



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN
Department of Sociology

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**A Comparative Study of Turkish and Norwegian
Urban Dual-Earner Couples**

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2002

Preface

This is a slightly revised version of the doctoral dissertation that was submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Bergen, in February 2002. The following committee was appointed to assess the thesis: Prof. David Morgan, University of Manchester, Prof. Zehra F. Arat, State University of New York and Prof. Ann Nilsen, University of Bergen. The disputation took place in Bergen, on 12. June 2002. I am grateful to the members of the committee for their thorough evaluation and constructive comments. Defending this thesis has been a rewarding experience.

As in most long-term projects, I needed some time to establish the necessary distance from the original thesis, before I could start to review it for publication. I have added some details to the arguments in the concluding chapter. I have added an appendix to provide more information on the historical trajectories of the two countries. The analysis chapters (3 to 8) are the same as in the original.

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Writing up this dissertation was the major activity in my life throughout 2001. My mood has been characterized by recurrent ups and downs. At times, when the final submission seemed so far away, I used to dream about this very moment, the moment of writing the acknowledgements, and imagined how good it would feel. At this particular instant of printing out the thesis after a whole night's shift, I am primarily grateful for the support of everybody who believed in this project and contributed in many different ways.

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Summary in Norwegian / Sammendrag

Globale tema / Lokale problemer: En sammenliknende studie av tyrkiske og norske urbane, toinntektsfamilier

Hovedmålet med studien var å granske dynamikken i familie og kjønnpraksis i to forskjellige sosiale kontekster, nemlig storbyliv i Norge og Tyrkia. Forholdene mellom kjønn, familiepraksis og politikk er studert gjennom sammenliknende analyser av offisielle dokumenter og statistikk, samt intervjuer med 16 tyrkiske og 11 norske høyt utdannede par i to aldersgrupper. Hvordan definerer disse parene familie og hvordan evaluerer de endringene i familie og kjønns-relasjoner? Hvordan organiserer de husarbeid og barneomsorg? Hva slags strategier har de for å balansere familie forpliktelser og fulltidsjobb? Bruker de tiden som de ønsker? Hva slags framtidsplaner har de? Hvordan reflekterer de om kjønn: hvordan evaluerer de fordeler og ulemper knyttet til å være kvinne eller mann i Norge og Tyrkia? Hva forventer de fra staten i forhold til familie og kjønnpraksis? Disse var noen av de spørsmålene studien forsøkte å svare.

Likhetene mellom de tyrkiske og norske parene danner et grunnlag for å analysere 'globale tema' som resultat av modernisering. Forskjellene danner grunnlag for å reflektere om 'lokale problemer' som er spesifikke for de to land. Her følger en oppsummering av prosjektets hovedfunn:

Definisjon av familie og vurdering av endringer i familie relasjoner

Å være i familie fører til ulike forpliktelser i Tyrkia og Norge. I Norge viser velferdstaten seg å være en sentral aktør i forhold til omsorgstjenester for eldre og barn. I Tyrkia er ikke staten oppfattet som en ansvarlig omsorgsaktør. Omsorgsarbeid er betraktet som kvinners viktigste ansvar som bør utføres innenfor den private sfæren. Spørsmålet 'hvem er din familie' er også mer ideologisk i den tyrkiske konteksten. I moderniseringsprosessen ble det å være kjernefamilie assosiert med å være moderne, i motsetning til storfamiliene som symboliserte det tradisjonelle. Disse faktorene synes å påvirke hvordan informantene definerer familie. Yngre tyrkiske par tegnet skarpere grenser mellom deres kjernefamilie og resten av slektningene, mens norske par var mer avslappet med hensyn til å inkludere flere i familiegruppen. I følge de tyrkiske parene har de viktigste endringer i familier vært en demokratisering av forholdene mellom ektepar, mellom foreldre og barn og en større grad av frikobling fra familieband. I følge de norske parene har de viktigste endringene vært økning i toinntektsfamilier og økt risiko for samlivsbrudd.

Organisering av husarbeid og barneomsorg

Den viktigste forskjellen mellom tyrkiske og norske par angående organisering av husarbeid, var at alle tyrkiske par hadde betalt hushjelp. Det er vanlig at kvinner som har flyttet til byene fra landet jobber som vaskedamer hos middelklasse familier. Dette er en veletablert og relativt billig service som gjør at fordeling av husarbeid ikke blir et tema for forhandling for tyrkiske par. Norske par hadde for sin del mye å fortelle om hvordan de organiserer husarbeidet. Idealet for dem hadde vært å dele likt, men de fleste hadde likevel 'glidd inn' i et relativt tradisjonelt mønster etter hvert. En likhet mellom de to grupper er at, det er kvinnene som har største ansvar når det gjelder organisering av husarbeidet: å sette standarder, bestemme hva skal gjøres og når, og å ta initiativet for forhandlinger når arbeidsdelingen føles urettferdig. Tyrkiske kvinner har lavere forventninger enn de norske, og husarbeid generelt er et mindre viktig tema for tyrkere enn nordmenn.

I forhold til organisering av daglig omsorg for barna, er det store forskjeller mellom de to land. Statssubsidierte barnehager, som er den mest foretrukket ordning blant norske par, eksisterer ikke

som et alternativ for tyrkere. Tyrkiske par må finne private løsninger i mangel av offentlige tilbud. De fleste har fulltids dagmamma og noen benytter private barnehager.

Familie-Jobb balanse

Å finne en god balanse mellom familie og jobb synes hovedsakelig å være kvinners' problem blant tyrkiske par. Spesielt kvinner med små barn som jobber i det private arbeidsmarkedet opplever mye stress og anstrengelser. Blant norske par snakker både mødre og fedre med små barn om problemer knyttet til å balansere familie og arbeidsliv. De opplever kravene om å være tilgjengelig både hjemme og på jobb som motstridende. Sammenliknet med tyrkiske fedre føler norske fedre seg mer ansvarlig for å delta aktivt hjemme og å balansere arbeidet med hensyn til familien. Bortsett fra en hadde alle unge norske fedre brukt farspermisjon og opplevd dette som positivt.

Kjønnsideologier og kjønnete erfaringer

Kjønn er mer politisert i Norge, hovedsakelig som følge av 70-tallets feminist bevegelse samt velferdstatens likestillings politikk. Norske par hadde mer å fortelle om endringer i kjønnsrelasjoner og de fleste opplevde større likestilling mellom kjønnene som positivt. Standard måten norske informantene reflekterte om kjønn på kan karakteriseres med setningen: «Vi har kommet langt i likestilling i Norge, men...» Denne setningen avsluttes ofte med referanser til ulikheter i arbeidslivet og i deling av omsorgsarbeid hjemme.

De aller fleste av de tyrkiske informantene ser ikke kjønn som viktig. De tror at andre faktorer, som klassebakgrunn og utdanning, har mer å si. Mange kvinner reflekterte om kjønn på følgende måte: «Jeg, personlig, føler ingen ulemper knyttet til å være kvinne, men...» Denne setningen avsluttet de med referanser til problemene 'andre' kvinner, som ikke har utdanning eller jobb hadde. Striden mellom religion og moderniseringsprosessen er viktig fenomen som påvirker dagens kjønnsrelasjoner i Tyrkia. 90 prosent av befolkningen i Tyrkia er muslimer, men offisielt er Tyrkia en sekulær stat, uten statsreligion. Kvinners status og kjønnsrelasjoner er påvirket av den spesielle moderniseringshistorien. Tyrkia har opplevd en revolusjonær modernisering etter frigjøringskrigen hvor modernisering var definert som 'vestliggjøring ved å beholde tyrkiske verdier'. Kvinners status i samfunnet hadde også en viktig symbolsk betydning i moderniseringsånden. Spesielt middelklasse kvinner fikk mulighet til å ta høyere utdanning og jobbe i profesjoner. Et tvedydig 'moderne kvinne' ideal var skapt: en som har høyere utdanning, deltar i arbeidsmarkedet, men som prioriterer familien, og som først og fremst er en god mor og kone. Dette er fremdeles et sterkt ideal i Tyrkia, som gjør at kvinner ofte velger å slutte i arbeidslivet når moderskap kommer i konflikt med å være i arbeid. I tillegg har, som tidligere nevnt, alle noe hjelp i huset. Derfor blir ikke tradisjonelle kjønnsroller hjemme omdiskutert, i motsetning til situasjonen i Norge fra 1970-tallet. I Norge er likestilling den dominerende ideologien, mens komplementær kjønnsrolleideologi er mer akseptert i Tyrkia. Intervjumaterialet viser at kjønnsrelasjoner i høyst grad er påvirket av statens kjønnsideologi og politikk. Særlig påvirker spesifikk familiepolitikk sosiale forventninger knyttet til foreldreskap og kjønnsroller.

Familiepolitikk og forventninger fra Staten

Dette er et område hvor store forskjeller mellom de to sosiale kontekster kommer til syne. Det finnes ikke en velutviklet familiepolitikk i Tyrkia. Hovedgrunnen er at problemer knyttet til barneomsorg og eldreomsorg er definert som "private problemer". Familien er mer "offentlig" i Norge: Det finnes en velutviklet familiepolitikk som tar over en del av ansvaret for barne- og eldreomsorgen, en hoved karakteristikk av den sosialdemokratiske velferdsstaten. Selv om Norge

har vært etternøler i Skandinavisk sammenheng i forhold til investering i barnehager og støtte kvinner i lønnet arbeid, har det i løpet av 1990-tallet skjedd en viktig utvikling. Antall barnehageplasser har økt og permisjonsperiodene har blitt vesentlig forlenget. Hovedideologien bak familiepolitikken i Norge er nå å støtte “to-inntekts” familie modellen og målet er å legge til rette for at både fedre og mødre skal delta aktivt i arbeidsmarkedet og dele omsorgsansvaret hjemme. Det som er spesielt med Norge er fokus på fedrenes ansvar hjemme gjennom utvikling av permisjonsordninger som er forbeholdt fedre.

I Tyrkia kan familiepolitikken karakteriseres som “familistisk” --omsorg for barn og eldre er sett som familiens (dvs. kvinnens) private ansvar som må gjennomføres innenfor familien. Norsk familiepolitikk kan betegnes som ‘individualistisk’ siden den hovedsakelig er basert på ideen om at både mødre og fedre skal delta i arbeidsmarkedet.

Når det gjelder forventninger fra staten og forestillinger om staten er det stor forskjell mellom de to land. Norske informanter fastslår at de setter stor pris lengre permisjonsperioder og subsidierte barnehager. Og parene har store forventninger fra staten, spesielt i forhold til barnehager: de ønsker bedre dekning og mer støtte. Tyrkiske par forventer derimot lite fra staten, særlig i forhold til det de definerer som deres ‘private problemer’ hjemme.

Tidsbruk og framtidplaner

Både tyrkiske og norske par med små barn føler et stort tidspress. Spesielt tyrkiske mødre som jobber i den private sektor føler at de har lite kontroll over sin tid. Både norske mødre og fedre ønsker å få mer tid: både til familien og til fritidsaktiviteter.

Tyrkiske og norske par har også forskjellige framtidplaner. De fleste norske par snakket om ‘å holde sammen som familie’ som en viktig plan. For tyrkiske par var det å sikre framtiden økonomisk det viktigste. Velferdsstaten har her trolig stor betydning. Norske par er mer “dekommodifiserte” siden velferdsordningene gir en grunnleggende sikkerhet for framtida. Økonomiske og politiske faktorer legger større bånd på tyrkiske pars framtidplaner. Et viktig problem som yngre norske par opplever er å takle høye og motstridende forventninger knyttet til å være vellykket i mange sfærer samtidig. For tyrkiske par er hovedproblemet å takle motstridende forventninger av tradisjonelle og sen-moderne familieforhold og kjønnsrelasjoner.

Forskjellige moderniteter, forskjellige overganger

Sosiale forhold i Tyrkia og Norge kan karakteriseres som kontekster av forskjellige moderniteter. Blant tyrkiske par en overgang fra en tidlig-moderne til sen-moderne holdning var mer synlig. Yngre tyrkiske par var mer individualisert og mindre opptatt av tradisjonelle bånd, sammenliknet til de eldre. En liknende holdningsforskjell var mindre synlig blant norske par. En tendens som karakteriserer norske par var en holdning som jeg kaller ‘forsiktig moderne.’ Kjenne tegn for denne innstillingen er en skeptisisme om økende dominans av penger og økende sosiale ulikheter i samfunnet. Et felles ønske blant yngre norske par var å redusere daglig travelhet og få mer tid for familielivet.

En likhet mellom tyrkiske og norske par var det faktum at kjønnsforskjeller eksisterer i forhold til fordeling av ulønnet arbeid og i forhold til erfaringer i arbeidsmarkedet. Selv blant disse par som deltar i lønnsarbeidet under like betingelser, er det kjønnsforskjeller når det gjelder organisering og utføring av hus- og omsorgsarbeid. Kvinner både føler seg mer ansvarlig og gjør mer av ulønnede arbeid i den private sfæren. Og det er ofte kvinner som velger å prioritere familien når konfliktene mellom forventningene hjemme og i jobben blir store.

Chapter 1 Introduction

“Sociological imagination...is a quality of mind that seems most dramatically to promise an understanding of the intimate realities of ourselves in connection with larger social realities (Mills 1959: 15).”

The major purpose of this research project is to study the dynamics of gender and family practices in two social contexts that are going through different transformations of modernity. The complex relationships between gender, family practices, and state policies will be investigated through comparative and complementary analyses of historical developments, statistical trends, official documents, and face-to-face interviews. Social practices of a specific group – dual-earner, professional couples – will form the basis of the comparative approach. My objective is to interpret the accounts, experiences, and evaluations of this particular group to gain insights on larger dynamics in the two societies and to come one step further in the task of analyzing “the major issues for publics and the key troubles of private individuals in our time” (Mills 1959: 11). My hope is to contribute to a clarification of the ‘global issues’ and ‘local troubles’ crystallizing in the lives of these individuals. A major theoretical ambition of this project is to contribute to a deeper, critical understanding of the processes of modernization and globalization in interaction with specific local, national, and cultural formations. The two national contexts that I have chosen for this purpose are Turkey and Norway. The *sine qua non* of this choice is my personal biography.

I am a Turkish woman who was born in Istanbul. I studied Business Administration as my first undergraduate degree at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, realized that this was not the field where my heart is, and started searching for alternative fields of study. As a result of a series of coincidences and conscious choices, I received a scholarship for a master’s degree in sociology at the University of Bergen and traveled to Norway for the first time in August 1990. Since the day of my arrival, I have been engaged in observing and trying to understand the institutional and cultural differences between Turkey and Norway. Despite the similarities in urban living arrangements, certain areas were strikingly different. For example, almost half of the members of the Norwegian Parliament were women and gender issues ranked high on the political agenda. When I had to decide the subject of my master’s thesis in sociology, the choice was easy: I would study women’s societal positions in Norway and Turkey comparatively. My positioning in the two countries as concurrently an insider and an outsider was the essential factor that enabled me to mobilize the ‘sociological imagination’ (à la Mills, 1959) to compare the dynamics of these two societies. The findings of this initial project (Sümer 1996, 1998) resulted in new research questions and gave way to the specific design of the project at hand.

1.1 Research Background

The prior comparative research showed that despite clear differences in terms of their gendered experiences, young Turkish and Norwegian women with a university education, expected to face similar problems related to the conflicting demands of motherhood and employment and to gendered division of domestic and care work. The available solutions for these problems, however, were fundamentally different in each country: while the public support offered by the welfare state in Norway – in the form of lengthened maternity leave and subsidized day care institutions – helped women in combining their earning and caring commitments, the traditional family relations and the availability of paid household help enabled modern Turkish women to combine employment and motherhood without challenging the conventional role patterns within families. At the institutional level, the Norwegian welfare state and the Turkish family appeared to play significant roles in the lives of these women, in terms of the different opportunities and constraints they signified.¹ I analyzed the common problem that both Norwegian and Turkish women declared as a dilemma – i.e., the clashing demands of the public and private spheres – as stemming from an ‘incongruity of the design of modernity’ (Beck 1992: 82). In the capitalist order, combining family commitments with work outside home has been both experienced and defined as a problem and source of conflict for women, while this combination has largely been a matter of course for men. My research revealed that both Turkish and Norwegian women have worries related to family/work and motherhood/career balances. In light of these findings concerning young and educated women, I started to contemplate the kinds of relationships men of the same backgrounds might have to the spheres of the state and the family. Combined with an interest in changing family patterns, gender relations, and the division of tasks inside households, these questions led me to formulate the research problems for the current, wider-ranging, comparative project. I extended the field of investigation to include heterosexual couples from Turkey and Norway in order to study the dynamics of gender relations and hear the stories of both men and women regarding their gender, family and work practices.

1.2 Research Design

The first reaction that this study often causes is a statement that Turkey and Norway are too different to be comparable in any way: Norway is among the richest countries in the world, due to its North Sea oil revenues, and has one of the most institutionalized welfare states, while Turkey is often in major economic crises and suffers political instabilities. Different institutional arrangements, religions, and values prevail in the two societies. Norway is homogeneous and has a lower social inequality, while Turkey is extremely heterogeneous. All these claims are true. Given these basic differences one may ask: Is it justifiable to compare the practices and policies of these two societies? I would answer

¹ For a more detailed presentation of the main findings of this research see Sümer 1998.

“yes,” within a particular research logic and design. The project is not “comparative” in a positivistic sense, but the aim is to investigate the social relations and institutions in the two societies with an interpretive-comparative approach. The main strategy I employ in approaching these dissimilar countries is to base the empirical comparison on highly specific and similar social groups. The groups that will form this basis of this inquiry are heterosexual couples (married or cohabiting) with children, living in cities, in which both the man and the woman have a university education and are (or have been) in full-time professional employment, in the age groups 30-45 or 45-65. The focus will be on individuals who define themselves as ‘secular’ since the main purpose is to study individuals’ reflections on changing gender and family relations by bracketing out the religious arguments. There are several theoretical, strategic, and practical reasons behind this specification:

Why Couples? Interviewing couples will provide data on their family lives, their problems, negotiations, and solutions regarding divisions of domestic tasks, care work and combination of employment and family life. Comparisons of attitudes and experiences of women and men will provide material for studying the ways gender is constructed and gendered patterns are reproduced, as well as potentials and possibilities for change.

Why Parents? Having a child brings up a situation in which women and men face increased pressure on their time and priorities. They also need more support from other agents, such as the state, close relatives and friends. As parents, individual men and women deal with a new aspect of their identities, as well as expectations and difficulties related to combining motherhood/fatherhood and professional employment. Interviewing parents will provide the means to examine different aspects of parenthood and the functioning of support networks in the two countries.

Why an Urban Background, Secular Orientation and University Education? People who live in cities and have higher education are often conceptualized as the vanguard in the process of reflexive modernization (Beck 1992). To establish a meaningful level of comparability, it is important to clarify that though living in different social contexts, the Turkish and Norwegian groups share at least a certain amount of similarity concerning life-styles, material conditions, and value orientations. Concentrating on individuals who define themselves as “secular” and whose attitudes and decisions are not directly influenced by their religious orientations will facilitate and strengthen the comparability of the different groups. Basing the study on highly modernized groups in the two societies also will offer the possibility of studying convergence, and analyzing whether these stem from the globalizing influences of modernity.

Why in Full-time Employment? One of the theoretical purposes of this project is to contribute to understanding how women's increasing education and employment influence the traditional family patterns and gender divisions of labor inside households and in the labor market. Interviewing couples who are (or were) both employed outside

the home will provide information on what kind of problems this situation brings about, how couples handle these problems, and how much help the state and other networks provide.

Why both Younger and Older Individuals? Most theories on gender roles and family patterns point to changes and transformations that took place, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. Comparing the attitudes and experiences of both younger and older people on these issues will provide valuable material to examine these changes over time.

The task of studying the relationships between state policies, family patterns, and gender relations necessitates the complementary use of several types of data. In this study, I have sought to keep a broad range for the topics to be studied comparatively. My main purpose is to reach an understanding of the main trends in family formations and the relationships between women and men, both in the private and public spheres. For that purpose I drew on several types of data. To get at general trends in gender relations and family practices in Norway and Turkey, I analyzed historical and statistical data and official documents.² To gain a deeper understanding of how a specific group of social agents organize their daily lives, manage conflicting demands, and evaluate societal trends, I interviewed dual-career couples.

1.3 Research Questions

The broad purpose of this study is to provide a comparative analysis of family practices and gender relations, and the historical, institutional, and cultural factors influencing them. State policies, especially, are conceptualized as having direct and significant effects on gender and family practices.

The study specifies three major fields – gender relations, family practices, and state policies – and aims at analyzing their interactions by focusing on urban, dual-earner couples.³ The main dimensions of comparison are the national contexts, gender differences, and age groups (30-45 and 45-65).

