

"Honor" Murders - Why the Perps Get off Easy

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On May 31, 1994, Kifaya Husayn, a 16-year-old Jordanian girl, was lashed to a chair by her 32-year-old brother. He gave her a drink of water and told her to recite an Islamic prayer. Then he slashed her throat. Immediately afterward, he ran out into the street, waving the bloody knife and crying, 'I have killed my sister to cleanse my honor.' Kifaya's crime? She was raped by another brother, a 21-year-old man. Her judge and jury? Her own uncles, who convinced her eldest brother that Kifaya was too much of a disgrace to the family honor to be allowed to live."^[1] The murderer was sentenced to fifteen years, but the sentence was subsequently reduced to seven and a half years, an extremely severe penalty by Jordanian standards.

Today, honor killings are prevalent mostly among Muslim populations.² This article analyzes the social, legal, and religious circumstances of honor-killings in one Muslim state—Jordan—where, according to official Jordanian reports, honor crimes lead to the death of 20-25 women yearly. (The real number is probably much higher, with murders hidden as suicide or accidents; a 1998 State Department report estimates the annual number at about 100.)³ Jordan is of particular interest because of a campaign launched in the summer of 1999 to abolish the reduced penalties for honor crimes, which encountered fierce opposition by conservative forces in the Jordanian parliament. This debate made explicit arguments which are normally kept quiet and has implications for Muslims everywhere, including in the West. The article also includes examples from Egyptian and Palestinian societies.

Two Types of Honor

Understanding the nature of these crimes requires a short review of the notion of honor in traditional Arab society, where a distinction is made between two kinds of honor: *sharaf* and *'ird*.⁴ *Sharaf* relates to the honor of a social unit, such as the Arab tribe or family, as well as individuals, and it can fluctuate up or down. A failure by an individual to follow what is defined as adequate moral conduct weakens the social status of the family or tribal unit. On the other hand, the family's *sharaf* may be increased by model behavior such as hospitality, generosity, courage in battle, etc. In sum, *sharaf* translates roughly as the Western concept of "dignity."

In contrast, *'ird* relates only to the honor of women and its value can only decrease. It translates roughly as the Western concept of "chastity" or "purity." And as with chastity or purity, exemplary moral behavior cannot increase a woman's *'ird* but misconduct reduces it. In addition, *'ird* trumps *sharaf*: the honor of the Arab family or tribe, the respect accorded it, can be gravely

damaged when one of its women's chastity is violated or when her reputation is tainted. Consequently, a violation of a woman's honor requires severe action, as Tarrad Fayiz, a Jordanian tribal leader, explains: "A woman is like an olive tree. When its branch catches woodworm, it has to be chopped off so that society stays clean and pure."⁵

What behavior amounts to a violation of family honor is not precisely codified. Basically it involves an unsupervised contact of a female with a male that may be interpreted by society as intimate. Such contact can be trivial: a 15-year old Jordanian girl was stoned to death by her brother who spotted her "walking toward a house where young boys lived alone."⁶ As for rape, society perceives the violated woman not as a victim who needs protection but as someone who debased the family honor, and relatives will opt to undo the shame by taking her life. Failure to do so further dishonors the family.

But murder is not the sole remedy for rape or other violations of a woman's chastity. An alternative is marrying the woman off. The marriage is supposed to be with the person who violated her honor, although marrying the woman to someone else is an alternative. For instance, in cases where the rapist is a brother, and marriage is impossible, the family may find someone else who will marry the victim. This procedure of getting the woman married is felt to rectify the offense supposedly committed by the rape victim against her family and as such has won the legal approval of the state.⁷ If a rapist-victim marriage takes place in Jordan or some other Middle Eastern states, the criminal investigation is stopped, though the rapist may still face criminal charges if he divorces his wife within five years "without a legitimate reason."⁸ This custom enjoys support in some unlikely places; a lawyer at a Cairo human-rights advocacy group says that "putting a rapist in jail does not help anyone ... but if he marries the victim, then it helps both of them, giving them a chance to start fresh and to protect the girl from social stigma."⁹ However, Islamic authorities both in Jordan and Egypt have recently expressed opposition to this law, claiming such a procedure is not prescribed by Islam, and have demanded its abolition.¹⁰

