

Assessing Honour Killing Through The Novels *Maps For Lost Lovers*, *Bliss* and *The Cry of the Dove*

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters

of Arts in English



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Declaration

I, hereby, declare that this work has been written entirely by me except for the references and quotations which I have acknowledged duly. Additionally, I have maintained all academic ethics and integrity while preparing this research.

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Approval of Supervisor

I certify that this dissertation satisfies all the requirements as a dissertation for the degree of
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Abstract

Honour killing is a global crisis that has been depicted in different literary texts. This thesis aims to understand and analyze the politicization of Islam and gender roles that play a role in the honour killing of Muslim women across the world. Incorporating Louis Althusser's Ideologies and Ideological State Apparatus theory, and Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis theory this thesis evaluates literary texts *Bliss* (2002) by Zulfu Livaneli, *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) by Nadeem Aslam and *The Cry of the Dove* (2007). By analyzing these literary texts, I argue that gender discrimination, the manipulation of Islam, the failure of state laws in different countries, and Muslim women's subalternation aids in the continuation of honour killing

Introduction

In 2022, according to a news published in *The Guardian* newspaper on the 24th of May, two sisters were victims of honour killing. The sisters had dual citizenship from Pakistan and Spain and were forcibly married off to their cousins. After marriage, both of their husbands wanted to move to Europe, and so they pressured both Anisa Abbas and Arooz Abbas to apply for spouse visas. However, the sisters wanted to divorce their husbands, so when the parents learned about their daughters' decisions, they were tricked into travelling to Pakistan and killed by their father, brother, and husbands. To cover their crime of murder, the murderers claimed that the sisters had to be killed as they have violated the honour of the family to cover their crime of murder (Janjua). This news, no doubt, unravels one of the heinous crimes committed against women.

In honour killing, the honour of the clans or families is preserved by killing the person who supposedly brings dishonour by going against the norms set by patriarchy. Ironically, by taking away the lives of the so-called “criminals”, they are also committing a heinous crime themselves. It is seen that in most cases, the victims are women. Women are expected to be docile and submissive to the norms and traditions even if they are unfavourable to them. Men take it as their duty to preserve the honour of their bloodline and society. It is shameful that such an act of honour killing prevails even in the twenty-first century. The victims of honour killing are murdered when certain actions are considered dishonourable by their family members, relatives, and community. There are several actions of women that are considered to be “dishonourable” in eyes of the male-dominated society; actions like falling in love, marriage outside cast, or getting a divorce from an abusive husband are deemed as dishonourable and hence, worthy of putting to stop such actions. According to Human Rights Watch, “Honor

crimes are acts of violence, usually murder, committed by male family members against female family members who are perceived to have brought dishonor upon the family” (“Violence Against Women”). To elaborate, honour killing is the act of revenge, generally, death, carried out by male family members against female family members who are considered to have brought the family into shame. The actions that are considered dishonourable are a set of norms and expectations created by someone authoritative, mostly the patriarchs. The mere suspicion that a woman has acted in a way that "dishonours" her family is enough to prompt a life-threatening attack.

Honour killing is an important issue because even in the 21st century there are many countries where honour killing persists. Amnesty International published in their article titled, “The Horror of ‘Honor Killings’, Even in US”, that the majority of honour killing that is reported to exist are in different regions of Middle East and South Asia. It is also found in different countries such as Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition, the majority of honour killing victims are women. The United Nations estimated that 5,000 women and girls are honour killed each year by family members (“Honour Killings”). According to The Council of Europe’s report, approximately, over 200 women have been killed in the name of honour each year in Turkey. The University of Alabama at Birmingham in its Institute For Human Rights Blog posted that in honour killings ninety-three percent of the victims are women. Hence, it can be said that the victims of general honour killings are mostly women. Human Rights Watch describe the phenomenon as a clear “violation of women’s rights. (“Violence Against Women”). It might be difficult to stop honour killing drastically but through creating awareness victims will get a chance to protect themselves. Honour killing is not limited

to a specific region or religion and most of the time abusers are unaccountable for their crimes. As literature reflects real life, reading literature can help the readers to understand the depth of the situation. Hence, I chose this topic to create and spread awareness among the readers.

Countries that practice honour killing have cultural values that consider women as the property of the family and society. A woman's body and chastity are considered to be the property of the family which must be guarded. To properly control a woman, her freedom is compromised. It is not only the women from Muslim countries who are victims of honour killing, Muslim women who immigrate to different parts of the world are also at risk because if they become westernized, they are also thought to be dishonouring their families and consequently might end up being the victim of honour killing. The older generation among the immigrants sometimes has a negative attitude towards the younger generation who assimilate into the culture of the foreign country they are living in. Another reason honour killing is carried out is to cover the crimes committed by the men. Rape victims or victims of any kind of sexual abuse are targeted for honour killing in order to cover the crimes and to protect the perpetrators. In situations like these, the women are falsely accused of tainting the honour of the family.

For my thesis, I have selected three novels, which are *Bliss* (2002) by Zulfu Livaneli, *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) by Nadeem Aslam and *The Cry of the Dove* (2007) by Fadia Faqir. As mentioned previously, honour killing is not limited to specific regions. I have selected these three literary texts to analyse honour killings taking place in Jordan, Turkey and the immigrant community in England. The setting of the novel *Bliss* (2002) by Zulfu Livaneli is in Turkey. It explores the religious brainwashing taking place among the tribes in rural Turkey. Female victims of sexual assault are murdered in disguise of honour killing. The novel also explores the failure of state law in protecting women's human rights. In Turkey, judges exploit and modify

punishments allowing the murderers to go free. *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) by Nadeem Aslam is a crucial novel in the context of understanding honour killing among Muslim immigrants in England. It unfolds the severity of the toxic men-made tradition of Pakistan, illiteracy, misuse and manipulation of religious institutions and figures such as mosques and Imams distorting Islamic values to haunt the lives of the Muslims in England. Lastly, *The Cry of the Dove* (2007) by Fadia Faqir depicts honour killing taking place in Jordan and the condition of the female victims of honour killing. *The Cry of the Dove* adds insight into prisoning of the female victims in Jordan. The novel explores the factors such as unawareness, illiteracy and patriarchy to be the reasons for women in Jordan to become honour killing victims. The different novels represent the versatility of honour killing in different regions which enriches this thesis by adding different lenses and perspectives.

Dr. Éva Pataki in her article titled, "This Dasht-e-Tanhaii called the planet Earth": The Metamorphosis of Space and Identity in Nadeem Aslam's "*Maps for Lost Lovers*" investigates the novel to claim that formation of diaspora spaces is a two-fold process of hybridization. It happens from both the inside as well as from the outside. She analysis the novel and shed light upon the formation of diasporic identities and claims the formation of hybridization in an immigrant Muslim community has to be disguised because the "slightest sign of westernization is severely punished" and orthodox Islam is responsible for the disharmony in the diasporic community. Berivan Saltik in her PhD dissertation at Lancaster University entitled "Exploring Honour Killings through Literature: An Investigation of Motivations for Honour Killings" (2016) examines Turkish author Zülfü Livaneli's novel *Bliss* (2007) to analyse the cultural construction of purity and impurity and its relation with the notion of honour and dishonour in Turkish society in the first chapter. In the third chapter of her dissertation, she examines Nadeem

Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) to understand that the relationship between cultural alienation and identity in the diasporic community is a vital contributing factor in honour killing. On the other hand, Zahra Ghasemi, Nasser Dasht Peyma and Seyyed Majid Alavi Shooshtari in their research article titled "The Aesthetics of Trauma in Fadia Faqir's *The Cry of the Dove*" analyse the narrative techniques of the novel to show how traumatic experiences are expressed through voicelessness. She examines the narrative styles such as fragmentation, non-linearity, repetition, poetic prose, and stream of consciousness and how these styles expressed the "evasive nature of traumatic experience" of the protagonist Salma.

The researchers working on these three novels have shed light on the issues such as diasporic identities and hybridization in an immigrant Muslim community, the cultural construction of purity and impurity and how it defines honour and dishonour and the narrative techniques of the novel to explore traumatic experiences. However, in my thesis, I have focused on Muslim women victims of honour killings in different regions. In my research, I have included issues such as manipulation of Islamic values, failure of state laws and factors that make women primary victims of honour killing. My research is different because, I will investigate the novels *Bliss*, *Cry of the Dove* and *Maps for Lost Lovers* through the lens of functions and failure of state law and religious manipulation. The purpose of this research is to understand the motives of honour killing and to show the exigency to put a stop to such a heinous act. The significance of this study is to create awareness that Islam does not promote honour killing, rather it is more of a cultural construct created by the patriarchy to sustain physical, psychological and ideological domination.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters titled, "Manipulation of Islam: A Way to Justify Honour Killing", "Muslim women: Victims of Ideologies" and "Laws and Lies: Nation

and Community's Failure to Protect Women's Rights" respectively. Each chapter analyses the different factors responsible for the continuation of honour killing even in the present day.

Chapter one scrutinizes *Bliss* (2002) and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) to unveil the manipulation of Islam that normalize honour killing in patriarchal societies. Chapter two elucidates the factors that make women vulnerable to honour killing as well as the reasons that prompt women to participate in honour killing. This chapter analyses all three novels to understand how manipulative social norms and the financial condition of women are responsible for the vulnerability of women. The final chapter will analyse the previously mentioned novels to shed light upon the failure of nations and communities to penalize perpetrators and protect women's rights. The shortcoming of the judicial system and provocative community contributes to the continuation of honour killing till today. By analyzing these three novels I will establish my claims that the manipulation of Islam, gender discrepancies in human rights and Muslim women's active and passive participation are the causes of the continuation of honour killing.