Turkey and Norway are especially interesting arenas for a comparative study of changes in gender relations due to the interaction among historical, cultural and socioeconomic factors that create different ‘gender regimes’ (Connell 1987) and ideologies. In both countries, gender-related issues have been high on the agenda, though with a different focus and at different times. The position of women had a symbolic importance in the revolutionary modernization processes in Turkey. Radical steps were taken in the early years of the Republic to make Turkish women equal to men as citizens, which led to this period being labeled a type of ‘state feminism’ (Tekeli 1986, Kandiyoti 1995). However in daily cultural practices, traditional gender arrangements prevailed.

² Documents published by family and gender-related Ministries and Directorates, official internet pages, and official reports were used.

³ Detailed definitions of these concepts and the ways their relationships are conceptualized will be presented in Chapter 2.

There is a real need to examine changing and ambiguous practices of the state concerning gender and the influence of official ideologies in daily life since, as Kandiyoti notes, “there has been a gradual but definite shift from acknowledging the role and agency of the state in shaping gender relations...to marginalizing or ignoring it” (Kandiyoti 1995: 314).

Gender equality has been an ‘official ideology’ in Norway since the 1970s, yet inequalities and backlash tendencies remain. Issues related to gender equality in both public and private spheres rank high on the political agenda. Positive developments towards gender equality have led feminists to argue about the possibilities of a ‘woman-friendly’ state (Hernes 1987). Women’s (and especially mothers’) labor force participation has been constantly increasing in the last two decades, yet the Norwegian labor-market is highly gender segregated and the ‘equal pay for equal work’ principle is far from being realized. The division of labor between family, market, and state is decisive in analyzing gender relations and the distribution of power, and these relationships go through constant transformations. This study aims at taking a close look at change and stability in gender relations, both in the public and private spheres.

A major theoretical insight of this study is that the ‘public’ and ‘private’ spheres interact in complex ways, and the organization of paid and unpaid labor must be analyzed simultaneously to reach an understanding of the ways gender differences are produced and reproduced. With that orientation, this study seeks answers to the following questions: How do dual-earner couples organize unpaid household labor and childcare? What are their strategies for balancing work and family? Are there significant gendered differences concerning care responsibilities and priorities? What types of support mechanisms are available for dual-earner couples?

Some trends in family patterns are similar across industrialized countries: a decline in family size, the postponement of marriage and childbirth, a decrease in fertility rates, and an increase in divorces. At the same time, there have been important variations among countries due to interacting effects of state policy, religious orientation, cultural characteristics, and gender ideologies. The convergence theories of evolutionary modernists have now largely been criticized and discredited (Mason and Jensen 1995). Increasing industrialization and modernization do not lead to uniform changes in family patterns in different regions and countries. Local factors, like state policies directed at families, strength of feminist movements, and historically rooted gender ideologies are some of the factors that interact and influence these trends.

This project aims to ‘deconstruct’ (Gittins 1985) many popular myths surrounding ‘the family’ by raising a number of questions and providing cross-nationally and historically sensitive answers. Questions to which I seek to provide answers are: How do people define their families? Do family relations imply the same obligations in different social contexts? How are families changing? How are divorces evaluated? This process of deconstruction will bolster our understanding of families as products of historical, class-specific, and culturally-specific practices and ideologies.

Before embarking on the task of analyzing the relationships between and trends within family practices, gender relationships and state policies in Norway and Turkey,

focusing on the reflections and practices of urban dual-earner couples, introductory information on the basic institutional and cultural characteristics of the two countries will be in order.

1.4 Key Characteristics of Turkish and Norwegian Societies

Existing gender relations and family practices are formed through the interacting influences of specific cultural and historical factors and modernization processes. A brief introduction to the basic institutional and cultural elements of the two societies is necessary in order to place the analyses that will be presented in the following chapters in a wider context.

Turkey and Norway exemplify different modernization routes, social policy systems, state organizations, value orientations, and religious and cultural practices. Compared to many other European countries, Norway has a lower unemployment rate, a lower poverty level, and a higher level of income equality. Norway ranks at second place among 174 countries according to United Nations' Human Development Index, while Turkey ranks as number 85 (UNDP 2000, also see Table 1). Turkey is a developing country with significant urban-rural differences, where a mixture of traditional and modern life-styles coexists. It is a country that – despite its predominantly Muslim population – has officially declared its devotion to the principles of secularization and democratization. However the rise of 'political Islam' and the threat of fundamentalism have been high on the agenda in the last decade. The history of the Turkish republic is characterized by a revolutionary modernization that created conflicting attitudes towards the ideas of Westernization and secularization, and a vicious cycle of military interventions which halted its transformation into a civil, democratic society.⁴

Norway has been able to preserve its Social Democratic welfare system without major cuts, due to its vast oil revenues that provide the basis for a strong economy. Turkey has recently experienced a major economic crisis and is still going through serious social turmoil. The exact reason of the crisis is hard to pinpoint, but IMF structural adjustment policies (i.e. privatization and deregulation) seem to have played a major role.

The formation of the welfare state in Norway and the process of top-down modernization in Turkey can be identified as the most significant historical elements influencing today's practices. The developments in the Norwegian welfare state were rooted in a broad political consensus, and social policy issues did not cause major conflicts between parties. The Labor Party was a leading force in defining new social policy tasks, but other parties followed closely behind. A noteworthy feature of Norwegian politics was the extent to which the bourgeois parties incorporated social democratic policies.

⁴ For a more detailed presentation of the historical trajectories of Turkey and Norway see Appendix 1.

Table 1.1 A Comparison of Basic Economic and Social Indicators

1997-98	Turkey	Norway
Population (Thousands)	63.745	4.393
Inhabitants per sq. km.	82	14
Gross Domestic Product (Bill. US \$)	189.9	153.4
GDP Per Capita	2.979	34.815
Purchasing Power Parities Per Capita (US \$)	6.422	26.342
women	4.703	22.400
men	8.104	30.356
Sectoral Distribution (as % of GDP)		
Agriculture	17.6	2.0
Industry	25.4	32.1
Services	57.0	65.9
Share of income Consumption		
Poorest 20 %	5.8	9.7
Richest 20 %	47.7	35.8
Adult literacy rate		
female	75	99
male	93	99
Life expectancy		
female	71.7	81.3
male	66.5	75.5
Indicators of Living Standards		
Private consumption per capita (Purchasing Power Parities US \$)	4 397	12 728
Passenger cars (per 1000)	50	387
Telephones (per 1000)	212	556
Doctors (per 1000)	1.2	2.8
Personal Computers (per 1000)	23	373
Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)	42	4

(Sources OECD 2001, UNDP 2000)

The Turkish Republic was proclaimed in 1923. Under the leadership of Atatürk and a small elite devoted to his ideology – ‘Kemalism’ – the Ottoman Sultanate and Caliphate were abolished and the process of top-down reformation was initiated. Kemalist reforms aimed to transform all the cultural and symbolic phenomena associated with the Islamic way of life: from the modernization of the alphabet and dress code to the status and roles of women. However, this new ‘modern’ culture did not have profound effects on society at large, especially in rural areas. A gulf was created between the rulers and the ruled, each of which had their own distinct cultures: “the Westernized, secular culture of a small but influential minority and the indigenous culture of the masses associated with Islam” (Ahmad 1993: 92).

The class structures of the two countries differ historically: In Norway, independent farmers have played an important role in the country's history and there has never been a large, wealthy class of landed aristocracy. Norway has a recent history of industrially-based social classes and a longer history of rather egalitarian class relations (Gullestad 1992). In Turkey, the class relations in the modern sense came into existence only after the Kemalist revolutions that initiated a transition to capitalism. Compared to Norway, the differences between the classes in terms of economic conditions and life-styles are more marked in Turkey, mainly as a result of the unequal income distribution.

A great majority of the population in Turkey is Muslim, and in Norway the majority is Protestant. The Protestant Church in Norway is organized as a State Church. Around 85 percent of the population are members of the State Church, which officially regulates most of the country's religious activities. Most people baptize their infants and hold religious services for marriage and death, though the ratio of the population who regularly attends church services is quite low. Institutional religiosity has diminished and the role of church in society is no longer dominant, although the Christian party plays a more significant role in the political arena in Norway compared to other Scandinavian countries. After the last national election (September 2001) a center-right coalition government was formed and the leader of the Christian People's Party became the Prime Minister.

Religion has always been socially and politically important in Turkey, and is still at the center of the political agenda due to the rise in electoral support for conservative parties over the last decade. In the early years of the Republic, the state strictly controlled religion. Socialized in the ideas of the Enlightenment, positivism, and progress, the Kemalists were committed to driving religion out of the public arena and into the sphere of individual conscience, a purpose signified by the principle of secularism (Kazancıgil 1994). In the 1950s religion became an instrument for appealing to the masses in elections. Following the 1980 coup, military leaders attempted to find a middle ground between religion and the secular state, opening way for a revival in religious fundamentalism. 1990s has witnessed a growth of Islamic movements. Islamists are especially critical of Western influences on gender relations, the family and social customs (Toprak 1994).

This note takes us to a glance on Turkish and Norwegian women's participation patterns in the 'public sphere' to serve as a background for the following analysis of the dynamics of gender relations and family practices.⁵

1.4.1 Gender in the 'Public Sphere'

The legal status of women in the Ottoman Empire was mainly defined by *Sharia* (Islamic Law), which assumed that women were naturally dependent on men and that they

⁵ See Appendix 2 for more information and statistics on Turkish and Norwegian women's societal positions.

needed the protection of men (Arat 1989). After the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, the process of establishing a secular, national, and democratic state had radical consequences for women. In 1926, the Turkish Civil Code, modeled after the Swiss Code, was adopted. This law abolished polygamy and endorsed compulsory civil marriage, the right of divorce for both partners, and egalitarian inheritance laws.⁶ In 1934, women were given the right to elect – and be elected as – members of the National Assembly. Historically, middle class women have been encouraged to participate in the process of “bringing Turkey to the level of developed Western societies” – the ideological motto of the modernizing Kemalist regime. This factor had significant effects in shaping the status of women and the class relations in the Turkish society. Women from elite backgrounds have been encouraged to enter the prestigious professions, restricting the options available to men from manual or peasant backgrounds (Öncü 1981). In that way, the secular ideology, the Westernizing reforms, and the elite subculture they defined, strongly encouraged women’s higher education and career orientation as part of their modernization mission. The result of this forceful push to recruit women into the professions at the same time prevented the sex-typing of certain professions (Acar 1990). However, labor force participation rate of women in urban areas in Turkey is extremely low (16 percent in 1998). A great majority of urban women are housewives. In 1990, 82 percent of Turkish women defined themselves as housewives (Ilkkaracan 1998). The underdeveloped economy of Turkey, the lower education of women and the prevalence of traditional attitudes towards working women can be mentioned as the most important reasons behind this phenomenon. Only 5 percent of urban Turkish women are university graduates. Apart from the professional women with higher education, female workers are seen as second class labor in the work market and are first to be dismissed when the business is bad.

In Norway, women’s education levels and labor force participation rates increased dramatically in the last two decades. 22 percent of Norwegian women are university graduates. In 1999, 74 percent of women aged 15-64 were in paid employment, compared with 53 percent average in the EU countries (SN 2001).

A main difference between the two countries is that Norway witnessed a strong women’s movement in the 1970s, and the ideal of equality between the sexes is integrated in both Norwegian culture and all areas of social policy. Turkey, on the other hand, has only recently seen an increased emphasis on women’s issues, while feminist movements have never been strong due to serious differences among women and specific historical developments that make gender-solidarity difficult.

Political participation is crucial for gaining power to make a difference in the way state policies address gender. The political participation of women is high in Norway; their representation levels compare favorably with world averages. In 1999, 36 percent of the members of Parliament were women. Women also constitute 45 percent of cabinet ministers. Norwegian women’s integration into party politics has led to an extensive agenda change in politics, mainly as an increased focus on ‘care politics’ (Skjeie 1993). In

⁶ The gender discriminatory clauses of the Civil Code will be analyzed in detail in Section 6.2.

Turkey, on the other hand, politics is both considered and practiced as a predominantly male activity and women's representation has been remarkably low in the last several decades (Arat 1989). After the general elections in 1999, there has been an increase from 8 to 22 women deputies in Parliament, which consists of 550 seats; yet there is not a single woman among the 39 ministers of the present coalition government (As of February 2002).

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

Following this introduction on the underlying research questions and design, I will proceed with a presentation of my basic theoretical perspective and methodological orientation in Chapter Two. Building on a brief biographical narrative, I will first depict the contours of my personal development in the field of social theory. I will then proceed with a clarification of the major theoretical concepts that have guided the comparative analysis, with a specific focus on modernity, individualization and family practices. Definitions of the key theoretical concepts applied will be followed by reflections on methodology. In this section, I will provide a rather detailed account of the interviewing process. I will conclude the chapter by presenting the background characteristics of the interviewees and their pseudonyms.

Chapter Three is on changes in family practices. I will first provide a brief review of the historical and cultural roots of the present family patterns in Turkey and Norway, together with comparative statistics on marriage, divorce and fertility rates. This will be followed by an analysis of interviewees' conceptualization of their families in the context of differing family ideologies that prevail in the two societies. I will conclude the chapter by concentrating on interviewees' evaluations of the trends in families and intimate relationships, with a special focus on divorce as a complex social phenomenon.

In Chapter Four, different arrangements for housework and childcare will be the subject of comparative scrutiny, with a focus on both changes and stabilities in these fields. Brief information on general ways of organizing domestic labor in the two countries will be followed by a detailed analysis of interviewees' own practices.

Chapter Five will throw a light on the different ways interviewees are balancing work and family obligations. Different types of conflicts throughout the life-course will be analyzed together with the strategies used to solve the problems related to the clashing demands of the two spheres.

In Chapter Six the focus will shift to an analysis of state policies. Following a brief analysis of the social security systems, the gender ideologies and family policies of Turkish and Norwegian states will be analyzed to illuminate historical variations and ambiguities. Interviewees' understandings of and expectations from the states will be analyzed in this background.

Chapter Seven will focus on gendered experiences and ideologies. The ways Turkish and Norwegian women and men think about their gendered positions in society and conceptualize differences between the sexes will be analyzed. Reflections on 'being a woman/man, in Turkey/Norway' will be studied comparatively.

In Chapter Eight, I will take up several topics related to different aspects of late-modern lives –namely time-use, life-planning and different approaches to modernity. Analyses of these themes will give way to a specification of the main wishes and struggles of the interviewees, as well as a formulation of the major ‘public issues’ and ‘private troubles’ for dual-earner, urban couples in the two societies.

In the concluding Chapter, I will summarize the findings of the previous chapters and explore the connections between them. I will further analyze the gender policy regimes that prevail in the two countries in light of existing comparative models and frameworks. Reflecting on the ‘global issues’ and ‘local troubles’ identified in light of this comparative study, I will end the dissertation by challenging particular national myths in Turkey and Norway and specifying themes that call for further research.

Chapter 2 Basic Theoretical Perspective and Methods of Inquiry

“...every act of research is simultaneously empirical (it confronts the world of observable phenomena) and theoretical (it necessarily engages hypotheses about underlying structure of relations that observations are designed to capture). Even the most minute empirical operation – the choice of a scale of measurement, a coding decision, the construction of an indicator, or the inclusion of an item in the questionnaire – involves theoretical choices, conscious or unconscious, while the most abstract conceptual puzzle cannot be fully clarified without systematic engagement with empirical reality” (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 35).

In this chapter, I will first give an account of how the theoretical perspective applied in this comparative study was formed and define the key concepts that have guided the analysis. This will be followed by reflections on methodology and information on the methods of inquiry applied in this study. The strategy that I employ in explaining my general theoretical perspective will be to present a brief biographical narrative. The field of social theory is vast, and the specific perspective each sociologist establishes after years of reading, writing, researching, and discussing is always bounded by the interacting limitations of diverse factors, such as the imposed restrictions of academic requirements, the availability of literature, personal and political taste, and pure chance. The theoretical perspective a researcher employs is not a static ‘given.’ Rather it is a dynamic entity always being made and remade in relation to the empirical task at hand. As Bourdieu puts it aptly: “...theory is not a sort of prophetic or programmatic discourse which originates by dissection or by amalgamation of other theories for the sole purpose of confronting other such pure ‘theorist theories’...Rather, scientific theory...emerges as a program of perception and of action...which is disclosed only in the empirical work that actualizes it. *It is a temporary construct which takes shape for and by empirical work*” (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 161, emphasis in original).

Before starting data gathering and analysis, I did not have fixed hypotheses about how certain social factors would ‘determine’ certain outcomes. I had a conception that gender relations and family practices would interact with state policies and other institutional and cultural elements, yet the specific form of this interaction was exactly what the research was designed to learn more about. The theoretical perspective that I chose did not imply a hypothesis-testing orientation, but rather exploratory research that is comparative, historically informed, and sensitive to individual accounts and difference.

A chronological construction of the important turning points in my personal development as a sociologist will illustrate how I came to strive for the ‘sociological imagination’ (Mills 1959) and depict the theoretical positioning with which I feel at ease.

2.1 A Biographical Narrative

I started reading the classics of sociology and following sociological theorizing in a continuous manner in 1991. My first paper in the field of sociology was on Erving Goffman's celebrated work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, which introduced me to the richness of sociological approaches, the possibility of manifold perspectives, and the fun of dealing with ‘real’ human beings. Starting from my undergraduate student years, I have been especially interested in social theories that attempt to transcend the well-established, yet counter-productive dualisms of sociological theory; among others structure vs. agency, determinism vs. voluntarism and objectivism vs. subjectivism. My first in-depth study in sociological theory was a review of Anthony Giddens’ ‘Structuration Theory’ and the debates it initiated in the field of social theory (Giddens 1984, Clark et al.1990). A review of these contrasting perspectives has been a rich source of insights on basic subject matters of social theory; e.g. the conceptualization of structures, agency and power. Structuration Theory is formed through criticisms of two opposing traditions: Functionalism and Structuralism on the one hand and various forms of ‘interpretive sociology’ on the other. Its main ambition is to specify the concepts of action, meaning, and subjectivity and relate them to notions of structure and constraint. Giddens’ meticulous criticisms of one-sided approaches to social life have helped me to develop a basic alertness regarding deterministic and evolutionary theories.⁷

Following Giddens (1984), I conceptualize individuals as ‘knowledgable agents’ who have the capacity of reflecting on their actions, though this knowledgeability is always bounded by the ‘unconscious’ on the one hand, and by ‘unacknowledged conditions’ and ‘unintended consequences’ of action, on the other (Giddens 1984: 282). This conception of agency informs the understanding of ‘structure’ as not something external to individuals, but as “the medium and outcome of the reproduction of social practices which it recursively organizes” (Giddens 1984: 25).

During the first year of my master’s degree studies (1993), I was also introduced to the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 1992), who had a similar theoretical aim of overcoming the opposition between objectivism and subjectivism by transforming them into a dialectical relationship between agency and structure. Even though there are important differences between the perspectives of Giddens and Bourdieu with respect to the philosophical questions in which they are rooted and their conceptualizations of agency and structure (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), I thought the objectives for

⁷ I have been more critical of his later work, especially *Transformation of Intimacy*, mainly due to his limited attention to gendered inequalities and constraints. In general, I agree with the critics of Giddens, who stress his insufficient consideration of the differential distribution of options available to individuals (Jamieson 1999, Marshall 1994).

formulating 'Structuration Theory' and 'Constructivist Structuralism' respectively were strikingly similar, and therefore necessitated simultaneous attention. Though I do not apply the conceptual framework of Bourdieu [(Habitus x Capital) + Field = Practice] in a systematic manner, I have largely benefited from his general ideas concerning sociological reflexivity and his arguments, 'against theoreticism and methodologism' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, Bourdieu 1990) in constructing my sociological perspective.

A major turning point in this exploratory journey in the field of social theory was my confrontation with C. Wright Mills and his proposal regarding the 'sociological imagination' (Mills 1959). I took great joy from his treatment of the tendencies of 'Grand Theory' and 'Abstracted Empiricism' in the field of social theory, and shared wholeheartedly his declaration that the political task of the social scientist is, "continually to translate personal troubles into public issues, and public issues into the terms of their human meaning for a variety of individuals" (Mills 1959: 187).

In the same period, I also started to learn more about the internal conflicts and diversity of approaches within the field of feminist theory. From my earlier student years in Turkey, I had carried the remnants of a skeptical attitude towards feminism, which was mainly based on a misunderstanding of the term. I had equated feminism with a perspective that reified differences between women and men and suppressed the differences among 'women.' Even though I was aware and critical of the gendered inequalities prevailing at many levels of the society, I was not willing to define myself as a 'feminist' either. However, a recognition of the existence of feminist perspectives that were equally critical of biological determinism, essentialism and ahistorical universalism, enabled me to identify more comfortably with a feminist position (e.g. Stanley & Wise 1983, Harding 1986, Fraser & Nicholson 1990).

In the fall semester of 1993, I wrote a theoretical examination paper focusing on an analysis of the power-gender relationship based on a feminist critique of Foucault's theory of power. At this time, I started learning about specific postmodernist theories and the basic criticisms they received in the sociological community, which became a central area of interest later.