Social Pressure

The murder of women to salvage their family's honor results in good part from the social and psychological pressure felt by the killers, as they explain in their confessions. Murderers repeatedly testify that their immediate social circle, family, clan, village, or others expected them and encouraged them to commit the murder. From society's perspective, refraining from killing the woman debases her relatives. Here are five examples:

A Jordanian murdered his sister who was raped by another brother. The family tried initially to save its honor by marrying the victim to an old man, but this new husband turned her into a prostitute and she escaped from him. The murderer confessed that if he had to go through it all again he would not kill

her, but rather would kill his father, mother, uncles, and all the relatives that pressured him to murder and led him to jail. Instead of killing his sister and going to jail, he said he should have "tied her with a rope like a goat and let her spend her life like that until she dies."¹¹

An Egyptian who strangled his unmarried pregnant daughter to death and then cut her corpse in eight pieces and threw them in the toilet: "Shame kept following me wherever I went [before the murder]. The village's people had no mercy on me. They were making jokes and mocking me. I couldn't bear it and decided to put an end to this shame."¹²

A 25-year-old Palestinian who hanged his sister with a rope: "I did not kill her, but rather helped her to commit suicide and to carry out the death penalty she sentenced herself to. I did it to wash with her blood the family honor that was violated because of her and in response to the will of society that would not have had any mercy on me if I didn't... Society taught us from childhood that blood is the only solution to wash the honor."¹³

A young Palestinian who murdered his sister who had been sexually assaulted: "Before the incident, I drank tea and it tasted bitter because my honor was violated. After the killing I felt much better... I don't wish anybody the mental state I was in. I was under tremendous mental pressure."¹⁴

Another Palestinian who murdered his sister: "I had to kill her because I was the oldest [male] member of the family. My only motive to kill her was [my desire] to get rid of what people were saying. They were blaming me that I was encouraging her to fornicate... I let her choose the way I would get rid of her: slitting her throat or poisoning her. She chose the poison."¹⁵

These testimonies are in line with the analysis of 'Izzat Muhaysin, a psychiatrist at the Gaza Program for Mental Health, who says that the culture of the society perceives one who refrains from "washing shame with blood" as "a coward who is not worthy of living." Many times, he adds, such a person is described as less than a man.¹⁶

In some cases, the decision to commit the murder has a quality of being deputized. In the case of Kifaya Husayn opening this article, the victim's uncles actually appointed her brother to commit the crime on behalf of the family. The murderer in the fifth case cited above felt obliged to commit the crime as the eldest male of the family.

Murder has its intended social effect, permitting the family to regain its original social status. The murderer in the fourth case cited above went on to tell how almost ten thousand people attended his sister's funeral; once she was dead, society again embraced the family.

Leniency for murderers of female relatives, especially wives, is not entirely alien to Western society. For example, in 1989, a New York City judge

sentenced a man to only five years on probation for murdering his adulterous wife, in light of the "great shame and humiliation" the man felt at being cuckolded.¹⁷ In 1994, a Maryland judge sentenced a man to only eighteen months in prison for killing his wife, whom he had caught in adultery—and, in recognition of the stress he must have been under, the judge apologized for giving him such a harsh sentence.¹⁸ However, in the West such cases are an oddity; in Arab states, leniency toward family-honor murderers is the norm and is also codified in the penal law.

Jordan's Legal Code

Some Arab states distinguish legally between honor-murders and other types of murder. The former are dealt with by a separate clause in the penal code that allows the murderers to benefit from reduced penalties or even to avoid punishment altogether. In Jordan, for example, sentences for honor murderers usually range from three months to two years imprisonment.¹⁹ This light treatment follows from the Jordanian penal code, where two articles deal with this matter:

Article 98: He who commits a crime due to extreme anger caused by an illegal, and to some extent dangerous act, committed by the victim benefits from reduced penalty.

