings.

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Introduction

Exploring Honour Killing through Literature: An Investigation of Motivations for Honour Killing

'Humanism is the only, and I would go so far as to say, the final resistance we have against the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history.'[1]

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the complex attributes of honour killing portrayed in works of literature. I argue that literature can guide us toward a better understanding of honour killings. Fiction, as it portrays actions in their social context, can usefully be employed to 'better understand non-fictitious aspects of the world'.[2] By conceptualising the complicated web of relations between individual and society in a vivid way, literature adds a humanistic point-of-view to the existing historical, anthropological, psychological, and sociological knowledge about honour killing. Fiction enables the writer to narrate individual and social group behaviours from multiple points-of-view, and so allows the reader to approach this intricate issue from different angles.

This study provides an analysis of literary texts which deal with honour killings while suggesting that literature has multifaceted effects on society. On the one hand, literature raises awareness about honour killing as it identifies problems and spreads knowledge about them to readers through a fictional experience, across diverse geographical, cultural and linguistic contexts,

[1] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), p. xxix.
[2] Mariano Longo, *Fiction and Social Reality: Literature and Narrative as Sociological Resources* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), p. 2.

without the necessity of specialised (for example, anthropological) knowledge. On the other hand, however, as the issue of honour killing is highly sensitive and sometimes entails misrepresentations and hyperbole, literature might also strengthen clichés and stereotypes about honour killing. This may happen if a selective portrayal of a cultural characteristic is combined with the selective perception of the readers. Especially if there are already existing stereotypes, myths, and cultural biases, readers can be predisposed to see what they expect to see. Assuming that similar information and images are received by readers over time, this may have a cumulative effect, and the author's choices may strengthen already existing stereotypes such as the portrayal of honour killers as men and/or Muslim.

Literature can, nevertheless, be an important tool in terms of understanding the constructedness of the notion of honour and honour killing within society, as it reflects, challenges, and questions the very status of these two things. In other words, literature reveals elements of honour killing in its discursive formation. I understand discourse, in the Foucauldian sense, as a statement system which legitimises truth and contains and constitutes knowledge verbally and institutionally within power relations. Foucault writes in his *Archaeology of Knowledge* that discourse should be treated 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'.[3] The analysis of the discourse surrounding honour killing is significant, indeed urgent, as it will offer insight into a problem which ends more than 5000 lives per year,[4] and increase awareness as to how such events can be avoided.

I focus on the key aspects of a situation that results in honour killings in the texts. Each chapter examines a literary text which foregrounds a key factor to do with the motivation for honour

[3] Michel Foucault, *The Archeology Of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 55.
[4] Nafis Sadik, *The State of World Population 2000 Lives Together, Worlds Apart: Men and Women in a Time of Change* ([n.p.]: UNFPA, 2000), p. 29.

killings. I analyse, respectively, cultural and social constructions of purity in O. Zülfü Livaneli's *Mutluluk* (2002)/*Bliss* (2007); identity and the need to belong to a community in Fadia Faqir's *My name is Salma* (2007); tensions in diaspora living and fear of acculturation in Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004); and the construction of victimhood and culpability in relation to notions of family honour and masculinity in Elif Shafak's *Honour* (2012). I focus on how these themes are plotted in literary texts as motivations for honour killings. Each chapter necessitates different critical tools, but Said's humanist criticism is the overarching framework which I use to interrogate texts. Said attributes a worldly quality to the texts and acknowledges them in their relations to historical, political, social and cultural human experience. For this reason, I analyse all the texts within their material (worldly) contexts.

As a Muslim Kurd, who has experienced life both in Turkey and in the UK, I position myself, in relation to the social worlds of novel settings, as both an outsider and an insider. This allows me to evaluate worldly qualities of the texts to better analyse constructions of honour in, and through, the literary texts. By so doing, I provide an original investigation of how literary works challenge and/or reinforce, but also illuminate notions of honour and honour killing when the texts are read in particular ways. My double perspective enables me to access aspects of these texts which illuminate the phenomenon of honour killing and challenge our often limited knowledge of the subject. The remainder of this Introduction provides background for the study of honour killings through literature and outlines key theoretical and methodological approaches that I employ throughout this thesis.

On Honour

Crimes of honour are world phenomena, even if they are stereotypically connected with particular

(generally non-Western, especially Muslim) societies and minority groups. The complexity of the notion of honour, which varies from culture to culture, causes confusion in defining this phenomenon. Believing that specifying what honour and honour crimes are is one of the essential steps for a deeper understanding of the issue, I will first discuss different definitions of the phenomenon, in order to establish a comparative ground for the cultural perspectives on honour and honour-related crimes that this thesis engages with.

Human Rights Watch defines honour crimes as 'acts of violence, usually murder, committed by male family members against female family members who are perceived to have brought dishonor upon the family'.[5] Although this definition may apply to the most common type of honour killings, limiting the victims to women and perpetrators to men is misleading, as sometimes the whole family can be complicit in the crime, and men, especially if they are in a homosexual relationship, can be victims as well. For instance, the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI) declares that, in February 2012, in one month, 42 gay men were tortured and killed as they did 'not fit under the religious description of a family'.[6] Upholding proper family values is so important that sisters and mothers can be active in the purification of shame brought to the family as they do not want to be labelled as being as dishonourable as the victim. Joanne Payton explains female complicity in such crimes:

> Women are made complicit with the ideology of 'honour' through conditioning and coercion; dissent is suppressed by threats and violence. Patriarchal structures do not just unite men against women, but the older generation against

[5] Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective: Violence Against Women and "Honor" Crimes, in *Human Rights Watch* <http://www.hrw.org/news/2001/04/05/item-12-integration-human-rights-women-and-gender-perspective-violence-against-women> 2001 [accessed 20 May 2012] Item 12.
[6] Yanar Mohammed, 'Campaign of Iraqi gay killings by smashing skulls with concrete blocks' in *Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq* <http://www.equalityiniraq.com/press-release/150-campaign-of-iraqi-gay-killings-by-smashing-skulls-with-concrete-blocks>, [accessed 10 October 2012]

> the younger. Older women may be included in family councils and take a role in conspiracies, provided they have internalised the gender roles of the 'honour' system and play a masculine role in enforcing them on the younger generation.[7]

The stage of a woman in her lifecycle determines the position that that woman has in a patriarchal system, with older women being given relatively more privileges—something which Payton describes as the 'masculine role' imposed by patriarchal structures, which in turn strengthens the systematic patriarchal control mechanism.

Payton's arguments are useful in understanding how patriarchal control mechanisms are sustained. It can be understood that Payton gives an active role to women who can internalise their gender roles. However, Judith Butler finesses our understanding of social construction, particularly in the field of gender, and further complicates the view that there is a self 'which assumes and exchanges "roles" within the complex social expectations of the "game" of modern life'.[8] Butler suggests 'this self is not only irretrievably "outside," constituted in social discourse, but that the ascription of interiority is itself a publically regulated and sanctioned form of essence fabrication.'[9] In other words, there is no self or internalised act separate from social discourse, and both masculine and feminine positions are constructed through actions and words. Hence, gender is not a fact but a performative act designated socially. According to Butler 'what is called gender identity is a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo'[10] and is not universal because:

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[7] Joanne Payton, 'Collective Crimes, Collective Victims: A Case Study of the Murder of Banaz Mahmod', in *Honour, Violence, Women and Islam*, ed. by Mohammad Mazher Idriss and Tahir Abbas (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 67-80 (p. 75).
[8] Erving Goffman cited in Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40:4 (1988), 519-531 (p. 528).
[9] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40:4 (1988), 519-531 (p. 528).
[10] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts', p. 520.

> […] gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out "gender" from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained.[11]

What Butler adds to Payton's approach to gender identity is the effects of social construction, which is the source of the self and internalised acts.

This also means that there cannot be 'a universal basis for feminism, one which must be found in an identity assumed to exist cross-culturally'. We should similarly problematise 'the universal or hegemonic structure of patriarchy or masculine domination'.[12] In other words, 'patriarchy exists nowhere in a pure state'; it is 'a tangle of oppressions grown up and around each other for centuries'.[13] It takes on different characters in different locations, social classes and groups at different times. Its multifaceted character functions in various forms for individuals and social groups. Men's position in a patriarchal hierarchy is bound to their performing according to certain gender requirements; hence, a man can be victimised by other men. Not all men experience the same privileges; nor do all women suffer from the same disadvantages. As Elizabeth Spelman states, 'even if we say all women are oppressed by sexism we cannot automatically conclude that the sexism all women experience is the same'.[14]

Even if we cannot ascribe universality to gender attributes, there are some patriarchal

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[11] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), p. 6.
[12] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 6.
[13] Adrienne Rich, 'Notes towards a P olitics of Location' in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 29-42 (p. 33).
[14] Elizabeth Spelman, cited in Ien Ang, 'I am Feminist But … "Other" Women and Postnational Feminism', in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (Edinburgh: EdinburghUniversity Press, 2003), pp. 190- 206(p. 191).

specifications which pave the way for honour killings. The patriarchal systems of Muslim-majority countries where honour killings are common are mostly tribal patriarchies; this is due to the fact that 'Islam was born in a tribal environment, and tribes have played a large role in Islamic history.'[15] The Canadian Council of Muslim Women accepts tribal patriarchy as a specific cause of violence against women in Muslim-majority countries and defines a tribe as being an 'internal social structure, with shared beliefs, strong feelings of identity and loyalty […] With men central to the structure, women and children are seen as belonging to the tribe and family.'[16] Tribal patriarchy's most powerful control mechanism works on the status of its members by using reputation and shame factors. Certain men, as the holder of power, construct the knowledge of honour in favour of men; hence, as Payton suggests, the ideology of honour is dichotomous in much of the Middle East in terms of female and male honour.[17] Rupa Reddy, reviewing the existing literature on the discussions of honour, contextualises interlinked and correlated themes which tend to underpin analysis of gendered notions of honour and its function as 'part of a patriarchal system of control and subjugation of women.'[18] The interlinked themes 'surrounding the conceptualization of honour' are 'the twin concepts of male 'honour' and female 'shame'; perceptions of women as the property of their male relatives; and consequent attempts to control female behaviour, particularly female sexual autonomy.'[19] Hence, honour is gendered and has different implications for men and women.

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[15] Frank H. Stewart, 'Tribalism', in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, ed. by Gerhard Bowering, Patricia Crone, Wadad Kadi, Devin J. Stewart, Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Mahan Mirza (Princeton, Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 563. See also: Mounira Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: the Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco* (London: University of California Press, 2001) for an example of effects of tribes on North African states. The issue is further discussed at pp. 16-17 of this thesis.

[16] 'CCMW Position on Femicide [not honour killing]' in CCMW Position Papers (2012), p. 5 <http://www.ccmw.com/documents/PositionPapers/ccmw_position_femicide_not_honour_killing.pdf> [accessed 20 July 2012].

[17] As the Information and Research Officer of the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Right Organization, Payton refers to the Middle Eastern Countries where Kurdish, Turkish, Farsi, Dari and Arabic are spoken.

[18] Rupa Reddy, 'Domestic Violence or Cultural Tradition? Approaches to 'Honour Killing' as Species and Subspecies in English Legal Practice', in *'Honour' Killing and Violence Theory, Policy and Practice*, ed. by Aisha K. Gill, Carolyn Strange, Karl Roberts (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 27-46 (28).

[19] Reddy, p. 28.

Honour generally translates as at least two different words, thereby revealing its dichotomous gendered structure.[20] In Algerian Kabyle (spoken by the Berbers of northern Algeria), the terms *nif* and *hurma* are one example of a dichotomous construction of honour. Bourdieu defines *nif* as 'manly point of honour' which protects *hurma,* which is female honour.[21] The Arabic words *'namus'* and *'sharaf'* (*şeref* in Turkish) both mean honour; however, *namus* is more closely related to sexuality. *Sharaf* is honour 'in the sense of 'respect', 'status' and 'prestige'. *Sharaf* depends on *namus*: as '*namus* is part of *şeref*, once *namus*is sullied, *şeref* is automatically affected to a greater or lesser extent. The less *şeref* that remains, the higher the risk of an honour killing […]'; if shame becomes public, then *sharaf* will be more affected. [22] Hence, to restore *sharaf, namus* should be purified and honour killing is used as a way of purification. One of the reasons why women are most likely to be victims is because, as Mohammad Mazhar puts it, men are regarded as 'more "honourable" than women and so killing a man may cause blood feuds'.[23] One can postulate that there are different notions and indications of honour for women and men. Again Payton's ideas are useful to explain how gender is constructedregarding honour:

> 'Honour' in its more feminine aspect is located in negative, passive characteristics: stoicism, endurance, obedience, chastity, domesticity, servitude. In its more masculine form it features active and positive qualities: dynamism, generosity, confidence, dominance and violence. Female 'honour' is static: it can neither be increased or regained, and once lost is lost forever. Male 'honour' by contrast is dynamic, and maintained and increased through active

[20] Payton, 'Collective Crimes', p. 69.
[21] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 90.
[22] Clementine Van Eck, *Purified by Blood: Honour Killings Amongst Turks in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), p. 221.
[23] Mohammad Mazher Idriss, 'An Introduction' in *Honour, Violence, Women and Islam*, ed. by Mohammad Mazher Idriss and Tahir Abbas (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 1-15 (p. 2).

> participation and competition in the life of the community, and as such is in a constant state of flux.[24]

The dualism in the discourse of honour ascribes women negative qualities while men are attributed positive ones; and, as women's honour is static, if it is lost entirely and cannot be restored, killing women is considered by the family a means of preventing other family members being ostracised by their community.

As we see with reference to these contexts – which are closely related to ones discussed in this thesis patriarchal ideology associates male honour mostly with women's bodies. Honour depends not only on individual behaviour but the behaviour of others in the family, the group and the society, which explains the reason behind the perceived need to control women. In collective societies, community involvement and feelings of shame can urge families to control their female members. Protecting the hymen of unmarried girls is considered to be proof of the family's and society's success in controlling their unmarried female members. Anything which might damage the hymen is so threatening to the family that they devise prevention mechanisms, such as 'segregation of the sexes, early marriage of girls, female circumcision, and preventing girls from engaging in such beneficial physical exercise as, for example, jumping and stretching'.[25] The hymen is considered to be the place 'where female honour resides, and the loss of which thus scars a girl with shame, even if its loss has nothing to do with any sexual activity'.[26] Deniz Kandiyoti considers this obsession with controlling women as being due to women being 'vested with immense negative power because any misbehavior on their part can bring shame and

[24] Payton, 'Collective Crimes', pp. 67-80 (p. 69).
[25] CEWLA (Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance), ''Crimes of Honour' as Violence against Women in Egypt', in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, ed. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London, New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 137-160, p. 140.
[26] CEWLA, p. 140.

dishonor to the male members of a whole community, lineage, or family'.[27] This negative power is considered so ominous that controlling the sexuality of women is accepted as a responsibility of the whole family or community and seen as the most important value to be protected. As stated by Amir Jafri, honour 'belongs to the collectivity and transcends time. Not only are the "honourable" names of fathers and grandfathers on line [sic] with the conduct of the present generation but the lives of unborn members also depend on it.'[28]

In societies with honour codes, this negative power of women, which may affect the whole community and lineage, is the reason behind the rage against women who are thought to have stained the collective honour because of an individual wish for pleasure, whereby the whole community and lineage are ignored. Thus, in such a society, the one who commits the honour killing is seen as the real victim because he or she is the one who is urged to commit the crime, and this is 'worse than death'.[29]

The immense 'negative power' of women is not only due to the expectations placed on women at the familial level but also at the ethnic and national levels. Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias highlight five major duties that women are expected to carry out where women are involved in ethnic and national processes: as the 'biological reproducers of member of ethnic collectivities'; 'reproducers of boundaries of ethnic/ national groups'; ideological reproducers of 'the collectivity and […] transmitters of its culture'; 'signifiers of ethnic/ national differences'; and 'participants

[27] Deniz A. Kandiyoti, 'Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case', *Feminist Studies*, 13 (1987), 317-338 (326).
[28] Amir H. Jafri, *Honour Killing: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 23.
[29] Jafri, p. 24.

in national, economic, political and military struggles.'[30] Hence, women are equated with mothers who give birth to the members of the nation (who will, in turn, become the economic, political, and military power of the nation) and raise them with ethnic and cultural ideologies. These key practices give women the negative power of being the symbols of national and ethnic boundaries which no one may cross because any breach of these boundaries (any relationship between the women—of the nation or the ethnicity—and "other" men) is seen as a threat which damages the posterity of the nation and ethnicity.

Societies tend to 'portray women as being more virtuous than women of other groups', as can be understood through various cultural, ideological, and political means.[31] Hence, they protect their women from those other societies. In so doing, societies protect their posterity and lineage or ethnic purity via control mechanisms performed by social and state policies. These policies affect the laws of those countries and their legal systems, which unfortunately reinforces familial violence against women through lack of due diligence.

The political powers of tribes in the political, cultural, and religious nexus have affected changes in the criminal laws of those regions and the decisions of judges. Furthermore, traces of colonial influence on controlling women are still felt in some legislation.[32]Mounira Charrad's work *States and Women's Rights: the Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco* gives examples

[30] Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis 'Introduction' in *Women – Nation - State,* ed, by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (Macmillan: London, 1989), p. 7.
[31] See: Obbo, Christine, 'Sexuality and Economic Domination in Uganda' in *Women – Nation - State,* ed, by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (Macmillan: London, 1989).
[32] See: Researching Women's Victimisation in Palestine: A Socio-Legal Analysis by Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian in *Honour, Violence, Women and Islam*, ed. by Mohammad Mazher Idriss and Tahir Abbas (Oxon: Routledge, 2011). Kevorkian discusses the imperial and colonial effects on Palestinian legislation and traces the current law on honour crimes to Roman legislation.

of how colonial powers manipulate family laws.[33] According to Charrad, France had different strategies of ruling in each country during the colonial period. In Tunisia, the French did not change family law, yet in Algeria and Morocco, they manipulated the law according to their own political interests. In Algeria, the French gave some customary tribal laws the status of official legislation so as to eliminate tribal resistance and to encourage the regional and local particularisms of tribes. For instance, Kabyle customs became official legislation in 1889 in the Berber region, and Ibadites customary law, which follows Sharia, but interprets issues regarding women more conservatively, was made official legislation in the Mzab region. In Morocco, the French followed a 'divide and rule policy' by emphasising the differences between tribes; in the end, there was Islamic rule in some parts of the country and tribal rule in others.[34] Under colonial rule, the balance of power changed, allowing some tribes to gain more political power in the aftermath of independence.

As powerful groups in society, tribes still influence decisions about honour killings. In some cases, legal authorities turn a blind eye to cases of honour crime and leave them to be resolved by community groups.[35]Sometimes, as members of society, judges do not dispute social norms and accept a fit of fury as a defence (even if the crime was perpetrated in cold blood), or accept honour as a mitigating cause. CEWLA, when evaluating the Egyptian penal code, came to the conclusion that giving judges "discretionary authority" may result in reduced sentences because, as members of the society, judges tend to replicate society's view that 'a woman is the "honour of

[33] Mounira Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: the Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco*(London: University of California Press, 2001).
[34] Charrad, pp. 131-142.
See also: Fadia Faqir , 'Intrafamily femicide in defence of honour: The case of Jordan', *Third World Quarterly*, 22.1, (2001), 65-82 and Chapter II of the thesis.
[35] As an exemplary case, see: The Case of Soran in 'Honour-based Violence among the Kurds: the Case of Iraqi Kurdistan', in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, ed. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London, New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 209-229, pp. 222-223.

the man"'.[36]

Another important factor which affects court verdicts is that in Western countries, in the name of multiculturalism, some verdicts are given in sympathy with the perpetrator. In 2002, when Heshu Yones was murdered by her father Abdullah Yones in the United Kingdom, Judge Denison reduced the sentence from 20 years to 13 years by accepting 'irreconcilable cultural difficulties between traditional Kurdish values and the values of Western society' as a defence.[37] Framing honour killings as a cultural element both helps Western countries to distance themselves from it and creates an area in which such violence is neutralised. Nicole Pope argues that violence against women in Western societies is perceived as a social issue; however, when a murder is committed in minority communities, especially Muslim minority communities, violence is 'attributed to "culture" rather than to the patriarchal element within the culture, and therefore perceived to be unavoidable. This perception reinforces prejudices and racism'.[38]

However, honour-motivated violence has existed historically in most societies, and no one can deny that honour is a value desired in most societies. Duelling, which was common in early modern Europe, can be portrayed as one of the most extreme forms of protecting personal honour. There were various reasons for duelling. Appropriate reasons for duelling were to prove one's bravery (which was a symbol of manhood), and to protect their honour with regards to 'the behaviour or favours of women'. Duelling practices in the name of honour were considered

[36] CEWLA, pp. 143- 144.
[37] Payton, 'Collective Crimes', p. 75.
[38] Nicole Pope, 'Honour Killings: Instruments of Patriarchal Control' in *Violence in the Name of Honour: Theoretical and Political Challenges* ed. by Shahrzad Mojab and Nahla Abdo (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Universitesi Yayinlari, 2004) pp. 101-109, p. 101.

'rightly honourable and proper among the elites in Western civilisations.'[39]

In Greece and Italy, which have the legacy of Roman Law, 'the notion of personal "honour" and even family reputation appears still common'.[40] In the Italian Penal Code, 'cause of honour' was effective until 1981. Bettiga-Boukerbout gives the reason for its persistence as 'the unwillingness of most political forces to modify the status quo, coupled with their view that giving more rights to women would unbalance the structure of family and society'.[41] In other words, women were denied their rights in the name of protecting patriarchal social norms.

The suppression of women because of social norms is not explicit in some societies, but still women can be victims of familial violence if they are not obedient enough. Sharon K. Araji draws our attention to the possibility that violence against women in Western societies may be an 'extension of honour system ideology':

> Within Western societies with the emphasis on individualism and privacy, the shame referent may rest only in a learned memory or belief system that males are dominant and females are submissive and must be controlled. If males cannot control females, this brings about shame. A remedy to this feeling is to

[39] Purna Sen, 'Crimes of Honour Value and Meaning' in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, ed. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London, New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 41-63 (p. 44).
[40] Bravo, A. (2001) 'Madri fra oppressione ed emancipazione' [Mothers Between Oppression and Emancipation], in A. Bravo, M. Pelaja, A. Pescarolo and L. Scaraffia (eds), Storia sociale delle donne nell'Italia contemporanea [Social History of Women in Contemporary Italy], Laterza, Bari, cited in Hannana Siddiqui, ''There Is No "Honour" in Domestic Violence, Only Shame!' Women's Struggles Against 'Honour' Crimes in the UK', in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, ed. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London, New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 263-281 (p. 264).
[41] Maria Gabriella Bettiga-Boukerbout, ''Crimes of Honour' in The Italian Penal Code: an Analysis of History and Reform' in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, ed. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London, New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 230-244 (p. 239).

> punish the deviant female for not being submissive.[42]

Learned behaviours and feelings related to shame and honour are different; hence, notions of honour crimes are constructed differently conforming to the different "conceptions of gender and culture".[43]In Western societies, passion crimes, hate crimes or domestic homicides might be honour-motivated crimes even when they are not called so.

In non-Western societies, passion and hate crimes are considered kinds of honour crimes in that the attack on the honour is acknowledged as being an acceptable reason for rage. Western societies incline not to acknowledge honour as acceptable grounds for committing a crime if the perpetrators are Westerners. An-Nisa Society's[44]co-founder Humera Khan stresses that:

> Just because honour issues are not associated with white people does not mean that it does not happen. It happens, but not in the way that people talk about it when it happens in a Muslims or Asian context. […]If an honour killing in these communities occurs it is usually referred to as a "crime of passion". But underneath this, the basic drivers such as pride and honour are still the same even if the motives are different.[45]

By drawing a clear line between passion and honour crimes, Western societies distance

[42] Sharon K. Araji, 'Crimes of Honour and Shame: Violence against Women in Non-Western and Western Societies', *The Red Feather Journal of Postmodern Criminology: An International Journal*, (2000) <http://www.critcrim.org/redfeather/journal-pomocrim/vol-8-shaming/araji.html> [accessed 9 May 2012] (para. 1 of 42).
[43] Mohammad Mazher Idriss, 'An Introduction' in *Honour, Violence, Women and Islam*, p. 6.
[44] A Muslim women's advocatory group based in London.
[45] Humera Khan cited in James Brandon and Salam Hafez, '*Crimes of the Community: Honour-based violence in the UK*', (Wiltshire: The Cromwell Press, 2008), p. 38.

themselves from honour killings. Lama Abu Odeh argues that there is a tension between honour and passion crimes in the various Arab Penal Codes and that a "similar tension, between passion and honor [sic.], exists in the United States criminal legal system'.[46]Comparing Arab and American judiciary systems reveals the fallacy of the 'orientalist construction that the East is different from the West'.[47]

Honour through Literature

Being a woman in a patriarchal world has made me a person who questions the gender inequalities from my earliest recollection. As a woman, while feeling insecure, at the same time, I have always thought about what I can do to stop or resist the injustice and violence against women. I have always felt that news of violence against women and especially honour killings have never been far from me and the society I live in. However, I never fully grasped how one's own family members collude in such an extreme act of violence. When I was studying literature at the Masters' level at the Royal Holloway University of London in 2010-2011, I analysed Souad's *Burned Alive* (2004) as part of my Master's dissertation on the autobiographies of Muslim women. Although my focus was not the attempted honour killing event in that book, I realised that the study of literature enabled me to access more details of an honour killing story than I could access in real life. Although there was, and still is, speculation that *Burned Alive* is a fiction and not a real memoir, [48] nevertheless, it's being fiction does not prevent it illuminating various details and aspects of honour killings such as the extreme way of killing that is approved

[46] Lama Abu-Odeh, 'Comparative Speaking: The "Honor" of the "East" and the "Passion" of the "West"', *Utah Law Review* 2 (1997), 287-309, p. 291.
[47] Abu- Odeh p. 290.
[48] Thérèse Taylor, *Truth, History, and Honor Killing: A review of Burned Alive* (2016) <https://www.antiwar.com/orig/ttaylor.php?articleid=5801> [accessed 18 July 2016].

by the community. These brief autobiographical remarks are relevant in that they justify my interest in the use of literary fiction as a source for understanding a social phenomenon.

It is difficult to accurately access the details of an honour killing as usually the victims and the killers are from the same family and due to the belief that the victim has brought shame to the family, there is a tendency in the family and society to side with the killer and/or remain silent for various reasons, such as avoiding public shame or the trauma of their losses.[49] For this reason, fiction on honour killings functions as a medium which enables readers to witness the details vicariously. The boundary between reality and fiction can be blurred as a real event can be incomprehensible and fictional elements can be all-too-real as the following extract demonstrates:

> On Nov. 6, 1989, Tina was late coming home.
>
> Her parents were waiting, glaring through the windows, as a classmate — a boy she had secretly begun dating — walked her to the door.
>
> When she stepped inside, her mother fumed, "Where were you, bitch?"
>
> Tina explained that she had taken a part-time job at a Wendy's restaurant a mile from home and had just finished her first shift.[50]

> "We do not accept that you go to work," interrupted Tina's father, Zein. "Why

[49] As an example see Unni Wikan's work on Fadima Sahindal's honour killing *In Honor of Fadime* (2008). Although Fadime Sahindal becomes a public figure before being killed and most of the family members and the community try to protect Fadime it is still not possible to access all the details of the event despite all the police investigations and Unni Wikan's considerable amount of effort to reveal details. Witnesses

[50] David J. Krajicek, 'Justice Story: 'Die, My Daughter, Die!' An Old-World 'Honor Killing' In Modern St. Louis: How FBI's Terror Bug Caught Parents Red-Handed, Stabbing Teenager Tina Isa to Death', *New York Daily News*, 2013 <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/justice-story/justice-story-honor-killing-article-1.1510125> [accessed 1 October 2015].

are you doing this to us?" asked Maria angrily.

"I am not doing anything to you," Tina bristled.

"You are a she-devil," hissed Zein, "and what about the boy who walked you home? He wants to sleep with you in bed, don't you have any shame? Don't you have a conscience? It's fornication."[51]

For several minutes, they argued in a mix of English and Arabic about whether Tina would be allowed to continue living with her parents.

"Come on, throw me out!" Tina said. "OK, here is my key."

During the argument, Maria Isa searched Tina's school bag, interrogating her about shoes, books and a newspaper she found inside.

The father suddenly cut off the conversation.

"Listen, my dear daughter, do you know that this is the last day?" Zein Isa said.

"Huh?" Tina replied.

"Do you know that you are going to die tonight?"

When he returned from the kitchen with a 7-inch boning knife, Tina grasped that he was serious. She cried out, "Mother, please help me!"

"What help?" the mother replied. "Are you going to listen? Are you going to listen?"

"Yes! Yes! Yes, I am!"

[51] Lama Abu Odeh, 'Honor Killings and The Construction Of Gender In Arab Societies', *American Journal of Comparative Law*, 58, (2010), 911-952 (p. 913).

> But it was too late. As her mother pinned the screaming girl to the living room floor, her father raised the knife and buried it in her left breast six times.
>
> "No! Please!" she shouted.
>
> "Shut up!" her mother replied.
>
> "Die! Die quickly!" said the father.
>
> After one final death groan, he added, "Quiet, little one! Die, my daughter, die!"[52]

I believe that if one does not know the sources of the above excerpts, it would be hard to give an exact answer to the question of whether the quotations are taken from a literary work or a real life dialogue. In fact, the conversation was picked up by an FBI bug when a Palestinian- American father, Zein Isa, and his Brazilian wife, Maria, murdered their sixteen-year-old daughter, Palestina. Zein Isa had been listened to for two years, as a suspect of terrorism, when the honour killing was caught on tape by the FBI.[53] But how often, outside fiction, are the details about such heinous crimes revealed? It seems there is a one in a million chance that these details can be accessed as many honour killings are still not even reported to be honour killings; they are disguised as accidents or suicides.[54]

Honour killing is a phenomenon of the real world, but I aim to discover how this phenomenon is illuminated by literature. Although honour killing is a sensational issue in the Western societies

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[52] Krajicek, 'Justice Story', <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/justice-story/justice-story-honor-killing-article-1.1510125>.
[53] Ronald Kessler, *The Secrets of the FBI* (New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2012), p. 235.
[54] Rana Husseini, *Murder In The Name Of Honor* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2009), p. 146.

and a political issue in Turkey, no one in either country has, to my knowledge, systematically examined this issue via relevant literary works.[55] In this thesis, I focus on honour crimes represented in fiction that are related both to the control of women's sexuality and to the restoration of tarnished honour by aiming to exterminate women who are the source of the shame. Hence, other honour related issues, like duelling or forced marriages, do not fall within the scope of my study.

I believe that Mariana Longo is right to argue that 'literature as a source gives a social scientist the opportunity to go beneath the surface of social phenomena'.[56] My thesis aims to contribute to existing knowledge of honour killing in social, political, legal, economic and cultural discussions by dealing with honour-related crimes, especially honour killing, in literature. Lindsey Moore discusses two essential issues peculiar to the ambiguous social 'function of literature' in her article on Nadeem Aslam's second novel *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004): on the one hand, as a work of art, it has to entertain and be formally and aesthetically coherent, and on the other hand it is often expected to work as a social commentary and endowed with the 'burden of representation'. The 'burden of representation', whereby writers are expected to speak 'for' a community, applies disproportionately to minorities.[57] In my thesis, I aim to deal with the function of literature by bearing in mind these crucial issues highlighted by Moore.

[55] There are studies that reading of a single novel that focuses on honour like Ana-Beatriz Perez's 'Shame and (Self) Punishment: Trauma and Diasporic Identity in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*' but these studies are not systematically comparative and connected one another.
[56] Mariano Longo, *Fiction and Social Reality: Literature and Narrative as Sociological Resources* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), p. 7.
[57] Lindsey Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*', *Postcolonial Text*, 5 (2009), 1-19 (1).

Of course, the best known critique of subaltern representation in colonial and postcolonial texts, as problematized by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, is that third world subjects are studied within first world academic frameworks and these studies serve the interests of Imperialism. Spivak reminds us that the complicity between 'speaking for' and 'portraying' should be borne in mind to avoid doing political harm.[58] Spivak asserts that:

> […] these two meanings of representation are conflated; for in the constitution of disempowered groups as coherent political subjects, the process of (aesthetic) representation is subordinated to the voice of the political proxy who speaks on their behalf. As a consequence of this conflation, the aesthetic portrait – symbolically representing disempowered people as coherent political subjects – is often taken as a transparent expression of their political desire and interests.[59]

Spivak worries that while trying to give the silenced other a voice, the postcolonial critic unknowingly does 'epistemic violence' to the former by objectifying them and taking away their ability to speak for themselves as they ignore their individuality and differences.[60] In this thesis, I acknowledge the concerns raised by Spivak and never claim to reach the final truth about a subject, aiming to speak for a certain group or simplify heterogeneous groups by ignoring the diversity within them. My humanist approach to literary representations is an attempt to figure out how a real life phenomenon, namely honour killing, can be better understood through certain

[58] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Sarah Harasym, 'Practical Politics of the Open End', in *Interviews, Strategies and Dialogues Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* , ed. by Sarah Harasym (New York, London: Routledge, 1990), p. 95-113 (109).
[59] Stephen Morton, *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 58.
[60] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271-313 (p. 281).

interpretations of an aesthetic portrayal. Spivak also insists that 'rather than imagining that women automatically have something identifiable in common' the language of the other woman should be learned when studying the literature of Third World. She accepts 'language as the process of meaning-construction' and asserts that 'bodies of meaning' are not 'transferred in translation'.[61] Issues raised by Spivak about the inevitability of meaning shifts in translation have guided me to restrict my selection of texts to include only English and Turkish-language literary materials.

Literature, as aesthetic work, is not directly bound to or transparently reflective of real world concerns. Rather, as Longo argues that the worlds created by literature are 'reality-like,' and 'a portion of reality is represented, given significance and relevance' in 'a temporally and logically coherent meaning structure'.[62] As Tzvetan Todorov defines it, literature presents another continuum of lived experiences, rather than being a replacement for them. It is denser than daily life and expands our universe; it is an interaction which enriches us infinitely and helps us to fulfil our human potential.[63] Literature allows us to experience other lives and cultures vicariously and to penetrate the minds and souls of characters whom we need to understand, as 'the "Other" [...] is the source and resource for a better, more critical understanding of the "Self"'[64] seeing as we need "others" in order to be more self-critical and define the self.[65] Engaging in the story line, and sharing in the despair, hope, anger and other feelings of characters

[61] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 179-200.
[62] Longo, p. 4.
[63] Tzvetan Todorov, 'What Is Literature For?', *New Literary History*, 38:1 (2007), 13-32, (p. 17).
[64] Akeel Bilgrami, 'Foreword' in Edward Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticsm*, ed, by. Akeel Bilgrami (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003) p. xii.
[65] Edward Said argues that the West needed the Orient to define itself. See: Edward Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticsm*, ed, by. Akeel Bilgrami (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003), p. 1.

is different from reading a newspaper article or sociological text about a problem. As Margaret Atwood states:

> If writing novels – and reading them – have any redeeming social value, it's probably that they force you to imagine what it's like to be somebody else. Which, increasingly, is something we all need to know.[66]

Especially after September 11, the polarisation between East and West has gone to extremes in 'the structures of representation', and the need for empathy has been greater as all the stereotypes like the 'bearded Muslim fanatic, the oppressed, veiled woman, the duplicitous terrorist who lives among "us" the better to bring about our destruction' have become more visible in the cultural products (like films, fiction, and television programmes) of the West.[67] Likewise, barbaric Muslim men and oppressed Muslim women have become a popular theme. Stories of Muslim women – even hoax ones, like Norma Khouri's *Forbidden Love* (titled as *Honor Lost* in the United States of America) – which depict Muslim men as violent have become best sellers. Publishing director of HarperCollins, Shona Martyn, when evaluating the reasons behind Khouri's success, accepts there has been 'a global post-September 11 demand for nonfiction, "particularly books which perpetuate negative stereotypes about Islamic men."'[68] In response to this demand, the number of stories of Muslim women (mostly with exotic covers featuring a veiled woman) has risen on bookstore shelves. Miriam Cooke summarises the gendered logic of empire after September 11:

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[66] Margaret Atwood, *Second Prose: Selected Critical Prose* (Toronto: Anansi, 1982), p. 226.
[67] Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping and Representation after 9/11* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), p. 2.
[68] Shona Martyn, cited in Gillian Whitlock, *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2006) p. 111

> The burqa recalls sati and the four-stage gendered logic of empire: 1) Women have inalienable rights within universal civilization; 2) civilized men recognize and respect these rights; 3) uncivilized men systematically abrogate these rights; and 4) such men (the Taliban) thus belong to an alien (Islamic) system. Imperial logic genders and separates subject peoples so that the men are the Other and the women are civilizable. To defend our universal civilization we must rescue the women. To rescue these women we must attack these men.[69]

Drawing a clear line between Muslim men and women by giving women the position of victim involves 'replicating a colonial theme that Western imperialism was necessary to save Muslim women from their oppressive cultures', men being, namely, the 'fundamentalist "Other"'.[70] The fact that Muslim women have been used to legitimise the War on Terror is similar to a colonial logic which Spivak summarises as 'white men […] saving brown women from brown men'.[71]

The First World engagement with the sexual oppression of Third World women is rooted in the assimilation project of colonial times. Patricia Geesey cites historian Julia Clancy-Smith's argument that:

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[69] Miriam Cooke, 'Islamic Feminism Before and After September 11', *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*, 9:227 (2002), 227-235, (p. 227).
[70] Halil Ibrahim Yenigun, 'Muslims and the Media after 9/11: A Muslim Discourse in the American Media', *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 21:3 (2004), 39-69.
[71] Spivak, Can the Subaltern Speak?, p. 271.

> Women's sexuality was a central concern to colonialist policy because the "strange" and "foreign" sexual mores of the "natives" were seen to be the major obstacle to their potential assimilation.[72]

Today, however, orientalism is not 'yet a thing of the past.' Anastasia Valassopoulos points out that 'the orientalist legacy […] has consistently misrepresented the Orient and […] in many ways, persisted in misrepresenting […] the Orient.[73] In post- and neo-colonial context of today, the obsession with presenting the headscarf as a symbol of women's subjugation can be seen as a return to colonial themes and can be identified, in Yegenoglu's terms, as a 'colonial fantasy' which serves to reinforce Muslim stereotypes. 'The reference of the veil thus exceeds its sartorial matter; it is in everything that is Oriental or Muslim. The Western eye sees it everywhere, in all aspects of other's life'.[74] The covers of books about Muslim women have often been designed with figures of sad veiled women even when this is not related to the theme of the book. For instance, Amireh and Majaj compare the content and cover of Fadia Faqir's novel *Nisanist,* arguing that although the plot of the book is noticeably political and about 'Arab-Israeli and intra-Arab conflict', the cover irrelevantly has an image of a woman fully draped in black to 'attract readers and generate sales'. This is because, with such a cover, 'assumptions about the "oppression" suffered by Third World women come together with [an] interest in the "exotic veiled" women to create an eye-catching image.'[75] All in all, sex segregation and Islamic dress

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[72] Julia Clancy-Smith cited in Patricia Geesey, 'Identity and Community in Autobiographies of Algerian Women in France', in *Going Global*, ed. by Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000) pp. 173-207 (p. 180).
[73] Anastasia Valassopoulos, *Contemporary Arab Women Writers* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 135.
[74] Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) p. 47
[75] Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, 'Introduction' in *Going Global*, ed. by, Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, (Newyork: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000) p. 6.

code are among the subjects 'that attract the attention and curiosity of the West as markers of the repression of women and the inferiority of Muslim societies.'[76]

Reducing the meaning of the headscarf to a symbol of patriarchal oppression and violence against women is to ignore its complexity and is another way of misrepresenting Muslims. Apart from having religious and traditional connotations in regards to avoiding the male gaze, the headscarf has become a symbol of anti-colonialism, as in the case of colonised Algeria where women reclaimed their right to veil themselves.[77] Furthermore, in some cases, covering the head is an institutional matter as is the case for both Iran and Turkey. For example, wearing the headscarf is legally obligatory in Iran now but was outlawed there under Reza Shah's regime as a symbol of women's 'emancipation,'[78] just as it was outlawed in Turkey as a symbol of secularism[79] between 1978 and 2011, when there was a formal prohibition of headscarves at universities and public institutions.[80] Farzaneh Milani states that 'the veil has accommodated itself to a puzzling diversity of personal and political ideologies.'[81] However, this diversity is often ignored by mainstream Western culture. Accepting veiling as barbaric and 'not-to-be- veiled' as the universal norm is a Western construction which Yeğenoğlu argues against. She contends 'that the power exercised upon bodies by veiling is no more cruel or barbaric than the control, supervision, training, and constraining of bodies by other practices, such as bras, stiletto heels, corsets,

[76] Habiba Chafai, *(Mis) Representing the 'Other': "Honour Killing" in the British Press* (Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2014), p. 43.
[77] Medya Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies*, p. 143.
[78] Farzaneh Milani, *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers* (London: Syracuse University Press, 1992), p. 33.
[79] Elisabeth Ozdalga, *The Veiling Issue, Official Secularism and Popular Islam in Modern Turkey* (Surrey: Curzon, 1998), pp. 39-49.
[80] Zeynep Akbulut, 'Veiling as self-disciplining: Muslim women, Islamic discourses, and the headscarf ban in Turkey',*Contemporary Islam*, 9.3, (2015), 433-453 (p. 433).
[81] Milani, p. 19.

cosmetics, and so on.'[82] However, people don't approach these gender practices comparatively. Although methods employed to control the female body in Western societies may not be 'enforced by actual physical violence, they are all culturally enforced' and can be harmful and violent. If we consider cosmetic surgeries like labiaplasty or rib removal for a smaller waist – which has become popular in recent years – the 'brutality' of 'beauty practices' would be better understood.[83] Cultural practices, however, are categorised as violent, harmful or barbaric according to mainstream Western discourse and there is a double standard when evaluating Muslim cultural practices.

In the same vein, focusing on violence against Muslim women and using women in hijab in media and cultural products as a symbol of oppressing women (by regarding the hijab as a barbaric practice) have been prevalent in the Western world especially after 11 September 2001. Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin rightly argue that cultural products like films, fiction, and television programmes, and especially news coverage related to Muslims have stereotyped the latter and equated Muslim men with terrorism.[84] The issue of honour killing has been one of the tools used to reinforce this idea. Morey and Yaqin put it thus:

> In public debates, in formulation of government policy, in police intervention, in the judicial categorization of honour crimes, ethnic minorities in Britain come to be seen through the lens of tribal values and customs. Issues of honour and shame are nothing new in the debates on cultural difference,

[82] *Colonial Fantasies,* p. 116.
[83] Sheila Jeffreys, *Beauty and Misogyny Harmful: Cultural Practices in the West* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 1-44.
[84] Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, pp. 79-111.

> multiculturalism, or integration. Yet when it comes to underwriting the "clash of civilizations" discourse, such essentialized markers of difference confirm an unbridgeable divide between Islam and the West.[85]

Although there are many cultural products which augment the idea that 'Western' and 'Muslim' cultures are different and clashing, this thesis is committed to the potential of literature to serve as a zone of mediation which has the potential to increase cross-cultural understanding.

Theory and Methodology

Akeel Bilgrami gleans from Said that having a new understanding is possible in the study of literature (criticism), when it is supplemented with self-knowledge. This study will bring the capacity of being self-critical if this study is not 'parochial'.[86] Namely, wider contexts, such as the traditions and cultures of others, should be considered during the process of literary criticism, as a means of attempting to transcend self-interest. To this end, I will use Said's *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* as a guiding method. In his book, Said argues for the potential coexistence and fruitful interaction of cultures.[87] And reminds us that 'there are other traditions and therefore other humanities'.[88] A critical perspective that aspires to this kind of relativizing humanism will enable the reader to have a deeper understanding of issues which appear hard to comprehend.

[85] Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, p. 77.
[86] Bilgrami, p. xi.
[87] Edward W. Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, ed. by Akeel Bilgrami (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003) p. xvi .
[88] Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, pp. 4-5.

According to Said, to understand a humanistic text, the reader must apply a philological hermeneutic method, which first attempts to ascertain a writer's perspective, and enables the reader to interpret the text according to its historical context. This method brings sympathy and erudition together, requiring readers to put themselves in the author's place and to think as though they had undergone the same life experiences, which will help them to come closer to the reality of the author.[89] Said's humanist criticism is secular. According to him, the historical world is not made by God but by men and women, and this historical world can be understood according to the principles formulated by Giambattista Vico, hence:

> [...] we can really know only what we make or, to put it differently , we can know things according to the way they were made [...] As human beings in history we know what we make, or rather, to know is to know how a thing is made, to see it from the point of view of its human maker.[90]

While reading fiction, we will witness histories of characters that are constructed within the text, such as important events in their lives, their traumas and the culture which surrounds them. However, in order to have a deeper understanding of the text, we need to understand in which historical context these literary texts are being produced. We need to stop judging these texts according to our cultural norms and try to understand the realities surrounding the text, for only then will it be possible to make a humanist criticism, seeing as:

[89] Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, p. 92.
[90] Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, p. 11.

> Humanism is the exertion of one's faculties in language in order to understand, reinterpret, and grapple with the products of language in history, other languages and other histories. [...] Humanism is not a way of consolidating affirming what "we" have always known and felt, but rather a means of questioning, upsetting, and reformulating so much of what is presented to us as commodified, packaged, uncontroversial, uncritically codified certainties [...].[91]

Hence, adopting a humanist perspective requires resisting patterns of knowledge accepted as absolute truths or clichés.

In order to resist such patterns of knowledge, I combine Said's insights with a Foucauldian understanding of a power/ knowledge nexus to understand 'regime of truth' in depicted societies.[92] Foucault's theories and Said's method parallel each other in focusing on the historical construction of knowledge. In his earlier book, *Orientalism*, Said argues that 'analysis of the politics of Western ethnocentrism must begin with the question of representation as formulated by Foucault'.[93] Foucault does not focus on the 'analytics of truth', like earlier philosophers, but on the conditions under which certain notions are considered to be true; and he does not assume that one ever reaches a position where one has discovered the final truth about a subject.[94] Said never claims that humanistic knowledge is ultimate either; on the contrary, he emphasises the

[91] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 28.
[92] Michel Foucault, 'Truth and Power' in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), pp. 109- 134 (p. 131).
[93] Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1999) p. 126.
[94] Sara Mills, *Michel Foucault* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 25.

subjectivity of knowledge and states that: 'There is always something radically incomplete, insufficient, provisional, disputable, and arguable about humanistic knowledge.'[95]

However, the discrepancies between Foucault's non-humanist views and Said's humanist views have been commented on by critics and even stressed by Said. He is not convinced by the tenets of 'structuralist anti-humanism', arguing instead that people can be moved by ideals like 'justice' and 'equality'.[96] Views on the role of the writer, as described by Said and Foucault, differ significantly from each other because of their views on humanism. As Robert Young explains:

> Foucault contended that knowledge is constructed according to a discursive field which creates a representation of the object of knowledge, its constitution and its limits; any writer has to conform to this in order to communicate, to be understood, to remain in the true, and thus be accepted.[97]

While using Foucault's ideas in *Orientalism*, Said makes clear that he believes in the individual agency of writers:

[95] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 12.
[96] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 10.
[97] Young, p. 126.

> Unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in [the] determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism.[98]

In my analysis of the primary material selected in this thesis, I aim for a synthesis of Said's ideas on the individual agency of writers and Foucault's ideas on the discursive formation of the truth. Said is aware of the fact that the world is already inscribed with the works of past writers, information and discourses: in short, an 'enormous archive of material assaulting one's senses from all sides'.[99] In this regard, Said appreciates Michel Foucault and Thomas Kuhn, reminding us that:

> Whether we are aware of it or not, paradigms and epistemes have a thoroughgoing hold on fields of thought and expressions, a hold that inflects if it does not shape the nature of the individual utterance.[100]

Nevertheless, Said believes that humanistic efforts resist these clichés.

