

**Women on the Margins of Life and Death:
Honour Crime and Governmentality in Turkey**

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Abstract

Throughout this study, I discuss how discourses on ‘honour crime’ in Turkey appear to be a governmental tactic, and how these discourses are modernized and institutionalized by the Justice and Development party(the ruling party). From the discourses of nationalist elites to the recent discourses of the government, the notion of ‘honour’ operates at different levels and it creates forms of control over women through the governmentalization of the conjugal family. By focusing on the parliamentary debates, legal changes and the party programme, I address how the issue of honour crime remains an unsolvable question through the governmental discourses that transform ‘honour killing’ into a problem of a specific of a ‘tradition’ and community. I use the Foucauldian approach towards governmentality to look at honour crime as an interdiscursive space where discourses on family, women, virginity and the ethnic identity become tools of managing people.

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Introduction

Since 1994, ‘honour crime’ has been highly debated among members of the Turkish government and in professional circles.¹ Although, there is no official data collected on honour crime in Turkey, according to the cases covered in the national media from 1994 till 1996, approximately “fifty-five women fell victim to honour killings” (Kogacioglu 2004:118). In the media and government discourses, honour killing is commonly perceived as the murder of a woman by one of her male family members in the name of ‘protecting the honour of the family’. Thus, I am aware that even though the term honour crime has negative connotations in it, for the sake of simplicity, throughout the thesis I will use the term honour killing.²

What is noteworthy is that in order to reveal and explicate the dynamics behind the cases of honour killings, it is necessary to take into consideration the multiplicity of actors in the cases of honour crimes—such as family members, relatives, residents of neighbourhoods, government officials, parliamentarians, and professionals (judges, lawyers, doctors and so on) – and the range of the discourses which are produced and reproduced through the media, the state and kinship relations. However, in this study, my main intention is to pay attention to the discourses of current government in which the ruling party is the Justice and Development Party (The JDP).

Under the rubric of the discourses on honour killing, many conceptual arguments concerning the body, kinship, tribal and conjugal family relations– in which ethnicity, sexual and gender relations are tied together—are at stake. On the basis of how the state begins to discuss the topic of honour crime, I seek to answer how honour crime becomes a

¹ Before 1995, there were just very few movies and novels treating the topic of honour.

² The naming of honour crime is “debated in feminist circles” where there are many suggestions of naming such as “the crime of killing women for family honour” or “murders deriving from the codes of honour” (Kogacioglu 2004:118). So even though I am aware of different meanings attributed to honour killing, I prefer to use honour crime, because it is the “most widely used term”(Kogacioglu 2004:118).

governmental tactic of managing people through otherization. Honour crime constitutes a category of governmental management of individuals through families instead of creating domination over them. In doing this, I will analyze the construction of ‘honour’ and ‘honour crime’ at the governmental level in order to examine how honour killing turns into a governmental strategy by taking into account the family law, women, virginity and the ethnic identity and how honour crime is mediated and reproduced by governmental technologies.

From the time of the proclamation of ‘Turkish’ Republic in the 1920s to today, the position of women and the roles of women in the society have remained important sites of discussion in terms of the state policies. Despite the importance of women in the official discourses, the issue of honour crime has not been highly discussed until the 2000s. However, coming to power in 2002, the JDP made significant changes in the Penal Code and the Civil Law concerning the family, women and the issue of honour crime. The JDP has produced shifting contingent and conflicting discourses about honour killing, women and family.

Throughout this study, I argue that despite the so-called attempts of the JDP to solve the issue of honour killing, the solutions that they propose only become a part of a governmental tactic which is embedded in the legal changes. The issue of ‘honour crime’, then, continues to remain an unsolvable question, in the sense that the government reproduces the dynamics behind the honour crimes through maintaining patriarchal discourses and through representing ‘honour killing’ as a part of specific a ‘tradition’ (*tore*) or ‘culture’ which refers to the dichotomy between modernity and tradition taking its roots from the discourses of the nation state.³

Moreover, the reconstruction of ‘honour crime’ and the notion of ‘honour’ through the politico-judicial discourses and discussions of the contemporary Turkish government bring

³ In the official discourses, honour crimes are primarily represented as part of tradition(*tore*).The crimes of tradition is defined in the the dictionary as, “ In some regions, the killing of someone, usually a young girl or woman, by member of her family in accordance with a verdict reached by the *family council*, due to the girl or woman’s failure to obey the dictates of *tore*.” (KA-MER Report 2006)

the notion of governmentality (in which a new object of discussion is created) to the fore. I construct my main theoretical framework by relying on the Foucauldian conceptualization of governmentality, which can be defined as “conduct of conduct” and as series of tactics in connection to honour crime. While governmentality allows me to conceptualize the nation state beyond a “unified actor”, it paves the way for revealing the multiplicity of the actors who produce multiple conflicting and contingent discourses over the issue of ‘honour crime’.

To reveal and reevaluate governmental discourses, I will use discourse analysis by following the steps that are offered by Foucault and the critical discourse analysts. My main aim is to pay attention to the power relations that are produced and reproduced through governmental discourses. I will thus illustrate how governmentality through the strategies of inclusion and exclusion works within the rhetoric of the government which is targeting specific groups of people. I will present a collage of official discourses about women, family and honour crime by referring to the parliamentary records, party programme and the changes in the Civil and Penal Codes.⁴ In order to understand the scope of the legal changes, I conducted interviews with four lawyers who were actively involved into the process of legal changes made in 2005, which become useful to illustrate how multiple actors play different roles at distinctive levels through the production of governmental discourses.

This study is divided into three main chapters. In the first part, in order to give a general portrayal of the problematization of the issue of honour crime, I focus on the general discussion in academia and continue with an explanation of my theoretical perspective: the Foucauldian notion of governmentality. The second chapter deals with the presentation and evaluation of historical and contextual milieu—rather a genealogical analysis—that prepares the conditions for the nation state formation during the 1920s. The nationalist, modernist and governmental discourses underline the historical construction of the notion of honour

⁴ The name of the parliament is *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, and I will use the shortest version of it as *TBMM*.

originating from the so-called dichotomy between modernity and tradition. Through repeating themselves, these discourses present women ambiguous roles in terms of their sexuality, which oscillates between being ‘honourable’ and ‘dishonourable’.

In the third chapter, I will analyze the discursive aspects which will mainly concern the governmentality of family, women and honour crime by addressing the Penal Code, Civil Law and the parliamentary records. In the last section of third chapter, I will evaluate the image of women created through discursive categories about ‘honour killing’. I will thus explicate how these representations of women are constituting the image of women as ‘silent subjects’ in the cases of ‘honour killing’ through bringing the notion of “patriarchal bargains” and empowerment strategies of women into the discussion (Kandiyoti 1988). Throughout my thesis, I bring a multidimensional approach towards the issue of honour crime to show the interplay between different discourses of women, family, the Kurdish identity, and virginity, so honour crime appears to be a lens of instantiation to analyze all other discourses mentioned above.

Chapter 1: Problematization of Honour Crime and the Concept of Governmentality

1.1 Honour Crime as an Issue

In recent years, honour crime began to be problematized and debated in the academic circles, both among sociologists and anthropologists. Nukhet Sirman (2004:39) puts forth, “Those who live according to the *code* of honour see such violence as necessary for the protection of virginity and the value system they are related to...” And Lila Abu-Lughod(1985:245) also claims, “For Awlad Ali, like others in circum-Mediterranean societies, the cultural ideals are those entailed by the honor code.” Honour becomes something beyond the meanings of self-respect and glory, what Abu-Lughod means is that honour begins to function like a code or a mechanism which regulates the social relations and the attitudes of the individuals.

However, what is referred to as a code of honour cannot be evaluated as particular and singular established code of honour. I believe that there are multiple codes of honour, operating at distinctive levels, which are revealing from the rhetoric of various actors, thus producing inconsistent and complementary discourses about honour crime, circulated through various channels in the society. Then, my intention is specifically to analyze the construction and reconstruction of honour and honour crime on governmental level through both historical and theoretical axes.

While searching for the reasons behind the honour killings, there is a common tendency to see ‘the loss of virginity’ as the main cause of the honour crime. Nebahat Akkoc (2006:125:127) argues the issue of honour crime cannot be reduced just to the loss of virginity, for what is striking is that the cases of honour crime are related with whole set of attitudes of a woman. In this sense, the control of the attitudes and of the bodies of women both in the public and private realms is the main reason behind the honour crimes which

cannot be considered as independent of the patriarchal system(s). Honour crime should be evaluated as a specific form of sexual violence which brings many discourses with it. Although in the 'West' there is a tendency to see honour crime just as a form of violence related with 'cultural patterns', it is actually a specific form of sexual violence operating through codes of honour that is legitimized through tools of patriarchal mechanisms directly targeting women's bodies. As Nicole Pope(2004:101) states, "While violence against women in Western societies is rarely perceived as a problem of 'culture', but rather as a social issue, murders committed in minority communities in the West, or in developing countries,.....are broadly attributed to 'culture' rather than to the patriarchal element within the culture."

By showing the functioning of honour in a Greek Christian community, John Campbell (1974) provides a basis for invalidating the dominant international discourse establishing a direct relationship between Islamic/cultural practices and honour crimes. Shahrzad Mojab and Nahla Abdo (2006) point out that honour killing cannot be reduced to Islamic practices, because "the patterns of family honour" is also "evident in Latin American and Mediterranean peasant societies, among nomadic people" as well as among Christian community (Ortner 1978). So the notion of honour cannot be explained and reduced to cultural and Islamic practices. In this sense, Bourdieu's (1965) analysis on the notion of honour in Kabyle society is inspiring, because he argues that the notion of honour is not a part of cultural practice, but part of a constellation or an interpersonal exchange.

Even though honour crime is viewed in different societies, each case of honour crime has to be evaluated in terms of its particularities and differences. As Nichole Pope (2006:113) stresses, the forms of honour crimes change not only from country to country, not only from one tribe to another, but also from one village to another, because the meanings that are attributed to the notion of honour change very easily.

In terms of the legal aspects of honour killings revealing in the ‘West’, the differences drawn between the crimes of passion and crimes of honour lay in the so-called dichotomy between the ‘West’ and ‘East’. Lynn Welchman and Sara Hossain (2005:10) address legal codes to explain how there is a tendency to associate the honour crimes with the ‘East’ and crimes of passion with the ‘West’. I believe that it is difficult to differentiate crimes of honour from crimes of passion, because some cases of honour crimes show very similar characteristics with the crimes of passion. The main difference drawn between these crimes is “the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim” in which “the difference here lies in the murder of women by those who are or who have been their sexual intimates” (Welchmann and Hossain 2005:11). Yet, the important point for the cases of honour killing is the idea of “the protection of family honour” functioning along with the protection of “conjugal honour”, and although these two forms of honour seem as different sites, they are so intertwined within multiple codes of honour. So what is common about sexual violence is the possession of men over women’s bodies, however the specificity of honour killing comes not from the cultural features, but it comes from the possession and control of men over women’s bodies operating on the basis of the codes of honour not only through husband, father, or brother, but also through the society in general. ‘Stain on family honour’ is turned into ‘stain on honour of society’.

While difference is created between crimes of passion and crimes of honour through the so-called binary between ‘West’ and ‘East’, within Turkey ‘the difference’ between ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ parts of Turkey lies in the main discussions about the differences and similarities between “crimes of tradition” and “crimes of honour”. By questioning the term ‘tradition’, Dicle Kogacioglu (2004:120) notes that “tradition” is as an effect of power relations; however I think that the discourses of tradition and honour crime appear to be segments of governmentality rather than being just an effect of power relations. Hence, the

peculiarity of my study is based on bringing a governmental perspective towards honour crime in which my basic question is how the notion of honour and the issue of honour crime are modernized, institutionalized and mediatised by referring to the patriarchal relations embedded into governmentality. At this point, general significance of my study reveals itself: my approach to the issue of honour crime as a form of sexual violence which is maintained through governmental discourses on family, virginity, women and ethnic identity.

1.2 Conceptualizations of Governmentality and Contemporary Turkish Politics

A Foucauldian framework is relevant for the story that is told by modernity in Turkey. For Foucault, modernity produces certain forms of knowledge production practices that make the crystallization of modern power relations possible. Foucault frames an explicit theory of modernity where the concepts of “governmentality” and “bio-power” explain the operation of modern power relations.