Article 340: (a) He who discovers his wife, or one of his maharim [female relatives of such a degree of consanguinity as precludes marriage], while committing adultery with another man and kills, wounds, or injures one or both of them, is exempt from any penalty; (b) He who discovers his wife, or one of his sisters or female relatives, with another in an illegitimate bed, and kills, wounds, or injures [one or both of them] benefits from a reduction of penalty.²⁰

In most cases, murderers build their defense on the Article 98, whose language is somewhat reminiscent of the Western concept of "temporary insanity." Indeed, Jordanian politicians, like Senator Muhammad Kaylani, believe it to be so. "If a man finds his wife in bed with someone else, and he kills her immediately," Kaylani explained, "then he should not be punished because he was overwhelmed by his emotions."²¹ Jordanian courts use the notion of temporary insanity very freely, as can be seen from the following case: A man murdered his sister because he believed her "immoral" behavior had led to his own divorce. The court's transcript says that on October 4, 1999, the defendant was hiding behind parked cars waiting for his sister. When he saw her walking in the street with two men, he "became enraged," drew a gun, and shot her three times in the head. After the murder—when apparently he was not enraged anymore—he sat down next to his sister's corpse, smoked a cigarette, and waited for the police. The court based itself on Article 98 and sentenced him to six months imprisonment because he committed his crime "in an act of fury."²²

In mid-1999, Jordanian human-rights activists managed to enlist the Jordanian crown and government to assist its campaign to win tougher penalties for honor-murderers. Although Jordanian legal history records only one case in which a murderer was exempted from penalty on the basis of Article 340, the human rights campaign focuses on this article because it explicitly condones honor-killings. Its amendment is more than symbolic, however, for the leniency allowed by Article 98 morally follows from Article 340; in the words of Human Rights activist 'Abd al-Hadi Kabariti, Article 340 is "a license to kill."²³ (That said, the campaign also targets Article 98, which the Jordanian government has also promised to reconsider.)

The government's proposals to abolish or amend Article 340 met with fierce resistance from the public and its leaders alike. Clearly, honor murders enjoy the approval of the majority of Jordanian society. A Jordan Times survey revealed that 62 percent of Jordanians oppose the amendment of Article 340, mostly out of fear of "moral corruption in society."²⁴ To answer this fear and improve the bill's prospects, the government appended to it tougher penalties for adultery (Article 282 already stipulates that adultery is an offense punishable by six months to two years imprisonment.) The Jordanian senate passed these changes but the lower house rejected them in November 1999.

During the lower house sessions, it became clear that on the issue of honor killings, the Jordanian members of parliament (MPs) share the sentiments of the public. Most MPs argued that the bill contradicted the conservative nature of Jordanian society. MP Mahmud al-Kharabsha, speaking on behalf of thirty-one fellow MPs, warned that the amendment would harm the Jordanian family and remove the element of deterrence implied by Article 340.²⁵ Some politicians even expressed sympathy with murderers who cannot be expected to control their feelings. "A man, as a rule, cannot tolerate acts of immorality," explained MP 'Abd al-Majid al-Aqtash, "so how can he be expected to tolerate an act of immorality that is related to him personally?"²⁶ "What do you expect from a man who walks into his house and finds his wife in bed with another man," wondered Kharabsha, "to give her a rose?" In fact, Kharabsha also explained that women are "a control tool" because, if they preserve themselves, they can prevent adultery in society as a whole.²⁷ Thus, he accepted the logic of honor-murders as an alternative means to clean the society of corruption.

In an attempt to solve its disagreements with the lower house, the Jordanian senate's constitutional committee came up with the following proposal: apply the same exemption to women who kill husbands caught in adultery. Surprisingly, this proposal, which is unlikely to save women from being killed, won the support of some elements in the women's rights movement. Nevertheless, it was torpedoed by the Islamic Movement, which objected to such equality in the "license to kill." Sheikh 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khayyat, a former Jordanian minister of religious affairs (awqaf), even issued a fatwa (Islamic religious ruling) stipulating that the Shari'a does not give the wife the right to

murder her husband if she catches him with another woman. Such a case, Khayyat explained, does not amount to an offense against the family honor but rather, against the couple's marital life, and the most the wife is allowed to do is to file for a divorce.²⁸ Another Islamic politician, 'Abd al-Baqi Qammu, of the Jordanian senate, further explained "whether we like it or not, women are not equal to men in Islam. Adulterous women are much worse than adulterous men, because women determine the lineage."²⁹ These statements were a prelude to the unequivocal endorsement of honor crimes by the Jordanian Islamic movement.