According to Foucault, discourse is the 'system which structures the way that we perceive reality', and it is 'associated with relations of power'. Power depends on knowledge and knowledge is 'produced and maintained in circulation in societies through the work of a number

[98] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 23.
[99] Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, p. 42.
[100] Said, Humanism and Democratic Criticism, p. 42.

of different institutions and practices', and it always works 'in the interest of particular groups'.[101] Based on the ideas of Foucault, power is constituted through knowledge which is accepted as 'true' and this 'truth' is not 'outside power, or lacking in power'.[102] Rather, different power relations determine what is accepted as true. Foucault emphasises the worldliness of truth. 'Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power.'[103] Truth is constructed and sustained within power relations which means it is political and a product of social construction as Foucault asserts 'each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements […]'. Consequently, there is a 'circular' relation between power and truth. Power constructs and sustains truth and truth produces power and extends its effect.[104] Likewise, knowledge is constructed in power relations and knowledge constitutes power relations. When I analyse my selected literary texts, I will analyse the discourse(s) surrounding honour in the societies depicted by the author, as well as 'the regimes of truths' and prevailing norms and values sustained in the depicted societies.

Foucault, 'rather than asking questions directly about the author and his or her works, […] encourages us to ask questions about the way the author function operates to reflect or promote the meanings and values of the containing culture.'[105]Authors also operate within power relations; while they are reflecting and promoting meaning, their perspectives and choices are

[101] Sara Mills, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 55, 54, 79.
[102] Michel Foucault, Alessandro Fontana, Pasquale Pasquino, 'Truth and Power', in Power/*Knowledge Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977 by Michel Foucault*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall John Mepham, Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books), p. 109-134 (p. 131).
[103] Foucault, 'Truth and Power', p. 131.
[104] Foucault, 'Truth and Power', p. 133.
[105] Lisa Downing, *The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 68.

also shaped by power relations. For this reason, I will place my texts in a wider social discursive space, with references to interviews, journalism and a wide range of reader responses in order to understand what kind of power relations may have affected the choices made by authors. It should be borne in mind that texts are 'the result of some immediate contact between author and medium'.[106] If authors want their texts to be published and read, these texts are subject to 'legal, political, economic and social constraints, so far as their sustained production and distribution are concerned.'[107] As soon as texts are released for the world's attention, they are enmeshed in worldly power relations. For this reason the position of my selected authors and the reception environments of their texts will be considered as complementary aspects of the worldliness of my selected texts. While focusing on the discourse of honour in texts, I will try to understand the institutions and practices which shape and sustain the discourse of honour which paves the way for honour killings. What kind of power / knowledge relations are addressed in the texts? In whose interests is that knowledge created? Which ideas are resisted or reinforced by the author? I will try to find answers to these questions in my analysis of my primary texts.

My selected texts all depict Muslim majority societies or Muslim minority communities within a non-Muslim majority context. The honour killing stories analysed in this thesis are all stories about Muslim women. In order better to understand the norms and values in the depicted societies as these pertain to gender relations, it is necessary to complement Foucault and Said's theories with something more culturally specific. In this thesis, I will make reference to Moroccan writer and sociologist Fatima Mernissi's Islamic feminist theories, which focus on gender dynamics in modern Muslim society.

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[106] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, and The Critic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 33.
[107] Said, *The World, The Text, and The Critic*, p. 32.

Mernissi argues that instincts in the Muslim conception are similar to the Freudian perception of the libido. Raw instincts are not innately good or bad but use of them determines if they are good or bad for the society.[108] Mernissi contrasts Muslim theologian and philosopher Imam Ghazali's and Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's theories of sexuality and compares different interpretations of the Quran regarding women in her book *Beyond The Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Muslim Society* (1975) to explain perceptions about gender in Muslim societies. In my experience (as a Muslim woman) her analysis is still relevant to Muslim societies. Mernissi argues that sexual dynamics in Muslim society can be understood by way of two contradictory theories, which are 'an explicit theory' and 'an implicit theory'. In line with the explicit theory, which is the most prevalent, women are seen as passive and men as forceful with regards to their sexual dynamics. Mernissi epitomises the 'explicit theory' with Egyptian literary critic Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad's (1889-1964) theories in *Women in the Koran* (no date of publication). Aqqad, like Freud, thinks that women have a 'hearty appetite for suffering' in their very natures. Like all animals, males are more powerful, compelling women to answer to their instinctual demand (which is sex) and 'women enjoy surrender'. Furthermore, Aqqad accepts that women's suffering and surrender is their greatest source of pleasure. By contrast, the unconscious, implicit theory of female sexuality is explained by the interpretation of Ghazali (1050-1111) which accepts women's power as the biggest threat to the social order as they distract men 'from their social and religious duties'. This theory 'casts the woman as the hunter and the man as the passive victim'.[109] Both theories are similar in that women have *qaid* power '("the power to deceive and defeat men, not by force, but by cunning and intrigue")'.[110] Namely,

[108] Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond The Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Muslim Society* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), p. 27.
[109] Mernissi, *Beyond The Veil*, pp. 32-33.
[110] Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, p. 33.

women can sexually attract and deceive men and can be the source of *fitna* (disorder). For Aqqad, this is because of women's 'weak constitution' and 'inferiority'; for Ghazali, this is 'the most destructive element in [the] Muslim social order'. Mernissi states that 'the whole Muslim organization of social interaction and special configuration can be understood in terms of *qaid* power'. The concept of *qaid* power, which makes women the scapegoat of the disorder and source of the problem, is still a useful instrument to understand the reasons behind controlling female sexuality today and accusing women of any sexual transgression in the society. Mernissi's explanation of *qaid* power is useful for the understanding of the concept of destructive power vested in women to subvert social order. This negative power, as I discussed in the 'On Honour' section, can affect the whole family, lineage, and community. The concept of qaid power will improve our understanding of the dichotomous honour discourse for men and women and different implications of the concept of honour for them.

I also refer to sociological and anthropological articles on the source countries of the texts, in order better to understand the texts in relation to their historical, political, social and cultural human experience, and thus to ascertain what kind of messages a literary text may send to its target audience. Although I accept that literature does not have to totally parallel reality and it is not necessary that literature should be didactic, literature is a means of communicating and, as such, inevitably produces messages. Consciously or unconsciously, messages produced by the author are interpreted by the reader and find meaning according to the reader's ethos. As Fredric Jameson argues, texts reach readers 'through sedimented layers of previous interpretations' and are read 'through the sedimented reading habits and categories developed by those inherited

interpretative traditions'; thus, reading has a historical and political context.[111] thus, reading has historical, social and political contexts.[112] Jameson highlights the inevitable perception of texts in already accepted codes and warns that artistic creation and literary fiction cannot be disentangled from their political contexts both during their production and reception. We cannot, then, evaluate a literary text without the collective perception of history and reality of the time of production and reception. Literary texts are not the main source of information like in a scientific paper, sociological text or article, but produce constructed realities stemming from and filtered through the realities of life. In related fashion, Said assumes that 'there is always the supervening reality of the aesthetic work' without which the humanism he talks about would not be meaningful.[113]

It is true that writers observe the world, as do sociologists; however, the data 'collected' by writers of fiction is more individualistic. While sociology collects data from individuals to draw general scientific conclusions, writers deal with the inner world of fictional individuals in a given context. Hence, while sociology tries to understand society in the frame of objective scientific facts, to find solutions to sociological problems, literature narrates society subjectively, albeit in a focused and intense way. Said follows Poirier's claim that literature is the most intensive example of words in action. Said quotes Poirier thus:

> None can teach us so much about what words do to us and how, in turn, we might try to do something to them which will perhaps modify the order of things on which they depend for their meaning. To literature is left the

[111] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1983), p. 9.
[112] Jameson, p. 9.
[113] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 64.

> distinction that it invites the reader to a dialectical relationship to words with an intensity allowable nowhere else.[114]

In this study, I am trying to create an environment of mutualistic interaction between literature and sociology. I agree with Amir Jafri that honour killings are perpetrated as a message to society – but especially to women – and that they are 'rhetorical assertion[s] communicated by an individual man (or several men) about his personal and collective identity'.[115] As I accept that literary texts also send messages, my aim is to reveal the social messages related to honour within literary texts via a humanistic reading. Said adopts Leo Spitzer's formulation on how the humanistic reader should interpret the text. This requires working 'from the surface to the "inward life-center" of the work of art'. For this, first of all, the 'superficial appearance of the particular work (and the "ideas" expressed by a poet are, also, only one of the superficial traits in a work of art)' should be observed in detail. Secondly, these details should be categorised in order 'to integrate them into a creative principle which may have been present in the soul of the artist'. Lastly, all other groups of observations should be integrated to find whether the "inward form" one has tentatively constructed gives an account of the whole. This requires 'repeated readings' to fight 'your way to unity [with] an author'.[116]

While working on the selected novels in this thesis, I will follow Leo Spitzer's formulation of humanistic reading steps, which Said synthesises with the works of Vico and Erich Auerbach to frame his democratic form of humanism. Hence, I will be working through the surface and

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[114] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 60.
[115] See: Amir H. Jafri, *HonourKilling: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, NewYork: OxfordUniversityPress, 2008), p. 10.
[116] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, pp. 64 -65.

toward the depths of these novels. First, I will analyse the author's position in relation to the text, audience, and target market. Then, I will analyse extra-textual ideas expressed by the author on his or her work and on the issues engaged in the literary work. Afterwards, I will focus on the discursive core of the novel and categorise opposing ideas and concepts. A focus on structuring binaries will enable me to make a comparative study of how the key aspects of honour crimes are depicted in literature.

I start, in Chapter One, with *Mutluluk* (2002) / *Bliss* (2007) by Turkish writer, musician, politician, newspaper columnist, and director, O. Zülfü Livaneli. It is set in Turkey and originally written in Turkish. The opposing ideas that I will examine in the novel are purity and impurity, with specific reference to the protagonist, Meryem. In Chapter Two, I assess *My Name is Salma* (2007) by Jordanian-British academic and writer Fadia Faqir. It is set in both an unnamed Levantine country and England, and originally written in English. Here, my focus is on the tension between individual identity and communal identity. *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004), by British-Pakistani novelist Nadeem Aslam is the focus of Chapter Three. It set in an unnamed English town, in a Muslim Pakistani community and it is originally written in English. I will discuss the perception of loss in the context of honour killings referring to cross-generational loss. In Chapter Four, I address *Honour / İskender* (2012) by Turkish writer Elif Shafak, set in Turkey and the United Kingdom, and originally written in English. I will examine this through the lenses of victimhood and culpability. In each case, I will analyse various discourses surrounding honour in the societies depicted by the authors and the norms and values sustained in the depicted societies. Emphasising the worldliness of literature, I will examine my selected texts in relation to historical, political, social and cultural human experience. As the humanist perspective requires resisting patterns of knowledge accepted as absolute truths or clichés, I will

question if there are any possible clichés promoted by the text and consider how these are, or may be, received by readers.

Said's humanist reading requires an ambivalent insider-outsider reading position, which can simultaneously engage the ideas and values of 'our society [and] someone else's society or the society of the other'.[117] I have strategically limited the set of core texts to Turkey and the United Kingdom and originally written in English and Turkish so that I have an experience of living in the depicted societies, and I can read the texts in the original languages. I only include literary examples written originally in Turkish or English in the study, as interference by publishers, editors and translators with textual meaning may result in huge shifts from the source texts that I may otherwise not notice.[118]

Reducing the number of texts has enabled more in-depth coverage of contextual issues in each case, which is essential for a humanist reading. Although *A Noble Killing* by British crime writer Barbara Nadel, and The *Lost Word* (*Kayıp Söz*) (2007) by Oya Baydar are both set in Turkey and written in English and Turkish respectively, I have not included them in my thesis so that there is a balanced comparative analysis of UK and Turkish settings. Throughout, I attempt to elucidate

[117] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 76.

[118] Due to this strategic delimitation of primary material, the following texts which also foreground honour killing and which I had planned to include when I started the research have been excluded: Because of language parameters, *Midaq Alley*, by Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz (first published in Arabic in Egypt in 1947 and in English in 1966), *A Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (first published in Spanish in 1981 and in English in 1982) by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *The Stoning of Soraya M*. (first published in French in 1990 and in English in 1994) by French-Iranian journalist Freidoune Sahebjam ; *Burned Alive: A Victim of the Law of Men* (2003), a repressed memory book by a Palestinian writer who has the pen name Souad, originally written in French have been excluded from my thesis. Also, because of geographical parameters, *The Seven Perfumes of Sacrifice* (2011), by American journalist and writer Amy Logan set in Israel has been excluded from my thesis. *Forbidden Love* (*Honor Lost*) (2003) by Norma Khouri and *The Imam's Daughter* (2009) by British Christian author of Pakistani Muslim parentage, Hannah Shah are beyond the scope of my on the grounds that they were published as non-fiction.

honour killing by bringing together literary with historical, political, social, legal, economic and cultural perspectives on the subject. Also, my selected texts and sequencing of the chapter themes enables me to navigate between texts while explaining fundamental concepts of honour such as purity and impurity, along with personal, collective and gender identity, and how these concepts are constructed in society and shaped in connection with one another.

The study of honour crimes through literature requires both a sense of responsibility and sensitivity. While analysing books using Spitzer's method, as Said suggests, there is no guarantee that connections between the details caught by the reader and the work of art are made correctly. There is, however, 'the inner faith of the humanist "in the power bestowed on the human mind of investigating the human mind"'.[119] Hence, it will be the humanist reader's responsibility to make investigations of the human mind while they interpret texts. On such an important and sensitive issue as honour killing, a literary study is crucial; as the reader's mental involvement in the event urges the reader both to think about the issue more deeply and to understand it from different perspectives. Readers interiorise the issue by empathising with the victim, perpetrator or witnesses. However, the writer's function and circumstances in creating the textual meaning and the reader's position and reception on this sensitive issue will also affect the relationship between reader and text.

For me, as a Muslim Kurdish woman who has lived in both the "Eastern" and "Western" worlds—namely, in Turkey and in the UK—and who is from Turkey, which is a very multicultural country with a high rate of honour killings, I feel that both in Turkey and Britain the

[119] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 65.

majority of people have a similar perception of the issue: they regard honour killing as the problem of 'the other'. In Turkey, there is a tendency to tackle the issue of honour killings as a problem inherent in the Kurdish population. It is claimed that honour crimes are perpetrated by people from the Eastern part of Turkey, which is heavily populated by Kurds.[120] As most Turks distance themselves from honour killings, as do most Westerners[121], I have always been in the category of the other where honour killings are perpetrated. I am categorised as a Kurd in Turkey and as a Muslim in the UK. However, I have also lived in Turkey in areas which are heavily populated by ethnic Turks. Furthermore, I have also experienced life in the UK in secular and religious (Muslim) environments. This will help me to understand the opposing ideas of honour, which is one of the tasks of a humanist reader:

> The task of the humanist reader is not just to occupy a position or place, nor simply to belong somewhere but rather to be both insider and outsider to the circulating ideas and values that are at issue in our society or someone else's society or the society of the other.[122]

Amireh and Majaj clearly point out the differences between the main foci of Western feminism and Third World feminism. Western feminists, believing their concerns are the main problems of Third World women, ignore Third World women's perceptions: 'Whereas First World feminists

[120] Shahrzad Mojab, 'The Particularity of 'Honour' and the Universality of 'Killing': From Early Warning Signs to Feminist Pedagogy' in *Violence in the Name of Honour: Theoretical and Political Challenges* ed. by Shahrzad Mojab and Nahla Abdo (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Universitesi Yayinlari, 2004), p. 29.
[121] The term 'West', and defining it, is problematic as its use entails culture and ideology to a greater extent than geography. I am aware of the danger that the use of the term may repeat a homogenous understanding of the 'other' which is defined in contradistinction to the 'Orient', and further implies the existence of a homogeneous West and Western discourse. However, with the term I aim to reflect the space occupied by the civilisations sharing the mainstream European tradition and values expanding from Europe to the USA and Oceania.
[122] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, p. 76.

have tended to focus on sexual oppression and on the cultural dimensions of "patriarchy" Third World feminists often seek to address political and economic oppression.'[123] My research subject focuses on honour killings involving sexual oppression and patriarchal issues in the Third World. While doing my research I never aim to ignore other Third World feminist concerns and never claim to speak on behalf of anyone; rather my aim is an attempt to perform a critical analysis and to understand the issue from different perspectives.

Chapter Outline

My first chapter concentrates on the concept of female purity in honour killings, by exploring Turkish writer, O. Zülfü Livaneli's *Mutluluk* (2002) / *Bliss* (2007) and by focusing on the ways in which the discourses of purity and impurity are constructed in the novel. Here, I examine the classification systems which label the main character, Meryem, as both dirty and pure, by focusing on Meryem's childish purity and her feminine purity. I also examine how the protagonist Meryem's sexual impurity stains the family honour and opens the way for an honour killing. Through an analysis of different constructions of purity in *Bliss*, I show that Meryem's purity or impurity is a matter of perception and that different discourses of purity determine whether she is pure or not. My reading of *Bliss* helps us to make sense of different constructions of social norms and expectations according to certain discourses of purity. I argue that *Bliss* provides depth and nuance to our understanding of how the notion of purity functions within the context of honour killing.

[123]Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, 'Introduction' in *Going Global*, p. 8.

In Chapter Two, I explore the relation between the notion of collective identity and honour killing by scrutinising *My Name is Salma* (2007) by Fadia Faqir. I focus on how personal impurity can be a concern for community and affect communal identity. Here, I look into the ways in which the protagonist Salma is included in or excluded from the Bedouin community in her hometown, somewhere in the Levant. Through an analysis of Salma's names – Salma Ibrahim El-Musa and her official British name, Sally – I argue that the protagonist's commitment to her familial name and her partial rejection of her new British name is an indicator of her struggle to live as an immigrant women in Britain and outside of her original Bedouin community. My reading of *My Name is Salma* illuminates the tension between being an individual outside of a community and being a member of a community and sheds light on the wider truth that the need to belong to a community may cause people to accept community rules even if that requires killing or being killed for honour.

In Chapter Three, I focus to a greater extent on the effects of living in a diaspora community on honour killings, through my examination of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004). Here, my focus is on the relations between diaspora-related losses, especially loss of cultural identity, and honour killing. I argue that the fear of losing future generations to another culture due to assimilation shapes the diasporic community in *Maps for Lost Lovers* and that the community revises and strengthens its traditions and bonds with the home country, original culture and socio-cultural identity. My examination of *Maps for Lost Lovers* builds an understanding of how diaspora-related losses can lead to honour killings.

Chapter Four concerns itself with the questions of who is responsible for honour killings and whether the concept of victimhood can be extended to include the killer. Can the perpetrator of the crime also be a victim? Through an analysis of *Honour* (2012) by Elif Shafak, I engage the concepts of victimhood and culpability in honour killing. I argue that victimhood and culpability cannot be entirely disentangled. I analyse the motivations of the protagonist, Iskender, to commit an honour killing through his developmental stages from childhood to adulthood. This chapter contributes to an understanding of the connections between victimhood and culpability in honour killings through my analysis of Elif Shafak's *Honour*.

Finally, in Chapter Five I bring the focal parts discussed in the previous chapters together in order to undertake a synoptic analysis of the novels and socio-cultural contexts explored in this thesis. The aim of this chapter is to highlight, through further and more synthetic analysis of the four novels dealt with in the previous chapters, some key overarching issues concerning honour killings. I also consider, at greater length, the relationship between literary and social, political, legal, economic and cultural perspectives on honour killings.

Chapter One

She Is Not Pure Anymore: The Purity Concept in O. Zülfü Livaneli's *Bliss*

I. Introduction:

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the relationship between the concept of purity and honour killings as represented in O. Zülfü Livaneli's third novel *Bliss* which was published in Turkey in 2002 and quickly became an international best-seller. In *Bliss*, Livaneli tells the story of a fifteen year-old girl,[124] Meryem, who is sentenced to death in order to cleanse her family's honour after she has been raped by her uncle who is a sheikh of a *tariqa* (sufi order) called the Cemaliye .[125]

While focusing on the theme of purity within the context of honour killings as it is represented in *Bliss* I will employ Said's humanist method of criticism as it enables *Bliss* to be understood thoroughly in its historical and political context. Said suggests that while texts are interpreted their actual worldly contexts should be taken into consideration, as texts exist in the world and calling the 'world's attention' is one of their functions.[126] Texts are physical and ideological sources in the world if they are not destroyed just after being created, and in the case of their publication they are received within a public domain addressing whoever reads them.[127] Hence, the historical, political and cultural environment of a text is important to understand possible circumstances which may have influenced the textual preferences of the writers. As humanist criticism requires putting oneself in the shoes of the writers and working 'from the surface to the

[124] She is seventeen years old in the Turkish edition. See p. 63 of this thesis.
[125] Ö.Zülfü Livaneli , *Bliss* (USA: Thornike Press, 2007) Although there is a *tarikaq* called Cemaliye in Turkey, in the text it is implied that Meryem's uncle is a fake sheikh.
[126] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, And The Critic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 39-40.
[127] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, And The Critic*, p. 3-4.

"inward life-center" of the work of art',[128] to understand the conditions in which *Bliss* was written, some brief information about Livaneli will be invaluable for the discussions which are to follow.

As a Turkish novelist, musician, newspaper columnist and politician, Livaneli was already internationally famous at the time when *Bliss* was published.[129] Livaneli started his career as a publisher but his publishing house was shut down by the military junta in 1971. After being held under military detention for three months, he was exiled, coming to live in Stockholm, Paris and Athens for eight years, ultimately returning to Turkey in 1984. Livaneli's international fame was due firstly to his music career, being honoured with prestigious international awards (e.g. winning the Cannes Film Festival Golden Palm Award for "The Road" soundtrack in 1982) as well as being elected as a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO in 1995 in response to his corroboration with UNESCO to encourage "a culture of peace through music"; he has been spreading UNESCO's message of "multiculturalism and tolerance" ever since.[130]

Livaneli has been an important figure in promoting friendship between Greece and Turkey by founding the Greek-Turkish Friendship Committee together with the Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis in 1986.[131] Having a longstanding relationship with Greek musicians by giving concerts together around the world, Livaneli is a long-familiar figure for the Greek people; besides, Greece was one of the first countries in which Livaneli's books were published.

[128] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, pp. 64 -65.
[129] Livaneli had been mostly known for being a musician in Turkey. He became a member of the Turkish parliament in the same month *Bliss* was published (November 2002) and his duty ended in 2007.
[130] Anonymous, *Unesco* (2013) <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/goodwill-ambassadors/omer-zuelfue-livaneli/> [accessed 1st November 2013]
[131] Earlier, Maria Farantouri had sung Livaneli's songs (Farantouri sings Zülfü Livaneli) and was honoured with the award of Record of the year in Greece in 1982.

Likewise, Greece was the first overseas country in which *Bliss* was published and, afterwards, it was published consecutively in the other countries in which Livaneli stayed during his exile years (Greece, 2005; Sweden, 2005; France, 2006); this might be due, at the very least, to his having connections in those three countries.

In 2006, *Bliss* was published in the USA as an audio and print book, was included in library catalogues, and was awarded the '"Discover Great New Authors" award due to its "superior literary value"' by Barnes & Noble.[132] Although Livaneli's earlier novels had been published abroad, *Bliss* became his first novel translated into English and became an international best seller, not only being translated into twenty-nine different languages but also adapted into an award winning film in 2007.[133]

In an interview made after the publication of the novel, Livaneli confided to the interviewer that he thought only a few people would read his novel. Although he thought that *Bliss* was his masterpiece, he was sceptical about its reaching a wide audience.[134] Hence, it can be assumed that the primary target audience for whom he was writing the novel might mostly be highly educated Turkish people; and, most probably, he was also writing it for those who lived in the Western part

[132] Anonymous, *Livaneli Official Webpage* (2013) <http://www.livaneli.gen.tr/en/biography/> [accessed 1st November 2013]
[133] There is not enough information available as to which languages *Bliss* was translated into, on Livaneli's official web page or in any source that I can access; I compiled information about Livaneli's novels from Livaneli's official web page and from published interviews with him.
[134] Zülfü Livaneli, interviewed by Ayşe Arman, 'Zülfü Livaneli'nin itiraf saati (Zülfü Livaneli's time for confession)', 23rd November 2002 <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/ShowNew.aspx?id=111276> [accessed 12th December, 2012]

of the country because of that region's education level. The other possible target audience is the readers of the European countries in which his earlier books had been published.[135]

There were realistic reasons for his assuming that only a few people would read his novel seeing as, according to a study released by UNESCO, in January 2013, in Turkey, one person out of ten thousand has a "habit for reading". Turks, on average, spend six hours in a year reading books.[136] One of the reasons why this average is so low is because the illiteracy rate in Turkey is quite high; this is especially the case for the older women of eastern Anatolia, who are mostly illiterate. Even if the younger generations receive an education, according to Odabaş et al., most of them do not acquire reading habits. Indeed, Odabaş et al.'s study shows that the low level of education in parents negatively influences the acquisitions of reading habits in Turkey.[137]

Statistics gathered by the United Nations estimates that 5.6% of men and 21.5% of women in Turkey were illiterate in 2000.[138] According to Bahçeşehir University's 2010 research, the most illiterate section of the Turkish population lives in the eastern part of Turkey. The South Eastern Anatolian Region[139] of Turkey had the largest percentage of the population over the age of 15 being illiterate with 29%; the next greatest percentage of the population over the age of 15 being

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[135] Livaneli's first novel *Engereğin Gözündeki Kamaşma* (The Eunuch Of Constantinople) (1996) had been published in Spain, Sweden, Greece and Korea; *Bir Kedi, Bir Adam, Bir Ölüm* (Memory Of Snow) (2001) had been published in Greece and Serbia by 2002, the year *Bliss* was published in Turkey.

[136] İpek Üzüm, 'Poor Reading Habits in Turkey Due To Exam-Based Education System', *Today's Zaman*, 31st March 2013 <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-311221-poor-reading-habits-in-turkey-due-to-exam-based-education-system.html > [accessed 11st October 2013]

[137] Hüseyin Odabaş, Z. Yonca Odabaş, Coşkun Polat 'Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Okuma Alışkanlığı: Ankara Üniversitesi Örneği (Reading Habit of University Students: The Model of Ankara University), *Bilgi Dünyası,* 9 (2), (2008) 431-465.

[138] Anonymous, *United Nations Statistics Division*, (2005)
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/illiteracy.htm> [accessed 11st October 2013]

[139] It is one of the seven geographical regions (The Aegean Region, The Black Sea Region, The Central Anatolia Region, The Eastern Anatolia Region, The Marmara Region, The Mediterranean Region, and The South-eastern Anatolia Region) of Turkey.

illiterate was in the Middle Eastern Anatolian Region with 22%, with Istanbul having a rate of 5%, the West Marmara Region having 6% and the Aegean Region having 7%.[140] Thus, when the geographical distribution of the illiteracy rate (as given above) is taken into account, the actual audience of the book in Turkey are mostly for those living in its Western part—i.e. those whose values have not been associated with honour killings the novel is attempting to represent.

Livaneli states in an interview made one year after *Bliss* was published in America: 'It is very hard for a Turkish writer to have their books published overseas. Especially in America, it is impossible.'[141] Hence; it can be inferred that receiving great deal of international attention for his novel came as a surprise for him; yet, when we consider the plot of the novel (i.e. a story of a young Muslim woman who is sentenced to death in the name of honour), the transnational interest in the book may not just be a matter of luck or the novel's literary value seeing as 'decisions about translating, editing, publishing, distributing, and course adoptions are all made with economic as well as literary factors in mind'.[142]

As I discussed in the introduction to this thesis, after September 11, literary representations and life narratives of Muslim women captured more interest and attention and became more popular among Western, especially North American, readers because of the political environment. When the cover of the US version of the first edition of *Bliss* in 2006 is examined, it is clear that

[140] Gökçe Uysal-Kolaşin and Duygu Güner, *Betam*, (2010) <http://betam.bahcesehir.edu.tr/tr/2010/08/4-milyon-742-bin-kadin-okuma-yazma-bilmiyor/ > [accessed 11st October 2013]

[141] Zülfü Livaneli, interviewed by anonymous, Hala Anlatacak Hikayelerim var (I still have stories to tell), 18th May 2007 <http://www.haberaktuel.com/hala-anlatacak-hikayelerim-var-haberi-66396.html> [accessed 14th November, 2013]

[142] Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, p. 4.

religious themes are used for marketing the novel.[143] The woman on the cover wears a blue burqa and walks through a desert-like landscape towards a far-off mosque—something which would arguably remind one more of an Afghan, than a Turkish, woman seeing as the blue burqa is not a garment worn in Turkey. Indeed, the cover seems to imply that the woman is a victim of religion as the blue burqa would be mostly familiar to a US reader due to the repetitive images being portrayed of Afghan women in the media after 9/11, thereby becoming a symbol for Americans of the oppression of women by religious regimes.[144] Ignoring all the cultural and national differences in characteristics of clothing may cause one to focus more on religious identity and representation and may imply that the novel is about the homogenous Muslim categorisation which the American media has been portraying; the cover contradicts the content of the novel and predetermines a particular kind of reading for 'the truth about Islam'. The content, however reveals the effects of different interpretations of religion on the life of the novel's characters.[145] Thus, Hazel Rochman, from a western point-of-view, comments on the story that it 'gets behind stereotypes of exotic Islam to reveal the diversity in individual people'.[146] For the Turkish reader, on the other hand, while the story questions the cliché that honour-based crimes are perpetrated by Kurds[147] by narrating an ethnically Turkish family's experience of honour killing, it strengthens the bias that honour killings are perpetrated by people from eastern Turkey.

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[143] Livaneli was dissatisfied about the cover and contested the publisher about the cover of the book. Upon his demand, paperback copies were released with a scene from the film. Zülfü Livaneli, interviewed by Nafiz Albayrak, Zülfü Livaneli'ye New York'ta anlamlı Ödül (A meaningful award to Zülfü Livaneli in New York), 1st March 2007 <http://www.haberler.com/zulfu-livaneli-ye-new-york-ta-anlamli-odul-haberi/> [accessed 14th November, 2013]

[144] Dinah Zeiger, 'Afghanistan Blues: Seing Beyond the Burqa on Youtube', *Land of the Unconqurable: The Lives of Contemporary Afghan Women*, eds. Jennifer Heath, Ashraf Zahedi (Berkeley: University California Press, 2011) p. 103-119 (p. 104).

[145] The divergence between the Turkish and American edition is not limited to the cover, but this is the most obvious one which may cause perceptual shifts; I will comment on some of the other differences when deemed relevant.

[146] Hazel Rochman, 'Livaneli, O. Z. Bliss', *Booklist*, 103.1, (2006), p. 55.

[147] Some Kurds are also nationally Turkish. When I specify Kurds differently I refer to their ethnicity.

The geographical setting is an organising device which enables three simultaneous stories to be told in different locations. These three simultaneous stories in different settings revolve around the three main characters in the novel: Meryem, Cemal [the "C" is here to be read as a "J"] and Professor Irfan Kurudal. Meryem is in Van, Cemal is doing his military service in the mountains of Eastern Anatolia, and the professor lives in Istanbul as a member of the social elite. When Cemal returns to Van from military service, his and Meryem's stories mingle and become two parallel stories until they meet with the professor. The historical setting of the novel is around the year 2000. It gives the reader the contemporary political history of Turkey such as hunger strikes in prisons and protests of university students against the headscarf ban:[148] 'In the twenty-first century, the same square was […] full of girls with headscarves clashing with police.'[149] Livaneli, however, has written in *Edebiyat Mutluluktur* (Literature is Happiness) that he sees historical events as "décor" in his novels and aims to focus primarily on human psychology.[150]

The story is told from the third person perspective and is narrated from multiple points-of-view, with several characters as focalisers. The parts related to a specific character are narrated with the diction of the type of character being portrayed (for instance; although the chapters related to Meryem are told with a village girl's locution, the chapters related to the Professor are told in a more erudite way).

The organization of the novel is mostly chronological, although there are several analepses which are filtered through characters' memories, especially with regard to their personal crises and

[148] There was a formal prohibition of headscarves at universities and public institutions in Turkey from 1978 till 2011.
[149] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 242, p. 373. I will quote from the English version of the text; unless there is a relevant divergence between the two versions of the text.
[150] Ö. Zülfü Livaneli, *Edebiyat Mutluluktur* (Literature is Happiness), (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2012), p. 44.

traumas.[151] Towards the end of the story, at the beginning of the chapter named "An Incompetent Chameleon", there is a time lapse in which the events are not skipped but narrated with analepsis.[152] All of the main events happen within the space of a couple of months. Because of the trauma, Meryem does not remember by whom she was raped. Moreover, no one sees the incident, as it happens when she takes food to her uncle's hut which is at the edge of their (unnamed) village in Van. Meryem's uncle, who represents the patriarchal, fearsome and decision-making authority of the family, passes the verdict of honour killing. No one can question his decision; Meryem is locked in a barn outside the house, and expected to hang herself. If not, they will wait for the sheik's son and Meryem's cousin, Cemal, to return from military service to carry out the killing. Since Meryem does not dare hang herself, the mission is given to Cemal. Soon after Meryem is locked in the barn, Cemal returns from military service and they set out on a journey to Istanbul so that Cemal can perform his duty away from their home—and so as not to attract the attention of the police. They stay in Istanbul for a few days. However, he pities her to such an extent that he realises that he cannot kill her. Defying the order of the family, Cemal decides he cannot return back to village and leave Meryem alone, so they escape to the Aegean region to disappear without a trace. There, they meet Professor Irfan Kurudal who, simultaneously, escapes from his wife and his job and the high society of Istanbul in which he lives and all the responsibilities of his life, for the sake of which he broke ties with his poor parents. Their paths cross in the Aegean Region coincidentally when Meryem and Cemal are hiding and working temporarily in a fish farm. Afterwards, they spend more than one month in the Aegean Region.

[151] Trauma is not an organising structure as much as it is in the novel *My Name is Salma*, which I analyse in Chapter II.
[152] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 318.

Among the main characters Meryem becomes the primary character. All of the three main characters feel the pressure of the society in which they live because of the required societal norms. Meryem is full of life and does not want to die. It can be understood that Cemal suffers from post-military trauma as he always recalls traumatic events during the military service and tries to believe in the sacredness of the killing missions that were given to him, both by military authorities to kill Kurdish rebels and by his family to kill Meryem. The Professor is portrayed as depressed as he cannot sleep at nights and he is unhappy, thinking that he has not lived a life that he really wanted but a life which society had required. Even though all three characters want to escape from the situation they are in, however, the focus falls upon Meryem.

After the professor meets Meryem and Cemal in a cove, Meryem and Cemal start working on Irfan's sailboat. During their journey, Meryem becomes more self-confident and liberated according to western values and the professor educates Meryem during their free time. After their trip ends, the Professor remembers 'Meryem's extraordinary character. After that happy day when she rid herself of the headscarf, she had made herself noticed like gradually rising water, eventually becoming indispensable.'[153] The change in Meryem's position is also narrated through Cemal's perspective. Cemal thinks:

> How could this snot-nosed girl, this feeble creature whose life he had spared, have changed so much? In the village, it would have been her duty to serve him, and there she would not even been allowed to eat or talk in the presence of men.

[153] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 420.

> On this boat on the Aegean shore, it seemed as if she were the superior being'.[154]

Livaneli depicts Meryem as an innocent and naive girl like a child throughout the novel as can be seen in the scene when the midwife of the village visits Meryem in the barn: '"Child." Gulizar sighed, caressing Meryem's hair. "My poor child. […]".'[155] Also, the novel is full of metaphors, which reassure that Meryem is pure and innocent such as she is named after 'Virgin Mary'.[156] There is a dynamic of two opposing ideas in the novel. One of them is that Meryem should be purified; the other, that Meryem is already pure. At the end of the novel, the idea confirming Meryem's purity becomes dominant. In this regard, I will explore how feminine purity is represented in the novel and whether the book productively challenges or reinforces the norms of feminine purity in Turkish society. Meryem is depicted as a loveable character and a paragon of purity for most readers: so, in one way, Livaneli challenges the idea that rape or sexual knowledge can tarnish purity, as Meryem preserves her pure status throughout the novel. Yet, due to the stress on her purity, I argue that while the novel criticizes social form, it praises feminine purity as a feminine quality.

The concept of purity in honour crimes is vitally important seeing as one of the central causes of honour crimes is the presumed stain on one's (family's, tribe's, clan's) honour. Many perpetrators and advocates of honour crimes defend their actions as morally correct in that it removes the stain brought upon their honour. The things considered impure and which may cause the stain on honour are prohibited to protect the physical and spiritual purity of individuals and society. This

[154] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 427.
[155] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 111.
[156] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 72.

notion of purity in the context of honour crimes is mostly related to the sexuality of women. A. Nevin Yildiz Tahincioglu declares that in the specific context of Turkey, the sexual purity of all women is controlled by men in the name of *sheref* of the tribe, family or men. For the sake of sexual purity and to claim the protection of sexual purity, the rights of women are revoked or restricted when referring to the sexual ethics which are shaped according to the honour codes of society.[157] When honour depends on the sexual purity of women; even the victims of sexual abuse who do not have any consent or control over the sexual act feel themselves dirty and guilty as they cannot satisfy social expectations. If we widen the lens, Shalhoub-Kevorkian's case study 'The Politics of Disclosing Female Sexual Abuse: A Case Study of Palestinian Society' reveals how abused girls internalise the social expectations of society and work hard to fit the codes of appropriate female behaviour and how they feel themselves dirty because of their loss of virginity.

One of the victims put it this way:

> I can't believe I am no longer a virgin! What else does a girl have except her virginity? I lost my purity… the purity that all girls feel proud of… How can I go on with my life when I am no longer a pure virgin girl?[158]

Mary Douglas states that 'there is no such thing as dirt; no single item is dirty apart from a particular system of classification in which it does not fit.'[159] Hence, in this chapter I will analyse

[157] A. Nevin Yildiz Tahsincioglu, *Namusun Halleri* [The Concepts of Honour], (Istanbul: Postiga: 2011) p. 14.
[158] Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 'The Politics of Disclosing Female Sexual Abuse: A Case Study of Palestinian Society', Child *Abuse & Neglect*, 23.12, (1999), 1275–1293.

the classification systems which label the main character in *Bliss*, Meryem, as both dirty and pure.

This chapter focuses on two main concepts of purity; the first, which I discuss in the next section is Meryem's childish purity; the other, which I discuss is Meryem's feminine purity. This novel has been selected because it focuses on the theme of purity in particular. Although stain and purity concepts appear as sub-themes in other novels with which this thesis engages, in *Bliss*, the theme of purity is prominent considering that characterisation of the leading character, Meryem, is clearly associated with purity and innocence of children and she is named after the symbol of sexual purity, the Virgin Mary.

II. Meryem is Pure like a Child

As a fifteen year-old, Meryem has a limited experience of life and a lack of sexual knowledge. She is seventeen years old in the Turkish edition. The English edition makes Meryem's character more in tune with her behaviour. With this change, Meryem's age is the same as that of the innocent bride who is the protagonist of a story told in the novel. As I will explain, the inner story has symbolic importance for Meryem's character which becomes more visible towards the end of the story when Cemal confuses the innocent bride with Meryem. This story symbolically discloses Meryem's sexual purity. Although Meryem's age is seventeen in the Turkish edition, still she can be perceived as a child. In Turkey, one becomes an adult legally at the age of

[159] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) p. xvii.

eighteen. For sexual activities, the age of consent starts at fifteen[160]; however, one should have a developed perceptual capacity for sexual behaviour to be able to give consent.[161] Thus, in Turkey, anyone who has similar sexual perceptual capacities to that of Meryem is considered equal to a child younger than fifteen in terms of her sexual consent capacity. For this reason, for Turkish readers, Meryem is portrayed like a child who is innocent and has no capacity to do any sins or wrong deeds.

Are children pure and innocent or are they sinful and corrupt? This question has had different answers in different times, cultures, and religious discourses. According to some Christian doctrines that follow the idea of Saint Augustine on purity, human beings are contaminated by the original sin of Adam and this sin is inherent.[162] Contradictory viewpoints have also existed about children being angelic and devilish at the same time. David E. Stannard points out that in the same year (1928), as John Earle, Bishop of Salisbury, was speaking highly of children's purity,[163] Puritan John Robinson was writing on the sin and corruption of children.[164] Similarly, although Judaism does not accept the doctrine of original sin in general and regards children as being pure,[165] in Talmudic times there were some Jews that thought that death was a punishment

[160] Suad Joseph and Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Encyclopedia of Women & Islamic Cultures* (Leiden: Brill, 2003) p. 128.
[161] "Turk Ceza Kanunu", *Ceza-bb.adalet.gov.tr,* 2016 <http://www.ceza-bb.adalet.gov.tr/mevzuat/5237.htm> [accessed 15 July 2016].
[162] Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction,* 5th edn (West Sussex: Blackwell, 2011), p. 19.
[163] Richard Mills, 'Perspectives of Childhood' in *Childhood Studies: A Reader in Perspectives of Childhood*, ed, by Jean Mills and Richard Mills (London: Rutledge, 2000), p. 10
[164] David E. Stannard, 'Death and the Puritan Child', *American Quarterly,* 26 (1974), 456-76, p. 460.
[165] Howard Shwartz, 'Narrative and Imagination: The Role of Texts and Story Telling in Nurturing Spirituality in Judaism' in *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions,* ed. by, Karen Marie Yust, Aostre N. Johnson, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), p. 191.

on account of Adam's sin;[166] additionally, in some Qumran texts of ancient Judaism, humans (even Adam and Eve) are born in an impure state and they bring impurity into the world.[167]

In Europe at the time of the Italian Renaissance, children were depicted as being divinely pure. It was also during this time that child-like angels emerged; in Estelle M. Hurll's words, the 'face and form of innocent human childhood' was used 'to represent the perfect innocence and purity of an angel.'[168] During the English, French and German Enlightenment periods, the idea of original sin was opposed vigorously. Voltaire and Rousseau criticised the doctrine on the basis of encouraging pessimism.[169] Rousseau's ideas led to the Romantic discourse of child innocence and afterwards, it was this image that prevailed in the West.[170]

Although the pessimist Schopenhauer doubted the innocence of children and Freud contradicted their sexual innocence, children are generally associated with purity and innocence in most modern societies. Jenks characterizes these contradictory childhood images as 'Apollonian' and 'Dionysian': 'Apollonian, which deriving [sic] from romantic foundations, sees children as innocent and pure and to be nurtured, and Dionysan, which sees children as the bearer of original

[166] Kolatch Alfred J., *The Second Jewish Book of Why*. 2nd edn. (Middle Village, New York: Jonathan David Publishers, Inc., 1985), p. 64
[167] Hannah K. Harrington, *The Purity Texts* (London, New York: T & T Clark International), p. 62.
[168] Estelle M. Hurll, *Child-life in Art* (Cambridge: University Press: John Wilson and Son, 2008), p. 115 in The Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25268/25268-h/25268-h.htm> [accessed 8th January 2013]. 158 Alister E. McGrath, p. 69.
[169] Alister E. McGrath, p. 69.
[170] Mary Jane Kehily, 'Understanding Childhood: An introduction to Some Key Themes and Issues' in *An Introduction to Childhood Studies*, ed. by Mary Jane Kehily, 2nd edn. (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2009), pp. 1-17.

sin and creatures to be tamed and formed into civilised beings.' The Apollonian point-of-view with regard to children has prevailed in many modern societies for the past century.[171]

In Turkey, the modern Western perception of childhood innocence combines with the Islamic tradition which accepts that children are born and remain sinless until puberty; hence, children are inclined to be equated with purity and innocence in Turkish culture.[172] From an Islamic standpoint, there is no concept of original sin because, according to Islam, Adam and Eve had been forgiven before they were sent to this world. The religion of the parents does not matter: 'Islam teaches that [...] every child is certain to gain paradise if he or she passes away before reaching puberty.'[173] Accepting children as being sinless gives them an angelic status. Lack of knowledge, ability to reason, and a limited experience of life are mostly regarded as positive features of children which protect them from being sinners.

In Turkey there are regulatory tools which protect childhood innocence, like censors on TV and the internet. TV programs or internet packages for families aim to prevent children's access to knowledge which is seen as inappropriate for them. The purity of children is based on their sensitivity and vulnerability. According to an interview with senior psychologist Ayşenur Dinç published in Zaman newspaper (which has a moderate Islamic perspective), having precocious children is not something to be happy about. Children should behave in a way which is

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[171] Owain Jones, 'Melting Geography: Purity, Disorder, Childhood And Space' in *Children's Geographies: Playing, Living, Learning*, ed. by Sarah L. Holloway and Gill Valentine (Routledge: Oxon and New York, 2000), p. 38.
[172] Carol Delaney, 'Mortal Flow: Menstruation in Turkish Village Society' in *Blood Magic: The Anthropology of Menstruation*, ed. by Thomas C. T. Buckley, Alma Gottlieb (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 75-94 (p. 80).
[173] Yetkin Yildirim, 'Filling the Heart with the Love of God: Islamic Perspectives on Spirituality in Childhood and Adolescence' in in *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions*, ed. by, Karen Marie Yust, Aostre N. Johnson, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), p. 69-80 (p. 70).

appropriate for their age. In addition, she claims that fashion firms which design adult clothes for children are stealing their innocence. Furthermore, Dinç points out the threat of online clothing and makeup games for girls which teach girls to behave like adults.[174] It is interesting to see that the psychologist talks about girls in particular. She does not mention any gun games aimed at boys because there is an inclination to see girls as being more vulnerable to outside threats; hence, the innocence of girls requires more protection. The idea of protecting the childish purity of girls in the context of sexual knowledge may continue after their puberty and even after they reach adulthood (albeit with different dimensions).

It is common to see that childish women are idealised, or normalised, in Turkey. Nilüfer Göle, who analyses articles of the 3 September 1987 edition of Zaman newspaper, deduces that Islamic male columnists, who have the title of professor or doctor, use 'the power of science' in order to impose the image of women as being childlike by using 'the archetypes of "strong man" and "childish woman," "emotional women" who need to be protected.' They claim that women are 'in between a child and a man.'[175] This is not the case just for Turkey, as Mernissi argues that Arab men want to force Arab women to 'tremble with purity and innocence on the eve of' their wedding. If the woman has medically restored her virginity, she must 'display childish behaviour' so as not to raise any doubt about her innocence[176] because this is what is expected from women: to be pure like a child. These men want to see their wives have surrendered their *qaid* power and that their sexual attractiveness is saved only for their husbands. Desiring childish innocence is not only limited to the countries where sexuality before marriage is a taboo. Jenny

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[174] Dilek Hayırlı, 'Moda, çocukların masumiyetini çalıyor! (Fashion steals the purity of children)', *Zaman,* 19th December 2010, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/aile-saglik_moda-cocuklarin-masumiyetini-caliyor_1067108.html>.
[175] Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), p. 125.
[176] Fatima Mernissi, 'Virginity and Patriarchy' , *Women's Studies International Forum*, 5.2, (1982), 183-191.

Kitzinger emphasises that childish purity and innocence in the West is a sexual commodity which becomes a fetish, not only because of the porn sector, but also because of the advertising sector. One way which the advertising sector implies that childish purity is sexual, for instance, is by naming one of their nightdresses for adult women "baby-doll".[177] They encourage men and women to believe that childish purity is desirable.

Livaneli portrays Meryem as pure and child-like from the very start of the book. The novel opens with the rape scene which is narrated from Meryem's point-of-view as if she is partaking in the tale of the Phoenix:

> In a dream as deep as the waters of Lake Van, fifteen-year-old Meryem was flying through the air, her pale naked body pressed against the neck of the phoenix. The phoenix was as white as in colour as Meryem's own slender form, and it flew as lightly as a feather […] Clasping the bird's neck, Meryem felt full of bliss. […] This was the bird of her grandmother's stories […][178]

Meryem is happy until the bird asks for her milk and flesh and the tale ends like a nightmare: 'The giant bird plunged its bloody beak between her tights – into that disgusting and accursed place of sin. "I'm just imagining it," Meryem reassured herself. "It's just a nightmare, that's all. It

[177] Jenny Kitzinger, 'Defending Innocence: Ideologies of Childhood', Feminist Review, 28, (1988), 77-87.
[178] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 11. There are different versions of the tale in Turkish folklore; the mythical bird in Turkey is called Zümrüdüanka which is a different version of the Simurgh of Persian mythology and analogues the Phoenix.

can't be real.'"[179] It can be said that Livaneli depicts an Apollonian childish character in the body of a teenage girl who escapes from the real world into the world of the dream.

