

**University of Lund**

**Department of Sociology**

# **Honor Killings**

**- the Survival of Patriarchy in Different Societies**

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**SÖX 203, 41-80 p, 20 p**

**Autumn 2003**

**Supervisor: Magnus Ring**

## **Abstract**

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This thesis is an attempt to understand the process behind honor killings. This phenomenon has been unknown for most people in Sweden until two Kurdish girls were murdered. Both these girls, Pela and Fadime, were from Kurdistan. This thesis will compare the Swedish and the Kurdish society.

The two most important purposes of the thesis are to see how the patriarchy is maintained in Kurdistan in different ways and how the Kurdish immigrants reproduce the patriarchal norms in Sweden.

First a prologue that introduces the background for the thesis is presented. Thereafter the problem, purpose and the research questions for this thesis are introduced. Problems concerning the material will be explained, before the background part will give the reader necessary information on, for example, how the honor/ shame ethic functions. The theories on patriarchy is a fundamental aspect of the thesis and the first part of the analysis shows how the patriarchy functions in Kurdistan. The analysis will then present how the honor/shame culture reproduces in Sweden. Finally, a concluding discussion suggests that upbringing of children is one important aspect of the survival of patriarchy. Another reason is that men feel that they lose control over their family. Immigrant women conquer their freedom in the Swedish society. There is not one simple answer to why honor killings occur; rather it is a mix of different processes that can give us a deeper understanding.

### **Keywords:**

- Honor killings
- Patriarchy
- Feminism
- Kurds

# CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION..... 4**
  - 1.1 PROLOGUE..... 4
  - 1.2 PROBLEM AND PURPOSE ..... 5
  - 1.3 METHOD..... 6
  - 1.4 BACKGROUND ..... 7
    - 1.4.1 *The Honor/Shame concept* ..... 7
      - Table 1: Gender Roles..... 9
    - 1.4.2 *Kurdistan History*..... 9
- 2. THEORY..... 11**
  - 2.1 CULTURE..... 11
  - 2.2 SEX AND GENDER; GENERAL THEORIES ON SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES ..... 12
  - 2.3 GENDER IN MIDDLE EAST CULTURES..... 14
  - 2.4 PATRIARCHY ..... 14
    - Table 2: The Private and Public Patriarchy..... 17
  - 2.5 FEMINISM ..... 20
  - 2.6 DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FEMINIST THEORIES..... 21
  - 2.7 ESTABLISHED AND OUTSIDERS..... 24
- 3. THE CASE..... 26**
- 4. ANALYSIS..... 29**
  - 4.1 THE PATRIARCHY IN KURDISTAN ..... 29
    - 4.1.1 *Marriage as a Subordinated Institution* ..... 29
    - 4.1.2 *The Upbringing of Children in Kurdistan*..... 31
    - 4.1.3 *Control, Power and Dominance in the Domestic and the Public Sphere* ..... 34
    - 4.1.4 *The Women Organisations Fight for a Better Situation for the Women*..... 37
  - 4.2 THE HONOR CULTURE IN SWEDEN ..... 40
    - 4.2.1 *The Traditional Mentality Reinforced*..... 40
    - 4.2.2 *Reaction From the Children*..... 42
    - 4.2.3 *To be Outsider: The Male Dilemma*..... 43
    - 4.2.4 *The Man’s Right to Control Questioned* ..... 45
    - 4.2.5 *The Collective Family vs. the Individual State*..... 47
    - 4.2.6 *Are Honor Killings a Cultural Issue?* ..... 48
    - 4.2.7 *Men Fighting to Change the Patriarchal View*..... 50
- 5. CONCLUSION..... 52**
  - 5.1 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION ..... 52
  - 5.2 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS ..... 52
  - 5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH ..... 55
- REFERENCES..... 56**

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Prologue

The phenomenon honor killings became a headline in Swedish media on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2002. The night before, on January 21<sup>st</sup>, Fadime Sahindal had been murdered by her father in Uppsala, Sweden. But for years, before the actual murder took place, Fadime had lived under a death threat from her own male family members. The reason was that she had decided to make her own choices in life. She lived her own life and did not do what the family expected her to. Her family conditions were well known since she had decided to tell all about them in the Swedish media. Already in February 1998, she gave her story away to a Swedish newspaper. The story told us about how she was abused by her brother, threatened over the phone by her father and brothers who called her a whore. Because of this she had to live a secret life on her own. Finally her father murdered her. (Grip 2002:34)

This thesis will look at another case. It is perhaps not as well known as the case of Fadime but the two girls had a lot in common. The case I will be using is about a girl whose name was Pela. Her uncles murdered her in 1999 in Kurdistan. Both Fadime and Pela were Kurdish girls. Because of this I have decided to focus on Kurds and honor killings. Kurdistan is not an independent state but a region. Geographically it consists of east Turkey, north Iraq, north Syria, northeast Iran and smaller parts in Armenia and Azerbajdjan. There are approximately 30 million Kurds living in Kurdistan. Most of them live in Turkey, Iran and Iraq. (Eskandari 2003:5) This means that these countries are involved in the material since there is limited material that only deals with the situation of the Kurds. In northern Iraq the Kurds have their own government and control their area.



Picture 1: Kurdistan (source: <http://hem.passagen.se/eramura/images/karta3.gif>)

## 1.2 Problem and purpose

In this thesis I will present two main questions. Under each of these questions I set out to answer two sub-questions. The reason for having two main questions is that I will compare the Kurdish and the Swedish society. In the first chapter in the analysis I will focus on the Kurdish society, while in the second chapter I will discuss the Swedish society. My first main question in the thesis is:

- *In what way do patriarchal norms reproduce in the Kurdish society?*

Other sub-questions are:

- ◆ How do men sustain the power over women in Kurdistan and how is the power relation reproduced from generation to generation?
- ◆ What role do women have in the Kurdish society?

My second main question is:

- *How and why are the Kurdish patriarchal norms reinforced in the Swedish society?*

Other sub-questions are:

- ◆ How is the culture changing for immigrants when they come to Sweden?
- ◆ How are the parents and children integrated into the new society?

This study wants to unravel the hidden reasons behind honor killings. If we get a picture of the Kurdish men's point of view we can try to understand - not accept - how these Kurdish men feel forced to kill their own daughters. According to Halvorsen there are a number of purposes in a scientific work. He points to that, in general, the purpose with an investigation can be to describe, explain, understand, evaluate, predict, change, evaluate new perspectives, shape concrete utopias and give grounds for decisions. I work primarily with three of these. (Halvorsen 1992:25-26) Thus, the first purpose is to describe, the second one is to explain and the third one is to understand.

The purpose is to *describe* the differences in and between the two societies that we compare; the Swedish and the Kurdish society. Moving on, what I set out to *explain* in this thesis is how the patriarchy and the honor/shame ethic work in theory and practice. The keyword when it comes to the purpose is understanding. The overall purpose with this thesis is to give the reader an *understanding* of what can happen when one culture meets another culture. The standpoint of this thesis is that today the Swedish society has no solution to the problem with honor killings. In an attempt to solve the problem we must understand the nature of the problem. Another aspect is to understand how the patriarchy and the

honor/shame ethic control the Kurdish women in Kurdistan and how these women question these old norms and values when they come to Sweden.

### **1.3 Method**

As method in this thesis I will use a general theoretical-empirical discussion about honor killings. As empirical material a book called *Hedersmordet på Pela* (Swanberg 2002) is chosen. This book represents a case that will be used as an opening towards a more general discussion about honor killings that will include gender issues, integration problems and cultural aspects. This case will also function as a red thread throughout the whole thesis. I will compare the case with other facts. The book is a story from life told by a Kurdish girl named Breen. The author of this book, Lena Swanberg, interviewed Breen and on the basis of the interview the book was written. As references Swanberg also used books on Kurdish culture. However, the book mainly gives the author's standpoint in the matter. Because of this I cannot control if the facts in the book are correct. It is secondary information, which I am aware of is a problem. The book is about the Atroshi family and the focus is on Pela and Breen, the two oldest daughters in the family. Their uncles killed the older sister, Pela, because in their opinion she behaved in an immoral way. According to the book, Pela destroyed the family reputation and brought shame over the family and the only way to deal with this was to kill her. I will read the book through my own "glasses" and have in mind the patriarchy theories and the honor/shame concept.

My ambition was to find a lot of material and connect it to the specific case. The theories used are connected to the case and this will hopefully give the reader a view of how we can understand the phenomenon of honor killings. In the analysis the material consists of different kinds of documents. Holsti defines documents in Merriam's book as; "every kind of communication - and includes in this among other things novels, newspapers, lyrics, diaries..." (Merriam 1994:117, my translation) I will also use articles from different newspapers, magazines and journals. I use newspaper articles since this discussion is of very current interest in the Swedish society today. Of course, also literature about this particular subject - honor killings will be used. I choose to use documents as my main source since I believe this can be a fruitful way to investigate the problem. Riley, referred to in Merriam, means that documents are sometimes the only way to investigate a problem. One of these situations is when you do "cross cultural investigations where you in person do not have

access to a certain environment” (Merriam 1994:121) However, there are disadvantages with documents that you have to be aware of as a scientist. Therefore, you have the mission to examine with a critical eye the documents you intend to use. Further on, you must ask yourself questions: where is the document from, why was the document written, who wrote it and what context was it made in? (Merriam 1994:120)

The thesis is constructed as follows. To start with I introduce a background description that will define the honor/shame concept and inform the reader about the Kurdistan history. Moving on, in the theoretical part I describe the theories used in the thesis. In the next part I present the empirical material, which in this thesis is a case from a book. In the analysis, I will analyze the situation in Kurdistan and how the patriarchy and honor/shame ethic continues to reproduce in Kurdistan. In the second part of the analysis I will investigate how the women and their daughters start to question these norms and values when they come to Sweden. In the conclusion I will end with a short discussion and answer the research questions.

## **1.4 Background**

### **1.4.1 The Honor/Shame concept**

The honor/shame concept is based on that men stand for honor and women stand for shame. It is important for a man to be honorable and respected in society. The woman needs to carry the feeling of shame. A woman should be attached to her man and help him to keep his good reputation by her sense of duty. She has to behave in a respectable way by dedicating herself and her life to the family. The duty of the woman’s male relatives is to make sure that her honor is under their control and fulfils the patriarchal family demands. Men claim that they have some responsibilities for the women, for example to control their sexuality. The woman’s sexual life is a domain of strong supervision, and the men are very offended if their women behave indecent. The good woman subordinates herself to please the needs of the man and the family. Through this it is possible for the man to appear as a respectable citizen. A woman who fails to keep her virginity until she marries causes a tragedy and the whole family is ashamed. The dishonor is hard to get rid of for the family. Some families use the most drastic method - honor killings. (Kocturk-Runefors 1991:114)

The concept of honor is connected to concepts like reputation, power and money. Geographically the honor ethic is primarily spread in the Middle East and around the

Mediterranean. Other countries with the same kind of ethic are Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Also Africa and South America display varieties of the honor ethic. (Viklund & Hagström 2003) The concept of honor can be defined in the following way. A man represents his kingroup and because of this his behavior must be honorable so that the group will not be disgraced. If you bring shame on to your group you are a dishonorable person. For a man to receive honor to his kin and himself he can, for example, show courage, generosity or have many sons. As has been shown above, one important issue in the honor concept has to do with a woman's sexual conduct. If a woman makes a mistake in this context she does not only bring shame over herself but over the whole family and kin. (al-Khayyat 1990:21-22) The honor/shame concept exists throughout society although it has varied levels of importance in different settings. In some communities the honor is more important than in others and there are differences between urban and rural areas and among social classes. (al-Khayyat 1990:23) According to Thornhill, there is a Kurdish locution that says: "Everything a woman does is shameful." (Thornhill 1997:87) In an old traditional society, a village in Kurdistan outside the city, a girl can be killed instantly if she dishonors her relatives through her sexual behavior. In the city the girl can be punished in other ways like being locked up in her own home. (al-Khayyat 1990:23)

The honor culture is mainly found in strong patriarchal societies. The family or clan constitutes the primary unit of the society and the solidarity within the own group is of great importance. Within the group you are to control the family and the clan members. (Viklund & Hagström 2003) In reality it is mainly the female members that are controlled. A Turkish born woman, Tahire Kocturk-Runefors, puts it like this; "The concept of honor is created from the idea that women are not capable of taking care of themselves and their virginity in the male dominated society that we live in." (Kocturk -Runefors 1991:114, my translation)

One aspect of the honor ethic and its view of women is that women are the lowest on the so-called ladder of society. A woman's position in the traditional society in parts of Pakistan leads to that the woman is compared to and has the same value as land, cattle, house or money. In other words the women have no human rights. They are considered to be equal to a commodity. In the eyes of men a woman has no value and can be killed if it turns out that she has a bad reputation. According to Viklund & Hagström, it is often the men's duty to kill the female family member who has ruined her value as a pure girl and therefore also the family honor and social status. While it is the men who are responsible for the violence it is not rare that the women themselves are instrumental when it comes to



reestablishing the honor and a young disobedient girl is punished. (Viklund & Hagström 2003)

Most honor killings that are committed today take place within groups that confess to Islam. Therefore, to explain the honor ethic by religious factors would be tempting, but way too simplistic. There are differing opinions whether you can find support for honor killings in the Koran or in the Islamic law, Sharia. Besides, the honor culture exists in both the Christian and the Hindu belief as well. (Viklund & Hagström 2003) Cederberg shows that some Kurds believe that Islam has been forced on them. There has been an occupation of Arabian culture and the Kurds have always been oppressed in the countries they live in. Even if most Kurds are Muslims all of them are not very religious. For example, most Kurdish women do not wear a veil. (Cederberg 2002:13)

The honor ethic divides men and women and gives them different roles. Beneath I have constructed a model of the roles in life for men and women.