According to Foucault, “Government did not refer only to political structures or the management of states; rather it designates the way in which the conduct of individuals or states might be directed: the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick” (Foucault quoted in Hunt and Wickam 1994:24). By drawing attention to micro-techniques of the government, what is noteworthy is that governmentality is composed of different mechanisms of control in which management of morality, family, economy, security are coming together under the rubric of the idea of conduct of individuals. In the words of Mitchell Dean,

Conduct of conduct is concerned with the means of calculation, both qualitative and quantitative, the type of governing authority or agency, the forms of knowledge, techniques and other means employed, the entity to be governed and how it is conceived, the ends sought and the outcomes and consequences. (1999:11)

Dean’s explanation gives space for constructing the relationship between governmentality and bodies of men and women, in the sense that he focuses on the point of

how governmentality is not only about the exercise of power over others, but also about “how we govern ourselves” which pinpoints the “technologies of the self” in which all practices, behaviours, attitudes and life styles of individuals emerge as governable spaces. Thus, studying governmentality is not only about the policies that are produced by the government, but also about the “practices of the self” and “conduct of self” (Dean 1999:12). Dean’s analysis is crucial for my study to make a connection between the reforms, strategies, policies of the government and “the space of bodies, lives, selves and persons” (Dean 1999:12).

I posit that technologies of self and governance of self are realized through internalization and normalization of governmental tactics and the notion of honour becomes a part of internalization and normalization processes through which specifically women are ‘policed’ by other selves. The notion of ‘honour crime’ is becoming a part of governmental tactic to govern individuals and to create specific sites of bodies where all behaviours and attitudes of men and women are regulated and conducted. Therefore, governmentalization of honour crime is directly connected to “the government of families/through families” and the governmentalization of familial space in which body of an individual is emerging as a site which has to be observed, known, categorized and conducted through the governmental tactics and institutions (See Jacques Donzelot 1979).

Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992) evaluate the notion of the state by reconsidering the governmentality as “art of government” and they analyze how knowledge stands at the centre of all governmental activities and strategies (Foucault 1978). They note,

Government is intrinsically linked to the activities of expertise, whose role is not one of weaving an all-pervasive web of ‘social control’, but of enacting assorted attempts at the calculated administration of diverse aspects of conduct through countless, often competing, local tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement (Rose and Miller 1992:175).

What they argue reveals the complex set of tactics behind honour killings; however, I add that these innumerable tactics of governance function through social control mechanisms

in which the discourses on honour and honour crime arrive to be part of governmental strategies enforcing the patriarchal relations and produce and reproduce new tactics of 'otherization' through reflecting on a specific territoriality, tradition and ethnic community.

By drawing attention to the "governmentalization of state", it is remarkable that the state loses its central role as an abstract, monolithic and unified actor (Foucault 1978). So Rose and Miller (1992:178) demonstrate, "the state should first of all be understood as a complex and mobile resultant of the discourses and techniques of rule." Hence, looking at honour killings at the governmental level is important so as to illustrate the intricate set of dynamics and discourses which are produced by multiple actors by using the paths opened through governmental strategies. What is so striking is that especially liberal government constitutes the 'private' realm as a 'non-political' one through establishing certain mechanisms to regulate and construct a sphere of conjugal family and then civil law becomes one of the most important strategic tools of governmentality to regulate family life under the idea of creating the so-called free and equal individuals.

As Rose and Miller (1992) state, the roles of professionals are so crucial in order to conduct the lives of individuals in the private sphere. In the case of honour crime, the actions of professionals enable the functioning of governmentality by producing specific forms of knowledge on the issue of honour killing and by creating a specific arena of discussion in which honour crime turns out to be a "space of struggle" through the multiplicity of conflicting and paradoxical discourses (See Dicle Kogacioglu 2007).

In order to place the problem of the modernization of women and constitution of them as citizens into the issue of honour killing, in the last chapter, I search for the changes in the Civil and Penal Codes done in recent years, and the law becomes an apparatus of governmentality. In neoliberal ideology of the government, the law appears to be an essential reference point where governmentality functions through regulations. In addition to Foucault,

I thus follow the approach of Alan Hunt and Gary Wickam to construct a theoretical analysis of law which combines both regulation and discipline in itself (Hunt and Wickam 1994:122). In terms of the Foucauldian point of view, what differentiates the modern society from the ancient one is the emergence of the discipline; however Foucault views the law as part of sovereignty and this point is questioned by Hunt and Wickam in a very detailed manner. By rejecting the contradiction between law and discipline or regulation, Hunt and Wickam denote that “we see discipline and law supplementing each other and forming distinctive and pervasive forms of regulation at the very heart of modern government.” Modern government produces different forms of regulatory practices through the law, then the law cannot be considered as a remnant of the ancient regime, and because such a claim can underestimate the importance of the law in creating discourses of the government.

Governmental discourses on honour crime, family and women are modernized, institutionalized and mediatised through the law itself. Therefore, what is at stake for my study is that the government addresses not only the rule of particular people, but also government of the family, government of sexuality, government of women in which honour crime becomes a lens of inquiry; upon which it is possible to construct a discussion of legal changes.

The notion of neoliberalism as a form of governmentality helps me to develop an understanding to grasp the changes undergoing in the contemporary Turkish political life.⁵ While Wendy Larner (2000a) approaches “neoliberalism as governmentality and as policy”, she refers to the increasing roles of institutions and policies that support individuals to become more active and self-caring individuals in the society. But to what extent is it possible to imagine a purely neoliberal world in which all citizens are considered as ‘free’ and ‘active’ individuals as part of technologies of self? What are the implications of neoliberal

⁵ Neoliberalism has appeared to be the hegemonic ideological package targeting and forming the economic policies of the governments all over the world beginning with the 1970s. Neoliberal ideology is basically portrayed through two basic changes which are “market individualism” and shrinking role of the state.

governmentality in the arena of ‘social’? The neoliberal model of society posits a reaction towards the understanding of ‘social state’ which emerged after the World War II which aimed to construct social solidarity network on the basis of the idea of social aid and social security; however in the 1980s, the reaction of the neoliberal ideology began to born in which the place of the welfare state taken by the “workfair” state (Insel 2004:190-191).

Therefore, neoliberalism as governmentality cannot be defined as a pure system in which everything is functioning according to market mechanisms. This view is really important in terms of understanding the contemporary Turkish politics in which the JDP reflects the contradictory nature of neoliberalism. Following Larner (2000a), I believe that neoliberalism is composed of intricate set of discourses, practices and relations through which governmentality operates at every level of the society.

When Stuart Hall evaluated the policies of the Thatcherism, he argued that the “New Right” cannot be portrayed as a consistent and coherent group, and it is important to pay attention to different groups of people who have distinctive interests in the New Right itself (Larner 2000a:8). By drawing attention to versatile nature of the policies and discourses of the JDP—which cannot be considered just as an Islamic moderate political party– the rule of the JDP involves many different features from both neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies similar to the Thatcher government. So honour crime as a tactic of governmentality turns out to be an effect of the interaction between the neoliberal and neoconservative discourses under the rule of the JDP. Governmentality in Turkey operates “as a hybrid assemblage of neoliberal and neoconservative rationalities and techniques” (Larner 2000b:245). In my opinion, the tension between the neo-conservative and neo-liberal forms of rule is seen under the rule of the JDP which oscillates between “a pure neo-liberal ideology premised on the individual and free market and a more traditional conservative ideology based on family and nation” (Larner 2000a: 8).

Although the JDP government tries to adopt the economy to the global context, in regard to the policies about family and women, the government continues to accentuate the roles of women as ‘mothers’ which is reflecting the conservative ideology of the JDP having elements both from neoliberal and neoconservative tendencies, this is a point that I will elaborate more in the following section of discourse analysis. The Thatcher government, during the 1980s, stated that “as individuals and members of families we are responsible for ensuring our children and other family members are cared for and supported” (Campbell quoted in Larner 2000b:255). Thus, the family cannot be delineated just as a self-regulating institution, since the contemporary Turkish government focuses on the family as a terrain which needs constant protection and regulation from the government. In that sense, the policies of the JDP mirror the neoconservative ideology which “aims to revalue women’s place within the family and, particularly as mothers” and in which the family and community are constructing the essence of the society (Larner 2000b:256).

The rhetoric of the JDP on women and family conveys contradictory discourses in which “authoritarian elements coexist with democratic and egalitarian ones” (Fairclough 1992:94). Therefore, in the contemporary Turkey, new forms of rule address not only the tension between neoliberalism and neoconservatism, but also the emergence of the multiplicity of actors who play different roles in tandem with the operation of governmentality. Hence, in order to construct a genealogical analysis of honour crime on the basis of governmentality, in the next chapter, I will concentrate on the historical construction of the discourses on nation state, women, honour and family.

Chapter 2: Historical Background

2.1 The ‘Question’ of Nation State and ‘Question’ of Women

Before introducing the ‘question’ of nation state and women, what is remarkable is to look at the emergence of modern nation state structure as a merger of “concrete social forms” rather than viewing it as an abstraction (Corrigan 1980:6). I approach the formation of state as a “multicellular opacity” which paves the way for developing an understanding of governmentalized state (Corrigan 1980). It is important to draw attention to how the transition from the modern nation state—on the basis of the ideal of the protection of territorial sovereignty—as a centralized and unified actor to “governmentalization of the state” takes place, and how governmentalization opens new demarcation areas—such as honour crime—through technologies and rationalities of governmentality.

Although honour killing had been invisible in the politico-juridical discourses before the 1990s, the nationalist discourses about family, women and nation are illuminating for grasping and historicizing the operation of the notion of honour.⁶ The years beginning with the 1920s were a period covering the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the ‘Turkish’ nation state, in which the ideal was to turn the subjects of the empire into ‘equal’ right bearing citizens of the nation under the rubric of constructing a ‘secular’ and homogenized nation state.

Being a nation state was about gaining recognition in ‘the West’ and the nationalist elite of that period thought that it was almost impossible to gain the recognition and representation on the world stage without being a nation state.⁷ Being like “the West” could have led the

⁶ It is really important to pay attention to changing political and social atmosphere of Turkey after the 1980s and 1990s. During this period, Turkey begun to be integrated into the world system through adapting economically neoliberal strategies and this new liberal atmosphere gives rise to the emergence of new discussion topics. Another factor was the rise of women’s movement after the 1980s, especially different women’s organizations began to set up, and their campaigns became really influential in terms of bringing the sexual violence to the fore.

⁷ By nationalist elites I mean mainly the bureaucrats and soldiers of the Ottoman Empire who supported the idea of nationalism on the basis of the ‘European’ model of modernity and development. Although they assumed that there was only one model of modernity, this was just an ideal depiction. These nationalist elites were educated in

‘Turkish’ state to cover its “inadequacies” and Partha Chatterjee (1986) puts forward that the ‘non-West’ should be evaluated in its own terms not, in terms of a lack, but in terms of a difference.⁸ Although nationalism(s) all over the world bear some universal features, nationalism(s) also takes different meanings and acquires various contents in different contexts. The dichotomy between being same and different connected to the dichotomy between the ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’– is directly related with the in-between position of women in terms of being ‘honourable and dishonourable’.

The attempt of the ‘Turkish’ nationalist elite to modernize the nation has turned out to be a contradictory and ambivalent project in itself and accordingly, it was/is a selective process, since it involved both rejecting and imitating the West (Chatterjee 1986). The fragmentary and paradoxical nature of modernization projects in the ‘non-Western’ countries is really significant in terms of grasping the roles which were assigned to women; this contradictory nature of the modernization project presented women ambiguous roles. Ayse Parla (2001: 70) who addresses the similarities among “third world” countries, post-colonial and colonial contexts and the context of Turkey, proposes that “women became the ground upon which notions of being modern became articulated.” On the one hand, women were seen as being able to dress like ‘Western’ women, to receive an education and to dance with men in public spaces and so on. On the other hand, they were considered as the carriers of the ‘traditional’ practices through which the nation state could prove its difference on the world stage alongside Western countries. This ambivalent attitude towards women gave rise to the formation of an ambiguous status which created a tension between women’s integration into

different cities of Europe in the second half of 19th century. After the establishment of the nation state, they were called Kemalist elites, meaning the elites who were following the reforms of Mustafa Kemal, who was the leading figure of the nationalist movement in the 1900s.

