Challenging Gender Roles within Humanitarian Crisis:

Predominant Patriarchal Structures before the Humanitarian Crisis and its Relation to the Identity and Experiences of Women refugees during and after the Humanitarian Crisis. A Case Study of Syria.

Written by: Amer Skeiker

Supervised by: Lisbeth Larsson Lidén

NOHA International Masters in Humanitarian Action

Uppsala University, Sweden

December: 2015
This thesis is submitted for obtaining the Master’s Degree in International Humanitarian Action. By submitting the thesis, the author certifies that the text is from his/her hand, does not include the work of someone else unless clearly indicated, and that the thesis has been produced in accordance with proper academic practices.
Abstract

One purpose of this study is to examine how predominant patriarchal practices can affect the experiences of women refugees. This study also examines how the gender roles and patriarchal practices may change during a conflict. A theoretical framework was constructed to examine the patriarchal practices through radical feminism approach. Also, possible ways of social change within a conflict is examined. Empirically, the Syrian conflict is selected for the case study. In order to answer the research questions, 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted to track any possible social change in the patriarchal practices in Syria during the conflict in comparison to before the conflict. The main two findings of this study are that a change did occur in the patriarchal practices in which women did achieve more freedom and more independence during the conflict in Syria. However, there were increased patriarchal practices when women became refugees outside Syria, in which there was less freedom and less independence for Syrian women, especially the less educated women.
# Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations.................................................................................................................. 6  

Chapter One: Introduction and Research Process ........................................................................... 7  
1.1 Introduction............................................................................................................................... 7  
1.2 Research Process....................................................................................................................... 8  
   1.2.1 Research Problem.............................................................................................................. 8  
   1.2.2 Aim and Research Objectives.............................................................................................. 9  
   1.2.3 Research Questions............................................................................................................. 9  
   1.2.4 Research Justifications and its Relevance to Humanitarian Field................................. 10  
   1.2.5 Methodology..................................................................................................................... 10  
      - Sampling Procedures........................................................................................................... 10  
      - Interview Procedures.......................................................................................................... 11  
      - Research Ethics.................................................................................................................. 11  
      - Analysis of the Interviews................................................................................................ 12  
   1.2.6 Research Limitations........................................................................................................ 12  
   1.2.7 Research Review.............................................................................................................. 13  
   1.2.8 Research Outline............................................................................................................. 13  

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework on Feminist Theory, Gender roles, Social Dynamics and the Humanitarian Field .................................................................................................................. 15  
2.1 Definitions.................................................................................................................................. 15  
2.2 Humanitarian Projects and Development Projects..................................................................... 15  
2.3 Patriarchy and the Feminist Theory............................................................................................. 16  
2.4 The Idea of the “Passive Woman” and Decision Making............................................................. 18  
2.5 The Humanitarian Field and the Patriarchal Practices................................................................. 19  
2.6 Pre-Crisis Patriarchal Practices and its Effects on the Social Dynamics during Crisis.............. 21  
2.7 Incorporating Gender into the Humanitarian Field...................................................................... 22  
2.8 Women refugees and Integration............................................................................................... 24  
2.9 Chapter Conclusion.................................................................................................................... 26  

Chapter Three: Gender and Patriarchal Practices before the Arab Spring............................................... 28  
3.1 Examining Patriarchy before the Arabic Spring in the Arab World......................................... 28  
3.2 Gender and Patriarchal Practices during the Arabic Spring....................................................... 30  
3.3 Chapter Conclusion.................................................................................................................... 32  

The Empirical Part

Chapter Four: Background about the Conflict in Syria and the Syrian Women within the Crisis ........... 34
4.1 Background about the Conflict in Syria

4.2 Women Participation and Feminist Organizations in Syria

4.3 Chapter Conclusion

Chapter Five: Research Finding

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Part One of the Interviews: Syrian Women before the War Inside of Syria

5.2.1 Daily Challenges

5.2.2 Patriarchal Practices

5.2.3 Participation in the Social and Political Life

5.3 Part Two of the Interviews: Syrian Women during the War Inside of Syria

5.3.1 Daily Challenges

5.3.2 Patriarchal Practices

5.3.3 Positioning of Syrian Woman in the Social and Political Participation

5.4 Part Three of the Interviews: The Experiences of Syrian Women as Refugees Outside of Syria

5.4.1 Patriarchal Practices among the Refugees in Al Za’atri Camp in Jordan

5.4.2 Patriarchal Practices among Refugees in Turkey

5.4.3 Interaction with Humanitarian Organizations

5.4.4 Integration in Sweden

5.5 Answering the Research Questions

5.5.1 Answering the First Research Question

5.5.2 Answering the Second Research Question

5.5.3 Answering the Third Research Question

Chapter Six: Conclusion

References

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics - Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Aid Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA</td>
<td>Free Syrian Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescents Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>International Rescue Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Islamic State in Iraq and Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring And Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and Northern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDA</td>
<td>National Defense Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>Svenska För Invandrare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Work Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One: Introduction and Research Process

1.3 Introduction

Syria has been subjected to the dictatorship of the Ba’ath party since 1963, and has suffered under the Assad family dictatorship since 1970. This dictatorship did not only confiscate people’s political freedom or people’s right to participate in the political life, but also greatly impacted the social and economic life of people. With the start of the Arab Spring in December 2010, people in Syria felt that they had the rights and justifications to start demonstrating against the Assad regime. The demonstrations started in March 2011 and as emphasized by Kilo (2013) the Syrian revolution was never only about the creation of a democratic system. It was also about students aspiring for better education, poor people seeking opportunity in life, and women playing more of a central role in the society.

This thesis encompasses social change and gender. It focuses on Syrian women, as both Syrian citizens participating in the social and economic development, and as Syrian refugees who are trying to formulate to themselves an identity. It is assumed in this thesis that the humanitarian field does not only cover short term relief programs, but it also covers long term development programs. The humanitarian field is wider and more complicated than only short term relief programs. Many crises and disasters run on the long term, also, many programs continue after the crises and the disaster itself, such as reconciliation programs. Usually these long term humanitarian programs have a long-term effect on the people and the societies benefiting from these programs. This long term effect should force the humanitarian field to address the development impact on the society.

Syrian society has been suffering from a patriarchal structure from which not only women were suffering from it, but also the poor compared to the rich and the minority compared to the majority. And the Syrian revolution, although shifted into a brutal war, in its roots, it is a revolution that aims to social change in as much as political change. This aspired social change in contrasts to the old patriarchal social structure that prevailed before the demonstrations was one of the reasons to initiate the demonstration. However, casting aside patriarchal structure, changing gender roles and the social dynamics is a very long process that will last for long time.
I will attempt in this thesis to discuss the effects of the patriarchal structure on the identity and experiences on women refugees in Syria. I will use the radical feminism approach which focuses on patriarchy and link it to the humanitarian field. I will also use the theoretical perspective to construct a set of questions for the interviews with female and male refugees in order to find out empirically how the patriarchal structure in Syria affected the Syrian women as both participants in the demonstrations and as refugees.

1.2 Research Process

1.2.1 Research Problem

The gender approach to the humanitarian field asks the question of “How gender relations impinge on the experience and recovery from disaster” (Enarson & Morrow, 1998 A, P.3). There are many research approaches with the aim of covering issues of gender and incorporating it to the humanitarian field. However, most researchers tend to study gender within the humanitarian field in a way that women are vulnerable and need more protection, also, researchers tend to be more interested in finding or analyzing ways to increase the protection for women, such as Aolain (2011, P: 1-23) and Freedman (2011, P: 549-606). Such research is important, nevertheless, it tends to focus on the humanitarian crisis itself and isolating it from its social context, as explained by Enarson & Morrow (1998 A, P: 2) “Disaster researchers have concentrated largely on the single, unexpected event in isolation from the sociopolitical and cultural pre-disaster context and on rebounding social systems and individual stress”. On the other hand, research that has taken into account the cultural pre-disaster context are indecisive and diverse, and the results vary among the different cultures and different geographical areas where the humanitarian crises strike, for example De La Puente (2011, P: 365-377) and Abdi (2014, P: 459-483).

The main problem of this thesis is to analyze how the pre-disaster social structure affected the women refugees during the humanitarian disaster and post-disaster, while the social context itself might change during the humanitarian disaster and post-disaster.
1.2.2 Aim and Research Objectives

The primary objective of this thesis is to examine, with the crisis in Syria as a case study, how and why pre-disaster social dynamics affected the identity of women refugees during disaster and post-disaster events.

Theoretically, the objective is to review and analyze the incorporation of feminist theory into humanitarian studies, therefore I will use the epistemology of the radical feminism approach which focuses on the analysis of the patriarchal structure in a certain context to give an understanding of the social dynamics and the gender problem. According to Walby (1990, P: 3) radical feminism explains the predominant patriarchal structure within a society. Therefore, I will analyze the patriarchal practices and patriarchal structure within the humanitarian crisis in Syria to gain a better understanding of the impact of constructed gender roles and power relations within a humanitarian crisis. Another objective is to examine the social dynamics of a humanitarian crisis and its relation to the social dynamics pre the crisis. I will apply the theoretical framework to the Syrian case in the pre-crisis social context and during the crisis. Another objective is to track any possible changes, if any, in the gender identity of women refugees when moving from the home country to another country with different social structure.

Empirically, the objective is to apply theoretical concepts of gender roles, social dynamics and patriarchy on the Syrian case study. And in order to achieve that, interviews will be conducted with female and male refugees from Syria.

1.2.3 Research Questions

The questions of the thesis are:

- What were the patriarchal structures before the conflict in Syria, and to which extent has it had an effect on the women’s identity and the gender roles during the conflict?
- Did the patriarchal structure and the social dynamics change during the conflict, and if so how has the interaction changed between female and male refugees?
- Did the predominant patriarchal practices or the new ones, if any, have an impact on the integration of Syrian women refugees in the Swedish society? And if so in what way?
1.2.4 Research Justifications and its Relevance to Humanitarian Field

The main focus of this thesis is gender roles and social dynamics which are related to both the humanitarian and development fields. The urgent nature of humanitarian work predetermines the nature of services that the humanitarian organizations need to provide to the victims. Usually the nature of humanitarian work is an aid provider, especially at the early stages of the humanitarian crisis. This implies that humanitarian activists separate themselves from the social/development work and focus only on providing short term help to the victims.

However, many conflicts are protracted, for example the crisis in Syria. I will argue theoretically in this thesis that social or development projects must be linked to humanitarian work. In this thesis I will attempt to examine the pre-crisis social dynamics and the social dynamics during the crisis by using the feminist theory, and I will attempt to analyze the way these social dynamics affected the women refugees and whether the gender roles have changed or not. Hopefully this thesis will contribute to shifting the way of thinking about humanitarian work from aid providing agents to contributors of social change. Also, I hope that this thesis will challenge the idea of women as a vulnerable group and therefore humanitarian work should focus on them. Rather I would argue that humanitarian work should incorporate and engage with women to help them create social change.

1.2.5 Methodology

Most research about refugees, social dynamics and gender roles has been an ethnographical research with the use of interviews as the main source of data, for example see, De La Puente (2011, P: 365-377) and Abdi (2014, P: 459-483). However, in this thesis a narrative approach within the interviews rather than an ethnographical one was used to answer the research question. According to Schweitzer et al (2007, P: 287) the narrative approach “includes an exploration of identity as well as the social context in relation to significant others, the broader community, and the world at large”.

Sampling Procedures

In total 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Five interviews were conducted with Syrian refugees living in Turkey (not living in camps) and the interviews were made through Skype calls with four women and one man. These interviews were
organized with the support of Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE). Seven interviews were made with Syrian refugees living in Jordan (all of them living in the Za’atri Camp). The interviews were conducted through Skype calls with four women and three men, and they were organized with the support of Ta’alia. Also, a total number of 14 face to face interviews were conducted, in both Stockholm and Uppsala, five of which were organized with support of Action Aid-Sweden, and nine interviews were conducted with refugees and were approached during their Swedish language classes at Svenska För Invandrare (SFI). The participants were all Syrians and seven of them were women and seven were men.