CHAPTER 1

Manipulation of Islam: A Way to Justify Honour Killing

For decades people around the world have had the wrong concept of Islam, particularly how it treats women. It is generally believed that Islam deprives women of freedom and restricts their liberty. The reason behind the spread of wrong information as such is due to the wrong preaching by Muslim men. Oftentimes the gatekeepers of Islam such as Sheikhs or Mullahs preach wrong Islamic values when it comes to the rights of women. Many Muslim men expect women to be docile and submissive to men in order to continue their power over women. In many cases, men manipulate Islamic values to establish their authority and in cases where Muslim men commit honour killing, they misuse Islam and its values to justify such crimes. Perpetrators of honour killing misuse Islam and its values to justify such crimes. Since religion is one of the most sensitive cognitive forms of social learning, it is easy to manipulate people's psychology by using religion. Such manipulation of Islamic norms and values to recreate distorted gender-biased social customs results in the continuation of honour killing. Taking advantage of religious sensitivity to authorize patriarchy, using religious practices to conceal the crime and normalizing honour killing with repulsive double standards are the ways Islam is politicized. This chapter will discuss how and why the manipulation of Islam is one of the vital tools for social, moral, and gender-based domination and thus aids in the continuation of honour killing to date. To establish my claim, I will examine *Bliss* by O. Z. Livaneli and *Maps for Lost Lovers* by Nadeem Aslam, where the authors scrutinize honour killing that takes place in the name of Islam. The geographical settings of these novels are respectively Turkey, and the Pakistani Immigrant community, living in England. For theoretical analysis, I will be taking references from Louis Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*.

Bliss is a story about a fifteen-year girl named Meryem who is fifteen years old and lives in a village in Eastern Anatolia, Turkey. She is raped by her paternal uncle who is a Sheikh, a respected religious figure among the Turkish people. Overwhelmed by the trauma as well as fear of her uncle since he is the most influential religious figure of the clan, she refrains from telling anyone about being raped by her uncle. On the other hand, fearing that Meryem may break her silence and jeopardize his position in society, her uncle contemplates killing her. Accordingly, he accuses her of bringing ‘dishonour’ upon the family and asks his son Cemal, who is a commando in the Turkish Army, to take her to Istanbul to kill her. Miraculously, Meryem does not die even after being pushed down from a bridge. Meryem’s survival impacts Cemal and he decides not to follow his father’s order and kill her for the time being. Cemal and Meryem take shelter in Cemal’s older brother Yakup’s place but as their financial condition is poor, they leave Yakup’s house. However, they get help from Cemal’s friend Selahattin who preaches the teachings of true Islamic values. Selahattin tells Cemal that Islam forbade killing. Selahattin manages a place for them to stay, where Meryem encounters Professor Irfan, a father figure, who employs Meryem as his cook. Living with Professor Irfan transforms Meryem from a helpless girl to a self-sufficient confident girl. Eventually, Meryem falls in love with a man named Mehmet Ali and settles down with his family. She also supports the family by making pancakes in their restaurant. Thus, she escapes her fate of being honour killed. Though the story revolves around Meryem’s journey and growth, in this novel Livaneli criticises the patriarchal manipulation and religious hypocrisies prevalent in Turkey.

On the other hand, Nadeem Aslam’s *Maps for Lost Lovers* centers on the murder of a couple named Jugnu and Chanda. Their murder is an instance of honour killing since they are killed to preserve the honour of the community. The story is narrated by Shamas, who is Jugnu’s

elder brother. We come to know that Jugnu is a middle-aged naturalist who studies rare butterflies. He fell in love with Chanda who is much younger than him and has been divorced by two husbands and abandoned by the third. Nonetheless, they are so much in love that they start to live together before marriage which is prohibited in Islam. Their decision of living together without being married is not taken well by the community members who begin to gossip about the couple's cohabitation and physical intimacy before marriage. The mockery and humiliation of society enrage Chanda's brothers Barra and Chotta so much that they decide to kill Chanda. However, what triggered the murder is the personal struggles and pent-up frustrations of the brothers. Chotta, the younger brother of Chanda has a Sikh girlfriend with whom he has a physical relationship. When he catches his girlfriend sleeping with another man, he vents his anger on his sister Chanda by murdering her the same night comparing Chanda's actions with his cheating girlfriend. On the other hand, Barra, the elder brother of the victim, forced his wife to have several abortions when the gender of his unborn child is revealed to be a girl. On the same day, he again forcefully aborted another unborn child thinking that it was a girl. Later on, he learned that the report was wrong and that it was a boy. He is frustrated because he is responsible for the death of his unborn son. So, when Chotta provoked him about Chanda saying that she needs to be punished, he instantly conspires with Chotta to murder her. Just like Chotta, he also channelled his anger on Chanda justifying the murder as restoring the honour of his family. Police suspect and arrest Chanda's brothers for murder, believing they disposed of the dead bodies. However, other community members believe that Chanda and Jugnu are alive and hiding. In this novel, along with examining the complexities of the lives of the immigrant South Asian community Aslam criticises the dichotomy between the treatment of women and men based on religion and honour.

To explain how Islam is manipulated to justify honour killing, I will be referring to Althusser's Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus. Althusser constitutes two theses to explain the object that represents the ideology and the materiality of ideology. His first thesis narrates that the dominant class represents certain ideas to us and the illusion of ideas alludes to something else. In his second thesis, he discusses that ideology exists in the world through apparatuses. The common people live by the ideology created by the dominant class and think that they are free with an objective opinion. However, this sense of objectivity is imaginary because unconsciously we are constantly going through different kinds of brainwashing for the benefit of those individuals who are in power. Ideology is created by individuals to manipulate subjects. The ruling class controls the media and creates mediums. Through different mediums such as media, religious institutions, and controlled apparatuses the ideology of the ruling class is circulated. Hence, we think about what the ruling class wants us to think. The process of idealistic subjugation through the manipulation of Islam resonates with Althusser's ideology. By referring to Althusser's discussion, I will further explore how the misogynistic ideology of the Muslim patriarchy circulates in the communities that aid in the continuation of honour killing.

In Muslim communities, men take advantage of religious sensitivity to legalize their domination over women. In many communities, Muslim religious leaders hold great power and authority. By exploiting religious sensitivity, men take advantage of people's trust and misuse their power. In the novel *Bliss*, Livaneli depicts how women are taken advantage of and are later killed to cover the traces of men's crimes. The protagonist Meryem is raped by her uncle. Her uncle is not just anybody, "He was highly regarded, not only in their village but throughout the neighbourhood, and visitors, bearing gifts, would often come to kiss his hand and pay their respects" (Livaneli 12). In his society, he is considered a "strict, quick-tempered and

intimidating” (12) person. The scariest part is the way he establishes his authority among the people. For him, it is not political authority or educational qualifications, or financial status; rather it is religion through which he establishes his authority. For centuries people in religious authoritative positions have been feared since many believe that they are pious and close to god. Hence, religious leaders are revered as godly. The same can be seen in Islam too, where Sheikhs are typically considered to be close to Allah. Meryem’s uncle takes advantage of such feelings in the community to gain respect and authority: He “recite[s] verses from the Quran, invoke[s] the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, and act[s] as a guide in all matters of daily life” (12). Ironically, such a man is a rapist and paedophile who committed an incestuous crime, still, he is the head of the religious sect of a certain area with followers. Despite being the rapist himself, he passes his ‘judgement’ to lock her up. He tags Meryem as an “immoral whore” (Livaneli 12) since his honour is at stake. He is able to dictate his ideology and dominance through the manipulation of Islam. For him, Islam is a medium through which he exercises his authority. Althusser describes such phenomena as ISA (Ideological State Apparatus). For the Sheikh, honour is an ideological apparatus through which he manipulates the people of his community into believing that a rape victim is a dishonourable person. He manipulates the ideology of the people of his community by using religion to create “imaginary distortions” (Althusser 696). That is, the rapist’s uncle tries to kill her off by shaming her for being raped. However, he is the perpetrator and should be shameful for committing such a crime. Meryem is not only a victim but also a living witness of his crime, so if she is killed, his crime will not come to light. The audacity of murdering a poor victim represents the horror of calculated conspiracies done by the men in society. Thus by manipulating religious ideology patriarchy hides its crime and justifies honour killing.

Concurrently, Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* also demonstrates how Islamic values and laws are distorted to favour men and justify honour killing. Chanda's circumstances and her death is the perfect example of such distortions. Even though Chanda is a victim of homicide, her murder is justified as an act of retaining the honour of the family. In her immigrant Muslim community, girls are married off at a young age as it elevates their social status. As depicted in the novel, most of the girls from Chanda's Community get married when they are in their early teens. The consent of these girls is not of importance since parents decide on the bridegroom. Chanda's first two marriages in Pakistan ended in divorce and the third husband abandoned her since his main intention was to get British citizenship. Chanda's third husband wanted British Citizenship, so he never bothered about whether she is divorced or not. He married her so that he could come and legalise his stay in England. When he gets his citizenship, he runs away without divorcing her and never contacted her once he left. His was nowhere to be found. The society and her family members disregarded Islam's humanitarian teachings. Her family members including her parents and brothers failed to see Chanda's sorrow, rather they along with the community members treated her as a disgrace because she was "divorced" and abandoned by her husbands. Her mother substitutes the word divorce with "used goods" (Aslam 134) because she is no longer a virgin. On the other hand, Chanda's brothers treated her existence as shameful, and not the actions of her previous husbands who were either violent or greedy. Her brothers Barra and Chotta suggested Chanda wear Burqa so that when she is outside "no one would know it was her as she went by" (Aslam 388) because they do not want to associate themselves as brothers of a divorced woman. Society, particularly, the men, turns the wronged Chanda into the wrongdoer. Scholar Chesler an Emerita Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies at the City University of New York, A feminist leader, and a retired psychotherapist describes honour killing as

“femicide” and sheds light on the materialization of women by the male family members. She points out that, in the case of a woman, it is as if “her body does not belong to her but to the collectivity (8)”. Her brothers take advantage of Islamic Law to further their power over Chanda.