⁸ It is important to bear in mind the differences within ‘the West’ and ‘non-West’, because they cannot be considered as closed and homogenous entities; yet they have to be evaluated through their differences among themselves.

the process of modernization as “mothers of the nation” and / or as the carriers of tradition and authentic culture (Kandiyoti quoted in Sirman 1999: 162).

With the proclamation of ‘Turkish’ Republic, a new set of debates was initiated about the roles of women. At the end of the 19th Century and at beginning of the 20th Century, the debates about the roles of women in a society were transformed into a ‘question’. These discussions have important implications for the recent debates about the crimes of ‘tradition’ and crimes of ‘honour’, revolving as they do around discussions of women’s roles as wives and mothers of the ‘Turkish’ nation state.

By trying to explicate the link between women and the state, Anthias and Yuval-Davis(1989:7) concentrate on five ways “in which women have tended to participate in ethnic and national processes and in relation to state practices.”; within these five ways, specifically women “as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities”, “as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups”, “as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture”, and “as signifiers of ethnic/national differences” become significant parts of Turkish nationalist project.

Being mothers of the nation was presented as one of the most important roles of women; in addition, the ideal was to make women more educated, more literate and more ‘civilized’ by taking their ‘veils’ away and by directly targeting the body of women in terms of their appearance and behavioural patterns. Being both an educated woman and a mother of the nation are two distinct, conflicting, but at the same time complementary parts of the modernization enterprise. In order to display how these two roles imposed upon women can be both contradictory and complementary by themselves, I refer to the words of Mustafa Kemal,

The highest duty of women is motherhood. If one realizes fully that education of both boys and girls starts in infancy, the importance of motherhood becomes evident. Our people are resolved to become a powerful nation. One of the major needs is to secure enlightenment for women in every field..... We have been educated by our mothers and they have done best they could. But our present standards are not adequate for our present days needs. We need men with

different attitudes and a deeper understanding, and the mothers of the future shall educate these men (Quoted in Parla 2001:74).

In these sentences, the ideals of education and motherhood appear to be constituent parts of the creation of a nation, in the sense that educating women becomes the basis for raising responsible and educated children, especially “boys” who will take the responsibility of establishing the nation. Furthermore, on the basis of the objective of becoming more “civilized” and educated, the modernization project presents different roles to different groups of women. As Yesim Arat (1997:100) mentions, women were not only assigned public roles, but also “traditional roles” which address the production and imagination of a collective identity through the transmission of its culture; while the state encouraged some elite women to participate into the public life, the state presented different roles to ‘other’ women. On the basis of disciplining the bodies of women in terms of the reproduction techniques and of shaping forms of behaviour, the aim of the Kemalist elite was not only to organize the public sphere, but also to order the private sphere which was considered as chaotic and undisciplined.⁹

Similar to the separation between the outer and inner world, the Turkish nationalist elites imagined a distinction between public and private life (See Partha Chatterjee 1990). They aimed to make women participate in public life. However, this ideal was also quite problematic, since this model did not target all women living in ‘the borders’ of the Turkish republic. A distinction was made between professional women and ‘other’ women. While professional, middle class women, were educated, had good family backgrounds, and were depicted as “Republican Girls”, rest of the women were seen as “the mothers of the nation”

⁹ The concept of “domestic life” is evaluated as a “European category of thought” by Chakrabarty. (1994:375) From the end of the 19th century up to the consolidation of the nation state, division of spaces and of time was so significant in regard to the creation of homogenous, disciplined and working citizens. Bringing “civilization” to the domestic sphere was concerned with educating the women of the “nation”. However, I consider that the idea of educating women reveals the ambiguity behind the nationalist projects of the “third world countries”.

and “the bearers of the tradition”. Although in the first years of the proclamation of the republic women were becoming the symbols of modernized Turkey, their roles as mothers and as reproducers of the next generations remained their dominant social roles. Hence, the target of *Kemalist* reforms was the middle class and elite women who lived in urban regions. Elite and middle class women –who were educated and involved public life–served as the representatives of other women in society and then they undertook a voluntary mission to ‘modernize’ and ‘civilize’ the women of the nation as a whole.

Participation of women into public life remained as an incomplete and ambivalent project, since the women who participated in the public life during that era were depicted as “asexual creatures” (Kandiyoti 1987: 315). While the national elites were trying to create equality between men and women in the “public domain”, they also ignored “difference” between men and women and they focused on “sameness”. One of the journals of that period–*Yeni Adam*(New Man)–illustrates this point:

In the land of the Turks, the male-female distinction does not exist any more. Distinctions between masculinity and femininity are not those that the nation pays attention to, labors over. They belong to the private existence of a single man; what is it to us? What we need are people, regardless of whether men or women, who uphold national values, national techniques (Durakbasa quoted in Arat 1997: 102).

In 1926, the enactment of the Turkish Civil Code –modelled on early existing civil codes, primarily The Swiss Code– has played an important role in the construction of this so-called equality between men and women, which was based on the denial of female sexuality valid only in the public sphere. In the private domain, ‘legal equality’ was much more difficult to ascertain. By accentuating the French Code Civil, Ursula Vogel (1998) evaluates the relationship between husband and wife by using the feudal metaphor; in this regard, we should not underestimate the role of the feudal metaphor which transferred into the new private domain with the codification of marriage. Husband within the conjugal domain became the representative of the state and the policeman of the family. The 1926 Civil Code

gave these men the right to get married combining it with the right to be the head of the family. That is why, Nukhet Sirman (2005b) calls the Turkish Republic a *Republic of Husbands* in which, through honour, men guarantee their leading and dominant position in the family and protect their property-women- against “other” men.

In the Civil Code as well as in the nationalist discourses, the family is presented as the essence of the nation; while discussing the blurred distinctions between family, nation and community, Carol Delaney (1995) points out the symbolism of father and mother which addresses Motherland (*Anavatan*) and Father State (*Devlet Baba*). In this case, the state is depicted as an authoritarian father figure, so the name given to Mustafa Kemal was ‘Ataturk’ meaning ‘ancestor’ to emphasize his role as the father of whole nation (Delaney 1995:185). Therefore, as Nukhet Sirman(2003:232) notes, through the family metaphors used, the associations between nation and family becomes a quite complicated one; in a way, while the nation is assumed to take its origins from family, both family and nation are perceived as ‘natural’ components of the life.

2.2 Body of Women//Motherland// Control of Women

Delaney (1995) mentions how Anatolian peasants have a tendency to use the metaphors of “seed” and “soil” to refer to the roles of men and women; within this metaphor, the body of women is portrayed like the fertile lands, like the soil which provides the ground for the “production” of healthy generations. The role of the men is to provide the seed and to “control” the soil which belongs to them. This delineation of women is very similar to the symbolism of motherland, for the body of women is imagined like the land and territory of the country and while the territory needs protection and control by the father state, the body of woman is seen like a territory—the borders are determined by the state and masculine power—which needs to be protected and controlled and disciplined (Delaney 1995:186-187).

In the nationalist discourses, the ideal model of family is the nuclear one, which is composed of a husband, wife and children. Pateman acknowledges, “the transition from the traditional to the modern world as ‘a change from a traditional form of patriarchy to a new specifically modern (or fraternal) form: patriarchal civil society’” (Quoted in Kandiyoti 1991:430-431). The nationalist discourses aimed to make people loyal towards “their nation”, because, in the Ottoman era, the subjects of the empire had no notion of nation; their only attachments were towards their family and kinship. But with the emergence of the nation state, these kinship relations and classical patriarchal relations began to be seen as the remnants of the past. The nation state found these tribal and kinship based family relations dangerous and they wanted to transform them through the civil law in which the ideal family model was defined as the “nuclear family”. What is different in the modern patriarchal relations is that modern patriarchal relations are institutionalized with the codification of marriage in the Turkish Civil Code of 1926.

The new Civil Code emphasizes the legal incapacity of women in which husband is considered as the representative of family and the head of family. In this regard, family is legally delineated both as the basis of the state and as a separate sphere from the state. While outside of the marriage, gender roles become problematized and messy, marriage arrives to be a key institution to explain gender order. Although the revolutionary attempts of the Turkish nation state aimed to improve women’s status and to give certain rights to women both in public and private domains, as Serif Mardin claims, these attempts were “primarily a revolution of values” where “innovations, such as... the reform in the status of women were directed at changing prevailing values” (Mardin quoted in Arat 1989:28).

In that sense, the reforms concerning women were becoming means to erase existing ‘traditional’ values which refer both Islamic and Ottoman political relations. Despite the revolutionary steps taken with the new Civil Code, it has its own patriarchal biases which are

called as biases of *Republican Patriarchy* by Arat. (1989) Therefore, these changes highlight a rise of new system based on the gender order; that gave the husband a marital authority which is private, but state sanctioned. Although the classical patriarchal patterns were deemed as the remnants of the past, these classical patriarchal forms continued to exist together with the “new” patriarchal forces.¹⁰

Honour is perceived as a code which functions as part of patriarchal regimes through kinship relations and kinship metaphors: the notion of honour became useful to give people a sense of belonging and identity. Kinship relations cannot be understood independent of the political structure. As Sirman (2005b) says, “kinship is a power mechanism which is ordered according to an identity, a morality, age, gender, and a state of belonging.” The paradoxical attitude of the state towards the kinship and honour reveals itself here: on the one hand kinship relations are delineated as dangerous parts of the past; on the other hand, using kinship and family metaphors becomes means to construct an ‘imagined’ solidarity on the basis of the nation state enterprise.

In this regard, for the people who lived on the lands of Anatolia, fighting for the motherland was like fighting to save their honour and the honour of their family, their nation. Therefore, honour was an important discourse with regard to defence of the family and nation. In the words of M. Kemal, “The reality is that each individual sheref (honour), respectability and heroism does not belong to anybody, but it belongs to the people who construct the nation” (*TBMM* Rec. November 11, 2003). This entails that the notions of honour and *sheref* cannot be considered as individualist, but rather relational: one’s honour is defined in reference to others and most of the time in reference to family and nation. What is important is to address the honour of the family and the honour of the nation rather than the particularity

¹⁰ In order to draw attention to the interaction between classical patriarchal practices and politics, Germaine Tillion (1966) defines the region of the Mediterranean as the “Republic of Cousins” where kinship becomes a way for regulating the daily life of the people as part of political relations.

of honour. Therefore, the notion of honour turns out to be like a code that connects the nation with the family.¹¹ I argue that although the codes of honour operated on the basis of economic relations of land ownership and feudal/tribal structures taking its roots from the classical patriarchal relations, with the emergence of the nation state, the notion of honour started to operate not only on the level of classical patriarchal regimes, but also on the state level through adaptation of notion of honour into the politics.

Reconsidering Kemalist reforms, the main ideal was to build a ‘secular’ nation state versus a ‘religious state’ where the body of women becomes a site of contestations, conflicts and negotiations.¹² Apart from being “asexual creatures”, another condition of participating in public life was “being unveiled”. Alev Cinar (2005:54) calls the project of Kemalist elite as “Clothing the national body” in which, “intervention with regard to the body, especially the strategic covering of certain body parts in certain public places and not in others, can become an important tool by which boundaries that constitute the public sphere are established and contested.”

To illuminate more the idea of “making women more unveiled and secular”, I want to give an example from the saying of a modernist thinker, Semseddin Sami, from the 1880s, he notes that the aim and the meaning of the modern way of education is that “women would cover themselves not with a piece of cloth, but by using reason” (Quoted in Sirman 2004:51). In these sentences, it is revealing that education again became a device, in which the basic idea was that when the Kemalist elites gave education to women, and women would easily learn how to veil themselves not with a piece of cloth, but by reason: veiling mentally. This mechanism of veiling mentally operated through the construction of honour; mental veiling

¹¹ For Beth Baron (2006:2), “Egyptian nationalists appropriated the notion of family honour, which was familiar and widespread, and elevated it to the national plane to create a sense of national honour”, this was also the case for ‘the Turkish’ nationalists.

¹² In the words of Omer Taspinar (2005:28), “Turkish secularism did not attempt to separate state and religion in the conventional Western sense of polity-separation secularism. Instead, the Kemalist elite adopted the traditional Ottoman pattern of state control over the religious establishment.”

was perceived only possible through the internalization of conduct of honourable behaviours by means of educating “the women of nation”.

