

HONOR KILLING A CULTURAL ISSUE: GLOBAL or REGIONAL?

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ABSTRACT

Honor killings which are in contradiction with the fact that a woman as an individual is the only person to have a right on her own body/sexuality and which form a serious violation to her right to life continues to exist. The committed murders by the motive of honor conception whose definitional limits are not clear and out of which every person of the society, especially the men, make sense according to their own experiences are the most explicit indicators of violence against the woman. With the cases whose decisions are taken in Adana 3rd Criminal Court, understanding of the relationship that exists between the individual environmental factors of honor-based killings committed by family members and the reasons behind such acts in various cultural contexts have been tried to put forward. Based on the fact that it is requisite to prevent such kind of killings for a country which take human rights as a reference to its legal and social practices, a variety of solution offers have been tried to be presented as they are thought to be effective in fight against honor killings.

Keywords: Honor Killings, Custom, Cultural Issues, Forensic Sciences, Jurisprudence

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INTRODUCTION

A human's right to life is the first and most indispensable of all rights and freedoms¹ that he/she has. It arises from being human, and it is protected by national² and international³ regulations. The guarantee of the right to life also includes the right of not being killed, or the principle of non-killing⁴. Unfortunately, this right, which is the basis of all other rights⁵, is violated through honor and tradition killings. These killings directly violate the right to life, and are subject to sanctions in our legal system.

In contrast to The Older Turkish Penal Code No. 765, The New Turkish Penal Code No. 5237, regulates these murders committed in the name of "honor" and "tradition" under the "aggravated" form (that increases the penalty) of the "intentional murder"⁶ crime. According to The New Turkish Penal Code, which was enacted in 2005, an individual who kills another individual for reasons of 'tradition' is sentenced to aggravated imprisonment for life⁷. The law states that killing in the name of tradition [here, the impetus, the reason that causes the person to commit the crime, is personal vendetta]⁸ will be penalized; honor killings are also evaluated under the same article.

The concepts of "tradition" and "honor", which are not defined by the law and often used interchangeably, are actually two different concepts with two different meanings⁹. Tradition includes "behavioral patterns that arise from social constructs, such as customs and conventions that a society or part of a society adopts, accepts and is compelled to comply with. Traditions consist of habitual, usual behavioral patterns. These behavioral patterns, which are oppressive, effective and coercive forces"¹⁰ are a "compilation of non-written rules"¹¹.

¹ Çelenk Halit, Yaşama hakkı ve ölüm cezası, İzmir Barosu Dergisi, 1991;2: 121.

² Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Article 17/1, <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2709.pdf> 01.06.2016.

³ European Convention of Human Rights, Article 2, http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf 01.06.2016; International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6, <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx> 01.06.2016.

⁴ Tanör Bülent, Türkiye'nin İnsan Hakları Sorunu, BDS Yayınları, İstanbul 1990;27.

⁵ Özen Muharrem, İnsan Hakları Ve Temel Hürriyetleri Korumaya Dair Avrupa Sözleşmesi Bağlamında Yaşama Hakkı Ve İşkence Yasağı Konularında İç Hukuktaki Düzenlemelere Ve Türk Mahkemelerindeki Davalardaki Sorunlara Bir Bakış, s.1, http://www.yargitay.gov.tr/aihm/muharrem_ozen.html 01.06.2016.

⁶ Türk Ceza Kanunu, Madde 81(1), <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.5237.pdf> 03.06.2016.

⁷ Türk Ceza Kanunu (TCK), Madde 81/1(j), <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.5237.pdf> 03.06.2016.

⁸ Akbulut İhsan, Yeni Türk Ceza Kanunu'na Göre Ülkemizde Kan Gütme Olayları, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 2007;32:294-305.

⁹ Sancar Yalçın Türkan, Türk Ceza Hukukunda Kadın, Seçkin Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2013;254.

¹⁰ Tezcan Mahmut, Türkiye'de Töre [Namus] Cinayetleri-Sosyo-Kültürel antropolojik Yaklaşım, Ankara: Naturel Yayınları, 2003;10-16; Bağlı Mazhar, Töre Ve/Veya Namus Adına Cinayet İşleyen Suçlu Ve Zanlıların Sahip Oldukları Toplumsal Değer Yapıları, Aile İlişkileri Ve Kişilik Özellikleri İle Bunların Sosyoekonomik Analizine İlişkin Bir Araştırma, Diyarbakır, 2008.