**Table 1: Gender Roles**

<b>Man</b>	<b>Woman</b>
<b>Honor</b>	<b>Shame</b>
<b>Public sphere</b> <b>(Work outside the home, breadwinner)</b>	<b>Domestic sphere</b> <b>(Work in the home, household, childcare)</b>
<b>Dominance</b>	<b>Subordination</b>

**1.4.2 Kurdistan History**

To understand the Kurdish culture it is important to be familiar with its history. The Kurdistan geography consists of an area in eastern Turkey, the north of Syria, the north and northeast of Iraq, the northwest of Iran and parts of Armenia and Azerbajdjan. This area is as big as France. In this area, Kurdistan, about 30 million Kurds live. The religion in Kurdistan is mixed but the majority of the Kurds are Sunni-Muslims. There are also Shia-Muslims, Christians and other smaller religions. The Kurd’s history is long and dependent of the countries that they are parts of. In general the governments in these countries do not accept

the Kurds, and there have been persecutions targeted at them from almost all of the countries. (Eskandari 2003:5) For example, the cultural identity of the Kurds in Turkey has been denied and until 1990 they were referred to as “mountain Turks”. (Aringberg 2003)

During the 1960’s the Kurds fought politically to achieve political rights in Turkey. From 1984 until 1999 there was an armed conflict until the PKK-leader Abdullah Öcalan was kidnapped by Turkish police and sentenced to lifetime in prison. As a consequence of this war hundreds of thousands of people were deported and Kurdish villages suffered from massive destruction. Today, Turkey wants to join the European Union and this has put some pressure on the country. For instance, they are not allowed to have the death penalty in time of peace and the Kurdish language is now allowed in TV and radio. (Eskandari 2003:5)

Also in Iran and Iraq the Kurds are persecuted. When the war broke loose between Iran and Iraq in 1980 the Kurds took back a part of Kurdistan on Iraqi land. The Iraqi government actually negotiated with the Kurds, but as soon as the Iraqi regime was successful in the war against Iran the negotiations broke down. The result was devastating. For example, chemical weapons were used in the well-known gas bombing of Halabja in 1988. After that there were series of military operations under the name Anfal that caused enormous amounts of innocent victims. (Eskandari 2003:6) After the Gulf war in 1992 the Iraqi population including Kurds living in the northern part of Iraq, was urged by the leaders of UN to revolt against Saddam Hussein. The Kurds did this but without success. Instead, they were haunted up into the mountains by the Iraqi army. With support from the UN a safe zone was established for the Kurds and an election took place in May 1992 and a following this a Kurdish government was founded. (Aringberg 2003) After a civil war in 1994, the political situation was stabilized. Today, there are two administrations led by political parties; PUK and PDK. Although the Kurds wanted to see Saddam gone they do not want to risk losing their freedom and their right to self-determination. (Eskandari 2003:6) When this article was written Saddam Hussein was the leader in Iraq.

In Iran the story is similar to the one in Iraq. The Kurds tried to establish a democratic regime and to precipitate the Shahen in 1979. This failed and instead the new Islamic republic proclaimed Jihad (holy war) against Kurds in an attempt to reintroduce Islam in Kurdistan. The consequences were mass executions and other acts of cruelty against the Kurds, as well as massive bombings over Kurdish villages. To sum up, today there is no improvement of freedom, democracy or the rights of the Kurds in Kurdistan. (Eskandari 2003:6-7)

## 2. Theory

### 2.1 Culture

The word culture in this thesis will be defined in an anthropological sense of the word: “Culture can be defined as perceptions of religion and values which are shared by a group of people, who express these in common manners and customs, in other words, in the way they act and organize the group or the society.” (Eliasson 1997:94, my translation) This is a broad definition and an anthropological interpretation of the word. Another definition rather similar to the above is offered by T.S Eliot, referred to by Eagleton, who claims that culture is: “first of all what the anthropologists mean: the way of life of a particular people living together in one place.” (Eagleton 1970:287) But he also has another definition of culture; “Culture may even be described simply as that which makes life worth living.” (Eagleton 1970:287) Eliot means that culture is the whole of a society’s manners. In culture you find religion, philosophy and arts. The culture in a society is what makes it a society. (Eagleton 1970:288) Culture is a collective consciousness. People have common knowledge, experiences and values and these are created through communication with each other in different ways. (Darvishpour 2003:73) One interesting theory connected to this thesis, presented by Eagleton, is that culture is not only something we do to ourselves but also something done to us by the political state:

In civil society, individuals live in a state of chronic antagonism, driven by opposing interests; but the state is that transcendent realm in which these divisions can be harmoniously reconciled. For this to happen however, the state must already have been at work in civil society, soothing its rancour and refining its sensibilities; and this process is what we know as culture. Culture is a kind of ethical pedagogy which will fit us for political citizenship by liberating the ideal or collective self buried within each of us, a self which finds supreme representation in the universal realm of the state. (...) The state incarnates culture, which in turn embodies our common humanity. (Eagleton 2000:7)

This is interesting because in the thesis we will see that the government in the Iraqi part of Kurdistan does not want to change the current culture. Although different women organizations try to change the law to improve the life for women, there are people in high

positions who are struggling to maintain the current law system. The definition of culture that is used in the thesis will simply be “the way of life of a particular people living together in one place.” (Eagleton 1970:287)

## **2.2 Sex and Gender; General Theories on Socialization Processes**

Since sex and gender are two terms that will be used throughout this thesis it is necessary to explain and define them in short. Sex is the biological difference. Women and men are separated from each other due to their biological distinctiveness. Gender is the differences between the sexes that are culturally created. It is a cultural definition of behavior defined to the sexes in a certain society at a specific time. Gender is the socially and culturally constructed difference. (Lerner 1986:238) Womanhood and manhood are both dependent on the society they are constructed in. They are reproduced daily and they are changing just like the rest of society. (Ganetz et.al. 1986:11)

Nancy Chodorow writes about gender relations in her book *Reproduction and childbearing* (1978). According to her theory gender relations is a result of early childhood experiences, in other words they are socially constructed: “Differing relational capacities and forms of identification prepare women and men to assume the adult gender roles which situate women primarily within the sphere of reproduction in a sexually unequal society.” (Chodorow 1978:173) According to Chodorow, referred to in Walby, the key to understanding both gender differentiation and the oppression of women is the reproduction of mothering. Women are raised to nourish because of early childhood experiences. Men are not. Motherhood is a good experience, but at the same time it gives the women a different role as an adult. The difference between the genders makes the girls identify with their mother during the upbringing. (Walby 1990:94) “Because women are themselves mothered by women, they grow up with the relational capacities and needs, and psychological definition of self-in-representation, which commits them to mothering. Men, because women mother them, do not. Women mother daughters who, when they become women mother.” (Chodorow 1978:209) Chodorow means that boys must break with the mother and identify with the father to become masculine. It can be tough since the father is not always around. In most societies the father is the breadwinner who is working in the public sphere and do not spend as much time in the domestic sphere. This makes the boys develop a personality that is not as nourishing as the girls. The consequence is that the girls grow up to become mothers that nurture the home just

as their mother has done. The boys are not that emotional and see themselves as breadwinners in the public sphere just as their fathers. (Walby 1990:94) Chodorow, referred to in Rosaldo, means that:

The young girl's family provides her with an adequate and intelligible picture of most of the possibilities and important relationships that will define her throughout life. This continuity, characteristic of a young girl's development through puberty, is in radical contrast to the experience of boys, who must learn to be men. Adult male activities, whether hunting, politics or farming, are rarely visible or available to young children, and fathers are often away from the home. At some point the boy must break away from his mother and establish his maleness as a thing apart. Therefore, when his sister is learning "to be a mother," he is apt to be restless and assertive and to seek out horizontal ties with male peers. (Rosaldo 1974:25)

Women as house workers in their domestic role reconstitute themselves as mothers on a daily basis, both emotionally and psychologically in the next generation. Because of this, these women contribute to the perpetuation of their social roles and their positions in the hierarchy of gender. (Chodorow 1978:209)

Henrietta Moore means in a similar manner that male children in most societies are brought up to become more aggressive and powerful while girls are supposed to be silent and powerless. (Moore 1994:139) Talcott Parson presents a provocative view on the socialization of gender. He means that the most important mission for women is to raise and socialize children and take care of the men. The men's mission is to support the family financially. Parson means that this role division is natural and universal. If this role division should change the stability in the family is threatened. The nuclear family is central for the socialization of norms and to maintain order and stability in society.<sup>1</sup> Mehrdad Darvishpour is another theorist who has a theory on the socialization of gender. According to Darvishpour, our roles in society are shaped by norms and expectations from the surroundings. This role is incorporated with the personality so that the individual act according to current norms. (Darvishpour 2003:27)

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<sup>1</sup> For further reading about Parsons see; Darvishpour Mehrdad, *Invandrarkvinnor som bryter mönstret - Hur maktförskjutningen inom iranska familjer i Sverige påverkar relationen* (2002) sid. 22-26

## **2.3 Gender in Middle East Cultures**

To decrease the power of patriarchy women must be a part of the public world according to theorists like Okin and Rosaldo. This is seldom the case in the Middle East where women often are at home to take care of the children and the household. According to Valentine Moghadam the women face a number of problems that makes it almost impossible for women to enter the labor market. Moghadam means that a common view in the Middle East is that religious and cultural factors should influence women's lives more than economic factors. When the question arises that women might be needed on the labor market there are tensions between sexes and generations. Pressure groups appear with the intention to preserve the traditional and cultural pattern that keeps the women at home. (Moghadam 1995:8)

Another theorist, Hussein Shakhathreh, means that there are four major obstacles for women to enter the labor market. These are religion, norms, attitudes and discrimination. The religion, in this case Islam, prohibits women to have contact with men outside the family. This decreases opportunities for women to find a job since they can only work with other women. The norms in society are that women should stay at home. Women should not even think about looking for a job. In turn, the attitudes women have toward the market employment have an effect on the offers they receive from the labor market. The fourth is discrimination. Because of a segregated labor market, a higher unemployment rate will lead to lower wage for women compared to men. (Shakhathreh 1995:133)

## **2.4 Patriarchy**

In an attempt to find out why honor killings occur theories on patriarchy will be used. The word patriarchy can have different meanings to people. Heidi Hartmann means that men create solidarity in patriarchy and have in common the domination over women no matter what social status they have in society. The women know that they are socially subordinated and this is reinforced in society in public institutions like schools, factories and churches. (Hartmann 1986:28-31) The patriarchy is a hierarchal organization where certain people take certain roles. It is through studying the patriarchy that we learn why and how women are dominated. (Hartmann 1986:33) Today, scientists' analysis of the patriarchy is wider. Before only studies in the sector of production (paid work) were made, today scientists are interested in how the patriarchy is involved in the domestic work, sexuality and reproduction. (Ganetz et.al 1986:11) Also, society as a whole is a system for systematic oppression of women.

The role as a father and patriarch, which leads to that the man has both rights and obligations in relation to women and children in the domestic sphere, has become weaker during capitalism. On the other hand, men's control and power over women in society and on the labor market has increased. During the feudal system men were in control over women's sexuality and fertility through the legal marriage. Through marriage the woman became a mother and not a whore and the children were legitimate and not bastards. The man has over time lost that control and today he instead tries to keep the power by controlling women's labor and economy. (Bengtsson 1986:205)

For thousands of years women have acted and behaved under patriarchy. Mostly under a form of patriarchy described as paternalistic dominance. This term can be explained as the relationship between a dominant and a subordinate group. Reciprocal rights and mutual obligations mitigate the dominance: "The dominated exchange submission for protection, unpaid labour for maintenance."(Lerner 1986:217) The patriarchal family constitutes responsibilities and obligations that are not equally distributed among those who are to be protected. The male children in the family are subordinated to the father's dominance but only temporarily. They will themselves become heads of the household in the future. On the other hand, the female children and wives are subordinated and controlled during their whole lifetime. Paternalism is an unwritten contract based on exchange. The woman receives economic support and protection from the man. In return she is subordinated and has to give sexual and unpaid domestic service. (Lerner 1986:217-218)

There are a number of different theories of the patriarchy. Sylvia Walby, for example, presents four different theories in her book *Theorizing Patriarchy* (1990). Before I present these theories in the next section of the thesis, I will present the definition that will be used in the thesis.