Nicola Ancell lists Apollonian child properties as different from the Dionysian in that 'childhood is a time for play, and not for work'; 'children need protection from the world; children are innocent'; 'children are passive'; 'childhood should be happy'.[180] Aspects of being an Apollonian child fit Meryem's depiction as a playful, vulnerable and passive character in the pursuit of the eponymous bliss. As a raped girl, there is emphasis on her defencelessness as well as her former purity and innocence. Her escape into a dream world is the outcome of her needing to be protected from the atrocities of the real world.

The professor İrfan Kurudal's point of view appears close to the author's. Thus, when he narrates from İrfan's point of view, he likens Meryem to a child who even makes the professor feel like a child, as is the case in the narration of the professor trying to teach Meryem how to swim:

> […] This was perhaps one of the most joyful moments of his life, and strangely enough, sexual desire was not part of it. Carnal desire would spoil their childish, innocent fun.
>
> He remembered that night as two children at play. He had become a young child like her […][181]

[179] Livaneli, *Bliss*, pp. 14- 15.
[180] Nicola Ansell, *Children, Youth and Development* (Routledge: Oxon and New York, 2005), p. 11.
[181] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 433.

One day, Meryem goes into hysterics and the professor infers from Meryem's words during her hysteric crisis that she has been raped by her uncle. After the professor understands that Meryem was raped, the Apollonian depiction of Meryem highlights her vulnerability: 'The sobbing girl fell asleep on İrfan's knee. So Meryem was one of those who had somehow been spared from suicide or death. Her figure looked so vulnerable in the moonlight.'[182]

When Livaneli talks about Meryem's beauty, he does not attribute any sexuality to Meryem's innocence. Sexuality is not a part of Meryem's being at the start of the book; however, her biological sex is shown to be the source of her problems. Meryem explores her sexual instincts only after she experiences the lives of other women and men who are not suppressing their sexual desire. When Meryem sees other girls in a small Aegean coastal town 'running around half naked' and 'a group of giggling girls and boys' who eat ice cream, she feels like a 'real woman':

At that moment, Meryem felt like a real woman, […] She wanted to be near those boys. Oddly, she did not feel ashamed of her desire. This young girl who had till now been called ill-starred, stupid, and sinful just because she was female had changed in this climate. She let the desires of spring possess her body. Even the "sinful place" between her legs did not seem so dreadful, because she realized that the girls here were not ashamed of their "sinful places".[183]

[182] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 437.
[183] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 396-397.

If we return to Butler's argument that the self is '"outside," constituted in social discourse',[184] we can see that, when the social context changes, Meryem does not feel her sexuality being suppressed in the same way she used to. The "climate" which changes Meryem is the new society where the possibility of having sexual drives is accepted as being normal compounded with the new type of discourse that one can have sexual drives and still be accepted as good, innocent and pure. The new discourse surrounding Meryem has changed the valance of shame: In the presence of other young girls having their hair loose, wearing 'hip hugging blue jeans', and tight blouses revealing their breasts, Meryem feels ashamed of her wearing a faded dress, muddy shoes, and—most disturbingly— 'the scarf covering her head'[185] as she is surrounded by these different discourses regarding sexuality.

However, although Meryem starts to discover her womanhood bit by bit, her inner child always persists. Meryem's purity is consolidated with her puerilities throughout the book. This is done in three main ways. Firstly, Meryem denies realities and lives in a dream world whenever she wants to escape from them; secondly, she does not have any sexual knowledge at the start of the book; and thirdly, she has very limited knowledge about the world before the professor starts to educate her.

The first chapter narrating the rape starts like a fairy tale of Meryem's childhood; she is naked yet not in an eroticised way, but, rather like a holy image. She flies on a white phoenix like a white feather through the clouds. The angelic characterisation of Meryem ends when the dream turns out to be a nightmare. After the rape event Meryem always reassures herself that it was just a

[184] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts, p. 528.
[185] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 392.

dream. Whenever someone talks about rape she changes the subject as if she has never heard anything. Apart from her trauma, this can be understood as her attempt to protect her purity, as once she remembers the event, she tries to wipe all the images from her mind and 'become as pure as a child once more'—but she cannot do so.[186] She believes her purity is gone because of having been raped. This shows how she has normalised the sense of relating purity with sexuality. She even goes so far as to blame herself because of the rape. Meryem thinks it happened to her because she peed in the holy place of Seker Baba's tomb when she was a little girl and now Seker Baba is punishing her from her place of sin. She never condemns her uncle; instead she tries to find the crux of problem in her body and her sexual being. She identifies the thing between her thighs and the signifier of her sexuality as being the source of the problem.

Meryem is portrayed as a fantasy-prone personality, such that 'fantasy and daydreaming represent socially desirable ways in which the individual escapes the troubled and frightening reality where the child lacks control.'[187] Meryem's fantasies and daydreams function as a remedy to not only the stress but also the problems of her life and her trauma. Moreover, as fictional 'trauma narratives' position readers 'in ethical dilemmas analogous to those of trauma survivors',[188] the effects of the trauma and the stress on the reader is also relieved and controlled by means of these fantasies and daydreams. There is a scholarly dispute regarding the representability of trauma in narration; indeed, trauma theory is very much concerned with the unrepresentability or partial representability of trauma.[189] However, Caruth and others confirm

[186] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 470.
[187] Catherine Purcell, and Bruce A. Arrigo, *The Psychology of Lust Murder: Paraphilia, Sexual Killing, And Serial Homicide* (California: Elsevier, 2006), p. 41.
[188] Laurie Vickroy, *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (Charlottesville:University of Virginia Press, 2002), p. 1.
[189] While Caty Caruth argues for the unspeakability of trauma, Michella Balaev stresses the possible multiple responses to trauma and he argues that the response to trauma is culturally motivated.

that literary representation can at least feature in witnessing the reality of the trauma and the traumatised.[190]*Bliss* itself bears witness to Meryem's unspeakable trauma.

Meryem converts reality into fantasy, as she does not only change the realities about the rape event, thinking that it was a dream, but other historical realities which have tragic consequences like the deportation of Armenians. When she hears the stories of the deportation of Armenians from Van, she thinks that all the Armenians who used to live there flew into the sky on a windy day. She imagines that the Armenian girls played across the sky and that their parents called out to them, saying 'It's getting late, children. Come back to your clouds.'[191] She prefers to think in this way and ignore the tragic stories she has heard. She keeps her optimism and always waits for a miracle to happen. Meryem is sure that her grandmother's spirit will recue her.[192] Although everyone in Meryem's village knows that girls are taken to Istanbul for honour killings, Meryem ignores this possibility. She just dreams about going to Istanbul and living in the golden city.

Even on the day Cemal takes her to her death, she dreams about the past when she and Cemal used to play and resists all the ideas which may overshadow her childish purity.

The sexual purity of Meryem is metaphorically paralleled to the innocent bride's purity. The innocent bride is the protagonist of a tale told in the novel by the young boys of the village. According to the novel, the story is a very famous erotic regional tale which is told for fun. This

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See: *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory*, ed. by Michelle Balaev (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
See the Introduction to the Chapter Two where I discuss Faqir's trauma narration and Caty Caruth's arguments about the possible impacts of narrating trauma and sharing trauma of others.

[190] Christine Grogan, *Father–Daughter Incest in Twentieth-Century American Literature: The Complex Trauma of the Wound and the Voiceless* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), p. 8-9.

[191] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 35

[192] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 77.

tale underlines the purity theme in the novel. The innocent bride grows up secluded in her home, ignorant of the outside world until the age of fifteen to protect her from 'knowledge of the shameful things that could happen between girls and boys.'[193] On the eve of her marriage, her husband, Hasan, tries to protect her innocence and tells her that he has something different from all other men; he then reveals his genitals and they have sex. When Hasan does his military service, one of his friends, Mehmet, realises Hasan's lie to his wife. As he knows the naivety of the bride, Mehmet says that he has the same thing as Hasan has and proves his words by having sex with the bride and they continue doing so until Hasan arrives. When Hasan returns from military service, the innocent bride gets angry with her husband about his lie:

> "You are a liar! You told me that you were the only one who had that strange part in front of him."
>
> "My God," Hasan thought to himself. I have lost my innocent bride!"
>
> He then asked her who else had this strange thing, and she told him about Mehmet."
>
> Feeling desperate and not knowing what he could do, Hasan had recourse to another lie. "I used to have two of them, so I gave one to Mehmet."
>
> […] The innocent bride punched Hasan in the stomach as she wailed sadly, "Why did you give him the better one?"[194]

[193] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 54.
[194] Livaneli, *Bliss*, pp. 53-56.

Although Hasan understands that his wife has had sex with his friend, he cannot get angry with the innocent bride as she is not aware of any classification system which forbids sex, she does not feel herself to be dirty or guilty. As for the husband, even when he thinks that his wife's innocence has gone, he does not blame her and tries to purify her mind. It can be deduced that he does not think that his wife fulfils the criteria of punishability. Like an infant who does not understand her wrongdoing, the innocent bride retains her innocence and is exempted from defilement.

As put by Jamie Mullaney, purity in the context of abstinence (not doing) involves three concepts.[195] These concepts are helpful to understand how the innocent bride's defilement is nullified. The first is that purity exists 'as a lack of contamination', the second is that it exists 'as a contract to an innocent state', and the third is that it exists 'as a strategy of order'. Purity 'as a lack of contamination' entails 'an idea of abstinence as an untainted, unadulterated, or "clean" state' mostly referred to as physical purity but which may embody spiritual and moral levels. Purity 'as a contrast to innocence' demands that the state of purity be 'prior to awareness of some expectation of doing'.[196] Mullaney borrows Tennessee Chaflin's (a women's rights activists of the nineteenth century in American society later known as Lady Cook) definition of purity to make the concept clearer: 'Purity is not the untried innocence of childhood, but the sustained virtue that passed unpolluted through the temptations of maturity'.[197] Purity 'as a strategy of order' involves a 'cognitive element in that it relies on perceptions of order'.[198] This concept echoes Douglas's

[195] Jamie L. Mullaney, *Everyone Is NOT Doing It: Abstinence and Personal Identity*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) p. 75.
[196] Mullaney p. 77.
[197] Lady Cook, 'Woman's Purity', *Bay of plentyTimes*, 26th April 1985, p. 3 <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=BOPT18950426.2.10&l=mi&e=-------10--1----2--> [accessed 15th November 2013]
[198] Mullaney, p. 78

model. As was referred to earlier, Douglas argues that, in order to call something dirty, there should be an ostracizing 'classification system'.[199]

The innocent bride's shift from innocence to purity 'as a contrast to innocence' is not presented in the story as she is not aware of any sexual restriction or social expectation. She remains in child-like innocence (in that she is not aware of any intention of any wrongdoing) but becomes a victim of not knowing. The innocent bride's innocence is restored by her husband by purifying her mind from contamination after the sexual act for, as far as she knows, a sexual act is only possible with her husband's organs; besides, for her, there is still no classification system which calls her impure—it is in this way that she acquires purity. Mullaney, in her article 'Like A Virgin: Temptation, Resistance, and the Construction of Identities Based on "Not Doings"', which analyses nineteenth century British novels, notes that 'audiences to these acts determine whether individuals may continue to enjoy (or regain) the positive consequences of a "pure" status or whether they must relinquish such social re-wards'. The resistance to partake in impure actions or thoughts on the characters' parts affects the reader's perceptions.[200] Although the innocent bride does not show any resistance, (in order to judge her as retaining her purity) the reader is reminded of her nativity, as well as the child-like status of her lack of awareness.

As for Meryem, although she knows that men and women are different, she would not dare to gaze at any man in her village. She only discovers her sexual instincts after their escape with Cemal to the Aegean coast when she sees boys and girls flirting: 'For the first time, she regarded the young men with interest – their slender bodies and charming smiles; the way they hugged the

[199] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger,* p. xvii.
[200] Jamie Mullaney, 'Like A Virgin: Temptation, Resistance, and the Construction of Identities Based on "Not Doings", *Qualitative Sociology,* 24. 1, (2001) 3-24. (p. 19)

girls […] Meryem had discovered a new and completely different world.'[201] In this sense, the Meryem of the village, before her rape, is similar to the innocent bride before her marriage in that they both are unaware of both sexual temptation and of the possibility of having sexual intimacy with anyone. The Meryem of the Aegean region, after her rape, is technically not a virgin but in a state of not doing any intentional wrongdoing or sin. Her victimhood, naivety and child-like innocence gain the reader's sympathy and ensure her textually pure status. Upon Meryem's discovery of her sexual instinct, her innocence shifts to purity 'as a contrast to innocence'. This depends on her innocence but requires that she deliberately abstains from any sexual act. Meryem, in a pure state, only flirts with a boy, Mehmet Ali, within his familial environment. It is implied in the text that this flirtation is with the purpose of starting a serious relationship (ultimately marriage) since Meryem has been accepted by his family: 'Meryem smiled knowingly to herself when the old woman said, "You have brought us such good fortune […]"'[202]. In Turkey, the phrase "he/she has brought good/bad luck to our family" is generally referred to those who have newly joined the family: i.e. the new born babies or brides.[203]

Meryem's purity —which depends on her untainted innocence— is symbolised in the novel through her similarity to the innocent bride. The innocent bride, who symbolises sexual innocence, is the one about whom village youth fantasise. Cemal always sees her in his dreams, yet at the end of the novel when he is traumatised and sleeps for days, he is unsure whether he has dreamt of the innocent bride or actually had real sex with Meryem. His blurred mind likens Meryem to the innocent bride. This is a sign that Meryem, as an avatar of the innocent bride, has not lost her innocence and is in a pure state.

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[201] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 396.
[202] Livaneli, Bliss, p. 488.
[203] Yasar Kalafat, *Doğu Anadolu'da Eski Türk İnançlarının İzleri* (Traces of old Turkish beliefs in Eastern Anatolia), 6th ed. (Ankara: Ebabil, 2010), pp. 270-279.

Sexuality remains a taboo socio-political subject in Turkey in all classes of society. Pınar İlkkaracan argues that sexual relations amongst youths and the question of sexual orientation remain taboo 'above and beyond the ideological differences between conservative or progressive political parties'.[204] For the majority of Turkish people, talking about sexual issues is taboo and sex is constructed in a very complex and variegated way.[205] It is not easy to make direct links between any one region, socio-economic background, educational level or religious perception with regard to the flexibility of the taboos. For example, there is a folk song with the lyrics 'my Emine, my Emine, my grey eyed Emine, with a hole under her belly Emine'[206] which is sung by regional singers in Turkey. There are many other Anatolian folk songs with allusive sexual references like these and which might also be regarded as erotic. Although these traditional songs are highly respected by the majority of Turkish people with any sexual references being accepted as normal because of their traditional values, İskender Pala, a famous writer, columnist, and professor of literature in Turkey, in his column at Zaman newspaper called for a ban on the radio broadcasting of these kinds of folk songs on the basis of their eroticism, immoral values, and the way in which they degrade women.[207]

It can be seen from the above analysis of variance in the perceptions that, the notion of what is normal or abnormal, immoral or moral and what is 'pure' or 'dirty' changes according to one's

[204] Pınar İlkkaracan, 'How Adultery Almost Derailed Turkey's Aspiration to Join the European Union', in *Deconstructing Sexuality In The Middle East: Challenges and Discourses,* ed. by Pınar İlkkaracan (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 41-65.
[205] Sahbal Aras, Semih Semin, Turkan Gunay, Esmahan Orcin, Sema Ozan, 'Sexual Attitudes and Risk-Taking Behaviors of High School Students in Turkey', *Journal of School Health*, 77.7, (2007), 359-366 (p. 360).
[206] This translation is mine. Original lyrics are: 'Eminem, Eminem, Cakir Eminem, gobeginin alti cukur Eminem' The folk song is sung by different folk singers; for instance, a small town (Azdavay) singer called Azadavaylı Safiye sings the song often with traditional men dancers in skirts.
[207] İskender Pala, 'Türküler, ah türkülerimiz!..', *Zaman,* 11th September 2012, p. 19.

state of knowledge.[208] According to Foucault's analysis of knowledge, power and knowledge are correlated and it should be admitted that:

> power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.[209]

As it can be understood from the excerpt above, Foucault sees power and knowledge as interlinked but, ultimately, the source or initiator of knowledge is power. Power not only creates knowledge but also uses the knowledge it has produced to legitimise itself. It can, therefore, be inferred that power is self-interested. This would be better understood if we look at Douglas's argument about taboos and how power produces accepted knowledge in society. She emphasizes that the rules of taboos are flexible according to the wishes of the leading members of society; as the controllers of ideas, they can suppress criticism and make whole areas of life unthinkable or unspeakable or, if they wish a different way of life, taboos can lose credibility depending on their selected view.[210] In *Bliss*, for Cemal, Meryem was dirty when they set out on their journey, but in the end, Meryem becomes innocent because of the new knowledge he has learned and because they are away from the classification system which characterised her as being dirty. Cemal's father's authority loses its power within the new context of knowledge.

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[208] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 8.
[209] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London: Penguin, 1977), p. 27.
[210] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. xiii.

Cemal's father represents the decision-making authority of the family. As a religious leader, he constructs unquestionable knowledge by using religion as a tool. He protects his authority by limiting access to knowledge, preventing people from watching TV or sending girls to school. He defines the limits of morality with the concepts of being sinful or holy. Hence, staying within these clearly delimited boundaries becomes a desirable end for those under his authority since they do not wish to be stigmatised as being sinful. There is a complex web of power relations which makes being sacred a desirable thing. Foucault asserts that power does not work only by suppression and punishment but penetrates inside slyly, that it 'creates desires' and 'provokes pleasures' and 'produces knowledge.'[211] Cemal's father's power becomes powerful within this complex web of knowledge and penetrates behaviour deeply. However, the religious authority of Cemal's father's becomes weaker after he has talked to another sheikh of a religious sect who contradicts his ideas on purity and honour killing. Then the sheik's authority loses all credibility after Cemal learns about the rape. Hence, Meryem becomes pure like the innocent bride in the eyes of Cemal.

Another issue which reinforces Meryem's child-like status throughout the novel is her limited knowledge about the world. She inhabits a small world when one considers that she thinks that Istanbul, which is 1638 km[212] away, is just behind their village. The professor who educates Meryem through their voyage links Meryem's limited world experience and knowledge to her purity. When he is teaching her how to swim, he thinks Meryem is '[…] a beautiful, innocent girl – a pure, intelligent, excitable, rosy cheeked child, a child who had not forgotten how to blush – a

[211] Michel Foucault, 'Tımarhaneler, Cinsellik, Hapishaneler' in *İktıdarın Gözü* translated by Işık Ergüden (İstanbul: Ayrıntı, 2007), p. 55. The original name is 'Hospícios, Sexualidade, Prisões'. The English translation is mine.
[212] The distance is calculated according to the Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Highways's data.

baby dolphin'.[213] The novel even ends with Meryem's conversation with a donkey. Although Meryem is more self-confident and experienced, she holds on to her naïve fantasy world.

III. Meryem is Not Pure

Meryem's impurity is constructed throughout the novel in relation to her sex and location and is divided into two phases by the rape event. The impurity of Meryem before the rape is tolerable, yet after the rape, she becomes an object of intolerable dirtiness within her family and village. Although there are some who pity Meryem and want to rescue her, their voices are not strong enough to resist the discourse pertaining to honour. Before the rape event there already exists a notion of impurity related to Meryem. When Meryem is a child she is regarded as cursed by the village people because, when Meryem is born, her mother dies during labour. The only one who accuses Meryem of the death of her mother and thinks that Meryem is sinful is her aunt. Rather than accusing her, however, the rest of the village believe that this is due to Meryem's ill-fate. They think that Meryem brings bad luck. While this is the case during her childhood, the impurity of being a woman after puberty, and the impurity of being a non-virgin after the rape event become a part of her life. Hence, I will discuss the contexts of impurity in relation to being a woman and being a non-virgin by accepting that the puberty and rape events are the turning points in Meryem's trajectory.

III. a) The Impurity of Being a Woman

[213] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 433

With the onset of adulthood, the perception of the natural purity of childhood begins to alter. To accept someone as adult first of all they should complete their puberty period. From girlhood to womanhood there are physiological changes yet menstruation is one of the most important signifiers of becoming a woman, as physiologically the first menses 'signifies the end of "childhood" and the beginning of adulthood'.[214] For this reason it would be helpful to explain the impure conception of menstruation in order to understand the varying shades of purity in women. We can witness an association between menstruation and impurity in most societies. As Rene Girard puts it, menstruation is considered as 'the most impure of impurities'; he assumes that this reaction is related to the 'sexual aspect of menstruation'.[215]

From an Islamic standpoint, menses symbolise the end of childhood; thus, 'sin begins to accumulate with the onset of puberty, described as production of semen in boys and menstruation in girls.'[216] If there are no psychiatric problems which prevent their reasoning, after puberty, children are accepted as having reached the age of reason and, according to Islamic rules, they become responsible for their sins. The reproduction ability in humans is seen as the signifier of having sexual ability and being an adult. Hence they start to be in need of purification processes.

According to Islamic rules, the purification of the full body wash (called *ghusl*) is required after certain events related to sexuality, as the ejaculation of semen due to desire, sexual intercourse, menstruation and puerperium. The first two impure states which are not just peculiar to women are problematic, not for the physical world, but for the spiritual world. Ze'ev Maghen argues that

[214] Barbara J. O'Connell, The Pediatrician and The Sexually Active Adolescent: Treatment Of Common Menstrual Disorders, *Pediatric Clinics of North America*, 44.6, (1997), 1391-1404, (p. 1391).
[215] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. by Patrick Gregory (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 34.
[216] Delaney, Mortal Flow, p. 80.

there is no dirty, shameful or negative quality in sexual arousal in Islam; the love of Allah, however, should not be active at the same time as sexual arousal because of their 'comparably commendable passions.'[217]Having these drives at the same time 'diminishes the energy of both, whereas exclusive focus on each in turn facilitates optimal levels of achievement and relationship. A barrier therefore needs to be set up between the two modes, and this barrier must have a door.' Ghusl ablution is the door 'between a condition appropriate to the bodily and a condition appropriate to the disembodied; between awareness of the tangible present and awareness of the incorporeal absent (ghayb); between the sensual human and the psychic divine'.[218]

If the required rituals are done, Islamic teachings encourage halal sex. According to one hadith, Prophet Mohammed tells some believers who avoid their wives to receive the blessing of God such that: 'I fast, and I break the fast, I pray, I sleep, I go in unto women; beware! Whoever deviates from my custom is not among my followers.'[219] Hadiths like: 'Marry the childbearing and loving women for I shall outnumber the peoples by you'[220] encourages reproduction; furthermore, there are hadiths which highlight that the main reason for having sex is not just reproduction; rather, having regular sex and having and giving pleasure is also advised. There are hadiths and religious scholars who also advise the foreplay and mutual satisfaction of both partners.[221] Sexual pleasure or sex is not considered a bad thing to be refrained from if it is

[217] Ze'ev Maghen, *Virtues of the Flesh-Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence*, Studies in Islamic Law and Society, 23 vols, ed. by Ruud Peters and Bernard Weiss (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 32.
[218] Maghen, p. 32.
[219] Bukhari cited in Ze'ev Maghen, *Virtues of the Flesh- Passion and Purity in Early Islamic Jurisprudence,* Studies in Islamic Law and Society, 23 vols, ed. by Ruud Peters and Bernard Weiss (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 17.
[220] Ibn Hibban, Ahmad, al Tabarani and others quoted in Shaikh ibn Baz, 'Ruling Concerning Birth Control', in *Fatāwá Al-mar'ah: Islamic Fatawa Regarding Women,* ed. by, Muhammed bin Abdul- Aziz Al-Musnad, trans. by, Jamaal Al-Din Zarabozo, (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1996), p. 164.
[221] Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence*, (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), pp. 7-12.

experienced within the required boundaries.

Ritual washing is required after sex, yet this can only be delayed until the next praying time so that the person does not miss any praying. Eating, having sex, or conducting one's daily activities is not a problem before the washing, yet touching the Qur'an and performing namaz[222] is forbidden. Bukhari conveys the following episode: 'the Prophet said, "O Abu Huraira! Where have you been?" I replied, "I was Junub, so I disliked to sit in your company." The Prophet said, "Subhan Allah! A believer never becomes impure."'[223] Although all the restrictions after sex or ejaculation are spiritual, the status of impurity which is mentioned here is merely a physical one. In the cases of menstruation and postnatal bleeding, the impurity is again physical. Although approaching women sexually without penetration during their period is a sunnah,[224] which is advised so that women do not feel themselves lonely and unlikable, vaginal penetration is forbidden until bleeding ends. Partners can satisfy themselves without penetration with a piece of cloth on the woman's vagina, covering her from beneath her belly to her knees. Even if woman has an orgasm during this period, it is not compulsory for them to have a ritual wash until their bleeding has ended as they cannot reach the required level of purity for praying with ongoing menstrual bleeding.

According to Guterman *et al*.'s study of the menstruation taboos among religions, Islam is comparatively moderate in its views on the impurity of menstruation as there is not any menstruation hut or isolation of women as in tribal religions, Hinduism, or Russian Orthodox Christianity; likewise, they do not have as strict rules as Orthodox Judaism. Menstruating women

[222] Ritual praying performed five times a day.
[223] Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari* , Volume 1, Book 5, Number 281 < http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/Bukhari_1_05.php > [accessed 03.03.2003] Junub means being in a ritually impure condition and in need of ghusl.
[224] Sunnah means behaving according to teachings of Prophet Mohammed.

are considered impure in each of the major religions: 'Some religions view the impurity as strictly spiritual; others fear physical danger and harm as well.'[225] In Islam the physical restriction is contradictory with hadiths and the Qur'an. However, the relevant verses (2.222) are sometimes interpreted as referring to physical danger and harm to woman.[226] Hence menstruation is 'the most impure of impurities'[227] within the Islamic concept of purity in that it has physical restrictions apart from the spiritual ones for menstruating women. Furthermore, because of a hadith which is said to be commonly misunderstood, as women miss their namaz during their menstruation period, women are thought to be deficient in their religion.[228] Accepting this perception about women's deficiency in religion degrades women's spiritual status.

Meryem, as a poorly educated woman who lives in a rural village and who has grown up in a family which has a strict, negative interpretation of Islam and negative traditional values regarding womanhood, accepts menstruation as a trouble which is caused by women's "sinful part".[229] Physically and spiritually, menstrual blood has negative connotations for Meryem. She believes if she does not wash the piece of cloth she places between her legs to absorb the blood immediately after use the cloth will get wormy.[230] Spiritually, Meryem equates being a woman with being a sinner and thinks that any bodily change which signifies womanhood takes away

[225] M.A. Guterman, P. Mehta, M.S. Gibbs, 'Menstrual Taboos among Major Religions', *The Internet Journal of World Health and Societal Politic*, 5.2. , (2008), in *The Internet Journal of World Health and Societal Politics* <http://archive.ispub.com/journal/the-internet-journal-of-world-health-and-societal-politics/volume-5-number-2/menstrual-taboos-among-major-religions.html#sthash.HuirDunm.48JMh29N.dpuf> [accessed 3rd March 2013].
[226] For the comparative translation see: *Quran Today* <http://www.qurantoday.com/BaqSec28.htm> [accessed 10th March 2013].
[227] Girard, p. 34.
[228] For the hadith see : Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari* , Volume 1. Book 6, Number 301 <http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/Bukhari_1_06.php> [accessed 03.03.2003]. Bukhari is considered one the most reliable hadith conveyors. This hadith's misconception is discussed widely. For a detailed discussion about the misconception of hadith see: Anne-Sofie Roald, *Women in Islam: The Western Experience*, (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 131-137.
[229] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 238.
[230] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 237.

from her ideal human condition:

> When her chest sprouted twin buds and her body found its curves, when the bleeding started between her legs, she knew she was different from Cemal and Memo. They were human, and she was a transgressor. It was considered proper for her to cover herself and hide away, to serve others, and to be punished. This was the way things were. She was now one of those creators called women, for whose transgression the world was doomed.[231]

Meryem's attitude is not the common Turkish woman's viewpoint; yet the views concerning menstruation as a punishment may be held especially by the rural uneducated people of Turkey. According to Ayşe Sayan Çevirme, Hülya Çevirme, Leyla Karaoğlu, Nezihe Uğurlu and Yasemin Korkmaz's study 'The Perception of Menarche and Menstruation among Turkish Married Women: Attitudes, Experiences, and Behaviors [sic.]', menstruation-related behaviours and attitudes are greatly affected by beliefs. The participants in the survey obey traditional and religious teachings about menstruation.[232] According to Delaney's study, which was conducted in a central village of Turkey between 1980 and 1982, both women and men believed that menstruation was a punishment because of Eve's disobedience to Allah.[233] However, Çevirme et al.'s study, which was conducted in 2007 in the centre of an Eastern Anatolian city called Malatya, shows that only 2.2% of the participants considered menstruation as a punishment from God. As reported by the study, there is a meaningful relationship between education level and the

[231] Livaneli, *Bliss*, pp. 26-27.
[232] Ayşe Sayan Çevirme, Hülya Çevirme, Leyla Karaoğlu, Nezihe Uğurlu, Yasemin Korkmaz, 'The Perception of Menarche and Menstruation among Turkish Married Women: Attitudes, Experiences, and Behaviors', Social Behavior and Personality, 38.3, (2010), 381-394 (p. 389).
[233] Delaney, Mortal Flow, p. 79.

attitude which considers menstruation as being a punishment.[234] Less educated people are inclined to think that menstruation is a punishment.

Due to the teachings of her uncle, Meryem grows up in an environment where womanhood is cursed; hence, she hates being a woman. She always hears things like: 'To be born a woman was a punishment enough in itself. Women were devils, dirty and dangerous. Like their forerunner, Eve, all of them got men into trouble.'[235] Eve's supposed "corruption" of perverting Adam from the right way is a familiar belief among Muslims, albeit one never mentioned in the Quran. In the Quran, the guilt is shared; however, there is a hadith which implies Eve's temptation.[236]

According to Mernissi's description of the implicit theory of women's sexuality, which is the *qaid* power of woman in Islamic societies, sexuality brings *fitna* to the ideal social order and women are accepted as the guilty parties. Acknowledging women as the potential tempter and guilty party is a common belief in Turkey and this belief is passed down from one generation to another with proverbs like 'If the bitch doesn't wag its tail, the dog doesn't follow'.[237] Meryem's uncle uses this proverb to accuse Meryem after the rape event. He speaks of another common Turkish proverb 'Get them [(women)] constantly with child and regularly give them a good hiding,'[238] which legitimises violence against women so as to control them because women are seen as potential trouble makers. Livaneli uses these proverbs to show Meryem's uncle's perspective, which is typical of the traditional and customary aspects of violence which are deeply rooted in Turkish society. Livaneli, however, through the words of the professor, claims

[234] Çevirme, p. 386.
[235] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 25.
[236] Diane Morgan, *Essential Islam: A comprehensive Guide to Belief and Practice* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2010), p. 29. The aforementioned hadith is: 'Had it not been for Eve, women would never have acted unfaithfully toward the husband.'
[237] Livaneli, *Bliss*, pp. 160-161.
[238] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 25

that ‘women are seen as guilty and sinful in the Western culture, too’ as the name of evil comes from Eve.[239]

III. b) The Impurity of being a non-virgin

Pre-marital sex is stigmatized in all major religions and being a virgin is idealised as a characteristic of being chaste. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines virginity as:

> the condition of being or remaining in a state of chastity; abstinence from or avoidance of all sexual relations; bodily chastity, as a virtue of great commendation, or as conferring especial merit or sanctity; the mode of life characterized by this, esp. as adopted from religious motives.[240]

When we analyse the major religions (especially the monotheistic ones) in terms of virginity, premarital sex is defined as sinful because it is considered fornication. Hence the important thing is not the loss of virginity but having sex out of wedlock, which is a sin regardless of the sex of the committer. However, in societies where virginity is important, since women have hymens which are usually torn mostly because of penetration into the vagina, the hymen is accepted as proof of purity.

In Islam, premarital sex is a sin, yet the adultery of a married person is accepted as being a greater sin because, according to the Qur’an and hadiths, there is a punishment of flogging for the

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[239] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 467.
[240] *Oxford English Dictionary*, (2013), <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lancs.ac.uk/view/Entry/223750?redirectedFrom=virginity#eid>, [accessed 20th March, 2013].

fornicators who are not married;[241] however, according to hadiths, stoning is the punishment prescribed for the one who has illicit sex.[242] As stoning is not written in Qur'an and as the justification of fornication or adultery requires four witnesses who literally see the penis in the vagina, according to moderate Muslims, the physical punishments of *zina* are in reality unjustifiable.[243] Furthermore, according to Islam, punishments should be enforced by state authorities—not by ordinary people. Hence, honour killings perpetrated in Muslim societies actually cannot be justified by Islam; we should note in particular that, there is no punishment of killing people who have had premarital sex. Yet, in most societies, the one who suffers most is the one who loses their virginity since the hymen blood is accepted as the seal of protected honour. 'The concepts of honour and virginity locate the prestige of a man between the legs of a woman.' Hence, the status of a man is secured 'by controlling the movements of women related to him by blood or by marriage, and by forbidding them any contact with male strangers.'[244] Although there is no specific focus on the issue of hymens in the religion of Islam, by misusing religion as a justificatory reason, many women are killed in the name of honour.

In the case of Meryem, religion and custom are the means used by her uncle to justify his verdict of honour killing. Although he is the rapist, he claims that Meryem has ruined the family's honour and she is 'guilty in the sight of both God and man.'[245] The sheikh does not accept that Meryem can be guiltless because, according to him, if women do not seduce, men do not rape.

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[241]Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, 10th edition (Maryland: Amana, 2004) p. 865.
[242] Bukhari conveys from Jabir that: 'A man from the tribe of Bani Aslam came to the Prophet while he was in the mosque and said, "I have committed illegal sexual intercourse." The Prophet turned his face to the other side. The man turned towards the side towards which the Prophet had turned his face, and gave four witnesses against himself. On that the Prophet called him and said, "Are you insane?" (He added), "Are you married?" The man said, 'Yes." On that the Prophet ordered him to be stoned to the death in the Musalla (a praying place). When the stones hit him with their sharp edges and he fled, but he was caught at Al-Harra and then killed.' (*Sahih Bukhari* , Volume 7, Book 63, Number 195 <http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/Bukhari_7_63.php>, [accessed 03.03.2003].)
[243] Linda Rae Bennett, '*Women, Islam and Modernity: Single Women, Sexuality and Reproductive Health in Contemporary Indonesia'* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), *p. 18. Zina* means any illicit, extramarital, or premarital sex.
[244] Mernissi, Virginity and Patriarchy, p. 183.
[245] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 160

Even if Meryem did not commit any wrongdoing, there is another powerful law which requires her punishment. That is custom. Cemal's words shows how custom cannot be violated:

> He pitied the girl for a minute, but everyone knew that customs are customs and had to be followed. Meryem had no chance to survive. Even if her father forgave her, and the sheikh did not interfere, she still could not live. Even if everyone in the village came together to forgive her, she could not be saved.[246]

Livaneli makes it clear that the pollution discourse in the novel is mostly constructed by customs and by the misuse of religion. By adding another sheikh to the novel, Livaneli contextualises the fact that real Islam does not order honour killing. When Cemal's friend takes him to his sheikh in Istanbul, the sheikh, by making references to al- Mai'dah Sura, clarifies that the killing of an innocent person is a great sin and that those who save the innocent ones will be rewarded: 'Whoever kills a person guiltless of killing others or of setting people against each other will be seen as the killer of all humanity. Whoever lets that person live or saves him from death will be seen as the savior [sic.] of humanity.'[247] The sheikh adds that, even if one person is guilty, forgiving is advised and the ones who forgive will be rewarded by God.

IV. Conclusion

To sum up, according to the novel *Bliss*, the concept of pollution which leads to honour killings is constructed by customs and these customs belong particularly to the eastern rural part of Turkey. When Meryem goes to west Turkey, she becomes an idol of purity for the characters who have

[246] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 162.
[247] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 361.

Western values, which is close to the perception of the projected audience.

Livaneli, by depicting an ethnically Turkish family, challenges the bias that honour killings are only perpetrated by Kurds; yet he reinforces the idea that honour killings are a problem of eastern Turkey. This reinforces regional prejudices regarding honour killings in Turkey.
Livaneli's ideas are in the same vein. He verbalises his thoughts about the issue, in an interview about the book:

> In certain parts of Eastern Anatolia, patriarchal norms and hierarchies can still be found in their harshest and most anachronistic forms and women are denied all of their rights.

> In recent decades, as a result of migration, honor killings have started to become more common in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and other major cities in Turkey. In fact, the arrival of this ruthless tradition to the metropolis is how many people living in western Turkey have come to be aware of the seriousness of the problem.[248]

According to Livaneli, honour killings arrived in the west of Turkey as a result of migration. He refers to the 'report prepared by a commission appointed by the Turkish National Assembly' which evaluates data from 2000-2005 and declares that, even though the majority of the honour killings take place in western Turkey, the majority of the victims and suspects are from eastern

[248] O. Z Livaneli, 'A conversation with O. Z. Livaneli' in *Bliss* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin , 2007), Reading Group Gold Attachment.

Turkey.[249]

If we analyse this data, however, it cannot be concluded that the problem is an Eastern Turkish problem. There were 1091 formally recorded honour killings between the years 2000-2005. The division by region for the scenes of the crime is as follows: 19 % is in the Marmara Region; 19 % in the Aegean Region; 18 % in the Central Anatolian Region; 14 % in the South-Eastern Anatolian Region; 13% in the Mediterranean Region; 9 % in the Eastern Anatolian Region; and 8 % in the Black Sea Region. The division by the birth place and registered province of the perpetrators are as follows: 24 % from the South-Eastern Anatolian Region; 21 % from the Eastern Anatolian Region; 15 % from the Central Anatolian Region; 11 % from the Aegean region, 11 % from the Mediterranean Region; 10 % from the Black Sea Region; and 8 % from the Marmara Region.[250] This data shows that it would be misleading to allege that the problem is exclusively an Eastern Anatolian problem. *Bliss*, however, reproduces the prejudice which links honour crimes to eastern culture and customs by making it clear that Meryem is categorised as impure in her village while being regarded as very pure by the traditional values of Western Turkey.

Moreover, the message that 'Meryem should not be punished because she is pure' praises purity as a feminine quality. In the film adaptation of *Bliss* (2007) directed by Abdullah Oguz, there are two cues which support my argument. One of them is that, before Cemal tries to kill Meryem, she says that she has never committed a sin (in a grammatically wrong, colloquial way which reminds one of a child's speech).[251] The other one occurs when the professor tells Cemal that Meryem is purer than all of us. Although these words are not written in the novel, these messages are given

[249] Livaneli, 'A conversation with O. Z. Livaneli'.
[250] Tahincioglu, p. 17.
[251] *Mutluluk* (Bliss), dir. by Abdullah Oğuz (ANS, 2007).

implicitly throughout the novel (as I have demonstrated).

Stressing Meryem's status as a rape victim implicitly denounces those women who are in a consensual sexual relationship in that they are sexually active by choice and, by implication, impure. Likewise, highlighting her childlike innocence stigmatises those who are not accepted as innocent. Kitzinger argues that innocence is an inconvenient concept for sexual abuse:

> If the violation of innocence is the criterion by which the act of sexual abuse is judged, violating a 'knowing' child is a lesser offence than violating an 'innocent' child. It is this notion which allows abusers to defend themselves on the grounds that their victim was 'no angel'.[252]

Kitzinger adds that the same notion of 'deserving and undeserving victims' can be applied to adult rape events.[253] Considering the atmosphere in Turkey, this issue should have been approached more sensitively in the novel, seeing as a recent trial of the twenty-six men who raped a thirteen- year-old girl named N.C. ended with the court passing verdicts of minimum punishment based on the supposed consent of the child.[254]

This 'deserving and undeserving victim' perception helps us to better understand honour killings in the Turkish context. There is a tendency to believe that some victims provoke honour killings. This is especially true if the victim is a married woman, as the number of those who sympathise with the husband rises. Tahsincioglu, as a case study, interviewed urban educated men in

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[252] Kitzinger, p. 80.
[253] Kitzinger, p. 80.
[254] Constanze Letsch, 'Turkish Court Reduces Sentences For Men Accused Of Raping 13-Year-Old', *Guardian* 4 November 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/nov/04/turkish-court-reduces-rape-sentences>.

Şanlıurfa. Although most of them say they do not have honour codes and they are against honour killings, they accept adulteresses as the exception.[255]

By depicting Meryem as a rape victim who is not aware of any sexual drives the writer suggests that although Meryem is pure, some Eastern customs label her as dirty. Hence, the source of the problem is customs because actually Meryem is as pure as a child and does not deserve any punishment. Thus, the following question should be asked: what would have occurred if she was not that pure? Would she deserve punishment if she had sexual relations willingly with anyone, including even her uncle? Focusing on the victim, and the pure status of Meryem, stigmatizes others who do not meet the required purity level. If to be against honour crimes or sexual abuse depends on the purity level of the victims, than this will automatically exclude those who do not meet the criterion of society.

Within the context of the novel, the dominant reading of the text appears to be as follows: In Eastern Anatolia, an innocent woman becomes the victim of honour killings because of malevolent patriarchal powers which misuse religion to legitimise violence and construct the notion of honour which depends on the sexual purity of the female members of the society. It is implied that Western knowledge and education can illuminate those societies and prevent the killings. According to the Goodreads review, which is the most popular website for book reviews, this reading is welcomed by those having a Western-oriented perception both in and outside of Turkey. Most of the commentaries accept the novel as a glimpse into another cultures. For instance; a Turkish reader in his review consistently reminds us that this is a non-fiction documentary of 'horrible things happening in Eastern Turkey'. Although most foreign readers comment on differences in Turkey, an American reader comments that the novel guarantees 'to

[255] Tahincioglu, pp. 115- 122.

remind American women why it's so much better to have been born here than there [Turkey]'.[256] According to the readers' comments, the issue of honour killings is perceived as the problem of the "other" both in Turkey and overseas. The choice of actress for the film, Özgü Namal, a popular figure, reinforces the dominant message in the film which is obvious in the novel as well:

> In our film, a woman's struggle for freedom is portrayed. I hope '*Bliss*' will help women to achieve a freer life. Women, especially in the East, are suppressed in a catastrophic manner. They have no rights to speak, they are never equal. They are treated as second-class people. To say it in a single word, it is violence. Experiencing such problems in this era is heartbreaking.[257]

The commentaries on the novel and film make it clear that both of them have been perceived mostly as representing a problem that pertains to the other.

The message at the end of the novel is in the same vein as Namal's words. Meryem is liberated and happiest of all the three characters. The Professor decides to return back to his mother's modest home and gives an envelope full of money to Meryem. Meryem gives some of the money to Cemal and tells him to return to their village. She decides to stay in the coastal town where she has met a lover, wishing to stay with him and his family. Cemal resists Meryem's idea, since he feels sorry because of his father's guilt and wants to stay with her, but Meryem, fearless and self-

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[256] Ali Ekin Gurgen *Goodreads* (2013) < https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/762060658> [accessed 28 July, 2016] Susanne *Goodreads* (2013) <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/395272691?book_show_action=false&from_review_page=2> [accessed 28 July, 2016].

[257] Bizim filmimizde bir kadının özgürlük mücadelesi konu ediliyor. Dilerim 'Mutluluk'un kadınların daha özgür bir yaşama ulaşmasında etkisi olur. Kadınlar özellikle Doğu'da feci halde bastırılmış durumda. Söz hakları yok, asla eşit değiller. İkinci sınıf insan muamelesi görüyorlar. Tek kelimeyle dehşet. Bu çağda hâlâ böyle sorunlar yaşıyor olmamız yürek parçalayıcı. Ozgu Namal, interviewed by Neslihan Kara, 'Tore Kurbani (Victim of Custom)', 23rd November 2002, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/tore-kurbani-5531754> [accessed 28 July, 2016]

confident, is determined to realise her plan. She leaves Cemal behind. Cemal is devastated but is certain that he will not return to his village, which he calls the 'sordid place'.[258]

A feminist critique of the film would criticize the portrayal of Meryem as a woman who gains self-confidence through the approval of men. Although there are some discrepancies between the novel and the film adaptation, the same critique can be applied to the novel since the love and approval which is portrayed has an important effect on Meryem's confidence:

> Meryem is reborn by being loved by men. Thus, we may say that, in the film, Meryem's empowerment has not been plotted; rather her being loved and accepted is plotted; i.e. a woman's empowerment depends on her being loved by men. In a sense, women are made visible only by men.[259]

Emin Saydut, a critic on the web page Sanatlog (a site which focuses on art and culture), criticises the happy ending of the novel for giving the impression that a woman receives happiness only by means of getting married and receiving wealth in that it is a highly held sexist belief in Turkey that that is all that women truly need.[260]

As a requirement of a humanist criticism that considers the writer's position, I assume that the writer had good intentions to bring the issue of honour killing to the agenda. Livaneli can be defined as a humanist writer as, according to him, literature is the art of narrating that which is human and a means to strive to understand and perceive life; hence, literature intervenes in life.

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[258] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 514.
[259] Burcu Tokat and Seda Saluk 'Akrabalık, Namus ve Aşk: Şiddetin Meşrulaştırılması Üzerine Bir Deneme' *BÜ'de Kadın Gündemi*, 14. (2008).
[260] Emin Saydut , *Sanatlog,* (2009) http://www.sanatlog.com/sanat/mutluluk-diye-onyargilari-pisirmek/> [accessed 15th November, 2013]

Livaneli believes that literature spreads humanitarian ideas and he focuses on psychology as he accepts psychology as the base of literature.[261] However, Livaneli fails to attain a strong insider/outsider ethos. There are some attempts to resist the dominant discourse on his part, but they are nevertheless weak in relation to the ideas which reinforce the prejudices of his Turkish/foreign Western readers.

However, although *Bliss* has aspects which can be criticized, reading Livaneli's text as an attempt to understand honour killings gives one some useful tips for grabbing the complexity of the issue. Passing beyond the boundaries of the text and characters, analysing the same issues in different societies adds to our understanding of how similar notions are constructed differently, in different times and locations. *Bliss* provides a framework for us to comprehend how the notion of purity functions within the context of honour killing. Here, I contribute to an understanding of how a literary fiction, *Bliss*, illuminates different constructions of social norms and expectations according to certain discourses of purity. Also, to reflect and contribute to the existing debate of honour killing, I have focused on the theme of purity in its complex relations with literature and society, which reflects the dominant discourse surrounding the honour notion, including the discourse of cultural products reflecting back upon the issue, such as *Bliss*.

[261] Livaneli, *Edebiyat Mutluluktur* (Literature is Happiness), pp, 14, 12, 37, 86, 14.

Chapter Two

The Concept of National and Personal Identity in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*

I. Introduction:

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the relation between the notion of collective identity and honour killings as it is represented in Fadia Faqir's third novel *My Name is Salma.*[262] When I analyse the relation between the notion of collective identity and honour killing as it is portrayed in *My Name is Salma* I utilise Said's humanist method of criticism as it enables the novel to be understood in its worldly contexts. As it is explained in the Introduction to this thesis, as a requirement of Said's humanist criticism, I analyse all the texts within their material (worldly) contexts, such as their relations to historical, political, social and cultural human experiences. For this, first, the 'superficial appearance of' *My Name is Salma* including the ideas expressed by Faqir will be examined and then, all analysis will be integrated to work 'from the surface to the "inward life-center" of the work of art', which requires 'repeated readings' to fight my 'way to unity [with the] author'.[263]

As its title suggests, the issue of identity is one of the book's primary issues. The eponymous character's journey from familial exclusion in her hometown, somewhere in the Levant, to national exclusion in Britain constitutes the main storyline. Salma's commitment to her familial name, Salma Ibrahim El-Musa, and her partial rejection of her new official British name, Sally, is a metonym of Salma's continued need to belong to her history, family and community.

[262] Published in the USA as *The Cry of the Dove.*
[263] Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, pp. 64 -65.

Salma's loyalty to her family name is not just an important element of the storyline; in extra-textual reality, this commitment creates an environment conducive to the practice of honour killings as internationally most 'honour killings are executed for instances of rape, infidelity, flirting or any other instance perceived as disgracing the family's honour, and the woman is then killed by a male relative to restore the family's name in the community.'[264] In these cases, individual acts become a matter of communal identity as 'in many cultures, an individual's identity is closely tied to their family unit.'[265] Particularly (though not exclusively) in 'Islamic and Middle Eastern societies a distinct honor-shame culture exists wherein individuals derive their identity from their social group, especially their family and kinship network.'[266] The phenomenon of honour killing is more common in collectivist societies such as tribes; thus, focusing on the tension between individual and collective identity in this textual case study will enable us to have a more comprehensive understanding of honour killings.[267] Although this identity issue is covered in all the other novels to which this thesis attends, *My Name is Salma* centrally thematises this issue, as its title reinforces—hence my focus on this novel in this chapter.