The tension between modernity and tradition emerges in the paradox in which women became the symbols of both modernity and tradition in different contexts. The nationalist elites’ formula of “unveiled modernity” was not an attempt to reject Islamic practices, but through “unveiled modernity” women become both modern/ civilized “human beings” and through being honourable, they became representatives of tradition as being mothers of the nation. In my opinion, the veil was annulled symbolically, but the modern nation state put women under a different form of a veil which I will call “modern veiling”. Modern veiling involves many new mechanisms for constituting “corporate control” over women’s bodies (Kandiyoti 1987). The state itself held the power to support and to produce the mechanisms which reproduce and legitimize the symbolic veiling of women. What I want to emphasize is not the veiling of the body in an Islamic way, but the veiling of the body through the power relations of the state to control, to order and to discipline the female body.

Honour crimes are one of the most important signifiers of how while women were ‘saved’ from the veil, they were put under the pressure of honour to protect the “body” of women against “external” threat, which are always depicted as “other” men around the “women of the family”. The tension between secular/ religious state and between modernity/tradition still exists and is traced within the nationalist discourses on honour and contemporary debates about honour crime.

As a result of the appearance of “the nationalist governmentality”, the nation state *per se* creates “docile bodies” in which power begins to operate over the most intimate parts of our lives. Discourses about population, family, kinship and sexuality divide people into categories. The nation state produces certain mechanisms which control the sexuality of women on the basis of the discourses of being honourable woman. Its aim was to control the

sexuality of women by only regarding their “reproductive functions” for the continuation of the society on the basis of the idea of creating ‘healthy citizens’ for the nation.

From Deniz Kandiyoti’s (1987: 324) point of view, cultural modes of the control of female sexuality lead to the emergence of different experiences among women. The important point is how some roles were attached to the bodies of some women and how the control over the female bodies cannot be understood without taking into consideration the different experiences of women. Under the rubric of the modernization ideology, women who came from different class, ethnic and familial backgrounds experienced the controlled process of their sexuality differently. Kandiyoti (1987: 325) calls this process of control the “corporate control” over female bodies, since this control not only comes from the state, not only comes from the society in general, but also comes from the parents and relatives. In this context, honour functions as a ‘patriarchal’ control mechanism regulating all kinds of relations between men and women. In Turkey, honour crime can be seen as the most extreme effect of power over women’s bodies. The corporate control over the female sexuality displays itself within the honour crimes through government discourses about honour crime and family relations, because the cases of honour crime show how multiple actors can play different roles in the murder of a woman in the name of protecting the honour of the family. Virginity examinations are one of the most obvious examples to show how power can operate even over the most intimate parts of our lives (Parla 2001).¹³

In the case of nationalist discourses in Turkey, the bodies of women became subject to several discourses, and certain roles were attached to women through these discourses. Kemalist elites tried to create a nonthreatening image of ‘the Turkish woman’ as a new model of womanhood based on bringing female sexuality to the point of invisibility in the public domain (Parla 2001:74). From the time of the beginning of the modernization project up to

¹³ See Chapter 3, discussion on virginity examinations.

now, the bodies of women still continue to be the sites of negotiations and conflicts where not only the same nationalist discourses are reproduced but also the new discourses are produced by the contemporary governments. During the emergence of nation state, the basic intention was not only to control the women and but also to provide the internalization of this control by women, so this can turn into a self-control mechanism or “technology of self”. M. Kemal himself explained this point very well: “The Turkish woman ought to be the most enlightened, most virtuous, and most self-controlled woman in the world....She who is the source of the nation and the basis of social life can carry out her duty only if she is virtuous” (Quoted in Parla 2001:74).

It must be argued that the notion of honour transcends the borders of the domestic sphere; it is institutionalized and mediated through governmental discourses. The notion of honour reaches to public domain and the operation of honour gives public life a new shape. Discourses produce certain forms of commonalities in the public space and public domain locates people into a discursive frame and at the same time, one begins to imagine oneself within this discursive frame. However, this public space becomes “honourified” through the discourses. The spheres which are “honourified” emerge as areas where power relations are legitimized and as domains of “deafness” in which nobody attempts to question the notion of honour (Mutluer 2008). The term “honourification” of the public space explains the process of politicisation and governmentalization of honour crime and the appearance of honour killing as a “space of struggle”; yet honour still continues to function as a normalizing tool without being questioned (See Dicle Kogacioglu 2007).

2.3 Ethically Nuanced Construction of ‘Turkishness’// Ethnically Nuanced Body of Women

In consequence of the contemporary discourses about ‘the crimes of tradition’ which have latent indirect ethnic and territorial connotations, it is important for my study to historicize strategic attempts of the nation state to ‘otherize’ and to ‘exclude’ certain groups of people from ‘recognition’. The nation state creates its own “others”; however I think that this attempt of the nation state is strategic and conscious creation of “exclusionary spaces” which is seen as a requirement for the continuation of the nation state (See Giorgio Agamben 2005). The construction of space of exceptions thus becomes an important tactic of nationalist and contemporary governmentality.

‘Turkish’ is written in quotation marks here to emphasize the point of how ‘Turkishness’ was created as a discursive formation in order to produce an “*imagined community*” by combining people—who come from different ethnic, religious, class and racial backgrounds (Anderson 1983). ‘Turkishness’ was constructed as an umbrella term which was assumed to cover ethnic differences. That is why in the official state discourses, the notion of citizenship was constructed as a national identity which was assumed to envelop various ethnic groups under the umbrella of ‘Turkishness’ (Kirisci 2000). Indeed, despite the articulation of ‘Turkishness’ as a generic form of identity, the notion of Turkish citizenship bears ethnic connotations in it, referring to ‘Turks’ as an ethnic group vis-à-vis ‘Kurds’, ‘Greeks’ or ‘other’ groups.

As Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) explains, the women become the reproducers of ethnic and national boundaries; in this case, the target of the reforms of Kemalist elite was the middle class women who were living in the urban areas in which modernity appeared to be a class project in itself. On the basis of the ideal of utopian time and space, modern nation state

divides and categorizes people. However, with regard to the definition of the nation state on the citizenship, some people are excluded from the civil society and from the definition of the ideal type of citizenship in which the concepts of ‘citizen’ and ‘civil society’ must be read in the masculine” (Kandiyoti 1991:430).

Some groups of people were excluded from nation state discourses such as those who lived in the rural areas and tribal nomadic people. According to Caglar Keyder (1997:43), “the masses in Turkey generally remained passive recipients of the nationalist message propounded by the elites.” Thus among the masses, especially the “Anatolian” peasants, remained as silent observers of these processes; Deniz Kandiyoti states that these Kemalist reforms remained as a “dead issue” for the rural parts of Turkey for years and years. The modernization processes and the nationalist discourses were experienced quite differently in the Southeastern region of Turkey. As Yakin Erturk (1995:141) points out, “Eastern Turkey was thus regarded as being at the very bottom rung of the modernization process.” Modernity created different trajectories for different people: for the women living in the Southeastern region, the results of the modernization became quite different, because these women were excluded more from the state discourses rather than being integrated into the system (Erturk 1995:143). This situation can be explained through the historically autonomous position of the Southeastern region of Turkey and its “internal structures of kinship, class and ethnicity” (Erturk 1995:143).

During the 1920s, the South-eastern region of Turkey was predominantly populated by the politically and economically autonomous ethnic kin-based units, called tribal/feudal structures, which were composed of tribal/feudal leaders, who were also big landowners, and landless peasants (Yegen 1999a). Thus, although in the name of protecting national and territorial sovereignty of the nation state, the politically autonomous position of tribal people become limited, the nation state followed strategic ways to integrate particular tribal leaders

into the new political system. These strategic alliances were important in the sense that these leaders played intermediary roles between landless peasants and the state; but certain potentially resistant groups were marginalized. So what is at stake is not a total exclusion, yet an “inclusionary exclusion” (Agamben 2005). Hence, the alliances constructed between the nation state and tribal leaders played significant roles in terms of the continuation of feudal/tribal structure and of the classical patriarchal regimes through exclusionary and inclusionary practices.

In the words of Mesut Yegen (1999a:555-556), “From the mid-1920s until the end of the 1980s, the Turkish state ‘assumed’ that there was no Kurdish element on Turkish territory.” For a long time, in the nationalist discourses, there was a process of “silence” about the problematization of Kurdish issue. The Kurdish issue was depicted as “reactionary politics, tribal resistance or regional backwardness” rather than as an ethno-political problem, that is why, on the basis of this depiction, Kurdish identity was invisibilized (Yegen 1999b:216). After the 1980s and 1990s, the Kurdish community began to disrupt the “developmentalist” myth which intended to eliminate differences in the society through “assimilationist” practices. The main actor of the developmentalist paradigm was the nation state whose aim was to develop the society in its all aspects (Kogacioglu 2007:195). Thus Kogacioglu (2007:195) acknowledges, this political and social portrait began to change with the 1980s, from then on, there was no longer the figure of a strong state. In this regard, since the 1980s, patriarchal relations have begun to be produced not only through the relationship between the state and family, but also through different non-governmental actors such as the media.

Until that time, there was a strong belief that if the economic backwardness of the region was solved, there would be no Kurdish “problem”, this kind of representation of Kurdish issue can still be witnessed in the debates about honour crimes, which is a point I will

elaborate more in the subsequent chapters. The exclusion and oppression of Kurdish people for many decades resulted in the emergence of Kurdish nationalist movement followed by the foundation of the Kurdistan Workers Party (*PKK*) which is represented as a Kurdish “separatist or terrorist” movement within the state discourses and after the 1980s, it is understood that the Kurdish issue is an ethno-political question in itself (Yegen 1999b).

In “analyzing the relation of women to the State: the construction and definition of women’s subordinate position will vary across particular apparatuses and institutional sites, it will not remain constant or unchanging in the form of its appearance” (Harrison and Mort 1980:82). The position of the Kurdish women was quite contradictory in this sense; for a long time, they remained invisible in the eyes of state because of their ethnicity. The relationship between the state and ‘Kurdish’ women was and is quite complicated, since they are considered as the people on the margins of the state; they can even be depicted as the “women without a state” (See Shahrzad Mojab 2005). The relation between the ‘Kurdish’ women and the nation state was and is quite different than the relationship between ‘Turkish’ women and the state; Kurdish women were totally left out of this project of modernization.¹⁴ I argue that within the discourses about honour crime, being ‘Kurdish’ and ‘Turkish’ presents sites of difference which reflect the production of distinctive state control mechanisms vis-à-vis ‘Kurdish’ and ‘Turkish’ women.

Kurdish men were also outside of the definition of state; compared to men, women were more in a ‘subaltern’ position—in terms of being in-between modernity/tradition and ‘East’/ ‘West’— because of their gender and ethnic background. However, since the 1990s on, as a result of the rise of the Kurdish nationalist movement, in the official discourses Kurdish

¹⁴ I am aware of the fact that ‘Turkish’ and ‘Kurdish’ women in themselves cannot be considered as homogenous groups which have many differences among themselves. What I want to accentuate is that the government discourses create a space of discussion by ethnicising and territorializing the topic of ‘honour killing’ within the frame of ‘crimes of tradition’.

women have begun to be represented either as a member of PKK or a mother or a ‘honourable virgin’: all these women coming from wide range social backgrounds have been commonly depicted as victims— victims of *PKK* or as victims of ‘tradition’ or as victims of honour (Caglayan 2007). This victimization operates through the government strategy of otherization. There is a double process of suppression over Kurdish women: suppression out of patriarchal power relations going hand in hand with suppression out of ethnic identity.

Importantly, the ethnicization of private domain aims to transform all differences into one homogenous framework of ‘Turkishness’. On the basis of the idea of constructing a homogenous nation state, it is assumed that all differences should have been assimilated in the process of development. The nationalist discourses anticipate that if these differences cannot be assimilated within the idea of homogeneity, the livelihood of these differences are only permitted unless they are kept within the private domain, the important point is to prevent these differences reaching to the public domain. This is where governmentality functions through the governance of differences on the basis of exclusionary and inclusionary practices. By means of the policy, it becomes possible to integrate differences into the system on the basis of the ideal that ‘freedom’ and ‘equality’ are mediated at the level of nation state. In the following chapter, I will explain and analyze how all distinctive discourses and trajectories— that are kept out of public sphere—come into the picture, on the basis of the issue of honour killing, construct an interdiscursive area of discussion.