The Jordanian debate over Article 340 shows how mainstream representatives close ranks with the Islamists on issues related to women. Of the 80 MPs in the lower house, 55—who are mostly affiliated with the government—submitted a proposal to implement the Shari'a as the state's law. The proposal was that the Shari'a would be the law in all areas and not only in this area. Yet it was seen as a signal to the government and the crown not to go too far in regard to Article 340.³⁰

In late January, a second attempt by the government to pass its bill was again blocked by the lower house after a mere three-minute discussion. Hence, the fate of Article 340 is to be determined in a joint Senate-lower house session sometime in the future. However, the joint sessions held since then altogether ignored Article 340, putting a question mark on the government's resolve further to deal with this hot potato.

Does Islam Endorse Honor Killing?

What is the Islamic view on honor killing? The answer to this question depends on whether one adopts a legalistic or a cultural approach in defining Islam. The Jordanian campaign regarding Article 340 generated a revealing dispute among Muslim authorities regarding Islam's role in the evolution of honor killings. The state's religious establishment asserts that honor killing is unconnected to the Islamic religion; in contrast, the Islamist party in the Jordanian parliament sees honor killings as part of Islam's code.

The religious establishment in Jordan views honor killing as a remnant of pre-Islamic Arab tribalism, for Islam prohibits the "taking of the law into one's own hands." The Jordanian king's advisor on Islamic affairs, Sheikh 'Izz ad-Din at-Tamimi, stated that if a woman is proven guilty of adultery, the person entitled to carry out her punishment is "a specialized employee" designated by the government for such a purpose.³¹ The prohibition on taking the law into one's own hands does not amount to a moral denunciation of honor crimes; rather, it is a criticism of the technical transgression of authority. This notion is conventional in the Arab world; thus Egypt's Ifta' Council of Al-Azhar University, a leading religious authority of Sunni Islam, issued a fatwa stating that applying the punishment on a female caught committing adultery or found in an adulterous situation, "should be up to the ruler."³² Following this same

logic, the mufti of Gaza, Sheikh 'Abd al-Karim Kahlut, goes so far as to demand the death penalty for honor murderers, because "they are not authorized to carry out [the punishment] on the women."³³

Religious officials have only minor disagreements regarding the proper Islamic punishment the state should level at adulterers. Hamdi Murad, an official at the Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf explains that if an adulterer, male or female, has a previously unblemished reputation, the proper Islamic punishment is one hundred lashes, while if the adulterer's reputation is blemished, the punishment is stoning to death.³⁴ The Jordanian minister of awqaf (religious foundations), 'Abd as-Salam 'Abadi, finds that in the case of an unmarried female adulterer, "the Shari'a is clear and she should be lashed eighty times."³⁵

The Jordanian Islamic Action Front (IAF) disagrees. In the heat of the Jordanian debate, this parliamentary coalition of several Islamist groups, most of whom affiliate with the Muslim Brethren, issued a fatwa that declared honor-killings are seen as favorable by Islam; male relatives should punish their female relatives and not leave this duty to the state. Ibrahim Zayd al-Kaylani, head of the IAF's Ifta ' committee, said that a man who restrains himself from committing an honor killing, leaving this unpleasant burden to the government, "negates the values of virility advocated by Islam." Article 340, Kaylani added, is based on "the Islamic principle that allows a Muslim to defend his honor, property, and blood."³⁶ Muhammad 'Uwayda, dean of Zarqa University's Shari'a College and a member of the lower house, stated that while the Shari'a does prohibit individuals from taking the law into their own hands, "cases where a man catches his wife committing adultery are the exception."³⁷ The IAF issued a fatwa to the effect that "canceling Article 340 would contradict the Shari'a."³⁸ Thus the Jordanian Islamic Movement has suddenly declared that honor-killings are part of Islamic dogma rather than a detestable remnant of tribal paganism.

The Islamic establishment adopts a legalistic approach to the teachings of Islam, arguing that honor killings are not prescribed in the Qur'an. The Islamists, in contrast, see honor killings in the cultural context of Islamic teachings and find it consistent with "the values of virility."

An Islamic Practice?