My Name is Salma tells the story of a Bedouin shepherd girl who becomes pregnant out of wedlock by her lover, Hamdan. The setting is an unnamed Levantine country, which is probably Jordan as it can be inferred from the direction of Salma's travel to Lebanon, as well as, because of Faqir's background. After Salma's mother's attempt to abort Salma's baby fails, her mother

[264] Anushree Tripathi and Supriya Yadav, 'For the Sake of Honour: But Whose Honour? "Honour Crimes" Against Women', *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law*, 2, (2004), 63-78 (p. 64).
[265] Valerie Plant, 'Honor Killings and the Asylum Gender Gap', *15 J. Transnat'l L. & Pol'y*, 109, (2005-2006), 109-129, (p. 111).
[266] Ferris, K. Nesheiwat, 'Honor Crimes in Jordan: Their Treatment under Islamic and Jordanian Criminal Laws', *23 Penn St. Int'l L. Rev.*, 251, (2004-2005), 251-281, (p. 254).
[267] Jafri, exploiting Kramer's 'theory of dimensional accrual / dissociation' and Gebser's 'conscious mutation theory' provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between honour killings and collectivist society. See: Amir H. Jafri, *Honour Killing: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 38-45.

warns Salma that her brother will kill her for besmirching their family's honour. Upon asking help from her teacher, Miss Nailah, Salma is placed in a prison under protective custody. On the advice of Salma's prison fellow, Naura, Salma's baby girl is taken from her just after labour, on the grounds that, if the baby is not taken immediately, it would be harder for Salma to let her baby go. This, however, does not prevent Salma from falling into depression because of the separation from her daughter. After around six years of custody in prison, a civil nun from Lebanon smuggles Salma into Lebanon where she is later adopted by an English nun, Miss Asher, whereupon they migrate to Britain. Despite her new name as Sally Asher, Salma never fully accepts her forced migration and new identity in Britain.[268]

Faqir explains that she started writing *My Name is Salma* as an escape from the guilt she felt upon losing the custody of her thirteen-month-old son because she was, in her words: 'verging on the edge of madness. And it was perhaps a way to talk to my son. Perhaps it's a long letter to him, all of it.'[269] This is one of the major events in Faqir's life which is, indirectly, echoed in the novel; the other is Faqir's experience as an immigrant in Britain. In Faqir's words:

> When I first arrived in Britain I examined and re-examined my sense of belonging, adjusted the mirror and drove on exploring a new map. Now I don't subject myself to such inquisitions. I am a cross-cultural, transnational writer par excellence; I cross borders, languages, cultures and literary traditions in a blink. I belong to a rootless multicultural community […][270]

[268] Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, (London: Doubleday, 2007). Hereafter, I will refer to *My Name is Salma* as *Salma*.
[269] Lindsey Moore, '"You Arrive at a Truth, Not the Truth": An Interview with Fadia Faqir' *Poscolonial Text*, 6.2, (2011), 1-13, p. 2.
[270] Rachel Bower, 'Interview with Fadia Faqir, 23 March 2010', *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 48.1, (2012), 3-12, p. 8.

Here the author seems to echo Said: 'seeing "the entire world as a foreign land" makes possible originality of vision.'[271] As exiles recognise at least two cultures, settings, and homes, contrary to most people, they have an insider/ outsider perspective and a plural vision which brings about the consciousness of concurrent dimensions which Said calls – borrowing a terminology from music - '*contrapuntal'*.[272] Both new and old environments are 'vivid, actual' and 'occurring together contrapuntally' as 'for an exile, habits of life, expressions, or activity in the new environment' exist together with the recollection of the same things in a different environment. The perception is uniquely illuminating, particularly if the exile is aware of more contrapuntal appositions which abate conservative attitudes and 'elevate appreciative sympathy'. Also, there is a sense of accomplishment in the act of feeling at home no matter where one is.[273] However, Said is aware of his relatively privileged experience and the difficulties of exiles, such as the pain of estrangement. He reminds that 'while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement.'[274]

Salma, however, does not achieve a contented immigrant life; she is mentally disoriented and torn, as is clear from the style of the narration. Although Salma / Sally is the continuous focalizer of the story, it feels – as I will demonstrate – as though the text has two narrators, swapping between Bedouin shepherd 'Salma' and forced immigrant 'Sally'.

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[271] Edward W. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta Books, 2001), p. 186.
[272] Said adopts the term from music to interpret colonial texts with a simultaneous awareness between the linked perspectives and histories of both the colonizer and the colonized. 'That is, we must be able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and system of external relationships, all of them coexisting and interacting with others.' See: Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 32.
[273] Said, *Reflections on Exile*, p. 186.
[274] Said, *Reflections on Exile,* p. 173.

The story spans from the 1970s to 1990 but is plotted non-chronologically. The narrative which is juxtaposed between past and present makes up the story incisively, showing how Salma's traumatic past haunts her and the narration. The continuum of the narration is interrupted with analepses so randomly and frequently that it may cause the reader to lose track of time, just as Salma does. The fractured complex narrative presents a tough chore for the reader to follow.[275] Faqir; however, values non-linear narrative. According to her, truth cannot be represented by a linear narrative. 'My narrative is always fractured. The glass is held in the hand and then dropped on the floor. A fractured narrative could perhaps become more tragic and more beautiful than the whole.'[276] More specifically here, Faqir enters the mind of Salma, which is haunted by her past and the trauma of the loss of her daughter, family, history, and her original coherent identity. The juxtaposition of random scenes from past and present is meant to reflect Salma's psyche, seeing as 'the human mind works randomly; it free-associates. If you want to represent thought process, your form can never be entirely linear.'[277] Faqir aims to 'reinforce the idea that [for Salma] the past is alive in the present.'[278] As Salma never makes peace with her past—especially due to the guilt she feels about the loss of her daughter—Salma's present remains a traumatic and painful experience.

Cathy Caruth understands that trauma is a devastating experience which refuses 'integration and expression.'[279] Although Faqir's narration is criticized by some readers as unreadable, the narration actually represents resistance to integration and expression with an emphasis on the

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[275] According to two of four total customer reviews on the Barnes and Noble webpage (written by an anonymous customer and a customer with the user name 'pjpick') the book is confusing and intolerable because of its narration style. See: Barnes and Noble (2014) <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/reviews/Cry-of-the-Dove%2FFadia-Faqir/1102330923?ean=9780802170408> [accessed 2nd Februray, 2014].
[276] Claire Chambers, *British Muslim Fictions: Interviews with Contemporary Writers* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 66.
[277] Moore, '"You Arrive at a Truth, Not the Truth": An Interview with Fadia Faqir'. p. 4.
[278] Chambers, p. 67.
[279] Stef Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds,* Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 1.

inaccessibility of trauma. As Stef Craps puts it, according to Caruth:

> conjoining a psychoanalytic view of trauma with a deconstructive vigilance regarding the indeterminacies of representation in the analysis of texts that bear witness to traumatic histories can grant us a paradoxical mode of access to extreme events and experiences that defy understanding and representation. In this account, textual "undecidability" or "unreadability" comes to reflect the inaccessibility of trauma.[280]

Caruth also points out that speaking of our traumas and listening to the trauma of others can provide a link between cultures.[281] Hence, trauma literature can provide the fruitful interaction of cultures which echoes Said's humanist criticism. He believes that literature can bring about a change by arousing sympathy; yet, he reminds us that 'there are other traditions and therefore other humanities'.[282] As we cannot speak of a universal humanism, Stef Craps warns that trauma theory should not be regarded as universal. Craps criticises Western trauma theorists, including Caruth, for marginalizing or ignoring 'traumatic experiences of non-Western or minority cultures'; taking for granted 'the universal validity of definitions of trauma and recovery that have developed out of the history of Western modernity' and frequently favouring or sometimes prescribing 'a modernist aesthetic of fragmentation and aporia as uniquely suited to the task of bearing witness to trauma'; commonly 'disregarding the connections between metropolitan and non-Western or minority traumas'.[283] To overcome trauma theory's Eurocentric biases, Craps underlines the importance of focusing on 'collective, ongoing, everyday forms of traumatizing

[280] Craps, p. 2.
[281] Cathy Caruth, 'Trauma and Experience: Introduction', in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press), p. 11.
[282] *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, pp. 4-5.
[283] Craps, p. 2.

violence' instead of 'traditional individual and event-based model'.[284] Craps' work on trauma theory is useful to think through the issue of honour killing as hour killing is a form of collective violence and punishment and as part of everyday ongoing collective masculine control.

Faqir believes in generating change through literature by accepting it as a humanising form.[285] Faqir makes it clear that all of her novels are 'socio-political' and she affirms that 'novels are windows to the world; they humanize, bring injustice to the reader's attention, and act as cultural bridges.'[286] As a humanist writer 'no longer beholden to the dictates of the "home" community', she exploits her position as insider-outsider and establishes a 'dialogue with past and present, the distant and the near.'[287]

In this chapter, I will read *My Name is Salma* in Said's humanist terms bearing Craps' concerns about trauma theories in mind. Faqir has written *My Name is Salma* for humanistic purposes, for the purposes of making a change by 'open[ing] up the debate of [honour killings] and widen[ing] it.' This is because Faqir asserts that she writes about the Arab world 'to be self-critical. There will be no reform without that.'[288]

Faqir, herself suggests that '*My Name is Salma* is partly about honour crimes but mainly about the immigrant experience in Britain today.'[289] Salma's daily, persistent and cumulative trauma is narrated in the immigrant context. As an immigrant Bedouin woman in Britain, Salma is distressed partly because, for her, identity is not a purely personal matter which can be resolved

[284] Craps, p. 4.
[285] Bower, p. 3.
[286] Bower, p. 7.
[287] Layla Al Maleh, 'Anglophone Arab Literature: An Overview' in *Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature* ,ed. by Layla Al Maleh (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2009), pp. 1-65 (p. 15).
[288] Bower, p. 9.
[289] Bower, p. 9.

through education or personal development which is being offered to her in her new environment. Observing some college students walking on a road, Salma wonders: 'What was it like to be a student in England? What did they teach them here in England? Was it possible to walk out of my skin, my past, my name? Was it possible to open a new page […]'[290] Salma, after trying to be a university student, fails to turn a new page in the sense of foreclosing upon her earlier identity. Salma feels she is irrevocably bound by her communal identity, even though it threatens her life. It seems that she still wishes to be a part of her cultural community even though it may end up resulting in the cruel punishment of an honour killing and the disappearance from this world, as she does not see herself existing outside her own community. This might be the reason behind her need to return back home and to her culture even if the patriarchal and archaic elements in her culture require her to die in the name of honour.[291]

Hence, in this chapter, the relationship between honour killings and familial and national identities will be foregrounded through a reading of the tension between individual identity and communal identity. The novel has been composed in such a way as to dramatise this tension by juxtaposing in *My Name is Salma* two parallel stories simultaneously. One of them pertains to the narrative present set in an individualist British society and the other one to the narrative past set in a communal Bedouin society. Since Salma cleaves to her past identity by resisting the adoption of her new name, I will discuss the identity issue by means of her names and the acceptance or rejection that she feels towards one vis-à-vis the other. This chapter provides a new reading of the novel which contextualises honour killing in an immigrant context focusing on the conflict between individual and collective identity.

[290] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 38.
[291] I will discuss how challenging Salma's inability to let go of the past narratively and politically on pp. 15-16.

II. Turning into Sally

A name is 'a word or phrase constituting the individual designation by which a particular person or thing is known, referred to, or addressed.'[292] By giving names to their children, families reflect upon their cultures and frames of mind. According to Mary V. Seeman, 'identity though complex, can be encoded in a name. The name reflects the traditions of the namers and their hopes for the child.'[293] Likewise, there seems to be a mutual relationship and interaction between the subject and the name as 'the infant's characteristics influence the choice to some degree, and to a degree, a name affects the person who bears it.'[294] Hence, a change of name has a more complex context than just being a change of word a person is addressed or known by. If the name is altered forcibly, anyone can regard this change as being a threat to their identity (as in the case of the requirements of assimilation in immigrant and minority contexts).

In an immigration context, assimilation requirements are made implicitly as well as explicitly by means of economic or social pressures. For instance, studies show that, in Sweden, people of Asian, African and Slavic background change their names to raise their chances of employability and to increase their earnings; indeed, surname changes are institutionally promoted by the Swedish government.[295] In these cases, the change of name can be regarded as an assimilation policy and external constraint. As a name is a significant personal trait, changing it can be

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[292] *Oxford English Dictionary*, (2013), <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/124918?rskey=UVJWG9&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [accessed 10th September, 2013].
[293] Mary V. Seeman, 'Name and Identity', *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry / La Revue Canadienne de Psychiatrie*, 25.2, (1980), 129-137, (p. 136).
[294] Seeman, p. 36.
[295] Mahmood Arai, Peter Skogman Thoursie, 'Renouncing Personal Names: An Empirical Examination of Surname Change and Earnings', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 27. 1, (2009), 127-147.
Moa Bursell, 'Name Change and Destigmatization among Middle Eastern immigrants in Sweden', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35. 3, (2012) 471-487.

perceived as a 'personal loss'.[296]

Another incentive for changing one's name is as an indication of religious conversion. Although religious conversion does not necessarily require name-change, ever since antiquity it has been widely practiced—especially during the first two generations of Christianity (i.e. the early A.D.s).[297] These kinds of changes mostly take place via the will of the person who is renamed, or in some cases, by a divine demand, as in the cases of Abram, Sarah and Jacob recorded in the Old Testament. Abram is given a new name: Abraham; his wife Sarai was named Sarah by God; and Abraham's grandchild Jacob was divinely bestowed a new name, Israel.[298] All the name- changes narrated in the Old Testament are results of a divine command.

There was a tendency towards name changing in the early years of Islam. Indeed, most converts today change their names to Muslim names. The Prophet Mohammed frequently changed those names which had negative and inappropriate meanings.[299] Examples of this include the changing of *haram* (prohibited) names denoting enslavement or the worship of anything besides Allah; e.g. changing Abdul Amr (slave of *Amr*) to Abd al-Rahmaan (slave of *Rahman*; i.e. one of the names of *Allah*) or changing names with negative meanings, like Aasiyah (disobedient), to Jaameelah (beautiful). It is *sunnah* to change first names in order to replace them with one which has a better meaning if the name is considered *haram* and inappropriate.[300] Islam, however does not advise surname changes. Even in the cases of adoption, surname change is not considered in Islam seeing as the Islamic system of naming contains the father's name and clearly remarks paternal

[296] Arai and Thoursie, p. 129.
[297] G. H. R. Horsley, 'Name Change as an Indication of Religious Conversion in Antiquity' *Numen*, 34. 1, (1987), pp. 1-17
[298] Horsley, p. 7
[299] Muhammad Khalid Masud, 'Fatwa Advice on Proper Muslim Names' in *Islam in South Asia in Practice*, ed. by Barbara D. Metcalf (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009) pp. 339-352, p. 344.
[300] *Muslimconverts.com*, (2013) <http://www.muslimconverts.com/muslimnames/index.htm> [accessed 1st June 2013]. The word 'sunnah' means behaving according to the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed.

lineage (i.e. Ibn Yahya: son of Yahya).

For Salma, who is brought up Muslim and identifies as Muslim, the change of both her name and surname entails erasing all the familial and religious signification of her name and identity. Upon arriving in Britain, Salma feels a threat to her identity when she is urged to adopt the new name, Sally. The name-change here firstly indicates a change in ethnic and linguistic identity seeing as the name is not in Salma's native language and she is adopted and named by a British citizen. Secondly, for Salma, this change might imply a forced new religious identity as in Islamic societies name changes generally occur for this aim. Not understanding that contemporary British Christian identity is both hegemonic and secular, for the most part, Salma misunderstands the conversation exchanged between herself and the immigration officer:

> The immigrant officer at Southampton port detention centre kept asking, 'What is your Christian name?'
>
> I looked at him puzzled. 'Me Muslim,' I said. He ran his fingers around his stiff collar as if trying to loosen it. Other passengers whizzed through the immigration control counters with a smile on their faces.
>
> 'Name?' he said
>
> 'Yes. Salma Ibrahim.' I nodded my head to show him that I understood his question.
>
> Miss Asher interrupted quickly and said that my name was Sally Asher.[301]

Sally is 'in origin a pet form of Sarah' and a Biblical name. In the book of Genesis, Abraham's

[301] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 128.

wife's and Isaac's mother, Sarai's name, 'possibly meaning "contentious" in Hebrew', was changed by God to Sarah (meaning princess) as a sign of greater blessing.'[302] Miss Asher might have expected that Salma would convert to her religion by giving her a Biblical name because she plans to 'show her the way of the Lord'.[303]

Though Miss Asher would not be aware of this, giving Salma a name meaning princess resonates with Salma's father's, Haj Ibrahim's, intentions when giving Salma her name: 'I called you Salma because you are healthy, pure and clean. Your name means the woman with the soft hands and feet, so may you live in luxury for the rest of your life. Salma, my little chick, my heart, may God keep you safe and sound wherever you go, darling!'[304] Given her rural and humble origin, it is implied that Haj Ibrahim tries to bring up Selma in a way to be suitable for a rich husband. Salma – who was supposed to be a woman with soft hands and feet and who should have lived in luxury like a princess but who fails to uphold the requisite qualifications of being 'healthy, pure and clean' for having the name Salma – is now offered the name Sally again, almost with the subliminal expectation of Miss Asher that Salma is to live a life like a princess. The requisite qualification for being Sally, the princess, is implied as purifying Salma's past (i.e. her past religious identity and sins) and offering her a "rebirth", as it were. Just like a new-born baby, Salma is given a new name. When Miss Asher, Salma's adoptive guardian, explains the process of adoption to Salma, she says 'I changed your name to Sally Asher and got your temporary document' with a facial expression 'similar to that of the Jesus crucified', which implies purification and self-sacrifice for others.[305] During their journey—and despite Salma's objections—, Miss Asher tries to assure Salma that she will be forgiven by the Christian God.

[302] Patrick Hanks, Kate Hardcastle, *An A-Z of Baby Names*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) pp. 300, 303.
[303] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 87.
[304] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 12.
[305] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 87

Salma, not believing the story of the Gospel, sticks, instead, to the Muslim version of the story:

> 'Christ was put on the cross for the sins of mankind. He died on our behalf. All our sins will be forgiven.'
> 'Christ not put on the cross. It appeared so. Christians think so. Not true.' […]
> 'Christ was crucified. He loves you' she said. 'No crucification, no love me,' I said.
> Miss Asher stood up and slapped me on the face.[306]

Salma's resistance ends up with her being slapped in the face by Miss Asher, even though the latter is calm and kind most of the time.

Miss Asher requires Salma to make radical changes apart from settling in a new country, such as taking off her headscarf and eating food considered *haram* (prohibited) according to Islam. It seems that Miss Asher believes that Salma needs to start a totally different and a new life, leaving her earlier life behind, not unlike being reborn. The concept of rebirth is an essential part of Christianity and Biblical-based Christian therapy. The statement of Jesus, 'You must be born again to enter the kingdom of God' (John 3:3), is indispensable for gaining wholeness and being patient.[307] Salma, however, rejects this. Salma interprets every change as her integrity being taken from her and becoming more fragmented: 'I cannot take off veil, Sister. My country, my

[306] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 165.
[307] William P. Wilson, 'Psychiatric Treatments Involving Religion: Psychotherapy from a Christian Perspective', in *Religion and Spirituality in Psychiatry*, ed. by Philippe Huguelet, Harold G. Koenig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 283-301, p. 290.

language, my daughter. No piece of cloth, feel naked, me.'[308] This nakedness is not just physical nakedness, as is clear from Salma's utterance when she is told that she will go to England: 'They stripped me of everything: my dignity, my heart, my flesh and blood',[309] referring respectively to her being deprived of honour, beloved ones, daughter and lineage.

Miss Asher communicates with Salma by focusing on God's forgiveness to relieve her trauma. This again resembles therapeutic psychiatric Christian therapy which is especially aimed at the symptoms of 'shame and guilt, hate, or resentment'.[310] Salma, however, is refractory:

> 'God is love, he loves you child. He will forgive you no matter what.' 'Allah punish me. Burn me in hell. Close the grave in on my chest.'
> 'Not the Christian God, he is love. He loves and forgives, Jesus died on the cross to wipe out the sins of mankind.'
> 'God loves me? Do not think so.'[311]

Salma feels so guilty about leaving her daughter behind that she does not want to be forgiven; she wants to be punished instead. She occasionally verbalises her anger to herself: 'I left her behind. Deserve to die, not live, me'.[312] Miss Asher attempts to relieve Salma's feelings of guilt with Christian scripture, which Salma is afraid even to touch. If this is analysed in itself, the foregoing dialogue might indicate that Islam is unforgiving of sin; however, it is Salma's trauma which prevents her from thinking in an optimistic way. Actually, Salma is aware that she, as a Muslim, can ask for forgiveness from Allah but she does not. Her awareness and resistance is clear after

[308] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 165
[309] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 84
[310] Wilson, p. 290.
[311] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 165.
[312] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 36.

she sleeps with Jim.

> You stay in bed next to him pretending to be content, asleep and all you wanted to do was to jump up and wash your body with soap and water including your insides, do your ablutions than pray for forgiveness. No, you just chew at your cold breakfast looking at the bright stripes of light between the curtains and the windowsill tight-lipped.[313]

Both Islam and Christianity have common conceptions regarding the naturalness of sinning. Both religions accept the concept that 'there is no one who does not sin.' Focusing on God's mercy is the psycho-therapeutic way, from an Islamic perspective, of overcoming excessive feelings of guilt for Muslims.[314] Dashing hopes about Allah's mercy is against the Quran: 'Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'[315] Still, Salma does not find any comfort with any possibility of being forgiven because she does not forgive herself. Miss Asher wants to emancipate Salma both physically and spiritually: 'Well, you also think so many things. Not necessarily true. One day you will see the light. One day the truth shall set you free.'[316] Salma's self-imposed traumatised captivity, however, continues.

Upon her arrival in Britain Salma is imprisoned first very literally as, when the authenticity of her adoption by Miss Asher is questioned by the British government, Salma is kept in immigration

[313] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 71.
[314] Sasan Vasegh, 'Psychiatric Treatments Involving Religion: Psychotherapy from an Islamic Perspective', in *Religion and Spirituality in Psychiatry*, ed. by Philippe Huguelet, Harold G. Koenig, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 301-317, p. 290.
[315] Yusuf Ali, *Quran*, (n.d) <http://quran.com/39/53> [accessed 13 September, 2013].
[316] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 165.

prison for two months. She remains there until the conclusion of the lawsuit which is commenced against the British government by Miss Asher and Minister Mahoney, a Quaker priest, who try to prevent the authorities from sending Salma back. After Salma is released, Miss Asher returns to Lebanon in order to save more women, while Minister Mahoney invites Salma / Sally to come and live with him in Branscombe whilst trying to teach basic English to her. Around one year later, feeling guilty about her being a guest for longer than proper, Salma decides to start a new life and settles in Exeter with the help and advice of Minister Mahoney.

Exeter is the predominant setting of the text's narrative present, and the details of Salma's past are revealed by way of sub-plots as an interference of the past in the present. Although she improves her language skills, Salma feels considerable alienation while living in Exeter as an immigrant and her psychological imprisonment continues as she is haunted by her past. Every daily activity reminds Salma of the life she left behind. In the narration, similar events in the text's narration's present and past are adjoined; for example, the sage smell in her bathroom in Exeter reminds her of sage tea in Salma's home country or, upon seeing students on the street, Salma's school years are then narrated.[317] Salma expresses the burden of her past as being 'too hard' after she is diagnosed with 'too much past' by a doctor.[318] Salma's inability to forget her past makes her a psychological prisoner of that past. Indeed, she even believes that she should be imprisoned literally. For example, when she walks past an HM prison, she feels like she is 'on the wrong side of the black iron gate' because of her 'dark deeds and […] shameful past'.[319]

According to Ana-Beatriz Perez, Salma represents a diasporic subject who cannot attain a hybrid

[317] This is an experience in Proustian sense in which object act as a catalysts for involuntary memory. 'For Proust, involuntary memory comes unsolicited, often with explosive force, to unsettle the individual in the present.' David Gross, *Lost Time: On Remembering and Forgetting in Late Modern Culture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), p. 47.
[318] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 41.
[319] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 8.

identity because of her past trauma. The novel is a 'reflection of [the] diasporic subject's experience in exile and a metaphor of [the] subject's necessity to resolve their relationship with their past in order to successfully move forward in the host society.'[320] Faqir, however, also wants to show that racism is a major issue. The failure is not only Salma's as the host society does not give her a chance to integrate. The novel not only criticises Salma's old society but also the new one which isolates her. As Faqir explains,

> If the society [Salma] left behind has a conservative strict code of honour, then the society here has its own constraints as well. I wanted to be even-handed: 'Don't think you are superior; you have got problems specific to Britain.' The fact that the family has disintegrated; casual sex; the objectification of women; the fact that you are not beautiful, with long legs, there is no space for you in this media-driven and controlled society. Women and men have to go out every day and sell themselves […].[321]

In the hostel where Salma stays upon arrival in Exeter, she meets another honour crime fugitive, Parvin, who has fled from a forced marriage and becomes one of her best friends and helpmates in Britain. As a second generation British-Asian who knows the ways of British society, Parvin advises Salma to: 'Lighten up! Groom yourself! Sell yourself! […] You are now in a capitalist society that is not your own'.[322] Hence, Salma has to take the veil[323] off to find a job 'as a

[320]Ana-Beatriz Perez, 'Shame and (Self) Punishment: Trauma and Diasporic Identity in Fadia Faqir's My Name is Salma' in *Migration, Culture and Transnational Identities: Critical Essays*, ed. by Edward O. Ako, Sarah Anyang Agbor, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013), pp. 55-79, p. 56.
[321] Chambers, p. 65.
[322] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 46.
[323] In the novel, Faqir use the word 'veil' to mean headscarf. It is not the stereotypical veil which covers head and face. Here, veil is the specific garment to cover head (often referred to as *hijab* in Britain). There is no implication that Salma covers her face so the use of the word 'veil' feels like unnecessary pandering to a non-Arab audience on Faqir's part.

strategy of economic survival'.[324] When Miss Asher suggests Salma take the veil off on their journey to Britain, Salma refuses: 'My hair is aura. I must hide it. Just like my private parts. […] I cannot take off veil, Sister. My country, my language, my daughter. No piece of cloth. Feel naked, me.'[325] In the new xenophobic society in which she lives, however, the veil marks Salma as being different, someone who is not 'one of "us"', someone who should be stayed away from. Salma says 'people look at me all time as if disease'[326]—a disease which might potentially harm them. Hence, Salma prefers to be naked rather than be a 'disease', even if she feels 'as dirty as a whore, with no name or family, a sinner […]'[327] The cultural connotations of the veil, apart from being a religious requirement, make the veil a means of connecting Salma to her old culture; her not wearing the veil, on the other hand, would be seen as being unacceptable to her community of origin. Salma's removal of her veil echoes Faqir's own experience, even if she had always resisted wearing the hijab even when she was in Jordan: 'I felt as if I had taken off my skin, my identity, my whole family and clan. They would not want to have anything to do with me now.'[328]

Salma's unveiling can be read as mimicry to sell herself in the job market, an example of the necessary assimilation tactic I discussed earlier. I agree with Esra Santesso that Salma's unveiling is a Lacanian mimicry of 'camouflage. […]Salma takes it off to become socially undetectable, as "mottled" as those around her'.[329] In this sense Santesso surveys 'a new understanding of mimicry that is site-specific, conscious and convenient—and often more escapist than

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[324] Lindsey Moore, 'Space, Embodiment, Identity and Resistance in the Novels of Fadia Faqir', in *Edinburgh Companion to the Arab Novel in English: The Politics of Anglo Arab and Arab American Literature and Culture,* ed.by Nouri Gana, (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2013), pp. 246-269.
[325] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 165.
[326] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 108.
[327] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 114.
[328] Fadia Faqir, '"As soon as the fresh air touched my hair I began to cry"', *Guardian*, 22nd October 2007, (2014) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/oct/22/religion.familyandrelationships> [accessed 12th December, 2014].
[329] Esra Santesso, *Disorientation: Muslim Identity in Contemporary Anglophone Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 122

resistant.'[330] At first, Salma wants to be invisible like 'Casper' without encountering the dominant culture, because her 'immigrant survival kit' says to 'avoid confrontation at any price'.[331] Therefore, Salma's invisibility is a survival strategy in both her past and new country. In her country of origin, she is veiled to be sexually invisible as the female perceived as a threat to societal order.[332] Besides, after committing the honour crime she is imprisoned to be invisible to her family's eye. On the other hand, in Britain she is unveiled to be less visible; in related fashion, by drinking apple juice in pubs and disguising it as beer, she conceals her non-British, especially Muslim, identity. Moore reminds us that this strategy is not just an escape from 'racist assumptions […] but also to avoid being tracked down by her family'.[333]

Although Salma's living conditions in Exeter eventually improve and her fantasy of marrying a 'white gentleman' is realised when she marries her British university lecturer, her psychological condition deteriorates. After having a baby boy, Salma's guilt about her daughter haunts her even more and, believing and dreaming that her daughter is in need of her, she returns to her home country where she discovers that her daughter, Layla, was murdered two months previously because of her mother's disgrace to the family. The novel ends when Salma is apparently shot in the graveyard where her daughter is buried. As Salma is the narrator of the story, first her mother's pleading to rescue her is heard; than the pain Salma feels through her forehead is narrated. When Salma stops narrating the reader understands that she has been shot.

Mashael A. Al-Sundeary criticises Faqir for writing about honour killing in the aftermath of 9/11. As I discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, in the post 9/11 political environment, stories

[330] Santesso, p. 112.
[331] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 202-203.
[332] Salma's sexuality is a representation of women's *qaid* power that I discussed in my Introduction.
[333] Lindsey Moore, 'Space, Embodiment, Identity and Resistance in the Novels of Fadia Faqir', in *The Edinburgh Companion to the Arab Novel in English: The Politics of Anglo Arab and Arab American Literature and Culture*, ed. by Nouri Gana (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015) p. 253.

with the elements of the victim-escapee stereotype, depicting Muslim women as the victims of Muslim men, flattered Western values and became popular. Al-Sundeary characterises Faqir as an 'Orientalist writer within the English canon' who in the novel 'authenticate[s] her position as a native informant who has the knowledge and expertise to speak about her culture.' He further claims that Faqir's 'allegiance' is 'clearly with her new home in Britain' on the grounds that she changed her decision to write multiple endings for Salma in order to avoid publishers rejecting her novel.[334] Roxanne Ellen Bibizadeh also suggests that Faqir could have 'avoided the charge of stereotyping a subordinate Arab female subject who meets a violent and tragic demise as a result of a patriarchal society' if she had written the intended alternative ending.[335]

Faqir admits that publishing houses would have rejected a double ending, speculating that this would have been 'too experimental for them', especially since publishers assume that Arab writers should not 'give them [pieces which are] more modern and complex.'[336] That is not surprising, considering that the readers expect a poignant story of a primitive world, but corroborating my argument in this chapter, Faqir also explains that she preferred to write a tragic ending, even though she had initially wrote a happy ending: 'I was writing a book about honour crimes, partly. […] Because honour crimes persist, it would not be politically accurate for Salma to walk free into the sunset. […] And there was the unresolved issue of having left her daughter behind.'[337] I, however, dispute Faqir's view that a happy ending would not be politically correct in consideration of existing honour killings. Faqir could have written a happy ending text or a double ending text which would bring the idea that it is possible to make a change and prevent

[334] Mashael A. Al-Sudeary, 'Reception of the Anglo-Arab Novel in the Euro-American Literary World', *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 9,4, (2013), 1-7 (p. 5).
[335] Roxanne Bibizadeh, 'Women in Exile: Islam and Disempowerment in Fadia Faqir's My Name is Salma', *The Journal of Humanities and Arts,* 1, (Spring 2013), in *HARTS & Minds* <www.harts-minds.co.uk/against-the-grain> [accessed 1st October 2014].
[336] Chambers, p. 66.
[337] Moore, '"You Arrive at a Truth, Not the Truth": An Interview with Fadia Faqir'. p. 8.

honour killing even if it means confronting the expectations of some readers. In this case, the fame of the book and its chance of being published around the world could have been lesser as Mohja Kahf argues that the novels sell more when they pander to Western expectation and incorporate victim escapee motif.[338] Amireh and Majaj reminds us that 'the entire range of process by which a text "travels" from a Third world to a First world context, including translation, packaging, advertising, and distributing' involves the intervention of 'economic, literary and discursive forces'. Market forces ally to produce a predominant 'discourse about Third World women' and 'Third World difference',[339] which causes writers to be criticised as minority writers disproportionally carry 'the burden of representation'. Correspondingly, according to the reader comments of the Goodreads, some readers criticize Faqir for misrepresenting Muslims as the novel does not include an example of a Muslim who practices Islam sincerely.[340]

Faqir, however, does not glorify British life. Merely focusing on the tragic ending may be misleading seeing as the story is already thoroughly tragic. Life in Britain does not offer Salma a life which can relieve her pain. Salma is marginal in both cultures; she is marginal as a sexual norm transgressor in Hima and her body and language marks her as an alien in Britain. She is often asked where she comes from which, in turn, reminds her that she does not belong there. Indeed, she expresses irritation at being asked that question:

> I could hear it sung everywhere: in cathedral, 'WHERE DO YOU COME

[338] Mohja Kahf, 'Pcking "Huda": Sha'rawi's Memories in the United States Reception Environemnt', in *Going Global*, ed. by Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 200) pp. 148-172 (p. 148).
[339]Amireh and Majaj, pp. 5 - 6.
[340] As an example an Arab female reader from Jordan named Enas comments that: There is some injustice done to the orient. It addresses to the West. There is mockery when it comes to religion. All the Muslim characters are depicted hypocrites. Enas, *Goodreads*,(2015), <ttps://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1081908.My_Name_Is_Salma?from_search=true#other_reviews> [accessed 1st December 2014]. The comment translated from Arabic to English by Ghadeer Al-Hasan.

> FROM?' in the farmers' market 'Do you know where this vegetables comes from?' Sometimes even the cows on the hills would line up, kick their legs in unison and sing, 'Where do you come from, you? Go home!'[341]

What causes Salma to return and risk her life is not 'madness', as Parvin and John intuit. Nor is it just maternal instinct as Salma claims.[342]When Salma yearns for Layla, the scene mostly evokes nostalgia for her home and homeland. During these moments, the setting changes between Exeter and Hima:

> How could I ignore Layla's cries […]? I stood at the bottom of the hill and looked back. It was green with grass, weeds and shrubs, but suddenly like magic everything was erased and it turned into a dry brown mountain covered with silver green olive trees, plum trees and grapevines. […] What was better: to live with half a lung, kidney, liver, heart or to go back to the country and get shot? To learn how to numb this throbbing pain or let it all end swiftly?[343]

This scene ends when the purple iris of Exeter turns into the black iris of Hima. This may foreshadow Salma's returning back to Hima. Her duality of vision makes Salma belong nowhere; thus, she can only be an in-betweener. As Faqir puts it, 'she has a huge legacy that pulls her back. There is so much to love and deplore about both cultures.'[344]I agree with Ana-Beatriz Perez when she suggests that, as an in-betweener 'suspended between now and tomorrow', Salma is fully conscious of the fact that tomorrow promises a return and that return promises death. Perez argues that 'the image of return' means the 'annihilation of both the original and the acquired

[341] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 167.
[342] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 270, p. 280.
[343] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 201.
[344] Bower, p. 9.

identities'.[345] I argue that Salma's return denotes her attempt at claiming her original identity once more, at whatever cost. To fully understand why Salma returns, however, it would first be useful to understand what it is to be Salma Ibrahim El Musa.

III. Being Salma Ibrahim El-Musa

Although Bedouins historically and traditionally value 'pastoral nomadism' and a desert lifestyle, they do not define themselves by the way they live but by the basic 'principles of social organization: genealogy and tribal order'—depending on the proximity of paternal relatives.[346] When Salma holds on to her Arabic name Salma Ibrahim El-Musa, as a Bedouin girl, she is instinctively remaining connected to her Bedouin origins (i.e. that she is a member of the El-Musa family). According to Said, nationalism (another strong forms of collective association) is essentially related to exile as it is an 'assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people, a heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture and customs; and, by so doing, it fends off exile, fights to prevent its ravages.'[347] In Salma's case having her father's first name, Ibrahim, and her family name, El- Musa, after her name makes her paternal lineage evident and helps Salma to define herself as a member of a community and is 'an assertion of belonging'. Although she is given Asher as a surname, Salma does not have any connection to the Asher family, nor does she know anyone who belongs to that family apart from her adoptive mother, of whom she knows very little. Thus, being Sally Asher entails being alone—in other words, having an individual identity discontinued from a familial one. From being a Bedouin who defines herself by her having paternal family ties to being an individual having a surname from a legal

[345] Perez, p. 61.
[346] Lila Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* (California: University of California Press, 1999), p. 40.
[347] Edward W. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta Books, 2001), p. 176.

mother with whom Salma does not share any blood ties is not an easy step for Salma.

The notion of blood is important for Salma's home culture. This is clear when the El-Musa family's horse is killed by a member of another tribe. Salma's brother, Mahmoud, has to take vengeance on their opponent tribe by killing the opponent tribe's horse; otherwise, the opponent tribe could start shooting the men of their tribe. It becomes a matter of honour as 'the horse is a member of the El- Musa family. His blood had to be avenged.'[348] Salma recalls the event:

> We congregated in groups, families, clans, tribe; our honour must be protected, our blood must be avenged; eating together, sleeping together ten to a room or a tent, our destiny shackled together in a chain. […] I had broken the metal ring tying me to my family. […] If you had no family, you killed no horses [and you are not killed].[349]

This is due to the fact that if someone is not a part of the collective, then their behaviours do not stain the collective honour as it depends on the honourability of its members and the collective is only responsible for its members.

Salma always stays tied to her family psychologically and in the end she returns and claims her daughter (a member of her family in Hima) which brings her death. The ties between mother and child are generally very close and warm in Bedouin society all throughout life.[350] Faqir especially highlights the close relationship between Salma and her mother. For a long while, Salma wears her mother's letter—which she received in prison—and Layla's lock of hair as

[348] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 249.
[349] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 249.
[350] Lila Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments*, p. 62

amulets around her neck. In addition, Salma wraps her mother's shawl around herself, not only to protect herself from the cold but also whenever she needs physical and emotional protection. For example, when Salma sneaks away from her country, she wraps up in her mother's black shawl, not only in order to warm herself up but also in order to help her not to think about the mother, father and daughter whom she is leaving behind.[351] At those times when Salma needs her mother's affection, the shawl becomes an object which reminds her how compassionate her mother is:

> The mist and the waves told me that I was moving further and further away from my country, my mother and above all from her. My mother's black shawl was wrapped tight around my shoulder, but I could still feel the cold. Whenever I was beaten by Mahmoud, my brother, Mother used to stroke my head to calm me down. 'It's all right, child. It's all right princess. [sic.]' She would undo my braids, rub my head with olive oil, run her fingers through my hair, stroke my face with her rough fingers, fondle my ears, massage my hands. […][352]

Being brought up in such a society, Salma remembers the close ties she had with her mother and believes that her daughter needs that kind of affection as well. Salma lives with the fantasy of meeting and living with her daughter. Indeed, she imagines that her daughter needs her protection as much as she needs her own mother's protection. Salma's mother is portrayed as a person who collaborates with her daughter and tries to hide her pregnancy instead of cooperating with the patriarchal system which requires Salma's death. Salma's adoptive mother, however, although tries to rescue Salma from violence, is characterised by Salma as a person who inflicts violence:

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[351] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 65.
[352] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 95.

'Through the flames of the fireplace I saw her smiling at me, then my mother stretched her arms to me, Miss Asher slapped me, Minister Mahoney blessed me, then Elizabeth shouted at me […].'[353] Salma does not feel any emotional ties or gratitude to Miss Asher. Furthermore, the scenes with Miss Asher evoke violence, as in the case when her facial expression resembles that of depictions of the crucifixion of Jesus. Miss Asher, as a European rescuer, is the female version of the colonial powers beyond the text who historically claim that they are, in Spivak's term, 'saving brown women from brown men'.[354] Without Salma's consent, being saved turns out to be more painful for Salma and she experiences the everyday violence of racism and inequality in the host country. With the trauma of estrangement from home into an unfamiliar land, Salma eventually decides to return to her country and is killed as a result.

Her life in exile increases Salma's losses. Being deprived of her freedom, daughter and family, Salma is offered a new life in which she is psychologically imprisoned. Additionally, the deprivation of her mother tongue and homeland are added to her losses. No substitutes can compensate Salma for these detachments, nor does she allow them any real chance to replace her losses. Salma's new family with John and Imran, instead of filling in the gaps, becomes a reminder of her dispossessions, as well as her guilt over Layla. This is expressed through the following reaction: '"Please hold on to Imran and let go of Layla," he [John] said. When I heard her name coming out of his lips my ribcage collapsed as if I was punched'.[355]

In Freudian terms, Salma is suffering from an extended amount of deep melancholia seeing as she does not show any interest in any 'object of love' which may replace her lost objects of love.

[353] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 66.
[354] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271-313 (p. 271).
[355] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 280.

Freud correlates mourning and melancholia first by listing the main mental traits of melancholia as being 'painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment.'[356] The melancholic reaction to the loss of a loved one brings a loss of interest in the outside world which does not recall the lost object and the loss of capacity to accept a new object of love. This would mean replacing the lost object and diverging from any activity which is not related to the lost object. Melancholia is an 'inhibition and circumscription of the ego' which expresses a special commitment to mourning which, in turn, leaves no space for other purposes or interests. When the loved object no longer exists, this requires that all libido attached to that object should be withdrawn from it. In this case, an understandable resistance to other objects is revealed. Even if there is a substitute, it is generally observed that people are not disposed to abandon their libidinal position. Sometimes, the resistance is so intense that it creates a 'hallucinatory wishful psychosis'. Reality, however, gains in the end and, even though painful, when it does end, the 'ego becomes free and uninhibited again'.[357] Lindsey Moore, by exploiting Freud's ideas that melancholic patients are cured when the unconscious memories are transformed in conscious one, exemplifies how melancholia and mourning works in an analysis of Moufida Tlatli's film *the Silences of the Palace* (1994). Moore suggests that when there is 'a passage from melancholia to mourning,' this may lead to transmission of the story.[358]

In the case of Salma, mourning never properly begins as she does not accept her loss and hopes to

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[356] Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, ed. by James Strachey, trans. by James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey, Alan Tyson(London: Vintage, 2001), p. 243-244

[357] Freud, p. 245.

[358] Lindsey Moore, *Arab, Muslim, Woman Voice and Vision in Postcolonial Literature and Film*, (London and New York: Routledge,2008) p. 90.

rejoin her daughter; hence, she remains melancholic with a notable decrease in self-esteem. It is useful to return to Freud in order to better understand Salma's melancholia. While suffering from melancholia, the ego becomes poor and empty and the melancholic 'represents his [sic.] ego to us as worthless, incapable of any achievement and morally despicable; he reproaches himself, vilifies himself and expects to be cast out and punished.'[359] Salma, as a representation of a melancholic subject, becomes more severely disoriented when she has a chance to have a relatively more normal life in Britain. While Salma's acculturation in xenophobic British society might have increased as she is married to a British husband and a mother of a British child, she feels guiltier about her past. Thus, her return becomes unavoidable because only in returning will she be able to compensate for or acknowledge her loss, or at least be able to be punished because her 'picture of a delusion of (mainly moral) inferiority is completed by sleeplessness and refusal to take nourishment'; and this, in turn, psychologically symbolises her 'overcoming of the instinct which compels every living thing to cling to life.'[360] According to the clinical examinations of Freud, if the melancholic's many and diverse self-accusations are all listened to with patience, with some slight modifications, the harsher of these fit someone 'whom the patient loves or has loved or should love'. This means that the 'self-reproaches' of the patient are actually reproaches made against an object of love and which is transferred from it to the patient's own ego.[361] Hence, Salma's rejection of nourishment can be read as her reproach to the fact that her daughter was taken from her without being given the chance to suckle her mother's milk.

Salma's self-accusation is mostly focused on leaving her daughter behind. Her special attachment to motherhood is highlighted by Salma's psychological ties with her mother and grandmother.

[359] Freud, p. 245.
[360] Freud, p. 245.
[361] Freud, p. 248.

Layla's supposed need for her mother is a projection of Salma's own need of her mother. Salma experiences something akin to what Freud calls the death drive by wishing to return to her motherland. Her death drive might represent her desire to return to the protection of the maternal womb where all of her needs are met as well as her overcoming of the life instinct. According to Freudian doctrine, the death instinct is equal to the womb instinct because the former reflects the wish to return to an earlier condition—to return to the inorganic condition which precedes life.[362] Although Salma knows that going back to her homeland entails the possibility of being killed, she decides to challenge death in order to relive an earlier sense of happiness. Salma feels incomplete and unprotected due to her segregation, not only from her mother but also from her native language and homeland. This feeling of incompleteness is perfectly portrayed in the following lines:

> The small leather bag containing my mother's letter [representing her native language] folded around the lock of her hair looked like an amulet hanging on the side of the Indian Mirror. My tribal protection [representing her homeland] had been removed, my blood was spilt and my arms had broken out with red sores.[363]

This portrayal resonates with the Lacanian concept of the fragmented body in the context of the mirror stage. Seeing as Salma is far away from her motherland and her own culture, she needs to experience a feeling of completeness. Before marrying a British husband, Salma fantasizes that feelings of completeness will occur like magic upon marrying a British husband. Salma, however, comes to realise that this is not possible in a society where she does not feel unified in relation to

[362] Jean-Joseph Goux, 'Lacan Iconoclast' in *Lacan & the Human Sciences*, ed. by Alexandre Leupin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), pp. 109- 123.
[363] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 93.

communal identity (which, itself, can function like a mirror). The communal identity gives Salma at least a fantasy of completeness; however, in Britain, she is an outcast who feels fragmented. The trauma of her losses and her desire to return to an earlier stage of bliss produce the urge to feel united and complete again. When Salma returns to her homeland, she would conform to her society by letting them punish her by means of honour killing as it is too painful for her to wrestle continuously with the feeling of incompleteness. This return, in turn, means that she would again be a part of her community and united with them, even if her community would only accept her when dead. Dying is simply her willingness to return back to an inorganic state from which life emerges in the hope that she can feel complete again. Even though the price she pays for belonging to this particular community is high, her 'longing is to return to the womb, to return to death, to return to pre-consciousness and pre-individuality' to compensate her loss.[364]

IV. Conclusion

In a tribal society with an intense sense of common identity, there also exists a strong sense of unity. When Salma becomes an outcast from her society and ultimately loses her family and community, this becomes a tragic event for her because she also loses her sense of unity. In order to regain this sense of unity, she desperately wants to return back to her homeland. The freedom and autonomy offered to Salma in England does not necessarily mean freedom for her as a person because she has different perceptions regarding the concept of freedom as 'humans are social beings, raised in certain social and historical contexts and belonging to particular communities that shape their desires and understanding of the world'.[365] Salma, having a different

[364] Erich Fromm and Rainer Funk, *Beyond Freud* (New York: American Mental Health Foundation Books, 2010), p. 76.
[365] Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Do Muslim Women (Still) Need Saving' in *Do Muslim Women Need Saving* (Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 27-54.

understanding of freedom, feels forced to adopt the western understanding of freedom by having an individual life free from the requirements of her previous communal life. For Salma, this individualistic society is not something to be desired.[366] Arguably, what Salma wants is to regain her tribal protection and communal identity in order to feel united and complete again. Salma asks herself which is better: 'to live with half a lung, kidney, liver, heart or to go back to the old country and get shot?'[367] Neither option can simplistically be seen as preferable but in the end, Salma decides to return to her society, whatever the price. The morally challenging suggestion of *My Name is Salma* is that as soon as Salma becomes a part of society she has to accept the rules of society, her dishonour again becoming a concern for her community, and in this case the 'death drive' turning into a 'killing drive' to make the society complete again without the lack of honour. As the dishonoured part of the community, Salma is killed and returned into an inorganic state.