All participants received the refugee status and all of them lived for at least two years during the war in Syria before moving outside. The average age of females who participated in the interviews was thirty four with educational variations from primary education to PhD level; also their marital status varied from single to widowed. The average age for men who participated in the interviews was thirty three with an education which varied from primary education to master degree level; also their marital status varied from singles to widowers.

**Interview Procedures**

The interviews were semi structured which gave the interviewers and the interviewees a certain amount of freedom to say whatever they wanted within a certain topic. According to Robson (2011, P: 279-280) in semi structured interviews, the researcher must prepare an interview guide “that serves as a check list of topics to be covered and a default wording and order for the questions, but the wording and order are often substantially modified based on the flow of the interview, and additional unplanned questions are asked to follow up on what the interviewees says”. An interview guide was prepared to achieve a valid and reliable picture of women’s identity experiences, and gender roles as well as the men’s perceptions on gender roles. The interview guide was prepared with questions and main points that the interview should cover. All interviews were in Arabic, and the translation was done by me.

**Research Ethics**

The main ethical consideration during the interviews was confirming the confidentiality of the interviewees, in which all participants were given confirmation of confidentiality.
at the beginning of the interview. Each interviewee was giving a code name such as W1 for the first woman I interviewed. No real names or personal information that could identify the interviewee was written or saved.

The main challenge during the interviews was to create an ambiance of trust, giving that to many interviewees the topics discussed during the interviews were personal and family related. The confidentiality assurances by keeping their identity anonymous helped in creating an atmosphere of trust. Also, explaining the aim of the research and the fact that I am a student—rather than a researcher working for a government or political institution—helped in regards of creating an environment of confidence.

I did not have control over the place of the interview when it was conducted using Skype video call; however, I was able to confirm that at least the interviewees were alone in the room. During the face to face interviews, the interviews were conducted in a place of the choice of the interviewees where they felt most comfortable, which most of the time was in a café that they chose.

**Analysis of the Interviews**

In order to analyze the primary data collected from the interviews an empirical phenomenology approach was utilized, which is a qualitative approach that linked the process of the storytelling within the interview from the participant to the theory. According to Aspers (2015, P: 1) “empirical phenomenology proceeds from the assumption that a scientific explanation must be grounded in the meaning structure of those studied. This means that the actors’ perspective is central in the analysis. A further assumption is that the social world is socially constructed, an argument which is generally accepted in contemporary social science. Finally, empirical phenomenology acknowledges the central role of theory in research, as well as the role of unintended consequences. Hence, empirical phenomenology is not just storytelling from the actors’ perspective”.

**1.2.6 Research Limitations**

The thesis is inductive and analytical and policy recommendation is not the aim. An ethnographical approach to examine the patriarchal structures is time demanding. Therefore mainly qualitative interview technique was used for data from the field. Although the role of humanitarian organizations working in the field was tackled, the
focus was more on the refugees themselves rather than giving an institutional analysis of the work of the humanitarian organizations.

1.2.7 Research Review

De La Puente’s (2011, P: 365-377) main argument is that the women of Darfur do not only suffer from the consequences of war but also from the traditional patriarchal structure. But through the involvement of international humanitarian organizations and nongovernmental organizations in the humanitarian intervention in Darfur, women have learned more about their rights, their potential roles in the society, and their rights as well as the involvement in decision making. This change that happened to women in Darfur is basically challenging the traditional patriarchal structures in Sudan. The author also argues that the international humanitarian organizations in Darfur should emphasize this new knowledge about women rights and treat the women in Darfur as active players in the society rather than only victims. In addition to that, the author argues that the international humanitarian organizations should have long term goals for the social change in Darfur and should not look at its mission in Darfur as only a short term mission of relief and providing immediate help to refugees in camps.

Another paper is conducted by Abdi (2014, P: 459-483) who tests whether the migration of the Somali refugees to the United States strengthen the patriarchal consciousness when living in the United States or if it does actually change towards a more gender equal relationship. The author explains the social dynamics of the Somali refugee community in the United States and he finds that the Somali community in order to integrate more within the new host society; they had to have a patriarchal bargaining. The author also finds that women had more tendencies toward challenging the patriarchal structure as for example they try to find an independent economic life in the United States. On the other hand, women tend to preserve and accept a certain degree of gender inequality that prefers men over women. Also he mentions that although new gender structures unfold the effect of religious leaders and elders among the Somali refugees community still exists. This in turn tends to result in more unequal gender relationships between men and women and stronger patriarchal ties.

1.2.8 Research Outline

This thesis will consist of a theoretical perceptive which will include:
Chapter two will cover the theoretical framework on the interaction between feminist theory, gender roles and the humanitarian field. My intention is to explain what the feminist research is, why radical feminism is important to explain the patriarchy structure, and how to incorporate it into the humanitarian field. Also, this chapter will cover humanitarian work and gender. How does the humanitarian field address at gender issues? Other issues to be addressed are, how patriarchal structures could be linked to the humanitarian field, and what effects the patriarchal structures have on the crisis. Also, I will briefly cover the issue of integration as some of the interviews took place here in Sweden. It apparently became difficult to avoid talking about personal experiences of integration brought up by the interviewees during the interviews. Chapter three will analyze how researchers have studied the problem of patriarchy before the Arabic Spring, and how their approach to study it has changed after the Arabic Spring. Also, a review will be conducted about the feminist organizations and positioning of Syrian women in the Syrian revolution.

The Empirical Part will include:

Chapter four will cover a background about the conflict in Syria as well as the women participation in the demonstrations. Chapter five will provide a discussion and an analysis of the empirical investigation. In which I will present the interviews on patriarchy and gender roles during the crisis in Syria and the identity of women refugees and their experiences in the neighboring countries or in Sweden. The answers to each of the research questions will be given based on the analysis of the outcome of the interviews. Finally there will be a presentation of the conclusions.
Theoretical Perspective:

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework on Feminist Theory, Gender roles, Social Dynamics and the Humanitarian Field

2.1 Definitions

For the purpose of this thesis the following definitions will be used:

Radical Feminism: According to Rowland & Klein (1996, P: 10-13) radical feminism is a women-centeredness approach for social problems that focus on women’s experiences. And the main assumption to the radical feminism is that the main cause for the oppression and inequality of women is patriarchy. Therefore patriarchy must be studied, examined and analyzed.

Patriarchy: According to Said-Foqahaa (2011, P: 235) “traditional patriarchy is built upon a hierarchy of roles and authorities and is represented in the power of the old over the young, men over women, the rich over the poor, and the majority over minorities”. However, in this thesis only the power of men over women will be taken into account.

Gender roles: According to O’Neil (1981, P:203) gender roles are “behaviors, expectations, and role sets defined by society as masculine or feminine which are embodied in the behavior of the individual man or woman and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or females”.

2.2 Humanitarian Projects and Development Projects

Both humanitarian projects and development projects are interlinked and the differentiation between the goals of the two is not very clear. Redfield & Bornstein (2011, P: 2-5) discuss the differences between humanitarian projects and development projects in which they differentiate between the two in a way that humanitarian projects answer the question of “what is the present” and development projects answer the question of “how we want it to be in the future”. This shows that humanitarian projects focus on the short term situation and the development projects have more of a long term view of how the situation in a certain context will be? This statement might be true if we think of humanitarian projects as only relief projects that aim to provide the minimum requirements for the victims to survive. But when studying a certain crisis and not only focusing on the results of the crisis i.e. victims or refugees, or limit the crisis to only a
short term phenomena then we are talking about an interlinked project between humanitarianism and development.

Davies (1992, P: 152) states that “war is part of social experience and it is embedded in social life”. Humanitarian projects try to make this social experience of the crisis as less harmful as possible which means that the humanitarian projects try to affect this social experience. Development projects on the other hand take into account, when addressing developmental policies, the social experience of the society during a certain crisis and its effects after the crisis.

Also, Oliver-Smith (2011, P: 29) highlights that “every society is a dynamic arena of contesting interests organized along some lines of differentiation, whether they be only age and gender or in more complex situations, color, class, caste, religion, ethnicity, kinship or any of the other myriad ways in which humans group themselves and distinguish others”. Applying the previous statement on a crisis situation we could conclude that during a crisis, the contesting interests intensify because of the extreme situation lived by people. The old dynamics of society adjust and evolve into a completely new culture or even a culture derived from the old one. However, a change in the culture is almost definite because of a crisis, which leads to a social change on the short term and the long term. Therefore both humanitarian projects and development projects must take this social change into account.

2.3 Patriarchy and the Feminist Theory

The feminist approach within social sciences is basically to put an emphasis on women’s identity and women’s experiences. According to Hesse-Bibber et al (2004, P: 3) “research conducted within a feminist framework is attentive to issues of differences, the question of social power, resistance to scientific oppression, and a commitment to political activism and social justice”, such issues are applicable to the humanitarian field, for example the question of social power within camps among men and women.

Within the feminist theory there are many approaches to conduct research, for example radical feminism, Marxist feminism, positivism, postmodern feminism or postcolonial feminist. Each approach tries to explain the inequality problem from a different perspective, for example Marxist feminism explains inequality through social classes
and capitalism, while radical feminism explains inequality through patriarchy (Walby, 1990, P: 3).

The main approach that I will use in this thesis is radical feminism which according to Walby (1990, P: 3) “… is distinguished by its analysis of gender inequality in which men as a group dominate women as a group and are the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women. This system of domination, called patriarchy, does not derive from any other system of social inequality; for instance, it is not a by-product of capitalism”. This means that the radical feminism gives more focus on the analysis of patriarchal structure and practices and how it affects the experiences of women, and less focus (although it is always included) is given to the reasons of why we apprehend that such a patriarchal structure exists.

According to Harding (2004, P: 186) radical feminism “does not conceptualize the importance of differences among women or among men created by ethnicity, racism, imperialism, heterosexism, and other cultural forces”. These conceptualizations of differences are found in other approaches in the feminist theory such as Marxist feminists or the dual theory. Therefore, radical feminism focuses on patriarchy and it deals with patriarchy as existing phenomena where men oppress women regardless of the social, religious, cultural reasons that lead to the patriarchal structural. In a way, radical feminism tries to understand the existing patriarchal structure rather than going through the reasons of its existence.

Early radical feminists refused to include men in their scope of research, because to them “all men appear deeply and firmly implicated in women’s oppression because they receive the benefits of male supremacist culture, its institution and practices, whether or not they actively or consciously engage in sexist acts or the construction of androcentric conceptual frameworks” (Harding, 2004, P: 184). However, a queer solution was given to the problem of including men in their research in a way that men could actually become “a different kind of men, or perhaps even better, a human, a person, in a truly gender-neutral sense” (Harding, 2004, P: 184). To the radical feminist that solution is not only a solution to include men in their research but rather a solution to the whole patriarchal problem and it would create a post-patriarchal structure, which would lead to a change in the whole structure of the society.
According to Epure (2014, P: 518) “for the developing and third world countries especially, radical feminism is possibly the best option to be adopted initially to "get things going" as one would say”. Therefore, I will use the epistemology adopted by radical feminist in which, I will analyze the patriarchal practices in Syria and track the effects of these predominant patriarchal practices on the social dynamics during the war. In addition, I will analyze how the identity of the Syrian women refugee has been affected by these practices and to what extent men were aware of these patriarchal practices and to what extent they contributed to change it. It is also important to mention that according to Enarson et al (2007, P: 131) feminist theories in general and the humanitarian field work well together as they use the same terminology such as “social power, privilege, domination, vulnerability, empowerment, political economy, and social change”.

2.4 The Idea of the “Passive Woman” and Decision Making

Enarson et al (2007, P: 131-132) emphasizes that in many underdeveloped countries women’s “disaster vulnerability cannot be understood outside patriarchy”, as herein women’s dependency is rooted. This dependency of women on men, household, relatives and community creates the image of dependent woman or in other words a passive woman. Mirkin (1984, P: 40) explains the idea of passive woman from the patriarchal point of view as “men (or at least some men) were supposed to be in charge of ruling the country and running business, but women were seen as being in charge of "what everything was for"”. This explanation shows how patriarchal practices work, one in which men are in control of the important resources and the women are just receivers and in control of what is given to them.