My master's thesis (1994-96) focused mainly on three fields of social theory: modernity, identity, and culture. Through a review of several theories of modernity (e.g., Kumar 1995, Wagner 1994, Giddens 1990, Berman 1982) I came to realize that a 'Janus-faced' conceptualization of modernity, with a stress on its double-sided effects – liberating and disciplining, enabling and constraining, uniting and dividing – would be the most fruitful in approaching to the different modernities that prevailed in Norway and Turkey. An understanding of modernization as an ambiguous, non-evolutionary, and unfinished project also informed my basic critical attitude towards theories of postmodernity, and influenced my decision to study the uneasy relationship between feminism and postmodernism in the course of my doctoral studies

In 1999, I wrote a paper entitled, 'Postmodernism and Feminism: Seeking a Constructive Confrontation' (Sümer 1999). Reviewing various feminist responses to postmodernism, I spotted a convergence in the thinking of several feminists who are critical of certain elements of both classical modernist and postmodernist stances. Two

feminist projects that I found compelling specified similar goals under different labels: Barbara Marshall (1994) named her project ‘critical modernism,’ whereas Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson (1990) prefer to call theirs ‘postmodern feminism’. Both endorse a theory, “...which is post-positivist, critical of the hegemony of Western ‘reason,’ listens to ‘local stories,’ rethinks the notion of a coherent pre-existing ‘subject,’ and rejects the universalizing impulse of ‘grand narratives’ (Marshall 1994: 159). Revealing this convergence, I argued that labels such as postmodernist or modernist appear to be almost arbitrary, since these theorists specify similar aspects as the hallmarks of their approaches: the importance of a non-positivistic and non-deterministic approach to social life, which is explicitly historical and sensitive to local and cultural diversity. I agree with Barbara Marshall (1994) when she calls for a ‘critical eclecticism’ as a beneficial strategy for approaching the modernism-postmodernism controversies. In this way, the legitimacy of social analyses will be assessed on the basis of their explanatory power and commitment to social change; not on the basis of a simple identification with modernism or postmodernism. Personally, I prefer not to label such an approach postmodern, since I do not see a solid basis for political action in the postmodernist worldview.⁸

During the course of my doctoral studies (1997-2001) several new fields opened up in relation to the questions aroused by my empirical work. For example, comparative analyses of welfare and gender ‘regimes’ became a central field that provided me with theoretical tools for approaching the state-family-individual nexus in Turkey and Norway. In the next section, I will briefly summarize key proposals of these perspectives.

As the short biographical narrative above reveals, during my decade long experience in the field of social theory, I have striven to establish a theoretical approach that would enable me to practice the basic insight that the main task of sociological thinking should be, ‘an articulation of everyday experience to historically situated socioeconomic and cultural formations’ (Marshall 1994: 3) through a critical theorization, ‘to reach beyond the particular, while remaining sensitive to culture and difference’ (Calhoun 1995: xxv).

Having drawn the basic contours of the theoretical perspective applied in this comparative study, let me now proceed with a clarification of the major concepts that have guided the specific analysis.

2.2 Key Theoretical Concepts and Constructs

This study is designed to learn more about the relationships between gender relations, family practices and state policies in the age of ‘late-modernity’ in two different cultural contexts. How do I conceptualize and analyze these relationships? To answer this question, I will first briefly clarify my understanding of culture, modernity, and issues of identity in the context of ‘late-’ or ‘reflexive-modernity.’ This will be followed by an account of the ways I conceptualize family practices and gender-family-state relationships.

⁸ See, for example, Benhabib 1994 and Walby 1992 for similar arguments on this issue.

It is almost a taken-for-granted assumption that there are cultural differences between Turkey and Norway, but what this means is often ambiguous and contentious. A striking feature of the concept of culture is the diversity of meanings attributed to the word itself. Wallerstein (1990) mentions a fundamental confusion in the use of the concept: culture is used, on the one hand, as a set of characteristics which distinguish one group from another, and on the other hand, as a set of phenomena which are different from (and “higher” than) some other set of phenomena within the same group. The second usage points to a division within the group rather than a unity. This basic distinction in the conceptualization of culture can be formulated as a division between culture seen as an implicit feature of social life and culture conceived as an explicit social construction (Wuthnow and Witten 1988). In the context of this comparative study, the way culture is defined is similar to the alternative approach formulated by Ann Swidler (1986). According to Swidler, a cultural explanation based on values, as in the voluntaristic theory of action of Parsons, is misleading since it sees culture as affecting human action by defining what people want. Culture, however, is not a unified system that pushes action in a consistent direction. Action is necessarily integrated into larger assemblages, called ‘the strategies of action.’ Strategies of action denote a general way of organizing action. In this framework, culture is more like a “tool kit” or repertoire from which actors select differing pieces for constructing lines of action. This approach also leads us to expect that people are not passive ‘cultural dopes,’ but rather active, sometimes skilled users of culture: “Strategies of action are cultural products; the symbolic experiences, mythic lore, and ritual practices of a group or society create moods and motivations, ways of organizing experience and evaluating reality, modes of regulating conduct, and ways of forming social binds, which provide resources for constructing strategies of action” (Swidler 1986: 284).

I subscribe to Swidler’s assertion that the challenge for the sociologists is not to try to estimate how much culture shapes action, but to search for new analytic perspectives that will allow more concrete analyses of how culture is used by actors and how cultural elements constrain or facilitate action. The concept of culture is central in approaching ‘different modernities.’ The insight that modernization interacts with local cultural formations of specific societies at hand and produces different modernities, and that ‘traditional,’ ‘modern’ and ‘late-modern’ characteristics often coexist within the same society, has been a key theoretical premise guiding my comparative approach to Turkey and Norway. As Gullestad (1992) argues, the social sciences need to conceptualize the simultaneous processes of cultural globalization and homogenization, on the one hand, and regionalization and diversification of forms of life and claims to identity on the other: “While many phenomena are transcultural, cultural ‘traditions’ are at the same time also transformed or invented... This may be a question of context – of being ‘global’ in some contexts and ‘traditional’ in others. It may also be a question of locally reworking international impulses. And it may be a question of going through a modernization process partly based on local economic and cultural conditions (1992:14).”

Before passing to a rather detailed depiction of the concepts of modernity and modernization, a note on globalization will be in order. Globalization is a plural

phenomenon and at the most basic level, can be perceived as the growing interdependence of the people all around the world. In the context of this study, globalization is mainly conceptualized as an intensified world-wide competitive economics, increasing dominance of market forces and more international contact. It is important to focus on both the opportunities and constraints brought about by globalization and be aware of the fact that “globalization divides as much as it unites” (Bauman 1998: 2). In theory, global markets and global technology can enrich the lives of people by expanding their choices. However, the benefits of globalization are not distributed evenly. Today’s economic globalization is being driven by market expansion. When the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalization spread unequally, concentrating power and wealth in a selected group of people, nations and corporations, marginalizing the others (UNDP 1999).

A plural perception of globalization is indispensable while analyzing the cultural complexities of both modern Western countries and the modernizing non-Western nation-states. As Featherstone (1995) argues it is not possible to conceive global processes in terms of the dominance of a single center over the peripheries since this image presents an over-simplified view of cultures:

One of the problems in attempting to formulate a theory of globalization is of adopting a totalizing logic and assuming some master process of global integration is under way which is making the world more unified and homogeneous (Featherstone 1995: 102).

Globalization does not produce cultural uniformity; rather it makes us aware of new levels of diversity. This particular grasp of globalization, which maintains that there is a plurality of national responses to modernization that cannot be reduced to the ideas generated by Western modernity is related to a specific understanding of the ambiguity of modernity.

2.2.1 Modernization and Modernity

In the context of this study, modernization is understood as the transition from simple to highly differentiated societies. One institutional axis of modernity is *industrialism*, referring to the social relations implied in the widespread use of material power and machinery in production. A second dimension is *capitalism*, referring to a system of commodity production, involving both competitive markets and the commodification of labor power (Giddens 1991: 15).

Modernity is associated with the release of the individual from the bonds of tradition, urbanization, rationalization, the differentiation of the various spheres of the life world (Marshall 1994). These aspects of modernity are more or less agreed upon by many classical and contemporary theorists. What is mostly disputed concerns the ways modernity will unfold.

A crucial feature of the understanding of modernity applied in this study is the stress on its inherent ambiguity: Modernization does not bring about straightforward, linear

changes in societies. It is always simultaneously liberating and disciplining, enabling and constraining, uniting and dividing. Looking at both gains and losses and ambiguities of modernity is crucial in understanding the ‘self-critical’ moment and the ‘counter-discourse’ inherent in it. Following Krishan Kumar (1995), I find it useful to differentiate between ‘modernization’ and ‘modernism’ to elucidate this approach:

“Modernity is a comprehensive designation of all the changes – intellectual, social and political – that brought into being the modern world, while modernism is a cultural movement that occurred in the West at the end of the 19th century, which was in some respects a critical reaction against modernity” (Kumar 1995: 67).

The idea of modernity once established at the end of the 18th century came up against a complex reaction to it a century later. This was the cultural movement of modernism. Modernism both affirmed modernity and denied it, both continued its principles and challenged it at its core (Kumar 1995: 85). This approach makes the ambivalence inherent in modernity clear: modernization – the social and economic processes of modernity – from the very beginning gave rise to modernism, the cultural critique of modernity. The tension and at times divergence between these two concepts puts into sharp relief the dual aspect of modernity and illuminates the parallels between this classical modernism and what has come to be labeled as post-modernism in the last decades.⁹

The three ‘founding fathers’ of sociology – namely, Durkheim, Marx and Weber – were all preoccupied with interpreting the nature of modernity, by attending questions of social order and social change. The growing social division of labor and the shifting relationship between the individual and society were common concerns of these classical theorists, whereas all three have identified different institutions as the driving engine of the modern transformations (Giddens 1990). For Marx, the major transformative force shaping the modern world was *capitalism*. For Durkheim, the central element was *industrialization* and the complex division of labor it brings about, while the key component in Weber’s theory of modernization can be identified as *rationalization*. All these classical theorists looked at both gains and losses of modernity.

As Marshall Berman (1982) notes, while classical theorists looked at ambiguities of modernity, in terms of opportunities and risks it signifies, in contemporary theorizing one often confronts unilateral approaches to modernity. A conceptualization of modernity underscoring its double-sided effects renders many postmodernist claims questionable. Two of the most cited defenders of modernity (as against postmodernity) – Jürgen Habermas and Anthony Giddens – also direct attention to the nature of modernity itself with its radical and critical potentials which are either unrealized or are about to be realized. Craig Calhoun is another critical theorist who is skeptical of postmodernist arguments asserting that the social changes that we see do not amount to an epochal

⁹ Although offering any simple definition for post-modernism is a ‘futile and pointless exercise’ (Docherty 1993), it can be generally argued that proponents of post-modernism challenge the Enlightenment ideals which lie at the root of the project of modernity; such as the autonomy of the human individual and the capacity for independent judgement and reason oriented toward the pursuit of justice and freedom (Flax 1990).

break, but reflect continuing tensions which have characterized the whole modern era (Calhoun 1995). The crucial task for sociologists is to investigate how social change has shifted the conditions and capacities for human actions. The post-modernist discourse obscures this fundamental question by positing an end to subjectivity or rendering it universally problematic rather than addressing the ways in which agency and subjectivity are constructed in specific historical and cultural situations (Calhoun 1995: 98). This insight takes us to a closer look at the relationship between modernity and the constructions of individual identity.

2.2.2 *Late-Modernity and Identity: Towards Individualization?*

The ways modernization influences individual consciousness has been a contentious issue for sociology for decades. Classical sociological accounts of the effects of modernization on personal relations and the experiences of the self have mostly contrasted the communal character of traditional orders with the impersonality of modern social life. For example, Peter Berger et al. (1974) have elaborated on the changes that take place in the modern consciousness, using the theoretical framework of the sociology of knowledge.¹⁰ Their basic argument is that, as modernization proceeds, a transformation in both the organization of knowledge and in the cognitive styles takes place (ibid.: 131). The dichotomization of the public and private sphere in modern life is the precondition for the segmentation of the self: individuals in the modern situation typically face sectors of everyday life confronting them as different, and sometimes discrepant worlds of meaning and experience (Berger, et al. 1974).

The way modernity alters the nature of day-to-day life and affects the most personal aspects of our experience is a major theme in the works of several contemporary theorists of modernity (e.g. Beck 1992, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995 and Giddens 1991, 1992). Newer theories on modernity focus on a transformation from simple to late- or reflexive-modernity. A common argument these theorists put forward is that in the contours of late-modernity, social agents tend to become more reflexive and individualized, and that new mechanisms of self-identity that are shaped by the institutions of modernity emerge.

The overriding stress of Anthony Giddens' book *Modernity and Self-identity* (1991) is upon the emergence of new mechanisms of self-identity that are shaped by – yet also shape – the institutions of modernity. His basic observation about the concept of the identity is that, in the post-traditional order of modernity it becomes a reflexively organized endeavor: “The more tradition loses its hold, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate life-style choices among a diversity of

¹⁰ According to the basic principle of the sociology of knowledge, a comprehensive understanding of any social reality must include the dimension of consciousness. In this school of thought, society is viewed as a dialectic between objective givenness and subjective meanings, that is, as being constituted by the reciprocal interaction of what is experienced as outside reality and what is experienced as being within the consciousness of the individual. (cf. Berger, et al. 1974).

options...reflexively organized life-planning...becomes a central feature of the structuring of self-identity (Giddens 1991: 5)".

A recent theory on the relationship between modernization and individual biographies belongs to German sociologist Ulrich Beck. Beck argues that, just as modernization dissolved the structure of feudal society and produced the industrial society, modernization today is dissolving industrial society and another modernity is coming into being. This is a distinction between modernization of tradition and modernization of industrial society, or between "classical and reflexive modernization" (Beck 1992: 10). According to Beck, as a result of the shifts in the standard of living, sub-cultural class identities have dissipated, class distinctions based on status have lost their traditional support, and processes for the diversification and individualization of life styles and ways of life have been set in motion. As a result of this destabilization, the system of coordinates in which life and thinking are fastened in industrial modernity "the axes of gender, family and occupation, the belief in science and progress" begins to shake, and new opportunities and hazards come into existence. These are the contours of the "risk society." According to Beck, there are two main dimensions that constitute the social and political dynamic of industrialized society: one is the distributional logic of global modernization risks and the other is social, biographical, and cultural risks and insecurities.

In Beck's argument, reflexive modernization causes serious transformations on the level of primary relations since it 'dissolves' class-consciousness, as well as gender and family roles. He refers to this major transformation as 'individualization' which means that individual biographies are removed from the traditional precepts and certainties, from external control and general moral laws, becoming open and dependent on decision-making, and are assigned as a task for each individual. This process has direct effects on the most intimate personal relations. Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim elaborate on the effects of individualization on the family and gender roles, in *The Normal Chaos of Love* (1995). Their argument is that it is no longer possible to pronounce in some binding way what family, marriage, parenthood, sexuality, or love mean; rather these vary in substance, norms, and morality from individual to individual. Accordingly, men and women are released from the gender roles prescribed by industrial society within the nuclear family. They emphasize that this individualization process is taking place in those countries where prosperity and social security have reached a high level and where peace and democratic rights are beginning to be taken for granted.

The principal thesis Beck and Beck-Gernsheim put forward is that the prescribed gender roles are the basis of industrial society, and not some traditional relic that can easily be dispensed with:

"Without a distinction between male and female roles there would be no nuclear family, and without nuclear family there would be no bourgeois society with its typical pattern of life and work...On the one hand, a wage-earner presupposes a house-worker and production for the market presumes the existence of the nuclear family. In that respect industrial society is dependent on the unequal roles of men and women. On the other hand, these inequalities contradict modern

thinking and give rise to more and more controversy as time goes on. The more equal men and women actually become, the shakier the foundations of the family (marriage, parenthood, sexuality) seem (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995: 24).”

A major theoretical ambition of this study is to assess these arguments critically in light of data on gender and family practices from two contexts of different modernities. This task also requires theoretical tools to approach gender, families, state policies and their relationships.

2.2.3 Theorizing Families: From the Functionally Divided Nuclear Family to Diverse Family Practices

There have been important shifts both in the ways families are organized and in the ways they are theorized in the last decades. Nowadays, most theorists tend to acknowledge that families are varied and there is a wide gap between the ‘families we live with’ and the ‘families we live by’ (Gillis 1996). The family model that prevailed in the 1950s, in which the woman was the full-time housewife and the man was the breadwinner, has been a strong ideological model, and it is still a nostalgic ‘ideal’ for those who miss the ‘stability of the good old days.’ However, our time is characterized by an immense variation of family types, and there are many people living in step, one-parent, lesbian/gay and other types of families as well as in ‘traditional,’ ‘modern,’ or ‘post-modern’ nuclear families.

In the 1950s, the ideal and the basis of analysis was ‘the’ functionally divided nuclear family, which was thought to have universal characteristics. In Talcott Parsons’ functionalist approach, the family is conceptualized as one of the core elements of the social system, providing a crucial link between the individual and the wider social group. Parsons’ family is overtly optimistic and peaceful: it provides the physical and emotional support that both children and adults need for their roles in society. Women were allowed to find purpose in family life, in the expressive roles of mother and wife and the man’s emotional needs were to be met in his instrumental role of breadwinner.

In late 60s and 70s important changes started to take place in the sociology of the family. David Cheal (1991) refers to these transformations as a ‘Big Bang’ in the field. The most important forces behind these changes were feminism and Marxism. New research showed that there is no one type of ‘universal family’ and that kinship and family structures vary in different cultures and economic systems. Christopher Lasch has written *Haven in a Heartless World* which was an analysis of experts’ intrusion into the family. This book caused heated debates in the field and “baffled ideologues of every political color” (Lasch 1977: xiii).¹¹ Lasch was criticizing state intervention in the family, seeing it as the last stronghold of the realm of the private, while many feminists were questioning the very separation of the private and public spheres. In the feminist approaches, there was an increasing stress on power relations and different interests within families. New family types – dual-earner and dual-career families – became subject matters for sociological analysis (e.g. Rapoport & Rapoport 1976).

¹¹ See Barrett and McIntosh (1991) for a cogent critique of Lasch’s views on family and feminism.

1980s and 1990s are characterized by a general acceptance of pluralism. Most sociologists gave up the ideal of producing ‘the’ theory of ‘the Family’. Deconstruction of the family concept became the new fashion (Cheal 1991). ‘Rethinking’ approaches were abundant (e.g. Thorne (ed.) 1992). Feminists have challenged the ideology of “the monolithic family” and the beliefs that any specific family arrangement is natural or “functional” in a timeless way (Thorne 1992: 4). The stress shifted to *families* that vary with social class, culture, life-cycle and so on. At the same time, conservative ‘back to nuclear family’ arguments continued to exist (e.g. Popenoe 1988). There was also an expansion in cross-national research on families (e.g. Mason & Jensen 1995, Ingoldsby & Smith 1995, Lewis et al. 1992). Analysis of intimate relationships and family practices moved from the margin to the center in the field of social theory and gained a new popularity.¹²

In this study ‘family’ is defined in broad terms giving room to include all types of relationships that people themselves conceptualize and experience as pertaining to family. I avoid to use the term in the definite form as ‘the family’ since this usage often conveys the assumption of a certain type of institution, namely “the married, two-parent family form, gender-differentiated, stable through time (Harding 1996: xii).” A preference for the plural usage ‘families’ and a stress on family lives, relations, and practices are deliberate choices to demonstrate this non-traditional and inclusive approach. The decision to base the study on dual-earner couples stems from the necessity of specification, not from a wish to privilege this family type vis-à-vis others. Following David Morgan (1996, 1999b), I prefer to use the term ‘family practices’ since it conveys the understanding of family relations as dynamic processes. In this perspective, family refers to “sets of practices which deal...with ideas of parenthood, kinship, and marriage and the expectations and obligations which are associated with these practices (Morgan 1996: 11). Family practices refer to the intimate relationships between couples (who may be cohabiting, married or divorced), between parents and children (who may or may not be living together) and between other persons who see themselves connected as belonging to the same ‘family’ (like grandparents, uncles, ex-aunts, step-cousins).

The term ‘family practices’ conveys a focus on both everyday activities and regularities and it stresses the active rather than the passive or static. Family practices include numerous activities, such as endless negotiations between men and women centered around the ‘standards’ for housework, decisions concerning if and when to have children and how to organize their care without jeopardizing one’s career, and so on. As David Morgan stresses, ‘the Janus-faced character of everyday life – looking to both self and society at the same time – is seen or constructed in its clearest form in the case of family practices’ (Morgan 1996:193). Relationships between husbands and wives can be analyzed as gendered practices, those between children and parents as age-specific practices, and so on.