¹¹ Bağlı Mazhar, "Töre ve/veya Namus Adına Cinayet..."; Karam Filiz, Türkiye'de Namus Cinayetlerinin Dinamikleri: Eylem Programı İçin Öneriler Sonuç Raporu, Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı, 2005;10-17; Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Sebeplerinin Araştırılarak Alınması Gereken Önlemlerin Belirlenmesi Amacıyla Kurulan Meclis Araştırması Komisyonu Raporu. Komisyon Çalışmaları ve Rapor Girişi, 8 Mayıs 2015;1:55-136.

Honor, on the other hand, is defined as a “commitment to moral rules and social values of a society, and to chastity, honesty, and truthfulness”¹². Although the definition is gender-independent, in practice, unfortunately, this concept is discussed in terms of women's sexuality. So much that the most prominent meaning of "Honor" is the "protection of purity in terms of sexual behavior", "protection of chastity" from everyone before marriage and the exclusive loyalty of the woman to her husband after marriage. In contrast, it can be stated that a concept of male honor also exists, however both the definition and the protection behavior of male honor is different. The honor that a man must protect is "the honor of women that are dependent on him", more than his own honor¹³.

In other words, although honor, in terms of definition, applies to both genders¹⁴, there is a strong tendency in the public opinion that this concept is interpreted as the man's authority over the woman, the woman's sexuality and the woman's body¹⁵. In short, the protection or tainting of honor is tied to the woman, and the woman is deemed responsible to bear the man's honor.

In a patriarchal society, the sexuality of men and women is structured by certain values and behavioral patterns. The individuals express their sexualities within these limits. The patriarchal society exaggerates and fictionalizes the difference between genders and ensures that individuals interact on this basis. The patriarchal society has to perpetuate itself through gender identities that it enforces and the stereotypes that constitute them. In a male-dominated social structure, the woman's body is always under control, and is severely limited. The patriarchal society limits the woman's body on women's behalf, while leaving it open and vulnerable to the man. The men start to see women not as "human beings" but as an "object" on which they can enforce their own sexual dominance. Thus, the woman's body becomes a material¹⁶.

While the concepts of honor and tradition, which are not part of human nature, but are invented by humans, are different from each other; the "tradition killings" and "honor killings" that result from the violation of the meanings attributed to these concepts by individuals and the society, are also different. In tradition killings, if an act violating the tradition is committed, a family meeting consisting of the males of the immediate family and relatives is convened to punish the violating individual. The family meeting decides on the perpetrator, and the perpetrator is required to punish those who violate the tradition with death. Moreover, the execution order and method for this future murder is decided upon. In honor killings, the situation is more individualistic. The perpetrator decides on the act, for the reason that the woman that he believes is his own has violated his conception of honor, and carries out the killing¹⁷.

¹²Turkish Language Association, General Turkish Dictionary, http://tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_gts&arama=gts&guid=TDK.GTS.563d64e50e8904.92873316 01.06.2016

¹³Tezcan Mahmut, “Türkiye’de Töre [Namus] Cinayetleri...”, 10-16; Bağlı Mazhar, “Töre ve/veya Namus Adına Cinayet...”.

¹⁴Bağlı Mazhar, “Töre ve/veya Namus Adına Cinayet...”.

¹⁵United Nations Populations Fund, The dynamics of honor killings in turkey prospects for action, p.16.

¹⁶Demren Çağdaş, Ataerkillik Ve Erkeklik Biçimlerinin Karşılıklı İlişkileri Ve Etkileşimleri, Unpublished Master Thesis, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Antropoloji Bölümü, 2001;Ankara, Turkey.; Bodur Harun, Çeşitli boyutlarıyla kan davası ve namus cinayetleri, Unpublished Post-graduate Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi,Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Hukuk Bölümü, Kamu Hukuku, İstanbul, 2007.