The image of women being passive also has an implication on their participation in the decision making process. Usually in developing countries men are free to decide for themselves and they have full control on the decision making process. This could be due to many reasons, for example, the economic power over women, the religious power that favor men over women, or the socially rooted status that men are superior over women. This full control of the decision making process by men, makes women have less power in decision making, as men possess the power in society to decide for women. Said-Foqahaa (2011, P: 236) explains that this lack of access to decision making creates an institutional vicious circle in which “in light of the absolute and
relative absence of women’s participation in decision-making positions, it is a consequence that institutions and organizations do not take women’s lives and needs into account. As such, women are unable to hold decision-makers accountable. These institutions, thus, continue to produce policies against the rights of women, leading to an increase in the gap between women and men.”

To break this vicious circle the term empowerment arises as according to Al-Mustafa (2014, P: 50-52) the term empowerment gives an opportunity to access the decision making process. The idea of empowerment is rooted in both the development field and the humanitarian field in which within a conflict most humanitarian projects have a component of empowering women refugees. Such an empowerment component is usually on the economic level which on the long run would create also a social empowerment and therefore more access to the decision making process.

2.5 The Humanitarian Field and the Patriarchal Practices

Fothergill (1998, P: 11) states that “disaster settings is considered a unique laboratory or a strategic site in which to learn about social phenomenon, examine social relationships and reveal social problems”. This statement shows that the identity and the social experiences of the victims/refugees are not generated during the crisis/disaster but are linked to the previous social relations. According to Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992, P: 393) patriarchy “is a fluid and shifting set of social relations in which men oppress women, in which different men exercise varying degrees of power and control, and in which women resist in various ways”. The patriarchal practices of men as the main authority over women, old over young and majority over minority are embedded in the social life. Since patriarchal practices exist in the pre-crisis social dynamics, theoretically, it will exist during the crisis. However, when a crisis strikes the social relations and gender roles shift and evolve, even more, the society reinvents itself (Solnit, 2009, P: 162-164). This reinvention of the social dynamics in the society might give an opportunity for “patriarchal bargaining”, which according to Kandiyoti (1988, P: 274-276) is the process of gaining or taking power from men and giving it to women. This process is always started by the women, i.e. women must initiate the process in order for it to be sustained.

However, different research shows different results in comparing the patriarchal practices before the crisis and during the crisis. For example Daley (1991, P: 248-249),
in his paper about refugees in Tanzania mentions “in periods of crisis or in new socio-economic environments patriarchy tends to intensify, and women are said to assume lower social profiles. Often women, like children, are ascribed passive roles as victims, ill-equipped to cope with new and demanding situations. This negative perception of women’s capacity for change is compounded by the male bias inherent in refugee and state-sponsored development programmes”. This passive view about women, gender roles and social dynamics during crisis gives a very negative view on crisis as an opportunity for social change as it deals with women as victims who need to be taken care of.

A second result of patriarchal practices during and after crisis, gives a positive view on the possibility of patriarchal bargaining and the chance for a positive change in the social dynamics and the gender roles. For example, De La Puente (2011, P: 365-377) shows in an analysis conducted on women refugees in Darfur, that there were positive changes in the patriarchal practices. The women in Darfur were not only victims of war but also victims of patriarchal practices. During the crisis, women in Darfur found opportunities to change the social dynamics as in camps women played the main role rather than men.

Another result by Al-Bassam (2010) highlights an analysis conducted on governmental jobs in Iraq after the Iraqi-Iranian war that ended in 1988. The main finding showed that from 1988 to 1993 there was a yearly increase by 20% in the number of female employees in the governmental section also there were many ministers who were women. But starting from 1995 the number of the female employees started to decrease. This decrease in number he explains as men taking their power back, in which men felt betrayed as most of them were working in the army during the war and after the war in a way they felt marginalized. This result also shows that in the period right after a crisis, the social dynamics might change but it is still fragile and the old patriarchal practices might rise again.

Social change cannot be imposed by humanitarians and a crisis may create an opportunity for positive social change or it might create negative change. In both cases an analysis of the old social dynamics and the newly created one is very important to see where we stand and take it as a stand point to move forward.
A good example of feminist movements that challenged the patriarchal practices within the humanitarian field is the movement of “Women Will Rebuild” which started in the aftermath of the hurricane Andrew in Miami in 1992. Enarson & Morrow (1998 B, P: 176) mention that the idea of Women Will Rebuild “originates from a community activist whose work experience includes disaster relief projects around the country. With other leaders of a feminist collective, she developed the idea of a coalition. From the outset, it was intended that this emergent group have short-term goals and an informal collectivist structure”. Women Will Rebuild is based on the idea of recruiting well known professional women who could mobilize other women within the community to create pressure on the society for more involvement of the women to rebuild Miami. The movement of Women Will Rebuild has achieved several good objectives such as supporting the women and children who were the most affected by the hurricane as well as creating a momentum for contributing in the rebuilding among women in the local communities. However, the main criticism that Women Will Rebuild received was that of the dilemma of a feminist organization in a disaster situation. Most leaders of Women Will Rebuild were considered well known women in Miami in different fields, and they were accused of using this community based organization for the disaster response in achieving personal political goals rather than supporting and creating incentives for women to actually contribute to the rebuilding of their own societies Enarson & Morrow (1998 B, P: 177-181).

2.6 Pre-Crisis Patriarchal Practices and its Effects on the Social Dynamics during Crisis

Fothergill (1998, P: 12) mentions that “disasters researchers have accepted that disasters are social phenomenon and that disasters have roots in the social structure, but they do not take these ideas seriously enough and they often fail to take the larger social context into account in their research”. The crisis/disaster itself is momentary and unexpected; however, it might lead to a change in the social context. Both the old social dynamics and the post social dynamics created by the crisis interact together.

When a crisis occurs the problems in the pre-crisis social dynamics become accentuated during the crisis, such as patriarchy. Enarson & Morrow (1998 B, P: 176) mentions that disaster exposes “both the vulnerability of women and the traditional male power”. More specific examples were found in Wilson et al (1998, P: 116-124) in which they
give three examples from three crisis/disasters in three different geographical areas of the world on how crises expose the social problems that existed before the crises specially from a gender point of view by using domestic violence against women as indicator. They concluded that when domestic violence existed during the pre-crisis social context then it was also intensified during the post-crisis social context, which in turn evolved due to the crisis/disaster stress itself. On the other hand, when domestic violence was not a major problem in the pre-crisis social context, it was not then extended to the post-crisis.

Also, Scanlon (1998, P: 64) mentions that “Traditional female role responsibilities associated with family care giving prevent many women from assuming larger community roles”. This statement implies that not only the problems in the pre-crisis social dynamics, such as the patriarchy, become clearer during the crisis, but also the old social dynamics contribute to the formation of social participation during the crisis and post-crisis. Although, the patriarchy in a pre-crisis situation might have an effect on the social dynamics during the crisis, it is not necessarily a bad effect. As mentioned by De La Puente (2011, P: 365-377) during the crises in Darfur, the women refugees presented a new challenge to the patriarchal structures which prevailed before the crisis.

2.7 Incorporating Gender into the Humanitarian Field

Enarson & Morrow (1998 B, P: 171-172) emphasizes that “Women’s vulnerability is well documented but women’s instrumental and proactive work after disaster is less self-evident”. This perspective encapsulates the approach humanitarian researchers take when incorporating gender to the humanitarian field. Documenting women vulnerability and paying more attention to the women victims is important. Nevertheless, such documentation is important to make a certain short term relief program more efficient, but it also ignores the possibility of social change during a crisis that the humanitarian field must be aware of.

The International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) developed a practical guide to incorporate gender to the humanitarian projects, in which a gender sensitive approach was developed to be appropriately used within the humanitarian field. The guide in its first section, which tackles the issue of gender during a disaster management, used the approach of focusing on women vulnerability rather than women’s instrumental and proactive work after disaster. IFRC (2010, P: 6) mentions that “these guidelines address
the needs of both men and women, greater focus is placed on addressing the needs of women, as it is recognized that women more often carry additional disadvantages due to gender than men. These disadvantages can be amplified within some communities and cultures, especially when women are single, divorced, widowed or childless”.

Moreover, the guide gives a lot of attention to the differences between men and women in which it mentions that understanding these differences such as lack of skills for women, the less physical strength and the cultural constraints could save more lives (IFRC, 2010, P: 7-8). The guide shows that the humanitarian projects should respect and understand the culture of the society they are working in, rather than helping people to challenge it.

However, in the second and the third section of the guide, which are the sections that tackle the problem of recovery, preparedness and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and how to incorporate gender to these issues. The IFRC guide in these sections pays a lot of attention to empowering women, but admits that it is going to be a challenging task, in which IFRC (2010, P: 21) mentions that “As humanitarian agencies apply Sphere to better address the political, protection, social and economic concerns of women refugees, the humanitarian charter and Sphere standards will be put to a true test”. Also, the guide focuses on the importance of taking the Sphere gendering materials into account in which it focuses on “women’s full participation in decisions regarding access to humanitarian aid, and the appropriateness of humanitarian interventions” (IFRC, 2010, P:21).

The guide focuses also on the importance of making a gender analysis, especially in the phase of disaster recovery, in which IFRC (2010, P: 24) mentions that “gender analysis is a systematic approach to identifying and understanding the relationships of women and men within the family, economy and society and how these relationships affect the distribution of resources, as well as the structures and rules that contribute to an unequal distribution of resources and power. It involves consulting with a range of men and women from the community, including those in positions of authority, to get their different perspectives. As with emergency assessments, ensuring gender balance on the team conducting the assessments is essential to achieving a reliable result”.

In the first section of the guide the focus is basically on the disaster management and relief programs which are short term programs, which justify the focus of the IFRC on
understanding the biological and practical skills differences between men and women in order to save more lives. However the later sections are all tackling a long term issues such as disaster recovery or reconciliation. Also, unlike the disaster management section, in the later sections, there are less immediate threats on the lives of people.

Challenging the gender roles in one society is a long term-process. The guide from IFRC admits that it actually focuses on women empowerment and challenging gender roles when the humanitarian programs are on the long term. Also, the guide focuses on saving lives as a priority, which is quite justifiable, even if the humanitarian programs used some “sexist” expressions such as admitting the biological differences (lack of physical strength) or the lack of practical skills.

2.8 Women refugees and Integration

The process of integrating the refugees in the new host country is a long-term and complicated process. The integration process for refugees is very different from that of integrating migrants. According to Hyndman (2010, P: 455) refugees usually do not have control on which country they move to nor have control on their means of departures, also the “ties between refugee and country of origin are precarious and politically charged in ways that are different from labour migrants”.

Researchers such as Basch et al (1994) and Hyndman (2010) focus on the first period of the integration process as they call it “transnational processes”. During this process the refugees usually act within their new societies according to more than one social and cultural behavior. This multi social and cultural behavior is explained by the strong ties that the refugees still have to their country of origin and their attempt to adapt to the new host country. This period is usually the critical period which determines to a certain extent how well the new refugees will be able to integrate in the new society.

Platts-Fowler & Robinson (2015, P: 476-478) argue that there are many reasons for the integration process of refugees and migrants to fail such as “a lack of conceptual clarity about what integration ‘looks like’, the insensitivities of available administrative data to migrant situations, a tendency towards cross-sectional analysis of a long-term process, and the failure to recognize diversity within the migrant population, for example, in relation to the pre-migration experience”. The pre-migration experiences can vary greatly especially for women refugees who may come from countries with completely
different cultures than that of the host country. It therefore becomes very important to analyze the pre-migration cultural experiences especially during the first period of the integration process.

