

Master Thesis Proposal

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THESIS TOPIC: HONOR KILLING OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN - A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION:

In my research, I'll be studying the reasons and motives that lead to honor killings in Palestine. Such acts are carried out against women whose actions are deemed unacceptable or outright taboo by the general community, or maybe by just the family members. The work shall be looking at whether honor killings are strongly correlated to social and religious reasons. As well as this, I'll also be studying what countermeasures the women can possibly take up from their end to face this issue, and also how the judicial system deals with honor killings.

Research question: What are the underlying motives for honor killings in the Palestinian communities? How can we hope to find a solution to this atrocity?

Literature survey:

A) Scholarly: Some of the major sources I shall be utilizing for my thesis work are mentioned underneath. These works certainly assist in laying some solid groundwork to the overall topic being discussed here.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Nadera. “Femicide and the Palestinian Criminal Justice System: Seeds of Change in the Context of State Building?” *Law & Society Review*, vol. 36, no. 3, [Wiley, Law and Society Association], 2002, pp. 577–606, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1512163>.

Hasisi, Badi and Bernstein, Deborah. “Multiple Voices and the Force of Custom on Punishment: Trial of ‘Family Honor Killings’ in Mandate Palestine.” *Law and History Review*, vol. 34, no. 1, [American Society for Legal History, Inc., Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, Cambridge University Press], 2016, pp. 115–54, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24771505>.

Ruggi, Suzanne. “Commodifying Honor in Female Sexuality: Honor Killings in Palestine.” *Middle East Report*, no. 206, Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP), 1998, pp. 12–15, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3012473>.

B) Organizations: The organizations being mentioned here have either been a major driving force when it comes to preventing violence against women, or directly connected to the Palestinian community, if not both.

- Human Rights Watch
- UN Women
- Union of Palestinian Women Committees
- Jerusalem Center for Women
- Palestinian Working Women Society for Development
- UNRWA
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Methodology - Discourse Analysis:

The initial section of the research methodology would consist of going through the relevant literature to violent acts against women in Palestinian communities. From this point onwards, the work shall go into analyzing the press coverage of violence against

women; whether it even exists to begin with, and if so, then how these violent acts are being framed by the news media. Because depending on how the media networks are biased, they might either exaggerate minor transgressions into a huge matter, or possibly the other way where they might omit certain events which might bias the general news reader against the supposed victim in question. Or as mentioned already, the press might choose to skip reporting the incident entirely, in order to pretend there are no issues whatsoever.

The next part of my research would rely on setting up interviews with some of the people in the affected communities. Also, seeing as how some of the successful female business owners or leaders are viewed in a negative light, it would do good to interview such women for a better understanding of the situation on the ground. If things work out well, I would be able to land some interviews with someone in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, possibly even the minister herself.

Conclusion:

Preliminary reading would suggest that honor killings may be a byproduct of how the Palestinian society has been structured, over the last few decades especially. At a cursory glance, one can already sense that libertarianism isn't a cornerstone of Palestinian society. However, more work needs to be done to verify if the findings support my initial guesswork regarding the motives, or if there is an entirely unrelated reason as to why these acts occur. You never know until you *really* know, after all.