¹⁷ Bağlı Mazhar, “Töre ve/veya Namus Adına Cinayet...”; Kardam Filiz, “Türkiye’de Namus Cinayetlerinin Dinamikleri...”, 10-17; İnci Ülkü Hayriye, Basında Yer Alan Namus Cinayetlerinin Sosyolojik Analiz, Tarih Kültür ve

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The belief that the woman's sexuality is the honor of the family and that it must be protected by the male relatives of the woman existed before the emergence of Judaism, Christianity or Islam. Violence against woman, although committed under religious pretenses, is actually based on a conservatism that is marred by tradition and feudalism. Judaism, Christianity and Islam originate in the Middle-East and have similar principles in terms of male and female honor¹⁸.

Table 1: Tradition and Honor Killings Report (2008)

REGIONS	Total Killing	Total Population (2007. TUIK)	Ratio to Total Population	Killing Density Ratio
Marmara	294	20.724.950	29%	25.61%
Inner Anatolia	219	11.327.675	16%	19.08%
Aegean	217	9.299.322	13%	18.90%
Southeastern Anatolia	162	7.170.849	10%	14.11%
Eastern Anatolia	94	5.694.582	8%	8.19%
Mediterranean	83	8.906.427	13%	7.23%
Black Sea	79	7.462.451	11%	6.88%
TOTAL	1148	70.586.256	100%	100%

Source: Directorate of Human Rights, RoT Prime Minister's Office. Tradition and Honor Killings Report (2008)¹⁹.

The honor and tradition killings that are commonly seen as a problem involving only certain geographical regions²⁰ (Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia), are actually the problem of the whole country and region (Greater Middle Eastern Region)²¹. Research has shown that the Marmara Region (City of Istanbul) shows the highest number of tradition and honor killings. There are several reasons that underlie this fact. The first of these reasons is that the city of Istanbul in this region is "receiving an amount of immigration that increases every year, and the immigration problems -especially inadequate accommodation, education, and employment, crowded families, poverty, etc.- are experienced more intensively there" Another reason is suggested to be that "considering the regional distribution of the perpetrators'/suspects' places of birth, almost half of these individuals come from the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions, where the traditional

Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi, 2013;2 (3): 282-296; Akbaba Zeynep Burcu, Töre, Namus Ve Töre Saikiyle Kasten Öldürme, Türkiye Barolar Birliği Dergisi, 2008;75: 333-351.

¹⁸ Abu-Odeh Lama, Crimes Of Honor And The Construction Of Gender In Arab Societies, Women And Sexuality In Muslim Societies, Edited by Pınar İlkaraçan, 363-381. Özgün Ofset, İstanbul, Turkey; 2000.

¹⁹ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, Töre ve Namus Cinayetleri Raporu, Sessizliğimizi Duyan Var mı? 25 Haziran 2008;2-11.

²⁰ Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, "Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Sebeplerinin..." ,55-136; Anar Suat, Türkiye'de Kan Davası, Türk Aile Ansiklopedisi, Aile Araştırma Kurumu Yayınları, Ankara, Turkey. 1991; C:2, 656-658; Yıldız Mahmut Cengiz. Türkiye'de Töre Baskısına Bağlı İntiharlar Ve Töre Cinayetleri, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 2008;9(1): 16.

²¹ Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, "Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Sebeplerinin..." ,55-136.

patriarchal structure is more evident"²². "Although individuals from rural societies in which tribal life is dominant and family ties are strong may migrate to cities, their social environment doesn't change much²³ and more, they bring the concepts of tradition and honor that prevailed in the regions they came from".

The state's involvement in the problem of honor killings in our country has been inadequate since recently, and the laws had been regulated and enforced in a manner that reinforces gender inequality. Since the woman's social identity was defined on the basis of family in The Older Version Turkish Penal Code, the approach towards honor killings was tolerant. Although premeditated murders increase the sentence of the perpetrator [in relation to unplanned murders], in honor killings, although they are premeditated, this was ignored. The Older Version Turkish Penal Code assumed severe provocation in these cases, and applied a reduction on the sentence. Moreover, young boys in the family were coerced to carry out the killings to obtain a much more reduced sentence. The New Version Turkish Penal Code has removed the sentence reduction on honor killings, and started sentencing the perpetrators of these crimes to heavier sentences. However, although modification have been made in the legislation, in practice, it is not yet possible to state that the social mindset has been completely transformed²⁴.

This study discusses the honor killings, which are punished with aggravated imprisonment for life under the Turkish Penal Code, the dynamics of these killings and the measures that can be taken to prevent these killings.