My reading of *My Name is Salma* adds to an understanding of the conflict between being an individual outside of a community and being a member of a community. It also reveals insight into the wider truth that the need to belong to a community may cause people to accept community rules that regulate their behaviours even if that rules impose violent coercion such as killing or being killed for honour.

[366] As an example of the contradicting desires and possible visions of how Muslim women perceive Western women, we can observe Lila Abu-Lughod's experiences in Egypt. From the poorest of peasants to the most educated women in Egypt, they all perceive women in the United States as 'bereft of community, cut off from family, vulnerable to sexual violence and social anomie, driven by selfishness or individual success, subject to capitalist pressures, participants in imperial ventures that don't respect sovereignty or intelligence of others, or strangely disrespectful of others and God.' In Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Do Muslim Women (Still) Need Saving'

[367] Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 201.

Chapter Three

Honour In the Diaspora: Concepts of Loss and Honour as Represented in Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*

I. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to demystify the relationship between the conceptions of loss and honour as portrayed and illuminated in Nadeem Aslam's second novel, *Maps for Lost Lovers*, published by Faber and Faber in 2004.[368] I will investigate the thoughts of the characters narrated in the novel in order to discuss how the anxiety of the characters is depicted against the threat of loss in a diasporic community and how the concerns related to loss contributes to honour killings. In this chapter, the notion of purity, which I discussed in Chapter One and that of identity, discussed in Chapter 2, will be relevant to my analysis of the context of diaspora-related loss. I will focus on the relationship between the notion of loss and honour killings as represented in *Maps* and will adopt Said's humanist method of criticism to discuss how this fiction illuminates the reality of honour killings.

Utilising Said's humanist method of criticism enables *Maps* to be understood profoundly particularly given that Aslam 'champions the cause of humanism' and his aim in writing fits

[368] I will refer to the novel by saying *Maps* hereafter.

Said's description of a humanist text.[369] According to Aslam a real artist brings 'human warmth and longing and complexity' to his work and knows how to be 'indirectly political'.[370] Said opposes the view that texts are closed to actuality and that they have their own universe on the basis both that 'texts in fact are in the world' and that 'they place themselves – one of their functions as texts is to place themselves – and indeed are themselves, by soliciting the world's attention.'[371] For Said, canonical English literary works should be re-read in consideration with their affiliations with political, social, cultural and many other aspects of the world.[372] Texts are theoretically and practically immersed in 'circumstance, time, place and society'; namely, they exist in the world and are of this world. Unless a text is obliterated right after it is created, it exists as both a physical and ideological source in the world, addressing whoever reads it.[373] Although Aslam asserts that there is 'no message for others' in his books and that they are his 'way of understanding' his own 'life', his books, which consciously engage in the politics of the world, are published and received within a public domain.[374] Hence, it can be assumed that his published writing is a way of calling attention to the subjects he believes should be thought about. However, Aslam – contradictory to himself – tries to establish channels of political communication with his readers as he states that 'it's a very conscious decision. I wanted to write about honour killings, I wanted to write about female infanticide, I wanted to write about the war in Afghanistan. So subject matter comes first.' His characters portray the 'complexities,' 'despair' and 'hope' of the subjects dealt with in the novel. His subjects are political and his

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[369] Khurram N. Khurshid, 'Aslam, Nadeem', in *The Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century Fiction Volume 1 of Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Literature*, ed. by Brian W. Shaffer (Sussex: Blackwell, 2011), p. 964.
[370] Nadeem Aslam, 'Where to Begin', *Granta: The Magazine of New Writing*, 112 (2010), <http://granta.com/Where-to-Begin/> [accessed 23 July 2016]
[371] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, And The Critic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 39-40.
[372] Bill Ashcroft and D. P. S Ahluwalia, *Edward Said* (London: Routledge, 2001) p. 7.
[373] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, And The Critic*, p. 3-4.
[374] Huddersfield Examiner, "New Book Is A Labour Of Love For Writer Nadeem", *huddersfieldexaminer*, 2004 <http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/new-book-labour-love-writer-5090244> [accessed 30 January 2016].

artwork serves as a way of relieving Aslam's feelings of indebtedness towards the world. Aslam remarks: 'I am happiest when I do something which pays off some of the political debt that I feel I owe to the world as well as being a work of art.'[375] Namely, it can be claimed that even if Aslam says there is 'no message for others' he is keen to offer his art in the service of the world and make a political communication.[376]

Said opposes the view that there can be limitless interpretation of a text. He believes that the contents of texts restrain how they can be interpreted due to their relation to actuality.[377] Accordingly, for a humanist reading, knowing the position of the author must be a precondition as 'the act of reading is the act therefore of first putting oneself in the position of the author, for whom writing is a series of decisions and choices expressed in words'. Said, however, warns that while putting oneself in the position of the author, it should be borne in mind that 'no author is completely sovereign or above the time, place, and circumstances of his or her life, so that these too, must be understood' to feel a cognitive empathy with the author.[378] With this caveat in mind, Aslam also makes it clear that his novels bear the hallmarks of his life seeing as he has taken account of his daily experiences, thoughts, and observations, not to mention his archiving interesting things, like a photo from a newspaper for over twenty years, in order to use them in his novels.[379] Hence, to understand the conditions in which the novel was written, presenting some information about Aslam will be invaluable for the discussions which are to follow.

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[375] Nadeem Aslam in Numan Khalid, 'From Jaipur With Love: Nadeem Aslam's 'The Blind Man's Garden' (Part One)', *The Huffington Post UK*, 2013 <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/nauman-khalid/post_4565_b_2961323.html> [accessed 26 November 2015].
[376] Huddersfield Examiner, "New Book Is A Labour Of Love For Writer Nadeem".
[377] Edward W Said, *The World, The Text, And The Critic*, p. 9.
[378] Edward Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, ed, by. Akeel Bilgrami (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003) p. 61.
[379] Nadeem Aslam in Nauman Khalid, 'From Jaipur With Love: Nadeem Aslam's 'The Blind Man's Garden' (Part Two)', *The Huffington Post UK*, 2013 <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/nauman-khalid/from-jaipur-with-love-nad_b_2977314.html> [accessed 26 November 2015].

Nadeem Aslam, who was born in Pakistan in 1966, published his first short story at the age of 13 in Urdu. When Aslam and his family moved to the UK as asylum seekers, he was 14. At that time, English language and culture were new to him. Claire Chambers suggests that, as a writer, Aslam is neither categorisable as a 'British Pakistani writer' nor, as a 'Pakistani writer' because of his late arrival to the UK. Chambers states that Aslam complicates 'conceptual boundaries between East and West.'[380]Aslam, with his 'hyphenated identity,'[381] also complicates boundaries between religion and culture because he has been declared to be an 'atheist Muslim'[382] and describes himself to be 'culturally a Muslim but a nonbeliever.'[383] Accordingly, Aslam fits on the spectrum posited by Amin Malak in *Muslim Narratives and the Discourse of English*. Malak extends the term Muslim, when dealing with fiction, to include not only writers who strongly believe in Islam but also those who intentionally refer themselves as Muslim, no matter why, and those who are inherently rooted in Muslim culture and civilization.[384] Aslam's versatile identities and life experiences shape his novels by enabling it to be filled with diverse characterisations with opposing mind-sets. Although the primary context of *Maps* is religious seeing that the poignant events in the novel are motivated by, or related to, religious thoughts, as a non-believer, Aslam seems to privilege non-religious perspectives over religious ones.

After writing his debut and award winning novel *Season of the Rainbirds* in a span of just eleven months, Aslam spent eleven years on *Maps* to embellish it.[385] The novel was both criticised and

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[380] Claire Chambers, *British Muslim Fictions* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) p. 134.
[381] Lindsey Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', *Postcolonial Text*, 5 (2009), 1-19 (5).
[382] Chambers, *British Muslim Fictions*, p. 11.
[383] Nadeem Aslam in Marianne Brace, 'Nadeem Aslam: A Question of Honour', *Independent*, 2004, p. 3 <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/nadeem-aslam-a-question-of-honour-6167858.html> [accessed 13 September 2015].
[384] Amin Malak, *Muslim Narratives and the Discourse of English* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), p. 7.
[385] *Season of the Rainbirds* won several awards, including the Authors' Club First Novel Award, the Betty Trask Award, and the Mail on Sunday/John Llewellyn Rhys Prize.

praised because of its flowery prose style. Aslam, endeavouring to write the 'literary equivalent of a Persian miniature' with its exceptional detail, consciously ornamented his poetic prose with similes. At the same time, he was also trying to write in a relatively new language for him, thus, his Urdu heritage, especially the 'lush imagery of Urdu poetry', reappeared in his writing.[386] Aslam affirms that his cultural origin affects the style and content of the novel: 'Coming from the culture and country I come from – Pakistan – I was always aware of the potential for truth- telling that existed in any form of artwork – painting, music, the written word, cinema.'[387] Aslam, however, adds that as the truth in art can reveal 'the truth about existence', there is always a chance that 'the powerful who had heavy investments in lies' could become restive. Aslam remarks:

> In a society which had very rigid rules about every aspect of life, to make the smallest movement was to risk offending those in power. This situation is more or less the same there in Pakistan still and within Pakistani ghettos in the Western world. The so-called leaders and self-proclaimed spokesmen of these communities are keen to take offence. They burn books, get plays cancelled, picket outside cinemas, disrupt performances by stand-up comedians.[388]

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[386] Aslam in Chambers, p. 143-144.
Several commentators, like Paul Bryant and Batjit on Goodreads, find the novel too 'flowery' to read and complain about the abundancy of similes. Neel Mukherjee made a similar criticism about the novel in his review in *The Times* on the same basis. See: 'Maps for Lost Lovers', *Goodreads*, 2015 <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/44086.Maps_for_Lost_Lovers#other_reviews> [accessed 13 November 2015].
Neel Mukherjee, 'Maps For Lost Lovers By Nadeem Aslam | Neel Mukherjee',*Neelmukherjee.com*, 2004 <http://www.neelmukherjee.com/2004/06/maps-for-lost-lovers-by-nadeem-aslam/> [accessed 13 November 2015].
[387] Nadeem Aslam in Michael O'Connor, "Nadeem Aslam Interview - Writing against Terror", *Three Monkeys Online Magazine*, 2005 <http://www.threemonkeysonline.com/writing-against-terror-nadeem-aslam/2/> [accessed 24 January 2016].
[388] Aslam in Michael O'Connor, <http://www.threemonkeysonline.com/writing-against-terror-nadeem-aslam/2/> [accessed 24 January 2016].

Aslam's words remind us of the Rushdie affair of 1989.[389] Thus, it can be inferred that Aslam was conscientious about the possible dangers of being critical of Islam. Another issue which affects the reception of the novel is that, as Moore reminds, texts embodying Muslim identities and written by authors with Muslim origins are often subject to the 'burden of representation', particularly in the post 9/11 context.[390] Geoffrey Nash argues that after the Rushdie affair, texts containing Muslim characters tended to be polarized in terms of presenting Muslim identity. He argues that on one side there have been 'neo-Muslim writing such as, that of Leila Aboulela, which incorporates rewritings of 'traditional, ethnic views of Islam and Muslims in terms of a twenty-first century global Islam that attracts believers from many different backgrounds', and on the other side there have been texts like Aslam's *Maps,* along with Hanif Kureishi's *The Black Album* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane,* which are concerned with Muslim characters echoing what Nash sees as Orientalist constructions of 'female-disabling, fanatical, and aggressive' Muslim.[391]Moore, however, locating *Maps* in relation to the 'war on terror' rhetoric which has been generated in the aftermath of 9/11, suggests that the novel challenges 'multicultural and war-on-terror-affiliated discourses' by bringing the experiences of specified Muslim community to life and giving subtle differences between their experiences.[392] Aslam defends his thematic choice on the grounds that: 'There is nothing in my novels that isn't being discussed on a daily basis in the newspapers published in Pakistan and in the rest of the Muslim world.'[393] Nevertheless, Aslam's selective coverage of particular topics in *Maps,* which portrays a Muslim populated society without any likeable devout Muslim characters, is problematic.

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[389] The publication of *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie in 1988 in the United Kingdom led to violent protests by some Muslims who thought the book contained blasphemous references. The novel was banned in countries with Muslim majorities excluding Turkey and a copy of the novel was burned in Bolton in North West England. In 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran, issued a fatwa ordering Muslims to kill Rushdie and his publishers. Margaret Bald, *Banned Books: Literature Suppressed On Religious Grounds* (New York: Facts on File, 1998), pp. 291-300.
[390] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 5.
[391] Geoffrey Nash, *Writing Muslim Identity* (London: Continuum, 2012) p. 26.
[392] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 3.
[393] Nadeem Aslam in Michael O'Connor, "Nadeem Aslam Interview - Writing Against Terror".

Aslam does not deny that signs of Muslim influence can be tracked throughout *Maps*. 'The book in many ways is about the classic theme of Islamic literature: the quest for the beloved.'[394] *Maps* dramatizes the issue of loss in an immigrant diasporic Muslim Pakistani community in Britain. As the title suggests, the central event of the novel is the loss of a couple of unmarried lovers and the quest to solve the mystery of their disappearance. The novel is narrated by an omniscient third person narrator and centres upon the lost lovers, Jugnu and Chanda – though there are other lost lovers in the novel including potentially Shamas – and their relatives, especially Jugnu's brother Shamas and his family. The tension between the contradicting perspectives of Shamas and his wife Kaukab are prevalent in the novel as they are the main focalising characters. Aslam tells the story from opposing perspectives to encourage the readers to grasp the rationale behind different mind-sets. Hence, the novel is a medium urging readers to think about different perspectives regarding the same issue. Also, by selecting opposing characters such as husband and wife, Aslam suggests the possibility of togetherness despite there being a clash of perspectives. Even though Shamas and Kaukab's relationship is not depicted as being a satisfying one, earlier, before coming to Britain, they seem to be a better match. Britain's potentially devastating effect on people from the sub-continent can be interpreted as the novel's critique of British colonialism and its continuing legacies.

Shamas and Kaukab are first generation immigrants to Britain who settled in 1965 into an immigrant community of an unnamed northern British town; this town is renamed unanimously by South Asian immigrants from different countries as 'Dasht-e Tanhaii,' meaning 'The Wilderness of Solitude. The Desert of Loneliness.'[395] Shamas is the Director of the Community

[394] Nadeem Aslam in Michael O'Connor, "Nadeem Aslam Interview - Writing Against Terror".
[395] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 29.

Relations Council and a mediator between the immigrant community and other British people seeing as he 'is the person the neighbourhood turns to when unable to negotiate [with] the white world on its own'; hence, he 'embodies the concept of the bridge.'[396] This is a working class immigrant community of underprivileged people, deserted by those can afford to leave and it is full of unemployed young immigrant youth. The neighbourhood is 'isolated by class, language, culture, forced to look to itself for survival and therefore particularly vulnerable to the tendency to reproduce the most repressive forms of religion and culture.'[397] Namely, *Maps* illustrates the effects of socio-political marginalism in strengthening religious extremism.

Aslam's rural immigrant narrative draws readers' attention to the fact that integration might be harder for such community members as their chance of knowing the language and metropolitan ways of living is lower. They occupy a lower position in socio-political hierarchies among both immigrants and Britons. Amina Yaqin suggests that *Maps* demonstrates how pointless the conception of 'state multiculturalism' is for an immigrant labouring class and insecure underclass who preserve a relentless way of belonging in a foreign surrounding. At some points in the novel, the characters, whose identities are constructed within regional boundaries Dasht-e Tanhaii, clash over the qualities upheld by the metropolitan centre. Some characters have the ability to venture outside the limits of the Dasht-e Tanhaii territory and gain access to a broader, more nuanced perspective, while others are stuck in 'a self-perpetuating inward looking moral universe.'[398] Understanding the different socio-economic positioning of individuals and diversity of human psychological experience across cultural contexts invites readers to think how it may be difficult

[396] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 15.
Fiona McCulloch, *Cosmopolitanism in Contemporary British Fiction* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 99.
[397] Chris Weedon, 'Tropes of Diasporic Life in the Work of Nadeem Aslam', in *Metaphor and Diaspora in Contemporary Writing*, ed. by Jonathan P. A. Sell (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 25.
[398] Amina Yaqin, 'Muslims as Cultural Misfits in Maps for Lost Lovers', in *Culture, Diaspora, and Modernity in Muslim Writing*, ed. by Rehana Ahmed, Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin(New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 101-117.

for non-metropolitan Muslims to have a satisfying life in an alien country.

The British location and community in which Aslam and his family were relocated are akin to the environment and characters portrayed in the novel. The community depicted in the novel is set in an unnamed northern English town. This fictional town resembles the Yorkshire cities of Huddersfield, where Aslam and his family settled after their immigration, and Bradford, which have large populations of South Asian immigrants.

Moore and Chambers remind us that in the process of renaming immigrants imitate the colonial renaming process.[399] By reversing the process of naming, Aslam reveals 'a complex history of interchange between Europe and the subcontinent'.[400] Additionally, the renaming process of immigrants can be interpreted as trying to create a sense of home in the new environment and as trying to distance themselves from 'the other' language and community; that is the English language and white British culture. The immigrant community in the novel does not mingle with white Britons and tries to protect their children from becoming like them. It is clear from the racist attack against the mosque, when someone leaves a pig's head at the mosque entrance, that these immigrants are not welcomed in the country either, so there is a kind of mutual dissatisfaction about sharing the same land. The British Pakistani community is shown to have well-developed defence mechanisms and reasons for resisting assimilation as they are strangers in a hostile land owned by their former colonizer. However, regarding the immigrant community in *Maps*, Dave Gunning states that, 'while the unsociability of mainstream culture no doubt adds to the sense of existing as an enclosed community that needs to be protected', Aslam's novel

[399] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 6.
[400] Claire Chambers, 'A Comparative Approach to Pakistani Fiction in English', *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 47 (2011), 122-134 (130) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2011.557182>.

suggests that 'the core of the culture pre-exist the experience of migration.'[401] Because of the location we can assume that the strand of Islam central to the novel is most likely to follow Sunni Islamic schools of jurisprudence and also potentially be affected by Sufism, especially as the name of the town is taken from Sufi poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poem called Yad (1952).[402] Hence, as Moore states, it is hinted in the novel that the traditions followed in Dasht-e-Tanhaii are most like Barelvi.[403]

The novel shows quite explicitly that, although the sense of wanting an enclosed community might pre-exist, migration increases the need for self-protection amongst the immigrant community. This is due not only to the racism or unsociability of the main culture, but also to the fear of the minority group that contact with an alien, dominant, majority community might change and acculturate the immigrant minority group. For fear that they may lose their culture and customs, immigrant groups might increasingly close themselves off and their perceptions and prejudices related to other groups — especially the dominant group — may become more embedded. Staying away from each other seems to enhance the perceived difference between us and them. *Maps* illustrates the effects of avoiding contact between self-perceived native and immigrant groups since we are told in the early pages of the novel that looking from afar can be misleading: 'perspective tricks the eyes and makes the snowflakes falling in the far distance

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[401] Dave Gunning, *Race and Antiracism in Black British and British Asian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010) p. 85.
[402] Amina Yaqin, 'Cosmopolitan Ventures during times of Crisis: a Postcolonial Reading of Faiz Ahmed Faiz's "Dasht-e tanhai" and Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers'', *Pakistaniaat*, 5.1, (2013), 1-17.
[403] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 6. Barelvis are the most notable Sunni Sufi order in Pakistan and are dominant in Bradford, as well as parts of Birmingham, Manchester and towns around London in UK.
See: *The Pakistani Muslim Community in England: Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities* (West Yorkshire: Communities and Local Government Publications, 2009), pp. 39-40 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http:/www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1170952.pdf> [accessed 11 January 2016].

appear as though they are falling slower than those nearby […]'.[404] This allusive narrative works in a way which implies that perspective affects perceptions related to distance and that keeping a distance prevents one from understanding others. The perspectives of individuals provide insight into the complex and diverse emotions, attitudes and experiences of immigrants even within the same family.

There is, nevertheless, a 'unifying trope in the depiction of individual lives that Aslam locates within the complexities of the diasporic community', and that trope is "loss". Weedon outlines the most affecting losses in *Maps* as being the losses of 'homeland, extended family and community, heightened by the loss of second-generation British-born children' due either to assimilation or to a form of extremist disposition. Assimilated children are considered to be lost as they 'cannot be contained within the limits of their parents' culture and religion.'[405]This is the most crucial loss for the communal society as this means that their culture and religion cannot be passed down to further generations if their children are assimilated. Control mechanisms in the small community are especially shaped by the fear of losing control over the future generations and the preservation of traditional values that might be at stake if future generations have strong affiliative connections with the dominant majority culture. This may, in turn, pave the way for tyrannical parental restrictions over children in order to keep them within the boundaries of their own culture and religion.

Aslam's immigrant community illuminates the environment in which the risk of honour killings is elevated due to the perception of honour as a marker of cultural specificity and also in relation to feelings of being surrounded by hostile neighbours and strangers. Aslam invites readers to

[404] Nadeem Aslam, *Maps For Lost Lovers* (New York: Knopf, 2005), p. 5.
[405] Weedon, p. 35.

think about the effects of being in exile on honour killings by setting the community in England, not in Pakistan as there is a more severe enforcement of honour codes in diaspora communities. Although *Maps* portrays an immigrant Pakistani community in the UK, the story resembles some life stories in other European countries, through its representation of othered immigrant groups. The community's anxiety at losing their members to the "other" has tragic consequences in many diaspora communities. Unni Wikan's book focusing on honour killings committed in Sweden is helpful to understanding the motivations of honour killings in the diasporic context. According to her research, 'families often fear that the daughters will become too Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, etc.'[406] This concern was verbalised by a husband who killed his young Lebanese wife in 1997 in Sweden based on his belief that 'she 'had become too Swedish.' Unni Wikan remarks that:

> […] immigrants to European countries often revise their concepts of honor [sic] in a conservative direction: they can feel surrounded by hostile neighbors, [sic.] infidels, and uncivilized strangers and react by setting a greater value on traditions of honor [sic]. The chastity of their girls becomes more important in exile than, for instance, it is in modern Syria.[407]

The polarization between the generations and between those members of an immigrant community who want to avoid the dominant native culture and those who want to assimilate creates a stressful environment for immigrants, especially for family members. *Maps* contextualises the issue of loss and is preoccupied with the different perceptions which cause tension between family members. The tension generally exists between older and younger

[406] Wikan, pp. 29-32.
[407] Unni Wikan, *In Honor of Fadime* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2008) p. 69.

generations, though it may exist between more tolerant and intolerant ones as well, as the tension between Kaukab and Shamas reveals. Those who assume that acculturation means that they will lose their society or family members, because these members may end up acting like white people, try to control them. As a defence mechanism, children or more liberal members of the society attempt to create a zone in which to live in order to accommodate the main /host culture even though, by doing so, they might end up losing family ties.

Hence, I will discuss the perception of loss in the context of honour killings from the following two angles referring to cross-generational loss: losing future generations (first generation immigrants' parental fear of losing their children to another culture) and losing the ties with ancestors (second generation immigrants' loss of family ties in their pursuit to integrate with the major community). This discussion is crucial because, according to Phyllis Chesler's study conducted in 2010, 58 percent of all honour killings worldwide are committed because of a family member's becoming 'too Western,' and this rate is higher in diaspora communities. 'Allegations of unacceptable "Westernization"' is the stated reason given for 44 percent of honour killings in the Muslim world; comparably the rate is 71 percent in Europe, and in North America the rate is the highest with 91 percent.'[408] According to another study by Chesler, in 2015, becoming 'too Western' is still accepted as one of the common ways which damages the honour of family. According to her 'non-random, qualitative study of 31 honor [sic.] killings (26 cases) in North America, Europe, India, and Muslim-majority countries' victims were perceived to be 'too Western' with the rate of 77 percent.[409]

[408] Phyllis Chesler, 'Worldwide Trends In Honor Killings', *Middle East Quarterly*, 17 (2010), 3-11 <http://www.meforum.org/2646/worldwide-trends-in-honor-killings> [accessed 10 December 2015].
[409] Phyllis Chesler, 'When Women Commit Honor Killings', *Middle East Quarterly*, 22 (2015), <http://www.meforum.org/5477/when-women-commit-honor-killings> [accessed 10 December 2015].

II. Losing Future Generations: Are Chanda and Jugnu too western to live?

The novel begins with a scene describing the nature of the novel's setting when Shamas is watching the snow fall. The line between existence and nonexistence is drawn from the very first paragraph when the smell from a nearby lake is neutralised by the snow. The smell that usually comes from the lake is described to be 'there even when absent, drawing attention to its own disappearance'; hence, loss 'creates a notion of eternity' and incites the perpetual search for the lost.[410] As can be seen from this thought-provoking definition of disappearance, the tone of the novel is mournful and 'introspective,' evoking the moods and psychological states of the characters — especially their feelings related to loss.[411]

The first chapter of the novel sequences a number of individual and collective losses like the loss of home country: apart from the mysterious disappearance of Chanda and Jugnu, the reader discovers Shamas's sleep deprivation since their absence; Kiran's loss of both her lover because of her religion (she is a Sikh and considered non-marriageable by her Muslim lover's family) and of her family, apart from her father, because of the Partition of India in 1947; and the widow next door's losing her reasoning after the death of her husband. All of these losses are portrayed with snowy weather as the backdrop, where the snow itself implies melting and temporary existence, which is 'a classic motif in literatures of migration' and connotes the inhospitability and transiency of the host country.[412]Hence, for immigrants, what is lost (the home country) is eternal and sacred like paradise, whereas its substitute (the host country) is temporary and easily

[410]Aslam, *Maps*, p. 1.
Cordula Lemke, 'Racism in the Diaspora: Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers (2004)', in *Multi-ethnic Britain 2000+: New Perspectives in Literature, Film and the Arts*, ed. by Lars Eckstein, Barbara Korte, Eva Ulrike Pirker, Cristoph Reinfandt(Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2008), p. 171-198 (173).
[411]Akash Kapur, ''Maps For Lost Lovers': Little Murders', *The New York Times*, 2005, p. 7 <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/22/books/review/maps-for-lost-lovers-little-murders.html> [accessed 20 November 2015].
[412] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 7.

dispensable.

We discover in the opening lines of the novel that the lovers Chanda and Jugnu have been lost for five months and are presumed to have been murdered by Chanda's brothers in the name of honour. The narration is set around 1997 and charts the characters' activities over the course of a year. Although honour killing is the central severe event which affects the main characters, the main focus of the narrative falls on the characters' mind-sets. Shamas and his brother Jugnu are the characters who stand out most in the community because they are first generation immigrants who hold secular views and, ergo, are portrayed as being the misfits of the town. Yaqin rightfully mentions the awkwardness of Jugnu's settlement in the town, observing that, apart from family relations, it is hard to make sense 'why this cosmopolitan figure has chosen citizenship in the claustrophobic town of Dasht-e-Tanhaii, a place riddled by high unemployment and crime.'[413] However, the importance of family relations in the culture portrayed is emphasized by Jugnu's settlement in the town. As a well-educated lepidopterist Jugnu was pursuing a scientific career in the USA and could have settled there if it had not been for his family affiliations. He realised how lonely he was in the USA after he learned the news of his mother's death and moved to the UK the following year.[414] Jugnu is an interesting open-minded figure for Dasht-e Tanhaii. He names his speedboat Darwin, and the selection of the name is allusive given that Darwin's theories on evolution and natural selection have been controversial and contested by some religious affiliates due to his hypotheses regarding the creation of the world.[415] It can be argued that Jugnu is portrayed as a person who puts science and religion in contest with each other.

[413] Yaqin, Cosmopolitan Ventures During Times of Crisis.
[414] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 27.
[415] According to some scientists such as Edward O. Wilson and Richard Dawkins 'science in general and especially biology severely undermines traditional religion' and 'to some extent, can even replace religion.' See: Mikael Stenmark, 'Contemporary Darwinism and Religion', in *Darwinian Heresies*, ed. by Abigail Lustig, Robert J Richards and Michael Ruse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 173-193.

Shamas and Jugnu both interpret science as providing the means for disproving religious ideas. When Jugnu brings his white ex-girlfriend to Shamas's house for dinner, Shamas and Jugnu reveal their beliefs. First, the white woman utters: 'But, surely, the rational explanations of how the universe began are just as shaky. Every day the scientists tell us that their long-held theory about this or that matter has proved to be inaccurate.'[416] This makes Shamas laugh because Kaukab defends religion with exactly the same observation. Shamas resists: 'I am still inclined to believe the scientists, because, unlike the prophets, they readily admit that they are working towards an answer, they don't have the final and absolute answer.'[417]Before Kaukab recovers from the shock of hearing such words from her husband, Jugnu adds:

> I trust what science says about the universe because I can see the result of scientific methods all around me. I cannot be expected to believe what an illiterate merchant-turned-opportunistic-preacher—for he was no systematic theologian— in the seventh-century Arabian desert had to say about the origin of life.[418]

As the conversation is in English, it takes a while for Kaukab to make sense of it. Meanwhile, Jugnu, his girlfriend, and Shamas drink wine with dinner. In the presence of a white person, and in the language of the other, Kaukab hears such devastating sentences that she has to lean on the wall in order to remain standing whilst 'she realized that Muhammad, peace be upon him, peace be upon him, was being referred to here.' Although the white woman does not say anything disrespectful towards religion, Kaukab unfairly holds her responsible for the blasphemy of her husband and Jugnu. Kaukab's only concern at that time is that 'Soon her children would be

[416] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 38.
[417] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 38.
[418] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 38.

further encouraged towards Godlessness.'[419] Kaukab wants to ask Jugnu: 'What else have you learnt from her and her people, […] what else do you plan to pass on to my children?'[420]

Actually, if Kaukab was not so judgemental, she could have realised that, regarding religion, she has more ideas in common with the white woman than she does with Shamas or Jugnu: the two women defend religion in the same terms. But Kaukab is not communicative even when Shamas invites her to speak. In Punjabi he says: 'Kaukab, you should really come and talk to our guest: she's just said something which I have often heard you say'.[421] Kaukab does not respond and occupies herself refilling salad bowls in the kitchen as she finds it difficult to follow the conversation in English and feels she and her values are excluded from the dinner table. Kaukab's avoidance of white Britons and her limited language capacity strengthens her prejudices. Aslam again emphasises the fact that perceptions can be misleading from a distance in his descriptive scene of snowfall: 'perspective tricks the eyes […]'.[422] The narrative works in a way to remind us that things may be different from what they seem.

Kaukab's concerns are mostly focused on her children and the supposedly degenerative effects of the "other nation" on them; her solution is to raise her children as proper Muslims in order to protect them from the other. This strategy, though, creates the main problem between her and her children. Kaukab's despotic rules estrange her from her children. Believing that Ujala was born as a blessed child seeing as he was not born with a foreskin, she makes the few-days-old baby Ujala fast during Ramadan. Kaukab, in Ujala's adolescence, upon the advice of a (possibly corrupt) cleric, secretly feeds him a supposedly sacred salt — which is actually bromide — in

[419] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 39.
[420] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 39-40.
[421] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 38.
[422] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5.

order to make him obedient. Unaware of the fact that this salt is a sedative which curbs sexual urges, Kaukab is happy with the holy result which makes Ujala more obedient. Upon discovering his mother's secret, however, Ujala runs away from home. Kaukab's tortuous precautions to secure piety in her children backfire and eventually all of Kaukab's children, and her husband, become alienated from her.

Kamila Shamsie, in her review of *Maps for Lost Lovers,* argues that Kaukab's adherence to a strict version of Islam could have transformed her into a 'monster' in the novel; the way in which Aslam portrays her, however, is 'entirely human, entirely heartbreaking.'[423] Esra Mirze Santesso describes her impression of Kaukab as being 'harsh, disagreeable, [and] emotionally cold' but that, nevertheless, she can still sympathise with her, seeing as Aslam 'uses the idea of disorientation' in an immigrant community where, due to the 'strict and judgmental form of surveillance,' motherhood becomes onerous. It can easily be said that she is a devoted mother in her own way. Even if her children do not live with her or keep in touch with her, she continues to endure living in Britain with them. As Kaukab states, 'There is nothing on this planet that I loathe more than this country, but I won't go to live in Pakistan as long as my children are here.'[424] Again we see that perspective changes the meaning of being as Kaukab can be seen as either a monstrous or a devout mother, depending on which angle you are looking from.

The fact that Kaukab's and Shamas's originally temporary settlement in Britain's turns into a permanent one can be better understood in terms of Badr Dahya's concept of, the 'myth of return.' As a social anthropologist, Dahya studied the settlement of Pakistani immigrants in Bradford and Birmingham who came to Britain for the purpose of working only for a short time

[423] Kamila Shamsie, 'All You Need Is Love', *the Guardian*, 2004, p. 3 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/jun/26/featuresreviews.guardianreview17> [accessed 5 December 2015].
[424] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 146.

but, in time, took root in the country. 'The myth of return had consequences for patterns of investment, savings, and marriage, and continues to affect Pakistanis as a diaspora retaining strong ties and commitment in the subcontinent.'[425]The fact that Kaukab regards the expenses for their house in England as a waste of money until Mah-Jabin's puberty, when it then becomes urgent to increase Mah-Jabin's chance of marriage, is a result of the myth of return. This myth affects the entire family and, even though there is no verbal pressure, there is a psychological one when Kaukab and Shamas want Charag to become a doctor so that they can return to Pakistan. Indeed, 'this expectation had been inhaled by him with each breath he had taken during those early years.'[426] It is noteworthy that even the bridge character, Shamas, expects to return. This implies that the great majority of first generation immigrants share the same expectations. During the 1950s and 1960s, there was a great demand in the post-war British labour market for manual workers which caused a flow of South Asian men to arrive in Britain. Amanullah De Sondy remarks that Pakistani men travelling as part of this flow of migration would plan on returning home with the money they earned 'to build and strengthen not just their families but also the [new] Islamic nation [of Pakistan] as a whole.'[427] As a secular and communist person, Shamas is not portrayed as a typical Pakistani man concerned with strengthening the Islamic nation of Pakistan. De Sondy points out that the values which were brought to Britain by Pakistani parents and supposed to be maintained by Pakistani men had been 'developed out of the specific historical experiences of decolonisation and partition, as well as being influenced by social traditions inherited from the British colonisers and the older Mughal order.'[428] These values were

[425] Cited in Pnina Werbner, 'Pakistani Migration and Diaspora Religious Politics in a Global Age', in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures around the World. Volume I: Overviews and Topics; Volume II: Diaspora Communities*, ed. by Melvin Ember Carol R. Ember Ian Skoggard (New York: Springer, 2005), p. 475-487, (477).
[426] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 122.
[427] Amanullah De Sondy, 'British Pakistani Masculinities: Longing and Belonging', in *Men, Masculinities and Religious Change in Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. by Lucy Delap and Sue Morgan (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 252-279
[428] De Sondy, p. 275.

strengthened during the late twentieth century, when the myth of return to the homeland was worn away, as many Pakistani immigrants assumed these values were under threat in Britain. Religious values, in particular, were of importance for Pakistani parents as Islamic beliefs and awareness helped them to gain freedom from colonialism and attain a better life.[429] However, in *Maps*, Kaukab, the mother of the family, is portrayed as holding to these traditional values rather than the father. Both Kaukab and Shamas are portrayed longing for Pakistan but their way of coping with life in Britain is totally different.

After Shamas breaks the last cup of a tea set which they bought when they first moved to Britain, Kaukab says she remembers that it hurt her to buy the set, thinking that they would leave it behind when they returned to their own country. Kaukab's tone when saying this shows her acceptance of the conditions which prevents them from returning, thereby demonstrating that her hope to return has finally been exhausted. Kaukab utters: 'Decades have passed and we are still here. Hazrat Ali, may he forever be sprinkled by Allah's mercy, used to say that I recognized Allah by the ruins that were my vain plans for my life.'[430] Kaukab's religious beliefs help her to endure conditions as she leaves them to destiny.

Shamas, one of the most integrated characters in the community, has a routine of welcoming the first snow of the year by stretching out his arm in order to hold a piece of snow in his hand and to watch its transformation 'into a monsoon raindrop.'[431] This has been Shamas's habit since his arrival to England seeing as, 'among the innumerable other losses, to come to England was to lose a season, because, in the part of Pakistan that he is from, there are five seasons in a year, not

[429] De Sondy, p. 275.
[430] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 145.
[431] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5.

four […] Winter, Spring, Summer, Monsoon, Autumn.'[432] The narrator confirms that Shamas's hand holding a piece of snow 'is a hand asking back a season now lost.'[433] Aslam makes it clear that this immigrant community have already lost many things. The characters are constantly conscious of their losses,[434] seeing as they are 'there even when absent, drawing attention to' their 'own disappearance.'[435] Shamas, who is described as being more accommodated to life in Britain than other first generation immigrants, is still yearning for his home country's climate while still feeling 'innumerable other losses.'[436] Aslam's selection of such a character to yearn for the loss of his homeland is surprising since Shamas, who is educated, secular, and acts as a mediator between the native and immigrant communities, seems to be a person who should have one of the most contented lives amongst the immigrants.

When we consider other characters (like Kaukab) who are devoutly religious, speak limited English, and cannot communicate with white British people effectively, the gap between the native and immigrant communities expands, in turn making the immigrant community more self-enclosed. The location in which they live, 'Dasht-e-Tanhaii,', 'linguistically and hermeneutically' indicates the isolation of the community, which is a continuation of the theme conveyed in *Season of the Rainbirds*.[437] Dasht-e-Tanhaii has its own conditions of life and is a place where people constantly remember their home countries with a sense of nostalgia. Aslam takes the name for the community from Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poem called Yad (1952), meaning memory. I agree with Amina Yaqin that 'the hoped for union' in Faiz's verse is exhausted by 'the wilderness of diasporic loss.' The same feelings are portrayed among the novel's older generation

[432] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5.
[433] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5.
[434] Sara Upstone, *British Asian Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 104.
[435] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5
[436] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 5
[437] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 29.

immigrants.'[438]

In Dasht-e-Tanhaii, the older generation is especially defensive against any possible threat of loss, compared to their British born children, since they already experienced the pain of loss when they lost their homeland, coupled with a life in exile. The older generation keep themselves closed off from the other in their new home that they have created for themselves and which they hope to be temporary. They resist any change and influence from the native culture. People outside Dasht-e-Tanhaii are considered to be aliens and any interaction with them may cause them — and especially their children — to be alienated from their original society. Seeing as they want to return to their home countries sooner or later, they want to stay within the limits of their traditional (non-progressive) values of their original country and adhere to them. Wikan notes that 'many traditions are strengthened in the diaspora.'[439]

Seeing as honour is revised strictly in conformity with the home country's traditions and as an opposition to Western values, women are governed by a stricter honour code. According to the Honour Based Violence (HBV) Awareness Network, if immigrants are integrated into the dominant society, the rate of HBV may diminish. There is, however, another possibility that 'some communities [may] become isolated and ghettoised, maintaining [the] traditional male-dominant family structures as a form of resistance against the majority culture.' This is the case, especially 'where economic and social integration is poor, and where minorities are subjected to racism and prejudice.'[440] In Aslam's novel, such a community is portrayed.

[438] Yaqin, Cosmopolitan Ventures During Times of Crisis.
[439] Wikan, p. 69.
[440] Honour Based Violence Awareness Network, "Faq", *Hbv-awareness.com*, 2015 <http://hbv-awareness.com/faq/> [accessed 25 December 2015].

If we return to the concepts of purity and identity examined in the previous two chapters we can understand that, in Aslam's portrayal of ghettoised immigrant communities, moral, cultural and ethnical purity, in the sense of a community with secure boundaries, determines the communal identity and shapes the lives of the people living there. For instance, a white prostitute lives in Dasht-e-Tanhaii, but if she was an Indian or Pakistani, 'she would have been assaulted and driven out of the area within days of moving in for bringing shame on her people.'[441] This means that, the physical boundary of the diasporic community is first shaped in the country of origin. Those who do not fulfil the first condition of coming from the same region are not regarded as members of the community, even if they live in the same region of the receiving country. Chanda, by contrast, 'brought shame on her family by living with Jugnu'[442] because she is a member of the community who embodies the responsibility of protecting its purity. Her deed is equated with the deeds of the white prostitute — not only as prostitution but also as adultery — within the community. But contrary to the white prostitute, Chanda is a member of the community and her deed damages its honour. As a woman in the community, her virtue is evaluated according to her sexual behaviour and has the destructive potential of defiling the entire community. Jugnu plays a part in the misdeed of damaging Chanda's family name; thereby, is killed by Chanda's family in the end. He does not damage his own family's name and is only accused of having a relationship with someone from the subcontinent and damaging her. This is clear from Kaukab's reaction:

> I may only be a woman and not as educated as you, but won't stand by and let you damage further that already-damaged girl. Have you considered the consequences for her when her family finds out about this? You men can do anything you want but it's different for us women. Who will marry her again

[441] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 16.
[442] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 16.

> when people find out that she has been engaging in intercourse with men she's not married to?[443]

As I already discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the concept of communal identity and honour 'belongs to the collectivity and transcends time. Not only are the "honourable" names of fathers and grandfathers in line with the conduct of the present generation but the lives of unborn members also depend on it.'[444] Shame and honour are similar in this respect; if someone is not able to be married, the entire family's reputation may be affected because the discourse traduces the family's name and they lose prestige in the community. This is the case for Chanda's family in the novel. The fact that the family disapproves of Chanda's 'living in sin' with Jugnu is not considered sufficient for the community, for disapproval does not remove the family's shame. As a religious person and headman at the mosques, Chanda's father quits his position:

> […] he had stepped down recently, unable to do anything about the talk in the mosque about his "immoral," "deviant," and "despicable" daughter, who was nothing less than a wanton whore in most people's eyes—as she was in Allah's—for setting up home with a man she wasn't married to.[445]

The quotation above describes how the people of the Dasht-e Tanhai community perceive religion as the foreground of social norms and how sacralised rules control its members. In diasporic communities, communal identity helps to define the group as a distinct social community with strict boundaries which prevent their assimilation. In the Pakistani Muslim

[443] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 61.
[444] Amir H. Jafri, *Honour Killing: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 23.
[445] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 15.

community in the novel, being Muslim and Pakistani are the cornerstones of their identity. The community in *Maps* can be understood as a defensive 'nation-type' structure in which women are considered to build the community's ethnic and national identity. We recall, the five major points specified by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias, that women are identified as the "biological producers" of the ethnic group members who propagate the ethnic group's boundaries and collective culture, reflect its ethnic differences, and contribute to the ethnic group 'in national, economic, political and military' conflicts.'[446] Boundaries are more sensitive in diasporic communities; thus, as a consequence, 'in immigrant families girls are kept under stricter control abroad than in the parental country of origin.'[447] This is why only Chanda's family is urged to take action. As the community leader, Shamas continues to work in the same position. There might be verbal condemnations towards Jugnu's family because of their not preventing the sin, but the discourse of shame surrounds Chanda and her family. The overall mentality of the community is announced with the words of the matchmaker:

> And as for Chanda: What a shameless girl she was, sister-ji, so brazen. She not only had poor Jugnu killed by moving in with him, she also ruined the lives of her own poor brothers who had to kill them—if that was what happened, of course. Let's hope they are found not-guilty in December. But what I fail to understand is how Shamas-brother-ji could have allowed the two of them to live together in sin? And how did you, Kaukab, manage to tolerate it, you who are a cleric's daughter—born and brought up in a mosque all your life?[448]

[446] Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis 'Introduction' in *Women – Nation - State*, ed, by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (Macmillan: London, 1989), p. 7.
[447] Wikan, p. 167
[448] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 42.

Chanda is held responsible and is judged as being the deviant one who pushes others into sin. Contrariwise, the men who were involved in the crime, as well as the male victim of the crime, are all depicted as victims as Jugnu was killed and the killers ended up in prison. In this case, and to borrow Mernissi's term, the *qaid* power of the woman is in action.[449] As for the condemnation of Jugnu and his family, religious order, and his breaking the religious rules are emphasized. As the majority of the Pakistani community in Dasht-e Tanhai identify as members of the Pakistani-Muslim community, they maintain the social order within the bounds of their religion and ethnicity.

If we remember Jafri's discussion about honour killings as being messages, here in the novel, the explicit message given by the killing is scribbled on the wall of Jugnu's house: 'They lived the life of sin and died the death of sinners and They have been burning in the Fire now for over six months but remember that Eternity minus six months is still Eternity.'[450] There is, however, an implicit message as well. Jugnu had always lived such a life with white girlfriends (the life of a sinner in the eyes of community) before his relationship with Chanda, but his earlier sins were not considered a threat to the community. When he has sexual relations out of wedlock with a female member of the community, it is considered as a threat to the society. Hence, the implicit message is that the sexuality of the female members of the community should be controlled and that anyone actively involved in breaching that rule may end up being killed as sinners. Here, the rhetoric of sin and religion is exploited to maintain patriarchal power.

Leyla Pervizat rightly argues that religions, customs and traditions are employed to preserve the

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[449] The *qaid* power of women is based on their sexuality and is a threat to social order as they can deceive men with this power. See: Introduction to my thesis and Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond The Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Muslim Society*, (London: Saqi Books, 2003), p. 32-33.

[450] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 102. See: Amir H. Jafri, *Honour Killing: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

sovereignty of man's power and ability to perform such acts while at the same time espousing that those practices are detrimental for women.[451] In this way, the control of women and the protecting of man's power are ensured under patriarchal ideology. The control of women's sexuality and reproduction is the common and interconnecting problem of different patriarchal structures.[452] As the 'natural' bearers of children, women are regarded as the 'bearers of the collective' and controlled with 'cultural legal and political discourses' which construct the boundaries of nations and categorize people as either an "us" or as a "them."[453] Additionally, 'by dressing and behaving 'properly' and by giving birth to children within legitimate marriages, women both signify and reproduce the symbolic and legal boundaries of the collectivity.'[454] If women trespass those boundaries, the racial purity of the nation will be in danger and women may start to bear children to "them" instead of to "us," thereby causing the nation to lose its children.

All in all, in the diasporic Pakistani Muslim community portrayed by Aslam, the threat of contamination by the other is a daily concern for conservative minds. The novel is informative about British-Asian and Subcontinental history, especially focalised through Shamas. As a leftist communist party member, possibly an echo of Aslam's father, he seems to be conscious about the abuse of knowledge and the discourse of contamination surrounding the others. Shamas himself is considered genetically impure, for the reason that his father was a war orphan and was actually born into a Hindu family. In fact, when the history of the Subcontinent is considered, Bengali Muslims of East Pakistan were already perceived as 'Hinduized', 'impure', 'half Muslims' and

[451] Leyla Pervizat, "Ne Mardin İşi, Ne Kürt İşi, Ne De Türk İşi!" [It is not related to Mardin, Kurds or Turks], *Bianet - Bagimsiz Iletisim Agi*, 2003 <http://bianet.org/bianet/toplum/21285-ne-mardin-isi-ne-kurt-isi-ne-de-turk-isi> [accessed 29 December 2015].
[452] A. Nevin Yildiz Tahincioglu, *Namusun Halleri* (Istanbul: Postiga, 2011), p. 45.
[453] Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), p. 26.
[454] Floya Anthias, Harriet Cain and Nira Yubal-Davis, *Racialized Boundaries* (London [etc.]: Routledge, 1993), p. 20.

their practice of Islam was regarded as inferior by West Pakistani (now Pakistani) authorities.[455] *Maps* portrays Pakistan as experiencing an historical event when hundreds of thousands of East Pakistani (now Bangladeshi) women were raped by West Pakistani troops just because they were considered an 'inferior race' whose genes ought to be improved.[456] Aslam reminds us of the 'horrific mistreatment of women at the hands of patriarchal masculinity' and how historical events intertwine with present-day characters.[457] The major "other" nation in the novel which is considered to be the fictional community's largest threat is the white-British nation which is historically portrayed as an opponent and as a coloniser. This is obvious from the words of neighbourhood women which Kaukab overhears from the kitchen window. One woman is 'cursing the inventor of the wheel and ruing the day she came to England, this loathsome country that has stolen her daughter from her […]'. Another woman makes a distinctively colonial reference, when she is ready to cry as 'she's beginning to realize that she would never be able to go back to live in her own country […], a country that's poor because the whites stole all its wealth, beginning with the Koh-i-Noor diamond.' For the neighbourhood women, Britain is the compulsory and undesirable place of residence which has been a threat to their children and home country. Women in the neighbourhood do not trust Britain thinking that 'the government is about to announce that all the Asian immigrants are to be thrown out of Britain' and they are ready to 'go back with pleasure as soon as the Queen gives back our Koh-i-Noor.'[458] Hence, even if Asian immigrants have to live in Britain they are aware that they are in the country of their colonizer. Most of the community members of the older generation perceive white British people as being

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[455] Nayanika Mookherjee, 'Mass Rape and the Inscription of Gendered and Racial Domination during the Bangladesh War of 1971', in*Rape in Wartime*, ed. by Raphaelle Branche, Fabrice Virgili(Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 67-78.
Nayanika Mookherjee, 'Denunciatory Practices and the Constitutive Role of Collaboration in the Bangladesh War', in*Traitors: Suspicion, Intimacy, and the Ethics of State-Building*, ed. by Sharika Thiranagama, Tobias Kelly(Philedelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), p. 48-68.
[456] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 82.
[457] McCulloch, p. 104.
[458] Aslam, *Maps*, pp. 45-46.

the "dangerous other", as they are a threat to their children, thereby further strengthening a discourse of contamination by whites and increasing their defensive behaviours in controlling the purity of their own nation. By wanting to secure the purity of their nation, stricter controls on women are implemented which, in turn, pave the way for an increased number of honour killings.