Many researchers focus on the previous cultural experiences before the migration. For example, Abdi (2014, P: 459-483) argues that Somali refugees failed to integrate in the US because of the failure of addressing these pre-migration cultural experiences, which is namely the patriarchal structure. Also, Qasmiyeh & Qasmiyeh (2010, P: 294-314) focuses on the failure of integration within the first period of the integration process in which they interviewed Muslim asylum seekers from the Middle East in the UK. Their main conclusion is that several factors contributed to the failure of integration which is the uncertain legal statues, the voluntary/forced religious identity, and the exclusion access to the Muslim community. The second conclusion also confirms the importance of the pre migration cultural experience, in which the religious identity is part of the identity that was formed in the country of origin.

Usually, the formal integration process in one country is very standardized and it does not take into account the country of origin, and it does not take into account the previous cultural experiences. Several NGOs usually offer support to different groups of people, such as women. However, within integration policies there is usually no specific policy standardized for women who come from a certain area in the world.

Platts-Fowler & Robinson (2015, P: 476-478) mention that there is still a lack of understanding about what it means to be fully integrated in the host country. However, integration might mean, that assuming there are opportunities in the local area where the migrant and refugees live, then a successful integration means that a migrant or a refugee is taking the opportunities that might arise in the localities where they live. Women refugees usually come from a background with strong patriarchal structures, which usually stop them from taking any opportunity in their country of origin. Therefore, unless they receive the necessary support to actually break this patriarchal dependency on men, then they would not be able to use the opportunities that rise in their new host countries.
2.9 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I started by linking the humanitarian projects to the development projects. In which I showed that some researchers differentiate between the two as development projects run on the long term and humanitarian projects focus more on the present. Nevertheless, crisis and disasters become part of the culture in the society and even a new culture might emerge. This change that brought by the crisis must be taken into account by both humanitarian projects and development projects as this change is happening on both the short term (during the crisis) and on the long term (after the crisis).

Radical feminism was my main focus as a theoretical approach as it mainly focuses on patriarchy as the main reason for women inequality. Also, I chose it because it focuses on analyzing the practices of the patriarchal structures rather than its religious, economic, cultural and social reasons to exist. Based on the approach of radical feminism I explained how within a patriarchal structure women are dependent on men which would create a vicious circle that would exclude women from the decision making process.

A linkage between patriarchal practices and crises was made. In which during a crisis the social problems such as patriarchal practices that existed before the crisis might intensify or it might be challenged. I gave three examples from three different geographical areas in the world about how patriarchal practices interact with a crisis. The first example shows that the patriarchal practices got even worst during the crisis. The second example shows that actually the crisis provided an opportunity for women to challenge the patriarchal practices. The third example shows that on the short term the patriarchal practices were challenged but on the long term it got even worse than before the crisis. I tried also to show that when a crisis happens in the society it is something that affects not only the people but also the culture. A new culture might rise or the old culture might be altered to a better or to a worse culture. It is important for the humanitarian field to notice that and take it into account as well as encourage the positive change.

Then I reviewed how usually gender is presented within the humanitarian field by analyzing a report developed by the IFRC to incorporate the gender sensitive approach to the humanitarian projects. In which within the scope of relief programs and disaster
management, which works on the short term, social change and challenging the gender roles or the patriarchal practices is not as important as understanding the differences between men and women in order to save more lives. However, on the long run, the opportunity for women empowerment arise and then the humanitarian projects should take into account the concepts of gender roles challenge or cultural change into account.

Finally, I briefly touched upon the problem of integration which is quite complex subject, nevertheless, I emphasized that within the integration process it is important to take into account the pre-migration experiences of refugees, especially women refugees.
Chapter Three: Gender and Patriarchal Practices before the Arab Spring.

3.1 Examining Patriarchy before the Arabic Spring in the Arab World

The Arab world is one of the regions of the world with most crises. For example to name but a few, the Palestinian- Israeli conflict that has resulted in massive refugee problem since 1948, the Algerian civil war in 1992 with all its reflections on the political Islamic parties and their relationship to dictatorships in the Arab World, the Iraqi-Iranian war that ended in 1988 and had a lot of geopolitical effects on the region, or the Lebanese civil war that ended in 1990 which had a lot of effects on the way minorities could co-live with the majority in one country. Even though crises in the Arab world are well documented, researchers were very much interested in studying and examining the political/geopolitical and religious consequences of these crises rather than studying and examining its effects on the cultural and the social life of people. It was difficult to actually find much research about the problem of refugees before the Arab Spring, especially from a gender point of view. Similarly, when researching about patriarchy most research before the Arab spring examines the patriarchal structure from a political and religious point of view rather than from a gender point of view.

One of the most dominant researchers who has studied the problem of patriarchy from a political and religious point of view is Hisham Sharabi. Sharabi (1988, P: 1-151) in his book “Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society”, argues that the Arab world moved from a traditional society (patriarchal society) after the imperialist era to modernity without having solved the problem of patriarchy which resulted in what he calls “neopatriarchy”. The state in this kind of society has made a distorted development and made the Arab world’s societies seem to be societies that have some modernity aspects but within predominant patriarchal practices. For example, education is available for everyone, but still the father or the patriarch in the household decides for the women what to study or if they should study at all. Sharabi extends the concept of neopatriarchy from the family to the despotic political regimes in the Arab world. The failure of the nationalists and leftist movement in creating democratic systems, allowed the military (who are the patriarch) to take over, and made governing regimes look like regimes which belonged to the modern era. While on the contrary, they actually belong to the traditional and patriarchal era. He continues in his analysis to say that the way the dictatorships in the Arab world are persecuting, discriminating, and pressuring political
groups that have an Islamic background will push these groups toward fundamentalism. He predicts that with the failure of almost all development programs conducted by the dictator regimes in the Arab world, the Islamic groups/fundamentalists groups will be able in the long term to mobilize people to take over these neopatriarchal systems. This would only lead to strengthening of the patriarchal practices in the Arab world.

Applying Sharabi’s (1988, P: 1-151) theory to the ongoing situation in Syria, we can conclude that the Assad regime acted as the patriarch. Its oppression of the Islamic groups in particular whether before the Syrian revolution or during the revolution, gave the Islamic groups the leading role within the revolution. This in turn had an impact on the culture in Syria and on strengthening the patriarchal practices during the revolution.

Joseph (1996, P: 14-18) differentiate between several types of patriarchal practices in the Arab world. The first type of practices is the social patriarchal practices which have two levels; the first one is kinship. Kinship provides access to social networks in the society, therefore, the sense of belonging to the relatives or family act as the patriarch, and the individual member of the family acts as the subordinate. The second type of social patriarchal practices is that “men and older people are argued to be superior to women and younger people as administrators, professionals, politicians, religious leaders, and the like, without reference to kinship” (Joseph, 1996, P: 14).

The second type is the economic patriarchy which can be found in many practices, such as, when men are the main source of financial security in the household, or when they are the providers and women are the receivers. Also, even when women or young people have a source of income their earnings are considered to be secondary, as men will have control over the way to spend it. Also, economic patriarchal practices include better working opportunities for men compared to the opportunities women might have. Moreover, even within a family setting the priority is always given to finding jobs for the unemployed men rather than for the unemployed women.

The third type of patriarchal practices within the Arab world is the political patriarchy. The characteristics of such practices are that “most Arab countries state that the family, not the individual, is the basic unit of society. By declaring that the responsibility of the state is to preserve the family as the basis of the nation, the constitutions use the family as the recruiting and training ground for citizenship” (Joseph, 1996, P: 16). Such statements in many constitutions in the Arab world result in the fact that fathers give
their children the nationality; however mothers cannot have the same right of giving their children their nationality. The idea of family as the main base of the society has had an implication on the political life of the Arab world in which the term political family has been raised, in away such as; sons would inherit their father’s political position.

The fourth type of patriarchy in the Arab world is the religious patriarchal practices. The religious identity of people in the Arab world is very important. The patriarchal religious practices include for example “children and women take the religion of their fathers and husbands. Even if a person leaves their religion, they are identified by the religion of their fathers” (Joseph, 1996, P: 17).

Any feminist movement attempt to resist the patriarchal practices before the Arab Spring was accused of being a westernized movement that does not belong to the Arabic culture. Ossome (2008, P: 25) mentions that “overtly radical Arab feminists are accused of being pawns of the West, of being too polarizing to represent the interests of Arab women and are ostracized by the Islamic establishment. Their “personal is political” stance is seen as a deliberate subversion of the primary issues concerning Arab women generally”. Such representation of the feminist movements and the limited understanding for their fight in challenging the patriarchal structure may be seen in light of the fact that the Arab world has been living under military or religious dictatorships which benefited from patriarchal practices. Furthermore, these dictatorships feared social change as if any social change could lead to a political change which might jeopardize these dictatorships.

3.2 Gender and Patriarchal Practices during the Arabic Spring

With the start of the Arab Spring the amount of research about gender, patriarchy and women rights notably increased. This can be explained by the widespread participation of women in demonstrations that caused researchers to focus more on women and their struggle to gain more rights. Also, with the start of Arab Spring, a lot of alternative ways for spreading news (such as social media) became very popular inside the Arab world and feminist activists found new ways to deliver their messages about women participation in the Arab Spring as well as the struggle of the women refugees and their experiences.
Kiwan (2015, P: 129-140) argues that with all the demonstrations that are happening in the Arab World, the conception of what is Arabic citizenship is being challenged. By using the example of youth, women, and refugees and their participation in the Arab Spring, he demonstrates that these three groups are usually marginalized due to the Arabic predominant patriarchal practices. However, youth are the driving force for the whole Arabic Spring. Also, women were notably present in almost every demonstration and they definitely did not sit home and let only men demonstrate for more civil rights. As for refugees, they are usually represented as passive victims, however, since the Arabic Spring there are many examples to challenge that idea, for example, “Syrian women refugees, rather than being passive victims, most often associated with sexual violence, there are numerous examples illustrating proactive agency in the domains of economy, education, and community engagement. For example, a group of Syrian refugees established a nongovernmental organization in the Palestinian refugee camp, Sabra and Shatila in Beirut. This organization also established a school for Syrian refugee children run by a Syrian Palestinian woman.” (Kiwan, 2015, P: 139). These three examples show that actually within a crisis a new culture can arise and that a crisis can provide for marginalized groups an arena for challenging the predominant patriarchal practices.

Eddin (2014, P: 1-20) by using the example of Iraqi refugees in Jordan argues that the new social and economic conditions of refugees have led them to negotiate their masculinity. It means that there is an opportunity for a negotiation over what is masculinity within this refugee’s community. The dependency of the refugees on the aid provided by NGOs led the male refugees to feel “ashamed” as they could not perform their previous role as providers or as the main supporters of the household. This new situation then led to patriarchal bargaining as the men lost part of their authority over women.

Holt (2013, P: 316-337) examines violence against women among refugees in Lebanon. The problem of domestic violence exists among refugees in different forms. This violence exists as a form of masculinity enforcing gender roles as men. Men when becoming refugees, they tend to feel that their masculinity is jeopardized. This form of domestic violence emphasizes the masculinity that existed before, but is intensified in a refugee setting. However, when challenging the idea of passive refugee woman by some of the women refugees themselves, it did indeed make the domestic violence less
frequent. Therefore the social problems which existed before the crisis can either be intensified during the crisis or challenged.

In the case of domestic violence, when masculinity was emphasized among refugees in Lebanon, domestic violence intensified. Alvi (2015, P: 293-318) examined female participants as well as feminist groups in two of the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region, Tunisia and Egypt. She found that although feminist groups were very important components of the civil rights demonstrations, their political representation was limited. Their main achievement was that they were able to force the political parties to prioritize gender equality. However, while it is noted that the oppression of women as well as their lack of freedom and civil rights has its historic roots in the MENA region; the Arabic Spring was the first step on a long road towards social change.