METHOD

The case files that are registered in the Adana Courthouse, in the National Judiciary Network Information System (UYAP) and that have been referred to the 3rd Criminal Court of the Adana Courthouse between June 2008 and June 2014, and that have been finalized after June 2008. Ten cases in these files will be examined and discussed considering current knowledge.

CASE 1:

It is understood that H.K., who was 24 at the time of the incident has killed his two sisters (15 and 22 years old) his mother (46 years old) and his brother in law (30 years old) with an unlicensed gun, in a premeditated fashion, because of tradition and the family members' compulsion to "cleanse our honor". The suspect has stated that his sister had an affair with his brother in law, that even his sister realized the situation but couldn't tell her family, and that she has argued with her husband several times about this subject. 5-6 months before the incident the brother (the suspect) has learned that his little sister is having an affair with his brother in law, and went mad upon learning that his other sister also knows the situation. On a day that all the family members were in Adana, the suspect has stated that he had a fight with the brother in law, then shot him first with the unlicensed gun, the gun fired again when the mother was trying to pry the gun away from

²²Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...",2-11.

²³Bozkurt İbrahim, *Tarih Boyunca Aşiretçilik Ve Şanlıurfa Aşiretleri*, İmaj Ofset, Adana, Turkey; 2003; Saruhan Şenal, *TCK Kadınlara Neler Getiriyor?* CKD Yayınları, Ankara, Turkey, 2005; Bilgili Naile/Vural Gülşen, *Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin En Ağır Biçimi: Namus Cinayetleri*, *Journal of Anatolia Nursing and Health Sciences*, 2011;14:1.

²⁴Bozkurt İbrahim, "Tarih Boyunca..."; Saruhan Şenal, "TCK Kadınlara..."; Bilgili Naile/Vural Gülşen, "Kadına Yönelik...".

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his hand and that he shot his mother, older sister and little sister, and that he has killed 4 persons from his family. The suspect has turned himself in to the police after the incident.

CASE 2:

It is understood that F.Z., 16 years old at the time of the incident, has killed his 21 years old sister by strangling her with a scarf. The suspect stated that his father passed away 15 years ago, and that he was currently living in the same house as his mother and sisters. The suspect has stated in his statement that he was working in a textile workshop with his sister until 10-15 days ago, and that his sister (the deceased) quitted the work without stating any reason. On the day of the incident, the suspect stated that he was alone with his sister in the house, and that his sister went out with a man that he does not recall the name of, and that he has argued with his sister that that man was not a good person. It is understood that during the fight concerning the fact that "she should be more careful about her behavior in their neighborhood, especially after their father's death", that "she would taint the family name", the suspect has strangled the victim with a scarf and caused her death due to mechanical asphyxia.

CASE 3:

It is understood that D.O. who was 24 years old at the time of the incident was married for 13 months, and has strangled his wife who left home to death. According to the suspect's statement, that his wife left home when they were married for 5 months, that they came together through the intervention of their families, however his wife moved back to her parents' house after 3-4 weeks, and that they have been living apart for 7 months. He stated that an unknown man has been calling him on the phone, that the caller stated that he has been together with his wife, that he has posted a video on the internet, and that the suspect should check the address that he provides, if he doesn't believe him. The suspect stated that he went on the web site and watched his wife's video, however he couldn't be sure, and that on the day of the incident, they met to discuss, and started arguing in the car, and that his wife confirmed the video. The suspect stated that he asked his wife whether she "had an affair with someone else", that she confirmed, and she even said that she was pregnant with her lover, and she had an abortion, upon which he has strangled his wife with her scarf. It has been understood that the suspect has killed his wife through mechanical asphyxia.

CASE 4:

It is understood that H.B. who was 36 years old at the time of the incident, has stabbed to death his brother in law who divorced his older sister, and was constantly visiting and threatening his ex-wife (the suspect's sister) and family regardless of the divorce. The suspect, in his defense, has stated that the deceased was constantly engaged in violence against the suspect's sister and their children, and that his sister has left home several times and that they are in shame in the eyes of their peers (family, relatives and neighborhood) as a family. The suspect has stated that the brother in law has not stopped his actions despite all warnings, and that he constantly threatened his family. The suspect stated that they rented a house on the same street as their own, to support his sister and her kids as a family, that the deceased continued to disturb his sister, that the brother in law came to his sister's house when the suspect was also there on the day of the incident, that the brother in law has insulted and attacked them, and that the suspect picked up a knife from the kitchen to defend

himself, and that his intention was not to kill the brother in law. The suspect has stated that he was the one who called the police immediately after the incident, and that he has applied first-aid.