Chanda and Jugnu decide to live together because the Muslim clerics they go to inform them that the annulment of Chanda’s third marriage will take time, and “since she had not been divorced by her previous husband, Islam forbade another marriage for several years— the number differing from sect to sect, four, five, six” (71), Chanda has to stay with her family for quite some time. But as the environment at her house is hostile, living with Jugnu seems to be the only way to protect herself from domestic violence and verbal abuse. Although Jugnu and Chanda visit many clerics to consult their situations, all of them focus on the part that she needs to get a divorce. None of them provides solutions regarding the situation where the husband abandons his wife as well as his duties. Islamic rules do not put women at disadvantage but they are distorted which makes it disadvantageous for women. For example, Muslim scholars of Darul Uloom Deoband, an internationally renowned Islamic seminary situated in India, have given a Fatwa on their online forum, (Fatwa: 968/1024/L=09/1437) stating that four months is the duration a husband is allowed to stay away from his wife with her permission. However, no matter how long they stay apart, the nikah (marriage) does not end. That implies that a husband cannot recklessly decide to abandon his wife. If a Muslim man wants to end a marriage, he has to comply with certain rules to make sure that the woman after divorce is not helpless. However, such a rule is distorted in Chanda’s case. Chanda is unable to marry Jugnu due to the above-mentioned religious restrictions. If her husband wants to divorce her, he will have to pay her alimony. He chose not to divorce her to avoid the alimony and none of the Muslim clerics that the couple visited pointed that out. In my opinion, the Muslim clerics from the community do not

point it out to uphold the ideologies that are taught by these men. Admitting the fault of Chanda's husband is similar to admitting to the flaws of the men, so they attempt to highlight Chanda's flaws.

By using religious practices, men conceal their crimes and pass the responsibility of retaining the "honour" on women. In any discourse related to honour killing, there is always a concern about whose honour we are talking about. According to Chesler, "honour killings are not necessarily religiously mandated" (7). Meryem's rapist uncle is a revered person in his community. Even though he gained respect by being a religious leader, his knowledge of Islam is questionable. To hide his crime, he wanted to murder her. He makes everyone believe that Meryem, the victim, is "a soiled, sinful woman, who had discredited the family. The family could not survive such a shame. For centuries this crime has been dealt with and punished in the same way. "This was God's will" (Livaneli 173). It is clear as day that in Meryem's case it was not Islamic rules but her uncle's personal interest for which she was convicted as a sinner. Sadly, honour killing is mistaken as a form of religious ritual. As Hongdao et al. denote, "With its occurrence in Muslim majority societies, the honor killing is mistakenly stipulated with the religion and the continuation of it is considered as a religious concession" (169). But Islam is against murder. In Qur'an Sharif, the holy book of Islam, it is stated that "He who slays a soul unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading mischief on earth shall be as if he had slain all mankind; and he who saves a life shall be as if he had given life to all mankind". Therefore, Meryem's uncle's decision to kill Meryem is not "God's will", rather it is against God's (Allah's) will.

Similarly, in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, honour killing is committed in the name of upholding the virtues of religion to conceal the crime of men. The Muslim parents of the immigrant

community send their children to the mosque to study the ways of Islam and the Quran. Sexual abuse takes place in the holy mosque where prayers are held and Islamic values are taught. When the perpetrator, a junior cleric, is caught red-handed with his “erect penis in a child’s mouth” (Aslam 269), a lot of the Muslim men in the community tried to draw a veil on this crime. When the mothers complained about the same cleric who sexually exploited the children in the mosque; “they were told that the scandal would give Islam and Pakistan a bad name” (Aslam 269). The men try to defend and cover the cleric’s crime by saying “if the police got involved and shut down the mosque no one would teach their sons to stay away from whore-like white girls” (Aslam 269). Hence, what we are witnessing is the distortion of the definition of crime. As Begum et al. explain that “The powerful concept of honour (and dishonour) is the moral foundation of gender hierarchy in collectivist cultures” (Abu-Lughod 2016). In Pakistani immigrant society, these men do not have an education or a proper job. Hence, they are unable to have a social status in the community. The only way they can regard themselves as socially important is by associating themselves with religion. Hence, if their paedophilia and homosexuality are unveiled, it will be a threat to their masculinity. Exposure to their crime is their biggest fear because they will be ostracised from society. And these men will no longer have a social standing in the community. In this way, religion is exploited to serve their own ends.

In some societies, Muslim men politicize Islam by establishing a double standard for women. For instance, in the novel *Bliss*, Cemal blames women for the sins men commit. Referring to the women in the magazine, he says that the “creature called woman was an invention of the Devil, created to tempt men into sin” (Livaneli 140). But he does not hold himself responsible for looking at those pictures from the magazines and getting sexually

aroused. However, in reality, Islam tells men to control their gaze too. In the religious book of the Muslims, the holy book Quran, it is stated: “O, Prophet, tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do” (Dr Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran 24:31). Although Cemal believes in Allah and Islam and is aware of sin, he creates a standard of sin that is different for women and him. Cemal learns to create double standards in his society and culture. The cultural system itself follows a double standard. Begum et al. shed light on the issue saying that the patriarchal hierarchy in the system is “engineered to uphold men’s dominance while subjugating women (2). This is similar to Cemal’s situation where he believes he has the right to dominate Meryem while subjugating her and her rights.

These double standards are more visible in Aslam’s *Maps for Lost Lovers* where Chanda’s brothers kill her because she was in a live together relationship with a man which according to them was dishonourable. But Chotta, Chanda’s younger brother fell in love with Kiran, a Sikh girl by mistaking her house “for the prostitute’s next door, and when [Kiran] answered he had decided to try his luck with [her]” (Aslam 326). And his love relationship progressed in a dynamic that Islam prohibits strictly. Hence, Chotta’s hypocritical religious stance on “Honor” is questionable. As a reader, we can resonate with victim Jugnu’s elder brother Shama’s, self-pondering question “How did he view his own illicit and, yes, sinful encounters with Kiran while condemning Chanda and Jugnu for the same thing?” (Aslam 327). These double standards are always in favour of men. It is revolting how in women’s cases society views them as guilty whereas supports the felony of the men. The younger sister Chanda is shamed and eventually killed but the younger brother from the same family is not, though he frequents brothels and was in a similar relationship with his girlfriend. The deep contrast is

visible when the community expected Chotta to do “the right thing and ask Kiran to convert to Islam and marry her” (Aslam 390). Chotta is not punished even though he used to visit prostitutes before dating Kiran but Chanda is murdered. As Aslam says, “They – and Chotta himself – saw nothing in common between his secret nights with a woman he was not married to and Chanda setting up home with Jugnu” (Aslam 390). However, as I have mentioned before, Islam advocates for male modesty too and if violated, they too are to be condemned as sinners. Islam is politicized in situations that benefit men. Chanda’s brothers drink alcohol which is forbidden in Islam. Chotta is often seen drinking alcohol such as Vodka and wine throughout the novel. But he does not face resistance from his family or community and he is never disciplined or receives any sort of punishment for it. This is how Islam is politicized through double standards.

These double standards make it easier for men to normalise honour killing. In the novel *Bliss*, Cemal’s older brother Yakup suggests him to murder Meryem “right away” if he is going to do it any way but he feels relieved that his daughter is not in Meryem’s shoes. In *Maps for Lost Lovers*, such normalisation of honour killing is evident in Suraya’s case. She is a character from the novel whose husband divorced her accidentally. Suraya discovered that one of the men from the family with whom her former in-laws had a long dispute was raping his niece for some months and when the girl got pregnant, she was accused of bringing dishonour to the family bloodline (Aslam 184). When Suraya wanted to expose it, she is threatened to be raped and then killed because raping would “cast a mark” on Suraya’s in-law’s family’s honour. The extent to which violence and crime such as rape and murder are normalized is extremely disturbing. By default, society holds women to be guilty. In the cases of both Meryem and Suraya, they are threatened to be sexually assaulted by the men of the society. One of them is raped another

receives a threat to be raped and killed. The social construction of 'honour' is devoid of gender equity. The fact that women can be murdered so easily based on behaviour that makes men feel ashamed portrays the normality of the crime. Sometimes honour killing is just a pretext that can be used to camouflage murder. In the case of Meryem, getting her honour killed is a camouflage for her uncle so that he can get away by murdering her to hide his crime. Suraya is threatened to be raped and killed because she voiced the crimes of men. Why is it not the other way? Because honour is positioned on the purity of the women, not the men. Furthermore, families feel the social pressure in protecting their 'women's' purity. Hence, if they cannot protect purity, the source that brings shame should be removed altogether. This shows how honour killing is normalised in their community.