3.3 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I attempted to show that before the Arabic Spring, not much attention was given to the gender problem, and most research was discussing the patriarchal structure problem from a political and religious point of view. Following the radical feminism approach which focuses on patriarchy itself as practiced in the society; I mentioned the different kinds of patriarchal practices that prevailed in the Arabic culture. Also, I focused on the idea that before the Arabic spring, feminist movements were not taken seriously by the public and it was considered to be an outsider to the Arabic Culture.

With the start of the Arabic Spring, a lot of attention was given to the problem of gender, women refugees, feminist movements, and social change. There was a new enthusiasm or a new momentum was found to focus and tackle these issues. I gave several examples of papers tackling these issues from different point of views as well as from different countries in the Arabic world. I also tried to link these articles to some of the concepts discussed in the first chapter, such as the opportunity that the crisis might provide to challenge patriarchal structure, patriarchal bargaining, pre-crisis social problems, and the long term social change.
Chapter Four: Background about the Conflict in Syria and the Syrian Women within the Crisis

4.1 Background about the Conflict in Syria

Since the beginning of the Arabic Spring in December 2010 in Tunisia, there was a feeling throughout the Arab world of a need to change. People felt that they were able to abandon the idea of being spectators to the different dictatorships in the region. Demonstrators in the Arab world were demanding social and economic change but more importantly political change. Political change was seen as key to social and economic change, and the dictatorships were the main obstacles to achieve such change. The Arab Spring started in Tunisia and then it spread to Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria, and Syria.

Adams (2015, P: 6-8) identifies five phases in the escalation of the Syrian conflict. During the first phase that lasted for almost 6 months, until the end of summer 2011, there was a civil movement across Syria. There was no armed opposition and the government used systematic violence against the demonstrators such as, arrest, torture, and allowed the police and army to shoot at demonstrators. During the second phase the Free Syrian Army (FSA) was formed as the main armed opposition force. In early 2012, the conflict in Syria entered its third phase with the siege of Homs. In this phase the government started using the air force and the army at its full capacity, also, the government formed the National Defense Army (NDA) which is basically the civilians who wanted to volunteer or work in oppressing the demonstrators. The majority of this army was formed of minorities in Syria and it was represented as if it was targeting Sunni Muslims. By early 2013, the fourth phase had begun wherein the Syrian government had its own territories and the oppositions had their own and no one can claim to be winning or losing. In late 2013, the fifth phase was initiated when the conflict started to shift from a political conflict into a sectarian conflict, which is basically the different minorities in Syria against the Muslim Sunni majority. The different minorities in Syria (around 35% of the population) support the Assad regime in contrast to the Muslim Sunni (around 65% of the population) who support the opposition. This representation of the conflict as a sectarian conflict allowed extremist Islamic groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or Al- Nusra (Al
Qa’ada branch in Syria) to expand and rise as a third party in the conflict. It is also important to note that the violence against the civilians escalated and entered a new phase whenever the international community (specifically the Security Council) failed to act against the crimes of the Assad regime.

The Syrian people have been living under the dictatorship of the Ba’ath party since 1963 and under the Assad family dictatorship since 1970. The demonstrations in Syria started on the 15th of March 2011, and up until today they have not stopped. The Syrian crisis has caused a major humanitarian crisis; The European Community Humanitarian aid Office (ECHO, 2015) described the Syrian crisis as the biggest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. According to the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights (2015), this conflict has resulted in more than 500,000 deaths and more than one million forced missing civilians.

According to ECHO (2015), the number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Syria is 6.5 million, and there are almost 4.2 million refugees in neighboring countries, and according to Ngcuka (2013) “Syrian women and children comprise over 70% of the refugee population and continue to bear the brunt of this conflict in many ways”. According to the International Rescue Committee (IRC, 2013, P: 2-7) one of the main reasons for families fleeing Syria is the fear of rape. In a survey conducted by the IRC in the neighboring countries of Syria (mainly in Jordan and Lebanon) in the year 2013, sexual violence and rape crimes committed by the Assad regime or its militia in the opposition areas or in the regime’s prisons, were the primarily reason for families to flee outside of Syria. Furthermore due to the social and religious norms that prevailed in Syria, reporting rape to international organizations is highly unlikely to happen. Moreover, families as a way for protecting their daughters from rape started marrying them off, which created a problem of underage marriage in the society that was not visible in the Syrian culture before the conflict, or it was not a major social problem.

According to Amnesty International (2015, P: 7) refugees are “people who no longer enjoy the protection of their state because that state will not or cannot protect them. They are people who have fled armed conflict, persecution, and violence and grave human rights abuses”. In the case of Syrian refugees, the Syrian state is not only unable to protect its people or will not protect the people but rather persecute, torture, kill and rape the people. This sad reality, combined with the rise of Islamic groups such as ISIS.
or Al Nusra as well as the failure of the armed opposition to protect the people, has forced many people to flee their homes. Of those who have fled Syria, 95% have moved to neighboring countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt.

As a result of this humanitarian crisis 8.1 million underage children are in need of help inside and outside of Syria, and there are 2.1 million children registered as refugees who need urgent help and access to health and educational services (UKaid, 2015). Moreover, ECHO (2015) estimates that around 13.5 million are in need of urgent help and among them 4.5 million are hard to reach or in besieged areas.

According to the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA, 2015, P: 8) the economic impact of the crisis in the year 2014 resulted in unemployment rates of 57.7% with 12.2 million people dependent on the welfare system, in addition, the health and education sector is on the verge of collapse, not to mention the total destruction of the industrial and agricultural sectors as well as the total destruction of cities.

The conflict seems to be a protracted conflict with no hope so far to end it, as it turned into a proxy war. At the international level, The United States and the European Union support the opposition while Russia and China support the Assad regime. Regionally, Turkey and the Gulf countries support the opposition in contrast to the Iranian state who supports the Assad regime. Therefore, there seems to be no end in sight.

Finally, I want to end by concluding that although the conflict in Syria has shifted from civil demonstrations into an armed conflict which is getting all the attention of the media as well as the refugee crisis and nowadays ISIS, still today civil demonstrations have not stopped across the Syrian cities. They continue on a weekly basis, not at the same momentum before, though it still exists.

4.2 Women Participation and Feminist Organizations in Syria

Pansieri (2013) in her statement as Deputy UN High Commissioner mentioned that “Since the outbreak of protests in Syria, women there have been at the forefront of demanding democratic reforms and the protection of the human rights of all people. Throughout the conflict, women have paid a high price and been the victims of gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law that often amount to international crimes”. When talking about the women participation in Syria we must talk about two levels, the first one as active participants in the demonstrations and as contributors in
forming many NGOs and organizations on the local community level. The second level is women as victims of war, which is basically the excessive violence that women in Syria had to suffer as a response from the Assad regime to their participation in the demonstrations and the civil community organizations.

The first organized demonstration in Syria that aimed to challenge the Assad regime took place in Damascus on the 15th of March 2011. It consisted of around 120 demonstrators in which at least 30% of the participants were women. Female participation in the demonstrations grew as the demonstrations escalated and received popular momentum.

Female participation in the demonstrations took three different forms; the first was in the more liberal areas and cities in Syria, such as Damascus, Homs and Sweda where women participated in the demonstrations alongside men. The second form was in the less liberal areas of Syria or more rural areas such as Daraa or Damascus suburbs, in which there was more of a separation between men and women, where there would be a male demonstration and a female demonstration (Appendix A contain a map for Syria for geographical references). The third form of participation in the demonstrations was when there was a funeral for someone killed by the Assad regime force. According to the Syrian tradition, when someone is killed and he/she is considered by the family as martyr then the funeral becomes more of a wedding rather than a funeral and within the context of the Syrian conflict, these funerals would turn into a demonstration involving both men and women even in rural areas.

As a response to the increased active participation of women, the violence against women by the Assad regime increased, and it took many brutal forms such as rape, torture, sexual harassment, arrest without trials, and the arrest of female members of families whose male members were activists (United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA, 2015), IRC (2014) and IRC (2013)).

As the momentum of the demonstrations increased, the Assad regime responded with more violent, as a result local communities began to organize themselves in an attempt to cope with the increased violence. Ghazzawi et al (2015, P: 4-5) highlights that Syrian women in response to the deteriorating situation in the country felt obliged to act and most believed peace building, amidst the ongoing violence, was their gateway towards reconstructing society”. Women participated in the formation of many feminist
organizations, local NGOs, forums and civil initiatives. These organizations such as “Nissa’a La Sbaya” or “The Syrian Kurdish Women Organization” were community based and aimed to build a democratic society through participating in the peace building process. Furthermore feminist organizations such as “Syrian Feminist Lobby” and “Syrian Women Networks” tried to increase female participation in the demonstrations, provide women with coping mechanisms in order to deal with the excessive violence their participation in the demonstration, and attempting to build a more equal society for women.

Female involvement in the Syrian conflict was not only faced by the violence of the Assad regime, but also by the extremist armed groups such as ISIS or Al Nusara. Ghazzawi et al (2015, P: 5) mentions that “women have to overcome society’s patriarchal attitudes towards women and their involvement in the public domain, and outwit the many restrictions imposed on their movements, as well as the hostile view on activism in general, where extremist armed groups like IS or the Al-Nusra Front are in control”. In fact not only the extremist groups oppressed female activism, but also the moderate opposition failed to include women in their political bodies. This may be explained by the patriarchal structures in Syria as men in the opposition fear losing the privileges that they have over women if they participated actively in the mainstream political parties. Women were excluded from official political life and their involvement did not exceed participation in the demonstrations or forming feminist groups that created political pressure on the mainstream opposition parties to at least include women equality in its agenda.

4.3 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the different levels of the Syrian conflict, in which I focused on how the conflict in Syria shifted from a civil demonstration into an armed conflict, solely because of the violence perpetrated by the Assad regime. I also focused on the humanitarian crisis in Syria, which today is the world’s biggest humanitarian crisis.

I also focused on the women participation in the demonstrations, in which it was a very active and obvious participation from the start of the demonstrations. However, it was more focused on the popular level and not so active on the political level.
Chapter Five: Research Finding

5.1 Introduction

Oliver-Smith (1996, P: 305) explains that the behavioral response approach is “the behavior of the individuals and groups in the various stages of disaster impact and aftermath. The emergence, adjustments, and interactions of individuals, groups, and organizations to the stress of warning, impact, and immediate aftermath”. Building on that approach, when conducting interviews my main focus was to see how or if the interaction among people in Syria had changed during the conflict compared to before the conflict. I focused on seeing if gender roles and the social dynamics had changed or not during the conflict. The main aspect of social life that I wanted to examine is the patriarchal structures; therefore, following the radical feminism approach, I focused on the patriarchal practices in Syria. I tried, through interviews, to examine how patriarchal practices were before the crisis, and if there was a change during the crisis. Also, to which extend these patriarchal practices have contributed to the shaping of the women refugees identity. Moreover, since some of the interviews took place in Sweden, it was very difficult to avoid talking about integration; I chose to focus, to a certain extent, on the effects of coming from a patriarchal society on the process of integration for women refugees.

A total number of 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted. All interviewees were with individuals on the grass root level, and did not play a leading political role in either before or during the conflict. The experiences of the interviewees were quite different before the conflict regarding age, education, employment, and marital status. During the conflict and its aftermath, their experiences were quite different as well, while most of them participated in the demonstrations, all were affected by the conflict and had to leave their home towns and all now live outside of Syria, in Jordan, Turkey and Sweden. The interviewees living in Jordan all crossed the borders illegally from the Syrian side and then registered themselves with the Jordanian authorities as refugees and they are living in refugee’s camp. The interviewees living in Turkey also crossed the borders illegally from the Syrian side and then registered themselves with the Turkish authorities and all are now living in private housings on their own expenses. The reason why all the interviewees did not cross the borders legally from the Syrian side is due to their fear of being arrested. While all the interviewees who I interviewed in Sweden left
Syria legally, they all entered Sweden without a visa and they had to travel to Sweden through human smugglers, and sought asylum once they arrived to Sweden.

Although the thesis is focusing on women refugees, nevertheless, I interviewed both women and men refugees. The main reason for that is to not only focus on the women experiences but also to get a grasp of the men´s perception on the gender roles.