Most of us probably connect patriarchy with some kind of gender inequality. Men dominate women in different situations in everyday life. The definition that will be used in the thesis is from Walby. According to her patriarchy is "...a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women." (Walby 1990:20) Most feminists agree on what patriarchy stands for but they have different opinions where the problem arises from and how to solve it. Theories about the patriarchy are changing over time. Thus, during the 1980's theories about the patriarchy were changing. Theories about the patriarchy are developed and changed because the society is changing. (Wahl 1987:1) I will split up the patriarchy into domestic which is the term I will use (but the term Walby uses is the private) and the public patriarchy. I choose to do this because it is relevant to the thesis.

Although Swedish women can choose to get a job and work outside the home in the public sphere, this is not something obvious for women living in for example Kurdistan. There the norm is still that the female role is to stay at home, in the domestic sphere. The women are supposed to give birth, raise children, take care of the domestic work and be available for the husband when he returns from work. (al-Khayyat 1990:17) In other words the women are trapped in the domestic sphere while the men spend most of their time in the public sphere. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo discusses the problems surrounding the domestic and public sphere in the book *Woman, Culture and Society* (1974):

Although the fact that women give birth to and nurse children would seem to have no necessary entailments, it appears to provide a focus for the simplest distinction in the adult division of labor in any human group. Women become absorbed primarily in domestic activities because of their role as mothers. Their economic and political activities are constrained by the responsibilities of child care, and the focus of their emotions and attentions is particularistic and directed toward children and the home. (Rosaldo 1974:24)

Another author who also discusses the domestic and the public sphere is Susan Moller Okin in her book, *Is multiculturalism bad for women?* (1999). She says that “[t]he more a culture requires or expects of women in the domestic sphere, the less opportunity they have of achieving equality with men in either (both public and domestic) (my comment) sphere.” (Okin 1999:12) To gather more education and information the women must come out in the public sphere and experience the society. Here lies a problem because women seldom get that opportunity: “culture is not only about domestic arrangements, but they do provide a major focus of most contemporary culture. Home is after all, where much of culture is practised, preserved, and transmitted to the young.” (Okin 1999:13) Women are brought up in the belief that their mission in life is to serve their husband and raise children in the domestic sphere and “...women are not human beings of equal worth but rather subordinates whose primary (if not only) function is to serve men sexually and domestically.” (Okin 1999:18)

In Western countries, Sylvia Walby argues, there has been a movement from a domestic to a public form of patriarchy. Domestic patriarchy is related to the work done by a woman in the household and is controlled by one patriarch individually and directly in the home. It is a husband or father who is the oppressor that makes sure that the women in the household are subordinated. In the public sphere the arenas are the employment and the state.



The way to control and dominate is the collective one. The patriarchy does it through segregation and subordination of the women in the public sphere. (Walby 1990:24,178)

**Table 2: The Private and Public Patriarchy**

<b>Form of patriarchy</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Public</b>
Dominant structure	Household production	Employment/ State
Wider patriarchal structures	Employment State Sexuality Violence Culture	Household production Sexuality Violence Culture
Period	C19th	C20th
Mode of expropriation	Individual	Collective
Patriarchal strategy	Exclusionary	Segregationist

(Walby 1990:24)

The table shows us that until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the patriarchy was private and mainly in the household. The male figure in the house was in charge and the women took care of the domestic work. The oppression was individual and the strategy was exclusionary. Other wider patriarchal structures that were not that dominant in this period of time were the state, sexuality and violence. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the rise of capitalism the women entered the labor market and the form of patriarchy changed. Now the patriarchy changed from a private to a public. The dominant structure is the employment/state. Women receive lower salary than male colleagues. Also it turns out to be hard for women to become executives. The oppression is collective and the strategy is segregationistic. Other patriarchal structures that are not so dominant today are household, violence and culture. Although the women are also on the labor market they still do most of the domestic work. For example, according to Swedish statistics, women do most of the domestic work in 87% of the families. (Malik 2001)

The process of female subordination is often invisible. This makes the patriarchy harder to understand today. What we can see is the results of powerless women. B.A. Sørensen, referred to in Wahl (1987) describes how the patriarchy in the family has become weaker but at the same time it has grown stronger in the organizations. The man as a breadwinner in the family is not obvious. Women often work and they can choose how many

children they want. The patriarchal control over the reproduction has weakened. Although, in the labor market, most power positions are controlled by men. (Wahl 1987:12)

Jan Hjärpe, a professor of Islam, has a theory about what goes wrong for some Kurdish men when they come to Sweden. In a patriarchal society, for instance Kurdistan, the man is used to decide everything concerning his family. No one questions him and this is how it has always been. The family lives under certain rules that are not questioned. This changes when the Kurdish immigrants arrive to Sweden. These rules are questioned in Sweden. In Sweden the Kurdish woman learns that she is an individual and that she has the right to say no both in the domestic and the public sphere. The every-day life strengthens her independence both socially and financially through education, work and contacts with Swedish authorities. The children change their attitudes through the influence from school and friends. The men have difficulties to enter the labor market and to establish contacts with authorities and become suspicious of the Swedish society. This leads to that the men feel they are isolated, powerless and that they have failed. On the other hand their wives have developed social networks and increased financial independence and opportunities to get a job. They have possibilities to a safe life without a man to control and financially support them. When we add this to the children's revolutionized attitudes, we can understand that the men lose confidence. The risk is that the men react by doing primitive and inhuman acts like honor killings. (Hjärpe 2000:7)

Hjärpe has an explanation to why it is such a major difference for Kurds to come to Sweden. In Kurdistan, Kurds are part of a collective, the family, but in Sweden we are more individual because of the state. This means that in Kurdistan the individual has no social or financial protection since they have no citizenship in any state; basically they have no protection for their own life. Instead, as an individual, you belong to a clan, family or a group based on your religion or origin. The group loyalty is very important for the individual. Here you can find a system of social protection and a comfort that you cannot find somewhere else. The individuals' loyalty and solidarity towards the family, the sacrifice the individual has to make towards the collective, is often necessary for the survival of the individual. In a society with this kind of structure, it is a religious duty to take care of the old, be loyal to the parents and to care about the loved ones. In the clan-society the family actually works the way a government does. Often the oldest man in the family is the leader and has the authority to rule verdicts over members who do not behave properly. The person who does not follow the norms or shows lack of loyalty can be punished. Often it is not a death sentence, but some other kinds of sanctions like social exclusion or that you are grounded. (Hjärpe 2000:8-9)

Sweden has a quite well developed welfare-society. The individual can count on that the state provides security to its citizens. Although you are not a part of a certain religion or a powerful family you can still survive and receive financial support. This gives individual freedom but it also presupposes a strong government with a powerful law system that can work as a protection for each individual. Here the individual has the freedom while the collective no longer has the right to judge their members. On the other hand, in the more collective structures (like in Kurdistan) the honor has a lot to do with the sexual honor. The men's status and power are related to the women's sexuality. The sexuality is the responsibility of the whole collective, not of the individual woman. (Hjärpe 2000:8-9) Hjärpe means that both in the Christian and Islamic faith we have the same basic norms. For example, we are not supposed to be sexually active before marriage, nor outside the marriage. At the same time it is clear that different lines of thought interpret these norms differently for boys and girls. They do selective religious interpretations. Certain norms go for the girls but not for the boys. (Hjärpe 2000:9) This is obvious for the patriarchal norm that decides that these rules should be applied to girls and not to boys. Hjärpe goes on to argue that the religious leaders know that this is the case and feminists try to point out that there is a difference between how the gender roles are reproduced and what is really said in the Koran. The trouble the feminists are facing is that the moral and the patriarchal view of the world have worked so long as a filter to support the religious tradition. Through this filter the tradition has been passed on and interpreted in favour of men. (Hjärpe 2000:9)

In a similar manner, Susanne Moller Okin claims that the patriarchy is a worldwide phenomenon that decreases the women's possibilities to make choices in life:

Many of the world's traditions and cultures, (...) which certainly encompasses most of the peoples of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia -are quite distinctly patriarchal. They too have elaborate patterns of socialization, rituals, matrimonial customs, and other cultural practices (including systems of property ownership and control of resources) aimed at bringing women's sexuality and reproductive capabilities under mens control. Many such practices make it virtually impossible for women to choose to live independently of men, to be celibate or lesbian, or to decide not to have children. (Okin 1999:14)

## 2.5 Feminism

Sylvia Walby means that there are six arenas where the patriarchy is obvious. She believes it is important that we are aware of this and do not believe that patriarchy is only, for example, caused by paid work. Depending on time and place some of the aspects become more important than others. There are:

- \* Patriarchal relations in the state
- \* Patriarchal relations in paid work
- \* Patriarchal mode of production
- \* Male violence
- \* Patriarchal relations in sexuality
- \* Patriarchal relations in cultural institutions including religion, media and education. (Walby 1990:177)

As touched upon above, Walby identifies four different general feminist theories related to patriarchy. There are Marxist feminism, Liberalism, the Dual-systems theory and Radical Feminism. All these theories have their own view of the six arenas.

The **Marxism feminism** means that men's domination or power over women is a by-product of the domination of capital over labor. Economic exploitation and class-relations are the central features of social structure. These central features determine the nature of gender relations. The family is a consequence of the need for capital from women's domestic labor in the home, producing the next generation of workers. (Walby 1990:4)

The second theory is **Liberalism**. They believe that the patriarchy exists because of the denial of equal rights to women in education and in employment. These factors are often important for the subordination of women according to liberalism. They believe that society as a whole has sexist attitudes towards women, which act to sustain the situation. (Walby 1990:4) The way to solve the problem is to work for equality between the genders. (Wahl 1987:3)

The third approach is the **Dual-systems theory**. One can argue that this perspective is a mix of Marxist and radical feminist theory. It does not only focus on the capitalism or the patriarchy. Instead it believes there are two systems of power relations and both are important for explaining how the gender roles are structured in society today. Thus, the inequality between genders can be analyzed as an effect of a capitalistic *and* patriarchal structure or by the capitalist-patriarchal society. (Walby 1990:5)

The **radical feminism** claims that “...men as a group dominate women as a group and are the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women.”(Walby 1990:3) They do not believe it is a product of capitalism. Instead they see sexuality as a major reason for male domination over women. Through the sexuality the men force their view of femininity on to women. (Walby 1990:3) The main source for the patriarchy is the reproduction and the sexuality. (Wahl 1987:5) This is the theory that I will focus on in this thesis. I have chosen this approach because I believe it is applicable to the patriarchal view of the Kurds. Here the men want to control the women and especially their sexuality. They believe it is their business to make sure the women do not bring shame over the family by losing their virginity. By controlling their sexuality they are controlling the women.

## **2.6 Discussion about the Feminist Theories**

Since we have gone through the definitions of these four theories I will shortly discuss the problems they deal with. To start with, the Marxist feminists believe it is the family that supports capital because it provides the everyday worker with food and clean clothes. Most Marxist feminists make a materialistic analysis of class relations and an analysis of gender relations in terms of culture and ideology. The critiques they have received are that they are too focused on capitalism. They claim that the gender inequality only has to do with capitalism instead of recognizing that it really exists independent of capitalism. (Walby 1990:4)

According to Liberalism women are subordinated because; “[w]omen’s disadvantaged position is related to specific details of prejudice against women.” (Walby 1990:4) This is combined with sexist attitudes that are analyzed as unresponsive and traditional because of recent changes in gender relations. Some of the major surveys of women’s domestic division of labor and women’s employment can fall within this category. This theory has been criticized to fail with the gender inequality and the interconnection between these different forms. (Walby 1990:4-5) Another issue is that liberalism always has been focusing on the individual but the liberal feminists see the women as a group that is discriminated. This is a paradox. (Wahl 1987:3)

The Dual-systems theory is a combination between Marxism and radical feminist theories. They believe that both capitalism and patriarchy are important when it comes to gender inequality. Some Dual-systems theorists believe that they are interrelated and

can be seen as one. Others believe that they are two separate interacting systems. The capitalism is a system of economy and profit. Patriarchy is a system of law, order and control. Women can be both housewives and wage laborers. The critique against the Dual-systems theory is concerned with whether they are able to sustain the duality of patriarchy and capitalism, which is very difficult. Another problem is that this theory does not cover all patriarchal structures. Sexuality and violence are hardly dealt with, although they are two very important factors when it comes to patriarchy. (Walby 1990:5-7)

The radical feminism believes that men as a group dominate women and this is the main cause for the subordination of women. According to the radical feminists the main factor of male domination over women is sexuality. Heterosexuality is, for example; “socially institutionalized in contemporary society and organizes many other aspects of gender relations.” (Walby 1990:3) The main problems with the theory according to the critics are that there is a tendency towards essentialism and biological reductionism. The problem is that if the biology is the explanation to the differences between the genders, then there is really nothing we can do about it, since only women can give birth. (Wahl 1987:5) Also there is a false universalism “...which cannot understand historical change or take sufficient account of divisions between women based on ethnicity and class.” (Walby 1990:3)

The radical feminism believes that if the women experience a victory there is always a backlash in another area. Men only choose to give up an activity when they are not interested in undertaking it anymore. If women would have a victory in an area this only means that the patriarchy regains control over the women in a different way. (Walby 1990:173) For example, first the women fought for their right as wives to divorce their husband if they were not happy with their marriage. When they got this through they won a victory. The thing is that today single mothers are often very poor since they have a lower salary. Without the salary from the husband it is very hard for them to survive. Many single mothers have to live very cheap and perhaps they need two jobs to make a living. It is hard to financially handle a single household with children. Thus, their victory turns into other difficulties and a new fight begins. This theory is applicable in the Swedish society as well as in other societies.