One might raise the question of why women are allowing these double standards to continue. The answer is gender-biased Islamic teaching that prevails in Muslim society. Women are taught the wrong customs and values. Many women are brainwashed since childhood about their rights and existence. They are deprived of individuality and made to believe that their honour, life, and chastity belong to the men. Hence, if any of these three is stained, men have the full authority to punish her in whatever way they want. The manipulation takes place in layers such as social, financial, and religious. For instance, Kaukab from *Maps for Lost Lovers* is an ideal example of gender-biased Islamic manipulation. During the month of Ramadan, Muslims all over the world perform fasting. This means they are not allowed to eat, drink or taste any kind of food until a certain period of time. Kaukab as a housewife, cooks for her family. While fasting, she tastes the foods she cooks to check if the seasoning is right; she does it not because of her satisfaction or hunger, but rather "to prevent a beating and unpleasantness" from her husband (Aslam 296). She rationalises it in her head that if a wife has a strict husband she can

taste the food “to see that the salt and spices are according to his preference” (Aslam 296). This reflects two ideas. Firstly, wrong Islamic teaching is embedded in women's psychology either from the community or the family. Secondly, Islam is manipulated to normalized domestic violence. Chesler very aptly states that “Women have internalised the same patriarchal and tribal beliefs that men have (7). This is problematic because the practice of violence creates room for more violence and in turn, it can become a cycle of violence that affects not only the women but also tarnishes the mentality of the growing children. In other words, boys grow up learning that beating their wives is normal and girls grow up learning that getting beaten by husbands is normal. The patriarchal beliefs and deprivation of women’s rights become internalised in women.

In conclusion, social values in most cases come from religious teaching but over time they are distorted by men. Authentic Islamic heritage and values have always stood for the honour of women and bringing justice to the weak and victims. However, by distorting the teaching of Islam, a segment of the patriarchal society is taking advantage. They are committing crimes of murder which is unforgivable and a heinous crime according to Islam and Prophet Muhammad’s teaching. There is no scope for double standards and crime in Islam. Islam never says that women are the only ones to adhere to morality and chastity. Rather, Islam has given utmost respect and equal rights to women. It is the men who distort the values and preaching of Islam to solidify their superior position in society. And honour killing is one of the many ways they adopt to exercise their power and cover their crimes. However, in many cases, women also partake in honour killing for varied reasons. The next chapter will discuss the role of women in honour killing.

Muslim Women: Victims of Ideologies

The previous chapter illustrated how patriarchy manipulates religion and its values to serve its purpose. Also, how men initiate and perpetuate honour killing. However, there is room for questions such as why. This chapter will investigate women's contribution to honour killing as victimisers and factors that makes Muslim women major victims of honour killing. Scholar Phyllis Chesler terms honour killing as "Femicide" (2). Muslim women contribute to honour killing as victimisers for self-protection. The factors that make women vulnerable to honour killing are their socio-economic background, distorted Islamic norms and beliefs, and manipulative social customs. The participation and support of women in the killings is a notable factor that adds to the vulnerability of Muslim women in honour killings. To show my claim, I will be taking references from three different novels from different regions: *Bliss* by O. Z Livaneli, *The Cry of the Dove* by Fadia Faqir, and *Maps for Lost Lovers* by Nadeem Aslam. These three novels are contemporary samples of the vulnerability of Muslim women that comes from social inequities. The geographical settings of these novels are respectively Turkey, Jordan, and a Pakistani community living in England. For theoretical analysis, I will be taking references from Louis Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*.

The Cry of the Dove is a story about a young Arab woman who escapes from Jordan because her family will kill her because she has brought dishonour by giving birth to a daughter out of wedlock. The protagonist Salma, a daughter of a Jordan Bedouin family, falls in love with a man named Hamdan. Salma attended a school from which she acquired minimum literacy. Growing up in the mountains among the Bedouin community she had no knowledge of the way of the world. In addition, she has no knowledge of sex education since talking about this is taboo. Neither her school nor her parents ever taught her about it. Hence, it was easy for Hamdan to

deceive her into believing that physical intimacy is normal between the couples. However, he called her a slut when she got pregnant and left her. In Jordan, when women are suspected of being murdered by the family, they are put in prison for protection so that their family members cannot kill them. So, when Salma becomes pregnant, she is put in prison by her school teacher to protect her from the tribe, especially her brother. She gives birth to a baby girl in the prison and names her Layla. Right after Layla is born, she is taken away from Salma because Salma might get attached to the child, and also because prison is not a suitable place for a child to grow. Six years later, a Lebanese nun secretly helps Salma to move to a convent, and then from the convent, she flees to England. In England, she works as a seamstress in Exeter, in the West Country, and changes her name to Sally. However, at one point, Salma becomes paranoid. She starts to hallucinate that her brother Mahmoud stalks her with a gun in England to kill her. In the meantime, her English teacher John, who she meets at the center where she goes to learn English falls in love with her and eventually they marry and start a family. After the birth of her son, she starts missing Layla; she feels guilty for abandoning her and wishes to go back to Jordan to meet her. Her hallucinations start to get worse too. Despite her husband's refusal, Salma secretly goes back to Jordan leaving her husband and son. Reaching her home, she learns that her father is dead and so is Layla. Mahmoud threw Layla into the Long Well. When Salma went to visit Layla's grave, Mahmoud killed her by shooting her in the forehead.

Besides exploiting the preaching and values of Islam, there are other factors that contribute to honour killings. To establish my claim, I will be referring to Althusser's Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus. Althusser examines what is ideology and how they are formed. He constitutes two theses to explain the object that represents the ideology and the materiality of ideology. His first thesis narrates that the dominant class represents certain ideas to us and the

illusion of ideas alludes to something else. In his second thesis, he discusses the ideology that exists in the world through apparatuses. The common people live by the ideology created by the dominant class and think that they are free with an objective opinion. However, this sense of objectivity is imaginary because unconsciously they constantly go through different kinds of brainwashing for the benefit of those individuals who are in power. Ideology is created by individuals to manipulate subjects. The ruling class controls the media and creates mediums. Through different mediums such as media, religious institutions, and controlled apparatuses the ideology of the ruling class is circulated. Hence, we think what the ruling class wants us to think. The factors that I will discuss in this chapter to shed light on the Muslim women's vulnerability resonate with Althusser's ideology. By referring to Althusser's discussion, I will further explore how Muslim women are killing other Muslim women for the honour.

One of the distinctive factors that make women vulnerable to honour killing is their socio-economic condition. In three of the novels, one thing that stands common among the victims Chanda, Meryem and Salma is their poor socioeconomic condition. The three of our primary victims from the three novels do not wield power in the social strata. Chanda from Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* is a dropout of high school and unemployed. Meryem from *Bliss* was only a 16-year-old illiterate teenager. Lastly, Salma, from *The Cry of the Dove* was a school-going teenage girl when she got pregnant and was targeted by her family. Therefore, these victims of honour killing in three of the novels are women without proper educational backgrounds and solid economical standing. They belong to an underprivileged social class. Chanda is financially dependent on her family. Her parents as well as most of the Pakistani immigrant community members believe that marriage is the best way of life for her. Her first marriage was to her cousin when she was a teenager and the marriage was promised ever since

she was a baby. Her second marriage was with another cousin who took pity on her and “agreed to marry her even though she was no longer a virgin” (Aslam 70). But she has divorced again after a few months. Then her parents found her an illegal immigrant to marry who wanted a British nationality. However, her third husband disappeared as soon as he got legal status in England without divorcing her. Her circumstances resemble that of a puppet who does not have a choice of her own. In her community and family, Chanda is valued based on marriage.

Such ideological practices are described as ISA, i.e., ideological State apparatus by Althusser. He discussed that ideologies exist through different apparatuses. Through apparatuses, hegemony perpetuates dominance. Her family’s valuation of her based on virginity is a reflection of hegemonic masculinity. The men in the community perpetuate their dominance over the females through the circulation of ideologies that women are like goods, if not virgins then they are ‘used goods’. The family has power over her because she is economically dependent on them. Unlike Chanda, Meryem becomes economically independent towards the end of the novel and breaks free of Cemal’s clutches. When She is taken to Istanbul to get killed, she escapes and accompanies the professor who is on a journey to find himself. Meryem cooks for him every day. She could make tasty pancakes so Mehmet Ali’s mother offered to stay with them. Also, Meryem can get a portion of the profit. She decides to stay with them. She starts earning by cooking for the professor. Hence when Cemal said to Meryem that “You can’t manage alone”, Meryem confidently replies that she can and frees herself from the grip of Cemal. Similarly, Meryem is a victim of ideological discrimination. Cemal’s and his father’s ideology and actions are a reflection of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity exists due to the need for the representation of masculine power. Althusser explains this existence of domination and exploitation by any group of people on a “falsified representation of the world which they have

imagined” is to “enslave other minds by dominating their imaginations” (694). Therefore, women’s lack of economic power adds to the domination and exploitation of the patriarchy through ideological manipulation. The juxtaposition of the socio-economic condition of Meryem and Chanda shows that women without economic power are more vulnerable to honour killing.

Another crucial factor that makes women vulnerable to honour killing is distorted Islamic norms and beliefs. In three of our novels, sadly we witness how Islamic ideologies are manipulated to dictate over women. Man-made practices are integrated into the society in a way where people mistake patriarchal dominance for Islamic doctrine and normal. In many Muslim countries, men redesign Islamic norms to benefit their interests. For instance, Cemal’s brother Yakup does not use protection during sexual intercourse. As a result, his wife gets pregnant often and has to go to the midwives to have abortions. Just like Yakup’s wife, there are lots of other women who have abortions “because their husbands don’t like to use condoms... and the pill causes cancer” (Livaneli 177). Similarly, in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, Barra, the elder brother of the victim Chanda refuses “to see reason and [claim that] the use of contraceptives would lead to the unborn children pointing to him on judgement day and saying to Allah, ‘That man is the one who did not allow us to be born and swell the numbers of the faithful’” (Aslam 131). Yet his actions are contradictory when he forces his wife to abort thinking the unborn baby is a girl. His wife “had induced a miscarriage by taking quinine tablets for a fortnight” (Aslam 131). Whereas Allah said in the Quran about female foeticide that parents who are not happy when a baby girl is born are evil.