For the sake of organization of the interviews, after all interviews were conducted, I ran a regression analysis. The basic methodology consists of running cross-sectional regression of the form (Sala-I-Martine, 1997):

$$\gamma = \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \ldots + \beta_n x_n$$

In which \( \gamma \) is the independent variable (explained variable) and \( x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n \) are vectors of the explanatory variables, while \( \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_n \) are the coefficients. Running this regression model on the primary data I collected from the interviews I found out that there is strong correlation between the educational level and patriarchal practices. In which the higher education is achieved by the interviewees, the less are connected to patriarchal practices, and other variables such as age, employment, or marital status were statistically not significant (Appendix B include all the variables which is basically the personal information sheet). This statistical result was noticed during the interviews, as during the interviews I would receive answers in the same general directions from a woman who is 45 or a woman who is 20 years old but with the same educational level. However, I would get different answers from two women who are in the same age but with different educational background. Therefore, I divided the research findings in each section based on the educational level, in which interviewees with university level education were separated from the interviewees with an education less than a university level. In total 15 interviewees held a university degree or more and 11 interviewees were not educated at a university level.

Also, it is important to mention that almost all the interviewees focused on expressing or linking their answers to their political views, and I tried in as much as I could to direct the answers towards the social practices regardless of their political views.

All interviews took place during October 2015, and it was all in Arabic, and I carried out the translations myself.
5.2 Part One of the Interviews: Syrian Women before the War Inside of Syria

The main purpose of this section of the interviews was to find out what were the patriarchal practices before the war in the Syria. Appendix C contains the questions guideline.

5.2.1 Daily Challenges

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree**

Most of the women I spoke to in this category described their everyday life challenges as things related to the family or creating a family of their own. They mentioned that before the war their life was very standardized, in which they think that every girl’s dream or purpose is to have a good husband who would provide her with a certain social security. The daily challenges that they described were related to that purpose, where single women are trying to learn how to be ‘good wives” and just waiting and letting the time pass at their families’ homes until they get married and start their own family. W 6 said “I used to feel the emptiness in my life, I did not get education, I do not know what to work, and the only thing that I learned how to do it is to become a wife and a mother. What else I could do?” M 2 on the other hand said “I am a carpenter; I went every day to work. In the evening I would come back home and I would eat with my mother and father, and in the evening I would go with my friends. I am saving money, and I was waiting to have enough money to make a good wedding to get married”.

Another type of answer but still within the family context was from the married interviewees. In which their focus was more on the children and relatives. Once they created their families, they could focus on their children and raising them as well as keep their access to the society’s different networks through relatives. W 12 said “The most important thing for me was to be available all the time for my children and my husband, and hopefully I would be there also for my grandchildren. It is also important to keep present within the social circles of relatives in case we needed something or something urgent happened”
When I tried to expand the conversation, I tried to challenge the idea of the family as the most important issue in their life, for example, I would ask questions such as: do you not think education is also important? All of them agreed, however, they would get back to the idea that family is more important. W 12 said “yes, education is very important but not as important as having a family”.

When I asked about the financial security and how they managed their financial issues. The answers were all related to the men in which the single women depended on the male authority in the family whether their father or the brothers. As for the married women they depended on their husband even if there was work available for women. The men also expressed that they either supported the women in their families, and if not, they knew that they were expected to do so in the future.

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level**

In comparison to those interviewed who did not hold a university qualification there were more variations in the answers I received from interviewees in this category. They described their daily challenges as finding a good job, trying to get better education if possible, creating a family and the most common thing I heard from the interviewees was to find ways to be active in the society. W 9 said “my daily life challenge before the conflict in Syria was how to use my education to contribute to my society”. When I tried to reflect with the same interviewee on the family issue, she agreed that it is an important issue but it was not the whole life goal in which she commented “before I got married, of course I thought of it, and I wanted to do it, but not because everyone expected me to be a wife or a mother. When I met the guy I love, we just did it, got married and I am happy that I have a nice family”.

On the other hand, there were answers that emphasized the idea of belonging to a man, authority or family. W 2 said” yes I would love to have a husband and to create a family and this does not contradict with the idea of getting a job, or getting education”. M 1 on the other hand mentioned that “it is important to get a good job or to get a good education, but every religion encourage marriage, in Islam we say “marriage is fulfilling half of the religious duties” so of course it important”.

The main difference in answers between interviewees with a higher education attainment and interviewees without was the need to have a sense of personal financial
security without being dependent on anyone. All interviewees with a higher educational background expressed the importance of having a job and having a source of financial income, even if they were from a rich family or even if they had a rich husband.

5.2.2 Patriarchal Practices

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree**

Most of the women that I talked to expressed their low participation in the processes of decision making. On the household level, their participation in the decision making process was related to the less important things in everyday life, such as, what to cook, where to spend an evening or whom to visit. For more important decisions, such as, where to live or which schools were better for the children, their participation in such decision existed but it was not as important as, or not as influential, as that of men’s in the decision making process. At a personal level, all the women expressed the intervention of men in their lives even in their personal decisions, such as what clothes to wear or what to study. Even more, they said that men have more amount of freedom in making personal decisions. W 12 said “I understand my father’s intervention in everyday life; what if I made a choice that led to someone strange touching me in the street or sexually harassing me. But for my brother, he could have done anything, he is a man and no one would harass him, and if they did he would fight back, but I could not”. The men also to a certain extent gave me a similar attitude in which they preferred the women in their families to consult with them before making a certain decision.

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level**

In this group, the discussion took another level, with women discussing the patriarchal structure before the war, especially from the legal point of view as well as the working conditions. W 5 said “I am a Syrian citizen but my husband is Lebanese, my children cannot take the Syrian nationality because the mother does not give the nationality to her children in Syria”. As for the working conditions, a lot of them tried to refer to statistics or their personal notice in the society. W 4 highlighted “how many female general managers, ministers, prime ministers, or university professors are there? The situation was almost hopeless; of course there are some exceptions, however, a lot of women (including me) just gave up and they think of their jobs as a social place where they make money, but why to make an effort to actually excel as it is going to be useless
and will not benefit us or reward us. We do our job, socialize with our friends and then get paid at the end of the month”. M 6 also mentioned “I used to work in the Central Bureau of Statistics, and in the calculation of the unemployment of Syria, the housewife does not count as unemployed. So in a way being a wife is considered to be a full time job”.

When talking about the decision making process within the family and the financial responsibilities the outcome was the following. Most of the women I interviewed mentioned that to a certain extent they were able to make their own decisions within the social norms that prevailed in Syria. In a way they were able to take decisions as long as it did not break social norms, or in other words the patriarchal social norms. For example, W 4 said “I could have a boyfriend as long as I do not move in with him without marriage, however, for my brother this was negotiable with my family and he actually did it”. However, for the very important decisions that might affect the future of their families, relationships, or partners a certain compromise or sharing of the decision making process is achieved. W 14 said “I was married and I wanted to study again, and I always wanted to be an artist. The department of Art is perceived in Damascus as a very liberal place, and my husband did not want me to study there. I feared that if I studied Art he would divorce me and the society in Syria is harsh on divorced women and I did not want that, so I basically studied something else and I draw by myself”.

Additionally financial responsibilities were to a certain extent shared, as generally speaking sharing is very deeply embedded in the Syrian mentality. However, most interviewees said that within a family context, although most of the interviewees used to work before the war in Syria, nevertheless, the sense of male superiority over the female still exists, in which men are the main supporter of the family. W 9 said “My husband and I used to work, and we made almost the same amount of money every month. I was offered a raise in my salary and I calculated my income and I found out that I will make more money than my husband, so I basically did not tell him, I did not want him to feel that I am better than him”.


5.2.3 Participation in the Social and Political Life

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree

The women I interviewed in this category, they had no involvement in any social or political organizations. However, some of them were involved in religious teaching groups whether in mosques or in churches. Their involvement in these groups made them participate in social events to help for example poor families in the area where they lived. W 12 said “next to my house in Aleppo there was a center called “the Family Organization Center” I always saw sad women and men going there, but never thought of volunteering or helping there, I always thought the government is taking care of them”.

As for their political involvement, they said it was also nonexistent. Two women mentioned that the only thing that they did politically was to vote in the presidential referendum because they heard rumors that the police were arresting people who are not voting.

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level

Within this group of interviewees, there was more political analysis. Some of them were involved with social organizations or foundations. However, since the Assad regime controlled everything in Syria, including the civil society organizations or unions, there were only a few independent organizations that they could have volunteered or worked with. W 3 said “I was raised in Egypt before we moved back to Syria when I was 20, being raised outside of Syria made my family feel free to talk politics and criticize the government inside our home. Before we moved back to Syria I told my father that I wanted to join the “the Syrian Women’s Union” he said, do you want to become a member in the Ba’ath party (the Assad regime party) now?”

To a certain extent, all of the interviewees said that it was essential to have a certain motivation to be active in a social or political cause. Such a motivation did not exist before the Syrian revolution, as there was no hope of reform or any support from the Assad regime to make people more active in their communities. All what they could do was get a good education and try to find a good job and that was their entry point to social involvement.
5.3 Part Two of the Interviews: Syrian Women during the War Inside of Syria

The main purpose of this part of the interview was to find out how the previous patriarchal practices affected female identity and experiences during the war. Also, to which extent were those practices challenged, and was there a change in the gender roles during the war? Appendix D contains the questions guideline.

5.3.1 Daily Challenges

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree

At the beginning of the demonstrations, almost all the women in this category that I interviewed said that while they understood why people went out on the street to demand their freedom, they did not know how to contribute. They did not know if they belonged in these demonstrations or not. They did not know if it was their job to go into the streets and join the demonstrators or if it was only something that men will did. Especially as at the beginning of the demonstrations, almost all of the demonstrations started from mosques after a certain prayer time, which is something only men do. W 12 said “to go and pray in the mosque, for example the Friday prayer, is something for men. And at that point of time, we did not understand that the demonstrations start from mosques for logistical reasons, as gathering in mosques was the only legal thing that allows people to gather without permission from the police”. All the interviewees mentioned that they started participating when the demonstrations started to affect their lives. W 8 said” My husband did not want my son to join the demonstrations, but I wanted him to join, I encouraged him to join. When my son got arrested by the secret police, my husband of course blamed me; however, the only thing I felt after my son got arrested was that I have to join the demonstrations”. Also, from a social point of view, most interviewees expressed that a lot of social norms have changed during the demonstrations. M 4 said “our social norms within my family were implying before the demonstrations that women should stay at home, and the wife could not leave home without the husband’s permission. With the start of the demonstrations, when a lot of our friends, relatives and family members got arrested, tortured, or went missing, I simply could not tell my wife to stay home and not to join the demonstrations, and I do not think she would have stayed home if I said no to her”. W 1 also expressed the same idea of a social change within her personal life; she said “usually I would stay home most of the time, if I went out I would have to tell my father where I wanted to go, our
life was very standardized. Joining the demonstrations made more sense to my life, I was on the streets demanding political freedoms and democratic elections, and I did not know if I would ever come back home. In a way all my previous dreams to create a family of my own and find a good husband were not important anymore or at least they got postponed”.

One interviewee however, expressed in her answers the idea that when a crisis happens the social problem before the crisis might get worse during the crisis. W 12 said “my sister got arrested at a police check point, and we were all afraid for her and what might happen to her, especially after all the stories that we have heard of rape and sexual harassment that happened when girls were arrested. We were all stressed out, and my father maybe could not handle it or he wanted to be more protective, and he basically ordered me to stay home, and the domestic violence increased to basically force me to stay home”. Nevertheless, although the patriarchal practices got even worse for the last interviewee, I could conclude that the patriarchal practices within this group got less extreme compared to the answers I received from before the demonstrations. In a way, the demonstrations made the women become more aware of their potential to create change. Whether the interviewees acknowledged that the practices before the demonstrations were wrong or not, a change happened in their relationship to men, and in a way the idea that men were the superiors to women was challenged.