CASE 5:

It is understood that M.U. who was 35 years old, married for 11 years and with one child, has killed his wife who was 33 years old and diagnosed with "Cervical Cancer" with a gun. The suspect stated that his wife lost interest in him for the last 1.5 years that she didn't carry out her domestic duties, that he thought that she was cheating on him and started following her. On the day of the incident, the suspect told her wife that he would be home late, but came back 2 hours before and waited for his husband in the garden. The suspect has stated in his statement that he spied the house from the window, that his wife came home with a low-cut dress and excessive make-up, and that she changed her clothes as soon as she came home and sat in front of her computer. The suspect stated that his wife has repeated this several times, and that he started hearing rumors about his wife from the neighborhood and he became furious, that he had several fights with his wife on the issue, but his wife didn't take his warnings into account. During yet another fight, the suspect stated that he didn't mean to kill his wife, but he couldn't stop himself because of her attitude, that he fired his unlicensed gun on his wife and killed her.

CASE 6:

It is understood that the juvenile pushed to crime R.B. (Suspect) who was 17 years old at the time of the incident, has threatened his cousin's [15] boyfriend by shooting in the air, along with the suspect's two male cousins. The suspects have forced their female cousin (whose father (their uncle) was dead and older brother was in the army) and the 21-year-old male person who they think is her boyfriend, and who lives in the same neighborhood in the car and taken them to a secluded area to "protect their female cousin, who is their honor". It is understood that they said to the boyfriend upon leaving the car "if you're serious, come and ask for her from our family", that the boyfriend denied the situation and that the suspects have started harassing him upon this. It is understood that the suspect R.B. has fired his gun in the air that at the same time his cousin started running towards an irrigation canal, jumped in the canal from 15 meters high and disappeared. The body of the cousin was found 12 hours later by the law enforcement officers in the irrigation canal, quite far from the incident area, stuck on an iron grating. The suspects have been tried according to the articles of the Turkish Penal Code concerning "causing the death of a close relative due to tradition".

CASE 7:

It is understood that M.G. who was 18 years old at the time of the incident has killed his mother who had an affair with another man by stabbing her in the back, acting on the sense of duty to "cleanse the stain that was put on their honor and dignity". The suspect stated that his deceased mother didn't perform her motherly duties, that she had an affair with a man other than his father, and that he has learned that she had an affair for 3-4 months on the day before, and that she left home and her 4 children to live with this man and started living with him. The suspect stated that he used drugs, and he took pills and marijuana on the day of the incident, and grabbed a knife from his house while under the influence and went to his mother's apartment and stabbed her.

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CASE 8:

It is understood that E.Y who was 30 at the time of the incident, who is a primary school graduate has killed the man that he claims was the lover of his female cousin with a gun. He has stated that the female cousin of the suspect and her mother live on the same street as him, and that he encountered the victim who also lived on the same street when he was in front of the suspect's cousin's house. Upon seeing that the victim was greeting his cousin, he asked the victim whether he knew her and the victim said "she's my lover", and the suspect stated that he couldn't take it, that he pushed the victim and insulted him, and that the victim ran away. The suspect was very furious and followed the victim, caught him, killed him with the unlicensed gun he had and ran away. A week after the incident, he turned himself in to the police.

CASE 9:

It is understood that O.O who was 40 years old and married at the time of the incident has killed his former paramour and the man she had an affair with because she was cheating on him. It has been understood that the suspect had a fight with his wife during the divorce and was arrested and incarcerated because of this. It was understood from the suspect's testimony that he had a paramour relationship with S.D. in the period before his arrest. The suspect has learned that his lover S.D. with whom he used to live together was cheating on him with another man after he was incarcerated. The suspect has called and made an appointment with S.D. after being released from prison to meet and discuss their old business partnerships and monetary issues. It is understood that S.D. arrived to the meeting with her new boyfriend. It is understood that the suspect attacked the victims upon their arrival, without any discussion/argument, has also stabbed S.D.'s lover to death, and has turned himself in to the police in the evening.