Hence, these actions are a microcosmic representation of how men manipulate Islamic ideologies to establish patriarchal dominance as Islamic values. On a macrocosmic level, the result of such manipulations makes women vulnerable to honour killing. Fatemah Albader sheds

more light on the dichotomy between women's right in Islam and Culture which create scope for injustice. She denotes,

Most Muslim communities have limited the ability to testify to male witnesses, but not female witnesses. The Quran, however, speaks only of eyewitnesses, thereby allowing both males and females to testify. Yet, it is due to culture that the requirement that only males be allowed to testify, because culturally, Muslim women are viewed as inferior to men. To support their patriarchal agendas, leaders of Muslim societies often turn to Islam as the justification to prohibit females from testifying, yet the prohibition is not grounded upon religion but on culture. (11)

Meryem's uncle brainwashes the whole community with his manipulative decisions because of the culture of that society. Even his son Cemal who grew up together with her thinks that the "creature called woman was an invention of the Devil, created to tempt men into sin" (Livaneli 140). Althusser describes this conscious manipulation as interpellation. He states that "all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects (699). Meryem's whole community is interpellated with the ideologies that women are the centre of all crime. Islam, on the contrary, says the opposite. In Islam, homicide is strictly prohibited. Quran, the holy book and guide to life in Islam states in "*Sura al- Mai'da* that Anyone who kills a person while remaining innocent of killing others or inciting conflict amongst individuals will be viewed as the murderer of all humanity. Whoever spares his life or prevents his demise will be hailed as humanity's savior" (Livaneli 186).

In addition, men use religion to impose their expectations on women at times. Sadly, there are some instances where women cannot differentiate the dichotomy between their faith

and patriarchal manipulation which often assist in honour killing. For instance, Kaukab, the sister-in-law of the victim Jugnu, loves and cherishes Jugnu and Chanda but her religious standpoint and her backdated moral belief act as a barrier in accepting the couple's relationship. Despite knowing the reason behind Chanda and Jugnu's live-in together relationship, Kaukab and other women from the community branded Chanda as a shameless sinner because she is not acting on the men's prescribed gender role of a good Muslim wife. However, no one blamed her husband, who married her only to get British nationality and disappeared soon after he received the nationality. Instead, they blamed Chanda because her husband does not want her anymore. The gender biases and rigid religious rules for women from the same community fail to condemn the real victim as a culprit. Scholars suggest that religious manipulation might be reduced or prevented to a great extent if women had access to study the various aspects of Islam properly. For example, scholar Mayer writes, "there is really no prestigious academy where women can be educated on a par with men in the advanced religious sciences" (314). This is important because most of the jurists and clerics of Islam are men. This puts men at an advantage to manipulate religious learning. Mayer adds, "there are no women with the training that would qualify them to serve as official muftis and Ayatollahs" (314). If women could get the training and qualify to be religious figures, then gender discrimination in Islamic preaching and ideological manipulation through religion would have reduced.

Three of the novels depict how men prescribed certain gender roles for women so that they can be overpowered and manipulated. Women have to cook for the family, clean the house, and give birth to many children. The whole process of such domestication is toxic for women and young girls. They are routinely chained within a physical and psychological boundary that many of them can never escape from. For instance, Madam Lamaa; another fellow prisoner and

friend of Salma from *The Cry of the Dove* is a chained slave of patriarchal domestication. “[she] gave birth to five sons, kept his house clean, and cooked him a fresh meal every day” (Faqir 128). Yet, after her menopause, her husband said her physical appearance looks “disgusting” (Faqir 129) which implies he is looking for a second marriage. Hence, the female body is a “tool” that validates multiple marriages and men's lust. Sadly, along with the men, a lot of women also believe in biased social gender roles. They try to impose those on other women. One of the perfect examples is Kaukab from *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the only sister-in-law of the victims Jugnu and Chanda. According to her, a wife's role is limited to “Looking after the children...while the man gets on with his work” (Aslam 74). Kaukab was brought up in a strict Pakistani Muslim family. Back in Pakistan, she had no social standing or a circle of her own. Likewise, back in England, she was just a housewife dependent on her husband economically. She never explored a world without domestication. Her impression of a good and dignified woman is someone like Suraya, another character from the same novel who came to England to marry and then divorce so that she can remarry her first husband who had “divorced her by mistake but she is still eager to go back to him” (Aslam 133). Referring to her, Kaukab voices out that this is what “a good and dignified woman is like” (Aslam 133). Suraya is the epitome of a pseudo-liberated Muslim woman, a psychological slave to patriarchal dominance. By supporting Suraya, Kaukab proves to be a puppet of patriarchal manipulation and tends to apply the deep-rooted gender roles to other women too such as she thinks her daughter Mah-Jabin's education is a form of vice that will give her freedom to do obscene things with white men. If women like Kaukab were free from such manipulative social norms, she could have saved Chanda from the murder by supporting her and giving her shelter in her house so that Chanda's brothers cannot kill her. The effects of misogynistic social norms on these women depict

Althusser's idea of "a subjected being who submits to a higher authority and is therefore stripped of all freedom except that of a freely accepting his submission" (701). Kaukab is ideologically subjugated to the point where she cannot think freely. Her rationalization of wrong male domination starts from a point where she puts herself as the submissive subject. However, gender-biased manipulation is possible because most women live in a world of the unknown due to their lack of education.

One of the reasons behind the vulnerability of Muslim women is their limited access to education. Barring women from education is the easiest way to subjugate and manipulate them. Lack of education leads to a lack of awareness, which ultimately leads to limited self-protection. Most women even are not aware that they are being manipulated with the use of misinterpreted social and religious beliefs. In the novel *Bliss*, the only education that Salma, a young teenager, has access to learning alphabets and names. Furthermore, there are no lessons on sex education at home or in schools. The only thing she learned about her body from her childhood is to hide it. Her father blabbered "Your breasts are like melons, cover them up!" (Faqr 9) but provided no proper education on self-protection. She had no idea how to protect them. As she is not aware of the process of pregnancy, her lover Hamdan takes full advantage of her ignorance, he manipulates her by telling her after she's a woman now, as if this is something to boast about. He addresses her as "[his] slave girl" (Faqr 26) which indicates Hamdan's manipulative mentality. Such androcentric social manipulations are the reason of her downfall. Her murder could have been stopped if she had minimal sex education and awareness. She could have prevented pregnancy and saved herself from her brother. There is a more problematic result of lack of education among women which is the practice of denial and ignorance. Kaukab denies logic and believes anything told by Muslim people. For instance, due to her limited knowledge, she fails to

understand the purpose of vasectomy, denies accepting the scientific reasons, and claims that “The vasectomy was a Christian conspiracy to stop the number of Muslims from increasing” (Aslam 75). Her blind belief toward the Muslim cleric resulted in feeding her son bromide that she believed “was just some salt over which the cleric-ji had read sacred verses” (Aslam 346). She ignores the fact that the Muslim cleric gave her bromide and argues, “I told you it was just ordinary salt over which some verses of the Koran had been read. What is a bromide?”. Kaukab’s act of blindly trusting the Muslim cleric is described as ISA by Althusser. To her, the cleric is someone who seemingly practices Islam, and she believes that he knows better than her. This is a result of the ideological manipulation of patriarchy. If Kaukab had been an educated woman, she would have been more aware of her circumstances. She blindly believes the cleric and feeds her son bromide unknowingly because of lack of education.

Another form of social manipulation is the common practice of the men to establish that women are dependent on men and they cannot fend for themselves. Being constantly brainwashed that they are the weaker sex, women also start to think of themselves as weak. On her journey to Istanbul, Meryem from *Bliss* is shocked to see a female passenger, Seher, travelling independently and being vocal about her rights as a Turkey woman amidst the crowd of men. Empowerment is accompanied by financial growth. Meryem’s circumstances changed when she used her skill to earn money in her limited circle. Hence, she is not convinced when Cemal tells her she “can’t manage alone” (Livaneli 265). Therefore, the subalterns cannot speak for themselves but their socioeconomic condition can. This is similar to Spivak’s idea of the speakability of the subalterns. As she denotes, “there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself” (Spivak 27). Therefore, even if the patriarchy puts limitations on

women, they can find their voice and speak for themselves if they earn and support themselves. Thus, education and empowerment can minimise the number of female victims in honour killing.

A lot of men and women both accept these faulty ideologies and try to impose them on every other woman. For instance, Kaukab represents the subaltern silent women. Despite being a mother she accuses her daughter Mah-Jabin of living a sin smeared life because all she wanted was freedom. Though Kaukab admires people who do great things. The idea of freedom is disturbingly distorted into sin. Kaukab's Pakistani culture collides with British culture. Her daughter grew up in England so she protests her mother and her Pakistani culture by divorcing her abusive husband and going to university. The clash of cultures is similar to Khan's idea of friction in cultural demands. He sees this friction as a "zone of occult instability" that is "articulations of new cultural demands, meanings, and strategies in the present become practices of collusion" (qtd. in Fanon 473) where everything is called into question regardless of right and wrong. Kaukab, a subaltern woman who is voiceless for the right cause questions the right social norms. Moreover, the tendency to dehumanize women is ingrained into men's minds so much that not only the norms but the language itself are offensive. In the relationship between Hamdan and Salina, Salina always addressed Hamdan as "Hamdan" or her "lover". Whereas Hamdan used to address her "romantically" as his mare, little courtesan, his slut and his whore". These words are normal for the males in Salma's Jordan community but they are offensive in meaning. This is a clear example of hegemonic discourses. This is the language of abuse. The continuous tendency to dehumanize women makes them feel vulnerable about themselves. Meryem considered her physical changes due to puberty as transgressing, unlike her male cousins who were "human". The intensity of the psychological subjugation is horrifying. This is how the subaltern consciousness is constructed which generates self-hatred.