III. Losing Family Ties: The Generation Gap

Sara Upstone argues that, along with Ian McEwan's *Saturday*, *Maps* portrays a increasing mainstream British discourse of fear regarding the "dangerous other" and the novel seems to illustrate Cindi Katz's definition of "banal terrorism," or the daily imaginary threat of the "dangerous other" which, in the end, effectively divides "them" from "us."[459] Pankaj Mishra, however, discussing the effects of September 11 on literature opines that *Maps* (along with Lorraine Adams's *Harbor* and Laila Lalami's *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*) captures the 'divided selves of Muslims.' Muslims and the West are not simply positioned against each other. For many Muslims, it is not easy to separate the west from their deepest selves. Furthermore, many people from the communities which 'western imperialism cracked open long ago cannot afford to see the west as an alien and dangerous "other"; it is implicated in their private as well as public conflicts.'[460] On the other hand, in regard to September 11, Moore – citing Aslam's words, referring to the honour killing in *Maps* as an example and suggesting that "small-scale September 11s go on every day" – argues that *Maps* portrays that 'ordinary people, in this case principally first and second-generation British Asian Muslims, live with *quotidian* forms of terror' both in the host and home country. The novel, in other words, disputes the present-day rhetoric of war-

[459] Sara Upstone, '9/11, British Muslims, and Popular Literary Fiction', in *Reframing 9/11: Film, Popular Culture and the "War on Terror"*, ed. by Jeff Birkenstein, Anna Froula, Karen Randell (London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 35-44 (p. 39).
[460] http://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/may/19/fiction.martinamis

on-terror in Britain by animating nuanced first-hand experiences of a 'particularized Muslim community'.[461] This 'particularized' community with their 'divided selves' creates diverse environments within the community.

Kaukab, as the devout Muslim character, sees England as a dirty country. Kaukab's racist perception echoes colonial construction of difference, however, it focuses on cultural difference and superiority not on biological difference or superiority. Martin Barker's term 'new racism' is helpful to understand the mutual racist constructions between immigrants and white British people in *Maps*. Although Barker's term was coined in the context of anti-immigrant sentiments of 1980s in the UK, it is transnationally applicable. According to Barker's theory of new racism, common values, difference, and fear of the unknown outline concepts of new socially constructed racism:

> It is a theory of human nature. Human nature is such that is natural to form a bounded community, a nation, aware of its differences from other nations. They are not better or worse. But feelings of antagonism will be aroused if outsiders are admitted. And there grows up a special form of connection between a nation and the place it lives.[462]

Although Kaukab is an immigrant to the UK, she is attached to her own community and has a separate place to live, which is Dasht-e Tanhai, a space 'linguistically and hermeneutically' sealed off from Britain and created out of mutual racist constructions between immigrants and white British people. Kaukab's avoidance of English people is based on her puritanical, obsessive

[461] Moore, 'British Muslim Identities and Spectres of Terror in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers', p. 3.
[462] Martin Barker, *The New Racism* (Frederick, Md.: Aletheia Books, 1982).

religious idea that having any contact with them would contaminate her. Kaukab and 'most Muslim men and women of the neighbourhood have a few sets of clothing reserved solely for outdoors, taking them off the moment they get home to put on the ones they know to be clean.' The rationale for the habit is narrated from Kaukab's perspective as follows:

> England is a dirty country, an unsacred country full of people filthy with disgusting habits and practices, where, for all one knew, unclean dogs and cats, or unwashed people, or people who have not bathed after sexual congress, or drunks and people with invisible dried drops of alcohol on their shirts and trousers, or menstruating women, could very possibly have come into contact with the bus seat a good Muslim has just chosen to sit on, or touched an item in the shop that he or she has just picked up […][463]

As I discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, there are some religious purity requirements like the ritual of ablution before praying *namaz* in Islam. These requirements are not compulsory for daily activities like eating or shopping and the spiritual impurity is not contagious. We can infer from the excerpt above, though, that the religious concept of purity for praying (*namaz*) or reading the Quran is taken out of context and interpreted for daily life. Although Kaukab is the only person in Shamas's family who has such conservative ideas, readers are reminded that there are many people in the community who share the same ideas as Kaukab. For instance, an old lady calls Kaukab for her six-year old grandson on his way to mosque and utters:

> 'Keep an eye on him, sister-ji. He won't let me walk him to the mosque anymore. He is becoming independent and wants to go alone. I am telephoning

[463]Aslam, *Maps*, p. 267.

> everyone I know along his path because you have to be careful - every day you hear about depraved white men doing unspeakable things to little children.' And the woman rang off with a sigh: 'We should never have come to this deplorable country, sister-ji, this nest of devilry from where God has been exiled. No, not exiled—denied and slain. It's even worse.'[464]

Here, Aslam portrays the fact that, as children grow older, conflicts with parents gradually start to occur and that children start to react to parental control as the world in and outside of the family is different, causing the children to struggle between the two different environments. Families try to find new methods for controlling and protecting their children and the community cooperates against that threat with one another. Aslam, however, ironically posits a paedophile cleric in the mosque where families send their children to protect themselves from earthly dirt and ensure that they have a proper religious education. Aslam portrays how the dangerous "us" is hushed up within the community as the community tries to clear the cleric's name. If there is any problem in the community which may tarnish the image of the Pakistani community, the problem is suppressed. Immigrants feel the burden of representing their home culture; indeed, the 'cultural psychology of immigrants is shaped by their marginalized location and by how they represent their culture and idealized cultural identities.'[465] Shamas is aware of this burden of representation:

> Shamas warned Kaukab to be careful and not lay a hand on the girl, because otherwise tomorrow the local newspaper would be carrying the headline BRITISH-BORN DAUGHTER OF PAKISTANI MUSLIM COMMUNITY LEADER BEATEN OVER MATTER OF MARRIAGE, bringing into

[464] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 30.
[465] Ram Mahalingam, *Cultural Psychology of Immigrants* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006), p. 7.

> disrepute, in one fell swoop, Islam, Pakistan, the immigrant population here in England, and his place of work, which was—in the matters of race—the officially appointed conscience of the land.[466]

Aslam's selection of the character of Shamas as the one who has concerns about representation is important when compared to the other more conservative characters, seeing as he is more of a realist about Pakistani culture and does not idealise it like the other characters do who intentionally distance themselves from British people. Parents raise their children with these concerns related to the burden of representing all Pakistani community and most of them want their children to adhere to an idealised cultural identity.

Judy Shreves's research in the US shows that, when some of the children who are raised in such an environment grow up, they start questioning parental control. While parents resist acculturation, children acculturate easily. Hence, in immigrant communities, there is a divergent acculturation between generations. When children become more fluent in the language of the receiving country in their educative lives and start to lose their capacity to speak in their mother tongue, they start to find the world of their parents and the immigrant community to be irrelevant to them.[467] Kaukab and her children epitomise intense inter-generational conflict within the immigrant population. Within the microcosm of the family, most conflicts stem from Kaukab's religious mentality. Ujala does not hesitate to tell the family members that his mother is 'a selfish monster' who does not let reason enter their house.[468] Kaukab feels devastated about her children's being so far away from her. According to Aroosa Kanwal, Kaukab's attempts to build

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[466] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 119.
[467] Judy R Shreves, *Successful Acculturation of Immigrant Muslim Children into The St. Louis Area*, 1st edn (Ann Arbor: ProQuest, UMI, 2007), p. 41 <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304721006> [accessed 21 December 2015].
[468] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 302.

a better relationship with her children is an indication of redirecting her love for her homeland — the primary love object — to her children — the secondary love object.[469] Zubaida Metlo, however, in her research on the perception of honour amongst the British-Pakistani community in Watford (UK), summarises the importance of children for a Pakistani mother. A Pakistani mother expects that, with 'motherhood, she will be stronger and more grounded. If she bears a male child, it will change her kismet (destiny). She will be considered more valuable and an important person.' Seeing as society is strictly patriarchal, a 'woman gets a little space for herself in society through her children; however, if they turn against her it will be a psychological death for her.'[470] Kaukab's maternal feelings are, in short, overdetermined and she eventually attempts to commit suicide once she reaches the conclusion that her children hate her.[471] As Pakistani mother, she feels complete only with her children and without them she 'feels incomplete, she compromises everything for them — her ego, her self-respect, her desires and identity as a human being.'[472] Hence, for Kaukab discovering that she has lost her children forever is worse than death.

As a woman, Kaukab's daughter, Mah-Jabin sympathises with her mother more than her brothers. Although Mah-Jabin tries to understand Kaukab's mentality, she is still angry towards her mother because of the marriage she was encouraged to enter and the way of life she was encouraged to follow. Mah-Jabin thinks that if her mother loved her, she would have prevented her from 'doing certain things,' like marrying her first cousin and moving to Pakistan at the age of sixteen. Kaukab's response to this accusation is that: 'I did not have the freedom to give you that freedom.' Kaukab inadvertently accepts that her motherhood is not controlled by herself. The societal mechanism of the strict patriarchal Pakistani society, which she feels she belongs to,

[469]Aroosa Kanwal, *Rethinking Identities In Contemporary Pakistani Fiction* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 167 - 168.
[470] Zubaida Metlo, "The Perception of Honour among The British-Pakistani Community in Watford, United Kingdom." (unpublished Ph.D, University of Leeds, 2012) p. 24.
[471] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 337.
[472] Metlo, p. 64.

shapes her motherhood. Kaukab feels pain because her children do not understand her and 'make so many mistaken assumptions when they take it upon themselves to evaluate' her life.[473] The psychological separation in the family is clearly depicted by Aslam. All of Kaukab's children would rather live away from Kaukab. Ujala, for instance, leaves home at sixteen and refuses to talk to his mother for years. Kaukab regularly calls him and listens to his voice on his answering machine.[474] Charag marries a white woman and lives far away from his family. Furthermore, even if he goes to Dasht-e-Tanhaii, he hesitates to visit his parents, thereby not seeing them at all.[475]

The tension which exists in the family causes all of its members to suffer and lose their familial ties. This depiction is realistic seeing as many British-born Pakistani immigrant's children have reported having 'feelings of alienation and estrangement' from their parents. Ikhlaq Din's research examining the perceptions of 'British-born young people of Pakistani origin and, who were between the ages of fourteen and nineteen living in Bradford at the time' showed that most of 'the young people [joined the study] did not resist control but they were resisting excessive control.' The parental plea is that 'they want to protect their children from possible dangers; […] especially the girls, and thus they would restrict their movement.' This strict control in Pakistani immigrant families causes young children to question familial authority and may cause a 'breakdown of communication between generations.'[476] This is the case portrayed in Dasht-e Tanhai as well. 'Girls frequently sighed with relief when they got married because the husbands were less strict than the mothers had been […]'[477]

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[473] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 115.
[474] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 33.
[475] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 122.
[476] Ikhlaq Din, *The New British The Impact Of Culture And Community On Young Pakistanis* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 105-110
[477] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 118.

Pakistani immigrants who break the rules of Dasht-e Tanhai community have one of two options. One of them is leaving the community and breaking the rule on not communicating with the "other", thereby losing the family ties which require them to have a communal identity. All of Kaukab's children follow this path. The other option was to lose their life like Chanda, Jugnu and the exorcised neighbourhood girl, who was in love with a Hindu boy, and therefore thought to be possessed by the djinn, and eventually Shamas who was hunted for his illicit affair. In the story, Mah-Jabin's life and estrangement from her family is given as an alternative to Chanda's honour killing.

When Mah-Jabin has a quarrel with her mother over going to America, Kaukab blames Mah-Jabin for attending a University in London for the purpose of being far away from her and in order to have 'the freedom to do obscene things with white boys and lead a sin-smeared life,' implying that she again wants to travel to a distant place for freedom. Mah-Jabin's reply shows that it is not the distance that worries Kaukab, as she already sent her 'a thousand miles away at sixteen' to Pakistan.[478] Her having freedom in the community of the "other" is what makes Kaukab concerned, because there, she will be able to do sinful things with white boys. The concerns related to girls' freedom are elevated in the presence and threat of the "other."

In reality, however, breaking the ties with one's family may not remove the threat of being killed. In another Swedish case, a 'Kurdish girl was stabbed twenty-one times by her brother and became partially paralyzed. She had broken with her family after having been forced to marry.'[479] Fadima Shadindal, who had stood against her family and fought for her freedom to love and have a life of her own, became a public figure and a human rights activist in Sweden. She made speeches in Parliament and was protected by the police but still was killed by her father when she

[478] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 111.
[479] Wikan, p. 29.

visited her family in Uppsala.

IV. Conclusion

Maps portrays an immigrant community establishing itself in a new country and its people trying to overcome the difficulties that they encounter there. In *Maps,* most of the violent events, including the honour killing, are associated with religion — especially with a strict version of Islam. It is, however, implied that the reason behind all of the atrocities caused by humans against humans is not religion per se, but rather, the specific interpretation of religion that one holds and especially the religious interpretations serve the interest of specific groups.

In reality, the effect of religion on honour killings is disputable. In Turkey, activists and religious leaders cooperated with one another for the purpose of denouncing honour related violence. The conversation between a 'very religious Muslim tribal leader' and the human rights activist Leyla Pervizat in the religious and conservative city of Urfa in Turkey invites us to think more on the effects of religion on honour killings. When Pervizat 'challenged the concept of honor killings by arguing that the Qur'an does not permit women to be treated like this,' she received the following response: 'This is honor, what has that got to do with the Qur'an? Men's honor [sic.] comes before the Book.' Hence, she realised that what the Qur'an says and the concept of honour are not related in the mentality of the perpetrators. 'Instead, the concepts of masculinity, culture, and tradition, which are rooted in the community and predate Islam, must be studied and utilized to end honor [sic.] killings.'[480] In *Maps,* Aslam challenges the relationship between religion and

[480] Pervizat, "In The Name Of Honor", *Human Rights Dialogue*, 2 (2003), 4 <http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/archive/dialogue/2_10/articles/1058.html/:pf_printable> [accessed 19November 2015].

honour killings by picking characters who seem religious but commit sins (like adultery). On the other side Kaukab, as a devout Muslim, prays for Chanda and Jugnu's safety.

As religion is portrayed as part of the communal identity marker in Dasht-e Tanhaii, Aslam's novel contributes to an understanding of how for some immigrants, the influence of other cultures, especially that of the majority, is perceived as a threat for the immigrant minority group. The threat of being contaminated by that influence surrounds the discourse of honour in the portrayed Muslim community. Readers are encouraged to think about how the feeling of being threatened is strengthened by a misperception compounded by isolation and avoiding contact with the "other" which, in turn, prevents understanding. It can be seen that the problem of miscommunication leads both the immigrant and host communities to consider each other as threats. It can be inferred that a similar miscommunication may exist within an immigrant family when any member opens up to the host culture. For instance, seeing as Kaukab is a religious person, all of her family members who are open to the host culture believe that she approves of honour killings and they do not understand the pain she feels for the lost couple, Chanda and Jugnu.

Aslam's novel spotlights how immigrants strengthen their communal values against the "other," and can become more extremist. Because women are accepted as being official boundary markers of the community, the pressure placed on them is generally harsher. The issue can be more sensitive for the inhabitants of a Western society 'as it may become extremely difficult for a woman [or man] to create a balance between two cultures; the one she [/he] sees at home and the other she [/he] experiences outside the home.'[481] When they want to gain the freedom to live their own lives in a closed immigrant community, however, then their lives may hang by a threat of

[481] Metlo, p. 25.

honour killing.

Chapter Four

Who Is the Victim, Who is the Killer? The Concepts of Victimhood and Culpability in Honour Killings as Represented in Elif Shafak's *Honour*[482]

I. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the concepts of victimhood and culpability in violence against women with a specific focus on honour killings as represented in Elif Shafak's eighth novel, *Honour*. The novel was first written in English, then translated into Turkish and published in Turkey in 2011 as *Iskender*, whilst the English original was first published by Viking in 2012 in UK.[483]

In *Honour*, Shafak tells the story of the Turkish-Kurdish Toprak family stretching back three generations and ends with the honour killing of the aunt, Jamila, by her nephew, Iskender. In this chapter I will discuss who is responsible for the killings and whether the concept of victimhood can be extended to include the killer. Can the perpetrator of the crime also be a victim? Who are the victims and who are the culprits of honour crimes? In this regard I will focus on how *Honour* contextualises the issues of victimhood and culpability in honour killings and I will discuss the subject of honour from these two aspects. As we can hear both a witness and the perpetrator of the honour crime as the narrative voices of the story, the novel offers multiple points of views on the issues of victimhood and culpability in honour killings. I will focus on agents and victims of

[482] Elif Şafak was born as Elif Bilgin and was raised by her mother so instead of having her father's surname she preferred to incorporate her mother's name, Şafak, as her pen surname. In English, probably because of pronunciation concerns, instead of Şafak, her surname appears Shafak on her publications. Hence, I spell her surname in the way she is known to English readers.

[483] I refer both Turkish and English publications of the novel during my analysis and comment on differences between publications when it is relevant.

honour killings as they are represented in *Honour* and the ways in which this representation illuminates the phenomenon of culpability. I argue that victimhood and culpability are linked in complex ways and that complexity illuminates the intricate nature of honour crimes. Through a contrapuntal[484] analysis of the issues in *Honour*, this chapter contributes to our understanding of how honour killings persist and are sustained in a society of 'classic patriarchy'[485] because of the social pressure felt by all its members, and of how victimhood and culpability cannot be entirely disentangled.

While analysing the novel, as a requirement of Said's humanist criticism, I will attempt to understand Shafak's reflective mind, her relations with society and her own experiences. As Said puts it, 'the act of reading is the act therefore of first putting oneself in the position of the author, for whom writing is a series of decisions and choices expressed in words.'[486] Thus, wider contexts such as the traditions and cultures of the depicted societies will be analysed to understand how they are reflected by the writer. For this reason, a preliminary overview of the writer's life and position and her reception as a writer in Turkey and in the world is useful.

As an author, columnist and academic, Elif Shafak is probably the best known Turkish female writer internationally. She was awarded the Mevlana (Rumi) Prize in 1998 for 'best work in mystical literature' in Turkey with her debut novel *Pinhan* (The Mystic), published in

[484] I borrowed the term from Edward Said to reflect comparative perspectives and histories. See Introduction to Chapter Two.
[485] I borrowed the term 'classic patriarchy' from Deniz Kandiyoti's work 'Bargaining with Patriarchy'. According to Kandiyoti, classic patriarchy predominantly exist in 'a geographical area that includes North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (including Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran), and South and East Asia (specifically, India and China)'. See: Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Bargaining with Patriarchy', *Gender and Society*, 2.3, (1988), 274-290.
[486] Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, ed. by Akeel Bilgrami (New York: Colombia University Press, 2003) p. 62. See Introduction to this thesis.

1997.[487]She wrote two more novels and was granted the 'Best Novel-Turkish Writers' Union Prize' before her best seller *Bit Palas (The Flea Palace)* was published in Turkey, in Turkish, in 2002.[488] Shafak, who wrote her first English novel *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* (*Araf)* in 2004, gained international fame with her second English novel *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2006). A law case was opened against Elif Shafak for insulting Turkishness due to the words of characters in *The Bastard of Istanbul* who accuse the Turks of perpetrating the Armenian genocide of 1915.[489] Her fame increased as the trials were followed by international media. Shafak was awarded the honorary distinction of Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2010 by France which is interested in the Armenian question.[490] When she received the award, French Ambassador to Turkey, Loren Bill, specifically mentioned *The Bastard of Istanbul* and Shafak's contributions to freedom of expression, cultural dialogue and human rights and expressed his appreciation that Shafak did not lose courage after the trail.[491]

The novels of Shafak have been criticized and broadly discussed in Turkey for their literary quality and content, and due to the fact that some of them are written in English. Although Shafak has been criticised harshly, she is still Turkey's best-selling female writer. This may be due to the criticism she has received, allowing her to stay on the agenda. *Honour*, which constitutes the subject of this chapter, is one of Shafak's most intensively discussed novels. Even before the

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[487]*Biography* (2015) <http://www.elifshafak.com/biography.php> [accessed 1 January 2015]. The novel depicts the story of an internal journey of a child, Pinhan, at a dervish lodge in Ottoman Turkey.
[488] After *Pinhan* (The Mystic), Shafak wrote *Şehrin Aynaları* (Mirrors of City) in 1999 and *Mahrem* in 2000. *Mahrem* was translated into English and published as *the Gaze* in 2006).
[489] The Armenian character Armanoush calls Turks butchers and accuses Turks of killing their ancestors. See: Elif Shafak, *The Bastard of Istanbul* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 53.
[490] A bill to make a law which punishes the people who deny Armenian Genocide was passed by the French lower House of Parliament in 2006. Although the law had never been made, the issue created political tension between France and Turkey. See: Mark Tran, 'French MPs pass Armenian genocide bill', *The Guardian*, 12 October 2006 (2015) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/oct/12/france.turkey> [accessed 16 September 2015].
[491] Taner Yener, 'Elif Şafak'a Sanat ve Edebiyat Şövalyesi Nişanı' [Elif Shafak awarded the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters], *Hürriyet*, 10 July 2012 (2015) <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kultur-sanat/haber/20949438.asp>[accessed 5 February 2015]. *The Armenian Observer, Author Elif Shafak Prized for Book on Armenian Genocide (2014) <http://www.thearmenianobserver.com/?p=1262>*[accessed 5 February 2015].

book was published, its pre-released cover caused controversy among critics due to Shafak's appearance on the front cover, cross-dressed as Iskender, who is the main character of the novel. Newspaper critics claimed the author was promoting herself and interfered with the imagination of the readers by providing an image of the fictional character.[492] Despite negative criticism in Turkey, 165,000 copies were ordered prior to publication.[493] Another sensational issue surrounding the novel was that Shafak took Zadie Smith's novel *White Teeth* as a template and *Honour* was alleged to be plagiarised.[494] Smith sent a letter to Shafak about this issue and indicated in the letter that these allegations were ridiculous.[495] After the letter, discussion related to the allegations slightly decreased. Subsequently, similarities between both books were mentioned in international reader forums, but not with the charge of plagiarism.[496]

In the face of plagiarism allegations in Turkey, Shafak expressed her belief that the literary criticism surrounding her novel should not take this form and that these discussions were gossip and assault, not criticism, and that she left discretion to the readers.[497] She responded to criticisms

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[492] Cüneyt Özdemir, 'Erkek kılığındaki Elif Şafak'ın kapak fotoğrafı' [Book cover of Elif Shafak in men's clothes], *Radikal,* 22 July 2011
(2015) <http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/cuneyt_ozdemir/erkek_kiligindaki_elif_safakin_kapak_fotografi-1057193> [accessed 5 February 2015].
[493] Ibid.
[494], *Elif Şafak'ın yeni romanı biraz fazla "tanıdık"* [Elif Shafak's recent novel is quite familiar] (2015) <http://fikirmahsulleriofisi.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/elif-safakn-yeni-roman-biraz-fazla.html> [accessed 5 February 2015].
[495] Kaya Genc, *Anglobalisation* (2015) <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2012/04/12/kaya-genc/anglobalisation/> [accessed 5 February 2015].
[496] Johanna Payton comments on Goodreads about *Honour*'s resemblance to Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* See: Joanne Payton, (2015) <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/15811554-honor> [accessed 5 February 2015]. For another example see the comments of the user named Gonza Bassa on Pinterest: GonzaBassa, (2015) <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/560064903632094188/> [accessed 5 February 2015].
[497] Elif Shafak, *Elif Şafak intihal iddialarına isyan etti* [Elif Shafak protested against plagiarism allegations] (2015) <https://www.kanald.com.tr/abbasgucluilegencbakis/elif-safak-intihal-iddialarina-isyan-etti/21950> [accessed 5February 2015].
Burcu Aktas, *'Türkiye'de örtük bir elitizm var* [There is a covered elitism in Turkey]*'* (2015) <http://www.radikal.com.tr/kultur/turkiyede_ortuk_bir_elitizm_var-1060623> [accessed 5 February 2015]. Genc, *Anglobalisation* <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2012/04/12/kaya-genc/anglobalisation/>.
Iskender 11. kitabım okurum beni bilir 'This is my 11th novel, my readers know me'(2015) <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/iskender-11--kitabim-okurum-beni-bilir-pembenar-detay-kultursanat-1423631/> [accessed 19 February 2015].

about the cover and explained that the meaning of the cover would not be understood without reading the book first, and that the cover was conceived in relation to literary concerns rather than commercial ones. Shafak specified why she dressed as Iskender on the cover:

> First, I have thought about what it feels like to be Iskender for a year and a half. While I was writing, I turned into Iskender. Therefore, the cover reference. Second, literature is already the art of putting oneself in the shoes of someone else. Third, and maybe the most importantly, to draw attention to the role of women in the construction of masculinity… Thus, the cover says 'when you see an image of man, see the woman within as well'. Because what makes Iskender Iskender is actually Pembe. Namely, his mother.[498]

Shafak's comments can also be extrapolated to her wider literary project as she often emphasises, extra-textually, the importance of feeling how it is to be someone else and the mother's role in the construction of manhood.[499] In this case, she accentuates that Iskender's experience should particularly be understood; she invites readers to 'feel Iskender'. She claims that even though her actual concern was violence against women, if we do not understand the pressure that men like Iskender feel and in which way they are constructed as men, the problem of violence against women cannot be solved.[500]

Honour tells the story of an honour killing in a diasporic community within the framework of the mother-son relationship. The novel differs from the other novels studied in this thesis as it

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[498] Arzu Akyol, *El insaf!* [Have a heart!] (2015) <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=363> [accessed 20 February 2015]. Translation is mine.
[499] Elif Shafak, *Elif Shafak (2012)* (2015) <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/media-gallery/item/elif-shafak-at-the-edinburgh-international-book-festival> [accessed 3 March 2015].
[500] Akyol, <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=363>. Translation is mine.

focuses on the perspective of the killer and investigates how he is shaped whilst it also questions the role of women in the construction of the killer's character. Shafak, via her novel, would like to remind us that the killer is not a monster and she extends our understanding of honour killings beyond aspects covered in the mainstream media to show that there is a story behind the murders. She states that 'There are so much grief in these stories, breaking points. I wanted to examine all these closely'.[501] The novel is exceptional for its focus on the killer's perspective and for this reason the perpetrator will be the focus of this chapter.

Honour is narrated by the daughter of the Toprak family, Esma, who is both a fictional character and the fictional narrator of the book. The novel opens and closes with the first person singular pronoun (I) referring to Esma, hence we can deduce that Esma is a fictional narrator, though a large part of the novel is narrated by a third person omniscient narrator. In the Turkish version of the novel, Esma's voice is heard only in the first and last part of the novel as the first person narrator. In the English version, Esma narrates all the chapters related to herself in the first person and the others in the third person. Iskender appears as a narratorial voice through prison dairies in both the English and the Turkish versions. Iskender narrates his feelings, experiences, and memories. Shafak uses both the voice of a man who committed an honour killing and the voice of a woman who experienced honour killing in her family. This contrapuntal structure makes the novel unique, to the best of my knowledge.

The novel spans from 1945 to 1992 in the English version and 1946 to 1991 in the Turkish version. The reason of this slight difference is not clear but might be related to some historical

[501] Akyol, <http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=363>. Translation is mine.

mistakes found by editors as she was criticized about those mistakes after publication.[502] The settings of the novel are an unnamed Kurdish village on the banks of the Euphrates River, Istanbul, London, and Abu Dhabi. The novel is characteristic of Shafak's fiction in that it has many characters, diverse themes and elements of black humour. As well as focusing on the mother-son relationship within the context of honour killings, the novel specifically addresses themes like the status of women in Turkish and Kurdish societies and mothers' position in the construction of those communities; minority and immigrant problems; alienation; identity; dichotomy; love and Sufism. Shafak structures the novel through analepses and prolepses, giving dates and names of places in the beginning of each chapter. The reader's interest is kept alive and the story moves fluidly between narrative voices, places and times. The novel makes use of postmodern techniques like magic realism[503] and metafiction. Shafak fits many characters, places and themes into 342 pages (the equivalent of 443 pages in the Turkish version) by deftly fictionalizing them, even though she was criticised for not tackling the topic and characters deeply enough.

The story of the Toprak family starts when Adem, who would marry Pembe and be Iskender's father, visits an unnamed Kurdish village during his brother's military service and falls in love with a girl named Cemile there. When he discovers that Cemile was kidnapped before, Adem marries her twin sister, Pembe, due to the risk that Cemile may not be a virgin. Adem and Pembe have three children: Iskender, Esma and Yunus. The family moves to Istanbul then to London

[502] Fuat Bozkurt, 'Elif Şafak, yazar olalı böyle eleştiri görmedi' [Elif Shafak has never received such a criticism], *Milli Gazete*, 11 October 2012 <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/Elif_Safak_yazar_olali_boyle_elestiri_gormedi/248384#.VUQwqvlVjBH> [accessed 10 March 2015].

[503] Magic realism—a kind of modern fiction in which fabulous and fantastical events are included in a narrative that otherwise maintains the 'reliable' tone of objective realistic report. See: Chris Baldick, *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 210. Shafak uses this techniques to expose that this superstitious world is the reality of a traditional mindset and creates a special and untouchable area which empowers particular groups, especially women, in Shafak's writing.

because of economic difficulties that result from Adem's gambling addiction. Iskender and Esma both are born in Istanbul and Yunus is born in London. The relationship between Adem and Pembe completely breaks down in London. Adem starts a relationship with a female escort named Roxana. When Adem's money runs out, Roxana breaks up with him and goes to Abu Dhabi. Thus, Adem leaves home permanently and goes to Abu Dhabi in the hope of reuniting with Roxana. While searching for Roxana he works as a construction worker there. He eventually commits suicide by jumping off a building roof.

Meanwhile, Pembe, with the sorrow of being apart from her twin, is unhappy in London. After her husband leaves her, she meets Elias and they have a love affair without physical intimacy. Pembe's younger son, Yunus, sees the couple together when they secretly meet in the cinema, but Yunus does not tell anyone. When the elder brother of Adem, Tarik, notices the relationship, he goads Iskender, his older nephew, that this is an issue of honour. Iskender, who feels the responsibility of being the man of the family after his father's abandonment, forbids his mother from going to work or out of the house. However, he sees Pembe outside and stabs her to death. She turns out to be her mother's twin, Jamila, in her mother's clothes. As Jamila has recently arrived in London and Iskender is not aware of his aunt's visit to them he does not realise the mistake until later. Only Yunus and Esma know the truth and the reality is hidden from the other characters to protect Pembe. Iskender and the readers discover the secret towards the end of the novel.

Iskender, who is the first son and whose mother rears him as if he is a sultan, is a rebellious teenager at the time of the crime. His sister, Esma, is a girl who feels excluded from the family because of gender discrimination against female children. She resist sexism and aspires to

become an author. Their seven year old brother, Yunus, is a dreamy boy. Due to his platonic love for an older woman, called Tobiko, Yunus spends most of his time with Tobiko's friends who constitute an anarchist and anti-capitalist group and live in a squatters' house.

Iskender suffers from remorse for murdering his mother. His initial plan was to frighten Pembe and her lover, Elias by stabbing her mother in a non-fatal place; however, the stabbing results in death. Iskender is sentenced to fourteen years in prison. His brother and sister, especially Esma, do not forgive him for the murder. A couple of years before his release, Iskender hears from his brother that he actually killed his aunt, but Pembe, Esma and Yunus had hidden the truth about the crime. The readers are revealed the truth at the same time as Iskender discovers it. Pembe, disguised as her twin, goes back to the village. Iskender starts to write an apology letter to his mother which he plans to deliver by hand after his release, but when he gets out of prison, he, and readers of the novel, discover that Pembe passed away a year previously.

In the novel, Pembe is a mother who maintains patriarchal values. Iskender is raised in Istanbul and the UK with strict patriarchal values. Esma is a girl suffering from these values and objecting to them. Yunus is balanced as he is not treated specially, unlike Iskender, by his mother even though he is a boy. Adem is an irresponsible father who received no punishment for breaching honour values despite leaving his family for another woman. This perhaps show the sexist duality of the honour concept. Tarik, as an elder brother of Adem, is a traditional oppressive figure who manipulates social values to suit his interests. Cemile is a woman whose life is ruined because of patriarchal values as she cannot marry the man with whom she is in love and, in the end, she is killed because of honour values. Pembe's family, as a Kurdish family, represents an exemplary family with patriarchal and traditional codes. Throughout the novel we see that habits and values

are mainly shaped in the family. Adem's father is an alcoholic and his mother leaves her family because of alcoholism and domestic violence. Suffering from his father's alcoholism, Adem avoids becoming an alcoholic, but he harms his family due to his gambling addiction and abandonment. Pembe, is portrayed to be shaped by her patriarchal family and she also promotes patriarchal values. Esma avows that she is lectured 'with words borrowed from Grandma Naze.'[504] Esma criticises Pembe's discriminatory attitudes and behaviours to control only female sexuality:

> We had been very close, me and my mother, but all that changed the moment my breasts started to bud and I had my first period. The only thing she was interested in now was my *virginity* [...] Not once had she told me about what was possible and permissible; her powers of communication were reserved solely for rules and prohibitions. […] Yet she didn't impose the same rules on my brothers.[505]

This characterization helps the reader to understand different perspectives on honour in the same culture and family and the ways in which personal experience can change individual attitudes. In this way, Shafak emphasises the importance of personal experience and family values in personality structure.

The novel suggests that notions of honour have been deeply rooted in specific cultural

[504] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 182.
[505] Shafak, *Honour*, pp. 184-185.

constructions of the family and that women have an important role in preserving these ideas.[506] Moreover, as can be understood from Shafak's newspaper articles, this idea reflects her real life view. In one of her articles, Shafak emphasises the importance of mothers on the masculine formation of their sons and warns them to be careful about bringing up their children.[507] In this way, she encourages women to teach their sons gender equality. At the same time, however, she reproduces motherhood clichés in the Turkish and Kurdish societies by implying that the responsibility for bringing up children lies with the mother. Neither does she take into consideration the social pressures women may face when raising their sons. Although Shafak stated that she desired to write the novel based on universal values, not only the values of the narrated society, in her speech at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in 2012 she focused on strictly patriarchal societies and the involvement of women in honour crime. In her talk, Shafak stated that, for her, *Honour* is 'more than an honour killing story, it is the story of a family.' She wanted to reflect her observations that 'not only in Turkey but perhaps around the world, but particularly in strictly patriarchal societies, […] people hurt the people who are closest to them, the people they love in fact.' In the novel, Shafak draws attention to 'mother son relationships in a patriarchal society' as she thinks that women often 'take a very active part in constructing masculinity in a certain way. They raise their sons in a certain way and those sons end up being […] more masculinist but the women also play a role in the […] continuity of this system.' According to Shafak, the situation is much more complicated than 'men are oppressors and women are oppressed'; hence she wants to 'take a critical look at the role of women, women of different generations' and their role in the maintenance of patriarchal systems.[508] In this connection Esma is a vehicle to reflect Shafak's stance. Shafak stated that:

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[506] See: Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis 'Introduction' in *Women – Nation - State,* ed, by Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (Macmillan: London, 1989) on women as boundary holders and transmitters of culture in the private domain.

[507] Elif Şafak, 'Erkekliğin inşası' [Construction of Manhood], *Habertürk Pazar,* 13 February 2011, p. 4.

[508] Elif Shafak, *Elif Shafak (2012)* (2015) <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/media-gallery/item/elif-shafak-at-the-edinburgh-international-book-festival> [accessed 3 March 2015].

> Esma criticizes her mother, does not want to be like her mother. She is very angry with her mother for not intervening. I suppose, as readers, we feel the same as well. What if she could have stood firmer. They are very strong characters actually. They, however cannot stand firm against their beloveds. I, at least, wanted to examine these issues.[509]

In the novel and in her comments, Shafak points the fact that Iskender is not only the perpetrator of the crime but also the victim of the same crime. In the same vein, Pembe is not only the victim of the crime but also complicit in it.[510] Hence, I will divide the following discussion in two parts to focus first on the position of Pembe as a mother and then on Iskender as a killer.

II. Pembe as the Mother of a Sultan

'We, women, are not that innocent'[511] says Elif Shafak in an interview after the novel's publication, implying that Pembe as a mother is not that innocent and shares the responsibility for Iskender's crime by taking part in the construction of his masculinity. In another interview, Shafak makes it clear that this message reflects her real world view: 'In this novel, I wanted to explore how we hurt the people we love most. I focused on mother-son relationships, on how mothers raise their sons as the sultans in the house and how this ruins happiness of people in the

[509] Irmak Zileli, *Elif Şafak'la Söyleşi: En Zoru İskender Olmaktı* [An interview with Elif Shafak: The hardest thing was to be Iskender] (2015) <http://www.remzi.com.tr/kitapGazetesi.asp?id=3&ay=8&yil=2011&bolum=1> [accessed 11 February 2015].
[510] http://www.elifsafak.us/roportajlar.asp?islem=roportaj&id=366 Shafak, *Elif Shafak (2012)*
[511] Gamze Akdemir, ''Biz kadınlar da çok masum değiliz'' [We, women, are not that innocent], *Cumhuriyet*, 18 August 2011, <http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/diger/275236/_Biz_kadinlar_da_cok_masum_degiliz_.html> [accessed 19 February 2015].

long run.'[512]

Shafak's focus is the mother-son relationship which is shaped by cumulative attitudes of generations. As one of eight daughters, Pembe experiences her mother's anguish for having borne no sons. Her mother dies during labour in risking her life for a chance to give birth to a son. For Pembe, the valuelessness of being a daughter turns into the pride of being a mother to a son.

The representation of Pembe's motherhood is closely linked to the worldly reality in the setting of the novel. As Pembe is taken to hospital in Urfa, Turkey, we can deduce that the unnamed village is around Sanliurfa province. To deepen our understanding of how the importance of having sons to a woman portrayed in the novel, I refer to Carol Delaney's ethnographic study in Harran, a district of Sanliurfa. According to Delaney, in the villagers' belief system 'the spark of life' can only be transmitted via men. If men have sons this spark is transmitted from fathers to sons and carried down the generations, which makes the spark 'theoretically eternal'; hence, the significance of having sons is an essential part of the concept of heredity. Having children, especially sons, determines the status of man in the village and as a '"true" man' fathers of sons have more rights to decide on village affairs.[513] For a woman, having a son means that she has saved the lineage of her husband's family, which secures her status in the marriage and the family.[514] Hence, a woman gains power by giving birth, especially to sons, within the limits of her societal circumstances. Ilknur Mese interprets women's desire to have sons within this context as their wish to compensate for their powerlessness with the power ascribed to men. A related effect is that social pressure on men to be powerful ends with restrictive definitions of

[512] William Skidelsky, 'Elif Shafak: 'In Turkey, men write and women read. I want to see this change'', *The Guardian*, 8 April 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/apr/08/elif-shafak-honour-meet-the-author>[accessed 19 February 2015].
[513] Carol Delaney, *The Seed and the Soil: Gender and Cosmology in Turkish Village Society* (London: University of California Press, Ltd, 1991), p. 36.
[514] Delaney, *The Seed and the Soil*, p. 64.

masculinity that preclude the exposure of vulnerability or gentleness which may reveal a man to be weaker. She adds that 'femininity and its repercussion motherhood are something produced down the generations. More or less each new generation has been affected by this legacy.'[515]

More broadly in the Turkish context, Sevket Okten reminds us that not only in the Southeastern Anatolia Region[516] but in all parts of Turkey, bringing children into the world is one of the primary concerns of both men and women.[517] Cigdem Kagitcibasi's and Bilge Ataca's longitudinal research spanning three decades from 1970s to 2000s shows that with urbanization and changing family dynamics, 'son preference has been replaced by daughter preference.' According to their findings, son-preference is strongly linked to 'patriarchal family patterns' and financial expectations of parents from sons. 'This is because men are the main breadwinners.' When the 2003 and 1975 findings are compared, the 'economic/ utilitarian values of children' and material expectations from children decreases; and so does the need for sons.[518]

One can extrapolate that Pembe, who represents a woman brought up with the values of 1940s and 1950s rural Turkey, feels empowered by the manhood of her son. Her expectation about how her son should be is apparent from the naming scene in chapter 'Askander… Askander…' First, Pembe rejects naming her son on the basis of her dream and superstition. Pembe believes that her dead mother, Naze, is jealous of her having a son at her first birth, at the early age of seventeen,

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[515] İlknur Meşe, 'Katilini Yaratan Annelik: Elif Şafak'in "İskender" Adli Romanindan Yola Çikarak Türkiye'de Kadinlik Ve Erkeklik Rollerine Dair Bir Sorgulama' (Motherhood Creating Its Killer: Based On Elif Shafak's Novel "Alexander" Questioning The Femininity and Masculinity Roles In Turkey), *Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, 8/3, (2013), 399-411 (p. 400). Translation of the title is by the author of the article.

[516] The Southeastern Anatolia Region is one of Turkey's seven geographical regions and mostly populated by Kurds.

[517] Şevket Ökten, 'Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve İktidar: Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesinin Toplumsal Cinsiyet Düzeni' (Gender and Power: The System of Gender in Southeastern Anatolia), *Uluslararası Sosyal Aratırmalar Dergisi The Journal of International Social Research*, 2/8, (2009), 302-312 (p. 306). Translation of the title is by the author of the article

[518] Cigdem Kagitcibasi, Bilge Ataca, 'Value of Children and Family Change: A Three-Decade Portrait From Turkey', *Applied Psychology*, 54.3, (2005), 317-337.

and is watching her from heaven with envy. Afraid of Naze's ghost Pembe refuses to name her son, believing that if the baby does not have a name, the Angel of Death, Azrael, cannot find him. When her son reaches at the age of five, they are living in Istanbul. Adem argues that the boy will be ridiculed at the school if he is not given a name. Pembe agrees to give her son a name on the condition that she takes him to her village and asks for both her family's and twin's blessing, and the advice of three village elders before naming him. Village elders advise her to ask a stranger, who does not know anything about the family and Naze's ghost, to name him. To achieve this Pembe is sent to a nearby stream close to the village to wait for the first man who can cross it using an unsafe makeshift boat. To their surprise an old woman crosses the river. Pembe asks for her help, and the old woman gives two options:

> One is Saalim. Once upon a time there was such a sultan. He was a poet and a fine musician to boot. May your son, too, learn to appreciate beauty should he be given this name. […] The second is the name of the great commander who always marched in front of his soldiers, fought like a tiger, won every battle, destroyed all his enemies, conquered land after land, united the East and the West, the sunrise and the sunset, and was still hungry for more. May your son, too, be invincible and strong-willed, and preside over other men should he be named after him.'[519]

Pembe prefers the second name: her son is named after Alexander the Great so he is called Askender in Kurdish, Iskender in Turkish, and Alex when they emigrate to London. The meaning of Saalim given in the Turkish version of the novel is slightly different: 'One is Selim. Once upon a time there was such a sultan; both a poet and a composer. If you want your son to be tender

[519] Elif Shafak, *Honour* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), p. 25.

minded, benign and conscientious, give him this name.'[520] Discrepancies between the meanings of the names are more noticeable in the Turkish version. As the novel was first written in English then translated into Turkish, but was first published in Turkish, it is not clear which version takes precedence or the reason behind the changes. However, in the Turkish version, the two different names clearly symbolise gendered characteristics: Saalim symbolises femininity and Iskender symbolises masculinity. As Mese argues, the concept of masculinity has 'meanings like mind, power, will, achievement, activity, committing violence, acting independently, and knowing to rule the others. However, the concept of femininity […] has soft meanings like compassion, pity, conscience, peaceful, passivity, and sensuality.'[521]

As I have already suggested, in the context of classic patriarchy, the wish of a woman to have sons can be explained by her desire to gain legitimate power in the community of women that she is in, especially towards her mother-in-law and later on the daughters-in-law. To ensure power, the mother has to raise her son in compliance with traditional masculine roles. Pembe represents such a mother; hence she selects Iskender as her son's name and she agrees to name him only when there is a threat of her son's being humiliated by his friends at school. Her fear of humiliation overcomes her superstitious fear that Azrael may take her son's life, which shows how the prestige of her son is important to Pembe. She dignifies Iskender by calling him 'my sultan' and treats him as the apple of her eye. She does not allow for any shadow on Iskeder's masculinity. On the day of his circumcision Iskender, terrified with fear, climbs a tree to escape. Pembe rages:

'Come down, you rascal! You have shamed your father. All the boys have been

[520] Elif Şafak, *İskender*, trans. by Omca A. Korugan (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2001), p. 109.
[521] Meşe, p. 400.

> circumcised. You're the only one who acted like a baby.'
>
> […] 'You spoiled brat! Come down this minute or I'll break your bones! Don't you want to be a man?'
>
> […] 'No,' he said finally.[522]

As is clear from Pembe's words, circumcision is an exigency of being a man. Circumcision, 'an ancient rite usually suggested to have marked the entrance to manhood'[523] still has the meaning of the entrance to manhood in most parts of Turkey. As Delaney puts it, during circumcision 'pride and masculinity are focused on the penis.'[524] It is common to proudly say, 'You have become a man now/ Artik erkek oldun' after circumcision and to make the boy feel proud of himself with a big ceremony, dressed in special clothing. Becoming a man is attributed so much importance that a child has to endure the cutting, if possible, without fear or tears as showing emotions damages the masculine image. Emotions, weakness, fear and tears are associated with women, as men have to be strong and logical, not emotional. It is clear from the following quotation that Iskender's masculinity is constructed in such an environment and circumcision is the 'first test of [his] manliness'[525]:

> She had wept all morning, telling him how proud she was that her little boy was becoming a man. For that is what you became when you were circumcised: a man. Iskender couldn't understand for the life of him how he would become a man with one cut of a knife. […] With less you became more. Nor could he fathom why he was told not to cry, though it was clear he would be hurt – while

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[522] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 29
[523] William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: an Old Testament Covenantal Theology* (Devon: Paternoster Press, 1984), p. 74.
[524] Delaney, *The Seed and the Soil*, p. 85.
[525] Delaney, *The Seed and the Soil*, p. 85.

> his mother could weep to her heart's content, though absolutely nothing was happening to her.[526]

Pembe's reaction to Iskender's escape is understandable since cowardice has feminine qualities in Turkish culture, as shown in the phrase *kari gibi* (like a woman) meaning coward, renegade.[527]*Kari gibi kacmak* (running away like a woman), *kari gibi aglamak* (crying like a woman) are common expressions in Turkish to ridicule and challenge a man. Even, Iskender, at that age, thinks about what people would think when they have learned that he has died because of cowardice, 'not because of illness or accident like everyone else seemed to do', if he dies on the tree because of hunger or cold.[528] His thoughts reveal that the cause of his death matters more to him than dying itself: thus he attributes more importance to his pride than to his life.