Chapter 3: Intersection of Discourses under the rule of the JDP

My method combines the perspectives of Foucault, and the critical discourse analysts. Foucault's discursive approach in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is important to develop an analysis that unmasks the sociohistorical milieu preparing the conditions for the emergence of specific discourses in specific contexts (Fairclough 1992:40). It is significant for my study that both a Foucauldian approach and the perspective of the critical discourse analysis emphasize the importance of interdiscursivity which addresses the relations between different discourses. My study sets out to develop a "genealogy" of the governmental discourses on honour killing, family and women. What differentiates "genealogy" from "archaeology" in Foucauldian analysis is that "whereas archaeology describes the rules of formation that structure discourses, genealogy examines the historical emergence of discursive formations...." Critical discourse analysis incorporates many elements from these two methodological perspectives.

I am particularly interested in N. Fairclough's (1992:5) "multidimensional approach" and V. Dijk's (1993:260) "discourse dominance and "marginalization and exclusion" approach, because they allow me to explore honour killing as an interdiscursive "space of struggle", as well as different discourses on family, women, the Kurdish identity, virginity, honour and tradition as they interact with each other as a governmental tactic.¹⁵ The effects of these discourses can be seen in the examples of the cases of honour crime in which the murderers take a sentence reduction in the name of protecting the honour of family.¹⁶ Additionally, intertextuality is a very crucial methodological endeavour in terms of articulating how different texts of the Civil Code, the Penal Code, the party programme of the JDP and the parliamentary records produce and reproduce patriarchal discourses in which

¹⁵ The term "space of struggle" (*mucadele alanı*) is used by Dicle Kogacioglu(2007) but I prefer to use this term to address the interdiscursivity and multiplicity of actors who play different roles in the production of discourses on honour crime.

¹⁶ I will give examples from the cases of honour crimes throughout my discourse analysis to show how these legal discourses are applied in practice.

both governmental and non-governmental forces—such as parliamentarians, women activists, judges, lawyers, doctors, policemen and family members— generate discourses on women, family and honour killing.

I concentrate on the process beginning in 2002 and 2003, because after the election of the JDP in 2002, the main politico-juridical discussions on honour crime started to take place during this period. The actors who produce these discourses are primarily the members of the JDP, the members from the RPP (Republican People's Party) and women activists and lawyers.¹⁷ In the following sections, firstly, rather than following specific steps of discourse analysis, I will decipher and analyze the discourses of the contemporary Turkish government, primarily focusing on the position of the JDP through reflecting on the party programme, on laws and parliamentary records in order to understand how the discourses on women, family, virginity, honour and crimes of tradition are institutionalized and mediated as a governmental strategy.

3.1 From Unveiled Modernity to 'Veiled Modernity'

After the 1980s, the political Islamic movement began to be more visible within the public scene, with its new actors. Nilufer Gole (2002:173-174) differentiates the two phases of politically Islamic movement: while the first phase started at the end of 1970s and marked by the rise of Islamic militancy and construction of Islamic collectivism, the second phase began after the 1980s when the Islamic movement lost its fundamentalist fervor and it turned to be a struggle of Muslim identity which went into the process of “normalization”. The rising

¹⁷ The Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*) can be considered as an opposition party and they symbolizes the centre-left ideology in reference to the conservative and moderate Islamic standpoint of the JDP. The RPP was set up in 1924 with the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, so from the formation of the RPP until today, it has represented 'the secularist and modernist vision'. However, the discourses of the RPP is beyond the scope of my analysis.

power of the JDP is an indicator of how the political Islam becomes more political and “normalized” by changing its vision and adapting itself to neo-liberal ideology.

When the JDP came to power in 2002, all the tensions—that take its roots from the time of the establishment of the nation state— between the ‘secularist’ and ‘modernist’ vision of state came to the fore. Since the rise of the JDP, the question of ‘veiling’ began to be discussed in the political sphere, specifically because of their political agenda which reframes veiling issue as an issue of ‘freedom’ and ‘human rights’. Both the veiled and unveiled modernity function through the bodies of women which are turned into sites of political strategies. What is noteworthy is that the wife of recent president is wearing headscarf which was considered as the most exceptional situation in the Turkish political history. For, the headscarf *per se* was seen as the symbol of ‘anti-secularism’, ‘backwardness’ and ‘irrationality’ on the basis of the ideal of constructing an “unveiled” and secular modernity, so Kemalist debates about headscarf are revitalized under the rule of the JDP.¹⁸ For this reason, I name the political rule of the JDP as the era of “veiled modernity” or “the rule of exceptions”.

This version of “modernity” can be considered as alternative, in the sense that it brings a new alternative vision to the so-called dichotomy between public and private spaces constructed through the discourses of the nation state. In Turkey, public domain arrives to be a site where all secular and nationalist practices are mediated through targeting bodies of women. Therefore, since the 1980s to today, veiling –considered as part of private sphere–has become visible and turned into a topic of discussion and gains new visions in the public sphere and shapes the public space itself. As debates about veiling become apparent, they indirectly affect the emergence of the issues related to women’s social position and status. One of the reasons behind the emergence of honour crime as a problem is related with the so-

¹⁸ See Chapter two for the tension revealing between secularism and religion where I discussed Turkish modernity.

called sensibility of the JDP about the issues concerning women, for the JDP became the target of all debates due to the issue of veiling. What the JDP wants is to change and to shape the vision of veiled women by giving visibility to them in the public domain.

The main slogan of the JDP in 2002 before elections was “Solving the problem of *turban* (veiling) is ‘our debt of honour’” In this slogan, discourses on honour and veiling came together.¹⁹ On the one hand, by saying veiling, they are drawing the attention of the religious community. On the other hand, since 2002, the JDP have become the target of the discussions and attacks of secularist Kemalist people, because of their slogan. However, when they begin to use the notion of honour, which is also the rhetoric of Kemalist nationalist elites, they created a common ground for understanding and negotiation, so this kind of language was part of strategy to attract two groups of people. Furthermore, the use of the phrase ‘debt of honour’ is one that I encounter very often in the cases of the honour crimes. The murderers of women predominantly claim that they kill in order to ‘protect the honour of family’ and to ‘pay their debt of honour’. This use of the same rhetoric by different actors in different contexts creates a common ground of intervention directly threatening women’s bodily integrity and rights through adopting the notion of honour. As it is understood, women’s status, veiling and honour crime are being discursively linked through targeting women’s bodies within the framework of the JDP’s political programme.

New actors emerged in the public scene, and governmentality begins to function through these actors rather than operating as a unified actor. The emergence of the new actors reveals and new areas of discussions, together with “area of differences” in which new public images came on the scene: one of issues emerging is honour crime as a “domain of struggle” (See Kogacioglu 2007). The notion of honour is produced, reproduced and ‘modernized’ by the ways of new governmental actors and strategies. Therefore, modernity is not a finite

¹⁹ “Debt of honour” is *namus borcu* in Turkish, which is commonly used in a situation of ‘dishonourable’ action of women, in that case, “paying” debt of honour is perceived as the responsibility of men.

process; it is a process happening at any moment, the so-called break up between modernity and tradition—by repeating and reproducing itself in line with the modernist paradigm—reflects itself in distinct and contingent discourses about the honour killing in the contemporary era. In the next sections, I will shift my focus to specific rhetoric of the JDP about women, family, virginity and specifically honour crime.

3.2 Governmental Discourses on Family and Women

In the party programme of the JDP, in a section on “women”, it is written that “Women are not only important, because they make up half of the population, but they are the most important because as individuals, they are primarily responsible for the raising of healthy generations” (The JDP Party Programme 2002). This representation of women as wives and mothers is quite similar to nation state discourses which I discussed in the second chapter. Portraying women as ‘mothers’ and ‘wives’ reveals a tension between neo-conservative and neo-liberal governmentality.²⁰

Mitchell Dean explains this strategy of governmentality as the creation of “technologies of agency” that intends to create “freely acting individuals” (Larner 2000b:246). In other words, neoliberal governmental ideology attempts to construct families as self-sufficient and self-responsible groups against a welfare statist idea of the “social state”. Special programs of the welfare state targeting women and family are based on the depiction of men as breadwinners and women as female domestic workers (Larner 2000b:246). However, the discourses of the JDP on women contradict neoliberal perspectives which treat women and men as active citizens of the society – who are required to work. Therefore, the discourses of the JDP cannot be evaluated as purely neoliberal or neo-conservative; they are composed of both.

²⁰ See my theoretical section.

The portrayal of women as wives and mothers of the society also brings ‘the distinction’ between the private and public domains into the picture. Dicle Kogacioglu’s (2004) discusses how third world Indian nationalists addressed ‘the woman question’ using similar strategies to the JDP. In the Indian case, the separation of the life world was based on the distinction between “the spiritual and material”: while in the material domain, the Western ideas of science, technology and progress in general was dominant, the spiritual domain was considered as the domain of women who were perceived as the carriers of the “tradition” (Chatterjee 1990:237). In contemporary Turkey, “The governing Islamist Justice and Development Party denounces the violence while appropriating strong understandings of family and family honour in line with its ideology of separate spheres” (Kogacioglu 2004:122). Strikingly, despite the denunciation of sexual violence by the JDP, discourses and legal practices/texts reproduce modern and classical patriarchal relations by emphasizing motherhood and treating ‘crimes of honour’ as ‘crimes of tradition’.

As a result of my examination of parliamentary records from 2003 to 2008, I argue that discussions about honour crimes generally result in a parliamentary speech by a member of either the JDP or the RPP –emphasizing the importance of motherhood and family for “Turkish society”. For example, recently in March Ayse Akbas from the JDP stated, “The mother is a crown to our head, she is a remedy to any illness, even when one child-one son becomes a patron or patriarch, he needs the mother” (*TBMM* Rec. 8 March, 2008). To show the importance of the family, article 41 of the Constitution also states, “Family is the essence of the society” (Turkish Constitution, art. 41). As it is written in the party programme of the JDP,

It is clear that we owe to a large extent to ‘our strong family’ structure the fact that we are still standing despite all the economic troubles. To assign priority to family centered policies.... (The JDP Party Programme 2002)

Article 4320 on the “Protection of the Family” of the Turkish Civil Code (2008) is a good indicator of how these discourses on ‘strong family’ and women are reflected in legal texts (See Nukhet Sirman 2006). This brings a new familial sphere into existence. Minister of Justice, Cemil Cicek said, “We are seeing that the societies which disregard the issues about family, defray the cost of the devastating results of it, especially Western societies...” (*TBMM* Rec. January 9, 2003) Here ‘the West’ is depicted as a homogenous unity and it is always used as a point of reference and comparison. This kind of representation of ‘the West’ is especially dominant in discourses where family values such as honour are viewed as distinguishing characteristics of Turkish society in contrast to ‘the Western perception of family’.

Furthermore, the family is presented as a sacred domain that needs the protection of the state in order to preserve ‘society’, family becomes a sphere that requires regulation and protection through state reforms. The distinction between the state and family is thus rendered mystical. The reference of the government to the family as a sacred space leads to the fetishization of private sphere and aesthetization of the housewife: as the private sphere and family are increasingly fetishized, the housewife increasingly aestheticized. Sally Engle Merry (1999:92) says: “The first sought to place women more clearly under the control of husbands in a private sphere beyond the law while the second invited the law into the family to protect the woman, even if this meant sacrificing marriage.” These two contradictory levels of criminalization—oscillate between the subordination and protection of women—coexist and produce an interaction between law and discipline that targets the individuals as family members, as “familial citizens”(Nukhet Sirman 2005a). This interaction is mystical, revolved around the notion of a sacred space that cannot be evaluated in capitalistic or ‘Western’ terms. If that sacred is politicised territorially in terms of Kurdish people or people living in the South-eastern region at ‘the borders’ of the state, the mystifying power of the sacred family

combines with the equally mystical discursive worlds of ‘ethnicity’, ‘custom/tradition’ and ‘backwardness’.

The JDP’s ideal of “Social State” takes its roots from the nationalist discourses of ‘difference’ and ‘sameness’ with ‘the West’ which seek to construct a tradition of ‘Turkish state making’ through a new sphere of spirituality: ‘the strong family’ on the basis of the idea of being the most “honourable” and “compassionate” nation. The problematization of honour crime under the rule of the JDP government is mainly related to the project of “developing a strong family”; but this is an inconsistent project which turns into a governmental tactic rather than questioning of honour and women’s subordination in the family.