In the book *The dialectic of sex* (1979), Shulamith Firestone writes about radical feminism and means that the household production and reproduction is central to women's subordination. She argues that reproduction and childbearing is bad for women and they have to be free from this. She goes on to argue that marriage as an institution has oppressive conditions built into it. Firestone argues that we need alternatives to marriage that will satisfy

the psychological and emotional needs that marriage still satisfies but that will satisfy them even better. (Firestone 1979:209-210) Firestone claims that we want children because of selfish reasons. The woman wants children to be justified as a real woman and a mother. The man wants children so that his name, property, ethnic identification and generation can live on. (Firestone 1979:213-214) For the Kurdish people it is important to have children that can support you when you get old and cannot take care of yourself. In Sweden, on the other hand, the state takes care of those issues. When you cannot work anymore you receive your pension from the state and the state can also provide a home, an institution where paid workers help you with your everyday life. Firestone argues that as long as natural reproduction "...still is necessary, we can devise less destructive cultural inducements. But it is likely that, once the ego investments in parenthood are removed, artificial reproduction will be developed and widely accepted." (Firestone 1979:214)

The problem, according to Firestone, lies in the fact that women are vulnerable and dependent on men when it comes to reproduction. On the other hand, the men's emotional development has been stunted because of the upbringing in the patriarchal family. Critical voices argue against Firestone and say that the reproduction technology of today is just a way for men to get more power over the reproduction. Thus Firestone's theory has received a lot of critics. Walby believes it is a well-developed model but she has some doubts. One problem with the theory, according to Walby, is that Firestone has missed the social aspect of reproduction. The biological part is during the nine months the mother is carrying the child inside her. When the child is born the childcare can be socialised and shared between the mother and the father. (Walby 1990:66-67) Firestone's theory is only one view of the radical feminism and how they look upon reproduction. Another one, represented by Rich, argues that children and motherhood is a source of joy. Motherhood as an institution under patriarchy gives women problems but you cannot blame that on motherhood but on the patriarchy itself. (Walby 1990:67)

## 2.7 Established and Outsiders

A theory introduced by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson will be used to understand the difficulties concerning the integration into a new society. In the book *The Established and the Outsiders* (1994) they present a sociological experiment. They interviewed people living in a residential quarter in Great Britain. In this area people had lived for a long period of time, often with their family in the same neighborhood. These were the established. On the other hand, there were also people who had just moved there. These were the outsiders. During interviews the relations between the neighbors were clear. The established did not like the outsiders. The outsiders did not really have anything against the established but they never socialized with them either. (Elias & Scotson 1994:xi-xiii) In our case the established are the Swedes and the outsiders are the Kurdish immigrants. This theory can also be applied to the way media is reinforcing these roles by talking about the others and "us". According to Elias, the established are more integrated which give them more power. The established believe that they have superior qualities that motivate the exclusion of the outsiders. The reason why one group can claim that another group is inferior is the power relation between the groups. (Elias & Scotson 1994:158-159) The established...

...fight for their superiority, their status and power, their standards and beliefs, and they use in that situation almost everywhere the same weapons, among them humiliating gossip, stigmatising beliefs about the whole group modelled on observations of its worst section, degrading code words and, as far as possible, exclusion from all chances of power- in short, the features which they occur under headings such as "prejudice" and "discrimination". (Elias & Scotson 1994:158)

The stigmatization of outsiders can be found in all kinds of power relations in society today; for example, black and whites, men and women, straight and gay people etc. (Elias & Scotson 1994:xv-xvi) In this case it exists between Swedes and immigrants. This power relation between groups is yet a factor that makes it hard for the immigrants to be a part of the Swedish society. The reason for using this theory is that immigrants, as we will see in the analysis, feel like they are outside the Swedish society. Elias and Scotson mean that...

...[p]eople move physically from one place to another. In reality, they always move from one social group to another. They always have to establish new relationships with already existing groups (...) Often enough they are cast in the role of outsiders



in relation to the established and more powerful groups whose standards, beliefs, sensibilities and manners are different from theirs. (Elias & Scotson 1994:157)

According to the theory, the established can impose on the newcomers that they are inferior not only in power but also by nature. (Elias & Scotson 1994:159) The established are afraid that when outsiders arrive they might take their jobs and for this reason dislike them. Outsiders always have the problem to fit in where people have lived for a long time and share established norms, values and a way of living. (Elias & Scotson 1994:148)

### 3. The Case<sup>2</sup>

In 1999, June 24<sup>th</sup>, Pela Atroshi was murdered by her uncles. That was meant to be the end of it. The family was supposed to forget all about her. They should act as if she never existed at all. All this would have worked unless the fact that Pela had a little sister who would not allow her uncles to walk away free from what they had done.

The Atroshi family is a big family as is common among Kurds and I will present only those important to the story. The case involves the grandfather and the grandmother. They have four daughters and four sons. Their sons are Dakhasz, Rezkar, Agid and Shivan. Agid is married to Fatima. Fatima's family gave her away to another man to get married when she was fifteen. She did not know her husband Agid or his family. According to Fatima's parents the Atroshi family had a lot of money and power. Agid was a good man to marry although he was not a part of her own family. A Kurdish woman can usually expect more respect and consideration if she belongs to her husband's family from the beginning. One reason to why the men in her new family treated her bad was probably because she had no blood relations to her husband's family. Fatima looked forward to her wedding, but the fun part of it was soon over. After the wedding she was trapped in her new home with her parents-in-law and an unmarried sister-in-law. She soon realised that her father in law was the one who decided everything and who demanded that everyone obeyed him. This was the grandfather. When Fatima was sixteen she gave birth to her first child. Fatima says that her husband changed a lot when they moved to Sweden in 1996. He was unhappy and angry. The physical and emotional problems he carried with him from the war made the situation even worse. Fatima wanted to move back to her own family. She knew she could not because her duty was to stay with her husband and children. Fatima gave birth to ten children, out of which eight survived. The oldest one is Pela.

Pela Atroshi was murdered in Dahouk, a city in northern Iraq. She was 19, soon turning 20. She had lived in Sweden since she was 14 years old. She left the Swedish High School to go to Kurdistan in the northern part of Iraq to get married. The family thought she had turned too Swedish. She questioned her father, Agid, one too many times. Her appearance and behavior harmed the family Atroshi's honor. Pela was killed so that the family could wash away the shame. According to Swanberg, the grandfather knows that the rules of the

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter three is based on the book *Hedersmordet på Pela* (2002) by Lena Swanberg.

honor ethic claim that the father of the daughter is the one who should commit the crime. The grandfather knew Agid was too weak and would not be able to kill Pela himself. Another son of his, an uncle of Pela, had to do it. However they all (the Atroshi family) claimed, after the murder, that Agid did it, because if he were sentenced the verdict would be reduced. The law in that part of Kurdistan says that the punishment is reduced if the father of a daughter has to commit an honor killing. The reason for the murder was according to Agid; “I committed this crime of my own free will and with good intentions since my daughter Pela had a divergent behavior and followed the wrong path of life. She adapted to western traditions and behaved in a way that goes against our social traditions and customs. (...) Her mother and I decided to take her back to our home region to get her married. But the victim had no intentions of changing her behavior. She had become a disgrace to our family and I started to think about getting rid of her. I decided to kill her at the right moment to wash away the shame she had brought upon her family. I committed this crime since I was convinced that my daughter had been seeing strangers and this made her lose her virginity.” (Swanberg 2002:236-237, my translation)

The Atroshi family had lived a good life with other Kurds in the area in northern Iraq. In 1990 Saddam Hussein decided that he wanted the Kurds to leave his Iraqi territory. The only thing for the Atroshi family and the other Kurds were to escape up in the mountains. For three months they lived in a tent in the mountains. Saddam’s soldiers plundered their house in Dahouk and they had nothing left. After months in the mountains they returned home and started a new life. It went well until Agid was accused of supporting Saddam and he was sent to prison. He was tortured and battered. When the grandfather came and gave money to the police Agid was released. However, it was no longer safe for them to live in Kurdistan. In 1995 the whole family arrived to Sweden. Pela’s parents did not want to move to Sweden. Instead they wanted to stay in Kurdistan with their relatives. However, Agid and the children went to school to learn Swedish. Agid decided that his wife had to stay at home. Agid got suspicious of everything and everyone including his oldest daughters, Pela and Breen. They tried to be as good as possible to satisfy their father. When they were not in school and not doing their homework they cooked, baked, cleaned and looked after their little sisters and brothers. Agid set up rules that they had to follow. For instance they were not allowed to wear short sleeves, they could not show their arms, only their hands. They were only allowed to wear dark colors like black and gray. They were not allowed to wear make-up and they could not cut their hair short. Finally, Pela had had enough and ran away. This was not good. According to Swanberg, a Kurdish girl cannot spend the night away from home. If she does, it

is assumed that she has lost her virginity and she must die. Pela returned home for a while but ran away a second time. Agid said to Breen that Pela had to pay with her life for the shame she had brought upon the family. When Pela, voluntarily, returned home the second time she was told that she had to get married as soon as possible. Pela had to marry someone within the family to keep the shame in the family. The wedding plans were soon made and the family planned to return to Kurdistan for the wedding. Back in Kurdistan the tension in the family was lessened and the family was preparing a wedding. However, the whole family knew that Pela was going to be killed, except for Pela's mother and Breen. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1999, Agid and his three brothers arrived in their home in Kurdistan. Rezkar, one of the uncles, shot Pela twice and then he told the others that she had committed suicide. When Breen came to Pela she told Breen that uncle Rezkar shot her. When the uncles heard that Pela was still alive they went up to her and uncle Rezkar shot her, a third time, in the head.

Pela was still an Iraqi citizen although she had studied in a Swedish school for five years. To get Pela to Iraq, the family told her it was time for her to get married. No one in the Atroshi family could imagine that a murder on a Kurdish girl, an Iraqi citizen in Iraq would upset anyone in Sweden. In Iraq, Pela's father Agid Atroshi, was sentenced to jail for six months since he confessed to having murdered his daughter. In Iraq, according to law it is extenuating circumstances that a father is forced to kill his daughter to sustain the family honor. (Swanberg 2002:169) The court in Iraq did say that Agid's three brothers, Dakhasz, Shivan and Rezkar were present when Pela was murdered but they came to the conclusion that Agid himself was the one who committed the murder. There was also a post-mortem rapport that claimed that Pela was not a virgin when she died. This was also presented to the court. Breen knew that this paper was bought from a doctor who was paid of by the grandfather. According to Breen, in Kurdistan you can buy everything if you have enough money.

In Sweden two of Pela's uncles, Dakhasz and Rezkar Atroshi were sentenced to lifetime in jail for the murder of Pela. They are Iraqi born, but both are Swedish citizens. Because of that they could be sentenced in Sweden for the murder of an Iraqi citizen in Iraq. The reason to why they ended up in the Swedish courtroom at all was because of Breen, Pela's little sister, who contacted the Swedish police the same day the murder was committed and later left Iraq to witness about the circumstances concerning the murder of Pela.

Today Breen lives with a new identity somewhere in the world. She is constantly afraid that the male side of her family will hunt her down and kill her.

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1 The Patriarchy in Kurdistan

In this part I will investigate how the patriarchy works and reproduces in Kurdistan. How do the men sustain the power over the women in Kurdistan and how is it brought down from generation to generation? What role do the women have in the Kurdistan society? The ambition is to compare the case and other material and from this try to depict the processes in work.

#### 4.1.1 Marriage as a Subordinated Institution

The women in Kurdistan are expected to accept and reproduce the values that the men find pleasing. For example, they have to stay virgins until marriage, marry at an early age and accept the exchange of women when it comes to marriages. (Irani 2003:11) According to the Kurdish tradition, when a woman marries a man she belongs to him. (Swanberg 2002:65) The reason why a Kurdish woman gets married is that the man can financially support her. Her own family cannot support her anymore, so they give her to a man they believe will take good care of her. This makes it very hard for the women to have any saying in the matter of marriage at all.