When Iskender is found in the tree no one can bring him down except his mother. Pembe deceives him by promising that he will not be circumcised. First she hugs him with endearments like 'my son', '*Malamin*, my sultan', than she slaps him and says: 'Do not ever shame me again!'[529] In the Turkish publication the diction is more menacing: 'Look at me, don't you ever shame your father and ancestors again!'[530] While the Turkish translation stresses Iskender's responsibility to his ancestors and the transmissibility of shame to subsequent generations, the English version emphasises Pembe's shame of failing to raise her child in the appropriate way as it is the mother who is responsible and blamed for the actions of their children.

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[526] Shafak, *Honour*, pp. 26-27.
[527] Türk Dil Kurumu [The Turkish Language Association], *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük* [Dictionary of Contemporary Turkish] (2015) <http://www.tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_gts&arama=gts&kelime=kar%C4%B1%20gibi&uid=27974&guid=TDK.GTS.553dabba652002.57694838> [accessed 11 February 2015].
[528] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 28.
[529] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 30. *Mala min* is a Kurdish word meaning my house, in the English version of the novel it is written grammatically wrong.
[530] Şafak, *İskender*, p. 26. Translation is mine.

Blaming the mother for the child's actions or anything that goes wrong with children is a more familiar and tangible concept to a Western audience than shaming ancestors. Mother-blaming is very ancient and some psychoanalytic theories 'fit into a general tradition of blaming mothers'. A child's actions determine the mother's capability of motherhood: 'If good mothers produce good children, then bad children are produced by bad mothers.'[531] In Turkey, however, if a woman is labelled as a bad mother this means she neglects her socially and religiously enshrined duty. The common expression 'Paradise lies under the feet of the mother' is known by most of the people in Turkey even if they do not lead a religious life or are not concerned about religious requirements.[532]As Shafak puts it: "Motherhood is so sacred in Turkey. It must be perfect. There is no room for ups and downs."[533]

According to Ann Oakley, the sanctity of motherhood functions to 'validate existing social order.'[534] The idea suggesting that 'only women as mothers are, ever have been, or can be the proper people to rear children' is called the 'myth of motherhood' by Oakley. She explains how the myth works with reference to Lucy Philip Mair's cross cultural study of myth in *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*. According to Mair's study, myth holds traditional social values sacred and boosts them. Instead of clarifying or inquiring about the origins of social mentality and morals, it only restates and reaffirms. Mythical notions are constantly highlighted

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[531] Beverly Birns, Niza ben-Ner, *The Different Faces of Motherhood*, ed. by Beverly Birns, Dale F. Hay, 1st edn New York: Springer Science & Business Media, 1988), p. 58.
[532] The saying is derived from a Hadith narrated from Mu'awiyah bin Jahimah As-Sulami, Jahimah asked the Prophet: '"O Messenger of Allah! I want to go out and fight (in Jihad) and I have come to ask your advice." He said: "Do you have a mother?" He said: "Yes." He said: "Then stay with her, for Paradise is beneath her feet."', See: *The Book of Jihad* (2015) <http://sunnah.com/nasai/25/20> [accessed 3 February 2015].
[533] Rebecca Abrams, 'Elif Shafak: Motherhood is sacred in Turkey',*The Guardian*, 19 June, <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/jun/19/elif-shafak-turkey-40-rules-of-love> [accessed 8 February 2015].
[534] Ann Oakley, 'Myths of Woman's Place', in *Organisation and Identities: Text and Readings in Organisational Behaviour*, ed. by Heather Clark, John Chandler, Jim Barry, 1st edn. (London, Glasgow, Weinheim: Chapman & Hal, 1994), p. 169-177 (169).

to be sacred and they are 'perceived and transmitted as sacred'. In this way, protection of them is legitimized as an essential social responsibility. With this social responsibility, one can consider a mythical statement to be unalterable: 'it has always been and should always remain as they know it.' Regardless of its verifiability, 'myth stated as fact becomes fact: what is mythological appears real'. In this way women's traditional domestic identity of motherhood appears to be natural and is conserved firmly.[535]

The sacredness of motherhood is implied in *Honour* as the dead mothers Naze and Pembe are located in heaven in the minds of the characters. Even Esma, who is more sensitive to women's rights than other characters, sanctifies all mothers:

> … for she will be watching us, I'm sure. Mothers do not go to heaven when they die. They get special permission from God to stay around a bit longer and watch over their children, no matter what has passed between them in their brief mortal lives.[536]

The sacredness of motherhood does not exempt mothers from being blamed; rather it makes them more responsible because as mothers they need to perform their sacred duties. Though Pembe criticizes Naze's preachings about the modesty of women, she repeats them verbatim to Esma in London, which shows how one generation later, in a completely different environment, norms and values are passed from one generation to the other through the sacred responsibility of motherhood. Rothman argues that 'it is women's motherhood that men must control to maintain patriarchy' and sacred motherhood leaves no space for change; it is hence controlled in the way

[535] Oakley, 'Myths of Woman's Place', p. 169.
[536] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 3.

patriarch needs.[537] Pembe, as a child, questions her mother's words but in time she complies with social norms. She marries Jamila's lover, Adem, due to suspicions over the virginity of her twin. Pembe is aware of the consequences of breaching social rules. She experienced her sister's death when her sister, Hediye, was forced to commit suicide after eloping a man. Learning from such experiences, Pembe repeats her mother's words. Naze expresses that 'this world is cruel. It won't take pity on you' and states:

> It was all because women were made of the lightest cambric, […] whereas men were cut of thick, dark fabric. That is how God had tailored the two: one superior to the other. As to why He had done that, it wasn't up to human beings to question. What mattered was that the colour black didn't show stains, unlike the colour white, which revealed even the tiniest speck of dirt. By the same token, women who were sullied would be instantly noticed and separated from the rest, like husks removed from grains. Hence when a virgin gave herself to a man – even if he were the man whom she loved – she had everything to lose, while had absolutely nothing to lose.[538]

The kind of experiences that cause Naze to utter these words are not specified in the novel, yet while she is talking she is described as if she is thoughtful and longing to be somewhere else. As a mother she feels obliged to watch her daughters' honour: even if she is not the main protector, she is the one who should teach the requirements of society. The dichotomy of honour for men and women is clearly taught in this way.[539]

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[537] Barbara Katz Rothman, *Recreating Motherhood*, Revised edn (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2000), p. 15.
[538] Honour, p. 15-16.
[539] See also my analysis of dichotomous ideology of honour in Introduction to this thesis on p. 11.

Dichotomy of gender roles exists in all aspects of daily life in the novel. Esma is described by Iskender to have ideas on 'equal opportunity, social justice, women's rights …', and questions the authority of the father. For example, she protests the fact that only her father's name is written on the doorbell. But while Esma is anti-discrimination, she contradictorily blames only her mother when it comes to the behaviour of Iskender. In an argument with Iskender, she avows:

> Who says you have to keep an eye on me?' She snapped. 'I can take care of myself, thank you very much. It is all mum's fault. She raised you like this. *Malamin, berhamin*. And now you think you are the Sultan of Hackney!'[540]

Esma, here, reflects Shafak's point of view. As I argued earlier, Shafak wants to zoom in on the contribution of women, especially mothers, to the construction of masculinity. However, it should be borne in mind that Pembe, as a woman who is raised up with the values of classic patriarchy, tries to empower herself through the power of her son. As Kandiyoti puts it, under classic patriarchy 'women become experts in maximizing their own life chances' through 'patriarchal bargain.' In classic patriarchy, women's subjection to men is compensated by the control women achieve over younger women. Women's power, depending on their stage of life, makes senior women in the anticipation of power encourage and internalize this kind of patriarchy. 'However, women have access to the only type of labour power they can control, and to old-age security, through their married sons. Since sons are a woman's most critical resource, ensuring their life-

[540] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 219. *Berhamin* is miswritten and mistranslated as my lion in *Honour* as there is not such a word in Kurdish but from the sound and context I can infer that it is *berxa min* which means my lamb. Malamin is translated as my abode. It should have been written as mala min. These words are figurative expressions to demonstrate love and affection.

long loyalty is an enduring preoccupation.'[541] Regarding the challenges women face in a classic patriarchal society, one should question to what extent a mother can be accused of contributing to the traditionally masculine behaviour of a son which can lead to the victimhood of women.

III. Iskender the Great Killer

When Iskender is up a tree, as an escapee from circumcision, he sees a bird in the tree. He is portrayed to have the potential to protect or harm the little bird: 'He could have sheltered the bird, loved and protected it, but in one swift movement he could also have broken its neck.'[542] The line between caring and hurting is depicted to be very fine for Iskender in this scene.
According to Shafak, the scene is substantial, even if it seems to be incidental, for pointing to two potential opposite tendencies of Iskender and maybe of all human beings. Shafak remarks: 'They [antagonistic potentials] are both within us in our childhood. But the life we live, the circumstances we are in, what we have seen, what we have suffered, reveals either this side or that side of us.'[543] Shafak outlines life experiences of Iskender which reveal his vicious side and poses the question of what motivates someone to kill for honour. This question is important and its multifaceted answer requires scrutinising. Narrowing the versatility of the answer might end up with blaming specific groups, like blaming only rural communities or Muslims, without illuminating the real complexity of the catastrophic phenomenon of honour killing.

Shafak illuminates the mindset of the killer. This angle is vital to understanding the motives of the crime and the psychology of the perpetrator. By this means, the crime's prevention could potentially be more effective. However, the killer's perspective tends to be ignored, apart from in

[541] Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Bargaining with Patriarchy', *Gender and Society*, 2.3, (1988), 274-290.
[542] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 28.
[543] Shafak in Zileli, (para 12 of 42).

fiction. As Jacqueline Rose asks when evaluating the discussion of Maggie Gee on *Honour*, following Shafak's conversation with Sebnem Senyener at the Upper Wimpole Street Literary Salon, 'How often, outside fiction, are we invited to understand the perpetrator of violence?'[544]

The honour issue is mostly investigated in the context of women's rights, law, and cultural and anthropological studies. Studies of the perpetrators of honour killings are quite limited. Generally speaking, in the mainstream media in the UK, Turkey and beyond, the images of the victims and the perpetrators are covered in a way to catch attention by remarking on the extreme violence of the case.[545] Interviewer Irmak Zileli, while interviewing Shafak, confessed that, after reading *Iskender*, she realised that she had never thought of a killer as a human being before, especially after reading the type of news that news broadcasters highlight with regards to honour killings.[546] Zileli's words indicate how *Honour (Iskender),* as a literary work, encourages readers to consider an aspect of honour killing which is often not thought about or called to one's attention.

Indeed, there are only a few texts which focus on honour killers in Turkey.[547]One of them is journalist researcher Ayse Onal's book entitled *Honour Killing: Stories of Men Who Killed* which

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[544] Jacqueline Rose, *Women in Dark Times* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014), p. 157.
[545] See recent examples: A news article from *Hindustan Times* on Msn page: Chitleen K Sethi, *Blood and honour: When 'parent' turns into monstrous killer* (2015) <http://www.msn.com/en-in/news/national/blood-and-honour-when-parent-turns-into-monstrous-killer/ar-AAdLmkU> [accessed 1 November 2015].
Allan Hall, ''I'm too young to die': Chilling last words of gang rape victim 'butchered by her own family in honour killing'',*Mirror,* 7 October 2015 (2015) <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/im-young-die-chilling-last-6589673> [accessed 2 November 2015].
Allan Hall, 'Muslim father strangled daughter, 19, to death in 'honour killing' after she was caught stealing condoms for sex with her forbidden boyfriend in Germany', *Daily Mail,* 28 September 2015 (2015) <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3251787/Muslim-father-strangled-daughter-19-death-honour-killing-caught-stealing-condoms-sex-forbidden-boyfriend-Germany.html> [accessed 2 November 2015].
Ihlas News Agency, 'Cani koca adaletten kaçamadı' [Slayer husband could not flee from justice], *Hurriyet,* 18 August 2015 (2015) <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/cani-koca-adaletten-kacamadi-29844794> [accessed 2 November2015].
[546] Zileli, (para. 3 of 42).
[547] During my research, I have found few works focusing directly on perpetrators of honour killings; there are only a few researches which partly deal with this issue like Unni Wikan's *In Honour of Fadime: Murder and Shame.* See: Unni Wikan, *In Honor of Fadime: Murder and Shame*, trans. by Anna Peterson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

was first published in 2008 in the UK. The book is the first research to focus on the perpetrators of honour killings.[548] While telling the real stories of honour killings, she mingles real interviews with fictional narrations. For instance, she reveals the thoughts of the victims who have already passed away. Onal's book was published in 28 countries during a span of four years.[549] The interest of the book might be related to the rarity of the material seeing as it directly focuses on honour killers in particular. Another important study is the one conducted by Mazhar Bagli et al., which is the first field-work in Turkey carried out with perpetrators in prisons. It was conducted with the support of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey.[550]

Bagli and Ozensel point out that existing social values prevent both the victims and the perpetrators of honour killings from having an independent life. While the victims lose their lives for their breaking the rules of their society, the killers, for fear of losing their social status and roles, feel so much pressure that they obey the values and rules of society even if they require them to kill their loved ones. Bagli warns that the media when referring to killings, often describe them in terms of "ferocity" and "barbarity", thus distancing perpetrators from ordinary people.[551]I would argue that, it is important to remember that honour killers are not monsters but that they are usually ordinary people who are motivated by their society to kill for honour. The killer's feelings and motivations should be investigated further to understand the nature of the phenomenon. *Honour* (*Iskender*) reminds the reader that honour killers are human and can feel

[548] Ayse Onal, *Ayşe Önal Gazeteci* (2009) <http://tr.duvarlarinarkasinda.com/roportajlar/ayse_onal/> [accessed 24 July 2016].
[549] Telesiyej, 'Ayşe Önal'ın 'Namus Cinayetleri' kitabı, 27 ülkede yayımlandıktan sonra Türkiye'de' [Ayse Onal's *Honour Killings* is in Turkey after being published in 27 countries], *Taraf*, 28 September 2015, (2015) <http://arsiv.taraf.com.tr/yazilar/telesiyej/ayse-onal-in-namus-cinayetleri-kitabi-27/20488/> [accessed 2 November 2015].
[550] Ihlas News Agency, 'Türkiye'de namus ve töre cinayetleri' [Honour and Torah Killings in Turkey], *Haber Turk,* 2 September 2008, (2015) <http://www.haberturk.com/yasam/haber/94963-turkiyede-namus-ve-tore-cinayetleri>[accessed 2 November 2015].
[551] Bağlı, M., and Özensel, E. (2011). *Türkiye'de töre ve namus cinayetleri: Töre ve namus cinayeti işleyen kişiler üzerine sosyolojik bir araştırma* [Honour killing in Turkey: a sociological research on honour killers]. İstanbul: Destek Yayınevi.

remorse and suffer from the killing that they committed. Most probably, they have, in all likelihood, felt pressured into killing one of the persons they loved the most.

Iskender's love towards his mother is depicted as being deep, indeed Oedipal from childhood into his teenage years. At the time when he runs away before his circumcision, he only thinks about his mother's hands 'combing his wavy, chestnut hair, making yoghurt in clay cups, caressing his cheeks, moulding figurines out of pastry dough.'[552] Obviously, leaving his mother behind is the hardest thing for him to overcome. When he is found in a tree, Pembe tells him that no one will marry him if he is not circumcised. He, however, desires a wife who looks like his mother but who never reprimands him. Iskender always exerts himself to be the way that his mother would appreciate. His mother wants him to be like the men whom society desires (that is, psychologically strong and fearless). When, as a small child, his mother takes him to a *hammam*, he feels frightened by the steam, the echoes, and the naked bodies:

> Terrified, I hurried out. Mum caught me, shook me hard. 'Where are you going?'
> 'I do not like it here.'
> 'Don't be silly. I don't call you sultan for nothing,' she said. 'Behave like a sultan or I will call you a clown instead.'[553]

Pembe threatens Iskender by withdrawing her love for him if he does not behave like a sultan. As we remember from the naming scene, he is required to be a fighter who wins every battle. In the end, Iskender becomes a boxer in his teenage years in London. His attachment to his mother and

[552] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 27.
[553] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 105.

his Oedipal feelings towards her still exist during these years. One day, he questions his mother's feelings towards his father; at that time, his feelings disturb him: 'I saw how pretty she was. You don't normally notice your mother's beauty. But that day I saw it plain and clear. It made me uneasy. A strange fear gripped me at that moment, and I didn't like it.'[554] When the father leaves the family, Iskender takes his place in his stead and is, therefore, entitled to be the head of the family. 'I was the head of the family since Dad had gone off and I didn't want her to work anymore. She cried a lot but didn't resist. She knew I had my reasons. People were gossiping. Where there's smoke, there's fire. So I told her to stay home. I had to put out the flames.'[555]

What matters for Iskender at the time is to stop community gossip. Seeing as he is the man of the family, he does not want to be humiliated. By prohibiting his mother to go out, he states his authority. When Iskender suspects that his mother has breached his authority by accepting her lover into their home, he does not want to be called a sultan anymore: 'Don't call me that, I wanted to say. Don't call me anything.' Since being a sultan requires ruling and having authority, Iskender feels that he does not have any control. According to Unni Wikan, honour killings are not related to 'jealousy' but 'power and control.' 'To get back in control you must show who holds the reins, who is lord and master.'[556] However, as I discussed in my Introduction, it is not easy to separate jealousy and power as motives for honour killings. Jealousy increases the anger towards the one who breaches the rules and can be related to losing control over the feelings of the disobeyer. When Iskender assumes that Pembe's lover, Elias, is at their home, he suffers from the thought of not being his mother's beloved anymore: 'She used to love me more than anything – her first child, first son, roniya chavemin. Everything was different now. Ruined. A tear rolled

[554] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 102.
[555] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 50.
[556] Wikan, p. 16.

down my cheek. I slapped myself to stop it. But it didn't help. I slapped again, harder.'[557] As a solution, Iskender decides to scare them and show that what they were doing was a mortal sin:

> I could sense her movements, touch her guilt, smell her shame. We waited like that for God knows how long, listening to each other breathe, wondering what the other might be thinking. Then she was gone – as if she had nothing to say, no explanation owed, as if my opinion didn't count anyway, or my anger, or my pain. She walked away from me.
>
> That's when I knew what Uncle Tariq had told me about my mother was true.
>
> That's when it occurred to me to buy the knife. […]
>
> I wasn't gonna hurt anyone. I only wanted to scare her – or him.[558]

When Iskender sees his aunt in the street, thinking that she is her mother, he feels humiliated by her mother's repudiating his control: 'A surge of resentment rose inside me. Had I not told her that she was forbidden to go out, that she could not wear dresses that showed her legs? And here she was defying my rules, making fun of me.'[559] This time he feels his rules are being broken outside the house in a public space. The publicity of the humiliation generally determines the severity of the punishment in honour crimes as, 'at the heart of the matter lies a feeling of shame and degradation, of having been offended and humiliated, laughed at, and made to look ridiculous in full view of the public.'[560] By stabbing Jamila, Iskender reclaims his authority in the public eye and avoids public shame.

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[557] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 51. Roniya chavemin is translated as 'the light of my eye.' Correct writing of the word is ronîya çavê min.
[558] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 51.
[559] Shafak, Honour, p. 250.
[560] Wikan, p. 19.

If we consider the pressure of public shame, humiliation, and the loss of reputation involved in honour crime, it is arguably unfair to convict only the killer (or killers). Honour killings are collective, social crimes in societies in which honour is supposedly determined by the sexual behaviour of its women.

IV. Politics of Reception

Honour was both praised and criticized in Turkey and internationally. It was nominated for the Man Asian Literary Prize in 2012; longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2013; and longlisted for the International Impac Dublin Literary Award in 2014. *Honour* has been evaluated more positively at the international level than it has been in Turkey. Maureen Freely's review for The Guardian suggests that Shafak's 'portrayal of Muslim cultures, both traditional and globalising, is as hopeful as it is politically sophisticated,' for which Shafak deserves a world audience.[561] Alev Adil, in a review for The Independent, praises *Honour* as 'an extraordinarily skilfully crafted and ambitious narrative, with Shakespearean twists and turns, omens and enigmas, prophecies and destinies fulfilled.' Adil, however, describes the characterisation of minor characters as 'broad-brush' and she mentions some minor historical flaws related to 1970s London subculture. She also highlights inconsistencies in characterization like the fact that Pembe allows seven-year-old Yunus to disappear for hours, and does not notice his tattoo for months.[562] According to Ammara Khan, although *Honour* is not a good example of magic realism 'as the crying spiritualism of which is too much to digest,' it 'offers everything that you would expect from a good novel' with 'vivid storytelling.' Khan criticizes the frequent use of

[561] Maureen Freely, 'Honour by Elif Shafak – review', *theguardian*, 20 April 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/apr/20/honour-elif-shafak-review> [accessed 5 February 2015].
[562] Alev Adil, 'Honour, By Elif Shafak', *The Independent*, 6 April 2012, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/honour-by-elif-shafak-7621922.html> [accessed 7 April 2015].

coincidence and 'shoehorning in [of] solutions to jarring questions' in the final pages.[563]

Although I have found international critical reception of the novel fairer in terms of critiques of its style, I have also observed that international critics are more hesitant to criticize issues in the novel related to the representation of culture and its plotting. In this regard, my reading has added an insightful understanding of the novel, specifically focused on its representation of Turkish honour culture.

Literary criticism in Turkey has also been affected by the debates and arguments surrounding, but not directly related to, *Honour*. Since the popularity of the author has increased more than that of her literary work, some newspaper critics have stated that they could not focus on the book due to loosely related debates about it.[564] Still, in Turkey there are some critics focused on the content of the novel. One of the harshest critiques has been made by Fuat Bozkurt in the magazine *Hece Dergisi*. According to him, the novel is full of Orientalist constructions and 'artificial and ridiculous' tales. Also by giving significant examples of historical mistakes related to the years portrayed, Bozkurt states that the novel has no persuasiveness and Shafak is far from the 'Anatolian truth' (referring to Historical and rural life of Turkey).[565]

Cem Kucuk with his review in *Yeni Şafak* newspaper argues that Elif Shafak has good potential as a writer and that she raised expectations with her novel *Baba ve Pic* (*The Bastard of Istanbul*)

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[563]Ammara Khan, *Review: Honour by Elif Shafak* (2015) <http://www.dawn.com/news/766780/review-honour-by-elif-shafak> [accessed 10 March 2015].
As a reader and critic, I think the use of coincidence is a part of Shafak's writing style.

[564] Buket Asci, 'Elif Şafak tartışması' [Discussions on Elif Shafak], *Vatan*, 6 August 2011 (2015) <http://www.gazetevatan.com/buket-asci-732256-yazar-yazisi-elif-safak-tartismasi> [accessed 10 March 2015].

[565] For example, Pembe's village is portrayed to have a tea house, however, Bozkurt highlights that tea was not a common beverage at the years portrayed and there were not any tea houses in villages, around that time.
See:Bozkurt, 'Elif Şafak, yazar olalı böyle eleştiri görmedi' [Elif Shafak has never received such acriticism], <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/Elif_Safak_yazar_olali_boyle_elestiri_gormedi/248384#.VUQwqv lVjBH>.

but that after the popularity and the success she gained with that novel, she has completely pandered to popularity. As an example, Kucuk mentions that international interest in Kurdish issues has awoken in recent years and suggests that by picking Kurdish characters, Shafak draws international interest deliberately and capitalises on this.[566] In this respect I partly agree with Kucuk as, in the International Impac Dublin Literary Award ceremony and in the introduction on the webpage of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, the fact that the family is a half Kurdish half Turkish family is masked and the book is presented as a story of a Kurdish family. At the Edinburgh International Book Festival, by contrast, Shafak indicated that she chose a half Turkish half Kurdish family on purpose, as it is perceived in Turkey that the honour problem only belongs to Kurds, but she believes this problem is universal. However, while Shafak points out the cliché of attributing honour crimes to Kurds, she does not avoid involving a Kurdish mother in the crime as the constructor of the criminal. The ethnic choice of the mother supports stereotypes about Kurdish people as the story is focused on the mother-son relationship and the mother's part in maintaining social rules.

Another issue which should be highlighted is that, neither in the novel nor in interviews with Shafak, is there any critical statement about the father's shared responsibility for child rearing, maybe because of the author's personal experience of being brought up by a single mother. A problematic approach both in Shafak's novel and interviews is to point only to mothers as the rearers of the future generations and to distance fathers from the responsibility. Due to this, there may be an increased tendency to blame the mother in a similar way to blaming women in the cases of rape, domestic violence and honour crimes with the idea that 'she must have done

[566] Cem Küçük, 'Bir hayal kırıklığı olarak Elif Şafak' [Elif Shafak as a disappointment], *Yeni Şafak,* 28 September 2014 <http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/cemkucuk/bir-hayal-kirikligi-olarak-elif-safak-56112> [accessed 15March 2015].

something wrong'.

Throughout *Honour,* the masculine values imposed on Iskender by Pembe and the role of the mother in the construction of manhood are clearly pointed out. However, by contrast, the pressure and role of wider society in constructing manhood and womanhood is only hinted at. The fact that Shafak criticised mothers on their role in the sustainability of the patriarchal values in her extra-textual comments, raises doubts with regards to her being even-handed while tackling the issue.[567] On the one hand, giving women an active role in the construction of honour values shows the power of women, implying that if women want to change society, they can. However, we can see that the power ascribed to women in the novel is similar to '*qaid* power' explained by Fatima Mernissi. As I discussed in Introduction to this thesis, in the concept of *qaid* power, women have power but this power is the source of the disorder and the problems in the society.[568] On the other hand, however, in the novel the individual's challenges in attempting to change societal values are ignored.

If it were not for Iskender's criticism of a journal article on his crime, it could have been assumed that the novel maps the mother as being the first culprit. However, careful readers can comprehend that Iskender's words suggest the issue is more complex. Iskender is angry after reading a newspaper article blaming his mother:

> Then she goes and pens the shittiest article. I was mucked around with as a child. It was all Mum's fault: as the elder son, I had been spoiled by her. 'This is a typical case of Middle Eastern patriarchal tradition,' blah, blah, blah. I was

[567] Elif Shafak, 'Erkekliğin inşası (Construction of Manhood)', *Haber Turk,* (13 February 2011), <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/elif-safak/600544-erkekligin-insasi> [accessed 24 July 2016].
[568] Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond The Veil,* p. 32-33.

> so irritated I never spoke to a journalist again. They're not really interested in the truth. All they want to do is to fit you into the story that's already in their minds.[569]

The fact that Shafak tackles the issue from a perspective on the construction of manhood is noteworthy as generally the responsibility of women in sustaining patriarchal values and the pressure that men feel in the patriarchal system are overshadowed by the poignancy of women's suffering. However, as the issue is sensitive I find the representation disputable in terms of focalising more on the mother's responsibility in the crime. Besides, Iskender changes for the better through the novel by regretting and suffering for the crime which he committed at a young age; hence, he gains the sympathy of the reader. Pembe, however, before and after the killing, lives the life of her twin and does not show that much change and her suffering is not depicted in an emphatic way.

Sohret Baltas criticizes Elif Shafak for forwarding the responsibility of honour killings onto Kurdish people and women. Baltas argues that Shafak, unfortunately, entraps readers with her fictionalised themes as these themes may be received as an eye-opener by younger readers, who do not have any perspective on the honour issue. Especially in Turkey, there is an institutional vindication of males. For instance, in a recent court decision, 12 year old C.Y, who was threatened and sexually abused for three years by seven men, was found unbelievable because of hiding recurring sexual assault.[570] In 2002, when a resolution on violence against women was discussed by Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament), Sare Davutoglu, wife of Ahmet

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[569] Elif Shafak, *Honour* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 136.
[570] Bahar Kiliçgedik, 'Mahkeme tecavüze uğrayan kızı suçlu buldu!' [Raped girl was found guilty by the court], *Taraf*, 17 May 2015 (2015) <http://www.taraf.com.tr/mahkeme-tecavuze-ugrayan-kizi-suclu-buldu/> [accessed 24 August 2015].

Davutoglu[571] stated in an interview that: 'We learned in central Anatolia that a real man does not batter his wife. Women also make mistakes, we raise those men.'[572] When criticizing women in such an environment as Turkey, strengthening prejudices should be avoided because in Turkey there is a tendency to justify the violence of men and accuse women in crimes against them.

V. Conclusion

Although I have criticized the fact that Shafak focuses predominantly on the mother's role in the crime at the heart of this novel and her selection of a Kurdish mother, I find *Honour* valuable in humanising the lives of honour killers. The narrated society's pressure on individuals to behave in a certain way restricts their choice. If individuals do not meet social requirements, then they are excluded and fall from grace. As they are no longer respected, they lose their social power. For centuries, in various societies, there has been honour or humiliation related crimes. As the pressure on individuals are so devastating that, philosopher – Immanuel Kant – suggested that people have the right to demand the esteem of others to avoid their scorn and humiliation, hence, crimes related to honour and shame should be punished less harshly.[573] However, accepting shame as mitigation, and emphasizing its pressure on the killer have made honour crimes more honourable in the eyes of the public, thereby encouraging the killers. In these circumstances, what can be done to halt honour killings? In the novel, *Honour*, the lines between crime, victim, and perpetrator are blurred, suggesting that the solution to the problem should include all parties. *Honour* suggests that, in order to eliminate honour killings, killers should first be understood.

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[571] The foreign affairs minister of the time (2012).
[572] Zeynep Gürcanlı, '"Kadınlarımızda da hata var... Çünkü o erkekleri biz yetiştiriyoruz"', *Hürriyet*, 7 March 2012, (2015) <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kadinlarimizda-da-hata-var-cunku-o-erkekleri-biz-yetistiriyoruz-20074019> [accessed 22 July 2015].
[573] Marianna Muravyeva, 'Vergüenza, Vergogne, Schande, Skam and Sram: Litigating for Shame and Dishonour in Early Modern Europe', in *Shame, Blame, and Culpability: Crime and Violence in the Modern State: Volume 1 of Routledge SOLON Explorations in Crime and Criminal Justice Histories*, ed. by Judith Rowbotham, Marianna Muravyeva, David Nash (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 18.

This is particularly important given that studies on the perspectives of killers are limited. Wikan's anthropological study on honour killings in Sweden is exemplary due to its inclusion of multiple perspectives on the killings. A murderer who killed his wife and was sentenced to twelve years claimed that 'it was hammered into boys like him, from childhood on, that if a female brought dishonor [sic.] on the family, she must be killed—whether daughter, sister, cousin, or wife.' What he adds to his comments is vital. He states that: 'We need a new concept of honor.'[574] Indeed, in light of our analysis of *Honour*, a reconceptualization of honour does seem appropriate.

[574] Wikan, p. 14.

Chapter Five: Synoptic Chapter

Literary and Social Perspectives on Honour Killings: A Comparative Analysis

I. Introduction:

The aim of this chapter is to highlight, through further and more synoptic analysis of the four novels dealt with in the previous chapters, some key issues concerning honour killings. In particular, the focus will be on the relationship between the literary works and social, political, legal, economic and cultural discourses surrounding honour killings. Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia outline Edward Said's humanist criticism method: 'the world from which the text originated, the world with which it was affiliated, was crucial,' for its readers and critics, 'not only for the business of interpretation but also for its ability to make an impact on its readers'.[575] Building on this quotation, I will also focus on the relationship between the author, the literary text and the reader, considering ways in which literary texts might reinforce or challenge social, political, legal, economic and cultural perspectives on honour killing, and how literary texts might play a vital role in the political reception of the text by urging the reader towards a specific socio-political conviction.

In the previous four chapters, I have examined four novels: *Bliss* by O. Zulfu Livaneli, *My Name is Salma* by Fadia Faqir, *Maps for Lost Lovers* by Nadeem Aslam, and *Honour* by Elif Shafak, all of which concern themselves with the subject of honour killings. I have aimed to investigate both how honour killings are portrayed in literature and also how literature throws light on the

[575] Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia, *Edward Said* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 27.

problem of honour killings in the specific context of motives based on the notions of purity, identity, diasporic identity and masculinity. In each chapter, I have scrutinised one of the aforementioned novels under a specific thematic rubric in order to analyse it in relation to a specific geographical and cultural context. This has enabled me to move between specific and general aspects of honour notion, in order to structure a cognitive map through which to understand the issue of honour killing.

As honour killing is regarded as a 'cleansing process' by the killers and entails an assumed stain, namely impurity resulting from dishonourable behaviour on the collective honour of the family or community, my first focal point in the thesis is the notion of purity in honour killings.[576] In most cases of honour killings, the assumed stain is usually assigned to the woman involved, and attached to her purity, wherein female honour is synonymous with 'sexual chastity before – and infidelity during – marriage'.[577] In my first chapter, I focused specifically on the concept of female purity in honour killings, by exploring *Bliss* by Livaneli, in order to understand how discourses of purity and impurity are constructed in the novel and also how the protagonist Meryem's sexual impurity stains the family honour and opens the way for an honour killing. In the second chapter, I went on to discuss how the threat of personal impurity can affect communal identity by exploring the relation between the notion of collective identity and honour killings within the context of Fadia Faqir's third novel *My Name is Salma*. Next, in the third chapter, I elaborated on the effect of diaspora on honour killings, through my examination of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*, by discussing how the anxiety of the characters against the threat of loss in a diasporic community is depicted and how concerns related to loss contribute to

[576] Nazand Begikhani, Aisha K. Gill, and Gill Hague, *Honour-Based Violence: Experiences and Counter-Strategies in Iraqi Kurdistan and the UK Kurdish Diaspora* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 32.
[577] Dietrich Oberwittler and Julia Kasselt, 'Honor Killings', in *The Oxford Handbook of Gender, Sex, and Crime*, ed. by Rosemary Gartner and Bill McCarthy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 652- 671 (653).

honour killings. Finally, in the fourth chapter of the thesis, I have asked the question as to how anyone can kill their loved ones in the name of honour as represented in Elif Shafak's *Honour* through the analysis of the concepts of victimhood and culpability in violence against women with a specific focus on honour killings. Each chapter deals with one crucial aspect of honour killings so that we comprehend, in detail, what motivates honour killings that is, their underlying causes.

In this chapter I will bring the focal parts discussed in the previous chapters together in order to undertake a synoptic analysis of the novels and socio-cultural contexts explored in this thesis. When we comparatively analyse the literary texts incorporated in this thesis and compare them with social, legal, economic, cultural and political discourses pertaining to honour killings, there are some common and contradicting points which should be contemplated to see how questions related to honour killings are raised through the medium of fiction and how fiction expands our understanding of honour killings.

In this final chapter, I encapsulate the crucial points related to honour killings which I derived from the various discussions of honour killings. Firstly, as honour killings are often described to be an 'inhuman practice' or monstrous act, I question the (in)humanity of the killer during their act of killing or killing attempt.[578] I then continue by investigating how the relationship between

[578] Within the context of international human rights law, honour killing is considered to be in violation of human rights, and the act of killing is often described as inhuman: See examples: Nasir-ul-Mulk, '"Honour" Killing',in *Bringing International Human Rights Law Home: Judicial Colloquium on the Domestic Application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, ed. by United Nations. Division for the Advancement of Women (New York: United Nations Publication, 2000), pp. 175- 178 (175). Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain, 'Introduction: "Honour", rights and wrongs',in *'Honour': Crimes, Paradigms and Violence against Women*, eds. by Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (London: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 1- 22. As I discussed in Chapter Four, p. 22, there is a tendency to describe killers as monstrous in news coverage. See, for example: Chitleen K Sethi, 'Blood and Honour: When "Parent" Turns Into Monstrous Killer', *http://www.hindustantimes.com/*, 2015 <http://www.hindustantimes.com/chandigarh/blood-and-honour-when-parent-turns-into-monstrous-killer/story-G2rZVA3vqrX3Q7211RA60L.html> [accessed 9 April 2016]. Another example is the news report on Rania Alayed by BBC News. The killer, Rania's husband is described as a

religion and honour killings is portrayed before exploring how religion affects characters' likelihood of perpetrating honour killings. These points will be pursued through comparative analysis of literary texts with references to related social, political, legal, economic and cultural discussions of honour.

II. The (In)humanity of the Killer:

When anthropologist Unni Wikan was researching the honour killing of Fadime Sahindal, who had been killed in Sweden in 2002, she felt disturbed by the feeling that she was sympathising with the people for whom she did not want to have any compassion.[579] When the literary texts included in this thesis are examined, it can be argued that the same disturbance might have affected the authors when they selected the decision maker figures who decides that honour killing has to be committed. It is always an inhumane figure who decides on the killing. If the prospective killer character is someone who can be sympathised with, then he is portrayed as reluctant and as enacting the will of another, patriarchal figure.

Of the four literary works I have explored in previous chapters, two of them, *Honour* and *Bliss*, have hesitant and reluctant characters in charge of the killing: Iskender and Cemal, respectively. Both fail to fulfil their duty to kill. Turkish writers, Shafak and Livaneli, focus on the story of the killers but also posit the figure of the uncle as the one who pushes the prospective killers into the act of killing. The hypocrisy of the figure of the uncle is especially underscored by these two Turkish writers.

'murderous monster' by Rania's uncle in the news video and his words are emphasised by BBC News as you can see his words through the news video as a subtitle. 'Rania Alayed Murder: Husband Jailed for "Honour Killing"', *BBC News*, 2016 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-27662204> [accessed 9 April 2016].

[579] Wikan, p. 7.

In Shafak's *Honour*, Iskender's uncle, Tariq, is the instigator of the honour killing depicted in the text, wherein he pushes Iskender to be the man of the family, to control his mother, Pembe, and to prevent her from having a lover. However, Tariq encourages Iskender to commit an honour killing, he pretends as if he has never done so after the killing. Iskender calls his uncle, Tariq, after stabbing his aunt under the mistaken assumption that he is stabbing his mother. Uncle Tariq condemns Iskender for his act: ''What have you done, son?' His voice sounded strangled. 'This is terrible.'' Iskender narrates his astonishment at his uncle's words as his uncle changes his stance completely before and after the stabbing:

> I was taken aback. 'Bb . . . but . . . wee . . . ttt . . . alk . . . ed ab . . . ab . . . ou . . . ttt . . . this.'
>
> 'Surely we did not,' my uncle said.
>
> The man who had told me everything and then impressed upon me, over and over again, that I had to do something and do it soon, had vanished into thin air.
>
> I was stunned.[580]

It is clear from Uncle Tariq's denial that he does not want to take any legal responsibility as he says over the phone: 'Iskender, son, you have to turn yourself in. I'll tell the police this is exactly what I told you when you rang me. You cannot run from the law!'[581] With his words, Tariq's hypocrisy is discerned by Iskender and underscored for the reader.

In Livaneli's *Bliss*, it is implied throughout the novel that Meryem's uncle is not only devious as

[580] Shafak, *Honour*, pp. 247- 248.
[581] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 248.

a religious leader but also as a father and as an uncle. The reader understands from the first chapter that the hypocrical uncle has raped Meryem when the omniscient narrator narrates Meryem's dream at the time of rape, when she is unconscious, in the form of a hallucination mixed with reality.[582] Later on, other aspects of the uncle's life are portrayed through other characters when the story advances to show that he is immoral in other respects. He is portrayed as a ruthless character without good manners. Meryem's uncle, a sheikh of a religious order, imposes the death penalty on Meryem and coerces his son, Cemal, to kill her for being raped, while at the same time hiding the fact that he is the rapist. The sheikh's religious identity is questioned by Selahattin, an outsider of the village. Selahattin is an army friend of Cemal's and suspects that Cemal's father could be a 'false sheikh' because he does not find Cemal's explanation related to his father's teachings reasonable. Selahattin is a 'deeply religious' person who has 'studied the Quran for eight years' and who is 'a member of the Ushaki sect', yet, he has 'never heard of the Cemaliye sect, of which Cemal's father was spiritual leader'.[583] Selahattin's suspicions transmitted to the reader through the omniscient narrator serve as an evidence for the deviousness of the sheikh as Selahattin is portrayed as a knowledgeable religious man. When it comes to the sheikh's actions as a father, there is an implication that Cemal's brother, Yakup, has experienced or witnessed something related to his father which has resulted in him taking a dislike to his father and the village. Yakup is settled in Istanbul and never wants to return. Yakup talks to Cemal 'bitterly and demeaningly' about his village and the people living there and Cemal warns his brother to be more careful of what he says, especially because Yakup's words apply to their father as well. Yakup reacts:

> "That father of ours!" Yakup exclaimed looking sternly at Cemal.

[582] See p. 67 of this thesis.
[583] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 102.

> Cemal did not understand what Yakup meant, but he felt that his older brother was harbouring some grief from the past.[584]

It is obvious that Yakup does not want the sheikh to be his father. At the end of the novel the first direct allegation related to the sheikh is verbalised openly when the professor is having a row with Cemal. The professor discloses Meryem's secret which he has discovered from Meryem's unconscious murmurs at a delirious moment. He addresses Cemal: '"It's your father who's the pervert! He raped his own niece!" […] "You idiot. Don't you realise that your father not only raped her but gave you the job of killing her?"'[585] The professor is the first character to openly verbalise dishonesty of the sheikh and he enables Cemal to see how his father misuses his power to cover up his own crime.

In these two novels, the men in charge of the killings are portrayed to be deluded by cruel patriarchal figures, such as a father or an uncle, and the female protagonists who are under threat from honour killings survive, although Iskender kills his mother's twin, Jamila, mistaking her for his mother, Pembe. Iskender's aim is not to kill but to wound his mother so that he can frighten and control her, but the stabbing turns out to be a fatal injury. Cemal, even if he attempts to kill Meryem, changes his mind about killing Meryem at the last minute.

The disinclination of the prospective honour killers is clearly portrayed in both novels. Iskender tries to find alternative ways of restoring male authority within the family, like banning his mother from going out, while Cemal resists his father's authority by sparing Meryem's life and

[584] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 307.
[585] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 500.

escaping with her. Both of the portrayed instigator uncles in *Bliss* and *Honour* are the elder brothers of the family and have authority over their younger brothers and each brother's family members. In *Honour,* Tariq interferes in the ruling of Adem's family when Adem neglects his household. Tariq thinks that he has to 'have a serious talk with Adem, that is, if he could find him. When a man neglected his home to this extent, the rest of the family might easily go off the rails'.[586] Tariq meddles for fear of being disgraced: 'Tariq would have to keep a close eye on Pembe and the kids. They shared the same surname. If one of them was disgraced, shame would attach itself to him as the eldest Toprak. Their honour was his honour'.[587] In *Bliss*, as Meryem's uncle is a sheikh, he is highly respected and his words are obeyed in the family and in the village. After the rape, Meryem's father 'was quiet and withdrawn, and her uncle dominated the family. No one, not even Meryem's father, dared to speak freely in front of him.'[588] Meryem's uncle is the undisputed ruler of the family.

Both uncles in the Turkish novels benefit from the act of killing by restoring their assumed honour without committing the murders themselves. All the responsibilities of killing are conferred on the nephew or the son, while the authoritative uncles maintain a Godlike status as they decide who should kill whom. Meryem's uncle tells his son Cemal that: '[…] it's up to you to put things right. […] Take the bitch to Istanbul and finish her off there'.[589] Uncle Tariq puts the idea into Iskender's head that he has to do something about his mother's affair.[590] While the two uncle figures are active in making a decision about honour killing, fathers do not have the power to avert killing, and they are not involved in the decision-making process behind the honour killing. Meryem's father, uncle and Cemal are in the same room when the uncle explains his

[586] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 154.
[587] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 154.
[588] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 21.
[589] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 161.
[590] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 248.

detailed plan about the honour killing but Meryem's father, Tahsin Agha, is silent: 'he had not uttered a word during the sheikh's speech. He did not say anything to support his older brother but just sat there in troubled silence.'[591] Hence, it can be argued that uncles are portrayed as monstrous: any humane feelings or inner conflict over the killing that they may have are undisclosed. Portrayed as a decision-making mechanism without any positive humane feelings, the figure of the uncle is dehumanised.

We should think about why it is the paternal uncles who give the verdicts on honour killing in these novels. The involvement of the extended family in the crime allows the killing to be organised in cold blood, as they may not have as close ties with the victim as do the members of the immediate family and so it does not seem unrealistic when emotions of the extended family members towards the killing are not revealed. More importantly, I would argue, the authoritative uncle figures point to the patriarchal system of the community, wherein, in classic patriarchy, the eldest man of the household rules the family.[592] This patriarchal system embodies the power of decision-makers and maintains itself by putting down resistance. As fathers with inner emotional conflicts have the potential to resist killing verdicts, they tend to be excluded from the decision-making process. Men in patriarchal systems are regarded and respected as long as they fit within them; if they do not, they can be ignored or humiliated or, in some cases, honour-related violence can also target them.[593] Meryem's father in *Bliss* is portrayed as silent and withdrawn, while Iskender's father, Adem, in *Honour* is not aware of the killing plan. When Iskender tells Adem about her mother's secret love affair, his father tries to calm Iskender down:

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[591] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 162.

[592] Valentine M Moghadam, *From Patriarchy to Empowerment* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2007),49. See also p. 180 of this thesis for the explanation of the term 'classic patriarchy'.
Karl Kaser, *Patriarchy after Patriarchy: Gender Relations in Turkey and in the Balkans, 1500-2000* (Berlin: Lit, 2008), p. 33.

[593] For instance, in the countries where honour killings exist, homosexual men can be suppressed and disrespected as they do not fit the gender norm and they can also become a target of honour killings as remarked in Introduction to this thesis.

> Adem put his hand on his son's knee. 'Look, I know you don't understand. Ten years ago, I would have been mad as hell. I would have done anything to stop it. But now I'm old enough to know I can't make your mother love me. She asked me several times for a divorce. I've ignored her request but it was the right thing to do.[594]

Iskender retorts: 'If you don't take care of this matter, then I will.' Adem does not take Iskender's words seriously at the time but, later, he remembers them with a 'piercing regret'.[595] When the honour killing is planned and performed, Adem is in Abu Dhabi and unaware of the plan. As a result, Adem blames himself for not preventing Iskender's murder of Pembe: 'He held himself responsible less for the things he had done for those he hadn't been able to'.[596] Iskender does not listen his father's advice on Pembe's love affair when he advises Iskender to leave his mother free in her choice. Hence, Adem is characterised as a father whose words are ignored as his words are not compatible with the patriarchal family structure of the Toprak family.

The uncles, by contrast, are presented as dehumanised authorities who have power to control some other characters. Fathers with humane emotions are powerless against them. As dehumanised subjects have the capacity to control humanised characters who have emotions, the capacity of human beings is challenged in the narrations. If we go back to Said's discussions of human capacity, Said tells us: 'no matter how apparently complete the dominance of an ideology or social system, there are always going to be parts of the social experience that it does not cover

[594] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 259.
[595] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 259.
[596] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 298.

and control.'[597] The power mechanism of dehumanised characters works as long as it breaks down the resistance of humanised characters. If the power mechanism cannot break down the resistance, as will be shown in more detail shortly, then it cannot control the humanised characters.

As I have indicated, Shafak's and Livaneli's novels also feature hesitant characters who are appointed to carry out the honour killing. However, resistance to the verdicts of patriarchal bodies potentially prevents the smooth running of patriarchal rule of the uncles. Therefore, the hesitance of these perpetrators must be overcome so that they take action and the patriarchal status quo is sustained. In *Honour*, the uncle does not demand honour killing openly but it is implied by Uncle Tariq that the shame on their honour should be cleansed as he repeatedly coerces Iskender 'to do something'.[598] Iskender resists killing but does decide to stab his mother when his alternative solution of enforcing a curfew on his mother does not work. Iskender's explanation to his uncle makes it clear that his action is a message to the society to show that men of the family can control Pembe and can prevent further attempts at dishonouring their family. Iskender remembers telling his uncle over the phone:

> I told him I had punished Mum for her illicit affair. From now on she'd never do such a thing again. I said her wound wasn't too bad but it would take sometime to heal. I had stabbed her once on the right side of her chest. That would show her how grave her sin was. It would give her time to think about her mistake, to repent. And the man would be scared out of his wits. He would

[597] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 240.
[598] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 248.

leave us alone. Our family's honour was cleansed.[599]

In contrast, in *Bliss*, Cemal's decision to spare Meryem's life resists his father's authority. Cemal changes his mind unpredictably as he is initially not hesitant about his task, abiding by the killing decree. At first, Cemal is portrayed as apathetic: 'Meryem had to be done away with, and he was the one chosen to do it. That was all. […] What was a human being anyway – just a creature that took only a second to die'.[600] On the day that he has planned to kill Meryem, however, a change occurs: he starts remembering their childhood: 'He could not help remembering her childish giggles when they played games, her illnesses […] Slowly, Meryem was transformed into the little girl Cemal used to know so well.'[601] Although Cemal tries to suppress his emotions and to focus on the idea that he was taught in the army, that 'the enemy was inhuman', he cannot perform his allotted task of killing.[602] Even though Cemal thinks that the killing is required as it represents the will of God and his father, he resists this imperative.