How does the social state operate in relation to the family formation? The notion of “social” can be glimpsed through the interpretation of G. Deleuze. He mentions the emergence of the social which addresses a new landscape where social has to be considered a new “hybrid domain” located at the intersection of the private and public spheres in which family turns out to be the intersection point of the social space (Deleuze 1979:10). The regulation of population is at the centre of the operation of the social state and for Foucault, the emergence of population as a specific arena of knowledge production symbolizes the “threshold of modernity and the beginning of the era of “governmentalization of the state” (Dean 2003:94). It is crucial to highlight that Foucault anticipates a separation between “the household or familialistic model of government and population-based rationalities” (Dean 2003: 94).

What I want to underline is that in contemporary Turkish politics, the regulation of family has a central place in the family policies and accordingly the rationalities of population and the family are inseparable from each other. For Nikolas Rose (1999:128), family is “the key site for social government”. Different actors converge in the area of social in which the power of the governmentality is dispersed both through governmental and non-governmental

actors. Donzelot (1979) speaks of 19th Century shift from “government of the family” to “government through the family”. In Turkey, these two forms of governmentality function together. Discourses on women and the family are addressed by the government through the regulation and disciplining of reproduction. “Government through the family” is a tactic according to which as family members connected to each other through kinship ties. Although the ‘Turkish’ nation state founded itself on the basis of the ideal of the strong nuclear family, it is important that extended kinship ties not only function through the practices of individuals, but also through governmental discourses.

Prime Minister Erdogan, on the 8 March 2008, stated that “Women should give birth to at least three children” (“‘Uc Cocuk’ Onerisi Meclis’te” *Sabah* 2008). The depiction of women as “familial citizens” through the discourses of the government prepares and enables the conditions for the production and reproduction of patriarchal relations.²¹ According to Ruth A. Miller (2007:9), “The Turkish government... is not remotely interested in the legal activity or in the juridical identity of its citizens; it is interested in their reproductive activity and their reproductive identity....” Even though discourses of the JDP depict women as mothers of the nation, certain actions and changes in their laws seem to be trying to ‘curb’ discrimination against women.²² So the political agenda of the JDP combines “patriarchal elements with feminist ones” (Fairclough 1992:94).

3.3 ‘Virginity’ Examination as a Control Mechanism of Governmentality

On the basis of the discourses on family and women, I would like to highlight Miller’s (2007:9) claim that “the question at stake becomes not what sort of juridical identity a citizen might carry, but instead what sort of bodily borders and reproductive identity a citizen will

²¹ See also Chapter 2 in which I discussed the notion of “familial citizenship”, this notion is developed by Nukhet Sirman.

²² For instance, with the changes in the Civil Code, the husband is not any more accepted as the head of the family. This can be explained through the pressure of the European Union and of the women’s organizations.

bear” with reference to virginity examinations as a practice directly targeting the sexual and bodily integrity of women. The virginity examination is one of the most striking examples of how bodily borders of women are ‘transgressed’ and “reproductive identity” is created: an area where complex sets of legal and medical discourses intersect with each other. Virginity can be evaluated in terms of the “purity” of women where being pure means ‘not being soiled’ and not involved in sexual relations (with men). Virginity is also considered as a kind of property that can be ‘bought, sold and protected’

The discourses that I mentioned above, exemplify how the small communities and state societies treat virginity and reproduction as important resources. Sherry Ortner (1978: 23) argues that both pre-state societies and state societies give importance to virginity, and she states “this sort of concern with the purity of women was part of, and somehow structurally, functionally, and symbolically bound up with, the historical emergence of systematically stratified state-type structures...” The link between the virginity and chastity of women/ the honour of a group is connected to the whole set of control mechanisms which limit the mobility of women under state structured systems.

During our interview, Habibe K. said, “In the cases of honour killings, what I came across is that honour is a mechanism functioning unilaterally. Thus men have no honour! Women are not provoked, women just become the side which is held subject to the violence.”²³ For Habibe K., the honour is a unilateral control mechanism. Yet, I argue that honour is not a unilateral mechanism: it is a mechanism that regulates the behaviours of both men and women. The link between the stratification and honour is highly significant; in the sense honour constructs hierarchies not only between men and women, but also among men and among women. Therefore, what I want to add is that despite different meanings that are embedded into the notion of honour, honour cannot be just defined in reference to the person

²³ See Appendix.

who is lower in the hierarchy, because the honour of the person who stands at higher position in hierarchy is a reference point as well.

In other words, the operation of honour cannot be considered as one-sided mechanism, because codes of honour cannot be evaluated independently of gender implications; they are central to social meanings of gender in terms of constituting not only what it means to be a woman but also what it means to be a man. Thus, virginity is one of tools of control over women's bodies. However, it is not just a technology of control, but it is a strategy of 'otherization' and domination of women. Herein, it is essential to pinpoint the position of the government in regard to the issue of virginity. The words of Prof. Dogan Soyaslan (supervisor of the Minister of Justice) are really illuminative,

What is the 'value' of a girl when she is 'raped'? Society looks down on her. 'Nobody' wants to marry her, then marrying with her 'rapist' is fact of Turkey. 'Nobody' wants to marry with a 'girl' who is not a virgin. The person who supports the opposite is two faced ("Kadinin Insan Haklari Ihlali" *Milliyet* 2003).

First, there is a common tendency to use the term "girl" specifically in order to emphasize the virgin 'status' of a woman in reference to the person who is male. To Ayse Parla (2001:79), "The woman's status as virgin, non-virgin, or married plays a significant role in how a crime against her interpreted....Even in documented medical reports, the phrase deployed to indicate rupture of the hymen is 'not a girl'" So the words of Soyaslan thoroughly reflect this representation of women under two basic categories in terms of being 'virgin and non-virgin'. What renders a woman more valuable? The approach of Soyaslan legitimizes the conditions under which women are seen as the property of their fathers, brothers, male cousins, uncles and husbands –who are perceived as responsible for protecting the women's honour vis-à-vis their own honour.

As a result of my examination of cases covered in newspapers, I can claim that honour killing is not just about the protection of women's virginity; it is about various bodily behaviours and attitudes, such as how you behave on the street, how you talk, what you wear

and so on. Any kind of behaviour that transgresses ‘the boundaries of private domain’, which are predominantly determined by men, can be considered as a ‘violation of honour’. It is important to bear in mind that newspapers do not just manipulate the leadership, but they set the limits of the discussions. So newspaper cannot be considered just as sources of information, but as constructions of discourse.

In 2003, 10-years-old A.T. was raped by Ferit C., and then she got pregnant; yet she did not tell anybody about this event out of fear (“Kizlarinin Hayatini 10 Milyara Sattilar” *Aksam* 2004). Afterwards, she was ‘sold’ to her rapist approximately for \$ 10.000. In the newspaper, her father reported that he did it because he had not other choice; from then on, A. T. would not be ‘taken’ by somebody, so she had to marry her rapist to save her life. What is so striking is that the rhetoric of the father and of Soyaslan turns out to be very similar to each other and this similarity shows how the government agents and media can play significant roles to reproduce the discourses of the killer fathers, rapists and the fathers who sell their daughters.

In 2004, another tragic event of honour killing happened in Istanbul; in this case, Guldunya Toren was killed by her brothers, Irfan and Ferit Toren with the reason of “cleansing” their family honour (Ceylan 2007). 22-years-old Guldunya was first raped by her cousin, and as a result she got pregnant. Subsequently, she was forced to marry with him by her family; yet she refused, since he was already married. So as to get rid of her family’s pressure, she decided to run away from her brothers. When they first attempted to kill her, she was staying in the house of her uncle; fortunately she survived from their first attack. However, while she was receiving treatment in the hospital, her brothers found her again and this time they killed her.

The life narratives behind the honour killings can be very complex, so it is really difficult to reduce one honour crime to one reason. The role of the government in terms of the

legislation, of the lawyers and of the judges and the doctors are important. The lawyers of the accused brothers–Ferit and Irfan– claim,

According to the Turkish ‘laws’, the honour is a scared thing that needs to be protected. However you take the notion of honour, in Turkey sexuality is not something free from restraint; it can even be considered as a reason for divorce. It is not true to say that I can live my sexuality however I want. It both concerns the family and society all together (“Tore Cinayetinde Akil Almaz Savunma” *Evrensel* 2006).

As for the major dynamic of the codes of honour, it is vested in person, family, tribe, community, society and so on. The notion of honour is produced and reproduced by different actors in different settings and it circulates from one space to another by changing its meanings. Therefore I propose that it is necessary to look at how various foci talk about honour and honour crime, being indicative of their actions.

Before 2005, there was not any specific law making exact reference to the virginity examinations, even though there were particular articles of the law preparing the atmosphere for the virginity examinations. The actions of doctors, police and teachers (all representatives of the state) are significant in the virginity testing. According to Human Rights Watch’s research in Ankara, “a director of state forensic medicine” expresses that “State doctors perform virginity exams at the request of the police when women are accused of prostitution or of ‘abnormal’ behaviour in parks” (Quoted in Parla 2001:80). Through reflecting upon the expression of the director, it is difficult to address who decides what abnormal behaviour is. The category of abnormal behaviour is so vague and ambiguous that any kind of behaviour can lead to an exposure to a virginity testing.

These virginity examinations are not only performed over the women—who show “abnormal” behaviour in the public spaces, but also commonly performed on the women who are in the state institutions such as prisons, high schools and orphanages (Parla 2004: 80). This shows how technologies of control function through institutions and how

governmentality is not only operating through discourses and but also through the practices of the institutions towards women.

This practice of the virginity testing violates Article 17 of the Constitution which notes that “with the exception of medical requirements no one’s ‘bodily integrity’ may be violated” (The Turkish Constitution, art. 17). With the enactment of the new Penal Code in 2005, new article concerning virginity examination put into the law. This article 287 makes reference to the “Genital Examination” which specifies that if somebody takes a person to genital examination without the authorization of the judge can be sentenced to between three months to one year of imprisonment (The Penal code, art.287). This article is problematic, in the sense that it does not make direct reference to “virginity examination”, so it leaves an open space for different interpretations. Thus this article does not mention about ‘the consent’ of women for virginity examination, and gives rise to forced examinations.

Honour cannot be considered just in reference to the virginity, but it functions like a symbolic veil which covers the bodies of women and regulates their bodily conduct and restrict the women’s visibility in public sphere.²⁴ So the discourses of the JDP about the family and women’s place in the family as wives and mothers support and enforce the operation of honour over the bodies of women.

3.4 Honour and Other // Honour Crime as a “Tradition”

In this section, I will firstly analyze the emergence of ‘crimes of tradition’ as a specific area of research and discourses with it, secondly I will point out the solutions presented by the government and thirdly, in more detail, I will concentrate on the construction of the notion of tradition (*töre*) in reference to the changes in the Penal Code and to the Kurdish question. When I examined the parliamentary records, I realized that most of the parliamentarians do

²⁴ Canan A., who is a lawyer and woman activist, said, “It is required to take honour out of in-between women’s legs. Honour is not in-between our legs. The state is locating honour into a special location of the body.”

not usually use the term “crimes of tradition” and “crimes of honour” interchangeably; the documents reveal that there is a common tendency among the parliamentarians, who are either from the JDP or the RPP, to use the term ‘crimes of tradition’ (*tore cinayetleri*) instead of the crimes of honour.

For Norman Fairclough (2003:39), “Discourse constitutes the objects of knowledge, social subjects and forms of self, social relationships, and conceptual frameworks.” New areas of objectification are created through this attempt; new object of knowledge is the crimes of tradition and/ or crimes of honour. The parliamentary commission issued a report in 2005-2006 which is an indicator of the attempt of knowing the “other”. The activities of “recording, counting, tabulating, calculating, comparing have become both the means by which governmental intervention expands and one of its chief by-products” (Hunt and Wickam 1994:27). The head of the commission– Fatma Sahin from the JDP– called their attempt as “a scientific endeavour” in order to emphasize the point of how they get rid of their personal prejudices.

Through ‘particularizing’ the violence and creating knowledge through the experts, different focal points of power are constituted as part of whole system of governmental strategies. According to the report that the commission prepared, honour crimes are defined as the result of an “uncivilized, negative mentality based on traditions”, this report also refers to the European Union report and representation of honour crimes in this report (Commission Report 2006:3). It is written that it is *shame* of Turkey and in the proposal given by the commission in 2004, it is stated that it is a *shame* for state and the Turkish state has ‘lost face’ because of the honour killings, so Turkey has to get rid of this *shame*. What is at stake is that discourse of women’s *shame* turns into the *shame* of the state. In practice, as a result of the cases I examined, there is a common rhetoric of losing face that is also employed by the family members in honour killings. In the case of crimes of tradition, the Turkish government

uses a language in which all discourses of nationalism, of honour crime and *shame* interact with each other. In the words of Prime Minister Erdogan, “The Turkish government felt the need to do something about this phenomenon, which is a social shame...” (KA-MER Report 2006:161) The discourses of women’s *shame* and family’s *shame* turn into the rhetoric of national *shame* and social *shame*.