In the book *Honour and Shame - Women in modern Iraq* (1990) by Sana al-Khayyat, we get to know the life of Iraqi women. This you can apply to Kurdish women as well since many of them live in the northern part of Iraq. When the women get married they are going to take care of their husbands. They stay at home and take care of the children and look after the home. When the husband comes home after work the dinner is ready and after that he can go and rest or if he demands it he tells his wife that he wants sexual intercourse. It is expected from the wives that as soon as the husband enters the house she must attend to all his needs. It is also the wives duty to take care of the children. She is to produce, look after and raise them and take care of all problems related to them. The man, the husband, does not have to deal with these everyday matters. His duty is to be the provider. (al-Khayyat 1990:17) This we can connect to Firestone's theory that can explain the subordination and oppression of the Kurdish women. Firestone means that marriage as an institution has oppressive conditions built into it. She argues that we need alternatives to marriage that will satisfy psychological and emotional needs that marriage still satisfies. (Firestone 1979:210) The

Kurdish men can control the women since they have put them in care of the household and the childbearing in the domestic sphere. Obviously, marriage in Kurdistan is often not a result of love between a man and a woman. The father and the male side of the family often choose a man they consider good for their daughter. In the word good they take into account his family's reputation. (Swanberg 2002:63) For the Kurdish women, one can argue, oppressive conditions are built into the institution of marriage. The majority of the Kurdish women today do not have any financial independence. (Irani 2003:12) Women, most of the times, do not know of any alternatives but to marry since they need a man to support them. For this to change there is, most likely a need for a functional government and a revised judicial system. For example, the women must be allowed to work outside the home, in the public sphere.

From the case we know that Pela was to be married because she behaved in an immoral way and to get rid off the shame she had to marry someone within the family. That is how Kurds solve issues when the family honor is on the line. One keeps the shame within the family and the problem is solved. It is never to be mentioned again. (Swanberg 2002:133) Another interesting thing from the case is that Breen, Pela's little sister who put the uncles in prison for the murder, now is engaged to marry a Kurdish boy. Their parents have agreed and the fiancée has paid a lot of money for her. Breen knows that a good Kurdish woman thinks about her husband first, then her children and last about herself. However, Breen believes it is important that a woman think about herself and has her own opinions and that you can discuss problems with the family. But Breen has to marry to be safe from her father and the male side of her family that has sworn that they will kill her for what she has done. As soon as she is married to this Kurdish boy they cannot do anything to her. If they go after her there will be bloodshed between the families and none of the families will risk that. (Swanberg 2002:260-261)

In the Western world of today a woman is not trapped in a marriage as in Kurdistan. If a woman is not happy with her married life she can, according to law, get a divorce. This is not the case in Kurdistan, as mentioned.

#### **4.1.2 The Upbringing of Children in Kurdistan**

The radical feminism means that the main factor of male domination over women is sexuality. (Walby 1990:3) Firestone means that reproduction and household production is the main reason to women's subordination. (Firestone 1979:209-210) In the Western world we can decide whether we want children or not. We do not depend on our children when we get old since the state takes care of us. In Kurdistan children are your guarantee that someone will take care of you when you do not have the strength yourself.

According to Chodorow's theory, gender relations are a result of early childhood experiences. Parents prepare their children for their adult gender roles, which place the women in a sphere of reproduction in a sexually unequal society. (Chodorow 1978:173) This phenomenon is applicable in all societies. The reason to women's oppression is according to Chodorow the reproduction of mothering. The girls grow up and develop a nourishing personality just as their mothers in the domestic sphere. The boys take after their fathers who rarely are at home and spend more time in the public sphere. (Walby 1990:94)

These gender roles are strengthened in society through how we dress girls in pink and give them dolls to play with. Boys, on the other hand, are dressed in blue and get to play with cars, trains and airplanes. Henrietta Moore, an anthropologist, said this about the subject: "Thus, male children, in many societies are encouraged to be more assertive, more aggressive, more thrusting and more powerful while female children are supposed to be passive, powerless, submissive and receptive." (Moore 1994:139) As we grow up we are shaped through our roles, norms and expectations from the surroundings. The role becomes incorporated with the personality so the individual is acting the way it is assumed according to current norms. (Darvishpour 2003:27) The way children experience their childhood and learn their gender roles in society is instrumental in making the patriarchy survive.

The Kurdish women are aware of their subordinated position and they know that the Kurdish society expect them to reproduce. Hopefully they give birth to more sons than daughters because that is good for the family. Women who only give birth to girls are at risk to be killed since their husband want sons. When she is dead the man can remarry with a woman who hopefully can give him sons. (al-Khayyat 1990:passim)

The Kurdish society is like all other societies. It is considered normal to raise boys and girls differently. In Kurdistan, according to Fatima, the mother of Pela in the case, children are told to fear God and obey their parents. According to Swanberg, this has changed in Sweden because of the way society has changed. It is slowly changing in Kurdistan too, but gender roles are hard to change. Especially in countries where the family is the only financial

and emotional security you have got. According to Swanberg, in Kurdistan it is well known that from the age of ten boys and girls should behave differently. The girls should be silent and withdrawn and boys are to be more open and social when guests are coming. If a male, non-relative guest is visiting he is shown into a room where he is to meet the whole male side of the family. He can also meet girls that are under ten. The other girls and women in the family are supposed to be in another room. Only if they are to serve the guest they may enter the room. The boys are to look after their sisters so they do not misbehave. They are even allowed to beat them if they disobey. When the girls reach puberty the rules turn even stricter. Now they are not allowed to leave the house on their own, not live on their own, not travel alone and they can absolutely not be seen with men outside the family. (Swanberg 2002:85-87)

According to Swanberg, Breen says that the father started to change when his daughters grew up and began to develop a female body. Suddenly they were not allowed to do things they had done before. One example is that they suddenly were not allowed to dance at weddings anymore. The grandfather had called from Australia and instructed Agid that his daughters were too old to dance. They had a reputation to think about. The grandfather decided everything. (Swanberg 2002:58) In Kurdistan a girl is not welcome in life from the moment she is born. Compared to her brothers she grows up without any notice. The girl is seen as a part of the household. When the girl reaches the age of puberty everything changes. Suddenly she is in the spotlight and she has to be aware of how she behaves. The girl is not allowed to mix with boys and she is not allowed to wear whatever clothes she wants. Her father tells her what to wear. The men keep the women in the houses and are very strict with who they meet. All these rules make it easier to control the girls in the domestic sphere in the home. (al-Khayyat 1990:36)

After puberty, sex roles become clearly differentiated and teenage girls and boys spend less time together. (...) From the age of 15-16 onwards young men start praying together with other adult men which marks the public recognition of male adulthood. From then on young men do not spend time alone with their female agemates other than those in their own household. (...) Marriageable women are considered a source of concern for the men of the house anyway, as their behavior and other's behavior toward them could easily be interpreted as an insult on the honour of the family. (Yalcin-Heckmann 1991:163-164)



Girls in Kurdistan are raised to serve and obey the men. In Kurdistan the men limit the women's development and freedom. Women are not expected to express their thoughts and feelings. They have no chance to become independent individuals since the men make all decisions for them. The male side of the family decides whom the daughter is to marry. The male side is also in charge of deciding if the girl is to be killed if they believe she has damaged the family's honor in any way. (Garemani 2003:15) It is obvious that through this upbringing of children the patriarchal norms are reproduced in Kurdistan. As we have seen the radical feminism claims that the patriarchy is a social structure in which the women systematically are dominated, oppressed and subordinated. This system is characterized by the men's power over the women. The men create solidarity and have in common, no matter what social status they have, that they dominate the women. (Hartmann 1986:28-29) The mother/woman knows that she is socially subordinate to men and this is reinforced outside the home in churches, schools, factories, massmedia and other public institutions. (Hartmann 1986:30-31) This goes for countries all over the world but is more obvious in certain countries than in others. According to Talcott Parsons, the most important mission for women is to raise and socialize children and take care of the men. The men's most important thing is to support the family financially. This role division is according to him, natural and universal and works as a stabilizing factor that reduces the oppositions within the family. If this role division changes the stability in the family is also threatened. Parsons, referred to in Darvishpour, means that the nuclear family plays a central role for the socialization of norms and for maintaining order and stability in society.<sup>3</sup>

One can argue that Kurdish society consider men to be worth more than women. In the Kurdish part of Iraq, where the Atroshi family that we know from the case above has its roots, this value based on sex is very obvious. When a woman is pregnant she wants a boy. If she gives birth to a boy everything is perfect. If it is a girl people basically say "better luck next time". The main reason is that bringing up boys are much easier. Whatever boys do, it will only affect them, not the whole family. Since the honor culture demands that girls must be controlled, the upbringing is much more difficult. Men are supposed to be independent, tough and rational. On the other hand, women are supposed to be submissive and emotional. (al-Khayyat 1990:27,30)

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<sup>3</sup> For further reading about Parsons see; Darvishpour Mehrdad, *Invandrarkvinnor som bryter mönstret - Hur maktförskjutningen inom iranska familjer i Sverige påverkar relationen* (2002) sid. 22-26

Throughout the whole Kurdish society the patriarchal norms are produced and maintained. The boys are much more worth than girls in different ways and throughout their life. One main reason for this is because of the honor/shame ethic.

#### **4.1.3 Control, Power and Dominance in the Domestic and the Public Sphere**

According to Ronak Faraj, a scientist, chief editor and female activist, there is an explanation to why the patriarchal norms reproduce in Kurdistan. Ronak Faraj is the chief editor of the Kurdish Female magazine called Rewan. In the magazine you can find articles that condemn honor killings and try to prevent them. (Irani 2003:10) Faraj says that the lack of a Kurdish government and laws lead to that the Kurds have no power over their country or lives. As mentioned above in the part on Kurdistan history, we know that Kurdistan is part of many countries. Only in the Kurdish part of Iraq the Kurds have managed with help from the UN to create a government in their own area. This government does not function very well and although laws change on paper they seldom change in practice. The Kurds have some self-determination in this area, and they are struggling to have the same opportunity in other countries. Furthermore, they feel that they do not have any opportunity to make the equality better between men and women. Faraj goes on to argue that the men who have no power over their country and lives instead use this power to control the woman and her sexuality. So we have oppression against Kurds as a people, but the women are the ones who become oppressed twice. The government that exists does not function very well and has encouraged and made sure that ancient patriarchal structures are reproduced. All this legitimizes the oppression of the Kurds. (Garemani 2003:17-18)

As mentioned above, both the lack of government and the government that exists in Iraq make the process of changing the domestic patriarchy very slow. As Sylvia Walby argues, in the Western countries the patriarchy has changed from the domestic to the public sphere. This has given women opportunities to work in the public sphere and to get more freedom since they can support themselves, but the oppression has only changed arena. The problem is that women who do work do not earn as much money as their male colleagues. (Walby 1990:173-201) The women's subordination under patriarchy is moving out from the family and into the labor market. (Darvishpour 2003:33) However, in Kurdistan women do not have jobs outside the home yet. The women have no possibilities to be in the public sphere. The men in Kurdistan are brought up in families where no one questions the fact that they are the ones who make decisions and support the family. The men are raised in the belief that they marry a girl and after that she will do anything to please him. Most women

live in a limited world in Kurdistan with only their family members and nearest neighbours to talk to. The issue with the domestic and the public sphere is discussed by, among others, Susan Moller Okin. She argues that; “The more a culture requires or expects of women in the domestic sphere, the less opportunity they have of achieving equality with men in either (both public and domestic) (my comment) sphere.” (Okin 1999:12) For women to gather more education and information they must come out in the public sphere and experience the society. This can be a problem since women seldom get that opportunity. Okin means that culture is often a domestic arrangement. It is in the home, after all, that much of culture is preserved, practised and transmitted to the next generation. (Okin 1999:13) This is one reason to why the Kurdish culture with its patriarchal norms is reproduced. The Kurdish women do not know of any alternative life. They are brought up in the belief that their mission in life is to serve their husband and raise children in the domestic sphere and “...women are not human beings of equal worth but rather subordinates whose primary (if not only) function is to serve men sexually and domestically. “ (Okin 1999:18) If the Kurdish women do not behave as they are supposed to they can bring shame over the family and risk being murdered. Because of their prerequisites in life it is hard for the women to try to change this old, traditional culture created by men to keep the control over the women. As stated above, one way to loosen up the patriarchy is to get the women from the domestic sphere to the public sphere by letting them study or get a job. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo has developed one theory that can be connected to this:

[Women’s] status will be lowest in those societies where there is a firm differentiation between domestic and public spheres of activity and where women are isolated from one another and placed under a single man’s authority, in the home. Their position is raised when they can challenge those claims to authority, either by taking on men’s roles or by establishing social ties, by creating a sense of rank, order, and value in a world in which women prevail. One possibility for women, then, is to enter the men’s world or to create a public world of their own. But perhaps the most egalitarian societies are those in which public and domestic spheres are only weakly differentiated, where neither sex claims much authority and the focus of social life itself is the home. (Rosaldo 1974:36)

One can argue that most women in Kurdistan are at home taking care of the domestic work while the men are in the public sphere working. It has been like this throughout the Kurdish history and no one is actually questioning this. One way could be to

let the women get an education and through this be part of the public sphere in society and not be trapped in the domestic sphere. They must try to take part of society in order to be able to question and change their culture. The men will hardly help them with this since they are happy with the situation and often take advantage of it. There are, however, changes taking place in Kurdistan. Today, the Kurdish Authorities are trying to get the women out into the public sphere. The problems the women face when they try to enter the labor market can be seen as a way for the patriarchy to remain powerful in the public sphere. In the Middle East, according to Valentine M. Moghadam, in the book *Gender and Development in the Arab world* (1995), a common view that underlines this problem, is that religious and cultural factors should influence women's lives more than economic factors. In this way, when there is a rapid development that tries to get women into the labor market these changes create tensions between sexes and generations. Pressure groups appear with intentions to reintroduce or preserve the traditional, hierarchical and cultural pattern that keep the women at home. (Moghadam 1995:8) There are several obstacles for the women to get a job. Shakhathreh, referred to in the book *Gender and Development in the Arab World* (1995), presents four major obstacles.