Lastly, one of the critical factors that make women vulnerable to honour killing is the participation of women themselves. Oftentimes women participate in honour killing by supporting the murder. Other times they participate in honour killing by belittling and cornering the victim. There are cases of honour killing where the women in the community such as mothers, aunts, and female relatives have voluntary involvement. Alongside the men, they also think that the female victims have brought dishonour upon their families. The participation of the women in orchestrating honour killing either actively or passively can be seen in three of the novels. The reasons for the participation of women are many. In most cases, the women are habituated to the stigmatisation of women as the culprit. The sole reason behind this is the psychological manipulation of patriarchy in society. In the article titled “Honour Killing: A Form of Femicide”, Phyllis Chesler notes that “[women] are more responsible for keeping other women in line, especially their daughters. Most mothers want to ensure that their daughters are allowed to live, marry, become mothers, and maintain honourable reputations (7)”. That is, women give in to the notion of ‘good women’ designed by men. Therefore, when someone becomes a ‘bad woman,’ it is the other women be it relatives, family members or community members who corner the victim. In the novel *The Cry of the Dove*, when a girl named Sabah was shot for the sake of honour, an old woman from the same community expressed relief saying “Good riddance! We’ve cleansed our shame with her blood!” (Faqir 76). Sabah defines shame which is determined by the social and religious discourses around her. The older generations of Muslim women in the novel are groomed with distorted notions of shame. These patriarchal women associate shame with women’s behaviour and virtue to define women which is similar to Shahnaz Khan’s definition of a Muslim woman. She defines, “Muslim Woman” [is] a construct ideologically overdetermined by social, political, economic, racial, and religious discourses”

(463). The novel reflects the mentality of the older generation of women who defines Muslim women based on the manmade ideological construct.

Another reason for the participation of women is their dependency on the men inside the family. A lot of housewives are dependent on their husbands for economical support. As portrayed in the *Bliss*, a husband may marry several times. The age difference between the stepmothers and children from previous marriages may not be much. And the pseudo authority of the female inside the house depends on the favour she receives from her husband. Thus, it prompts many women to bash other women. The possibility of bringing in a new wife shakes the authority of the old wives. As Noura, a prisoner with Salma at Jordan prison said, “They threaten us with taking on a second wife to keep us in our place” (Faqir 129). There is psychological tension too. Cornering women from the same house may help other women to score some points by seemingly looking better than the victims. Thus, women are put in a position where they become hostile to each other instead of supporting each other. In the novel *Bliss*, Meryem’s stepmother Done intimidates her by saying, “You know the punishment for what you did” even though she knew Meryem was a victim. (Livaneli 12). If Meryem, the stepdaughter is out of the picture of the family, Done can take better care of her biological children. In other cases, women participate because they are voiceless. The majority of the women have no voice since they are the subalterns in those communities where religion acts as a disciplinary institution that they cannot defy.

To conclude, literature reflects the cultural norms and traditions of a society. Honour killing is continuing in many parts of the world. Women’s limited access to education, their financial and social background, and the distortion of Islamic ideologies aid in this mass killing. All of these issues downplay the seriousness of the crime itself. There is a historical absence of

the practice of sex equality in the Muslim world. Men came up with corporal “punishment” such as honour killing to validate and escape from their crimes and shortcomings. As Shamas says, “The idea of honour is so sex-driven that women are murdered because “their virtue is in doubt” (Aslam 161). Furthermore, as long as the women do not claim their space, it will be tough to fight such a deep-rooted androcentric hegemony. Women need to break the silence and for that, they need to stand for each other. Otherwise, the distorted notion of honour will get deep-rooted even more which will be discussed in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3

Laws and Lies: Nation and Community's Failure to Protect Women's Rights

From the discussion in the previous two chapters, it can be said that honour killing prevails because of men's politicization of religious values and women's lack of agency and dependence on men. Yet the question remains why honour killing still exists. To answer the question, I would like to quote Livaneli from her novel *Bliss* where she writes, "All over the Mediterranean, the concept of honor is still considered to lie between a woman's thighs, and such murders are still seen as pardonable crimes" (232). The problematic notion of honour continues to exist not only because of the distorted ideas of honour but also because of the violent upbringing of the children, provocation of the community and insufficient judicial support. In this chapter, through a detailed discussion of the novels *Maps for Lost Lovers*, *Bliss* and *The Cry of the Dove*; I aim to demonstrate how the community and family work as agents in perpetuating the crime. I will also shed light upon the systematic failure of the state and Sharia law which concurrently play a key role in perpetuating honour killing.

The concept of honour emerged from societal norms, expectations and ideologies. Since we live in a patriarchal society and the rule makers are predominantly men, it can be said that the definition of honour stems from the ideals of the men. The clan or the community validates honour killing by blaming the victims. For the perpetrators, killing the women is an act of regaining honour since women are blamed to taint the honour of the clan. In most cases, the victims of honour killings are predominantly women and girls. This may suggest that the honour of an entire community lies in the hands of the women. Chanda and Jugnu are honour killed for

breaking the cultural tradition, while Meryem is targeted to be honour killed so that she can be a scapegoat for the rape crime; Salma is honour killed for losing her virginity outside marriage. Hence, it is seen that the idea of honour is closely tied to the body, sexuality and action of women. Be it rape or consensual physical intimacy, in every incident, even though the action takes place between a man and woman, women are the primary target of abuse. One of the reasons for this is men tend to think of themselves as the defenders of honour. Although in *Maps for Lost Lovers* Jugnu is a victim of honour killing, even though he is a man, in most cases, the hostility is directed towards the women. The basic and most common form of abuse is verbal abuse. Curse words and slang words like “corrupt” “indecent” “filthy” (Livaneli 140) are used to address the women. In *Bliss*, Meryem’s cousin Cemal uses words like “vile creature, bitch, disgraceful, filthy, sinful thing!” (Livaneli 173) to describe her. Meryem’s innocence is never taken into consideration; rather, her honour seems to be everyone’s honour. Even though she is raped, her honour or her aspiration for justice is never discussed.

The reason why Cemal verbally abuses Meryem even though she is a victim can be understood better through Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis. In his research titled “The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis”, Freud propounds that an individual is shaped by conscious and unconscious desires of the mind. Freud analyses this complex behaviour where individuals try to deny their innermost desires as a form of “resistance” (Freud 199). As the ego grows stronger, the desires are repressed because these desires are "not capable of being reconciled with the ethical, aesthetic and personal pretensions" (Freud 193). Cemal is sexually frustrated. His desires are expressed through his dream while he sleeps at night. He dreams of being intimate with the imaginary “innocent bride” and carries the “pleasurable feelings” (Livaneli 30). However, when he wakes up, he shudders at the thought of having such dreams because he

plunged “himself so deep in sin” (Livaneli 30). Cemal’s contradictory feelings are the result of the collision of his father’s and clan’s religious ideals and his physical need. As a result, the bitter feelings of shame that he feels towards himself are directed at Meryem. His verbal abuse of Meryem can be considered as a way of “resistance” to his unconscious ego. In her article titled “The Civilized and the Barbarous: Honor in French and Turkish Contemporary Societies”, Julie Alev Dilmac explores the place and understanding of honour in today’s French and Turkish societies which are highly profit oriented. She discusses MarieLuce G elard’s research on the vocabulary ‘honour’ and how it varies based on gender. In Dilmac’s view, “The words concerning women’s honour evoke an honour closed in on itself (remain a girl, keep one’s honour), whereas that of men is turned towards the outside world (face the world, show who you are)” (7). She further adds, that for Turkish women, honour also means taking on the burden of being abused by men and their crimes. As we can see, Meryem’s honour is at stake because she is raped. She is verbally abused by her cousin Cemal because of his own suppressed sexual desire. Hence, only through death can the inconvenient truth, that is, the crime of rape vanishes and along with it, her rapist uncle’s dishonour will vanish too.