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level

A similar attitude was found within this group of interviewees. W 13 said “at the beginning of the demonstrations, it all started from mosques; however, although it was understandable why, we felt that women are being excluded. As a response for that I would try to find female friends or female family members to join me, we would wait until men finish from inside the mosque and go out and then we would join them whether they like it or not”. Also, the refusal of the idea that men must protect women was obvious in some answers. In which W 9 for example mentioned “I went to a demonstration in a conservative area in Damascus suburbs, the men around me asked me to stay in the middle incase the police attacked the demonstrations. I simply could not stay in the middle; I was more like my life is not more precious than yours”. Also, the idea of that crisis gives a chance for social change such as challenging the patriarchal practices was presented by one of the interviewees, in which W 14
mentioned “I was arrested by the security police and in the detention center I was beaten and tortured, after one week I was just released. When I went home and after like two weeks I wanted to go to a demonstration, my husband tried to stop me, but I did not listen to him, I thought I paid a price in as much as men paid and maybe even more so I really could not listen to my husband reasoning with me and I just did what I want to do”.

5.3.2 Patriarchal Practices

There were no differences in answers between the interviewees with different educational backgrounds. Most of the interviewees expressed the more freedom women had in the decision making process was during the period they were active in the Syrian demonstrations. Wars and conflicts bring death and sad stories; however, as I tried to show in the theoretical part, it might bring an opportunity for social change. Two of the interviewees said that during their time in Syria, the main male financial provider of the household was not there. One interviewee answered that her husband was killed, and one interviewee’s husband was arrested. They basically had no source of income anymore. W10 said “after the death of my husband, at the beginning I tried to ask for help from my family, and they tried to help in as much as they could, but I realized after only one month that this is not a sustainable solution. Although I had never worked in my life, I just I had to try, I started cleaning houses to make money. My father kept telling me that I should not work, but I just did not listen to him and I tried to keep working as I wanted to save my family and support them. Later I found a job knitting and sewing and I am so proud that in that period I supported my children by myself”.

Many of the interviewees expressed that the deteriorating economic situation in Syria during the demonstrations forced them to either find jobs for the first time in their lives, or to find an extra job. And in these extreme situations, it did not really matter whether the men or the women were trying to provide this extra source of income. W 11 said ” our financial situation was never as bad as it was during the demonstrations, still as Syrians we were living our best days, however not financially, I remember my very old mother said once that she wished to die so we could give the food that she ate to the younger people. I could not hear that, and I just tried my best to find work. It was like all the social norms in my family that might hinder me working were put on hold”.
5.3.3 Positioning of Syrian Woman in the Social and Political Participation

As in the previous part, there were no differences in answers among the interviewees with different educational background. All the interviewees expressed either their involvement in community work to help people who got affected the most, or at least their willingness to join such a community work if they had the chance. Politically, all of the interviewees mentioned that they would have loved to join some of the opposition political parties; however, they could not since all the opposition political parties were based outside of Syria.

W 7 mentioned “compared to before the demonstrations, I consider myself to be very active in the community work. I used to go with my father to our friends, relatives and people that we know they support the demonstrations and we would collect clothes, food, medications, milk for infants and distribute it to the poor families for whom their main financial supporter is gone missing, been arrested or killed. I was arrested as well as my father for that, as they accused us of financing the demonstrations. I am very proud of that”. I tried to ask her what happened after her arrest with her father and if her relationship to her father changed . W 7 answered “yes of course, a lot of things changed, for example he never hit me after that, and he stopped being over protective”.

5.4 Part Three of the Interviews: The Experiences of Syrian Women as Refugees Outside of Syria

The purpose of this part of the interviews was to examine the extent of which patriarchal practices affected the experiences of the Syrian women refugees outside of Syria. Also, to find out what were the gender roles of the women refugees outside Syria?

Appendix E contains the questions guideline.

5.4.1 Patriarchal Practices among the Refugees in Al Za’atri Camp in Jordan

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree

Most of the interviewees expressed that patriarchal practices were challenged when they were living in Syria and they also expressed that the gender roles changed to express more equal relationships between men and women. Sadly enough, once they moved to Al Za’atri camp the change in the gender roles and the challenge to the patriarchal practices had a major setback, in that things became worse than it was before the
conflict. This could be explained by the loss of momentum that the people had during the demonstrations, in which their identity shifted from Syrians seeking political and social change to refugees who does not know if they would ever return to their homes. Also, the extreme living conditions as well as the lack of security in Al Za’atari camp greatly affected the patriarchal practices and the gender roles. Furthermore the Jordanian authorities made Al Za’atri camp more like a prison, in which no one can get out of unless a Jordanian citizen took responsibility of them 6 said “After we moved to the camp, we received a tent. At the beginning it was okay, especially in comparison to the risk on my family by living in Syria. When we moved to the camp we had no money, and we were totally dependent on the NGOs working in the camp, some other families or refugees had enough money to open shops in the camps and make money but we could not. The total absence of opportunities for my husband to work made him feel less of a man, so he had to compensate on other levels to feel his manhood, through an increase in domestic violence towards me and the children”.

A new patriarchal phenomenon emerged among the refugees living in the camp through marrying underage girls or, as described by one woman refugee, selling girls. All interviewees said that the security in the camp was not good and there were several rape incidents and sexual harassments among the refugees. This increased the level of fear on the daughters in the family, especially the virgins. Also, the lack of opportunities and the extremely bad living conditions combined with the unknown period of the refugees’ stay in the camp, forced parents to find solutions for their daughters to leave the camp. Finding a Jordanian husband was the most practical solution, in a way they had two options find their daughter someone to or face the possibility of her being raped. M 3 said “There is no future for anyone in the camp, and god knows when we will get back to our homes. I do not have any money and I am totally dependent on the NGOs working in the camp. Through one of the security guards, I met a Jordanian guy in my tent and he offered to get married to my 16 year old daughter. He also offered me 100 KG of beans as dowry. I thought even if he was not good enough, it is better than one day getting raped in the camp. Also I could start a small business in the camp with the beans. So I accepted, my wife and my daughter did not accept but I convinced them that this is the better option and at least she might have the chance to have a better life. And my family and I will have the chance to survive in the camp by this small business. It
has been a year since she left the camp and I do not know where she is now and we never contacted each other”.

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level**

I interviewed only one refugee woman with a bachelor degree who lives in Al Za’atri camp. W 5 is a nurse and she works with one NGO inside the camp. She tried to compare the patriarchal practices before the conflict in Syria with the patriarchal practices during the conflict, and the patriarchal practices in the camp. She admitted that within the camp context the patriarchal practices have increased and become more extreme, but mainly because of the extremely bad living conditions within the camp which increase stress and therefore, they tend to choose extreme tools to express themselves such as domestic violence or come up with irrational solutions to their problems such as marrying their underage daughters.

**5.4.2 Patriarchal Practices among Refugees in Turkey**

There were no differences in the answers between the interviewees with a higher educational level or lower level. Unlike the refugees living in Al Za’atri camp, the refugees living in Turkey have the freedom of movement as all the interviewees lived in their own apartments and all of them lived in the city of Gaziantep close to the Syrian borders. Also, they all had the right to work in Turkey, as well as the right to travel, and in a way it is their choice to live in Turkey. All the interviewees had to flee Syria after the security police tried to arrest them or arrest a member in their families. Some of them lived for a little while in refugees camps on the Syrian Turkish borders, but all of them chose to rent their own apartments after experiences in the camps. Also, it is important to note that the main border points between Northern Syria and Southern Turkey, especially in the city of Aleppo, are controlled by the opposition. Therefore, moving between Gaziantep and Aleppo has no major risk, apart from the fact that ISIS is moving closer to Aleppo now, however, it is still under the control of the opposition.

All the interviewees were working with either the opposition political parties that exist extensively in Gaziantep or with NGOs whether local or international on issues such as refugees, social change, governance and political reform. Unlike the refugees living in Al Za’atri camp, all the interviewees have not lost touch with what is going on in Syria. This ongoing connection with what is happening of development inside of Syria made
them feel the same momentum that they had when they were inside of Syria in the demonstrations. W 2 said “Yes, during the demonstrations we felt in a way a social change, maybe it was not sustainable and related to the pride we felt as nationals of a country that has a revolution. However, when we moved to Turkey this momentum took another level, in a way we wanted to keep it on a personal level, in which we will not be able to create social change in Syria unless we created it first on the personal level”.

Also, most interviewees mentioned that they plan to return to Syria, as seeking Turkish nationality is not a priority. This almost certainty that one day the Assad regime will fall, and that one day they will return, which enables them to keep their enthusiasm about the future of Syria as a country and that one day the social change and development will happen inside of Syria. This idea had its effects on their everyday life in which the patriarchal practices from before the conflict almost disappeared within the households of some interviewees or it got less extreme compared to before the conflict. M 1 said “Before the demonstrations in Syria, I would intervene in every decision my wife or my children would make. During the demonstrations I just stopped doing that as in a way I realized my mistakes. When I moved to Turkey with my family I started working with Syrian refugees, and we work a lot on making the sectarian tension much less among the Syrian refugees. We are trying to plant the idea of creating a future Syria where everyone from any religion could share the living in Syria. I believe in that, but using the same logic we all should learn how to share living in Syria regardless of sect, sex or ethnicity, starting from the family unit until we reach the country level, so of course I apply this logic to my family.”

Also W 2 expressed similar idea in which she said “I got my first job in Turkey, as a secretary in one of the opposition political parties. I feel that the most important thing I did is to join the demonstrations which made me a new person, not only in my eyes, but also in my husband’s eyes. I do not think I will ever get back to the person I was like before the demonstrations and let people decide for me”.

5.4.3 Interaction with Humanitarian Organizations

When asking the interviewees about their interaction with the humanitarian workers and whether it was only a relief job or they were able to help them to move forward from the patriarchal practices. Most interviewees said that they did not notice any major or effective efforts from the humanitarian workers or organizations to actually help the
Syrian refugees create social change. However, two interesting points were brought up by two interviewees that actually strengthen the patriarchal practices.

The first point was from a refugee woman in Al Za’atari camp. W 8 said “the total dependence on the humanitarian organizations made men loose a large part of their daily manhood, and in a way they had to compensate on other ways of manly behavior. Also, some organizations within the camp preferred women to make the daily visits to the organization’s center to collect the aid, and that did not help in making the men feel better. Also, most activities by the humanitarian organizations were targeting children or women, and only few activities were targeting the men, which also did not help in releasing the men’s tension”.

The second point was from a woman refugee in Turkey. After W 4 crossed the borders with her husband, she stayed for three days in a reception center. W 4 said “During my time in the reception center, a European humanitarian worker came to ask my husband and me if we need anything. However when he approached us, he shook my husband’s hand, and then he asked my husband if it is okay to hand shake mine. Of course I understand why he asked as I was wearing Hijab, but I do not mind shaking a man’s hand in my daily life. I felt a little bit of humiliation especially that I have a master degree. I also think there is a difference between respecting the culture of the Syrians and encouraging such a backward patriarchal practice”.

5.4.4 Integration in Sweden

Interviewees with an Educational Attainment Level below a University Degree

Most the interviewees in this category expressed that they felt that they had two different lives in Sweden. Inside their homes is one life where it is similar to the life they had in Syria before the demonstrations, and another life outside their homes where they feel they have to be very liberal or they will be excluded from the society they are now living in.

Most interviewees said that although they have permanent residencies, they find it difficult to integrate as they do not know if they want to stay in Sweden and build a life or if they want to go back to Syria. To a certain extent, this confusion about whether to live in Sweden or move back to Syria in the future makes them not take the process of integration seriously. Also, all of them expressed their lack of understanding about what
integration means. Is it only to find a job and learn the language or is it adapting to the Swedish culture? W 12 said “I have a job now, and I am becoming fluent in Swedish, but I still feel I do not belong to where I live or what I do here in Sweden, it is like my previous life in Syria still exists inside the house with my husband and my children”.