For several reasons, the Islamists' view of the relation between Islam and honor killings is more connected to the reality of religious influence on the practice of honor murders than that of the religious establishment. In other words, the influence of Islam on the conduct of Muslims is not limited to what is written in sacred texts; rather, it includes cultural perceptions of Islam. First, there is the fact, noted above, that the Jordanian public and its elected representatives by a nearly 2:1 margin endorse men punishing their women-folk. This custom is, in other words, deeply rooted in a devout society that does not view honor killing as an aberration from the teachings of Islam. Indeed, it is not uncommon to

hear honor murderers claim that they believe what they did was part of their religion.³⁹

Second, if honor killing originated in pre-Islamic Arab tribalism, it has long since been incorporated into Islamic society and thereby become common throughout the Muslim world, including India,⁴⁰ Pakistan, Turkey, and the Balkans. In Muslim Kosovo, for instance, thousands of Muslim women raped by Serbs during the war were abandoned by their husbands. Indeed, as one observer noted, most victims do not report the crimes because in Albanian society rape brings shame on the victims. Women who gave birth as a result of the rape, abandoned their babies and escaped from the hospital to live, "with no identity to prevent the disclosure of their situation, which would turn their life into hell."⁴¹

Third, honor killings fit into a wider pattern of customs that flow from the texture of Muslim life without specifically being required by Islam, yet still enjoy the blessing of Muslim authorities. Female circumcision, now more often known as female genital mutilation, is another example: common mostly in Muslim African countries, it is not mentioned in Islam's sacred texts and did not originate in Islam. Yet in those countries, religious authorities associate this practice with Islam. In other words, female genital mutilation, a clearly pre-Islamic custom, was adopted by modern Islamic authorities, who declared female circumcision to be worthy Islamic conduct. Mufti Sa'id al-Hijawi of Jordan, referring to the practice of female circumcision in one tribe at the Rahma village in south Jordan, ruled that female circumcision is "a noble trait accepted by Islam even though it is not a necessity."⁴² This fatwa is in line with the rulings of many senior Egyptian Islamic authorities in recent decades. Former Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Jadd al-Haq 'Ali Jadd al-Haq, for example, ruled in 1983 that it is impossible to abandon the lessons of the Prophet Muhammad in favor of the teachings of others, even doctors, because medical science evolves and does not remain constant. The responsibility of female circumcision lies with the parents and with those in charge of the girl's welfare. Those who do not abide by it do not do their duty.⁴³ It is noteworthy that Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid at-Tantawi issued a contradictory fatwa in his former capacity as grand mufti of Egypt stating that the decision on female circumcision should defer to the opinion of doctors.⁴⁴ Sheikh Tantawi still holds to this fatwa as the current Sheikh of Al-Azhar.

Fourth, it bears noting that the policy of "not taking the law into one's own hands," which dominates Islamic authorities' circles, is less than an unequivocal moral and religious prohibition of honor murder. The refusal of Islamic authorities to unambiguously denounce honor killings signals to the public that this practice does not necessarily contradict Islam.

Fifth, the already ambiguous Islamic objection to honor killings becomes even less effective when considering the way mainstream Islamic scholars interpret the Qur'anic verse (4:34) that legitimates wife-beating. This verse states: "Men

are responsible for women... So virtuous women obey [their husbands]... Admonish those of them on whose part you apprehend disobedience, and keep them out of your bed, and beat them." Various Islamic rulers have contemplated this verse in an attempt to regulate the beatings. Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, dean of Shari'a at the University of Qatar and a leader of the Muslim Brethren, advocates non-painful beating:

If the husband senses that feelings of disobedience and rebelliousness are rising against him in his wife, he should try his best to rectify her attitude by kind words, gentle persuasion, and reasoning with her. If this is not helpful, he should sleep apart from her, trying to awaken her agreeable feminine nature so that serenity may be restored, and she may respond to him in a harmonious fashion. If this approach fails, it is permissible for him to beat her lightly with his hands, avoiding her face and other sensitive parts. In no case should he resort to using a stick or any other instrument that might cause pain and injury.⁴⁵

Other Islamic scholars have come up with their own recommendations on wife-beating. Some rule out the breaking of bones and stress that in no case should the beatings be accompanied with "verbal assault."⁴⁶ The Islamic rulings section of the Palestinian Authority's daily newspaper forbids stabbing.⁴⁷ There is a consensus that the husband should avoid leaving bruises on his wife's body, and all scholars agree that wife-beating is the husband's last resort. Still, it is recommended when a couple finds itself on the verge of divorce: "It is better for the husband to beat his wife a little, to make her feel she was wrong, than to destroy the family through divorce."⁴⁸

The faith, in short, cannot be confined to the narrow boundaries of the Qur'an and other early holy sources. It includes developments and interpretations that occurred after the sacred texts appeared. If this cultural reading of the teachings of Islam is accepted, then the role of the mainstream Islamic establishment itself is revealed in nurturing the "values of virility" that lead to honor killings.