CASE 10:

It is understood that M.O. who was 40 at the time of the incident, has killed his wife because she was cheating on him, then killed his wife's lover who was a doctor in the Family Health Center in their neighborhood when he was leaving work with a gun and in a premeditated fashion. It is understood that the suspect was married for 22 years and had 3 children, and worked in Iraq for 7-8 years and could only come home for 2-3 weeks in 6 months. The suspect stated that he realized that his wife was talking on the phone with someone like lovers when he came to Turkey about one year before the incident on vacation, but that although he had suspicions, he didn't pursue the matter. However, the suspect has decided to get a divorce because he has realized that his wife was constantly chatting with someone on the internet and that she was treating him badly. The suspect stated that he has shared his views with his children and that upon their advice to save the marriage and not to divorce, he has talked with his wife and they decided to stay married. The suspect stated that he decided not to go to Iraq anymore because of his lung problems, and started working in his cousin's workplace in the city they lived. During this period, the suspect caught his wife talking on

the phone with someone like lovers again, and upon investigating the number she was talking to, he found out that it belonged to C.U. who was a doctor in the FHC in their neighborhood. His wife admitted that she had an affair with C.U. and that she loved her, and wanted to divorce. Upon this confession, it is understood that the suspect planned to kill the victims in severe anger and sadness. It is understood from the suspect's statement that he went to the FHC that the doctor who had an affair with his wife worked in the evening hours, and killed the doctor (victim) as he left work with his unlicensed gun, then came home on his motorcycle and killed his wife who was watching TV with the same gun.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The definitive boundaries of the concept of 'honor' that males fictionalize or to which they attribute some value based on the oppression of the society they live in, or only on their discretion, are not clear. We think that it is not possible to explain the "woman's honor" through the males to whom the women are claimed to socially belong to, based on the concept of honor created and defined according to every individual's, especially every male's own experience. Similarly, we think that it is not acceptable that women are victimized in various ways, even killed for honor due to the semantically "subjective concept of honor"²⁵. Thus, we believe that preventing these killings are absolutely necessary in terms of legal and social regulations, and for a society and a state that are based on concepts of human rights.

The fact that the Turkish Penal Code "has adopted the crime of killing a person with the apparent reason of salvaging their honor, which is a traditional behavior of feudal societies and societies that are left overs of feudalism" is of course commendable²⁶. However, the fact that honor killings are still occurring is proof that the sanctions provided by the law are not adequately deterring on their own. Suspects committing this crime do not feel guilt, in spite of very heavy sanctions that exist, and still continue to commit this crime because the concept of honor defined by traditional models means social and individual existence for these people²⁷. Thus, the legal norms enforced by the state to prevent these murders have sadly been most inadequate before the norms created by the society's perception of honor, and the perpetrators have chosen, and will continue to choose social existence by killing women. Moreover, the suspects who claim to have protected their honor by committing an honor killing are highly esteemed in our society and are presented to the society almost as heroes²⁸. At this point, we think that the duty of the individuals constituting the society is to realize that these individuals are not heroes but criminals who disturb the peace and safety of the society by killing humans, and to create the social awareness required to make the existing legal norms effectively enforceable to prevent these murders.

Another accomplishment necessary to prevent these murders is to change the perception of "woman" in the society. To start achieving this aim, the society must be taught that women are also

²⁵ Ankara Barosu Kadın Hakları Merkezi İnsanlığın namus lekesi: töre cinayetleri. Ankara Barosu Dergisi. 2008 Güz;66(4): 17-19.

²⁶ Hafızogulları Zeki/ Özen Muharrem, Türk Ceza Hukuku Özel Hükümler Kişilere Karşı Suçlar, US-A Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2011; p.55.

²⁷ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...", 2-11.

²⁸ Akbaba Zeynep Burcu, "Töre, Namus...", 333-351.

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individuals, that they have the right to determine their futures in terms of their body, mind and sexuality²⁹. Thus women will be able to attribute meanings to socially problematic concepts such as honor from their perspectives and experiences, just like men, and they will be able to live their own truths. Moreover, we think that they will be victims of less killings in the name of "honor" while they live their own truths.