1. **Religion**, Islam prohibits women to have contact with men outside the family. This leads to that women are restricted in the choice of occupation.
2. **Norms**, social norms say that women's proper place is in the home. Many women do not even consider looking for a job.
3. **Attitudes**, women's own attitudes toward and acceptance of the market employment has an effect on the offers the female labor force receives.
4. **Discrimination**, a segregated labor market can result in a higher unemployment rate that will lower the wages for women compared to men.

(Shakhathreh 1995:133)

Today, women in Kurdistan try to come together and make changes in society. For women to join together in organizations is exactly what Rosaldo talks about in her theory above; "One possibility for women, then, is to enter the men's world or to create a public world of their own." (Rosaldo 1974:36) This is what they do when they join together in Women Organisations. In the Western world today there are societies in which the public and domestic are distinguished but where women can take on men's roles. For example they can get an education to become a lawyer, doctor or even receive high ranked-positions in the army. In this way they achieve power and status in the public sphere. (Rosaldo 1974:37)

The lack of or dysfunctional government makes it hard to change the ruling patriarchy. Since the Kurds have been involved in several wars their first goal seems to be a peaceful country/region of their own. The issue of the women's subordinated positions are not considered to be a priority. The people who do question the patriarchy in public can get in trouble with the Authorities and the police. There are several cases coming to the European Court that handles human rights. Today there are about 3000 acts about what has happened to Kurdish women in Turkish prisons. Among them we can read this: "A woman was tortured with electrical chocks and was beaten under her feet. After that she was taken to a distant area, and was put in a wheel and rolled around while polices were laughing. She was raped. She had not had sex before, in other words she was a virgin." (Garemani 2003:17, my translation) It seems like there are people who want to keep the old customs and traditions and who are in positions with power to maintain the patriarchy tradition. Since there are no laws working they do not risk anything. As long as the men are in control the laws are shaped to suit them. The patriarchy is reproduced and brought down to the next generation. Although women struggle for a better and more equal society they often meet resistance.

#### **4.1.4 The Women Organisations Fight for a Better Situation for the Women**

In an article written by Sholeh Irani we get to know three women and their story about how they fight for women's rights. The Women Culture Centre in Solleimanieh, Kurdistan, is one independent group that works successfully with women's issues without undertaking different political power interests. In this way the women have demanded legal changes in the family law. They demand women's equal right to inheritance, they want to forbid polygamy and they work for that women's testimonies should be valued higher. (Irani 2003:9) According to law a man can only marry one woman. However, Islam allows a man to have four wives at a time, even though a man can only register one marriage at the civil authorities. The phenomenon is well known and accepted in society. (Yalcin-Heckmann 1991:216) After a lot of pressure the law actually has changed and honor killings and polygamy are now forbidden in the southern parts of Iraqi Kurdistan. Chnoor, a nurse and female activist, tells us how they are working to strengthen the women's roles in society. For example, since 1996 there is a centre that helps women to learn how to write and read. Media, such as newspapers and television are other ways for the Woman Organisations to get their message through. One magazine wrote about the murder of Fadime and the Television showed a story about it. Ronak and Sedighe, two other female activists, say that the outcome of the article was interesting. The majority of the

women have condemned the murder. Many men, although not all of them, defended Fadime's father and claimed that the order of society forces them to do these things. (Irani 2003:10)

Today the women struggle to get a law system that makes the women's situation better, and to make society follow the laws that has already been changed. Some Kurds that live abroad have returned to Kurdistan and affect the situation since they demand success and liberty. They have seen the outside world and know that Kurdistan also can be a better place, even though, Kurdistan today is about drugs, unemployment, suicides, hopelessness, prostitution, poverty and diseases. A fact that is delaying the work for a better and more equal Kurdistan is that The Women Organisations have to fight on different levels, against the class oppression, the national oppression and the oppression against women. (Irani 2003:11-12) As if this is not enough there are threats of war from other parts of the world. When this article was written there were threats from the US to start a war against Iraq. As we know this happened. (Eskandari 2003:6) The women who fight for their rights also meet a lot of resistance from the state and the police forces. The tactic the Turkish police are using against the Kurdish politically active women is torture and sexual abuse. The police know that raping is considered to be the ultimate humiliation, not only for the woman, but also for her family and the whole Kurdish people. Furthermore, male relatives are murdering some of the victimized women since they now are a shame to the family. This tactic was also used in Balcan. Women from Kosovo and Bosnia were raped by Serbian troops and when they returned home their male relatives murdered some of them. (Garemani 2003:17) Once again, as the radical feminists claim, we can see that although the women try to win a victory they meet a backlash. The women fight for a better society but the patriarchy does not want women to fight in the public sphere. To put an end to it, the women are raped and tortured by the police. When the male relatives find out that the woman no longer is a virgin they threaten to kill her to make sure she does not disgrace the family honor. This seems like a hopeless scenario for the women. Still they keep on fighting.

In an article we can read that things are changing in Kurdistan. A Kurdish debater and activist, Amad Eskandari, says that after the murder on Fadime Sahindal in Sweden there have been changes all over the world. Before this murder it was taboo to talk about honor killings among Kurds and authorities. Many men considered this as a silent consent. Many Kurdish girls were passive and did not think that there were any differences between Europe and Kurdistan. After the murder a lot of people have reacted. The debate is working to prevent honor killings but is also weakening the grounds for the old traditional values and norms. The Kurdish women have increased the demands to strengthen the

punishment for a man who commits an honor killing. The attention from all this has led to law changes in the Kurdish self-controlled region in the north of Iraq. They actually had to remove the paragraph that reduced the punishment for a man who killed his wife or daughter because he had to defend his family honor. However, the fighting women know that changing a law in writing does not necessarily mean that people start practicing the law. On the other hand, the debate of honor killings has changed some things and it is good that it has received attention. (Kihlström 2003)

KWAHK is another organization that works to prevent honor killings. KWAHK stands for Kurdish Women Against Honor Killings. Nazhand Beigikhani is a co-ordinator for KWAHK and also an active scientist in London. The Organization argues for some changes that must come around before honor killings can be prevented. First of all they want to increase people's awareness about women's rights and the need to liberate women both nationally and internationally in Kurdistan. Through legal actions they have pushed authorities to make serious attempts to improve the legal system and punish those who commit crimes against women. They believe that for Kurdistan it is most important that education is available for all and that democracy is developed. (Beigikhani 2003:21-22)

Through media we get a picture of immigrant women as passive victims of their culture and surroundings. This stereotype is common when it comes to Muslim women in Sweden. Along with that the racism and ethnocentrism is developing in the West and the attitude toward Muslims has become more negative. The Muslim woman is described as oppressed and subordinated. Through the Western perspective our society has a mission to liberate the oppressed Muslim women. Chandra Mohanty, referred to in Darvishpour, points out that the universal perception of the third world woman and especially of a Muslim woman has been constructed because the sex differences and the sex segregation in the third world have been emphasized and compared to West where the woman is supposed to be secular, open-minded and in control of her own life. One forgets that Western women still are oppressed in different ways. However, all women who come from the third world are not passive and uneducated. Furthermore, this leads to that the picture of immigrant men is that they are the ones oppressing the women. (Darvishpour 2003:75)

## **4.2 The Honor Culture in Sweden**

This part will discuss how the honor culture is expressed in Sweden. How is the culture changing for immigrants coming to Sweden? How are the parents and children integrated into the new society? The ambition is to compare the case and other material and from this try to depict the processes in work.

### **4.2.1 The Traditional Mentality Reinforced**

According to Fatima, Agid's wife, her husband changed a lot when the family came to Sweden. (Swanberg 2002:65) According to Darvishpour, immigrant men from the Middle East become more conservative in their view concerning family relations when they arrive in a new country, for example Sweden. Now they try to control the female members of the family even more, probably because their position in the family has turned weaker. In the native country the men had a stronger position in the family. Furthermore, sanctions from society stopped unmarried and married women from seeing other men. In Sweden the Kurdish women have an opportunity to release themselves from this control. This increases the men's fear of losing their wives and daughters and leads to a stronger control in the relation. (Darvishpour 2003:130)

The facts from the case also give us other reasons to why Agid, Pela's father, changed his personality. He was tortured by Iraqi police and had been a soldier in the war between Iran and Iraq. This marked him both physically and mentally. According to Swanberg, Breen says he became religious in Sweden. In Iraq he was often drunk and went out during the nights with other women. When he came to Sweden he started to read the Koran and became religious. (Swanberg 2002:16) What seems to happen when the families come to Sweden is that the young girls want to adapt to the Swedish society. The fathers in the families, on the other hand, feel that they are losing control over the family. It has been shown that when this happens the families become more attached to their own culture and minority group. A Kurd becomes more Kurdish abroad, just like Swedes become more Swedish when they are in another country. (Viklund & Hagström 2003) From a Western point of view one can wonder why Agid's wife Fatima did not divorce him since he was out with other women. The answer is simple. She is not allowed according to law to divorce her husband. The only exception when a woman is allowed to get a divorce is if the husband has married another woman or done something illegal. The Women Organizations are working to change that law, as we have seen above. (Davidsson 2002:25) Returning to the case, Agid's



brothers who were Swedish citizens and had been in Sweden for some years when Agid's family arrived, thought Agid should stay at home in Sweden and rest since he had a bad back because of his participation in the war. (Swanberg 2002:passim) We do not know if this is the real reason to why Agid stayed home but this was the reason presented to Breen and the rest of the family. The real reason could have been that he did not get a job in Sweden. According to Fateme Ald-Baldawi, a psychologist who works with immigrated families that have problems, there are three ways that show how the men react to their new situation coming to Sweden:

1. The man becomes depressed. He withdraws and feels sorry for himself. He complains over the fact that he cannot support his family anymore. He escapes reality.
2. The man starts a new life and tries to adapt to the new society. He might start a business of his own. He becomes a part of society, perhaps not with the same power as in his native country, but he starts to build up self-confidence.
3. The man does not accept reality. Although he is unemployed and outside the society he tries to be the one who seems to be in control. (Linebäck 2002:3)

The third group is the group Pela's father ended up in. He had problems integrating with the Swedish society. Kurdish immigrants come from different economical and social backgrounds. They do not move voluntarily in search for a better place. They have to move because they cannot guarantee that their family is safe. Most of the immigrants have never traveled outside the village before. Now they have physically moved, but mentally they are still in their home village. They rebuild their homes abroad by reintroducing their cultural norms and values. This reintroduction also includes the control of the woman's behavior and body. The liberation and individual freedom the women receive is considered to be a resolution of the collective identity. This tendency creates a traditional mentality instead of rational thinking. (Beigikhani 2003:22)

According to Söderlindh, referred to in Darvishpour, the immigration process itself creates an immigration crisis which means that a condition of crisis are developed out of the many psychological processes a person experiences when he/she is in an unknown environment. The immigrant is in a tempting situation where his/her earlier socialization, experiences, cultural background and norms are confronted with the new life situation. Scientists mean that an identity crisis and a culture clash lead to stress, which affects the family life in a negative way and creates a crisis within the family. (Darvishpour 2003:69) The General Director of the Integration office in Sweden, Andreas Carlgren, talks about this in an interview for the magazine *Integration i fokus* (2002). Carlgren argues that integration is

about being a part of society. We have to open the doors for the immigrants coming here so they feel that they are a part of our society. In many cases this fails. The result is a feeling of lack of power. This affects whole families. This becomes the place where old values and norms start to grow strong. (Carlgren 2002:11)

#### **4.2.2 Reaction From the Children**

The third type of reaction mentioned above, is the most troublesome. In these families the children can respond in different ways. They may accept the fact that the father is in charge and they obey his rules to keep him satisfied. They spend time with the people the father has approved of and they stay away from all kinds of problem. (Linebäck 2002:4) From the case, Breen tells us that her father was satisfied if he knew the fathers of the girls they were socializing with. It did not matter that he knew nothing of the girls as long as he knew their fathers. (Swanberg 2002:113) The other way for a child to react is to be the rebellious one that tries to adapt to the Swedish society and wants to make his/her own decisions in life. (Linebäck 2002:4) Carlgren comments on this phenomenon; “Girls who are in an exposed situation are often in a conflict between the individual’s rights and restricted norms, controlled by for example patriarchal structures”. (Carlgren 2002:11, my translation) This is the kind of child Pela became. Pela’s father, who did not have a job, was at home all days and started to develop a fanatic control over his daughters, Pela and Breen. He had told them that they had to go straight home from school and he sat home and watched the clock until they arrived. He thought that boys were constantly after them and he feared that they would have sex before they were married. (Swanberg 2002:passim) According to Swanberg, the worst thing that can happen within the Kurdish culture is if a girl is not a virgin when she marries and this is unforgivable. (Swanberg 2002:202-203) This is why the men must control a girl’s every move after she reaches puberty: “A woman’s sexuality has to be under the control of someone other than herself, and until marriage the protection is given by her nearest male kin, i.e. her father, brother(s), and her father’s brother.... After marriage the control of her sexuality is partly transferred to her husband.” (Yalcin-Heckmann 1991:212)

One difference between children in Kurdistan and Sweden is, according to Fatima, that in Kurdistan children obey their parents but in Sweden they do not. Fatima says that as long as they lived in Kurdistan the girls were not considered problematic. (Swanberg 2002:67) They did not know of any other life style than the one they had in Kurdistan. In Sweden Pela learned Swedish and adapted to the Swedish society very fast. Fatima believes that the other relatives that had been in Sweden for a longer time were only jealous of Pela.