¹² As Smart & Neale (1999) argue, the works of Giddens (1992) and Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (1995) contributed to bringing “the family” back into the center of sociological concerns and their theories have been critically discussed based on new empirical studies (e.g. Jamieson 1998)

Silva & Smart (1999) also argue that it is possible to analyze work outside the home as constituting part of family practices. For example, practices that seemingly have nothing to do with the family – husbands working late at the office or drinking with mates on the way home from work, for example – are family practices in that they reinforce certain constructions of fatherhood and masculinity. This conceptualization enables one to stress that paid work constitutes part of family practices, since it influences the organization of care responsibilities, and provides a fruitful nexus for studying the interactions between the private and public spheres.

2.2.4 Deconstructing the Public/Private Dichotomy: Theorizing the Relationships between States, Gender and Families

Classical (and many contemporary) theories of modernity are based on a conceptualization of the public/private divide that reifies their separateness. The private/public distinction is employed in several distinct and often diverging ways in political and social thought. In the liberal-economist model, ‘public’ refers to state administration, while ‘private’ implies the market economy. Most classical approaches see public in terms of political community and citizenship, while feminist approaches conceive of the public/private distinction as referring to the one between the family and the larger political and economic order (Weintraub 1997). I employ the concepts ‘private sphere’ and ‘public sphere’ in this sense: the former refers to the sphere of the family and intimate relationships, while the latter refers mainly to the state, market economy and the labor market.

For most classical theories of modernity, the key focus of analysis has been the nexus of relationships brought about by industrial capitalism: namely, the increasingly specialized division of labor, expansion of science and technical rationality, economic dominance of wage labor, commodity production and the emergence of a political citizenry. The theoretical gaze was directed at the visibly public realms of economics and politics, where ‘modern man’ emerged (Marshall 1994: 27). ‘Modern women’ were mainly thought as conveniently placed inside the home. The association of women with the ‘private’ sphere, with the expressive roles and emotions and establishment of this arrangement as something ‘natural’ is the theoretical trick that keeps women invisible in most theories of modernity.

As Marshall (1994) argues a basic task for a ‘critical modernist’ feminist project is to make gender visible in the dualistic categories which underlie most theories of modernity: “The changes associated with modernity – such as the separation of the family from wider kinship groups, the separation of the household and economy...and the emergence of the modern state – are all *gendered* processes. The roles which emerged alongside the differentiation of the economy and the state from the household – worker, citizen– were (are) *gendered* roles” (Marshall 1994: 9, emphasis original).

In this comparative study, the interactions between state policies, gender relations and family practices in two national contexts has a central place. 1990s has witnessed an increase in international comparisons state models and social policies with a focus on their gendered outcomes.

In his analysis of the relationship between gender and the state, Connell (1990) argues that as the central institutionalization of power the state has a considerable, though not unlimited, capacity to regulate gender relations in the society as a whole. However, classical theories of the state are unhelpful in theorizing this relationship, in the sense that they have little to say directly about gender: 'The liberal tradition presents 'citizen' as an unsexed individual abstracted from social context and in the socialist analyses of the state the contending classes seem to be all of the same sex (Connell 1990: 510).

Historically, mainstream theorizations of the state concentrated mainly on state policies' influences on the major institutions of the 'public' sphere, especially in the labor market, and were significantly gender-blind.¹³ Early feminist theorizing about the state was mainly directed to analyzing the impact of welfare state policies on women. As Julia O'Connor's title *From Women in the Welfare State to Gendering Welfare State Regimes* (1996) indicates, the last decade is characterized by a shift towards incorporating gender into the comparative analyses of welfare state regimes (e.g. Sainsbury 1994, 1999, Orloff 1993). There is not one single feminist perspective, but what unites existing ones is a concern with 'gendering' different aspects of welfare states by studying women as both paid and unpaid workers, clients, consumers, and citizens.

Most feminist scholarship on state-gender-family relationships starts with a review of Esping-Andersen's (1990) highly discussed welfare regime models and follows different paths in an attempt to bring gender into the analysis.

Esping-Andersen's analysis of welfare regimes is based on three key dimensions and questions:

1. *State-market-family relations*: Does the state responsibility begin only when the market and the family fails in providing services?
2. *Stratification*: What kind of a stratification system (class structure) is promoted by social policy?
3. *De-commodification*: To what extent is distribution detached from the market mechanism? De-commodification refers to the degree to which social rights permit people to make their living standards independent of pure market forces.

Esping-Andersen's main contention can be summarized as "politics matter:" He especially points out the central place 'the history of political class coalitions' have in the formation of welfare-state variations. *Welfare state regimes* refer to clusters of distinct welfare states characterized by the principles of stratification and the bases of social rights on which social policy is built. These principles result in qualitatively different arrangements amongst state, market, and family. They are reflected in the character of programs (targeted or universal), the conditions of eligibility, and the quality of benefits and services (O'Connor 1996). Esping-Andersen identifies three different regimes: Liberal, Conservative and Social Democratic.

¹³ In general, the state-family relationships did not receive much attention from "mainstream" researchers. The term 'mainstream' refers to analyses that do not consider the significance of gender, and 'feminist' refers to analyses that take gender as a fundamental structuring mechanism in society (O'Connor 1996: 3).

The *liberal* regime is based on a 'residualist' logic. State intervention is subordinate to the market and benefits are means-tested. Entitlement rules are strict and de-commodification effects are minimum. Typical examples are the United States and Australia. The *conservative* regime is based on a corporatist logic. In this regime, social rights connected to status and class and maintenance of the traditional family are emphasized. Germany, France and Italy are typical examples. The *social democratic* regime is characterized by high institutionalism, universalism and egalitarianism. Social benefits are based on citizenship and are financed by taxes. An equality of highest standards, rather than an equality of minimal needs, is pursued and level of de-commodification is high. This regime is typically exemplified by Scandinavian countries.

Esping-Andersen's welfare regimes have been used as a starting point for several feminist projects of 'gendering' welfare state policies (e.g. Orloff 1993, Sainsbury 1994, 1999, Lewis 1992). Feminist analyses show that when we focus on gendered outcomes the applicability of the standard welfare state regime typology is partly challenged.

In her powerful critique of Esping-Andersen's conceptual framework, Ann Orloff (1993) has argued that concepts like 'worker,' 'citizenship' and 'de-commodification' are based on a male standard and gender relations and their effects are ignored. She stated the necessity of taking into account of "the very real gender differences in productive and reproductive labor and access to civil and political rights and how these differences influence the ways in which men and women struggle for and claim benefits from the state as citizens" (Orloff 1993: 309). Gendering the state-market-family dimension entails a recognition of the unpaid caring and domestic work of women. In this framework, the state can be defined as "woman-friendly" to the extent that policies reduce the sexual division of labor by shifting the burden of domestic work to public services and to men (Orloff 1993: 314). De-commodification also needs to be gendered since benefits that de-commodify labor give male workers greater capacity to resist capital and enter the market on their own terms, but unpaid services provided by mothers, wives, daughters also enhance male workers' capacities. Orloff suggests that de-commodification dimension must be supplemented with a new analytic dimension that taps into the extent to which state promote or discourage women's paid employment – the right to be commodified (ibid.: 318). Another analytic dimension that she suggests is a dimension measuring independence, namely 'the capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household'.

Drawing upon the feminist critique of mainstream welfare state analyses, Sainsbury (1994, 1999) has outlined gender models of social policy emphasizing the importance of gender and familial ideologies as a key variation. Her basic ambition has been to analyze the patterning of variations between different welfare models as distinct "gender policy regimes". A gender policy regime entails a logic based on the rules and norms about gender relations that influences the construction of policies (Sainsbury 1999: 5). Sainsbury specifies three gender policy regimes: The male-breadwinner regime, separate gender roles regime and individual earner-carer regime.

In the male-breadwinner regime, men have entitlements stemming from the principle of maintenance, while married women's entitlements are primarily as wives. The separate

gender roles regime underlines a strict division of labor between the sexes, but attaches weight to both the principle of maintenance and the principle of care. The individual earner-carer regime envisions greater equality between women and men and “the transformation of the traditional division of labor between the sexes, so that each individual is involved in both caring and earning” (Sainsbury 1999: 260). This gender regime and the social-democratic regime have complementary logics, in that both individualize and thereby de-familialize social rights.

In his recent work, Esping-Andersen (1999) acknowledges his insufficient attention to gender differences and family as a major producer of welfare and gives attention to the feminist critiques of his earlier work. He analyzes different welfare regimes according to their degree of ‘de-familialization’ defined as “the degree to which households’ welfare and caring responsibilities are relaxed – either via welfare state provision, or via market provision” (Esping-Andersen 1999: 51). Hence, de-familialization would indicate the degree to which social policy render women autonomous to become ‘commodified,’ or to set up independent households. Mentioning the correlation between high familialism and low fertility, Esping-Andersen argues that “Contemporary welfare states can no longer count on the availability of housewives and full-time mothers. The more they do so, either by actively encouraging familialism or by passively refraining from providing an alternative, the more they diminish welfare at both the micro- and macro-level. At the micro-level, familialism is now counter productive to family formation and labor supply. This means low fertility, lower household incomes, and higher risks of poverty...At the macro-level, it implies a waste of human capital (in so far as educated women’s labor supply is suppressed)” (Esping-Andersen 1999: 70).

The current fertility rates in Europe – with Scandinavian countries ranking highest and Mediterranean countries lowest – support these arguments. Paradoxically, familialistic policy regimes seem to be counter productive for families. De-familialization at the policy level supports family formation at the individual level, by covering a good part of the ‘opportunity costs of having children’ for working mothers. These arguments will guide my analyses of the different gender and family policy regimes that prevail in Turkey and Norway.

The theoretical stand that I have specified above has particular methodological implications. In the following section, I will present a brief account of the methodological principles that have guided this research project. This will give way to a presentation of a processional account of the interviewing process and the type of analysis applied.

2.3 Reflections on Methods and Methodology

Taking the promise of the ‘sociological imagination’ seriously results in a methodological sensitivity that is specifically attentive to reflexivity, cross-cultural comparisons, and historicity. Reflexivity involves two different, but combined, levels: the reflexivity of the individual sociologist, as an awareness of her social coordinates and an awareness of the values she holds, and the reflexivity of sociology, as understood in terms of the ‘double hermeneutic.’ Sociology is reflexive in the sense that “sociological knowledge spirals in

and out of the universe of social life, reconstructing both itself and that universe as an integral part of that process” (Giddens 1990: 16).

The reflexivity of the individual sociologist is crucial in this study, since the researcher’s social position and biography is inherently connected to the formulation of research questions and is what makes the collection and analysis of data in the two social contexts possible. This condition necessitates a constant scrutiny of one’s own presuppositions and ideological dispositions, and is both a blessing and a curse at the same time. As Bourdieu (1992) argues, sociology can be a powerful instrument of self-analysis which allows one better to understand what she is by giving an understanding of one’s own conditions of production and of the position one occupies in the social world. He defines “epistemic reflexivity” as the self-analysis of the sociologist as cultural producer and a reflection on the socio-historical conditions of possibility of a science of society. Defined this way, reflexivity becomes an indispensable element in the process of all sociological research: “Reflexivity is what enables us to escape delusions by uncovering the social at the heart of the individual, the impersonal beneath the intimate and universal buried deep within the most particular (Bourdieu, 1992: 44).”

The comparative aspect is also inherently connected to my personal biography and theoretical stance. Being away from a familiar environment and being exposed to new modes of social relations were the initial factors that arose my comparative curiosity. As Dogan and Pleassy (1984) argue, observers who cultivate a distance between themselves and the society in which they live find new perspectives opening, and they may refine their perspectives by contrasting different societies. Accordingly, my ‘expatriation’ – which equipped me with the perception of an outsider – has been a crucial element in the choice and execution of this comparative project. At the same time, the several years I spent in Norway provided me the insider-information that is necessary for gathering and interpreting context-sensitive data.

The theoretical goal of reaching ‘beyond the particular, while remaining sensitive to culture and difference’ (Calhoun 1995) and the ‘critical modernist’ feminist project outlined above both point to the necessity of cross-cultural and international sensitivity. Comparative awareness also helps the sociologist stay away from the dangerous trap of falsely universalizing ‘features of the theorist’s own era, society, culture, class, sexual orientation, and ethnic or racial group’ (Fraser & Nicholson 1990: 27).

The historical sensitivity emerges as inherent in this perspective. Since the promise of the sociological imagination is the hope to understand what is going on in the world by grasping the intersections of history and biography within a society (Mills 1959), all sciences that have human beings as their subject matters are intimately related to sociology. The separation of history and sociology is characterized as a ‘disastrous division’ by many social scientists (e.g. Bourdieu 1992, Abrams 1981). Particularly in a comparative study in which the major explanatory units are nation-states, the necessity of taking a historical viewpoint is self-evident.

Where does this standpoint place one on the age-old methodological issues: namely, the qualitative/quantitative divide, generalizability, validity, and reliability?

2.3.1 *Towards a Critical Methodology?*

“How artificial the ordinary oppositions between theory and research, between qualitative and quantitative methods, between statistical recording and ethnographic observation, between the grasping of structures and the construction of individual can be. These alternatives have no function other than to provide a justification for the vacuous and resounding abstractions of theoreticism and for the falsely rigorous observations of positivism, or, as the divisions between economists, anthropologists, historians and sociologists, to legitimize the limits of competency: this is to say they function in the manner of a social censorship, liable to forbid us to grasp a truth which resides precisely in the *relations* between realms of practice thus arbitrarily separated. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 28, emphasis added)”

Despite sound evidence of its unproductiveness the qualitative/quantitative distinction is constantly reproduced in the field of sociology. My methodological position rests on an uneasiness with the terms themselves and the ways they are falsely dichotomized. As Raymond Morrow puts it: “...nothing about qualitative research...necessarily precludes the use of quantitative representations...Ethnographers and historians can and do count things. Moreover, the activities of research design, data collection, and analysis in quantitative social research necessarily are based on the interplay of constructed meanings (1994: 208).” The major distinction in social inquiry is not between the *techniques* of the research, rather on the ways different strategies conceptualize social actors. The strategy of statistical analysis is to model the social world in terms of causal relations between an observed system of variables and to construct the “subject” as ‘the member of an aggregate.’ Nonstatistical research, on the other hand, attempts to describe a society by referring to the systemic and social *relations* that constitute it and constructs the “subject” as a participant in different forms of social organizations (Morrow 1994: 208-9). In his proposition of a ‘critical methodology,’ Morrow (1994), offers a typology of ‘extensive’ and ‘intensive’ research designs as a more productive way of differentiating research strategies. Extensive research designs require a large number of cases (a representative sample) and this demands reducing the number of properties analyzed. In contrast intensive research designs consider small number of cases in terms of a large number of individual properties (ibid.: 250). Morrow’s central contention is that nonstatistical, historical and comparative case studies are most compatible with the research problems identified by critical theory and its concern with intensive research designs (ibid. : 253). The basic characteristics of this study –namely, its comparative style, historical sensitivity and intensive design– place it in the school of critical methodology as identified by Morrow (1994). This comparative research can be characterized as ‘intensive,’ in the sense that it focuses on a small group of social actors in two different social contexts and analyzes the variations and similarities on a large number of dimensions. The major sources of data are open-ended face-to-face interviews, that are interpreted in light of representative statistics, official documents and historical information.

2.3.2 *The Comparative Aspect*

It can be argued that all empirical social science is basically comparative: thinking in comparative terms is inherent to sociology since all empirical observation must be related to some kind of theoretical construction, and no theoretical construction has any value unless it bears some relation to empirical observation (Øyen 1990: 4). However, the term “comparative research” has a specific usage. It refers to studies which are concerned with cross-societal similarities and differences and which use attributes of macro-social units in explanatory statements (Ragin 1987: 5).

In his analysis of the logic of comparative research, Ragin (1987) argues that it is possible to distinguish two types of comparative research: Case-oriented and variable-oriented methods. The basic goal of variable oriented strategies is to produce generalizations about relationships among variables. In this type of research generality is given precedence over complexity. The basic goal of the case-oriented strategies, on the other hand, is to understand and interpret the diverse historical experiences of societies and cultures. Consequently, in-depth analysis of a small number of cases is given precedence over generality in case-oriented research.

Traditionally, there has been a clear tendency among comparative researchers to rely either on the synthetic approach of the historian or on the representative approach of the survey, since it seemed necessary to use techniques that would embrace whole societies (Bertaux 1990). Because of this tendency, little attention has been paid to the use of such approaches as interviews with lay persons, life stories and similar ethnographic data. Bertaux argues that this is due to a general suspicion that the quality of such “soft” methods of observation is based more on the talent of the researcher, than on the scientificity of their approach: “Interviewing selected persons about their life experience is an approach that has tremendous potentialities for sociological research, but which will only show all its potentialities within a post-scientist epistemology; that is, an epistemology which cares more about the originality, depth, radicality of new hypotheses than about their provability (Bertaux, 1990: 167). As Silverman argues “interview data display cultural realities which are neither biased nor accurate, but simply ‘real’. They reproduce and rearticulate cultural particulars grounded in given patterns of social organization (Silverman 1985: 157)”. In studies based on interview data the claims to reliability, validity and potentials for generalizability should be judged by the reader on the basis of the information on the interviewing process, ways of contacting interviewees and details of analysis techniques.

2.4 Interviews: Experiences, Measures and Analyses

The face-to-face, open-ended interviews I carried out with Turkish and Norwegian couples have provided rich accounts of their daily practices, problems, and negotiations, as well as their evaluations of certain societal issues. The individual men and women reflected both on their own lives and other people’s behaviors, problems, and

expectations. The interview guide had questions related to several general topics: Family, housework, childcare, work, gender, time-use, and future plans.¹⁴

I have no reason to doubt that the interviewees attempted to provide a ‘truthful’ picture of their lives and that they had positive intentions. To think otherwise would be to believe that the couple had joined in a conspiracy to impair my research. On the contrary, most interviewees expressed an enthusiasm concerning this cross-national comparative study. They thought it was important and appreciated being a part of it. By accepting being interviewed on the most intimate and public aspects of their lives, they demonstrated a basic belief in the usefulness of telling their stories. Their willingness to participate in this research without any material return and their readiness to use approximately two hours of their time by answering a stranger’s questions signify that they took the research project seriously. Most of the respondents asked further questions about the research project and generally displayed curiosity concerning my life. In several cases, I talked about my own life, experiences in Turkey and Norway, and answered the questions of the interviewees after the interview. My position as both an insider and outsider in the two contexts have contributed to the increased curiosity of interviewees.

Apart from minor reality distortions, such as exaggerations or the downplaying of certain conflicts, I believe that most interviewees did their best to report accurately about their lives. I characterize most of the interviews as “successful,” apart from one interview in Turkey that was shorter than the others were. This was mainly due to the male interviewees’ lack of interest and slight hostility towards my project. I had contacted this couple through a colleague of the woman, and had a feeling that she had insisted that her husband participate. Even though he was openly reluctant in the beginning, I actively tried to include him into the conversation. Towards the end of the interview he got more involved and open. Interestingly, this couple also was the one who had the most apparent disagreements concerning gender-related issues.

The fact that I interviewed each couple together also contributed positively to the trustworthiness of the accounts. In some cases, respondents corrected each other when they considered the answer of their spouse to be lacking or not totally ‘true.’ For example, Ipek gave her husband, Ilhan, a warning when she was not satisfied with his answer concerning their housework arrangements: “Look, this interview depends on you to give honest, open, and orderly accounts,” and added, “Let me put it this way, Ilhan did not say it clear enough: when it comes to the division of housework, we have a totally typical, traditional woman-man model.” In her study of different family practices in Norway, based on face-to-face interviews with couples, both as a couple and alone, Syltevik (2000) also mentions that more conflict themes were taken up and discussed during the interviews when both spouses were present and that these interviews produced a more nuanced account of the couples’ family lives.

¹⁴ See Appendix 2 for the complete interview guide.

2.4.1 Establishing Contacts and Deciding the Number of Interviews

The persons that I chose to interview had to meet a number of criteria, since I had decided to base this comparative study on a highly specific group. Contacting potential interviewees via colleagues and friends who personally knew individuals with these characteristics seemed the best path to follow. The interviews included questions that were quite private. Seeking consent via a personal acquaintance (the ‘contact person’) thus increased the success of this task. Trying to recruit interviewees through information letters posted by a stranger who planned to ask many private questions did not seem to be a wise strategic move. These considerations proved to be true. Gaining the consent of the interviewees was not a rapid process. One interviewee even mentioned that she normally would not agree to such an interview, but did this time since it was ‘a very respected friend of hers’ who asked them to participate. After the contact person spoke with potential interviewees and gave them information about the project, I received the addresses and phone numbers of those who agreed to be interviewed. I sent them a detailed ‘information letter’ that included an answer sheet and a stamped envelope. They were asked to write down their names and sign to indicate their consent to being interviewees.¹⁵

I started interviewing in Norway in the summer of 1998. After having eight interviews, I traveled to Turkey for my first field interviews in October 1998. By the end of that year, I had talked with six Turkish and eight Norwegian couples. In the spring term of 1999, I started analyzing the existing interviews while I completed the theoretical requirements for my doctoral education. In August 1999, I started contacting new possible interviewees in Norway and conducted three more. Originally, I had planned to base the project on 10 Turkish and 10 Norwegian couples. After the first round of analysis I recognized that the Norwegian interview accounts were signaling a sort of ‘saturation,’ i.e. the internal variation was lower among the Norwegian group and certain patterns had started to appear. However, the Turkish group appeared as extremely heterogeneous and it was harder to trace the patterns. This factor led me to a decision to carry out more interviews in Turkey. I traveled to Istanbul in November 2000 and conducted seven more interviews: with six couples and a divorcee.¹⁶

The interviewing process of this project had a long time span. The first pilot interview in Norway was dated March 1998, and the last interview in Turkey was in November of 2000. The reason for that long time interval was partly chosen, and partly a result of uncontrollable factors. My initial decision was to carry on interviewing and analyses during a relatively long period of time, while I was completing the theoretical qualifications for my doctoral education. This would give me the opportunity to carry out an in-depth analysis and provide me the time that I needed to translate the interviews from Turkish and Norwegian into English. The unintended factor further extending the

¹⁵ This process to assure informed consent and a declaration of professional secrecy is also demanded by the concession rules of Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

¹⁶ I did not include the interview with the divorcee in the ‘sample,’ but benefited from her accounts and reflections while analyzing divorce as a phenomenon in Turkey.

interview period was related to the length of time some interviewees used after receiving the information letter before finally agreeing to be interviewed. By the end of 2000, I had interviewed 16 Turkish and 11 Norwegian couples and I was satisfied with the existing level of variation and convergence within the groups.