Also, some respondents mentioned, that during the demonstrations in Syria everyone changed from a social point of view, however they were uncertain if that change in reality became part of the social culture in Syria or not. This uncertainty is affecting their integration process. For example W 14 mentioned “I am not sure what Syrian means anymore, before the demonstrations I could not do many things, after the demonstrations I could do many things, in a way this is confusing. Now when I am in Sweden, I do not see myself as becoming a Swede. For me it is difficult to understand how I could as a Syrian behave and act in Sweden”.

**Interviewees with an Educational Attainment of University Level**

In contrast to the previous interviewee group interviewees with a higher educational level showed a more positive experience regarding their integration process. Most of the interviewees said that they were positive about their integration process, in which reflecting on their experiences with the demonstrations in Syria, made them more proud of what they have achieved. As the social change that happened during the demonstrations which made them more liberal in a way is what defines their nationhood now, rather than the patriarchal structures before the demonstration and before the conflict. This confidence about who they are and what they did in Syria gives them the satisfaction that enabled to build new lives in Sweden. W 9 said “whether my family and I will go back to Syria, or if we will live all of our life here in Sweden, remains to be seen. I am happy with what I have achieved in Syria, as the demonstrations made me change as a person and I am continuing this change here in Sweden”.

**5.5. Answering the Research Questions**

**5.5.1 Answering the First Research Question**

The first research question of this thesis was: What were the practices of patriarchy structure before the conflict in Syria, and to which extend has it had an effect on the women’s identity and the gender roles during the conflict?
For the first part of the question about the patriarchal practices before the conflict in Syria, among the interviewees with lower educational level (less than a bachelor degree) the Syrian society is a very patriarchal society. In which from the first part of the interviews we could conclude that there is a clear superiority of men over women. Also, the idea of belonging to a family and the importance of kinship are very strong. Furthermore it is clear that men have almost a monopoly on the decision making process.

The interviewees with a higher educational level (more than bachelor degree) the patriarchal practices were less extreme, in that to a certain extent women have a certain amount of freedom in the decision making process. Statements from the interviewees show that Syrian women suffer from both economic patriarchy and legal patriarchy which is verified by Syrian employment statistics between 2009 and 2011 from the Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2015) which clearly shows that on average in a period three years only 25% of paid workers were women. Also, the legal patriarchy was easily verified by looking at the Syrian constitution which clearly shows in Article 48 that the women in Syria do not give their children the Syrian nationality (Jadaliyya, 2012).

For the second part of the question, to what extend have the patriarchal practices had an effect on the women’s identity and the gender roles during the conflict? The findings show none, as according to the patriarchal practices before the conflict in Syria, women had limited role in the social and the political life. However, these patriarchal practices did not stop them from joining the demonstrations. On the contrary to that, these practices were challenged and some interviewees mentioned that it will never comeback.

5.5.2 Answering the Second Research Question

The second question of the thesis was: Did the patriarchy structure and the social dynamics change during the conflict, and if so has the interaction changed between female and male refugees?

The answer is yes. During most of the interviewee’s time inside of Syria or as refugees in Turkey, there were positive changes in the patriarchy structure and social dynamics. The interview sample has shown that there was more freedom for women to participate
in the demonstrations and be active in demanding political and social freedoms. This participation had a big effect on the gender roles and on the stereotypes about omens role in society. Women are no longer expected to be subordinate to men and are now contributing to building a country.

However, in the case of the women refugees in Al Zatari camp in Jordan the outcome of the interviews was different. The change was negative. It shows the patriarchy practices have worsened compared to the patriarchal practices before the conflict in Syria. For the men, due to the extreme living conditions and the lack of opportunities, they restored big part of their authority and control over women.

5.5.3 Answering the Third Research Question

Did the predominant patriarchal practices or the new ones, if any, have an impact on the integration of Syrian women refugees in the Swedish society? And if so, how?

In the first group (interviewees with less than a bachelor degree) both the old patriarchal practices before the conflict and the new gender roles during the demonstrations have had an effect on the integration process of women. In that, women do not understand who they are anymore. Syria during the demonstration was more or less like an unfinished workshop of social change. It was like two social forces, old and new, contesting with each other. This confusion and the unfinished social change have left women without a clear understanding of their roles and left them with a lost sense of identity, and this has made it hard for them to understand how to integrate in the Swedish society.

For the second group of interviewees, only the new gender roles and social dynamics affected their integration process in a positive way. This group identify themselves based on the gender roles that prevailed during the demonstrations which made them more positive about their future, especially on the personal level as they believed that they could create something new and keep the process of improving on the social level in Sweden as well.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

Conflicts and disasters are destructive and brutal. They are usually remembered by the amount of destruction and death that they bring. However, conflicts and disasters can also bring positive change. I attempted in this thesis to show theoretically that within a crisis a social change might happen. Whether for the better or the worse I tried to show that it is important for the humanitarian field to realize and analyze the change in the social structure of the society during and after the crisis. I chose the issue of gender within the humanitarian crisis as an example to track such changes, with the empirical work focusing on Syria as an example. I used from the feminist theory the radical feminism approach in studying the social problems which focuses on analyzing the patriarchy as practice. Then, from a theoretical point of view I tried to link the patriarchal practices in a society to the social dynamics and gender roles during the crisis. I also analyzed the idea of patriarchal bargaining during a crisis, in which in extreme situations or during crisis, an opportunity opens up to challenge and change stereotypical gender roles. Such an opportunity definitely existed in the case of Syria, in which women were able to break from the old patriarchal practices and bargain for a new gender role within the society. Also, I touched upon how the humanitarian field tackles the issue of gender by examining a practical guide developed by IFCR. Also, I showed that within an integration process of women refugees, it is important to take into account the previous experiences in their original country. As seen among refugees in Sweden.

Also, theoretically I showed from an Arab perspective how we think about patriarchy and how the problem of patriarchy has been researched. I showed that before the Arabic Spring, the problem of patriarchy was tackled from a political and religious point of view. However after the Arabic Spring, the focus when researching the issue of patriarchy took more of a gender and social perspective. I also showed the different levels of patriarchy that usually the Arabic society is facing.

Empirically, I did a background analysis of the Syrian conflict, in which I tried to show that although it has shifted now into a brutal war; it all started as a civil movement aiming for political and social change. Up until now, many people believe that one day this war will end; Syrians will create the society that they aspire to. I also showed that
female participation in the demonstrations was very obvious since the start of the first demonstrations and women played central role in demanding for political and social freedoms. This involvement must have an effect on the social structure in Syria which I tried to show in the interviews. I conducted 26 semi-structured interviews to track the changes in the patriarchal structures and the gender roles. The interviews showed how the patriarchal structures worked in Syria before the demonstrations. Also, how a positive social change happened with the start of the conflict in the patriarchal practices. During the demonstrations women in Syria achieved more freedom in the process of decision making compared to the period before the conflict. However, there was negative change in the social dynamics and gender roles when people had to flee their homes to Al Za’atri camp. That is when the patriarchal practices among refugees worsened in comparison to the period before the conflict. Unlike the refugees in Al Za’atari camp in Jordan, the refugees living in Turkey did not lose their connection to what was happening on the ground in Syria and they kept the same momentum and same enthusiasm for social change as when they were living in Syria. This led to a change in the patriarchal practices among refugees in Turkey as women refugees gained more freedom in the decision making process and gained more independent from male authority. Another finding of this research is that gender roles and patriarchal practices in Syria have had an effect on the integration process among Syrian women refugees.

For further research: During the process of writing this thesis many questions were raised which I believe deserve to be researched more.

Firstly, how can humanitarian organizations, from an institutional point of view; manage the ongoing social change in a certain conflict as to more encourage positive social change and discourage negative aspects?

Secondly, issue for research is how humanitarian organizations especially international NGOs intervene in local social change can while at the same time respecting the local culture where the conflict is happening. Especially from a gender equality perspective.

Thirdly, regarding integration, the average Arab citizen has lost trust in the outcome of the adapted Western governing system, and as a refugee in a European state, might carry the same lack of trust toward the Western institutional governing system which might have a counter effect on the integration process.
References:


ECHO (2015). “ECHO Fact Sheets, Syria Crisis”.


Jadaliyya (2012). ”The complete Syrian Constitutions” http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4410/%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%84%9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%8%8D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B0%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B3. Retrieved on the 12/11/2015.


Source: Adams (2015)
### Appendix B

#### Index of the Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The index</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>When did they leave Syria</th>
<th>Current country</th>
<th>Date of the interview</th>
<th>How the interview happened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>11/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>14/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>11/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>15/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>15/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>19/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>19/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W7</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>19/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>18/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>18/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>18/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>18/10/2015</td>
<td>Skype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>25/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>24/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W11</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>20/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W12</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>21/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>21/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W14</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>married</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>28/10/2015</td>
<td>In Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>28/10/2015</td>
<td>In Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>28/10/2015</td>
<td>In Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>28/10/2015</td>
<td>In Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>22/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 8</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>24/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>24/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>11/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 11</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>11/10/2015</td>
<td>In Uppsala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Basically I wanted to find out how the patriarchal practices and the gender roles before the demonstrations were. The three points to cover are:

**Daily Challenges** (finding out what were the gender roles)

Opening question:

- What were your daily challenges in everyday life? What were your dreams? What were your obsessions?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- Did you feel that these daily challenges could change or be challenged?
- Which is more important, getting a job or raising children? Why?
- Do you think making a family contradicts with your personal education, or working?
- Financially how would you manage yourself?

**Patriarchal Practices**

Opening question:

- Were you independent in your decisions?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- Who affected your decisions?
- Would you agree with someone to be responsible on you?
- Would you decide on a certain issue, without consulting the male (husband, father, brother, male relatives… etc)
- Were you consulted in the main decisions regarding family, job, education and life in general
- Were you able to make personal decisions that would affect you life, such as your education, marriage...etc?
- Who is financially responsible?
Participation in the Social and Political Life

Opening question:

- Do you think it is important to be involved in a political organization or for a social cause?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- If yes, why? Did you make this decision yourself?
- If no, why?

Note:

The questions were written in Arabic and addressed for the women. When the interviewee is a man then the questions would be altered to be addressed to a man to find out his perception, acceptance, or rejection. For example this question is written to be asked for a woman:

- Were you independent in your decisions?

If a man was asked, the question would be:

- Would you agree with the woman in your family (wife, mother, sister..etc) be independent in her decisions?
Appendix D

Mainly I wanted to find out how did the patriarchal practices and the gender roles have changed during the demonstrations. The three points to cover are:

**Daily Challenges** (finding out what were the gender roles during the conflicts)

Opening question: How did your life change during the demonstrations?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- Did your priorities in life change compared to the time before the demonstrations?
- If there was a change, were you happy with it, or did you not like it?

**Patriarchal Practices**

Opening question:

- Were you independent in your decisions during the demonstrations?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- Who affected your decisions?
- Would you agree with someone to be responsible on you?
- Would you decide on a certain issue, without consulting the male (husband, father, brother, male relatives… etc)

**Participation in the Social and Political Life**

Opening question:

- Did you think it is important to be involved in a political organization or for a social cause during the demonstrations?

Depending on the answer, I would expand on the main points from the answer. Possible further questions:

- If yes, why? Did you make this decision yourself?
- If no, why?
Appendix E

I wanted to find out how and if the patriarchal practices and the gender roles changed among the Syrian refugees outside of Syria. The four points to cover are:

**Patriarchal Practices among the Refugees in Al Za’atri Camp in Jordan**

Opening question: compared to your life in Syria, before or during the demonstrations, how did your life and social practices change? And why?

**Patriarchal Practices among Refugees in Turkey**

Opening question compared to your life in Syria, before or during the demonstrations, how did your life and social practices change? And why?

**Interaction with Humanitarian Organizations**

Opening question: Did the humanitarian organizations help with the negative social practices that you did not like? Or you wish to change?

**Integration in Sweden**

Opening question: How did the practices inside of Syria affect your integration process in Sweden?