The Outside World

Although the movement to end honor killings must come from within Muslim societies, they can be helped by the outside world. The international community should, first and foremost, establish its stand on this problem. A United Nations report issued in January 2000 dealing with extra judicial, summary, or arbitrary executions came close to establishing honor killings as a violation of basic human rights. The special rapporteur, Asma Jahangir, condemned honor killings as "practices affecting the right to life."⁴⁹ Her report specifically condemned governments which maintain exemption and token penalties for honor murderers; she commended the Jordanian government and crown for their initiative to amend the Jordanian penal code to conform with international standards.

But a U.S. immigration court in December 1997 did not accept the view that the existence of honor killings constitutes a reason for granting asylum. A Jordanian woman who had engaged in premarital sex fled to the United States for fear of being murdered. The court record indicates that her father asked her brothers to kill her, and she claimed asylum on this basis.⁵⁰ To be eligible for asylum, she had to show that honor killings are a general pattern of persecution of a social group defined in part by gender, and that the persecutor is either the government itself or a group the government is unable or unwilling to control. The judge did not accept that this situation obtained. In August 1999, the Board of Immigration Appeals upheld the judge's ruling and maintained that the woman's fear of being killed was speculative and resulted from "a personal family dispute," rather than official or semi-official persecution. Thus, the Board noted "that the Jordanian government attempts to provide some degree of protection to its female subjects and to punish those who harm women for violating societal norms," even if it does not do so to the extent that it should. (In contrast, Fauziya Kasinga, an African woman fleeing her country in fear of female circumcision, won American asylum in 1996.)⁵¹

Despite the successful Kasinga case, it seems that U.S. immigration authorities are still puzzled by non-political asylum appeals. Legitimate, though not necessarily justified, fears of mass immigration collide with the natural inclination to help an individual in distress. In the Kasinga case, the judicial authorities emphasized moral resolve; in the Jordanian woman's case, they emphasized the language of the law. The difference may be traced to outside the courthouse. The campaign against female genital mutilation has won a high media profile in recent years with women testifying to terrible personal experiences.⁵² The lack of such a media profile concerning honor killing may have harmed the Jordanian woman's case.

Conclusion

The honor murder phenomenon has become a social plague in many Muslim societies around the world. Despite its clear pre-Islamic pagan origins, contemporary Islamic authorities usually refrain from unequivocally condemning it. Some important Islamic scholars in Jordan have even gone further by declaring honor-crimes an Islamic imperative that derives from the "values of virility advocated by Islam." This unwelcome development does not come as a surprise when the almost consensual approval of both Muslim public and leadership is considered. It may be a while before reduced sentences for honor murderers are abolished from the laws of Arab states. Yet the campaign against Article 340 of the Jordanian penal code has already proved successful in at least one important aspect: it shattered the silence that shielded these atrocities.

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¹ Chicago Tribune, May 3, 1998.