The idea of honour is also shaped by morals and values learned from family members. As we know, family teaching is important in shaping an individual’s ideology. In their essay titled “Toward a Dialectical Model of Family Gender Discourse: Body, Identity, and Sexuality” L. Blume and T. Blume bring forth the idea of shaping children’s ideology from gender discourse in a family. They state that “the strongest influence on children’s gender occurs within families when parents communicate their beliefs” (786). The environment in which children grow up influences their mindset, social values and religious teaching. In most cultures and countries, it is commonly seen that fathers are the authoritative figures in the household. Hence, the ideals of

the father figure, more often than not, are transformed by the children. Though the views and ideologies children learn from the family may change based on the environment they are exposed to later on in their life, the basic ideals are mostly father and patriarchy taught ideals. As a consequence, the concept of honour is wrongly taught to them from their very childhood. For example, in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the burglaries that take place in the community are mostly done by the sons of the immigrants. Even though burglary is a dishonourable act, nowhere in the novel do we find the parents disciplining or punishing the children for such dishonourable behaviour. Again, Chanda's brothers Chotta and Barra are involved in smuggling heroin from Pakistan, and even though the parents are more or less aware (Aslam 211), they do not consider such an act dishonourable. When the brothers get arrested as a suspect for murdering their sister Chanda, instead of reprimanding them or seeking justice for their daughter's murder, the parents come up with schemes to save their sons. When Chanda's mother told her husband that Chanda's ghost will never forgive them for helping their sons, the father unapologetically says to worry about "living first" (Aslam 210). It is apparent then that Barra's and Chotta's personalities and mentality are a mirror reflection of their father. He is more sympathetic toward the murderer sons than the murdered daughter. They too, like most other Pakistani people, believe that daughters are burdens and sons are the bearers of the family line. L. S. Bem and S. Coltrane connect such behaviour with interactions between family members which often "reveal implicit gender ideologies, scripts, or rituals that enable family members to coconstruct shared understandings of the dominant gender discourse in society" (qtd. in L. Blume and T. Blume 786). For Chanda's parents and brothers, the dominant gender discourse they grew up with is sons are the ones that take care of their parents in their old age. They think that they are the bearer of the family as well as the protector of the honour of the family. They feel that because of these notions they have the

right to decide who to kill to protect the honour of the family. Daughters, on the other hand, take care of their in-laws or husbands. Hence, sons are to be treated better than daughters.

One of the salient reasons for the establishment of such a distorted idea of honour is the violent environment around the perpetrators which later acts as a catalyst for honour killing. Many of the perpetrators of honour killing were exposed to aggressive environments as children, adolescents and adults. As discussed in the previous para, in the case of children, they are from the people they spend most of their time with. According to Guerra et al., “Children observe what goes on around them; make inferences and attributions; and acquire scripts, schemas, and normative beliefs that serve as guides for future behavior” (1561). Hence, parents’ violent behaviour and wrong ideals of honour are ingrained in the children’s psychology. In *Maps For Lost Lovers*, when Charag was feeling guilty for slapping his son, Kaukab justifies the action by saying that “Parents are supposed to hit children” (Aslam 74). Hitting the children to discipline them is common in most South Asian countries. Violent upbringing is a form of abuse. There are several instances where children murdered their parents because they could not stand tiger parenting any longer. Later on, when these children grow up, they enforce violent behaviour on others, especially on those who are weaker than them. Hence, it’s the boys, brothers and husbands who abuse the girls, sisters and wives. Also, men are encouraged to abuse women. Beating, slapping, verbal abuse, and the use of slang words are encouraged since they are thought to be the right way to discipline women who dare to disobey men’s orders. Physical violence against women is considered a form of disciplining the women from going astray. It expresses manliness and shows how well a man is managing his family members. Oftentimes, there is peer pressure from the community to discipline the women. Such pressure and customs encourage the increase and spread of domestic violence. Such behaviour is witnessed in the

novel *Bliss*. When Meryem accompanied her sister-in-law for an abortion, she heard women talking about how the men from the community pressurized a man who treats his wife lovingly to be strict on his wife. The men from the community told him, “What kind of man are you?... if you don’t beat your wife” (Livaneli 177). As a result of the peer pressure, the husband beats his wife to prove that he is man enough to beat and control his wife. This shows that the violent tendencies of men are normalised by society. When these abusive practices are combined with flawed moral and social values of honour, it becomes a catalyst in the way individuals conduct in society. Thus deformed values of honour are inculcated in male children and individuals.

So far the attempt has been to show how the concept of honour revolves around women’s actions and is taken for granted that women are responsible for any kind of “dishonourable” actions. In *Maps For Lost Lovers* when the despicable Muslim cleric was caught red-handed for sexually abusing a little boy inside the mosque, the community does not punish the criminal. Although he has molested many other children before, the men are not concerned for the safety of those children in the community; rather, they are worried that “if the police got involved and shut down the mosque no one would teach their sons to stay away from the whore-like white girls” (Aslam 269). Such distortion of ideas keeps growing because most of the boys are taught by their parents and all the men around them the wrong concept of honour. They are taught that a family’s honour depends on the actions of the women of the family only. Another reason is the dependency of women on men. Most women are married off at a very early age since marriage is considered a scale that determines the prestige and honour of a woman. As a result of early marriage, many women are deprived of completing their education. Many even have to stop going to school the moment they are married off. Lack of education breaks their backbone. As a result, they do not learn to support themselves financially and have to depend on men such as

fathers, brothers or husbands. A woman's role, thus, is to sit quietly, do chores and prepare themselves to be a 'good wife and mother'. Of course, that includes marrying the man selected by the family. It is seen that most of the immigrant women in *Maps for Lost Lovers* are dependent on their husbands and fathers. Often the fathers feel burdened with their daughters. The repulsive attitude towards the female comes from dehumanising women. Women are considered as properties who are to be sold off through marriage. Kaukab, Jugnu's sister-in-law states that her daughter is "used goods" since she is divorced (Aslam 134). Comparing a living woman with goods just because she divorced her abusive husband portrays the intensity of dehumanisation. The cycle of misfortune for the women victims of honour killing generates by distorted teachings by culture and is continuing for generation after generation.

Men contort the values and Islamic concept of honour in ways that are beneficial for them ignoring true Islamic values. The excerpt below explains men's definition of honour and the dichotomy between their actions and the true teachings of Islam:

Barra leaned to her face and said, "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. (Aslam 402)

Barra's words reflect the liabilities that are forced upon Chanda, the victim. Firstly, she has to be killed in the name of religion though the killers are violating religion in many ways. Secondly, she has to be killed for the sake of the family who is cruel and hypocritical. Lastly, her husbands, no matter how they treated Chanda, have to be idolised and taken care of. Chanda's brothers' words, though uttered to arouse remorse in Chanda, ironically reflect the suffering of women.

Surely, Chanda's murder by her brothers is not for the sake of honour, rather it is an act of hysteria where she becomes a scapegoat. Both brothers Barra and Chotta are emotionally struggling at that moment. Barra aborted his unborn child thinking the fetus is a daughter and Chotta caught his girlfriend being intimate with other men. However, both of the brothers had no outlet to vent their emotional suffering. Therefore, seeing their sister being happy with a man made them feel bad about their own situations. Hence, the murder of Chanda is an act of emotional venting. As Freud explains, the intense emotions of individuals look for outlets. He further adds that, when emotions are "imprisoned" and prevented from escaping, "hysterical conversion" happens which is an intense emotional expression (Freud 189). For the brothers, killing Chanda for the sake of honour at that moment is an overflow of the emotion of failure. Chotta's emotion of feeling betrayed and Barra's emotion of hopelessness for not having a son is bottled up. These "imprisoned" emotions take the shape of "hysterical conversion" and Chanda becomes the victim. They use Chanda as a scapegoat and an outlet for their frustration since she is weaker than them.

Provocative community is another issue that needs to be addressed regarding the problematic notion of honour. As discussed earlier in this paper, honour is a predetermined concept which is to be nurtured and guarded by women. The murder committed in the name of honour is a collective process in most cases. Here I would like to draw references from the famous honour killing case of Banaz Mahmood. Her family is a refugee from Iraq living in London. As Banaz ended her abusive marriage and chose to love someone else, she was killed on 24 January 2006, so as to safeguard the so-called honour of the family. Her father, mother, uncle and three cousins planned the entire murder plot together (Kale). The same scenario is seen in *Maps for Lost Lovers* where Chanda's brothers Barra and Chotta planned together to murder

her. Disturbingly, there are instances where the family members and the community provide shelter to the murderers from the police. Chanda's relatives from Pakistan told the police that her brothers confessed to them that they had killed Chanda and Jugnu. Later on, Police officers collected evidence from the crime scene and arrested Barra and Chotta. Even after they are arrested, one of the female immigrant neighbours terms the crime as 'alleged murder' since she believes them to be alive and hiding somewhere. It reflects the unaccommodating mentality of the community members towards the victims. Facing criticism, and isolation from the clan or community is common for people who sympathise with the honour killing victims as well as the ones who support them. For instance, Kaukab and Shamas, brother and sister-in-law of the victim Jugnu were criticised continually by the people of the immigrant community because they allowed Jugnu and Chanda to be "in sin" (Aslam 56). Sometimes the supporters of the victims received death threats too. In the case of Banaz Mahmud's honour killing, her elder sister Bekhal, who brings justice to her sister by testifying against her family, had to come to the trial wearing a veil so that her face cannot be seen, otherwise, her parents will kill her too. Oftentimes people from the community become provocative by encouraging the murder. For example, in the novel *Bliss*, even though Cemal's older brother Yakup dislikes the idea of honour killing and got scared thinking his daughter Zeliha might suffer from the same fate, however, he tells Cemal "if you are going to do it, do it right away (Livaneli 159). What he meant was to kill Meryem quickly. Another way the community participates in such acts is by condemning the victims when the perpetrators are punished. Not only this, the perpetrators are rarely held responsible for the crime; instead, the victims are criticised. In *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the community labels Chanda as "shameless" and "brazen" and accuses her of ruining Jugnu's life: "ruined her own

poor brothers who had to kill them” (Aslam 56). Instead of condemning the criminals, they hold the victims responsible for making the brothers commit such crimes.