2.4.2 Background Characteristics of the Interviewees

The two groups of interviewees share the following characteristics: All have attended college (with a minimum of 2 years after high school), all are (or have been) professionally employed, all live in urban areas, all have been in a heterosexual relationship for several years, and all have experience with raising children (either their own or partners') (See Table 2.1).

Norwegian Interviewees:

I interviewed a total of eleven Norwegian couples. Seven couples were in the 30-45 age group and four couples were in the 45-65 age group. Three couples were cohabiting without formal marriage and eight were married. Four of the interviewees had been married before and divorced before their current marriage/cohabitation. One man shared custody of a child from his earlier marriage. One couple did not have common children, but both had children from their earlier marriages. The shortest relationship had had a duration of 4 years; the longest, 36 years. The average duration of the relationship for all Norwegian couples was 14 years. The average number of children in the Norwegian group was 2.

Turkish Interviewees:

I interviewed sixteen Turkish couples.¹⁷ All of the couples were married. Only one of them cohabited for 6 years before getting married and having a child. Three of the interviewees had been married before and the current one were their second marriage. One couple did not have common (biological) children, but had an adopted child and two children from the man's earlier marriage (who lived with their mother). The shortest relationship had had a duration of 6 years and the longest 37 years. The average duration of the relationship was 18 years. The average number of children in the Turkish group was 1.4.

The Turkish and Norwegian interviewees are similar in terms of general economic level and life-styles. All live in urban areas, have attended college, have a positive attitude towards modernization. They all believe in the merits of getting a higher education and working in the professions. None of the interviewees were exceedingly religious, and interview accounts make it clear that religion is not a factor influencing their decisions and practices in life. These groups are the representatives of the 'most modern' segments of the two societies. Their dual-earner life styles, professional employment, and middle-

¹⁷ In one of the interviews, the man could only answer some of the questions since he had to leave because of an unexpected work obligation.

class positions give them a basic economic security, even though most Turkish interviewees faced significant economic constraints on their life-style choices.

Table 2.1. Main Characteristics of the Interviewees

	Turkish Interviewees	Norwegian Interviewees
Number	32 individuals: 16 women and 16 men	22 individuals: 11 women and 11 men
Age	22 interviewees younger than 45 10 interviewees older than 45 Average age: women: 45, men: 49	14 interviewees younger than 45 8 interviewees older than 45 Average age: women: 44, men: 45
Civil Status	All married	Eight married, three cohabiting couples
Number of children	Ten couples had 1 child. Six couples had two children	One couple had 1 child. Six couples had two and four couples had three children.
Education	Average of 16.25 years of education per interviewee	Average of 16.75 years of education per interviewee

A major difference between the Turkish and Norwegian interviewees in terms of parents' education and occupation is that the majority of Turkish interviewees had mothers who were full-time housewives: out of 32 Turkish mothers, 28 were housewives. Two of them sewed at home to earn extra income. Out of 22 Norwegian mothers, only 3 were full-time housewives. The rest were in part-time or full-time employment. This means that a big majority of Turkish interviewees grew up in "traditional" families with a mother who stayed at home and a father who was the main breadwinner. For most Norwegians, this family type had started to change when they were young and most of them grew up in dual-earner families, though some of the mothers were employed only part-time.

Occupational Characteristics:

All Turkish and Norwegian interviewees were professionals. There are variations concerning types of occupations (See Table 2.2). Most of the Norwegian interviewees were employed in the public (state) sector. Out of 22 Norwegian interviewees 18 (10 women and 8 men) worked in public (or semi-public) institutions, while 4 (1 woman and 3 men) worked in private firms. Out of 32 Turkish interviewees, 11 were employed in the public sector (5 women, 6 men) while 21 (11 women, 10 men) worked in private firms.

I did not directly ask the income levels of interviewees. However, from the type and sector of occupations, I can estimate roughly their earning levels. Apart from my estimations, actual income levels were mentioned in passing in some of the interviews. Based on these indicators, in seven Turkish couples, the woman and the man had equal levels of income, while in five couples, the man had a higher income and in four couples the woman had a higher income. In eight Norwegian couples the woman and the man had equal levels of income, while in three couples, the man earned more. None of the Norwegian women earned more than their partners.

Table 2.2 Interviewees' Occupations

	Turkish Interviewees	Norwegian Interviewees
<i>Public Sector</i>	3 doctors 3 academics 3 teachers 2 engineers (total: 11 interviewees)	5 academics 4 engineers 4 consultants 3 teachers 1 doctor (total: 17 interviewees)
<i>Private Sector</i>	4 doctors 3 high-level managers 3 information technologists 2 engineers 2 architects 2 teachers 2 lawyers 1 economist 1 pharmacist 1 artist (total: 20 interviewees)	1 engineer 1 journalist 1 private business 1 economist 1 consultant (total: 5 interviewees)

Due to anonymity concerns, I will refrain from indicating the exact profession of the individuals. In relevant cases, indicating the sector of the interviewees' profession will provide information on basic work conditions.

All the interviews were tape-recorded. Afterwards I personally transcribed the interviews fully in their original language, Turkish and Norwegian. I have translated the sections that I use as quotations into English. The longest interview lasted for 3 hours and 20 minutes, and the shortest 55 minutes (This was the 'less-successful' interview explained above). The average length of the tape-recorded interviews was 2 hours. I started the interview by filling out a background information scheme. After that I turned on the tape recorder. Some of the interviewees continued telling stories and asking me questions after I switched off the recorder. Accordingly, the actual interviews lasted longer than the sections that were tape-recorded.

The unit of analysis is the gendered individual forming a couple. Gender, age group, nationality, type of profession are main dimensions of variation.

I did not use computer programs for interview analysis. I preferred to construct large tables by hand with key characteristics and quotations in the cells, to see the connections and appearing patterns. This particular way of working and intensive involvement with interview texts also enabled me to remember the interviews, more or less, by heart after a few months of analysis and this made it easier to navigate through the texts in search for specific themes and quotations later.

I use extended quotations to demonstrate the ways individuals make sense of the issues at hand, evaluate and present their situations and decisions and interpret these accounts in light of larger societal configurations. Grouping together similar accounts, I look for emerging patterns. When there are divergent accounts, which distinguish

themselves considerably from the emerging patterns, I present them separately and attempt to interpret the reasons of these discrepancies.

I have also constructed cases that serve several related purposes. In the case studies, I present more detailed information on the individuals and quote relatively long passages to show the richness of interview accounts in their original flow. This enables me to show the ways couples develop a narrative together, opening up new perspectives to each other. Cases also serve to illustrate the instances when the woman and the man disagree.

All the couples are given pseudonyms that start with the same letter. Turkish interviewees have Turkish names and Norwegians have Norwegian. For readers who are not familiar with at least one of the two countries the differences will not appear so apparent. In that case, they could refer to the name list below. In presenting interviewees I decided to denote their age in parentheses after their names. This has a journalistic look, but I find it a practical way of denoting age of the interviewee which is an important piece of information. Whenever I present a couple, the first name is always the woman's and the second name is the man's. The following lists provide basic information on the interviewees of this study: pseudonyms, ages, duration of marriage/cohabitation, number and ages of children.

Norwegian Interviewees

1. Ann (34) – Arne (33) : Cohabiting for 4 years. Two children (3 and 1)
2. Bente (52) – Bjarne (57) : Married for 5 years. Four children (from former marriages)
3. Camilla (31) – Cato (32) : Cohabiting for 10 years. Two children (6 and 8)
4. Elin (56) – Endre (59) : Married for 35 years. Two children (30 and 24)
5. Grete (33) – Geir (32) : Married for 4 years. Two children (4 and 2)
6. Hilde (49) – Henrik (50) : Married for 25 years. Two children (23 and 17)
7. Inger (58) – Ingmar (61) : Married for 35 years. Three children (34, 32, 27)
8. Jorunn (34) – Jarle (35) : Married for 6 years (after cohabiting 4 years). One child (2)
9. Lise (36) – Lars (36) : Married for 10 years (after cohabiting 2 yrs). 2 children (7, 5)
10. Mona (35) – Magne (37) : Married for 9 yrs.(after cohabiting 3 yrs). 2 children (4, 2)
11. Nina (32) – Nils (36) : Cohabiting for 5 years. 2 children (3, 1)

Turkish Interviewees

1. Ayla (54) – Adnan (58) : Married for 33 years. Two children (aged 32 and 28)
2. Berna (51) – Bora (59) : Married for 32 years. Two children (aged 29 and 24)
3. Ceyda (35) – Cemil (35) : Married for 6 years. One child (3)

4. Dilek (41) – Devrim (41) : Married for 20 years. One child (17)
5. Elif (37) – Emre (37) : Married for 12 years. One child (7)
6. Fiğen (33) – Faruk (34) : Married for 10 years. One child (4)
7. Gaye (36) – Gökhan (38) : Married for 7 years. One child (2)
8. Hale (30) – Hikmet (34): Married for 6 years. One child (3)
9. Ipek (35) – İlhan (38) : Married for 10 years. One child (3)
10. Leyla (32) – Levent (32) : Married for 10 years. One child (2)
11. Mine (62) – Murat (65) : Married for 33 years. Two children (32 and 30)
12. Nermin (68) – Nadir (69) : Married for 36 years. Two children (33 and 36)
13. Oya (52) – Orhan (54) : Married for 30 years. Two children (29 and 23)
14. Sevim (44) – Sedat (44) : Married for 19 years. One child (16)
15. Tulin (38) – Tolga (40) : Married for 11 years (after 6 years cohabitation). 1 child (5)
16. Umut (39) – Utku (43) : Married for 10 years. Two children (9 and 2)

Chapter 3 Changes in Families as Groups of Individuals, as Relationships and as Institutions

“Terms such as ‘family’ should be seen as topics to be explored further, in all their usages and ramifications, rather than as resources to be drawn upon uncritically...‘family’ is often contested, publicly available, and often very powerful” (Morgan 1996: 11).

In this chapter, the predominant aim will be analyzing the definitions of ‘family’ and its dynamics by comparing the accounts of Turkish and Norwegian interviewees and scrutinizing the internal diversity of these groups. As a first step in this task, I will provide a brief review of the historical and cultural roots of the present family patterns in Turkey and Norway, together with comparative statistics on marriage, divorce and fertility rates. In this background, “how do interviewees define their families?” is the first question we will seek to answer. This will be followed by an analysis of interviewees’ evaluations and ideas about what they conceive as the major changes in families, particularly of increasing divorce rates.

3.1 Historical and Cultural Factors Influencing the Present Family Practices in Turkey and Norway

There is a prevalent popular belief and an official discourse concerning ‘the Turkish family’ in Turkey: “The family in Turkey is stronger compared to most other countries”. In this comparison, the point of reference is usually ‘the West’, mainly Europe and the USA. Article 41 of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic declares that: “Family is the foundation of Turkish society”. An historical approach is indispensable to understand the bases of this family ideology in Turkey. From the beginning of the modernization processes in the last decades of the 19th Century in the Ottoman Empire, discussions concerning women’s status in the family and in society have been pervasive and came to gain a significant symbolic power. Transformation of the traditional Ottoman-Islamic family structure into an egalitarian, modern, nuclear family in which women would participate in the public sphere by keeping their commitment to their roles as ‘wives and mothers’ has been an ambiguous – but equally strong – ideal formulated by the major ideologues of Turkish modernization. The leading ideologue of this period was Ziya Gökalp. According to Gökalp, family morality based on pre-Islamic Turkish cultural values included norms such as democracy in the ‘parental’ family as opposed to the autocracy of the patriarchal family, the equality of men and women, and monogamous

marriage (Kandiyoti 1995). He advocated a return to a societal structure in which women would participate equally in socioeconomic life and in educational institutions. Even though he advocated a place for women in the public world of work, he stated clearly that he placed the greatest emphasis on women's maternal duties and on socializing children. He elevated motherhood as a major role in building of the modern Turkish nation of the future (Duben & Behar 1991: 215). Gökalp's ideas have been influential for Atatürk and the whole project of Turkish modernization. Kemalist reforms aimed at transforming all the cultural and symbolic aspects associated with the Islamic way of life. The secularization of the family code and the enfranchisement of women were part of a broader effort to liquidate the theocratic remnants of the Ottoman state (Kandiyoti 1995). The new Turkish Civil Code abolished polygamy, endorsed compulsory civil marriage, right of divorce for both partners and egalitarian inheritance laws. It also granted women the right to choose their spouses and maintain their maternal rights even after divorce. However, the civil law failed to establish full legal equality between the sexes since it contained several clauses that endorsed a traditional and conservative family model.¹⁸

In approaching Norwegian families, a historical understanding of the social homogeneity of Norwegian society and the dominance of the social-democratic 'equality' ideal, which comprises equality between the sexes, are necessary first steps. Norwegian society never had a real feudal structure. From the Viking Age onwards, most of the land in Norway has been owned by independent farmers who played an important role in the country's history. Historically, the division of labor in the Norwegian farms was one where the wife tended the farm while the husband went fishing or hunting. Women were thus often used to rough work and to being alone for long periods with major responsibility for the farm and the household (Gullestad 1984). Historically, there have been regional differences in family formations in Norway. Holter (1993) argues as a result of industrialization and urbanization, "different family cultures have to some extent been supplanted by a more homogeneous middle class culture, with greater emphasis on the...individual's freedom and rights" (Holter 1993: 160). This also implied a progress towards more gender equality within the families. In Norway, important changes have taken place in the family structure since 1970s: more cohabiting without formal marriage, reduced fertility and fewer children, postponed marriage and child-bearing, more births outside marriage, more divorces and more single parents. Now let us take a closer look at these trends by comparing them to the ones taking place in Turkey.

3.1.1 Marriage, Divorce and Fertility Rates

Turkish society differs from most European societies with respect to the stability and power of the family as an *institution*, with defined rules and regulations. The marriage rate is extremely high, while the divorce rate is still low. Cohabitation without formal marriage is very rare and is often morally stigmatized. However, as in all developing and developed

¹⁸ These clauses will be analyzed in detail in Chapter 6.

countries, the family as an institution faces certain challenges in Turkey. Divorce rates are slowly increasing, especially in urban areas, and fertility rates of women with higher education are low. Yet, the practice of getting married to begin a family is still a dominant social norm both in urban and rural areas (Tekeli 1995).

Crude divorce rate in Turkey has increased from 0.48 in 1995 to 0.51 in 1998. Norway has witnessed a slight decrease in divorce rates in the last few years, after record high figures in early 1990s. Crude divorce rate was 2.38 in 1995 and 2.11 in 1998 (UN 2001).

In Norway, family, in its traditional institutional form, seems to have lost its dominant position in society and marriage has become one of several alternative forms of cohabitation, for couples with or without children (Knudsen and Wærness 1996). The practice of cohabiting without formal marriage is the most important change in the family pattern in Norway after 1945. This change took place very rapidly and was met with few negative sanctions from the parent and grandparent generations, rapidly becoming a widely accepted civil status (Rogoff Ramsøy 1994). Since 1987, official statistics started including cohabiting couples with children as a family category (Noack 1996). There has been an increase in the number of cohabiting couples (with children) from 27.000 in 1987 to 94.000 in 2000 (SN 2000). The number of cohabitants in Norway (with or without children) was estimated at around half a million in 1998 (SN 1999). In 1999, approximately half of the new born children had unmarried parents. Birth outside marriage is rare in Turkey and is not a socially accepted practice.

Fertility rate in Norway is relatively high – 1,8 children per woman – compared to most other European countries. After a sharp decrease in number of births in the beginning of the 1980s, fertility rate increased slightly and has been relatively stable in the last decade (Sosialt Utsyn 1998). The dominant tendency among Norwegian women is to delay births. The age at first birth has increased from 25 in 1986 to 26.7 in 1996.

Compared to Norway, fertility rate is higher in Turkey, though there has been a sharp decrease from the 1970s onwards. Level of education has a significant effect on fertility rates of women in Turkey. While women with lower levels of education give birth to an average of 2,5 children; this number declines to 0.8 children for women with higher education (SIS 1994). The average number of children of the Turkish and Norwegian couples that I have interviewed was in line with these general trends. It was 1.4 for Turkish and 2 for Norwegians.

One of the main findings of my previous comparative study (Sümer 1996, 1998) was the central and ambiguous position that the institution of the family had in the lives of young Turkish women. The continuing importance of tight family relations went hand in hand with a visible trend of individualization. Younger Turkish women stated that they were experiencing pressures to get married and form a 'happy nest' as soon as possible in their social environments. However most of them also felt that they had the power to resist and fulfill their own plans of 'self-realization' first (Sümer 1996: 138-144). For Norwegian women, family retained its significance as a source of emotional support, but had lost its dominance in providing economic support and control.

These previous findings formed the basis for formulating the research questions of the present project, which aim at ‘deconstructing’ (cf. Gittins 1985) certain myths concerning ‘the’ family by analyzing cross-national and historical variation in the ways family practices are organized and experienced. A first step in this task is understanding different definitions of the term ‘family’. Does ‘family’ mean different things in the two countries?

3.2 Who is your Family?: ‘Nuclear’ vs. Festive Families

The first question of the interview was designed to learn what the term ‘family’ means for the interviewees and which persons they think of when they say ‘my family’. The answers to this question yield a peculiar picture: Younger Turkish respondents include fewer people in the group they see as their family and many underline the primary importance of the small, ‘nuclear family’.

Many Turkish respondents used the scientific term ‘nuclear’ (*çekirdek*) when drawing the boundaries of their families. Among the Norwegians, only one respondent, who is a social scientist, used this term while talking about the family. The sociological concept ‘nuclear family’ seems to be more popular in Turkey. In the processes of top-down modernization, the modernizing elite had to redefine all major institutions. The family institution had held a central place in the debates between the Islamists, Traditionalists and Modernists. In recent decades, it lost this centrality, yet it still comes to the public agenda in the context of specific events.¹⁹

Evidently, Turkish people associate having a nuclear family with being ‘more’ modern. In the Turkish context, family is a more institutional (as opposed to emotional) concept, which implies more defined interaction rules and responsibilities. A main variation in the Turkish group occurred between the younger and older interviewees. Older respondents tended to speak of a bigger family, while younger ones more clearly differentiated between their own family, as ‘the first nucleus’ and their own parents and siblings, as ‘the second’. Dilek (42) said that there is a good deal of difference between the two circles and Devrim (42), her husband, agreed:

Who do you include in the group, when you say ‘my family’?

Dilek: Definitely, my husband and my son. This is the first nucleus. I mean, I don’t have my mother, father and sisters in the first nucleus. That is certain. But in the second circle, I have my parents and sisters. But there is a good deal of difference between them, I mean between those two circles, from my point of view.

¹⁹ For example in the summer of 2001, a love-affair ‘scandal’ of a married minister led to heated debates in the media on the topics of adultery, infidelity, love, marriage and so on. In all these debates ‘the sacred Turkish family’ was used in a taken-for-granted manner and was discussed in relation to Turkish ‘custom and practices’ (*örf ve adet*).

Devrim: I also think the same. I mean, I don't see mothers and fathers as family. I think of my wife and child as separate. I mean, that is so both as scope and as bonds of relationships.

Dilek and Devrim have a daughter and they received active help from their mothers when she was small. However, they also experienced serious problems in the first years of their marriage as a result of too much motherly involvement. They even came to the verge of a divorce. After a tough period, Dilek and Devrim decided to save their relationship by putting a distance between their own relationship and their relationships with their parents. Even though they stress the importance of this separation, in practice they have frequent contact with their mothers.

There are other examples of these types of ambiguities. Leyla (33) and Levent (33) only define each other and their child as their family. However, at the time of the interview Levent's mother lived with them and took care of their 3 years old son.