One of the most important reasons of honor killings is the low education level of the society. It is known that the number of both victims and perpetrators of these killings increases as the educational level decreases³⁰. The males who have combined the ignorance caused by low education levels with the power of a long-dominant patriarchal society have assumed that they have a power over women's bodies. Thus, we think that creating awareness that honor cannot be a male concept, that both men and women are equals before the law in the educational system would be pivotal in preventing these killings³¹. We also believe that the media, which announces these honor killings far and wide, should fulfill its responsibilities in preventing these killings. The words used to announce these killings to the public through media should be chosen very carefully. We believe that it should be shown that the murder of a woman lies behind most cases, instead of referring to the cases simply as honor killings. Moreover, we think that the state, NGOs and the media should collaborate to prevent these murders, create public service ads should, and that the media should play an active part in ensuring that these ads reach to most of the society³².

On the other hand, research on tradition and honor killings, and data analyses are usually conducted based on the age, ethnic origin, region of residence, or region of origin of the perpetrator and the victim³³. We think that as the analyses and research focusing on social gender increase; it will be revealed that honor killings are not a problem specific to certain regions, and that they concern all of Turkey. We believe that when these murders are accepted to be one of Turkey's problems, more effective and realistic solutions can be found to protect women in every social stratum, who are potential victims.

The woman's statuses must be elevated and it must be ensured that they have the same rights as the men in all areas. Moreover, the society must be made to understand that the penalty for a woman to marry whomever she wills or having an extramarital affair is not death, and the women who are considered to be at risk for honor killings must be protected. The society should not tolerate honor killings; it must condemn it. As the very young males who commit the murders may be considered victims as much as the murdered women, it must be ensured that the perpetrators are placed in special rehabilitation centers to be treated³⁴.

In tradition and honor killings, the male perpetrators may become victims as much as the women. The perpetrators should be evaluated in terms of forensic psychology to prevent individuals

²⁹ Akbaba Zeynep Burcu, "Töre, Namus...", 333-351; Ankara Barosu Kadın Hakları Merkezi, "İnsanlığın Namus Lekesi...", 17-19.

³⁰ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...", 2-11.

³¹ Ankara Barosu Kadın Hakları Merkezi, "İnsanlığın Namus Lekesi...", 17-19.

³² Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...", 2-11; Kardam Filiz, "Türkiye'de Namus Cinayetlerinin Dinamikleri...", 10-17; Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, "Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Sebeplerinin...", 55-136.

³³ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...", 2-11.

³⁴ Bilgili Naile/Vural Gülşen, "Kadına Yönelik..."

who will commit these crimes in the future from committing them. We think that the perpetrators are also victims of the violence of social feudality.

The necessary steps must be taken to change the traditional perceptions and judgements about social genders. In that regard, the official institutions and organizations should take effective measures to prevent women's safety. To prevent honor killings, the existing points of view should be discarded and it should be accepted that the problem is not just a "woman issue". This study presents information about the perpetrator profiles. However, detailed studies on much larger samples are required, in addition to face to face interviews to understand this feudal approach and attitude towards violence. We think that the society may be transformed from a violence-based one to a love-based one with the multi-disciplinary works of various units in forensic sciences. Thus, this study and similar studies are highly important in terms of social dynamics.

Forensic sciences raise awareness in individuals, law enforcers and societies. We think that this awareness will cause the social transformation of humanity, especially in all aspects of violence.

This is why we must persistently, perpetually discuss the issue within forensic sciences and to increase the awareness/consciousness levels on the issue. This is not only important for forensic sciences, but also for the improvement of world societies.

In conclusion; honor killings, which are in conflict with the fact that a woman as an individual is the only authority on her body and that just like other individuals, has the right to life which is the most fundamental right, are unfortunately still ongoing in our society. It must be remembered that what's important is not the theoretical existence of human rights in a legal system, but the practical implementation of these rights³⁵. Thus, very severe social and legal sanctions should be enforced on the perpetrators of these murders that violate the woman's right to life. In all this, the goal must be to completely eradicate these killings victimizing the women.

³⁵Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İnsan Hakları Başkanlığı, "Töre ve Namus...",2-11.

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