The problem was that Pela became too Swedish. When a girl becomes too Swedish she is suddenly a girl with a bad reputation. She wears short skirts, she wears make-up and she does not obey her father, uncles or brothers. The girls who become too Swedish want so much more than the men expect them to want. They want an education, to marry whoever they want, to live on their own before they get married and to have boyfriends. They do not want to start a family right away. Pela fought against her father's obsessive control-behavior. She wanted to have some freedom in her life and make her own decisions. Pela fought back against the patriarchal moral and norms that her male family members stood for. She did not want them to control her and make the decisions in her life. In Pela's family the grandfather, the father of Agid and his brothers, was the one who was controlling the whole family. Even if he lived in Australia he was the one who decided that Pela had to be killed. Although the Atroshi family was split up and lived all over the world everyone kept in touch with each other. Gossip traveled all over the world and the grandfather found out that Pela did not behave the way she should. This was where things cracked up in the Atroshi family. Agid turned even more depressed in Sweden without a job, no control in life and no sense of belonging. Pela conquered the freedom in the Swedish society. This turned out to be unforgivable. (Swanberg 2002:63-67) Pela's crime was that she tried to stand up to the patriarchal norms and wanted to live her own life based on her own decisions. But this was not welcome in the Atroshi family. (Swanberg 2002:passim)

Breen says in the case that one reason for why they killed Pela was to show what might happen to Breen too if she did not behave properly. It was an action to scare Breen and all the other girls in the family. (Swanberg 2002:13) In some cases the children has to contribute to the socialization of their parents. This leads to tensions within the family. These conflicts turn more intense between fathers and daughters. It is a question of both generation and gender conflicts.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4.2.3 To be Outsider: The Male Dilemma**

In the Swedish media there are Kurdish men who say that they can understand why honor killings occur. Kamaran Shawn, a Kurdish man living in Sweden, says that he can understand why Fadime's father murdered her but he also says that he does not accept it. As mentioned in the Prologue, Fadime Sahindal was murdered by her father in 2002 and after this a debate started. Shawn means that Fadime's father lived under extreme pressure. He says that in the

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<sup>4</sup> For further reading see; Darvishpour, Mehrdad, *Invandrarkvinnor som bryter mönstret – Hur maktförskjutningen inom iranska familjer i Sverige påverkar relationen* (2002) sid. 76-78

Kurdish family you pay a lot of attention to what opinions family, friends and the surrounding society have about you and your family. Fadime's father lived in a world with traditional values and norms. He could not read, he was pressured by a fundamental religion and he has never understood the Swedish way of thinking. In a way, the daughter lived in the Swedish society but her parents did not. What Fadime did in Sweden was completely unthinkable in Kurdistan. The parents felt like outsiders and did not understand the Swedish society, finishes Kamaran Shwan. (Cederberg 2002:13) Among other things this points to the fact that the children have an advantage because they are put in school and there they learn about the Swedish society and the Swedish way of thinking. They also learn the language faster. For the parents it is hard to get a job. Some men do not believe their wives can get a job at all. However, the women learn that in Sweden women are allowed to work and men and women have equal rights. The change is probably hardest for the men. They feel that they lose all control over their life and family. (Linebäck 2002:4) Different kinds of control behaviour like beating your wife and children, which is normal in some families in Kurdistan, is illegal in Sweden. The fact that the men do not get a job makes them feel like outsiders, they feel like they are outside the Swedish society. As we have seen, Norbert Elias & John L. Scotson have a theory about established and outsiders. The established in this case is the Swedes and the outsiders are the Kurdish immigrants. The society is reinforcing these roles for example in the media where there is a tendency to talk about the others and "us". The outsiders are seen as a threat to our established norms, values and way of living. The established believe that they have superior qualities that motivate the exclusion of the outsiders. The reason why one group can claim that another group is inferior is because of the power relation between the groups. (Elias & Scotson 1994:158) The established...

...fight for their superiority, their status and power, their standards and beliefs, and they use in that situation almost everywhere the same weapons, among them humiliating gossip, stigmatising beliefs about the whole group modelled on observations of its worst section, degrading code words and, as far as possible, exclusion from all chances of power- in short, the features which they occur under headings such as "prejudice" and "discrimination". (Elias & Scotson 1994:158)

This can be one theoretical explanation to why it is hard for immigrant men to get a job. There is a clear distinction between the others and "us". The Kurdish men feel like they are outside the society and by not getting a job this feeling increase. Since they do not have a job they often stay at home. Controlling the family keeps them occupied.

#### **4.2.4 The Man's Right to Control Questioned**

Jan Hjärpe has written an article about violence against women, honor killings and religion. Here he quotes a historian, Abdul Hussein Sadayo, who tries to explain how the man feels about coming to the new Swedish society. According to Sadayo, in the native country, the tradition says that the man has a special respect and status within the family. He is used to the fact that the other family members obey him and he is not to be questioned in public, especially not by a woman. A good woman is a good mother and wife. The woman is seldom in charge over the finances. (Hjärpe 2000:7) If we compare this to the case, Pela's father was very upset over the fact that the child support money came to the mother. The money was given to the mother, as the law says in Sweden. This made him frustrated because as the man in the house he was the one to handle the finances. He took care of the child support money and his two daughters study grants and gave his wife and daughters what he thought were reasonable. (Swanberg 2002:78) Sadayo goes on and says that if a woman wants to socialize with others (in the native country) it is only possible with the permission of her husband. (Hjärpe 2000:7) Rules and norms in Kurdistan are questioned when the Kurdish immigrants come to Sweden. Now the women have an opportunity to make decisions in their own lives. They can now get a job and support them self financially and they are not dependant of their husbands. (Hjärpe 2000:7) Immigrant women often accept unqualified work in contrast to immigrant men. This makes it easier for the women to enter the labor market. This new situation increases the women's self esteem and challenges the traditional role divisions. The men experience status changes that reduce their power in the family. Now they try to keep their dominance in the family by referring to old norms and rules. The women demand changes in the family and have expectations they never had in their native country. This leads to a crisis in the family. (Darvishpour 2003:76) The children often revolutionize since they now learn the Swedish language, goes to school and learn how the Swedish society works. This make the men lose their self-confidence. (Hjärpe 2000:7)

In the Western world, Walby means that the reason why men marry is because they want service in the home and someone who can produce the next generation. The reason to why women get married is because of economical support, and in return they take care of the household work. (Walby 1990:passim) When the women take on their roles as housewives they spend more time in the domestic sphere. This time increases even more the day the couple decide to raise a family together. The woman gets the role of a mother. Her work is to raise the children. In the Western world of today, women do not have to marry to survive

financially. According to Walby, statistic has shown that women of a social higher class do not marry. They choose to support themselves to avoid being trapped in the domestic sphere. The less a man has to offer a woman the greater is the chance that she will not get married. (Walby 1990:84-85) In the Western world marriage as an institution is filled with emotional needs and through marriage you also fulfil the expectations from society about how you should live. People are divorced and some remarry again. One can argue that there is a positive idea about the marriage and family as an institution. The opportunity to divorce for women in the Western world today contributes to a more equal relation. Women do not have to stay in the marriage because of financial reasons. (Åquist 1994:85) Women do have a choice and today you can live with your partner without being married. The woman who makes that choice, for instance, to divorce her husband and choose to live and raise her children can have trouble financing the single household. Again the patriarchy controls so that when the women has won this struggle another issue turns up. In this case, many single mothers do not make enough money to support themselves and their children.

Another issue for the immigrant men coming to Sweden is that the women can divorce their husbands if they are not happy with their marriage. This is totally unthinkable in Kurdistan. Many immigrant men experiences that there are more prejudices against them compared to the immigrant women. One immigrant man, from Iran, says that he had high expectations when the family first came to Sweden. He says that he still believes in his traditional norms and values and he wants to keep living by them in Sweden. He tried to forbid his wife to see other women and they argued about how to raise their children. He believes that when the family is in a conflict, the Swedish authorities always take the women's side. After a time in Sweden he told his wife that he wanted to return to Iran. She refused. She filed for a divorce and he tried to stop her without any success. He says that he cannot explain her decision except for the fact that the Swedish society supported her. Today he feels sick and lives alone. He has received psychiatric care for two and a half years. Because the women's positions are improved after the immigration, the women have a more positive attitude towards the Swedish society. They discover that they have possibilities to improve their own situation. (Darvishpour 2003:113-114). In a patriarchal society the men has a dominant position. In Sweden the women's dependence of the men decreases drastically while the men's dependence on the women increases. The difference between the men and women's power resources in the family has been reduced. (Darvishpour 2003:118)

#### **4.2.5 The Collective Family vs. the Individual State**

Hjärpe claims that religion and culture is not something static. A person can break with traditional patterns and norms and choose others. Religion and norms are in constant change. In most cases where honor killings have occurred, people have fled their native country. They have left areas in the world where there has been no stability, where the individual cannot count on any protection from the state and the public sector. (Hjärpe 2000:8)

As the situation is in Kurdistan we know from above that there is no Kurdish government in the most part of Kurdistan. Only in one region in northern Iraq they have some self-control. Thus, depending on where the Kurds live different states decide over them. Therefore there are different laws for the Kurds living in the Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi area. Since none of these countries want anything to do with the Kurds at all they cannot depend on any help from these states. (Garemani 2003:passim) Hjärpe's theory is that it can be hard for people to switch from a collective family hierarchy in, for example Kurdistan, to an individual based society with a state hierarchy. Hjärpe argues that the individual in Kurdistan has no social or financial protection from the state. Instead you live in a collective with your family as a security. This group loyalty is very important for the individual. It is important that the individual is loyal towards the family. In the collective you take care of each other. If there are old family members who cannot take care of themselves the family help out and share the work with these old people. This collective works the way a government does. The oldest man in the family decides and if someone behaved wrong he can rule verdicts over this person. If a person in the collective does not follow the norms and rules, he can be punished. (Hjärpe 2000:8-9) This collective, with the family as the most important unit in life is obviously very hard for Kurds to break free from. An article in a newspaper, gives an example of this. According to the article, two Kurdish sisters, 16 and 17 years old, want to reunite with their family. The problem is that the sisters were taken from the family to be protected against their abusive father. The father and the brother of the sisters were found guilty in the municipal court and were sentenced to jail for abuse and illegal threats. In the civil court the brother got off and the father got six months in prison. The sisters had turned to the police because they were afraid that the father and the brother were going to commit an honor killing. Now the sisters and their family want to meet and live together again. The sisters have lived under heavy pressure since they moved away from the home. According to new research the pressure is so hard that most girls decide to move back, although they are at risk. (Dahl 2003)

The above constitutes another reason to why honor killings occur. The men cannot handle to go from a collective structure where the family is very important to an

individual society that means more freedom for the individuals in the collective. The individual freedom means that the daughters can get an apartment, study, date boys and make their own decisions and choices in life. For the father and the patriarchy, it means that they have lost control over the girl and the girl's sexuality. She dishonours her family and this is not allowed. In Kurdistan you live at home until you get married and then you live with your husband or his family. To live on your own is unthinkable. This is hard to understand for the men who come to Sweden. As well as the women need information to come out into the public sphere, the men also need information about how the Swedish society works and to figure out the norms and values applicable in Sweden. They both need information to adjust to the new country.

#### **4.2.6 Are Honor Killings a Cultural Issue?**

There has been a debate whether we can simply blame honor killings on the Kurdish culture. In an article in *Kvinnor & Fundamentalism* (2003), it is argued that patriarchal norms and values are reproducing in ghettos (suburbs where many immigrants live). The question is why these traditional, old-fashioned norms and values reproduce here in Sweden? Is it a drastic attempt for the men to try and keep their control over the women, although the Swedish society teaches the women that they have equal rights? This, one can argue, turns out to be a conflict between the Swedish society and the norms and values we stand for and the norms and values the Kurdish immigrants bring with them. In other words, it is a clash between cultures. One Swedish police officer, Martin Stein, argues that he suspects that increased segregation and increased alienation (compare with Elias) between immigrants and the Swedish society gives the honor killings and other culturally related crimes a stronger foundation. He also argues that there is a social pressure that the immigrants bring from their native country. There are some that share the extreme opinions that girls must be murdered if they behave wrongly. Although another family does not share these opinions they feel a pressure that they should have the same opinions, (compare with Shawn) says Stein.