Who do you include when you say 'my family'?

Leyla: For me, it is my husband and son.

Levent: It is the same for me.

The interesting point is that both grandmothers lived at times with this couple and took turns taking care of their grandson in recent months. Given this close involvement and vital support, this delimitation of the 'family' and exclusion of grandparents appears almost ungrateful. But this can be seen as an attempt to balance the privacy of one's own family in the context of the network of other close relatives. In many families parents-in-law may get too involved with the internal affairs of younger families, and this results in conflicts. The pervasiveness of the 'strong and close family ties' ideal in Turkey as a dominant model conflicts with the realities and ideals of younger, more individualized couples, who strive for independence and self-determination. Accordingly, even though in practice, people have daily contact with their close relatives (especially parents-in-law) they feel the need to draw visible boundaries between the two circles and give primacy to the 'first nucleus'. Ceyda (37) and Cemil (35) also have close contact with their mothers but they choose to define their family as consisting of three persons:

Who do you include in the group 'my family'?

Cemil: Me, my wife and my child.

Ceyda: It is the same for me. If I think of this in a more detailed manner, then I may include our mothers as well, but in the first stage, it is these 3 persons."

This delimitation and drawing clear boundaries of the nuclear family is also related to life-phases. Couples who have small children, and who depend on support from parents seem to operate with this two-step conceptualization. The couples who stressed these boundaries were the ones who lived close to their in-laws. For others, this did not appear to be a major issue.

Figen (33) and Faruk (34) also differentiated between themselves and their parents and siblings. Faruk had a special way of defining who he thinks of as family:

Faruk: When I think of my family, I think only of us, this, my own family...

Figen: Sometimes, one also thinks of one's parents as well, right?

Faruk: Yes, but they come afterwards. Brothers and sisters as well, they come after...I mean the relationships here have priority...For example, when I earn some money, I don't think, 'what can I do with my brother?'...Therefore, I guess family can be defined as the relations with whom you want to spend your earnings, so it is here! (laughs) I mean it is a place that you can make major sacrifices.

The most unusual answer to this question came from a couple who also have other characteristics that set them apart. Tulin (38) and Tolga (40) had cohabited for 5 years before they got married and had a child. They are the only Turkish couple who cohabited before getting married and they reflected on the difficulties they faced related to their atypical 'choice.' During the period they cohabited, they had almost no contact with their parents, since their parents would not accept their cohabitation as 'legitimate.' Finally, they made the decision to get married to end these practical difficulties. Still, both Tulin and Tolga have difficulties conceptualizing themselves as a 'classical family':

Who do you include in the group 'my family'?

Tulin: I mean, frankly, I don't have such a notion in my head...I don't know, I think of us more like a 'team'.

Tolga: It is more or less the same for me. Because I still cannot place us three into the classical family structure I have in my mind. I mean I always think of our parents when I say family.

Older Turkish respondents had more persons included in their families, mainly as a result of the fact that their children had got married, and this led to extension of the original nuclear family. Most of them have close contact with their children's families and provide support in childcare. These relationships can be conceptualized as functionally connected nuclear families, since the two families live in separate but nearby households and actively help each other, both financially and more importantly by providing care. This type of an 'intimacy at a distance' is reported as a common trend in urban Turkey (Aykan and Wolf 2000).

Older interviewees, sometimes in a nostalgic manner, talked of more crowded families and closer family ties. Berna (51) and Bora (59) articulate their respect for the family as an institution and wish to keep their strong family ties:

Who do you include when you say 'my family'?

Berna: My husband, my children, my daughter-in-law, my sister and her family, my husband's siblings. There are no others left, our parents have passed away, so that's all; we are not such a big family.

Bora: We still continue certain principles of the patriarchal family, if I may use this expression. We have really strong family ties. Even though we live apart, we never break the ties. For example, my brothers are in (another city) now, but we always visit each other, especially on religious holidays.

The use of the term 'patriarchal' is interesting in this context. Bora was using it to denote 'strong' family ties, without acknowledging its male-dominated aspects. During the interview, Berna and Bora reflected on the problems related to gender-inequality in Turkey and advocated for the need to equalize the societal situations of men and women. In this context, the use of the concept 'patriarchal' denoted a family system in which ties are strong and there is respect between the members. Bora apparently did not use the concept to convey a sense of male-dominance, since he was also critical of the secondary status of Turkish women in general and welcomed the trend toward more equality in families, as well as in the labor market. However, he did not approve of the loosening of family ties and decreasing 'respect' for the family institution either. He is a typical example of the Turkish people who advocate further modernization by keeping certain traditional values – in this case the patriarchal family – intact. This is an inherently ambiguous ideal almost impossible to maintain. It is becoming clear that the Turkish interviewees' conceptualizations of family are greatly influenced by the special modernization history of the country. How did Norwegians approach these issues?

Compared to the Turkish interviewees, Norwegians indicated larger groups of persons as their families. They did not strive to separate out different nuclei and rank these in terms of significance, as most younger Turkish couples did. Some Norwegians also mentioned two-levels, according to proximity of relations, but this separation mainly stemmed from geographical distance:

Magne (37): As far as I am concerned, I think primarily of the four of us, because we do not have the rest of the family here, in this city. But if I expand it one step further, then it is grandparents on both sides, parents, and our siblings with their children. I have those two levels.

Most Norwegians argued that who they define as their families is a *context-dependent* issue. Grete (33) and Geir (32) had slightly different ways of thinking about who their family is:

Grete: It all depends...

Geir: Yes, if I shall think of family, then I think of parents, on both sides, also my grand-parents..

Grete: If somebody asks me 'who is your family?' then I think my point of departure would be only you and the kids.

Geir: I think of it much larger, actually, I include my brother as well.

Grete: Yes, in other connections, I would also think like that.

Norwegians tend to think of the 'big family' in relation to celebrations, festivities and church holidays. Especially, Christmas celebrations have a significant place where extended family members are embraced:

Endre (59): I include both my family and her family, but it is a very small family. I don't have any siblings...she has one sister...Her parents are still alive, but my parents died. Earlier, when we talked about the family, we included everybody. We were all together at Christmas Eves, both your parents and my parents.

For most Norwegian interviewees 'the family' included those persons they would invite to celebrate a major occasion:

Lise (36): When I am at work and talk about Lars (*her husband*) and the kids, I don't say 'my family', I just say Lars and the kids. But when I say 'my family' it is more related to visits and celebrations. For example when the kids have a birthday we have a 'family-visit,' and then it means both your parents and my parents. While I say 'my family' I refer mainly to my brother, sister and parents.

In the Norwegian group, there was not a significant difference between younger and older interviewees in terms of definitions of families, yet some of the cohabiting couples appeared to have a dissimilar approach to defining families. Camilla (31) and Cato (32) had been cohabiting for 10 years and they had two children. They mentioned that they saw a slight difference between 'her family' and 'his family':

Camilla: It depends on the context. Here in Bergen, I talk about the four of us. But when I talk about the family otherwise, I think of brothers and sisters, my parents, grandparents and all.

Cato: Back to everybody who is alive, pure and simple. Camilla: Yes.

Cato: But in a way, your family is not totally my family.

Camilla: No. That's true.

Ann (34) and Arne (33) are also a cohabiting couple who mentioned a similar difference. Arne included many relatives in his family while Ann mentioned that she did not conceive of these persons as her family:

Ann: I think that I am in a family with them (*Arne's aunts and cousins*) but they are not *my family*.

Nina (32) and Nils(36), who have been cohabiting for five years, mentioned that they became a 'family' after having children:

Nils: Earlier, it was Nina's family and my family, and two of us were cohabitants who actually were not a family. Then we had a child and became a "we" family...

Nina: Now your family and my family became also a 'family'. And you and I became a family. We have to practice this before the mirror! (laughs) What I thought as 'his family' and 'my family' separately, now became 'our family,' because we are attached to each other in a different way after having a child.

These reflections exemplify that in the Norwegian urban context, official marriage has lost its centrality to start a family. Having a child is conceived as the step into being a family, either with or without formal marriage.

3.3 Differing Family Ideologies in Turkey and Norway

When I had first formulated the question on the definition of family, I had an expectation that Turkish interviewees would denote larger groups. This expectation stemmed mainly from the findings of my prior research, which had pinpointed the significance of the family as a key institution in Turkey, with its enabling and constraining characteristics operating on many different levels. However, I came to realize that this expectation also had an ideological basis, since I also held the general belief that in Turkey 'the family' as an institution is stronger and family relations are tighter compared to western countries. Accordingly, the fact that most younger Turkish couples operated with a 'two-step' conceptualization of the family and sharply separated the 'first nucleus' from the second was surprising. Historical sensitivity and a theoretical separation of actual 'family practices' and 'family ideologies' provide several related explanations for this phenomenon.

First of all, the question 'who is your family' is ideologically more loaded in Turkey. In the process of modernization, the family and its transformation has always had a central place. Most researchers and the modernizing elite believed that a transition to the 'modern nuclear family' would take place as a 'natural' result of modernization. As documented by several researchers later (e.g. Özbay 1998, Duben & Behar 1991) a false belief prevailed that a majority of families were extended families in the Ottoman Empire and this type of family signified traditionalism and almost backwardness. In many circles, extended families were associated with backwardness, while nuclear families symbolized modernity.

Kandiyoti (1995) also emphasizes the central position of an evolutionary type of modernization theory in influencing family ideologies in Turkey:

"Turkey had more than ever become a country where a myriad of different gender regimes in the family coexisted historically. However, the language adopted to describe this variety and diversity was, for a long time, that of modernization theory. Turkey was assumed to be embarked upon a trajectory leading from tradition to modernity, with corresponding structures for the family and conjugal relations. Sociological and demographic studies described the extended family as rural and traditional, and the nuclear family as modern and urban...The idealized model of the nuclear family involved companionate marriage, role-sharing between spouses and child-orientation. Ironically, at a time when this type of conjugal family was being denounced as the site of women's oppression in the

West, it was held out as a more liberated state of being in Turkey... This vision was by no means totally misguided; it celebrated the greater autonomy of the young heterosexual couple from the interference and control by older kin (Kandiyoti 1995: 312-13).”

Accordingly, the stress on the nuclear family among Turkish interviewees can be interpreted in the context of this ideology concerning the modern way of living. In reality, as the interview accounts clearly showed, Turkish couples had intensive contact with closer kin, especially with their own parents. Nevertheless several younger interviewees stressed the importance and the centrality of the ‘first nucleus’ in their lives. This phenomenon exemplifies how family practices and ideologies may diverge.

Apart from this ideological reason, there is also a relevant material explanation for this phenomenon. Turkish interviewees include fewer people in the group they define as their families because this inclusion has important practical consequences and brings heavy obligations. In the absence of well-developed policies for the care of the elderly, close family members still form the main support network in times of need (Özbay 1998). While counting several persons as family mainly reflects feelings of closeness for Norwegians, this has more serious practical consequences for Turkish couples. Taking care of elder parents by living in a nearby neighborhood, or together with them, is a common practice in Turkey, as is relying on close family members in old age.

In Norway, the welfare state has to a much larger extent taken over the elder-care services. The most common and preferred arrangement for care of the elderly is state-subsidized institutions. Some Norwegian respondents mentioned that at times they experienced a type of ‘guilty conscience’ resulting from little contact with their elderly close kin. Even though they think that having the welfare state step in and take over the daily care of those in need has been a positive development, some are concerned about the loss of contact and loneliness that results.

The practical consequences of family definitions are dissimilar in the two countries. Younger Turkish couples with small children who are dependent on active support from their parents feel the need to stress the importance of distinguishing between two different family circles. This ideological separation enables them to draw boundaries between their ‘own’ small, nuclear families and extended family relationships, as well as retain a feeling of privacy and independence – cherished values of (late)-modern lives. The accounts above make it clear that ‘being in a family’ means different things and brings dissimilar responsibilities in these two countries.

‘Family’ is a wide-ranging concept. It can be approached, as done in the former section, as groups of individuals who are defined as the most important ones. It can also be analyzed as a social institution, going through transformations via complex interactions with other social institutions. We switch to that perspective to analyze the ways interviewees have evaluated the changes that they conceive as most apparent in families.

3.4 Evaluations of Changes in Families

All Turkish interviewees agreed on the point that there have been important changes in families, putting the emphasis on several different aspects. A majority argued that family ties are not the same as before; they are getting looser. Some conceived this as a positive development – increasing individual freedom – while others thought of this as a loss. Most interviewees had both positive and negative evaluations concerning the changes in families.

Ayla (54) and Adnan (59) reflected on the changes in family patterns and practices in the following manner:

Ayla: There are our times, on the one hand, and present times, on the other. Of course we see a lot of changes in families. Now parents help their children a lot. For example, if their child gets married and if both of them work, grandparents help a lot. In our times it was not like this...fathers were patriarchal fathers, they did not give many rights to mothers.

Adnan: With increasing education, families become more separate. People move to other cities, because of work opportunities. These prevent families from getting or being together more often. While in earlier times, father, son, daughter-in-law, three or four families lived together, now families are divided into small pieces. The one who gets married moves to a separate flat and some problems lead to an estrangement from the family. Family ties are not the same as before.

Ayla and Adnan put the emphasis on different aspects of change. Ayla sees and welcomes a transition from ‘patriarchal fathers’ to more helping families, while Adnan referred to a past where several families lived together and sees the loosening of ties as a loss. Both Ayla and Adnan have rural backgrounds and this separates them from other Turkish interviewees who have urban backgrounds. The families of ‘earlier times’ that Ayla and Adnan referred to are the rural families of 1940s and 1950s in which gender and generation hierarchies were much stronger.

Another older couple, Berna (51) and Bora (59) also see important changes in the family ‘institution,’ and they also traced both positive and negative developments:

Bora: It has been over 30 years since we got married. There are big differences between the family institution then and the family institution now. As we said before, we met each other through common acquaintances, through referrals of relatives. It was partly an arranged marriage. But now the young generation is getting married in a totally different way. For example, before getting married our son told us that he had a girlfriend, but they were not thinking of getting married yet. After a while he came and said that they had decided to do so and in that way they formed their family nest. So, as parents we only had the duty of approval...And in our times there were patriarchal family relations. But now in Turkey, due to economic conditions, families have to be smaller. Especially in terms of several families living together: now this is almost nonexistent...This is both good and bad. The bad part is that young couples have harder economic conditions. The good part is young couples have the initiative and they don't face problems like mother-in-law/daughter-in-law disputes...

Berna: And this is much more important, I mean their happiness. Because they solve the economic problems in one way or another.

Bora: Yes, and they can plan their lives more comfortably, since there is not much intervention from the elders. They can use their initiative more freely, use more initiative. So we see this as a positive development.

A move towards more democratic families, in which women are more liberated and there is a more balanced division of authority and decision-making between spouses, was conceptualized as a major trend by several respondents. Sevim (44) compared her childhood family to her current one and depicted a move from a 'patriarchal' to a 'democratic' style:

In my childhood, in terms of mother-father relations, my father had a definite sovereignty at home. In my family now, there is a more democratic structure. When I compare the two families in terms of relations with children, again my father's decisions had priority... I mean my father had a pressing and harsh dominance, over my mother as well. Everything shall be asked to him, he will decide everything, the things to buy, the places to go and so forth... So, in other words, it was somewhat a patriarchal family. Now, in my family, we are not doing that insofar as it's possible. Sedat is also a democratic person. We solve our problems mutually. We decide together.

Umut (39) also characterizes her family as more democratic compared to her childhood family, in which her father's authority was absolute:

When I think of my own childhood, there was a very disciplined atmosphere...My father was a very dominant figure and was strongly disciplinary. I always felt his pressure on my mother as well. Our family is more egalitarian in terms of husband-wife relations... I mean, it is definitely a more democratic family.

Another trend brought up by several respondents was the changing nature of parent-child relationships. An important characteristic of the dual-earner, urban families is the decreasing number of children. These families have fewer children compared to other family types and also adopt a freer style of childrearing. Most of the younger Turkish couples that I interviewed had only one child and this was a conscious decision for most of them. Most interviewees argued that nowadays children have more say in families. Oya (52) compares her childhood to the present and portrays the differences:

Younger children today have more free will, can insist on their rights, have more say at home and have their opinions consulted. Conversely, in our childhood, parents - especially the father - had the say; whatever he said was the rule.

Hale (30), mother of a three-year-old boy, thinks that the biggest difference between past and present families is in the relationships between parents and children:

There are very big differences between the ways parents treat their children. I think nowadays, parents are more tolerant, they give more freedom and voice to

their children. I mean, I think I had a more restricted childhood and perhaps because of that reason I try to give more freedom to my child.

Due to the smaller number of children and a changing mentality, families are becoming 'child-centered,' that is, children are given more say. Umut (39) mentioned the changing mentality with respect to favored methods of childrearing:

I observe this in many families today, and it is the same in our family, that families are child-centered. I mean, when I think of my own childhood, there was a very disciplined atmosphere...Sometimes, my father observes us and criticizes a lot, saying that we are not training our kids good enough. We have adopted a freer method of child upbringing. Ways of thinking have changed a lot.

Tulin (38) and Tolga (40) mention the economic bases of the transformations in families and evaluate these changes as a result of 'compulsory individualization':

Tulin: I suppose family relations have become looser; I mean they are not as tight as before...I think people became more individualized; they are divided into smaller units.

Tolga: And more egalitarian relations are established between individuals.

Tulin: And it is a little compulsory, maybe it (individualization) is not something we have chosen, but more brought about by working too much outside and spending too little time together at home. I mean, maybe it is the result of being independent out of necessity.

It is interesting to note that Tulin and Tolga evaluate the changes in family relations by stressing the ambiguity of modernization: individuals are becoming freer, but also lonelier, by the same token. The modern ideal of 'democracy in the family' was conceived as a major trend by most Turkish interviewees.

When evaluating changes in families, Norwegians focused on different issues. A main change in family patterns mentioned by Norwegian interviewees was the increase in the number of working mothers, which led to changes both in the tempo of daily-life and the division of tasks and power inside the home. Especially the interviewees who themselves had mothers that were at home pointed to this as a main trend. According to Henrik (50) the biggest difference between his childhood and the present is that his wife Hilde is a full-time worker:

The most important difference is that Hilde is employed, in contrast to my mother. So the biggest difference is that this leads to another way of distributing tasks at home, distribution of economic responsibility and everything else of course. Yes, this is the main difference, because my mother was a housewife.

Increases in the number of working mothers also has led to changes in children's daily routines. Grete (33) mentioned these changes as the most significant difference:

There are changes of course, because my mother was at home when we were small, so we were at home and there were lots of kids in the streets. We played in

the streets and such. But now, the kids get up at 6:30, we drive them to kindergarten and pick them up at 4:30. So there I see a lot of change.

Magne (37) also claimed that the biggest change took place in children's daily routines:

When we were small, kindergarten was an unknown concept. Neither we, nor the other kids in the neighborhood went to kindergarten. In most cases, mothers were at home, while fathers were working full-time. I think this is probably the biggest difference between the families now and when we were small.

Some of the interviewees pointed out that grandparent-grandchild relations have also been altered, since most of today's grandparents work long hours and do not have much time for their grandchildren:

Geir (32): And we also notice that there is a change concerning today's grandparents, in relation to what I was used to when I was a kid. Grandparents have less spare time, in a way...When I was a kid, my grandmother was at home...while my parents now, they are very much out at work. They work long hours, just like we do.

Nearly all Norwegian interviewees mentioned as major trends the increase in cohabitation without formal marriage and a higher tendency for relationships to break up. Most Norwegian interviewees were positive regarding the loosening of the traditional institutional characteristics of families. For example, Ann (34) considers a diversity of family patterns to be positive:

I think it is positive that not everybody in society aims at getting married and having children. I don't think that this means that 'family' is in a state of crisis. I mean, when the Christian Democrats say that the family is in crisis, they mean something else than what I mean, to put it that way.

Norwegians tend to conceive of cohabitation as a legitimate form of living, especially until the couple plans to have children. Yet, it is becoming more and more common to have children without formal marriage. In Norway, the institutional aspects of family have weakened and practices have become individualized. Arne, a thirty-three year-old Norwegian man who has a daughter from his earlier marriage, and who is now cohabiting with the mother of his other two children, declared:

We are not married, but I consider us an equally strong family all the same.

This quotation illustrates simply and clearly that it is not 'the family' as such, but its traditional, institutional aspects that are dissolving in Norway. Cohabiting interviewees made it clear that they consider their relationship to be as 'legitimate' as those of married couples, although they are aware of the remaining legal differences. Camilla (31) and Cato (32) have been cohabiting for 10 years and are parents of two children under school age. They reflected on their status in the following way:

Cato: We are still cohabiting, I think a little because I am stubborn and think that it must be possible to be cohabitants instead of getting married for that reason. In

a way, we do everything that married couples do: we have a house together, we have children together...but of course I am painfully aware of the fact that married and cohabiting couples are treated differently in the legal system...

Camilla: It may happen that we will get married just to have the papers in a way...

Cato: Yes, it may happen. However, I do not see the existence of a lot of cohabiting couples as a negative development...