The capacity for human beings to challenge power mechanisms and the capacity of power mechanisms to control human beings are juxtaposed in these two novels. The resistance to power is unpredictable: Cemal, as a person who has been a cold-blooded soldier, cannot kill Meryem, whereas Iskender, whose love for his mother is interpretable as Oedipal, does not hesitate to stab his mother.[603] The contradictions that inhere in both novels, specifically in terms of the contradictory or oscillating stances of antagonists towards honour killing can be understood with reference to Foucault's conception of the relationship between power and resistance. According to Foucault, 'there are no relations of power without resistance' and 'like power, resistance is

[599] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 247.
[600] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 161.
[601] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 334.
[602] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 335.
[603] Iskender's love towards her mother is depicted as Oedipal from childhood, see my discussion on *Honour* Chapter IV, p. 24.

multiple'. Resistance depends on as many different conditions as power does: 'relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role'. These conditions, as well as affecting the power procedures, may affect resistance, which 'exists all the more by being in the same place as power'.[604] Hence, 'resistances may occur in any number of different ways. Indeed, for Foucault, part of the point about resistance is its sheer unpredictability'.[605] Namely, there is no universal pattern for power or resistance and what people will do cannot be predicted before they do it.

In *Bliss* and *Honour* we can see how the perspectives of the perpetrators change unpredictably at different moments. By contrast, in *Salma* and *Maps* the killers' perspectives and stories receive limited narrative exposure. There is no provocative uncle who instigates honour killing: in these novels, the killers are unfaltering and relentless. The Migrant British writers involved in this thesis, Faqir and Aslam, prefer to portray the killers as monstrous. The choice to dehumanise the killers, as opposed to the uncle figures reviewed above, seems to be related to the social, cultural, legal and political realities prominent in contemporary Britain, as opposed to the societies depicted in the Turkish texts. In Turkey, before 1 June 2005, it was common to appoint a juvenile or an unmarried youth to perform an honour killing so that the received penalty for the crime was lenient.[606] Also, in Turkey, where classic patriarchy still exists, it is not unusual to grant the

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[604] Michel Foucault, 'Power and Strategies' in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), pp. 134- 146 (142).

[605] Mark G. E Kelly, *Foucault and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2014), p. 102.

[606] Before 1 June 2005, honour was regarded to be a mitigating cause, and penalties were reduced accordingly. The penalties were more lenient especially when the perpetrator was a juvenile. After the law change, honour killings with family involvement and custom motives are regarded as a major crime, qualifying as murder in the first degree. Even if a juvenile receives a reduced penalty the sentences are now harsher and other family members are prosecuted for being abettors. See: Rebecca E. Boon, 'They Killed Her for Going Out with Boys: Honor Killings in Turkey in Light Of Turkey's Accession To The European Union And Lessons For Iraq', *Hoftsa Law Review*, 35.2 (2006), 815-857 (p. 832). See: Musa ÖZTÜRK, Memet Ali Demirdağ, 'Namusunu Kanla Temizleyenler: 9 Mardin Cezaevi'nde Namus Davasi Nedeniyle Yatan Mahkûmlar Üzerine Bir Araştirma (The Ones Who Restored His Honour with

authority to effect family decisions to the oldest uncle. Particularly in rural families, which have strict honour codes, elder uncles can be seen as the guardians of the honour of the extended family.[607] In Britain, by contrast, the dynamics of honour killing are different and most sensational honour killings in Britain involve parents killing the victims or cooperating with the killers.[608] This is, most probably, because of the different social and legal responses to honour killing in Britain and Turkey, which I will explain in more detail shortly.

Specific dehumanising or humanising strategies used to characterise individuals in my four novels, *Bliss, My Name is Salma, Maps for Lost Lovers* and *Honour*, may also be pre-emptively influenced by expectations of the main target audience of the novels. The primary target audience of *Bliss* is most probably highly educated Turkish people, who are also one of the main target audiences for Elif Shafak's *Honour.*[609] It is likely that British people are the primary target audience for *Honour, Salma* and *Maps* as those novels are set in and were first published in the UK. In the UK, honour killings occur in minority groups and in Turkey it is not prevalent, but limited to more rural areas or families with rural backgrounds.[610] As honour killing is accepted as a barbarous crime by people who do not have strict honour values in Turkey and Britain, the dehumanisation of some characters caters to reader expectations. In Turkey, however, honour killings are a more familiar problem and it is known that there have been many juveniles involved in the crime.[611] I would suggest that this is why, in the Turkish novels, the killers are portrayed as

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Blood: A Sociological Research on The Prisoners Convicted of Honour Issue in MardinJailhouse', *Sosyal Politika Çalışmaları*, 7.30 (2013), 117-135 (p. 129).

[607]Aysan Sev'er and Gökçeçiçek Yurdakul, 'Culture of Honor, Culture of Change a Feminist Analysis of Honor Killings in Rural Turkey', *Violence Against Women*, 7.2, (2001), 964-998 (p. 965).

[608] See: Jasmine Coleman, ''Honour' crimes: six cases', *Guardian3,* 3 December 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/dec/03/honour-crimes-cases> [accessed 5 June 2016].

[609] See Chapter I for my discussion on the reading habits in Turkey.

[610] Aysan Sev'er, 'In the Name of Fathers: Honour Killings and Some Examples from South-eastern Turkey', *Atlantis*, 30.1 (2005), 129-145 (p. 129).

[611] The law related to honour killings in Turkey was changed when the EU required it as a condition for Turkey's possible acceptance to the EU during the early 2000s. At the moment, violation of honour is not accepted as a mitigating cause and the penalty for honour killing is life imprisonment. Honour killings are investigated more

hesitant and the uncles as monstrous and the driving powers.

Aslam and Faqir do not touch on the feelings of killers at the point of killing. In *Salma*, it is not an uncle but another man who incites the killer and appears in the novel physically at the time of the shooting. The man's identity is not clarified. Salma hears them: 'Suddenly I heard voices behind me. A woman was pleading with a man not to do something'.[612] However, it is very likely that, as the man of the family, Salma's brother shoots Salma and the other man encourages him. There is no reaction by the two men to the pleas of Salma's mother to stop shooting. The other man features as a reminder of the collective code of honour and says: 'It's his duty. He has to hold his head high. *II 'aar ma yimhiyeh ila il dam*: dishonour can only be wiped off with blood.'[613]

Maps does not incorporate extended family involvement in the crime as the extended family does not live, as far as the reader is aware, in the immigrant town of Dasht-e-Tanhai. However, two brothers perform the killing bloodthirstily and receive approval from certain members of the Dasht-e-Tanhai community as well as from some people in Pakistan when they boast of their killing Chanda and Jugnu: 'The people who learned of their crime patted their backs and said they had fulfilled their obligation, that such sons were born only to men among men and women among women'.[614] Hence, I would argue that in both of these novels, written by British immigrant writers, the supporters of honour killings are not limited to individuals or family members: there is a wider community abetment which goes beyond individual perpetrators. With

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rationally and other family members are jailed if they are complicit in the crime. See: Anna C. Korteweg, "'Honour Killing' In The Immigration Context: Multiculturalism and The Racialization of Violence Against Women", *Politikon*, 41 (2013), 183-208 (p. 186) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02589346.2013.866186>. Robin E Clark, Judith Freeman Clark and Christine A Adamec, *The Encyclopedia Of Child Abuse* (New York: Facts on File, 2007) p. 276.

[612] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 285.

[613] Faqir, *My Name is Salma* p. 285.

[614] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 15.

the support of the community, the killing in *Maps* and *Salma* is mediated. Killing acts are also portrayed to occur without hesitation and suggest that the perpetrators have lost their human empathy, if they ever had any.

Whether the novels have an instigator uncle or not, the killing verdicts are determined by dehumanised subjects. Meryem's uncle in *Bliss*, Iskender's uncle in *Honour*, Chanda's brothers in *Maps* and Salma's brother in *Salma*, are all shown to be villains and their humane sentiments towards the act of killings are excluded from the narration.

III. Religion:

Although honour killings occur among all religious groups and nonbelievers, countries with a Muslim majority population, like Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine, are among the most high profile countries where honour killings take place.[615] As honour killings prevail in countries with Muslim majority population and in Muslim immigrant groups, there is a tendency to associate Islam with honour killings, particularly in the West.[616] Even though adultery is a sin in the Qur'an and a crime by Sharia law, neither allows individuals to give out punishments. Still, religious concepts and rules are misused to encourage honour killings.[617] The narratives examined in this thesis vary in the way in which they reflect the relationship between honour killings and religion. While in *Bliss* it is clearly pointed out that the Qur'an condemns honour killings, *Maps* blurs the boundaries between religion, customs and honour killings. Again there is

[615] Wikan, p. 3.
[616] Mariam Al-Attar, 'Women and Violence in Light of an Islamic Normative Ethical Theory', in *Gender and Violence in Islamic Societies: Patriarchy, Islamism and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. by Zahia Smail Salh (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2013), p. 62-82, (p. 66).
[617] Fakir M. Al Gharaibeh, 'Debating the Role of Custom, Religion and Law in "Honour" Crimes: Implications for Social Work', *Ethics and Social Welfare*, 10. 2 (2016), 1-18, (p. 2)<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2016.1155632>.

a discrepancy between the portrayals of the Turkish writers and British immigrant writers. Turkish writers are more careful to maintain some distance between Islam and honour killing while Faqir, and especially Aslam, do not avoid portrayals which may strengthen misconceptions and prejudices relating to the relationship between honour and Islam.

In Livaneli's *Bliss*, the uncle is a rapist and a sheikh of a presumably fake religious order. There are two different interpretations of religion in *Bliss*. Two Islamic interpretations are from two different Sufi order perspectives: one is gentle and forgiving and the other one is harsh and unforgiving. The harsh one, which belongs to the Sufi order whose sheikh is Meryem's uncle, legitimises Meryem's honour killing. Meryem is confined to a barn at the behest of her sheikh uncle. He orders: 'Lock up that accursed immoral whore!'[618] When the uncle asks his son Cemal to kill Meryem he justifies his request as if it is God's will: 'This girl is guilty in the sight of both God and man.'[619] The clash of these two interpretations of Islam occurs when Cemal meets his army friend Selahattin and discusses Meryem's sin, telling Selahattin that he attempted to kill Meryem but was not able to, in spite of her sin. The dialogue between Selahattin and Cemal shows how their two different interpretations of Islam are incompatible:

> "Yesterday you avoided committing a great sin." […]
>
> "But doesn't Islam order men to kill women who've sinned?" "No"
>
> "But what about stoning? […]"
>
> "No. There's no such punishment in the Quran […]"
>
> "My father says that stoning was carried out until Ataturk came to power."
>
> "It's an incorrect punishment, which is applied in some Arab states, but it has

[618] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 22.
[619] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 160.

> no place in Islam. Besides, it is very difficult to prove adultery. Islamic law requires that the sword be seen in its sheath by three witnesses. […]"[620]

Selahattin follows a Sufi order which, as opposed to the Sufi order of Meryem's uncle, is more gentle and encourages being peaceful and kind. Selahattin takes Cemal to a ceremony so that he can talk with their sheikh. The sheikh first recites verses from al-Mai'dah Sura of the Qur'an: 'Whoever kills a person guiltless of killing others or of setting people against each other will be seen as the killer of all humanity. Whoever lets that person live or saves him from death will be seen as the savior [sic.] of humanity.' The sheikh gives a long talk about kindness and peace with references to the Qur'an and, '[f]or the first time in his life', Cemal has an impression that religion is 'not an intimidating force'.[621] The reader can infer that the interpretation of Islam that Selahattin follows seems more accurate as the sheikh makes frequent references to the Qur'an while explaining the misinterpretations of Cemal, whereas Cemal's sheikh father only despotically dictates the laws without proper explanations.

In *Honour*, religion is not associated with honour killing. The agitator uncle is conservative but not religious. However, at first sight he seems a pious Muslim 'with his bushy beard and a rosary in his hand'.[622] Perpetrator, Iskender, and instigator, Uncle Tariq, are not portrayed as religious and their notion of honour does not correlate with any religious idea. Religion is not delineated in connection with violence but, on the contrary, is the source of peace for the characters. The targeted victim of the honour killing, Pembe, and the actual victim, Jamila, are depicted to be religious as they perform daily prayers and endure problems by leaving them to fate. Their religious attitude towards problems is illustrated when Jamila responds to Pembe's letter saying

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[620] Livaneli, *Bliss*, pp. 354 - 355. Also see Chapter I of this thesis.
[621] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 361.
[622] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 151.

that she suffers from being away from her twin, Jamila. Jamila responds:

We easily accept that we have no power over nature. But why don't we admit that we cannot change our fates? It's not that different. If Allah guided us on to separate paths, there must have been a reason for that. You have your life there; I have my life here. We have to accept.[623]

Here religion is shown to work in a way to encourage the characters to stick to religious fatalism so that they can cope with problems that they have no power to change. Therefore, religion is portrayed as having a positive influence on the psychology of the characters by helping them to accept and cope with life's challenges.

After Iskender's imprisonment, clerics of many religions visit Iskender and invite him to correct his sins, yet none of them has any positive influence on Iskender. He expresses his views on clerics: 'So strong is their desire to correct sinners and score points in God's eyes. We're their tickets to heaven'.[624] Still, Iskender's moral growth occurs with the help of a religious prison inmate, Zeeshan, who is a mystic man who calls his religion 'love'.[625] Zeeshan is from Brunei, which is mostly populated by Muslims, and although the name of his religion has not been revealed in the novel it is positively depicted and appears to carry traces of Sufi tradition, wherein Iskender and Zeeshan, who have a teacher and student relationship, meditate together.[626] It should be added that as religion is a medium which creates fatalistic characters in *Honour*, religious characters are so submissive at times that they bow to injustices. Zeeshan, for instance, has been mistakenly imprisoned, yet he is glad to meet Iskender in prison and comments on his

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[623] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 94.
[624] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 135.
[625] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 203.
[626] As an example of Sufi meditation method see: Sayyid Nurjan Mirahmadi, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Shaykh Muhammad and Hisham Kabbani, *The Healing Power of Sufi Meditation* (Fenton MI: Haqqani, 2005), pp. 11-33.

imprisonment: 'Nothing happens for nothing. God has purpose, […]'.[627]

On the one hand, religion helps characters in *Honour* to have a contented life and optimistic expectations, but, on the other, it makes characters obedient and makes them vulnerable to tyrannical treatments. For instance, Pembe and Jamila's mother, Naze, warns her children about the difference between men and women and tries to prepare them of their possible fate: 'That is how God had tailored the two: one superior to the other'.[628] In this way, *Honour* shows how religious teachings can be used to subjugate women. However, religion is not portrayed as a driving force behind honour killing in *Honour*. On the contrary, it is the healing power which minimises the devastating impacts of honour killing on Pembe and Iskender.

In *Salma*, although there is no direct association between religion and honour killing, readers may associate the two involuntarily as the community in which the honour killing takes place is Muslim and the group which tries to save Salma is a Christian religious group. Christianity and Islam are juxtaposed, especially when Salma and her saviour nun, Miss Asher, discuss the forgiveness of God. While Christianity is portrayed as forgiving, Islam is portrayed as a punitive religion when Salma and Miss Asher have an argument about sinning. Miss Asher insists that: 'God is love, he loves you child. He will forgive you no matter what. […] Jesus died on the cross to wipe out the sins of mankind.' Salma answers back: 'No crucification, no love me,'[629]

Salma accepts herself as a sinner and expects to be punished. Her Muslim religion makes her life harder and deepens her trauma. Salma adheres to her religion as it becomes an identity marker for her in diaspora. As soon as she enters the United Kingdom immigrant officers ask her 'Christian

[627] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 206.
[628] Shafak, *Honour*, p. 16.
[629] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, pp. 164-165.

name'. Salma misunderstands and replies: 'Me Muslim', she assures that she is not mistaken for a Christian.[630] For the most part, however, the effect of religion in *Salma* is contrary to the effect it has on the characters in *Honour*. While, in *Honour*, Pembe and Iskender are portrayed as benefiting from religious doctrines when they are coping with their traumatic experience of Jamila's death, in *Salma*, religious doctrines of Islam remind Salma that she is a sinner. However, readers are also aware that this pessimistic view of Islam belongs to the disoriented and traumatised protagonist.

As Salma's saviour is Christian and the perpetrator and enactors of honour killing are Muslim it is possible that the novel gives a negative impression about Islam. However, none of the Muslim characters in Salma's Bedouin community are portrayed as pious in the novel, which loosens the relationship between Islam and honour killing. For instance, Salma's father prays only when there is a special condition, such as when a goat is stolen or there is a drought.[631] It can be argued that although the novel does not take sufficient steps to detach honour crime from Islam, the honour killing verdict in the novel is not directly associated with religious doctrines; the emphasis is more on the relationship between honour and tribal identity.

In *Maps*, Islam is more emphatically held responsible for creating the environment which paves the way for honour killing. The victims, Chanda and Jugnu, want to marry to conform to the society in which they live. However, they cannot, as Chanda's previous husband is missing and, according to the clerics they consulted, Chanda has to wait 'several years – the number differing from sect to sect, four, five, six' for a new marriage or she has to find her husband and get

[630] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 128.
[631] Faqir, *My Name is Salma*, p. 17. See Chapter Two of the thesis.

divorced.[632]The couple are therefore living in sin according to the society of Dasht-e-Tanhai. The objection of Chanda's family is also related to this sin: 'Chanda's family had disapproved of her "living in sin" with Jugnu'. Chanda's father who is a cleric at the mosque feels the pressure of society as the father of a sinner:

> […] the missing girl's father is no longer headman at the mosque: he had stepped down recently, unable to do anything about the talk in the mosque about his "immoral," "deviant," and "despicable" daughter, who was nothing less than a wanton whore in most people's eyes—as she was in Allah's—for setting up home with a man she wasn't married to.[633]

When Chanda's brothers hear from a taxi driver that their sister and her lover have just returned from Pakistan they feel disturbed about the fact that their sister's name is familiar to a taxi driver because, according to their mind-sets, `"No one can talk to a man about his women-folk." It was a fleeting glimpse of the nightmare: the brothers knew the kind of crude talk that went on among the gathering of young men […]'. During this conversation, the elder brother says that: 'We have to do something about her'.[634] Although they are not sure what to do, they end up killing Chanda and Jugnu. When considered in light of this conversation, their impulse to take action does not seem to have a connection with religion, especially as Chanda's brothers Barra and Chotta are already psychologically unstable: Barra has his son aborted after being told, mistakenly that it is a baby girl, and Chotta catches his lover Kiran in bed with another man. Amina Yaqin asserts that 'their act seems to owe less to religious motivation than to personal grievances'.[635]Still, there are

[632] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 55.
[633] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 15.
[634] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 350.
[635] Yaqin, Muslims as Cultural Misfits, p. 112.

references to Islam made during the scene when Chanda is killed. When Chanda is in the throes of death, her brother Barra states:

> If you can hear me, beg Allah's forgiveness for your sin before dying. And beg pardon from us and your parents for all that you put us through. And don't forget your husbands, ask forgiveness for the times you may have overlooked their concerns and comfort. The soul will leave the body easily if you repent before dying.[636]

The brothers are not portrayed to be religious, and they are sinners according to the rules of Islam, but their sins have not been a social concern.[637] Chotta has a relationship out of wedlock with Kiran, a Sikh woman living in the neighbourhood, and he is also an alcoholic. Earlier in their lives, the brothers also get involved in a group which smuggles heroin from Pakistan. Considering these points, the brothers are eventually portrayed to be sinners according to the same laws that they apply. Still, their sins have never been a concern for Dasht-e-Tanhai society. What is discussed at the court, including the brothers' plea, is not included in the narrative. However, what the judge says at the trial shows that the killers are perceived as religious and that the killing is related to their religion:

> […] the killers had found a cure to their problem through an immoral, indefensible act; a cure, a remedy—and their religion and background took care of the bitter aftertaste. Their religion and background assured them that, yes,

[636] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 355.
[637] Adultery and fornication (*zina*), alcohol and drug consumption and doing business in alcoholic beverages and drugs are prohibited in Islam. See: Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam (Al-Halal Wal Haram Fil Islam)*, trans. by Kamal El-Helbawy, M. Moinuddin Siddiqui, Syed Shukry and Ahmad Zaki Hammad (Indiana: American Trust Publication, 1999), pp. 141, 149, 70-71.

> they were murderers but that they had murdered only sinners. The judge said that Chanda and Jugnu had done nothing illegal in deciding to live together but, Shamas knows, that the two brothers feel that the fact that an act is legal does not mean it's right.[638]

The judge's words are focalised through Shamas and he refracts their opinion through a prism of legality as opposed to righteousness. The religion of Islam is regularly pointed at as approving of honour killing and no character in the novel, whether they are secular or pious, disputes this labelling. In the minority British Asian culture of Dasht-e-Tanhai, religion is the primary source of social order. Religion is the most decisive concept that shapes the community in Dasht-e-Tanhai, and discourses of contamination involve threats from other immigrant groups living in Dasht-e-Tanhai with different religious backgrounds. As David Waterman argues in relation to this novel, 'preoccupation with purity is based primarily on religion rather than race, wherein white skin in Britain is a marker of religious, rather than racial, difference'.[639] The same preoccupation with purity exists within the boundaries of Dasht-e-Tanhai based on religious differences in that interfaith marriages and relationship are not acceptable within the community. A Muslim neighbourhood girl was exorcised for being in love with a Hindu boy, hence, she was thought to be possessed by the djinn to love a non-Muslim. Similarly, a Sikh woman Kiran and Kaukab's brother as Muslim cannot marry because of professing different religions. Religion is portrayed to be the ultimate source of social order. Hence, I argue that, in this novel, honour killing is portrayed as being strongly related to Islam because the killing is a response to a break in a social order that is mostly shaped by religion.

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[638] Aslam, *Maps*, p. 278.
[639] David Waterman, 'Memory and Cultural Identity: Negotiating Modernity in Nadeem Aslam's Maps for Lost Lovers ', Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies, 2.2 (2010), 18-35 (p. 23).

All of the violent practices performed by Muslims living in Dasht-e-Tanhai are presumably associated with Islam by readers of the novel as there is a religious discourse surrounding the violent actions of the characters. The novel bristles with negative examples of those who use/misuse religious tenets to control and subjugate the community, especially women. The journalist Stefan Weider, who writes for the internet portal Qantara.de sponsored by the German Foreign Office to endorse communication with Muslim world, argues that 'if this novel is read in the context of current debates on Islam, the message is clear: Islam as it is interpreted and practised by most Muslim immigrants is a sinister delusion'.[640]

Uma Narayan argues that Third World people are often appointed 'the roles of Emissary, Mirror and Authentic Insider' by mainstream Westerners when they are living in Western context. Narayan sets forth the idea that these roles are 'assigned to a range of Third-World individuals making them 'interesting to reflect upon as positions that generally confront people of Third-World background in Western context', especially when they and their works become a subject of Western academic interest and academic discussions .[641] According to Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, among these roles, the 'Authentic insider', is the most common within the First World context in recent years and has had the most detrimental effect with regards to the reception of texts written, especially, by Third World women writers, wherein their texts are considered as 'windows' into their wider culture.[642] Similar ascription seems to be assigned to Aslam's text by some readers as a commenter named 'Phyllis' on Goodreads describes the novel as a 'window into a Pakistani Muslim community in England, with all the complexity and nuance

[640] Stefan Weidner, *Nadeem Aslam's "Maps for Lost Lovers" A Cosmos of Traditionalist Muslim Migrants* (2016) <https://en.qantara.de/content/nadeem-aslams-maps-for-lost-lovers-a-cosmos-of-traditionalist-muslim-migrants> [accessed 5 April 2016].
[641] Uma Narayan, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 121-122.
[642] Amal Amireh and Lisa Suhair Majaj, 'Introduction' in *Going* Global, p. 2.

of real life.'[643] Another commenter named Kathleen recommends the novel for the ones who want 'to know the Pakistani/Muslim mind'.[644] When treated as a text written by an 'authentic insider' Aslam's novel is perceived to be realistic and sometimes mistaken for real life. For instance, Cathy, despite acknowledging that the novel is a fiction, thinks that the novel matches with what she 'read and heard about the fate of Muslim women, and especially news articles about women who are killed by their brothers, uncles or fathers because of the dishonor [sic.] they've brought to their families'.[645] A reader named 'Robert' claims that he has 'learned more about contemporary Islam in this book than all the non-fiction' he has read.[646] Those comments shows that *Maps* has been stereotypically interpreted by some readers to be a source of knowledge about Third World reality. Gayatri Spivak, however, attributes an impossible status to the 'native informant' when she points out that the native informant 'can never truly tell their story because the moment they become the native informant their story is mediated by the control of the dominant, imperial audience.'[647] The impact of an updated version of the 'dominant, imperial audience' can be tracked in *Maps*.

Amina Yaqin and Peter Morey point out that there is a liberal media interest in 'the "authentic" cultural spokesperson' and hence a tendency to appoint reporters who have similar ethnic backgrounds to those they are covering as 'there is an inherent belief that cultural insiders

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[643] Phyllis, *Maps for Lost Lovers by Nadeem Aslam Community Reviews* (2016) <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/114706304?book_show_action=false&from_review_page=8> [accessed 15 September 2015].
[644] Kathleen, *Maps for Lost Lovers by Nadeem Aslam Community Reviews* (2016) <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/68021972?book_show_action=false&from_review_page=8> [accessed 15 September 2015].
[645] Cathy, *Maps for Lost Lovers by Nadeem Aslam Community Reviews* (2016) <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/736163152?book_show_action=false&from_review_page=2> [accessed 15 September 2015].
[646] Robert, *Maps for Lost Lovers by Nadeem Aslam Community Reviews* (2016) <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/194345219?book_show_action=false&from_review_page=8> [accessed 15 September 2015].
[647] Jenni Ramone, *Postcolonial Theories* (Hampshire, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 142.

guarantee closer proximity to the truth.'[648] In this respect, Aslam's text can be said to have a manipulative effect on some readers, especially readers who use the novel as a window to access a culture that they are not familiar with. This may cause them to generalise from the character type portrayed by Aslam to an essentialist Muslim-Pakistani mind-set. This is because almost all the believers in the novel are portrayed to be quite strict and have the capacity to be cruel for the sake of being pious Muslims. Madeline Clements rightfully argues that Aslam's youthful experience of strict Muslim practices has given him an 'insight into the different hues of Muslimness' but she also argues that this experience heavily shades Aslam's 'impressions of a certain kind of Islam and Islamic character type'. Hence, 'the Islam practiced in Dasht-e-Tanhai is strict and unforgiving'.[649]

It can be argued that the novels by Turkish writers are more balanced in their consideration of the relationship between honour and religion, by mentioning two possible contradicting effects of religious interpretations. It is a fact that the target audience of the novels written by Turkish writers include many Muslims and their careful approach towards Islam may be as a result of this fact. On the other hand, *Maps* and *Salma*, which were first written in English, and published for an English-speaking readership, took their places on bookshelves in the political environment charged by the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. It would be hard to say that these novels do not strengthen the polarisation between East and West as a result of their negative images of cruel Muslim men.[650]

IV. When to Kill, Who to Kill, How to Kill

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[648] Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping and Misrepresentation after 9/11* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2011), p. 100.
[649] Madeline Clements, *Writing Islam from a South Asian Muslim Perspective: Rushdie, Hamid, Aslam, Shamsie* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 92.
[650] See Introduction to this thesis, p. 17.

In the wider world of discourse, killing patterns for honour killings may vary from region to region yet it is widely known that most of the honour killing victims are women and they are killed by someone closely linked to them like their husbands, brothers or by close relatives including 'cousins, maternal and paternal uncles, grandparents and nephews.'[651] The motive for killing is to remove an assumed shame brought on the family by the victim, and this shame is generally related to sexual control of women. There can be family collaboration in the killing and most of the honour killings are 'premediated and planned murders.'[652] Women can be complicit in the crime and a message is given to the society by the honour killing.[653] In this section, I will ask if the novels on honour killings discussed in this thesis fit or conflict with the known trends in honour killings as these are elaborated in non-literary texts.

All the four novels analysed in this thesis involve shame brought on the family due to an extramarital relationship of a female family member. In *Bliss*, Meryem loses her virginity after her uncle rapes her. In *Salma,* Salma loses her virginity and gets pregnant after having sexual intercourse with her lover, Hamdan. Chanda in *Maps* and Pembe in *Honou*r are already married to someone in the eye of society and both have extramarital relationship with their lovers. In all four novels, the perpetrators are males. In these respects, the fictional narratives parallel honour killing patterns in the world.

In *Bliss* and *Salma,* honour killing attempts are only towards the females involved in sexual intercourse, which is consensual in *Salma* and non-consensual in *Bliss*. In *Honour,* the illicit

[651] Muazzam Nasrullah, Sobia Haqqi, Kristin J. Cummings, 'The epidemiological patterns of honour killing of women in Pakistan', *European Journal of Public Health,* 19.2, (2009), 193-197.
[652] Nazand Begikhani, Aisha K. Gill, Gill Hague, p. 31.
[653] See Introduction to this thesis, see also: Amir H. Jafri, *Honour Killing: Dilemma, Ritual, Understanding* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

relationship is without sexual intimacy, but still the possibility of women's engagement in a sexual relationship is enough for her to be punished. *Maps* is exceptional in having a male victim of honour killing. Jugnu in *Maps* is killed by the brothers of Chanda and Chanda, who is the women involved in the relationship, is not the target of honour killing. Yet, Chanda is killed unintentionally. It is the family of Chanda who feel that they are shamed and they have to clean the dishonour as 'honour and shame have distinct practical implications for men and women. Men are expected to uphold their family and social group's honour by ensuring that 'their' women do not bring shame upon the family.'[654] Although Jugnu is killed as a result of honour killing there is not any discourse of dishonour which affects his family. This is because, the sexual conduct of men can be judged morally but 'it is often considered secondary to the scrutiny focused on female relatives. Thus, in societies with honour-based value systems, honour is typically equated with the regulation of women's sexuality and their conformity with social norms and traditions.'[655] Even in *Bliss,* the identity of the rapist is not investigated: the important thing is not the identity of the rapist but the fact that Meryem has had sexual intercourse before marriage. She is considered to be the only one to be blamed as it is clear from his uncle's words: 'If the bitch doesn't wag its tail, the dog doesn't follow'.[656] In *Salma,* again, all the responsibility for the sexual congress is given to Salma. Salma's lover Hamdan stays alive in the village and he is not held responsible for impregnating Salma. All the novels that analysed in this thesis show that the ideology of honour is dichotomous for women and men.

In *Honour* and *Maps,* male members of the family have extramarital affairs but these affairs do not dishonour families. In *Honour,* a high school teenager, Iskender, has a relationship with his

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[654] Aisha K. Gill, 'Introduction', in *'Honour' Killing and Violence: Theory, Policy and Practice*, ed. by Aisha K. Gill,
C. Strange, K. Roberts (Hampshire, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 2-3.
[655] Gill, 'Introduction' in *'Honour' Killing and Violence: Theory, Policy and Practice*, p. 3.
[656] Livaneli, *Bliss*, p. 160-161.

classmate Kate and he impregnates her. Iskender's father Adem has an affair with Roxana, a dancer in the night club that he is a frequenter of to gamble there. Adem leaves his family and goes to Abu Dhabi in pursuit to gain Roxana back after she leaves him for another man. Sexuality of male members is not considered a threat but the possibility that Pembe has a sexual intimacy results in the discourse of contamination that effects the Toprak family. In *Maps*, Chanda's brother Chotta has a relationship with Kiran, a Sikh woman in the neighbourhood. They live their relationship out of public gaze as she is also an immigrant from the subcontinent. The men of Dasht-e-Tanhai are free to have affairs as long as their partners are not from the subcontinent. It is obvious from words of Chanda's father when Chanda's mother tells him that she has seen Shamas with a woman. First Chanda's father asks if she is a 'white woman?' When Chanda's mother negates him and says that she is one of them he responds:

> "Are all the sons of that family like that—defying conventions, doing what they please?" Chanda's father says with quiet indignation. "They can do what they like with white women—we all know the morals they have— but at least leave our own women alone. You would think it was their mission to corrupt every Pakistani woman they come across." And he adds decisively, "In my opinion they are still infected with their father's Hinduism. Lord Krishna and his thousand girlfriends, indeed! And they jeer at our Prophet, peace be upon him, for having just nine wives!"[657]

Jugnu breaks the rules of Dasht-e-Tanhai community and is killed ironically by Chotta who also has an extramarital relationship with a woman from the subcontinent.

To refer again to the extra-literary research on honour killing, although there are incidences

[657]Aslam, *Maps*, p. 176.

where men are killed for honour, the majority of honour killings are known to be committed by men against women.[658] According to Chesler's study, which examined a sample of 230 honour killings worldwide which took place between the years of 1989 and 2009, only 7% of the victims were male.[659] However, Dietrich Oberwittler and Julia Kasselt's study on honour killings in Germany from 1996 to 2005 surprised the researchers that 43% of the victims were male.[660]

Contrary to the common knowledge that the majority of the victims of honour killing are women, the data of the General Directorate of Security in Turkey shows that between the years 2000-2005 men were the majority of the honour killing victims. There were 1091 honour killings in Turkey and 710 of the victims were men.[661] Male victims of honour killing are usually killed by members of the family of the woman with whom they have a relationship.[662]*Maps* illustrates such an honour killing 'in which the woman's family directed its anger toward the seducer.'[663] Aslam's novel is exceptional in portraying male-on-male violence which is rarely represented in literature.

Aisha K. Gill asserts that 'while older women, especially mothers and mothers-in-law, may play a part in the perpetration of HBV, it is usually men who carry out the violence.'[664] Among the four novels I analyse in this thesis only two females are complicit in the honour crimes and they are both stepmothers of the victims. One of them is Meryem's stepmother in *Bliss* who tries to

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[658] Aisha K. Gill, 'Introduction', in *'Honour' Killing and Violence: Theory, Policy and Practice*, p. 7.
[659] Phyllis Chesler, 'Worldwide Trends in Honor Killings', *The Middle East Quarterly*, 17.2, (2010), 3-11.
[660] Dietrich Oberwittler and Julia Kasselt, *Ehrenmorde in Deutschland 1996-2005: Eine Untersuchung auf der Basis von Prozessakten*(Köln: Luchterhand , 2011), p. 77.
[661] Musa ÖZTÜRK and Memet Ali Demirdağ, 'Namusunu Kanla Temizleyenler: Mardin Cezaevi'nde Namus Davasi Nedeniyle Yatan Mahkûmlar Üzerine Bir Araştirma [The Ones Who Restored His Honour With Blood: A Sociological Research On The Prisoners Convicted Of Honour Issue In Mardin Jailhouse]', *Sosyal Politika Çalışmaları*, 7.30, (2013), 117 - 135 (p. 128).
[662] Emily Dyer, *'Honour' Killings in the UK* (London: The Henry Jackson Society, 2015), p. 6.
[663] Wikan, p. 56.
[664] Aisha K. Gill, 'Introduction', in *'Honour' Killing and Violence: Theory, Policy and Practice*, p. 3.

convince Meryem to commit a suicide and the other one is Pembe's stepmother in *Honour* who pushes Pembe's sister Hediye to commit a suicide after eloping with a man. In *Maps* and *Honour*, women also instigate honour killings by spreading the rumours about the forbidden affairs. Gossip and rumours can play a key role in instigating the murders as 'honour can be damaged, regardless of the truth of the allegations or gossip.'[665]

Although it is known that there are some cases that women are complicit in honour killings, in some cases women take an active part in the prevention of honour killings, even if it means risking their own lives. In *Salma*, Salma's mother, and in *Bliss*, Meryem's midwife, actively try to prevent honour killings. As Wikan argues honour killing 'is also not an easy way out, even in communities where it is deeply rooted.' There are many people who try to prevent the killing or develop 'alternative ways to avert dishonor […] to avoid acts of violence or loss of life.'[666] Bibi in *Bliss* and Salma's mother in *Salma* try to find alternative ways to remove dishonour. Bibi tries to find the rapist and make him marry Meryem. Salma's mother tries to hide Salma's pregnancy from her family and village and tries some old women methods at home so that Salma has a miscarriage. When this does not work with the help of another woman, Salma's teacher Miss Naila, Salma is taken into protective custody in a prison. Another alternative is given by a nun. So that Salma has a free life she is taken to England. When Salma goes back to her home village to find out whereabouts of her daughter and take her to England with herself she is shot, presumably by her brother. Salma's mother offers all her belongings to the perpetrator to prevent him from killing which does not work. In *Maps*, although Kaukab's concerns are mostly related to religion, she tries to persuade Chanda's husband to divorce Chanda so that Chanda and Jugnu can marry which would prevent the honour killings of the couple.

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[665] Anna C. Korteweg, "'Honour Killing' In The Immigration Context: Multiculturalism and The Racialization of Violence Against Women", *Politikon*, 41 (2013), 183-208 (p. 191).
[666] Wikan, p. 3.

Men are also active in trying to find alternative ways to prevent honour killings. In *Bliss* when Cemal understands that he cannot kill Meryem, he takes her somewhere hidden so that no one kills her. In *Maps*, Chanda and Jugnu go to clerics to ask for a fatwa so that they can marry and prevent social condemnation. In *Honour*, Iskender's first alternative to killing is preventing his mother from leaving the house. Secondly, when he sees his mother, Pembe, in the street he wants to frighten his mother, and her lover by stabbing Pembe so that they stop seeing each other. When Iskender kills his mother's twin by mistaking her with his mother, Esma, Yunus and Pembe keep it to themselves that Pembe is alive. Pembe pretends that she is her deceased twin sister and moves back to their village so that no one attempts to kill Pembe for honour.

The patterns of killing in the literary works analysed in this thesis mostly fit the patterns discussed in social, political, legal, economic and cultural perspectives on honour killing. The only major discrepancy is that none of the novels analysed in this thesis has a successful planned honour killing. There is a killing plan only in *Bliss* but this plan falls through at the last minute. The main work that literature does in this area is to humanise the experiences of honour killings and to remind us that victims, perpetrators or witnesses of honour killings are humans not statistics and each case of honour killings involves different contexts, implications and consequences.

V. Conclusion

The fact that honour killings are committed brutally and there are many complex dynamics delineated in the literary works dealt with in this thesis. As honour killings are not easily

comprehensible, these fictions, which include different patterns of honour killings, can help us to take a further step along the road to understanding the nature of honour killings in specific communities. Wikan, after years of studying honour killings, asserts that 'we cannot ever understand it, [honour killing,] as a "lived experience." In order to do so, I believe, one would have to be part of a tradition that justifies such acts. Still, she thinks that an 'important step toward comprehension [can be taken] by trying to grasp the kind of crises that lead to honor [sic.] killings.'[667] Literary works in this thesis clearly map the personal and collective crises leading to honour killings and they parallel real cases of honour killings. Each case in the literary works is different from the other and analysing each case reveals diverse factors that contribute to honour killings.

[667] Wikan, p. 18.

CONCLUSION

On December 2, 2009, Medine Memi went missing in Adiyaman, Turkey and forty-five days later her body was found in a sitting position in a two-meter hole dug under a chicken pen outside her house. Her hands were tied and, according to the post-mortem examination, there was a large amount of soil in her lungs and stomach, indicating that she was buried alive. An official reported that she 'had no bruises on her body and no sign of narcotics or poison in her blood - was alive and fully conscious when she was buried.'[668] The killers were discovered to be Medine's father and grandfather and the brutal killing was carried out in order to punish her for having male friends. It was a horrific honour killing and the bloodcurdling manner of the killing caused public outrage across Turkey and, also, internationally. What I find even more incomprehensible than the nature of the crime, is that, had it gone unreported, Medine's body would still be in the hole outside of her house and her family and her killers would have continued living in the crime scene. The hole where Medine's body was sitting was cemented and the chicken coop was still being used as if nothing unusual had happened. When I read the news in 2010, I thought about the killers, and I tried to understand how these two men could cooperate to kill a member of their own family; how a father and a grandfather could conspire to brutally kill their own daughter and granddaughter and then continue with their lives. How could such a killing be normalised? Were they sociopathic or were they just mentally normal human beings? I have been preoccupied with such questions relating to the perpetrators of honour killings and their motives since this point.

When I analysed Souad's *Burned Alive* (2004) as part of my Masters dissertation on the autobiographies of Muslim women at Royal Holloway University of London in 2011, I became

[668] Telegraph, *Teenage girl buried alive in Turkey for talking to boys*(2016) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/turkey/7161701/Teenage-girl-buried-alive-in-Turkey-for-talking-to-boys.html> [accessed 4 July 2016].

actively engaged in critical analysis of honour killings. *Burned Alive* enabled me to question and illuminate various details and aspects of honour killings, including, for instance, the trauma of survival. Although Souad's book was published as an autobiography there was, and still is, controversy as to whether it was actually fiction.[669] The controversy has demonstrated that although there are lines to be drawn between real-life stories and fictional ones, these can be blurred. Mariano Longo argues that literary work has the capacity to represent reality in fictional terms but it 'may also detect the relevance of themes and questions which are not yet on the social agenda. It may create new cognitive categories by which to understand social and psychological phenomena.'[670] Longo's arguments justify my choice to return to literary fiction in my thesis, in order to answer questions about the motivational aspects of honour killings.

One of Longo's points about the interface of reality and fiction is that 'telling a story is not simply a form of sociality, it is one of the ways whereby social reality is reproduced, value systems strengthened and behavioural standards confirmed.'[671] There is a complex relation between literature and reality whereby literature conforms, as well as challenges, elements of reality and encourages, as well as contextualises, certain behaviours, character traits or conditions, such as being pure, rich, and beautiful. I have investigated ways in which the novels focused on in this thesis contribute to, as well as critique, existing social values, beliefs and norms. This thesis has argued that the study of literature can guide us to have a better understanding of honour killings. Toward this aim, I have analysed the key discourses surrounding the notion of honour which enabled me to question the crucial structuring aspects of situations that (may have) resulted in honour killings in the texts.

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[669] Thérèse Taylor, *Truth, History, and Honor Killing: A review of Burned Alive* (2016) <https://www.antiwar.com/orig/ttaylor.php?articleid=5801> [accessed 18 July 2016].
[670] Longo, p. 6.
[671] Longo, p. 6.

My first chapter attempted to provide depth and nuance to our understanding of how the notion of purity functions within the context of honour killing by examining the Turkish writer, O. Zülfü Livaneli's *Mutluluk* (2002) / *Bliss* (2007). After examining the classification systems which mark the main character, Meryem, as both dirty and pure, I have shown how Meryem's purity or impurity is a matter of perspective and how different discourses of purity determine if she is pure or not. Here, I have contributed to an understanding of how a literary work, *Bliss*, helps us to comprehend different conceptions of social beliefs and assumptions in accordance with certain discourses of purity. I have also explored how the discourses of purity and impurity are constructed in *Bliss* in a way to strengthen and reproduce the idea that purity should be desired.

Chapter Two elaborated on how individual impurity can be a crucial problem for an entire group and can influence collective identity. I explored the relation between the notion of collective identity and honour killing by investigating Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (2007). I contended that the protagonist Salma's dedication to her original collective identity is an indicator of her need of belonging to a community which she cannot realise in Britain as an immigrant women. My reading of *My Name is Salma* illuminates the tension between being an individual outside of a group or community, on the one hand, and being a member of a community, on the other hand; and how the need to belong to a group or community may cause individuals to acknowledge group rules and decisions regardless of the possibility that requires killing or being killed for honour.

In Chapter Three I moved on to concentrate on the impact that living in a diaspora community can have on honour killings, through my analysis of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004), where I focused on the effects of diaspora-related losses, especially the loss of cultural

identity, on honour killing. I argued that the anxiety of losing future generations to another culture due to assimilation shapes the diasporic community in *Maps for Lost Lovers* and results in the community revising and reinforcing their traditions and their bonds with their home country, original culture and socio-cultural identity. My examination of *Maps for Lost Lovers* built an understanding of how diaspora related losses and the discrepancies between the integration processes of first and second generation immigrants may pave the way for honour killings.

In Chapter Four, I explored the instigators of honour killings through an analysis of *Honour* (2012) by Elif Shafak. I engaged the concepts of victimhood and culpability in honour killing and asked whether the idea of victimhood can be extended to incorporate the executor and whether the victim may also be complicit in the crime. This chapter contributed to an understanding of the connections between victimhood and culpability in honour killings as I have shown that they cannot be entirely disentangled.

In Chapter Five, I brought together the focal points that were discussed in the previous chapters in order to undertake a synoptic analysis of the novels and socio-cultural contexts. I have highlighted, through this synoptic analysis, some key issues concerning honour killings, focusing on the relationship between the literary works and social, political, legal, economic and cultural perspectives on honour killings. This chapter showed that literary fiction illuminates the complexity of honour killings in a nuanced way and resists generalisations about honour killings, for example by showing that the killers are not monstrous but mediated by society, and that honour killings can be unplanned. Another important finding is that literary works in this thesis clearly map the personal and collective crises that lead to honour killings which then parallel real cases of honour killings. Hence, literary works can be used to understand and develop strategies

for prevention of the crime.

In my thesis I have examined the key structuring aspects of real-life situations which may lead to honour killings in literary texts, but there are obviously further aspects of honour killings which can be expanded on and examined through literature. For example, the issue of honour killings could also be examined within the genre of crime fiction and, by extension, in texts which explore crimes of passion. Likewise, although I have restricted myself to literary fiction on honour killings, other narrative forms such as autobiographies, films and documentaries dealing with the issue of honour killing can be usefully studied to expand our understanding of the relation between aesthetic works and social phenomenon of honour killing.

Since 2015, two important films have been released on honour killing which defy stereotypes and biases about honour killing cases and also increase awareness. The first one of these important films is *A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness* (2015) directed by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, which is an Oscar winning documentary film about a real case of an attempted honour killing in Pakistan.[672] The interviews with the attempted killers and the victim provide an insight into how law protects killers and how the perceptions of killers can easily be changed when the community honours non-violent reconciliation. More recently, the BBC drama *Murdered by My Father* (2016) directed by Bruce Goodison and written by Vinay Patel aired.[673] Jasvinder Sanghera, the founder of the charity Karma Nirvana,[674] and IKWRO (Iranian Kurdish Womens Rights Organisation) advised on the plotting of the drama.[675] The outcome is an enlightening drama which shows the love and affection shared between a father and daughter, only for the

[672] A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness, dir. by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy (HBO, 2015).
[673] Murdered by My Father, dir. by Bruce Goodison (BBC, 2016).
[674] A UK registered charity which is dedicated to help victims of honour based violence.
[675] Marco Crivellari, *Murdered By My Father: Asking the experts* (2016) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/aboutthebbc/entries/2858bfca-a851-40be-b91c-81fda7e65100> [accessed 19 July 2016].

father to feel the urge to kill his daughter because of the humiliation and insecurity he feels after his daughter's fiancé leaves her, as she loves another man. *Murdered by My Father* shows that honour killing is not an easy way out: the father commits suicide as soon as he kills his daughter. These kind of illuminating films and documentaries on honour killing should also be examined to question how they further our understanding of honour killings and how they function in society.

When Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy received her Oscar, she declared that Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif promised to change the law regarding the honour killings after the international spotlight and success of A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness. During her award acceptance speech she stressed that 'that is the power of film'.[676] I also claim that this is the power of art, including literature, which potentially changes society through casting a spotlight on social problems. There is no tidy way of concluding the exploration of honour killings through literature as there are many aspects of production and reception of literature and there is a constant shift in notions of the social function of literature and the writer. Yet, my research suggests that literature may provide the opportunity to investigate different realities and experiences of honour killing which are not easily accessible otherwise, and it also enables us to reflect on the societal factors that structure honour killing, and critically analyse them from multiple perspectives.

[676] Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, *"A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness" winning Best Documentary Short*, online video recording, YouTube, 23 March 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MbA_q5yTeA> [accessed 19 July 2016].

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