- ² United Nations Report of the Special Rapporteur, Ms. Asma Jahangir, on Civil and Political Rights, Including Questions of Disappearances and Summary Executions (New York: United Nations, Jan. 2000), p. 27.
- ³ The Washington Post, Feb. 2, 2000.
- ⁴ Joseph Ginat, *Blood Revenge: Family Honor, Mediation, and Outcasting* (Brighton, England: Sussex Academic Press, 1997), pp. 129-130.
- ⁵ The Jordan Times (Amman), Feb. 15, 2000.
- ⁶ The Jordan Times, June 15, 2000.
- ⁷ Such legal procedures are apparently common in traditional societies in other parts of the world, including Latin America: see The New York Times, Mar. 8, 1997.
- ⁸ 'Iyad al-Luzi, director general of Jordan's Justice Ministry, Al-Ayyam (Ramallah), Oct. 7, 1998.
- ⁹ The New York Times, June 20, 1999.
- ¹⁰ Al-Hayat al-Jadida (Ramallah), Apr. 5, 1999; also the Mufti of Gaza, Sheikh 'Abd al-Karim Kahlut, Al-Hayat al-Jadida, Apr. 22, 1999.
- ¹¹ Ash-Sh'ab (Ramallah), July 24, 2000.
- ¹² Al-Hayat al-Jadida, May 6, 2000.
- ¹³ Al-Ayyam, June 1, 2000.
- ¹⁴ Al-Hayat al-Jadida, June 12, 1999.
- ¹⁵ Ar-Risala (Gaza), June 11, 1998.
- ¹⁶ Al-Ayyam, June 1, 2000.
- ¹⁷ Newsday, Apr. 1, 1989.
- ¹⁸ The New York Times, Oct. 21, 1994.
- ¹⁹ The Jordan Times, July 22, 1999.
- ²⁰ According to The Star (Amman), Nov. 30, 1999, similar laws exist in the Palestinian Authority, Egypt (Article 237 of the Penal Code), Syria (Article 548), and Lebanon (Article 562).
- ²¹ The Jordan Times, Nov. 11, 1999.
- ²² The Jordan Times, Feb. 15, 2000.
- ²³ The Jordan Times, Mar. 10, 2000.
- ²⁴ The Jordan Times, Nov. 9, 1999.
- ²⁵ Ad-Dustur (Amman), Nov. 30, 1999.
- ²⁶ Ad-Dustur, Nov. 30, 1999.
- ²⁷ The Jordan Times, May 18, 2000.
- ²⁸ Ad-Dustur, Nov. 30, 1999.
- ²⁹ The Jordan Times, Nov. 30, 1999.
- ³⁰ Al-Ayyam, Feb. 25, 2000.
- ³¹ The Jordan Times, Nov. 9, 1999.
- ³² The Jordan Times, Feb. 24, 2000.
- ³³ Ar-Risala, July 11, 1998.
- ³⁴ The Jordan Times, Mar. 14, 2000.
- ³⁵ The Jordan Times, Nov. 30, 1999.
- ³⁶ Al-Quds (Jerusalem), Feb. 23, 2000.
- ³⁷ The Jordan Times, Feb. 25, 2000.
- ³⁸ The Jordan Times, Feb. 24, 2000.
- ³⁹ Al-Hayat al-Jadida, June 12, 1999.
- ⁴⁰ The Hindu, Apr. 25, 1999.
- ⁴¹ Al-Quds, Jan. 17, 2000.
- ⁴² The Jordan Times, Dec. 2, 1999.
- ⁴³ Gad al-Haq, Gad al-Haq 'Ali: *Khitan al-banat, Al-fatawi al-islamiyyah min dar al-ifta' al-masriyyah, Wazarat al-awqaf*, Cairo, 9(1983): 3119-3125, quoted in Sami A. ad-Deeb Abu Sahliah, "To Mutilate in the Name of Jehovah or Allah: Legitimization of Male and Female Circumcision," July 1994, <http://www.cirp.org/library/cultural/aldeeb1/>.
- ⁴⁴ "Egypt: Court Asserts Doctors' Right to Perform Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)," July 1997, http://www.equalitynow.org/action_eng_8_3.html.
- ⁴⁵ Yusef al-Karadhawi, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam* (Beirut: The Holy Koran Publishing House, 1985), p. 205.

⁴⁶ Ar-Risala (Gaza), Oct. 1, 1998.

⁴⁷ Al-Hayat al-Jadida, Oct. 2, 1998.

⁴⁸ Ar-Risala, Oct. 1, 1998.

⁴⁹ U.N. Report on Civil and Political Rights, pp. 27-29.

⁵⁰ The Washington Post, Feb 2, 2000.

⁵¹ The Washington Post, Feb. 2, 2000; Board of Immigration Appeals at http://www.uchastings.edu/cgrs/law/bia/a-_bia.pdf.

⁵² Waris Dirie and Cathleen Miller, *Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Journey of a Desert Nomad* (New York: William Morrow & Co, 1999).