Camilla: It is totally all right. The important thing is to take care of each other, and to take care of children, irrespective of if you are married or not; and also irrespective of if you are a single parent...or if it is your own children or others'. The important thing is taking care of them.

This definition of family as 'a group of people who love and care for each other' (Stacey 1996) and related reflections exemplify the more open attitude concerning diverse organizations of family relations in Norway.

However, not everybody in Norwegian society is in favor of consensual unions. Several Norwegian respondents stated their concern for the increase in the number of families that break-up, and some see this trend as a result of increases in cohabitation. Inger (58) is concerned about the high divorce rates and sees this as related to such increases:

I think the big increase in divorces and broken up families in general is very regrettable, whether they are cohabiting or married, first of all because it is almost always a problem for children. If it is only adults, then they can manage the way they want. However, when there are children in the picture, then I think it is regrettable... I believe in a way...well, obviously some of the cohabitations are almost the same as marriage, but most are not. Statistics show that it is much easier to break up a relationship of cohabitation. I think it is important to have a stable home during the whole period when children are small. So seen from that angle I am sorry that there are so many cohabitations, because there are more break-ups.

This brings us closer to comparing the ways Turkish and Norwegian interviewees evaluate divorce. I had a specific question pertaining to divorce, since I conceive attitudes towards divorce as a significant component of individuals' general orientation towards institutional and moral aspects of marriage and family at large.

3.5 Evaluations of Divorce as a Social Phenomenon

In Turkey, divorce rates are higher in big cities than in rural areas, but even urban divorce rates are considerably lower than in the international context. In the last decade, there has been a constant though slow increase in urban areas, leading to a higher tolerance in society. Yet being a divorcee still has various stigmas attached. In Norway, high divorce rates are a popular theme on the agenda. Especially children's situation after divorce has been the subject of many hot media debates, as well as several academic research projects

(e.g. Moxnes 1990, Moxnes and Haugen 1998). In general, high break-up rates of marriages and cohabitation continue to be of concern, but at the same time are accepted as a basic, hard to change social fact. Several researchers approach to divorce not as 'an expression for decay and for the low status of the family' rather as 'an expression for that the family has a high value and that people have high demands concerning what type of a family they want to live in' (Moxnes 1990: 13, my translation).

Given the centrality of divorce-related issues in Norwegian society and the increasing 'popularity' of the issue in Turkey, I wanted to include evaluations of attitudes towards divorce as a topic of comparison in this study. The couples I interviewed are all currently together, but some of them personally experienced divorce in their earlier marriages and all of them declare that they have witnessed divorces in their close social environment. A general look at the Turkish and Norwegian couples concerning attitudes towards divorce yields a picture in which a majority of the interviewees have a neutral attitude: they accept it as a legitimate action when marriages face severe problems. Only 3 Turkish and 4 Norwegian interviewees were openly critical of the increase in divorces, due to their common belief that people make this decision too easily, without trying hard enough to 'repair' the relationship.

All Turkish interviewees agreed that divorce is becoming more commonplace in urban areas compared to a few decades earlier, and nearly everyone thought that this increase is related to increases in women's economic power. Other factors that were mentioned several times were increased selfishness and intolerance, decreasing respect for marriage, and higher and 'unrealistic' expectations related to marriage.

A common belief among Turkish interviewees is that the conflicts and problems couples are facing nowadays are not exceptionally new, but before women had to put up with their marriages even when they were not happy, since they did not have the economic means to survive after a divorce. Hale (30) notices an increase in divorces in her social environment and evaluates this phenomenon in the following way:

In old times, people would bear certain hardships more. Now women who seize their economic freedom do not bear them anymore. They say, 'I can continue this struggle alone,' and get divorced. People became more conscious. I think problems are the same: they were there earlier also. However, people continued their marriage as an obligation, not because it was such a good thing.

Oya (52) also mentions women's economic power as a main factor behind increases in divorce:

Personally, I think that increases in divorce are related to fact that in Turkish society women started having more material means and started thinking more freely. Earlier, even though they wanted to have a divorce, women could not make this decision, since they did not have economic freedom or somebody who could support them financially.

Another factor leading to more divorces that was frequently mentioned by interviewees was timing of marriages. Several interviewees argued that people who get married at a

young age and who make this decision rapidly tend to face higher risks of divorce. Early and rapid marriage decisions were thought to be related to unrealistic expectations. Nadir (69) sees unrealistic 'dreams' about marriage as a major factor:

According to me, getting married early, rapidly, and not finding the life that you dreamed of after marriage (are the reasons behind divorces). I mean, not obtaining the things one sees on TV, movies and in lives of those who have higher incomes, in one's own family life.

Seeing divorce as a result of 'disappointment' in marriages based on 'high expectations' was a prevalent argument. Tulin (38) had a similar remark:

There has been a big increase in divorce. I think it was 2-3 years ago, many couples who got married at the same time as us, got dissolved...I think in relationships that start at a young age, people have especially high expectations. Of course we all have big dreams and big expectations, if not related to life, related to our relationships, and I think after a while this gradually turns into a disappointment. Certain social conditions, and maybe a gradual decline in economic conditions, come together and form different dynamics and people lose empathy towards each other.

Among the Turkish interviewees, several stood out as being openly critical of increases in divorce. Berna (51) and Bora (59) are critical of increased 'individualization' which they conceive as 'selfishness' and especially Bora thinks that increase in divorces is a result of lost respect for the family 'institution':

Bora: Today, especially youngsters, they think of marriage as a toy; its attraction carries them away, but of course when its difficulties emerge, then it is too late. Since they have married without knowing the marriage institution well, they do not have respect for it either. Consequently, divorce is very ordinary for them.(...) I don't understand this. If a person has love and respect for an institution (*marriage*), it could not be so easy to demolish it. How can one demolish it so easily? One should instead make sacrifices to save it.

Berna: And another thing is that the younger generation is more impatient, so that is another factor (*in divorces*).

Dilek (42) and her husband, Devrim (42) believe that family is 'sacred' and think that some people divorce too easily. Dilek is critical of divorces that she thinks do not stem from real problems:

There are a series of divorces with a snobbish logic that I see among my friends. You grip your economic independence, and then without thinking of anything else, without philosophizing about happiness, you get divorced. And most of those who divorce, they are not like "oh, I am divorced, I am happy" either...I don't approach the matter that way. I think happiness is really a matter of effort. It is not easy to be together with a person 40 years, not at all easy to be together

feeling happy...I don't believe that love can be seized by changing partners because of unimportant reasons.

While some Turkish interviewees conceptualized divorce as more or less a 'natural' result of modernization and an increase in women's economic power, the critical accounts mainly revolved around two topics: increasing selfishness and unrealistic expectations. Some of these factors were also mentioned by Norwegian interviewees.

For Norwegians, divorce is a more common phenomenon: it takes place at higher rates and, defined as a 'social problem,' it has been on the agenda for several decades. Most Norwegians acknowledge that the normalization of divorce has had certain positive affects, especially for women. Bente (52) thinks that it has given more freedom to women:

I think that increased access to divorce, I mean that divorce has become more commonplace, has had many positive side-effects for the grown up. For children, I think it is more ambiguous. I think that the relation between parents must be very bad for children to prefer divorce. But especially for women, it has no doubt afforded them more freedom. And, it is a type of freedom that demands responsibility from the grown-up people, that they do not make this decision easily but have it as an opportunity if there are no other possibilities.

Grete (33) and Geir (32) reflect on divorce and conceive of it as a result of unrealistic expectations, but also as providing people a real choice:

Geir: It depends on the expectations you have beforehand and how much you are willing to work on the issues...I have a feeling that many people go around and think that they will be in love all the time. But when you have two kids and such, one still loves the other, but it changes form. Children take most of the love, that's what they do.

Grete: Yes, and maybe also earlier people had the attitude that marriage would last no matter what, while now people have more of a real choice. Divorce has been more common and more accepted and of course consequently relationships are more insecure.

Bjarne (57) criticizes what he conceives as individualistic trends in society which became prominent in the last two decades:

What we register in our times, maybe from 80s onwards, is that people have developed considerably more focus on their own happiness and welfare, and on what is good for them, and this affects children negatively. I see this as a striking feature of the 80s. Either it is children of divorce who are sent alone on airplanes with signs on them²⁰...or it is cohabiting couples, who break up and move in with someone new, so that it becomes a real mess in the end.

²⁰ Young children travelling alone by airplanes wear a sign around their necks that says "I am travelling alone".

There were two topics that crystallized as common arguments used by both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees: The first one relates to an ‘increased individualization and selfishness’ and the other one concerns ‘high expectations leading to disappointments.’ These arguments are in line with the propositions formulated by Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (1995) on the risky nature of intimate relationships, involving disappointments based on higher standards set on living together.

Let us now take a closer look at the ways one Turkish couple evaluated divorce approaching from different angles, reflecting on several reasons and disagreeing on their relative importance.

3.6 Case A. Ipek and Ilhan: An ‘Amateur Sociological’ Assessment of Divorce

When evaluating increases in divorce in Turkey, Ipek and Ilhan, a couple in their mid-thirties, provided ‘thick descriptions’ and interpretations of what they have observed in their environment. Neither of them are social scientists, but they are obviously interested in this theme and are curious to understand how divorce interacts with other social changes, both at institutional and individual levels. I will quote from the interview at length, in more or less its original flow. The sequence below is a special form of interview interaction, where the couple almost forgot the presence of the interviewer and carried on a heated debate, providing a rich narrative on divorce in Turkey that may not have been revealed through direct questioning.

Ipek (35) has an urban background. She works as a consultant in a private firm, with long working hours and high level of stress. Ilhan (38) also has an urban background. He is an academician working at a state university with high level of flexibility. They have been married for 10 years and have a 3 year-old son. Both display egalitarian attitudes concerning gender, yet the ways they organize housework and childcare are highly traditional. This is an issue which Ipek is critical about.

Ipek started evaluating divorce by bringing up women’s “second shift,” which often leads to exhaustion and conflict. Ilhan introduced the concept of ‘individualization’ which he sees as central in understanding divorce. They discussed other related phenomena, disagreeing on their relative importance in explaining why divorces are at rise:

Ipek: There are divorces, for example in my own social environment. Even those people who got married in a very traditional way and who I thought would never divorce, may get divorced. I think basically there is this main reason...in the city the woman has to leave the traditional role in order to work outside, because city life makes it difficult for only the man to support the household. Normally, in traditional relations, the woman stays at home and the man works...Nowadays, women work much more outside the home, either in the public or the private sector. Because of this work, they contribute to the household economically...So, OK, both man and woman contribute economically, but it is also expected that the woman continue with her traditional tasks. Everything feels heavier because she works outside and then comes home, cooks the dinner, sets the table for her

husband, takes care of her child, and so on. And in such a system, I think that the woman is led to exhaustion, and this intensifies incompatibilities. That is to say, it lessens the bonds of affection. And in this framework, women can make the decision to divorce more easily, compared to the old times. This is what I think. How about you?

Ilhan: Of course, the widening of the areas of freedom has a role in this. Because, as you said, in the past, people carried out their lives in more limited social environments and with more limited budgets, whether they wanted it or not. But the development of economic opportunities and differentiation of social environments has activated certain emotions more easily. But what I think as a serious factor apart from this, and maybe the most important one, is individualization. Even though this is meant as a concept that provides freedom for human beings, I think it seriously takes people to loneliness and to a point of solving all problems by being alone...

Ipek: In fact, I don't think that this is so determining in marriages, I mean in separations. Maybe in a very small section of society.

Ilhan: I mean, in the end, even though people do not put individualization as a goal for themselves, they follow a lonely path of development, whether they want it or not. In this lonely path of self-development, even people in the first circle, that is the family, are not included, since you have a different social environment, a different work environment, and maybe this brings with it a type of differentiation. And maybe individualization also decreases endurance for certain things, because you don't feel like you have to endure. You think, 'everybody can use the freedom of behaving the way they want.' So you also behave the way you want...when everybody is inclined towards experiencing all the feelings alone, when such an inclination increases, maybe you start reacting more severely to the quarrels that take place all the time. Even though you could cope with such problems, even though you could tolerate them, you start not tolerating them. (...)

Ipek: But now, you say that experiencing emotions individually, decreasing tolerance, and so on are important. But I think that in fact, in the traditional structure, the woman is conditioned, is trained to continue the relationship. Whatever happens, it is very difficult to break this mechanism. I mean, even if she enrolls in a university, the traditional structure is dictated to her so strongly, you know that issue of 'the female bird builds the nest' is forced on her with all its ramifications. Accordingly, in this respect, leaving the marriage, especially if you have children, is hard. Nobody can do it so easily. So I think there must be much more serious inclusion of this, rather than just individualization. (...) Of course, another thing may be related to changes in values. Maybe this is what lies at the root of the increases in divorce. Especially in former generations, marriage was always defined as something sacred, but in one way or another we all saw that it is not anything sacred. It can be a type of comfort brought by this.

Ilhan: I don't agree with that. In many ways, my parents' generation evaluate marriage maybe in a much more healthy way. We always had the logic of being against, a type of being 'anti,' and marriage was always presented to us as

something sacred, and we claim that we are against marriage. But this anti- point of departure, in a strange way, leads us to seeing marriage as much more sacred than our parents and having higher expectations related to that concept. The things that my father expects from my mother are very simple things. Whereas, I do not have as simple expectations as my father, from the person I am together with. I want an intellectual satisfaction, I want a sexual satisfaction, I want her to represent me well in different places in different styles, I want her to join with me in all types of activities, and these are in fact not realistic wishes. And when you look at it, former generations had very simple, very logical and very concrete wishes related to marriage. Maybe in that framework, we evaluate marriage falsely and load it with too many meanings.

Ipek: But also changing values have an affect, I mean in ending marriage more comfortably... One thing is that the new generation evaluates marriage differently, in a way freeing it somewhat from that sacredness. But in addition to that, I think earlier, being divorced was evaluated as much worse, socially, especially for women. I think now this is broken. This is a very important factor: now a woman can take place in this society as a divorcee (widow). Of course, there is a section of society that still condemns her, but also a section that accepts her... So this is also a factor that makes the decision of ending a marriage easier.

Several important observations and interpretations crystallize from the narrative above. One basic factor making opting for divorce possible for women is related to their economic power. According to Ipek, women's economic independence, together with loosening traditional values, are the main factors behind the increasing divorce rate. Ilhan has a different approach: He thinks that people have become more selfish and less tolerant. He also believes that people have unrealistic, high expectations that lead them to disappointments concerning marriage. Ilhan's evaluations have similarities to the points mentioned by several Norwegian interviewees and support the theses developed by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) concerning trends in intimate relations in the contours of reflexive modernity.

3.7 Summing up the Main Points

Themes that were articulated by the Turkish interviewees concerning changes in Turkish families can be grouped under three general headings:

Family ties are getting looser. Most of the interviewees claimed that there is a trend in Turkish society towards looser family ties. This is conceived as having both positive and negative consequences. The main reasons behind this change are specified as a combination of factors like urbanization, increasing levels of education, and mobility.

Families are getting more democratic. As a positive development, several interviewees claimed that families have become more "democratic". Women are more liberated compared to earlier times and fathers are less authoritative and dominating than before.

Families are getting smaller and child-centered. Especially urban, double-career families are having fewer children than the rest of society. There are many families with only one child. As a result, families are becoming more “child-centered.” Children now have more say inside families.

When asked about their thoughts concerning changes in families, most Norwegians mentioned that there have been both positive and negative trends and mainly referred to two major factors: The transition from the ‘housewife’ to the ‘working mother’ families and the increase in risks of divorce and break-ups.

While younger Norwegian couples were generally positive about the diminishing hegemony of marriage as the dominant form of living together, some older Norwegian informants appeared to be more skeptical concerning these developments. Some of the older Norwegian interviewees criticized the increases in the rate of divorce and the high numbers of couples who break-up, due to its harmful effects on children. Younger Norwegian interviewees displayed more tolerant attitudes, although they were also concerned with the high risk of break-up that relationships face.

Both Norwegian and Turkish interviewees mentioned that nowadays people have higher and unrealistic expectations concerning marriage and argued that this was a major factor behind increasing divorces.

In this chapter, evaluations and own experiences of the interviewees draw a general picture of the trends in family formations in the two countries. Let us now take a closer look at the internal dynamics of the interviewees’ own family practices by focusing on the ways they organize housework and child care as a first step.

Chapter 4 Housework and Child-Care Arrangements

“As reproductive work is concerned with the social and cultural reproduction of human beings, the actual doing of the work – who does it, when and where – is a crucial part of its meaning...it is an expression and reproduction of social relations, and in particular of relations between genders” (Anderson 2000: 14).

Couple relationships and family practices are complex and multifaceted. Different life-spheres put varied demands on individuals and modern life necessitates careful planning and organizing to allocate scarce time according to priorities. There is a lot of work that needs to be done inside the household.²¹ For example, human beings need to eat several times a day. Food is not only a physical necessity, but also a source of pleasure, togetherness, relaxation and joy. Cooking and eating at home often results in dishes that need to be washed and put back into their place. Both the spaces and equipment used in everyday life need cleaning and maintenance. This is necessary not only for obvious hygienic reasons but also for creating the sense of well-being that is vital for peace of mind. Clothing requires labor as well. Clothes need constant washing, drying, folding and ironing. We rely on having clean, decent outfits to participate with self-confidence in many arenas of life. These are just some of the major activities upon which our daily lives depend. These activities have not always been considered important in sociological analysis. For a long time, housework was ignored completely and it is still an invisible and undervalued activity.

One of the contributions of feminist scholarship has been documentation and analysis of the centrality of socially reproductive, unpaid work, done mainly by women inside the household. Ann Oakley's (1974) pioneering sociological study of housework was one of the first published works on this subject and has paved the way for many other studies and perspectives on these issues. The 1990s witnessed an increase in analyses of unpaid domestic labor using various types of data and focusing both on single countries and international comparisons. A basic finding of various cross-national studies on the gendered division of labor is that women still perform the bulk of household work across nations, although there is a decline in the gap between women's and men's household labor in recent years, especially in Scandinavian countries (e.g. Baxter 1997). Three main perspectives can be identified in the field of analysis of unpaid household work (Bittman et al. 2001). The first, and perhaps most widely discussed one, is the 'New

²¹ Most studies on 'household work' focus on both housework and childcare. In this chapter, I will analyze these two areas separately. The terms 'housework' or 'unpaid domestic labor' usually refer to all activities carried out inside the household, including child-care.

Home Economics' approach formulated originally by G. Becker (1991). In this framework, the relative efficiency of men and women at performing different tasks is emphasized and individuals are characterized as altruistic spouses who optimize their time usage relative to a single family utility function. Very briefly put, these conditions result in the rational arrangement that the person with the higher potential wage does more market work and less housework.

The second main perspective can be labeled the 'Bargaining Model,' which claims that the partner with higher earning power is able to bargain to do less household work: "Whereas in a Beckerian world, the family has a single utility function and cooperates to allocate each partner's time efficiently...in a bargaining world, partners are not entirely altruistic, and where they have conflict of interest, resources affect whose interests prevail" (Bittman et al. 2001: 6).

The third main perspective includes approaches to household labor that underscore the omnipresence of gender, both as beliefs and habits *internalized* within individuals and as constraints *external* to individuals. In this perspective, gender has pervasive effects at many levels, structuring identities, expectations, norms and institutions.

None of the perspectives above in isolation give satisfactory results in analyzing actual divisions of unpaid labor inside households. The gendered, institutional, economic and cultural aspects influencing arrangements for housework must be considered simultaneously. As the recent detailed study of Bittman et al. (2001) shows, efficiency, bargaining and gender all have a role in household dynamics, and gender overrides money in important ways: women's unpaid hours of work are minimized when spouses contribute approximately equal income, but 'gender trumps money' when women provide more income than their husbands. When women earn more than their husbands, the time they use on unpaid work increases, as if "trying to neutralize the deviance of husband's dependence" (ibid.: 35).

It is important to study both actual unpaid work arrangements and the levels of satisfaction and conflicts resulting from these divisions. Individuals are more complex than most economic theories presuppose: "Partners are not cultural dopes who are shackled to simplistic attitudes, but complex, often contradictory economic and social actors who seem, on the whole to be trying to make their relationships work," (Layte 1999: 166).

Household work is not only 'drudgery' either, since such work has important elements of love and caring (Ahlander and Bahr 1995). Division of unpaid work is important because it often influences spousal feelings of equity, fairness, love and caring. A certain level of satisfaction is necessary for the continuance of couple relationships. These aspects of the division of housework cannot be captured solely by time-use data. As Ahlander and Bahr (1995: 66) also suggest, methods that encourage close attention to lived experience and the meanings people give to their activities seem more appropriate to study the moral dimensions of family work.

In her path breaking study of couples' sharing of housework and childcare, American sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1990) relies on in-depth interviews and participant observation to analyze how women's 'second shift' at home influences the internal

dynamics of marriage. The term ‘second shift’ refers to the ‘leisure gap’ between men and women, since the major studies on time use show that most employed women work one shift at work and a ‘second shift’ at home. Hochschild’s analysis that considers both the economic and cultural factors influencing the divisions of tasks at home, and the specific gender ideologies of the individuals forming the couples, was a major source of inspiration for this study, which compares Turkish and Norwegian couples on similar issues.