The fact that honor-killings occur shows that female resistance against patriarchal norms and values exists. The women refuse to obey these norms. This illuminates the fact that we are dealing with a man's culture that struggles for its survival! A man's culture that grows faster in the ghettos of a lost generation of young men no matter what religion, skin colour and native country. (...) The Swedish Women Organization (...) must fight against the racism which institutionalizes the hatred in all shapes if it wants the marginalized women's trust, if it wants to raise a new generation of men who do not



look down at women- do not call them whores. A generation who does not have to walk all over the women to show their power or solve their identity-crises. (Kvinnor & Fundamentalism 2000:4, my translation)

In much the same manner, the chairman in the Kurdish National Organization in Sweden, Keya Izol, argues that the majority of the Swedish Kurds do not share the opinion that girls who do not obey should be punished by death. According to him, the fact that some people still has this opinion should not be blamed on the Kurdish tradition. He means that when Swedish men abuse their wives we do not blame it on Swedish culture. Murder and abuse is a crime in the Kurdish culture as well as in the Swedish culture. Those who are guilty of these crimes should be punished. (Ånnerud 2000) There has been a debate, as mentioned above, whether we can blame the Kurdish culture or not? The man above believed it was wrong. He means that a crime never can be considered to be something cultural. One person who has resisted this point of view is Haideh Daraghi. She claims that honor killings definitely are culturally related. She says that there are cultures with female hostile values that still are practiced all over the world. The men who murder their daughters are supported by the patriarchal culture that has been dominating the Middle East for thousands of years. She does not believe that those cultures are worth as much as the Swedish culture. She goes on to argue that cultures do change and the reason to why it has changed in Sweden is because of the history. In Sweden there is democracy and the women's revolution towards a more equal society has been successful. But there are tracks of patriarchal thoughts in Sweden too. For example, still in the Swedish society today, the court system believes that women who are raped asked for it because they were dressed in a certain way. Sweden is striving for equality but it takes time. The tradition, religion and culture are tied together. Islam has always sanctioned the oppression against women. Christianity and Judaism, Daraghi claims, are not much better. She finishes by saying that she is not against the culture in the Middle East itself but the inhuman cultural traits that still are there. (Svensson 2003)

It does not seem to be a united opinion about if honor killings are, or are not culturally related. Some claim they are and some mean that you cannot say that because men in all cultures murder women and children. They are murdered not for cultural reasons but for the patriarchy system the women live under which is universal.

#### **4.2.7 Men Fighting to Change the Patriarchal View**

The general view of Kurdish men is that they are the ruling patriarchs that decide everything in the family. They are known as the men who do not hesitate to abuse their wife or children. This is also often the view presented to us in the media. However, there are Kurdish men in Sweden that do not accept the fact that women are abused or killed by their male relatives. Shortly after the murder of Fadime Sahindal some men in Stockholm founded an organisation. It is called Kurdish men against women oppression. Their goal is to work for that no one, neither Kurdish nor Swedish, should accept violence and oppression between the sexes. According to Bahman Garemani, men are aware of the extreme oppression against Kurdish women. The Kurdish men must get a human and liberal view of women. He goes on to argue that when they know which men has committed these crimes, where they live, what jobs they have had, who they are socialising with, they can draw a conclusion what kind of group these men belong to. Another Kurdish man, Idris Ahmedi, who also works within this organisation, believes that the problem is the lack of communication. We want to try and reach these men who still have these old values. We want to communicate with them and build a bridge in order to reach them. We will not solve the problem by labelling them as evil and vicious men. (Garemani et.al 2003)

Another man who is working to help immigrant women in Sweden is Jafar Hasanpoor. He is Kurdish and works as a scientist and doctor in Kurdish languages at the University of Uppsala. He argues that, in a patriarchal region as Kurdistan you cannot fight in the public sphere for women's rights. He knows, because he was sent to prison for three years and exposed to torture. He is trying to stop the violence against women caused by men. His theory is that in countries with an old and well-grounded patriarchy it is considered normal for a man to beat his wife and children. The man can basically do what ever he wants with or to his wife. The patriarchy is never discussed or questioned in schools although a lot of women do go to school. He mentions his own parents as an example. His mother was educated but his father was not. His father had the financial and cultural power. When his brothers, sister and himself was older and had their education, their father turned less dominating. The power balance changed and the father stopped beating the mother. He claims that this shows that the violence does not depend on natural causes. Instead it is the influence from the surroundings. When the society and family approves of certain behaviour it is hard to question it. In Sweden the men sooner or later understand that it is not acceptable to beat their female relatives. Instead they encourage their sons to beat their sisters or mothers because they know that they will not be punished as hard. This phenomenon has also occurred in honor killings. A brother

of the girl has committed the murder instead of the father. There are different levels of how strong the patriarchal norms are. In Kurdistan, according to Jafar, they are stronger in the village among low educated men. Because of this you cannot argue that all the Kurdish men in Sweden have the same opinions because they do not. It depends on where they are from and how educated they are. (Hasanpoor 2003)

Traditions and cultures do change and they change first in the cities because of different reasons. In the cities in Kurdistan there are schools, although they do not have any school duty. Those who read can follow the outside world through newspapers. Through increased education the culture changes. The city is more modern and has a modern view of the culture. Here a girl does not have to be killed if she has done something shameful. There are other ways to solve the problem. But of course there are exceptions, for instance the Atroshi family in the case. They are a big family with a good reputation, a lot of money and they lived in a city called Dahouk in the northern Iraq. The men in the family are well educated and several of them are engineers. The grandfather had a lot of power and many friends in the political arena. (Swanberg 2002:31) This shows that we cannot argue that honor killings only happen in the villages in low-educated and poor families. It could be that it is more common, but honor killings happen in all social classes.

Hasanpoor believes that when immigrants come to Sweden and the women participate in the society the power balance change in the family and the man is not as dominant anymore. He argues that the gender roles, both in the Middle East and in Sweden, are considered to be something natural and normal and therefore are hard to change. (Hasanpoor 2003)

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Concluding Discussion

I believe it will take time before we see the end of honor killings. One reason to why the patriarchy remains strong in Kurdistan is that they do not have a government that functions. The patriarchy will prevail as long as there is no government that can stop it by law. Furthermore, you need authorities that follow these laws. I believe that once this has happened, the patriarchal norms and values will be questioned. Probably, then the women will be able to fight for their rights. Without any laws the women and children will be the ones suffering the most. In Kurdistan it is women and girls that are most vulnerable. The main reason is the honor/shame ethic. It is obvious, as is shown in the thesis, that there is a major oppression against women. This exists both in the domestic, but also in the public sphere. Those women who fight for their right in the public sphere can end up imprisoned and tortured by, for example, the Turkish police. Unfortunately, the Middle East today is a tense area, for which we do not know the future. First of all, there is a need for peace in this area. Moreover the countries surrounding Kurdistan, must accept the Kurds. It is not until this happens that the women can start to fight, for real, for their rights.

### 5.2 Answering the Research Questions

I will now answer the questions presented in the introduction. This will be a brief conclusion about what has come up in the thesis. What are the major conclusions and why? In the first part of the analysis, patriarchy in Kurdistan, the ambition was to investigate and come up with answers to the following questions.

- *In what way do the patriarchal norms reproduce in the Kurdish society?*

Other sub-questions were:

- ◆ How do the men sustain the power over the women in Kurdistan and how is it brought down from generation to generation?
- ◆ What role do the women have in the Kurdish society?

To start with we have seen that when Kurdish women get married they are supposed to take care of their husbands. Furthermore, they have to stay at home and take care

of the children and look after the home. One of the reasons for this is that women have been raised to nourish through their early childhood experiences. Men, on the other hand, have not. One of the main things to be concluded from this, is that the way we raise our children and influences from society when it comes to values and norms are very important. To sum up, children are raised differently depending on the sex of the child. Girls are raised to take care of the home and the children in the domestic sphere, while boys become breadwinners in the public sphere just like their fathers. Children learn their roles in society and what is expected of them. It is obvious that through this upbringing of children the patriarchal norms are reproduced in Kurdistan. Boys are much more worth than girls in different ways and throughout their life. One main reason for this is the honor/shame ethic.

As we have seen the patriarchal norms are produced and maintained throughout the whole Kurdish society. Another main reason for this is that Kurdistan is lacking a government. Because of this the Kurds feel that they have no power over their country or their lives. Since the men have no power over their lives or country they use their power to control the women and their sexuality instead. The lack of government also slows down all changes the women organisations are fighting for. The laws the Kurds live under in Kurdistan, based on Iranian, Iraqian and Turkish laws depending on where you live in Kurdistan, are shaped to serve the men. The people who try to question the patriarchy in public get in trouble with authorities and the police. The lack of government makes it hard to change the ruling patriarchy.

To conclude, the major reasons to why the patriarchy is reproduced and brought down to generation after generation are outlined below. Of course, in reality, these reasons co-exist and strengthen each other:

1. Socialization: The way we raise our children. Boys and girls in Kurdistan learn their roles in society and in the gender hierarchy early in their lives. They learn how they are supposed to behave. No one questions it and the patriarchy is reproduced.

2. Patriarchal structures: The honor/shame ethic is a system that subordinates women from the day they are born. Since the woman stands for the shame she must be aware of not bringing shame over her family. As a man you are worth more than a woman.

3. Social insecurity: The lack of government maintains old laws that are shaped to serve the men. It is hard for those who try to fight against the patriarchy in public, since the police punish them hard. There are powerful groups in society that want to keep the patriarchy the way it is.

To get a view of what happens when immigrants come to Sweden there were questions that had to do with integration and culture clashes. My second main question was:

- *How and why are the Kurdish patriarchal norms reinforced in the Swedish society?*

Other sub-questions were:

- ◆ How is the culture changing for immigrants coming to Sweden?
- ◆ How are the parents and children integrated into the new society?

The immigrant men coming to Sweden often feel that they loose control over their family. The female members of the family try to break free from old values and norms. In an attempt to get the control back the men reintroduce old values and norms including the control of the woman's behavior and body. The liberation and individual freedom the women receive in the new setting can be considered to be a resolution of the collective identity. This tendency strengthen a male traditional mentality instead of rational thinking. A reason for this could be that the men's position in the family has turned weaker. In their native country they were surer in their relations since they had a stronger position in the family.

Often the Kurdish parents coming to Sweden feel like outsiders and do not understand the Swedish society. The children, on the other hand, have an advantage because they are put in school and learn about the Swedish society and the Swedish way of thinking. The children react upon how their parents deal with the new situation. In general, the children may react in two ways. One group accepts the rules and regulations the father put up and they do everything to please him. The other group becomes rebellious and tries to get more freedom. For the father and the patriarchy this means that they have lost control over the girl and the girl's sexuality. When the immigrant men do not get a job they do not have much to do but to control their family. Therefore, some men turn to their religion and become more religious and aware of their cultural norms when they come to Sweden. Just as Swedes become more Swedish abroad Kurds become more Kurdish. One way the man can react is to not accept reality. Although he is unemployed and outside the society he tries to be the one who seems to be in control.

In a patriarchal society the men has a dominant position. In Sweden the women's dependence on the men decreases drastically while the men's dependence on the women increases. The difference between the men's and women's power resources in the family has been reduced. In Sweden, women can divorce their husbands and they do not depend on them financially. The women can get their own job. This is a whole new reality that can be difficult for the men to deal with.

To conclude, the major reasons for why the patriarchal norms are reproduced in the Swedish society are:

1. Integration issues: When the Kurdish family come to Sweden the men feel that they lose control over their family and especially the female members of the family. To recapture the control, they introduce their old values and norms. This is often not welcome by the women and children.

2. Cultural insecurity: The children in the families coming here have an advantage since they are put in school. They learn the Swedish language and how the society works. The parents, on the other hand, have a hard time finding a job and this makes them feel like they are outside the society, which makes them suspicious of society.

3. Power relations: The man's dominant position in a patriarchal society is challenged in Sweden. His position in the family is not as strong as it was in the native country. The women are not dependent on the men anymore and they conquer their freedom. Now the women can divorce their husband and get their own job.

To sum up this conclusion, the main answer of the thesis to why honor killings occur is that the men in patriarchal societies are used to control and dominate the family and especially the female members of it. In Sweden this changes and the children and women become aware of their rights. The man loses control over the family and this sometimes turns out to be too hard to handle.

### **5.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

In this thesis we have received some answers to problems concerning gender, culture and integration issues. The thesis has not presented any final solutions to how we can make the integration function satisfactory. This is a problem in the Swedish society that politicians are struggling with today. It would be interesting to investigate how we can make the integration easier for the parents and children. One conclusion has been that the children have an advantage since they start school. The question is how we can get the parents to have a similar introduction into the Swedish society? How can we teach families about equality among the sexes? One interesting approach would be to ask the immigrants themselves how they think it would be easier to integrate. Also to follow up families and see how the first generation is integrated and compare it to the next generation (supposing that they stay in Sweden). This would be a very interesting thesis that I look forward to reading one day.

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