Arranged marriage also acts as a catalyst in an honour killing. Nadeem Aslam terms arranged marriage as an “organized crime” (*Maps for Lost Lovers* 126). In most arranged marriages, the consent of the brides is not taken into consideration. If the marriage goes wrong, automatically the wife is held responsible. In the case of consanguineous marriage, women are more vulnerable. Domestic abuse by the husband and in-laws’ families often leads the women to file for divorce. But unfortunately, when abused women try to divorce their husbands and come out of the marriage, people often accuse the women and hold them responsible for their failed marriage. Women filing for divorce are not taken well because divorce is still thought to be shameful and dishonourable for the woman and her family. Moreover, since a woman having the courage to divorce her husband disrupts patriarchal domination, it is shunned by patriarchy. Women thus are forced to accept domestic abuse and continue the marriage, showing ultimate obedience to the husband. If there are any signs of disobedience, domestic violence takes place. Sometimes domestic violence and physical abuse turn into honour killing because the husband along with the in-laws decides if the wife is committing any dishonour to the family. Hence arranged marriage, domestic violence and honour killing are all connected in a complicated way.

Most importantly, lack of judicial support is the prime reason honour killing persists even in the twenty-first century. Unlike *Bliss* and *The Cry of the Dove*, in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the victims Chanda and Jugnu are immigrants living in England. Law enforcement is strict there compared to in Pakistan. Still, the members of the Pakistani immigrant communities practice honour killing because they have witnessed how the criminals go unpunished in their homeland. Not only do the murderers go unpunished, but they are also praised for their heinous acts. In

Pakistan, State Law and Sharia Law work side by side. This system allows for more honour killing. In Sharia law, “murders (qatl-i-amd) of all kinds were made compoundable or pardonable and the accused would be acquitted if pardoned by the victim’s heirs in return for monetary compensation” (Cheema 896). This is extremely problematic because most honour killings are arranged by the family such as parents, siblings or relatives of the victims.

Moeen Cheema, an associate professor and expert in Comparative Public Law from Harvard Law School sheds light upon the severity of the issue. He adds families are more likely to seek compromise over prosecution in cases of intra-family murder, particularly honour killings. In a case of honour killing, the accused could simply confess in front of the court, making his case qatl-i-amd and subject to qisas. Cheema further propounds, that any member of his family might pardon him and secure a speedy acquittal (896). As a result of the flexibility of the law, perpetrators are not afraid of committing murders in the name of honour. In addition, flexibility in the application of the law encourages the use of derogatory remarks on women such that if not virgins then women are “used goods” (Aslam 132). Such dehumanisation adds to the misogynistic approach of men in believing that they are the lawmakers, upholders of so-called right and wrong. This kind of attitude is reflected in Chanda’s brothers’ words and actions from *Maps of Lost Lovers*. Chanda’s brothers Barra and Chotta decided by themselves that Chanda is a sinful woman and they preferred “being murderers to being the brothers of a sister who was living in sin (Aslam 387). In *Maps of Lost Lovers*, Barra and Chotta receive punishment from the state law of England for committing honour killing and that serves as a warning for the rest of the perpetrators in the immigrant community.

On the other hand, although the story of *Bliss* takes place in Turkey, where, unlike Pakistan, people follow western values and ideals, the lax judicial system towards honour killers

creates scope for more honour killing. The Turkish government has made amendments at the legislative and judicial levels, but it still remains on paper. According to the article by Mammadova et al. “Istanbul Convention, Honour Killings And Turkey’s Experience,” the judicial approach of Turkey is unfair to honour killing victims. The statement provided by The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) stated that mitigating sentences in cases of honour crimes is a general practice of the criminal courts in Turkey. When honour crime is in concern “the criminal courts imposed a very lenient punishment or no punishment at all on the perpetrators of such crimes” (qtd. in Mammadova, Ulviyya and Kristi Joamets 89). Author Livaneli mentions in *Bliss*, that in Turkey people who get caught committing honour crimes are accused of homicide. She mentions that, according to the Turkish Criminal Code, honour killing carries the death penalty. Although judges frequently use their judicial discretion to modify the punishment, general amnesties are issued regularly, allowing the killers to go free. A similar crisis is narrated in *The Cry of the Dove*, where Minister Mahoney who helped Salma in escaping from Jordan speaks about honour killing in the court. He said, “hundreds, nay thousands of women are killed every year. You must give her shelter because if you send her back she will be shot on sight” (Faqir 115). These imply that because of the weak judicial system, the murderers go free or are subject to minimal punishment.

Both males and females are victims of honour killings across the world. However, in this thesis, I focused on novels and documentaries where women are the primary victims. Proceeding forward, these fictions are just a peek at the realities of honour killing and the social ills involved with it around us. This chapter problematizes the idea of honour in some Muslim countries and immigrant communities. I have tried to show how honour killing is a form of oppression that goes in circles from children learning from their families and dispersing what they have learned

in the community as they grow up. In this way, authentic Islamic rhetoric is distorted and proliferating across the generation inviting abuse and oppression in the name of religion and honour. Dispersion of such a social folly is strengthened due to improper application of law and enforcement. All of these issues alter the victim's fate through male-dominated discourses. A loving, understanding and communicative relationship of the parents with their male and female children alike and proper moral teachings as well as an understanding community can reduce honour killings to a great extent.

Conclusion

According to a news published in *Dhaka Tribune* on June 23, 2020, sixteen-year-old Laiju Akhter from Brahmanbaria, Nasirnagar Upazila was strangled to death with a piece of scarf. The murderers are her father Sonu Miya, maternal uncle Maju Miya and brother Adam Ali. Her death was a punishment for having an affair with a boy (Chakroborty). Before reading this news, I had no knowledge of the term 'Honour Killing'. When I came across the news in the newspaper, I could not fathom how a father, a brother and an uncle could kill their own daughter, sister and niece. As the incident intrigued me, I started to look up news of similar incidents where a family member of the family is killed by the other members, particularly, the male members as a punishment. That's when I learned about honour killing and found out that not only in Bangladesh, but this phenomenon exists in many other countries around the world. What is more horrifying is that this kind of murder is normalised in many countries, particularly in Muslim countries where the number of honour killings is the highest. At that point, I started looking for literary works that discuss honour killing.

The aim of this dissertation has been to highlight the exigency to put an end to honour killing. Oftentimes, Islam is misunderstood when describing honour killing due to its misrepresentation in different media. In addition, in some Muslim countries, patriarchy has deformed Islamic values thus distorting authentic Islamic teachings. Hence, the aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate that honour killing is more of a cultural than a religious establishment. This dissertation also analysed why honour killing continues to occur and why women are the major victims of honour killing through a careful examination of the selected novels.

In the first chapter, “Muslim Men’s Justification of Honour Killing through Politicization of Islam,” I scrutinize the selected literary works to explore the factors that normalize honour killing in and how patriarchy politicizes Islam. I demonstrated that men established double standards by manipulating Islamic values and norms. Islam advocates for justice and righteousness. Men use social standards of good and bad through the chastity and morality of women to suppress women’s individuality. Hence, honour killing is a socially evolved misogynistic crime. In the second chapter, “Muslim women: Victims of Ideologies”, I address the circumstances and factors Here I explore what makes women vulnerable to honour killing as well as the reasons that prompt women to participate in honour killing. By analyzing *Bliss Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Cry of the Dove*, this chapter shows how women’s values depend on the number of children she gives birth to and what it means to be a “good wife”. Furthermore, the chapter identifies women's lack of access to education, financial and social status, and the distortion of Islamic ideas as the key factors that contribute to this crime. The last chapter, “Laws and Lies: Nation and Community’s Failure to Protect Women’s Rights” sheds light on the failure of state and state-law to protect women from honour killing and the shortcomings of the judicial system. The rate of honour killing might reduce if the perpetrators are punished properly. Through the selected novels I have also demonstrated that honour killing works in cycles, with children, especially boys learning from their families and then disseminating what they have learnt throughout the community as they grow older. The role of the community is important to analyse the violent upbringing of the children which in result are making ways to establish the distorted idea of honour.

It brings hope that laws regarding honour killing are changing. A very recent incident in Pakistan made the state revise its state law regarding honour killing. The famous honour murder

case of Kandeel Baloch has shaken the Pakistan community and called for a change in its legislative revisions. The documentary titled “Qandeel Baloch Murder: One year on (FULL DOCUMENTARY) - BBC Stories” reflects how Qandeel, a Pakistani Social Media star was killed for the honour by her brother Waseem Azeem. In front of the media, Waseem admitted to the crime unapologetically. He said “I gave her sleeping tablets then I strangled her” (00:00:57-00:01:00). The reason for killing is, that he felt ashamed of her behaviour. Interestingly, unlike the other cases, Waseem’s father wants his son to be punished. In the BBC interview, answering the question on what he wants for the criminals as punishment, he said “I want them to get the death (00:14:23-00:14:32)”. This is rare for the Pakistani as well as the Muslim community. His decision has become quite an issue for the Lawmakers and courts in Pakistan to ponder upon the judicial actions on honour killing. Hence, it is apparent that the only way to establish justice is through upholding strict judicial support for the victims. The novels, as representation of the reality brings to light the huge gap between law and justice. If the existing law is strict towards the criminals and punishes them accordingly, then victims such as Chanda, Jugnu, Salma and so many others would not have died miserably

To conclude, this research is an effort to spread awareness amongst the readers on the systematic misogynistic territorialization of Islamic teaching and ideologies. This paper also opens up the doors for conducting research on various literary texts on honour killing across the globe. The future possibilities of research on this topic are endless. One of these could be investigating the compartmentalization of the causes of honour killing, comparative studies on honour killing across the globe. Moreover, since honour killing is still occurring in Bangladesh to some extent, it could be a prospective field of research. Hence, this dissertation will also broaden the possibility of further research on the issue in regard to the Bangladeshi context.

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