After this commission report, the government presented some solutions for ‘crimes of tradition’. Among these solutions, the most important one is the empowerment of women through educational means; but in the whole discourse, the education of men is totally invisibilized. This is also articulated in the party programme while pointing put to honour crimes, “within the regions where the suicides, crimes of tradition and honour are seen in abundance, this party aims to organize some preventive and educative programs for women and their families” (The JDP Party Programme 2002). Education is frequently presented as the only solution for preventing the crimes of honour. In her speech, Ayse Akbas from the JDP pinpoints the same argument as, “If our women’s level of education increases, the crimes of honour and crimes of tradition and the percentage of the women who commit to suicide will decrease” (TBMM Rec. 8 March, 2008). From the nationalist period up to now, women’s education is represented as a tool of ‘will to civilize’ and ‘to modernize’ the ‘other’ in the name of ‘saving’ women from the ‘violent tradition’. However, it is such a naive assumption to think that education can be the only source for preventing honour killings, because from the beginning of the paper up to now, I showed the complex set of relations and dynamics behind the honour killings, so the crimes of honour cannot just be reduced to a problem of lack of women’s education.

One of the most important areas the knowledge is produced is the law where governmentality is functioning in a very smooth and subtle way. For Foucault, “government is not a matter of imposing laws on men, but rather of disposing things, that is to say to employ

tactics rather than laws, and if need be to use the laws themselves as tactics” (Foucault quoted in Smandych 1999:2). In 2005, the Penal Code changed and the JDP government put the crimes of tradition into the article 82 under the section of *nitelikli insan öldürme* (homicide) and according to this article, “killing in the name of tradition(*tore*)” is given lifetime prison sentence unless there is condition which can be considered as “Unjust Provocation”, this is stated in the preamble of the article 82. Despite the efforts of some women’s organizations, the government insisted to name these crimes as crimes of tradition. According to the old Penal Code, killing a woman in the name of protecting ‘the honour of the family’ was considered a reason of extenuation, because this extenuation-reduced sentence- is given to murderers under the article of “Unjust Provocation” in which the “improper” behaviours of women can be a reason of unjust provocation. But what is evaluated as an unjust and improper action is still open to question and to the interpretations of the judges. For Sirman (2004:41), “law sees the woman who is suspected of bringing dishonour to her family as having provoked her murderers unjustly” According to the research conducted by the Women’s Rights Centre in Diyarbakır Institution of Court, for the last five years, 46 cases of honour killings out of 59 are evaluated under the article of “Unjust Provocation” (“Tore/Namus Cinayetlerinde Yargıclar” *Türk Hukuk Sitesi* 2006). Therefore, this new Penal Law still paves the way for the legitimization of these kinds of crimes. As Sirman (2004:51) expresses, “the legal institution recognizes the key role played by kinship and the family in the political order and organizes the clauses of the Civil and Penal Codes so as to protect the social and familial order rather than the rights of the individual.” The Civil and Penal Codes are interacting and talking with each other in terms of making strong emphasis on the familial sphere.

In the Penal Code, what is described as *tore* is a specific form of tradition indirectly associated with the Kurdish ethnic groups, the South-eastern region of Turkey, tribal practices

and kinship relations. Although it is almost impossible to claim that the state constructs a direct relationship between the honour crime and Kurdish issue, it creates an indirect relationship between the Kurdish issue and crimes of honour by emphasizing the South-eastern region and the so-called “tradition”. For Dicle Kogacıoğlu (2004:13), “To single out the Southeast implies that honour crimes are primarily a Kurdish phenomenon, as the area is populated primarily by Kurds.” Although this region of Turkey is predominantly populated by Kurds, it is important to bear in mind that there are various ethnic and religious communities living there. Hence, it is significant to deconstruct the notion of *töre* and uncover the latent meanings embedded into this notion within the scope of my research.

Despite the lack of any direct analogy between the Kurdish issue and honour crime in the governmental discourses, these kinds of associations are prevalent in the media and professional discourses, and here the statement of Gunduz Aktan (a journalist from one of the mainstream newspapers) exemplifies this view:

At the end, Western press also understood *töre cinayetleri* as something related with the tribal order and these two notions (*töre* and tribal structure) are specific to the South-eastern region of Turkey.The crimes that are happening outside of the South-eastern Turkey are showing that the Kurdish people who are migrating outside of East continue to keep their tribal traditions. This tribal structure is only seen among Kurds..... (Aktan *Radikal* 2006)

The ‘silence’ of the nation state about Kurdish issue and rejection of ethno-political characteristics of the Kurdish question turns into a systematic “otherization” of Kurdish community for a long time. Since the proclamation of the nation state, Kurdish society has continuously stigmatized through various definitions attributed to them ranging from reactionary groups to potential terrorists/threats for the ‘national solidarity and integrity’ and they are perceived as “enemies within”. Especially, as a result of the pressure of the European Union and in order to accommodate themselves to the criteria of the EU, the JDP government takes some actions to ‘recognize’ the Kurdish population as a distinctive ethnic group, but these actions remain just as ‘temporary’ ones. For, the Southeastern region of

Turkey witness a constant ethnic violence between the Kurdish “freedom fighters”—*PKK* calls themselves as such—and the Turkish military forces. So the Kurdish nationalist movement is a not just about making claim for the recognition of the differences; yet as E. Fuat Keyman and Ziya Onis (2007:291) put forth, “the politics of recognition has gone hand in hand with violence and dead, making almost impossible to separate discursively and politically the politics of identity/recognition from the politics of war for territory.” In so far as violence is discussed, the associations and analogies between the violence/ Kurdish people and violence/South-eastern region of Turkey become possible.

In this respect, the projection of Kurdish nationalist movement makes it possible the associations between the Southeastern region/Kurdish community and honour crime which is depicted as violent action of ‘traditional’ people. However, I challenge any kind of associations done between south-eastern Turkey and honour crime. Especially for the eastern part of Turkey, there is an obvious tendency to attribute the reasons of any kind of crime to the tradition of the ‘other’. I think that when the JDP government calls these crimes of honour as crimes of tradition by ethnisizing and territorializing them, situating honour crimes into traditional practices appear to be a part of ‘otherization’ strategy or strategy of alterity. Thus, even though governmentality functions beyond the boundaries of the nation state, since the formation of the nation state up to now, the discourse on the protection of national territorial sovereignty has been continuously reproduced in the manifestation of the Kurdish issue as a problem on the basis of two ideals: one is the protection of national solidarity and the other is the development and modernization.

In reference to the Kurdish question and issue of honour crime, I argue that the conception of citizenship should be evaluated in regard both to ethnicity and family. As Sirman (2005a:148) expresses, “the particular form of citizenship that was produced can best be described as ‘familial citizenship’” And what is at stake is that family turns into a gendered

and ethnic construction as a result of the establishment of the nation state. Ethnic and familial conceptualizations of citizenship are inseparable from each other and especially in the context of honour crimes, ethnic and “familial citizenship” intersects with each other (Sirman 2005a). This notion of “familial citizenship” gives the husband the control of his wife’s body and physical movement where honour appears as a tool of control. By considering citizenship both as a legal and discursive formation, the citizenship can be situated into the problem of women and modernization, in this sense the constitution of women as citizens arrives to be a problem which can be illuminated through considering honour killing as a lens of inquiry. What makes women more subordinate in the cases of honour killings is the familial roles imposed on women by the state.

I will now return to the notion of *tore*. On the one hand, *tore* per se is such an ambiguous and vague conception; through law, *tore* is categorized as timeless and unchanging notion. *Tore* is seen as a remnant of the past which belongs to the people specifically associated with tribal people, Kurdish population and people living in the East, whom the nation state always tries to transform and to assimilate. History of modernity creates *tore* as it is preconditioned. *Tore* cannot be classified as an abstract notion, yet it is relational concept referring to the everyday relations and practices of individuals. Correspondingly, the attribution of crimes of honour to crimes of *tore* creates the so-called dichotomy and tension between East/West and modernity/ tradition.

Tore is about everyday strategies and practices which cannot be reduced to a closed, unchanging and frozen entity. In practice, *tore* is a site of negotiations, contestations and conflicts. Muharrem Dogan (who is a parliamentarian from the JDP) uttered that “In Mardin, not the laws of *tore* but the laws of Turkish Republic is valid” (*TBMM* Rec. June 19, 2003). Although it is represented as rule of law and like a written code with its own established and solid rules and regulations, *tore* has different meanings for different people, *tore* as a practice

cannot be reduced to one abstract definition. Like *tore*, kinship is also not the rule of law and instead it is composed of everyday practices and relations. In the context of the crimes of tradition, *tore* is deemed as a separate category of law which brings the codification of *tore*, so *tore* is made into a legal code which is totally a modern invention.

Two spheres of *tore* are generated from the discourses of the government. The first one is ‘the tradition of the nation state’ taking its essence from the ideal of strong family and the second one is ‘the tradition of other’. Although these two spheres are represented as two separate spaces, and they seem so contradictory, they are coexisting and interacting with each other. Then, these attempts of governmentality turn *tore* from “a way of belonging” into an abstract form of code or into the logic of capital. Practically, *tore* represents a different ways of belonging and being in the world located in the history of differences. The constant tension and interaction between the “universal narrative of capital” and different ways of being in the world reveal itself in discourses on honour crime (Chakrabarty, 2000: 63–65/54).

Is there a real distinction between the crimes of tradition and crimes of honour? One strategy is that crimes of tradition and crimes of honour are treated as if there is no difference between them. And then, the blame of the crimes is easily put on the people living in the South-eastern part and on Kurdish people and it is another tool of alterity. The statement of a journalist, who was asked about the reasons of *tore cinayeti*, is very revealing:

Tore killings also concern honour; however it seems as if honour killings are more individualistic, while the others are collective. In the latter, many people, a clan takes the decision. Therefore, we can consider it then an organized crime (Istanbul, female, age 42, journalist) (Kardam 2005).

With the changes in the Penal code in 2005, new portrayal is emerging: on the one side, there is honour, on the other side, there is *tore*. Honour is implied as something which belongs to the human nature and as a natural emotion. When somebody commits a crime in the name of protecting his honour, it is depicted as an automatic and irrational reaction. On the contrary to the delineation of honour, *tore* is represented as a very conscious and organized crime. The

metaphors in the *tore* are crucial for understanding the discourses about it. In many segments of the parliamentary records, it is elucidated that the decisions of crimes of tradition is taken within *ail meclisi* (family council).²⁵ For instance, in 2004, Fatma Sahin (head of the commission of crimes of honour/tradition) uttered, “the women who is ‘dirtied’, in regard to *tore*, cannot be ‘convicted’ with the decision of a family council.” The term *meclis* in Turkish is thus used also for the parliament, then the family council is elevated to the status of court and parliament which has right to ‘convict’ (*TBMM* Rec. May 5, 2008).

In practice, like *tore*, *honour* is a very dynamic notion endowed with different meanings, and it has a long history behind it. Despite various connotations attributed to the notion of honour in discourses and practices, there is general patriarchal tendency to associate the notion of honour with the body/sexuality of women. According to the results of a survey research conducted in Turkey by Aytekin Sir, 139 people out of 423 defines honour as “their wives, sisters, mothers and families” (KA-MER Report 2005:94). The term *tore cinayeti* is taking gender implications of these crimes and agency of people out of picture, so without questioning “honour”, the governmental discourses easily provides the continuation of the patriarchal hegemonic relations. When it is mentioned as crimes of honour taking the collectivity behind these crimes, the term crimes of tradition is creating a gender blinded perspective.

For Lata Mani (1987:153), “Tradition was thus not the ground on which the status of woman was being contested. Rather the reverse was true: women in fact became the site on which tradition was debated and reformulated.” Honour crime is happening as a result of the patriarchal relations enabled through the government discourses, that reinforce the domination

²⁵ Bourdieu (1965:208) discusses the term “family council” who generally decides upon what to do in the case of a ‘dishonourable’ action. The notion of family council appears to be something that I frequently come across in the news about the honour killings: multiple actors play different roles in the murder of a woman in the name of protecting the honour of the family. Most of the time, the decision of killing a female member of the family is taken within the family council which includes both men and women- those women who are situated in a higher position hierarchically in terms of their age and experience.

of men in the sphere of the family and public domain and that enforce the operation of honour at state and family levels. The discourses of honour crime and crimes of tradition are used as a central strategy of otherization of women along with Kurdish people, tribal/traditional people. What I believe is that both of these terms are creating vagueness and even the notion of honour is vague in itself. Then rather than trying to decide which crime is honour crime, which one is crimes of tradition, it is necessary to unravel and question all meanings embedded into the notion of honour.

3.5 Women as “Passive Victims”

“The women who are ‘soiled’ are not guilty, but they are inoffensive victims.”
(Fatma Sahin *TBMM* Rec. 2005)

Although this section is beyond the scope of my analysis, it is significant to understand the distinction between discourse and practice. In the cases of honour crimes, women are already victims; however, it required to illuminate how women, in their everyday lives, cope with the codes of honour which are enabled by patriarchal relations. The conception of “patriarchy” is limited in terms of depicting women always as silent victims, because it does not give any space for agency or resistance. However it is possible to overcome these limitations through focusing on relational aspects of patriarchy together with thinking negotiations, everyday practices and empowerment strategies of women. By relying on the parliamentary records, I can note that, especially in the discussions about the honour killings which are attributed to a specific territoriality, women who are living in the South-eastern region of Turkey and Kurdish women are depicted as “uncivilized”, “uneducated”, “silent” and “passive” victims in their households and they are seen as victims who can be “saved” by the state. Women are represented as victims of *töre*. They are crystallized as victims by the power relations. Despite the deployment of women as muted objects, the disjuncture between discourses and practice thus becomes apparent here.

The term “patriarchal bargaining” is important to grasp how women are not that passive and silent as depicted within the discourses and how women can develop different strategies through their everyday practices to deal with and to bargain with patriarchal regimes, which can also called “empowerment” strategies. Kandiyoti states,

Women strategize within a set of concrete constraints, which I identify as patriarchal bargains. Different forms of patriarchy present women with distinct “rules of game” and call for different strategies to maximize security and optimize life options with varying potential for active or passive resistance in the face of oppression (1988:274).

The republicans and nationalist elite had also a tendency to represent peasant women as victims, either “because of a lack of education which hinders them from deriving the full benefits of republican reforms, or because peasant women are, like slaves, bought and sold like chattels as well as being worked to death”(Sirman 1995:200). While the term “patriarchal bargains” gives space for resistance, this notion also points out to the different relationships of subordination and domination—it is not about pure domination— which are embedded into the “variant masculinities and variant virginities” in practice (Lindisfarne 1994:82). As Lindisfarne (1994: 86) argues, “A patriarchal ideology may be embodied in the lives of socially dominant men, but this does not mean that all men are successful patriarchs, or that all women are passive, virginal or chaste.” However, these multiple forms of gender identities are not preclusive of the construction of hegemonic discourse on the notion of honour and of virginity. In their daily lives, women adopt different strategies through constructing networks. In the cases of ‘Turkish’ women vis-à-vis ‘Kurdish’ women, as result of the study done among the nomadic and semi-nomadic Kurdish tribes living in the eastern part of Turkey by L. Yalcin-Heckmann(1995:229), she says, “through the employment of various strategies, they (Kurdish women) try to exploit the contradictory meanings and practices of the patriarchal system.” Therefore, both ‘Turkish’ and ‘Kurdish’ women’s empowerment and bargaining strategies in everyday practices and relations cannot be ignored.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I focus on discourses on honour crime by referring to the institutionalization and mediation of them as a tool of current government. In Turkey, different forms of ‘dishonourable conduct’, based mainly on multiple norms on how women’s bodies and sexuality are controlled and regulated (whether they are married or not), serving to the restriction of the woman’s visibility in the public sphere and to the subordination of women in the familial sphere. By reflecting upon the discourses of nation state on women, family and honour, what appears is that contradictory roles presented to women have been continuously produced and reproduced until today. Then, looking at the ‘modernization, ‘otherization’ and ethnicization of women turns honour killing into a lens of instantiation.

I questioned how honour crime gives rise to an opening of an area of discussion where different actors produce various discourses and how specifically the JDP—the ruling party—turns the issue of honour killing into a governmental tactic by taking into consideration intersection of discourses on family, women, virginity, ethnic identity, and regional underdevelopment. Throughout my study, I touched upon all these topics from the angle of honour crime. Honour crime lays the ground for the formation of an interdiscursive space of “struggle” and “intervention” where different actors play different roles (Kogacioglu 2007).

Although in my thesis, I especially accentuate the importance of the discourses of various actors; my main intention was to focus on the position of the JDP and the role of their discourses in the interdiscursive space of honour crime. Each time it is produced, the notion of honour alters and transforms while at the same time, it generates new discursive spaces. The discussions on honour crime bring all other issues about women’s status, family, virginity, ethnic identity and modernity to the fore under the rubric of governmentality. Foucauldian conception of governmentality opens a space where all these topics become apparent as tools for management of people.

The concept of governmentality provides a useful theoretical ground for revealing and grasping the complex set of dynamics and actors behind the honour killings. In the words of David Garland (1997:182), “Power is not a matter of imposing a sovereign will, but instead a process of enlisting the cooperation of chains of actors who translate power from one locale to another.” In the discussion of honour killing, not only local actors—such as parliamentarians, lawyers, judges, doctors, women’s organizations and so on— but also the supra-national organizations—such as The European Union— at the global level function through governmentality. Because of the limited scope of my analysis, I could not give enough space for analysing in detail the discourses of other actors concerning honour crime and I suggest that the future studies on honour killing should focus on the discourses of each group and grasp to what extent their discourses are conflicting and interacting with each other.

The role of the JDP is quite significant in terms of deploying both neo-liberal and neo-conservative tendencies where governmentality functions through discourses revolving around women, family and honour crime. Governmentality is not about domination, but it is about “conduct of self” and “conduct of others” in which codes of honour are not imposed on people; but these codes are internalized by individuals and they function as tools of normalization. Honour turns into a self-control mechanism through governmental strategies. Governmentalization of honour crime is about managing individuals through family where women’s citizenship is constructed as “familial or reproductive citizenship”. The important point of discourses in my study is that, “Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy” (Foucault quoted in Fairclough 1992:99). This entails that although the political agenda of the JDP contains contradictory discourses of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism, they are all part of a strategy which produces a

hegemonic patriarchal discourse over family, women and honour crime. Governmental discourses on honour crime do not question the notion of honour; but rather maintain it through depicting women not as individuals, but as members of the family and the society.

The law *per se* is one of the important mechanisms of governmentality in which both regulation and discipline works together. Especially starting with 1926, as a result of the codification of marriage under the new Civil Code, family was constructed as a ‘modern’ institution where men, as the representative of the state in private space, were given the right to have direct control over the reproduction and women. By accentuating the historical construction of honour, from the time of the establishment of the nation state till now, family has been imagined as a universal and instinctual unit; but in fact, family has been constructed and maintained as a tool of power relations to manage populations through the codes of honour (See Nukhet Sirman 2005b). The construction of the ideal of “strong family” and familial citizenship of women in the Civil Code is also reflected itself in the Penal Code.

Strategically, in the Penal Code by transforming the crimes of honour into the crimes of tradition (*tore*), tradition is dislocated from the tradition of “strong family”, which takes its essence from discourses of the nation state, to the tradition of ‘other’. *Tore* appears to be a “contentious” tradition where “what was at stake was not women, but tradition”. (Mani 1987:153) The discourse of *tore* appears to be a governmental tactic for otherization of Kurds, feudal/tribal people, women and people living in the ‘east’ in general—categories which may overlap. The codification of *tore* works both through otherization and victimization of women. So discussion on honour crime turns into a discussion on tradition rather than on women’s status under the rule of ‘veiled modernity’.

Honour crime opens up a space where the tension between modernity/tradition, secularism/religion and ‘East/West’ is unravelled. In regard to the ambiguities that the modernity project generated, modernity not only differentiates itself in different spaces but also it creates distinctive patterns and identities on the basis of the ideal construction of ‘ethicized’, ‘secular’ and nuclear

family. Modernity is something fragmentary and fragmenting, it is also an uneven and unfinished project. Women's bodies are used as a medium to control, to suppress and to manage the "other". Therefore, it is essential to take the honour killings out of the category of *tore cinayetleri*, and the honour killings should be acknowledged as the most brutal form of violence against women in Turkey which transgresses the sexual and bodily rights of women.

What is at stake is that various meanings are attributed to the notion of honour, and in order to solve the issue of honour crime, rather than representing honour killing as a crime of tradition or the problem of 'the other', it is necessary to clarify the multiple codes of honour operating through the society which generate the dynamics behind the honour crime. So throughout my thesis, I showed how honour as a discourse interplays on different levels and interconnects patriarchal discourses on family and nation. The problematization of honour crime reveals the double-play of the patriarchal norms over the body of women: honour of the man and honour of the nation!

Appendix

Questions

- 1- Can you explain the changes in the execution of the cases of honour crime that you encounter after 2005?
- 2- Can you compare the process beginning after 2005 with the process of old Penal Code?
- 3- What do you think if there is a reduction in the cases of honour crimes after 2005 and what are effects of the changes in the law? What is the role of state in these crimes?
- 4- Have you ever involved into a specific organization dealing with honour crime?

Interviews

I reached my interviewees through Vildan Yirmibesoglu who is a lawyer actively interested in the issue of honour crime and she also wrote a book about honour crime (See Vildan Yirmibesoglu). Although she was not in Turkey, via e-mail, she gave me some contacts numbers of lawyers who worked in the Women's Platform of Turkish Penal Code before 2005.

1- Esra H.: She is working as a volunteer lawyer in the Purple Roof Women's Shelter. We conducted an interview 8 April, 2008 in Istanbul. I found her directly going to the shelter, because I knew that this organization took action during the changes in the Penal Code. We basically talked about the changes in the Penal Code done in 2005. Interestingly, she specifically emphasized how article of "Unjust Provocation" is interpreted in a wrong way by the judges and she defines honour crimes as crimes committed among kin related people. She continued to explain that each case of "crime of tradition" can be honour crimes, but each honour crime could not be a "crime of tradition". She evaluated honour crimes as a more generic term. She evaluated the changes done by the government as weak ones.

2- Ulfet K.: She is working in the Purple Roof Women's Shelter as a volunteer. I met her when I went to the shelter and I interviewed with her on 4th of April . Although she was not a lawyer, we talked about the notion of honour and honour crime in general. She said that by 'permitting' the continuation of wrong interpretations of the law, the state is becoming a party to honour crime. In terms of the cases that she saw in the shelter, she said that there was no reduction in the crimes related with honour.

3- Canan A.: I contacted her through another activist lawyer. We met her on 17th of April, 2008. Canan A. is working voluntarily in the Purple Roof as a lawyer and she had an important role in the Women's Movement emerging after the 1980s. And she worked in the Turkish penal Code Women's Platform before 2005. However, they made many attempts to change the articles in the law which covers sexual discrimination. What was so striking in our interview was her explanations about the difference before and after the changes in the law. She uttered that the changes made in the Penal Code were unnecessary in the sense that especially within the scope of old Penal Code, with interpretations, many things could have been changed. As she said, firstly, the case of Guldunya was taken before the changes in the Penal Code, but her brothers were sentenced to life time prison, so this showed that the interpretations of the judges were really important.

4- Habibe K.: I conducted an interview with her on 18th of April, 2008. She was also another one of very important lawyers who worked in the Women's Platform of Turkish Penal Code and she basically gave me information about the changed articles in the Penal Code and she compared them by giving examples from the cases of honour crimes that she involved into. She directly associated the changes done in the law to the efforts of women's organizations. And for the case of Guldunya, she said that her brothers took life time sentence prison because of the pressures of the women's activists and lawyers.

5- Ayten A.: We met on 21th of April, 2008. As in the interviews with other lawyers, she explained about the process of change and action of the lawyers. She stated that there was not any reduction in the cases of honour killings after the process of changes in the law. She continued that law *per se* was not enough to stop violence, but it was firstly necessary to take actions to shatter masculine domination. She said that *tore* is a more limited term, since it is specific to a *territoriality*; yet, the notion of honour was more general term in terms of shaping and limiting the bodily attitudes of women.

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