4.1 Arrangements of Domestic Labor: General Practices

There are important ideological and institutional differences between Turkey and Norway concerning the organization of housework and care-work. These tasks are still considered to be mainly women’s responsibility and natural duty in Turkey. There is not a visible trend of questioning the gender inequalities in this area, even among the households in which both the man and the woman have paid work. Most dual-career Turkish couples solve the problem of organizing housework and childcare by relying heavily on paid help. In Norway, on the other hand, there has been a societal trend of questioning the unequal, gendered distribution of housework and an improvement in state-sponsored child-care services, especially evident in the 1990s. Moreover, there is a visible trend of questioning continuing inequalities in these areas. The ‘official ideology’ and the shared ideal is an equal division, even though the practices may deviate from the ideals.

In Turkish families, women have the main responsibility for housework. When Turkish women receive help with housework, it is mainly other women (their daughters, mothers or paid female helpers), not their husbands, who share their workload. Nationwide statistics show the extreme imbalance in performance of domestic tasks (See Table A5.3 in Appendix 5). In 67 per cent of the dual-earner households, the woman has the sole responsibility for cleaning. Only in 1 per cent of dual-earner households do husbands share this work. In 24 per cent of the households, the woman receives help from other family members (mainly daughters) and 8 per cent of the households rely on paid help.

For middle-class families with sufficient finances, hiring a ‘woman’²² for housework is an institutionalized arrangement. Women who have migrated from rural areas to big cities are the main providers for such services²³. Most middle-class women working full-time prefer to hire help, especially for cleaning but also for washing clothes, ironing and cooking. The availability of these relatively cheap services is an important factor behind the stubbornness of the traditional gender division of labor inside the household. Most husbands do not face any pressure to participate in housework, since if their wives do not have the time, there is always another woman who can do the work relatively cheaply. In

²² The domestic workers who clean the houses are called *kadin*, literally meaning ‘woman’ in Turkish and this practice is another signifier of the gendered aspects of this phenomenon.

²³ As the first examples of detailed studies on domestic workers in Turkey see Özyeğin (2001) and Kalaycıoğlu & Rittsberger-Tilic (2000).

a recent study on the global politics of domestic labor, Bridget Anderson (2000) points to the fact that there has been remarkably little problematizing of paid domestic labor, and states that it is this labor that enables middle-class women and men to avoid the conflicts of interest inherent in the gendered division of labor (Anderson 2000: 1).

In Norway, in the context of a strong “second wave” feminism, all traditional gender arrangements were questioned in society during the 1970s. However, many social researchers point to the fact that the division of labor inside the home has been exceptionally resistant to change in practice, even though equality in all areas has been accepted as an ideology (Wærness 1999, Brandth & Kvande 1998). The trend from the 1970s on has been a similar use of time on housework for women and men, though equality has not yet been achieved. In Norway, time-use surveys show that in the last decades women have slightly decreased the time they spend doing housework and markedly increased the time they spend in the labor market. Men, on the other hand, decreased slightly the time spend in wage-earning activities and increased slightly their share of household work, especially child care (Kitterød & Haraldsen 1992). In the two decades from 1970 to 1990, Norwegian men have increased their participation in household work by an average of 23 minutes per day and women have reduced their housework by an average of 1.5 hours (ibid. 70). Among childless couples, the husband’s time used in household work amounts to 70 per cent of the wife’s time, however this figure decreases to 50 per cent for couples with children (Wærness 1999: 213).

In light of these general trends, let us now turn to the stories of dual-career couples regarding time use for unpaid household work. A question in the interview guide was formulated to learn about the ways couples organize housework. I was mainly interested in cleaning, cooking, clothes-washing and shopping arrangements, since these activities need to be done often and take a great deal of time. See Appendix 5 for a tabular presentation of the ways interviewees organize housework and the relative importance of this issue for the particular couple.

The narratives provided by Turkish and Norwegian interviewees concerning housework differ markedly in terms of both quality and quantity. First of all, Norwegians had much more to tell on this topic. For most of them this has been a subject of debate, an area of negotiation, and a source of conflict. Most of the Norwegian interviewees presented the historical development of the pattern of work that their household manifests at present.

4.2 Sliding into Separate Domains

The dominant ideology is ‘equal sharing of housework’ among Norwegians, though practices vary greatly. The changes in this area are visible: men seem to have accepted the idea that housework is also their problem. None of the Norwegian couples that I interviewed practiced the traditional model assigning all housework to women and maintenance and repair to men. When interviewees stated that there was a gendered and unequal pattern in their division of housework, they felt the need to explain why. Most Norwegians said that a ‘natural’ pattern emerged after many years in which the man and

the woman took responsibility for certain areas. For several of them, this was the result of discussions and conflicts.

Most couples have settled on a model with which they say that they are satisfied. After trying different sharing arrangements, Camilla (31) and Cato (32) decided to solve the problem by bringing in paid cleaning help:

Camilla: Before we got the cleaning help, there were always discussions on when we should do it... I mean we agreed that both of us would do it, but not on when and how...I felt like I was going around and nagging all the time, so it was in fact to avoid those discussions that we brought in paid help.

Cato: Yes, it was smart to do that!

Camilla: Because, before that we always had discussions exactly on cleaning.

Having paid-help for cleaning is becoming more common among dual-career couples, even though it is still a minority who have it. Only 5 per cent of all women between the ages of 16 and 66 had paid help for cleaning in 1995 (Kitterød 1996). Among the eleven Norwegian couples I interviewed, only two had paid housework help. The younger couple above took that decision to avoid conflicts. The other couple, Bente (52) and Bjarne (57), who also use paid help for cleaning, see this as a practical solution, even though division of work has never been a theme for discussion:

How do you organize housework?

Bente: We do it in a very simple way (laughs). Every 14 days somebody comes here and cleans. And in the meantime we do very little, we cook, do the dishes, and tidy a little, but we don't clean the whole house...

Bjarne: We got married as adults so the arrangement of practical things has never been a theme. I mean it hasn't been something we sat down and discussed and made agreements on. It fell into place totally, well more or less totally naturally.

Bente: But if Bjarne has been of the old-school, and did not feel it was natural to do things around the house, then we would have had to make agreements I think! (laughs) I would not have it as my natural duty, if I felt that we couldn't share it.

All interviewees above the age of 45 reflected on changes that have taken place in this area, both in their own relationships and in society at large. Most women mentioned that it was them who took the initiative to achieve a more egalitarian division of housework. Elin (56) and Endre (59) now share equally, but Elin said she had to fight for that arrangement:

Endre: I think cleaning the house together is totally all right. It is so easy and we do it very fast, under 3 quarters of an hour!

Elin: But I had to fight for it a little. Endre: Yeah, you bet.

Elin: We had a struggle over this earlier. Endre: ...but now it works well.

Most older Norwegian respondents mentioned that there was an imbalance in the distribution of housework before, especially when they had small children. Inger (58) articulates her earlier dissatisfaction:

Inger: It was much worse when we had small children. I had a very big portion of the work and I was not especially satisfied with that.

Ingmar: We had household help in-between.

Inger: Yes, the first 4 years after I started working. After I finished my education I started working full time. It was then I had the first two children... Then we actually had household help and it was OK. But on the other hand, maybe it resulted in you not learning to do your share from the beginning, since there was another person who cleaned the house and cooked.

Even though Norwegian male interviewees seem to have accepted the idea that housework is also their responsibility, the main task of organizing and 'seeing' what needs to be done still falls mainly on women. Ingmar (61) acknowledges the differences in this area:

Ingmar: In practice it is Inger who uses more effort on housework. I've gotten maybe a little better lately, but not so much...

Inger: Yes, but you did get better, now you cook sometimes. You can cook now, you couldn't before...But we have more or less a clear division of work, where you vacuum the house every week and I clean the bathroom and tidy up. So in fact, we share cleaning quite well.

Ingmar: Yes, we have a more equal division of work that can be done quickly.

Inger: But it is still me who sees things, sees what must be done.

The issue of setting the standards for housework is often reported as a source of gendered conflict. Most couples had different views concerning what needs to be done and how often, and some women feel that they have higher standards than their partners. Standard-setting for housework is a common area of gender-conflict among most Norwegian couples and it is usually women who feel more responsible for 'making sure that the work gets done.' Nina (32) and Nils (36) had to negotiate on the standards:

Nils: Division of housework functions well, but of course there have been negotiations because as a point of departure, we have somewhat different views on what the standard should be. I mean, maybe I have more tolerance for messiness than her. So we must, in a way, find some standard which will satisfy both of us.

Nina: In terms of taking responsibility, I mean who will see what needs to be done, I feel that I have more responsibility for making sure that things get done. And I automatically associate this with gender.

While, Nina chose the task of actively trying to change Nils' standards, Camilla and Cato decided to get paid-help to solve the conflict over differing standards.

In general, most Norwegian couples settled on a plan in which the woman and the man do different things. 'Sharing everything equally' is an ideal which has been hard to realize in practice. Some of the interviewees reflected on the fact that even though their point of departure has been to be non-traditional, they sometimes end up with a quite conventional situation. Magne (37) claimed that he and his wife are good at different things and the 'mutual demand for precision' leads them to take primary responsibility for the things at which they are better:

Magne: I thought about this, that we have glided into relatively traditional gender roles and wondered why that is so. I think it has something to do with the demand for precision from both sides...I am very careless with the clothes for example, and therefore I took tasks for which I felt a need for more accuracy, like maintenance.

Several Norwegian interviewees used terms like 'sliding away from' sharing and 'gliding into' a more traditional pattern while explaining their division of housework. Jorunn (35) is satisfied with their sharing arrangement, though she sees a gendered pattern in terms of 'heavier' and 'lighter' work:

Jorunn: In our house, we share most of the chores, even though maybe there is a tendency to fall into doing "boys" and "girls" things, depending on how heavy the work is. For example it is Jarle who changes the tires on the car and such things, so he does the heavier work. But inside the house, when it comes to sharing cooking and vacuuming, we do that quite well.

For Grete (33) and Geir (32), his long working hours have been the main reason for 'gliding out of' the sharing pattern:

Grete: We started with a type of sharing. In the beginning Geir made dinner and I did the clothes, but after a while we glided totally out of it. But it is mainly because he works so much that he doesn't come home before dinner is over, so it is me who does the cooking as well.

Geir has a job in upper management with long working hours. It is interesting that Grete accepts this as a legitimate reason for not sharing even though she also has a demanding career. Their slightly traditional gender ideology is a factor in understanding this phenomenon. Grete is the only Norwegian woman who uses her husband's demanding work as a legitimate excuse for his non-sharing. This is however more common among Turkish interviewees.

4.3 Devaluing Housework and Delegating it to another 'Woman'

In general, Turkish interviewees had less to discuss concerning housework. This is not an area that has much daily significance as a topic of discourse. Both men and women take it for granted that they pay another woman to take care of the cleaning. The work that is left, namely cooking, shopping, washing clothes, ironing, etc. is in most of the cases the women's responsibility, though there are exceptions. Some men 'help,' especially in the kitchen, and some couples get paid help for that task as well. "Who will do the housework, when and how?" has not been a topic of negotiation for Turkish interviewees the way it has been for Norwegians. Turkish women have lower expectations of sharing compared to Norwegian women, and they appreciate a 'helping' husband, since they define housework as their own responsibility.

Several male interviewees clearly stated that housework is not their area of interest and admitted their lack of responsibility. Figen (33) and Faruk (34) practice the traditional model:

How do you organize housework?

Faruk: It is not me who organizes! (laughs)

Figen: We had a woman who came for cleaning once a week. But now I started working again, so she will come maybe twice a week or we will find another solution. I mean I won't touch housework from now on, I hope. (What about shopping?)

Figen: Sometimes we do shopping together, sometimes alone. It depends on who has work to do and who has the car.

Faruk: I don't enjoy shopping that much. I mean, it gets too stressful, I don't want to spend weekends with that. And also my work tempo is quite different. For example now, I have to travel to (*another city*) stay for 4 days, and return, and I have to do this for the next 3 months. So, since I stay here only for a few days, I don't want to spend my time shopping or the like at all.

Housework is only Figen's concern, and what is more it is devalued by both. Figen is looking forward to leaving all housework to another woman.

Cemil (35) is a high-level manager and he explicitly displayed a lack of interest in this question, which took the form of interrupting his wife when she was talking about housework:

Ceyda: For cleaning, there is a woman who comes twice a week. Apart from that, we do daily tidying together. But it seems like cooking, washing dishes and clothes, these tasks fall more on me. And we do the shopping on Sundays, because it is not possible in weekdays, I mean when we both work very hard and come at home around 8...(Her husband interrupts)

Cemil: A cleaner comes twice a week, and there is a daily sitter for the kid. That's it.

This behavior may be interpreted as a sign of hostility towards a problematization of the unbalanced division of housework that clearly benefits the man, as well as an undervaluation of the topic.

Ipek (35) is a mother of a 3 year-old baby who apparently shoulders the whole 'second shift' at home. She used the interview as a chance to remind her husband the unfairness of this situation:

How do you organize housework?

Ipek: I am leaving this subject to my husband, he will explain it better! (*laughs*)

Ilhan: I do the man's work, and she does the rest. This is just a joke but...

Ipek: Now you can ask him "what is the man's work?"

Ilhan: It can be changing the bulbs, small repairs, but apart from that I help.

Ipek: Let me say it this way: First of all in our relationship, I will say it frankly, Ilhan said it a little indirectly, but in our relationship we have a typical traditional male-female model. What is that model? The whole responsibility for the house rests on the woman, maintenance and continuation. But in the traditional model shopping belongs to the man, yet in our model everything works somewhat to the contrary, because the woman also does the shopping. The woman does the housework, the woman does the shopping (*laughs*) and at the same time the woman provides finances for the home, as much as the man. (*To her husband*) Do you have any objection?

Ilhan represents the type of man whose deeds do not match their words concerning gender equality. During the interview he claimed that he has egalitarian ideas concerning gender arrangements, yet he seemed comfortable letting his wife do all the domestic work.

In some of the couples, Turkish men stated that they 'help,' and some women also mentioned this in an appreciative manner. Turkish women's conception of 'sharing' is extremely modest: they expect less and get satisfied by a minimum amount of help from their husbands. Some of them talk about the housework as 'theirs,' just like the housewives that Ann Oakley interviewed almost three decades ago (Oakley 1974: 159). Change is painfully slow concerning gendered divisions of housework even for the dual-earner couples who have egalitarian ideals and expectations.

Oya (52), who is an ambitious, career-oriented woman, relies on 'her' helper for housework and is satisfied with her husband's symbolic contributions:

I have a household-helper. She comes three times a week. I undertake the work of shopping and cooking. Apart from that, in my daily work, my husband helps

me. I mean, he makes the salad, makes the tea, he can serve tea for the guests. So, yes, we have a type of sharing.

Due to the non-existence of societal references on this issue, working Turkish women have very low expectations of sharing and demanding 'help.' Only when they get too exhausted is asking for help deemed justified. Sevim (44) realized in the course of her account that what they practice cannot really be called 'sharing.' This was a moment in which she seemed to dissolve the 'family myth' (Hochschild 1990):

Sevim: In general, we share. But when I say that we share, I mean that Sedat helps me in some matters. For example, if I will have a large group of guests, he sets the table. Or we do the shopping together. Sometimes, if I am very tired, he goes and does the shopping himself. But he does not interfere with anything else. I mean, there is a lot of work at home, like washing clothes, ironing and the like. Of course, he does not do any of these...Sometimes, when I get very exhausted, I tell him to do something and then he does. But it is not as if it is his duty or a real division of labor. So we do not really share in that way.

Some husbands state that they 'help' if their wife tells them to do so. Some men appear to be particularly skillful in playing helpless, especially when it comes to sorting the clothes:

Utku (43): I participate in the housework in-between, so the things I do are not very fixed. For example, I put the dishes into the dishwasher after dinner...or I can put the clothes into the washing machine. If Umut tells me to do so, then I do it. Because otherwise I don't know if the machine is full or if it is the white clothes that are to be washed or what.

Some of the male interviewees stressed that they can do most of the housework if it is necessary, but they also add that their behavior deviates from what the 'standard Turkish man' does. Adnan (59) is proud of his contribution to housework but carefully mentioned that his is not a typical example:

Adnan: We do almost everything together, more or less. When my wife works, if cleaning, cooking, or shopping needs to be done, I can do that...When my wife went to graduate school, I had to take care of the children, prepare their food and so on...But this was our idea. 90 per cent of Turkish men cannot manage, or do not help, so let me add that. Most men go directly to the city club or something like that after work, spend time there; they don't care for their children; they don't think of that as important...so our situation does not reflect that of Turkish men in general. Most Turkish men do not bother about housework or childcare, whether their wives work or not. The majority of men do not help.

For those who do not help, long working hours or more demanding jobs were the most common and legitimate excuses, and often went unquestioned. Dilek (42) claims that her

husband, Devrim, is not a standard Turkish man even though he does not 'help' in housework:

How do you organize housework?

Dilek: Look, this is interesting. Devrim is in fact not a standard Turkish man. But our work rhythm has been such that, throughout our working lives, I have been the one who had a little more spare time... He always had longer hours than me, therefore he could not help. But I cannot say he never helped, because that is not his character, his type. I believe that, if he had a job like mine, if we both came home at 6, he would share, that's what I believe. But he can tell you himself.

Devrim: Yes, that's right.

Even though women get some help from their husband in certain practical tasks, the main responsibility of 'organizing' is women's work. According to Umut (39) that is actually what takes most energy. She provides a rich account of the daily organization work she carries out:

I think the most difficult part of the work at home, which is not always stated openly, is its organization. I mean you might lose your mind with this! Who needs what? What will be done when? When will the babysitter come? What do I have to tell her? What will I cook today? What do I need to buy to cook that meal? I mean, you do the work but apart from that, organizing the work also demands a lot of brain-power.

Five out of sixteen Turkish couples that were interviewed claimed that they have an egalitarian approach to dividing housework. Those couples also get paid help, but share the remaining workload in different ways.

Levent: Such work is not organized at our home; whoever does it is stuck with it. But we do it equally. (Leyla: Yes.) More or less. I mean everybody can do housework. Apart from ironing, I cannot do ironing.

Leyla: Yes, apart from ironing, and I don't do ironing! (*laughs*).

In contrast to Norwegian couples, the present division of work has been more or less a result of 'natural' preferences, not deliberate negotiations. Tolga (40) was quick to say that he takes full responsibility for the kitchen:

How do you organize housework?

Tolga: I have the kitchen!

Tulin: I don't think we so much say, 'these tasks are yours, these are mine.' But of course, there are tasks which have been defined after so many years. So, yes, the kitchen is his, clothes, etc. are mine. Apart from that, the woman comes

and cleans anyway! (laughs) I mean, there is not much left. The only thing I see as a nightmare is cooking orderly everyday, and Tolga does that.

Emre, a 37 year-old man who has egalitarian attitudes and who has been sharing the housework explains the societal factors leading to patterns of inequality:

Doing housework is something very disturbing for men in Turkey. They see it as a woman's work and the system is suitable for that...and the women also see it as their normal work, as their destiny in a way, because they have been socialized that way in their families...I know of families in which both the man and the woman work, for example the woman works at the bank, comes home at 7 o'clock in the evening, makes the dinner, feeds her child, looks at her child's home-work, washes the dishes, puts the child to bed ...and while the woman is in the kitchen the man watches TV and reads the paper .

Emre participates actively in housework and childcare and has mentioned that he has received negative reactions from the neighbors regarding his 'unmanly' behavior. This exemplifies the ways 'hegemonic masculinity' is constructed by subordinating different masculinities (Connell 1987). Housework is actively constructed as 'women's work' and sustained as such by questioning the masculinity of men doing it.

The interview accounts make it clear that modernization, higher education and professional employment have not led to a radical transformation of traditional attitudes concerning sharing of housework among dual-career Turkish couples. Some couples do practice a relatively egalitarian pattern of organizing housework; however in most cases this is a result of personal egalitarian gender ideologies rather than conscious struggles and negotiations. The widespread use of paid household help eases the burden of women's 'second shift' and renders housework less visible and significant.

4.4 Main Differences and Similarities

The major difference between the Turkish and Norwegian groups is that *all* of the Turkish respondents have paid cleaning help, though the amount of time for which they hire such help varies. The rest of the housework has a clearer gender imbalance: it is mainly women's responsibility. There are exceptions to the rule, but the general picture that emerges is still highly gendered. Another main difference is the fact that there was a more visible tendency among Turkish interviewees to take the gendered division of housework for granted. Both women and men tended to underplay the inequalities and conflicts in this area. Norwegian interviewees, on the other hand, strived to explain and justify inequalities. Norwegian society provides a context in which general egalitarian attitudes and relatively strong women's rights and equality movements provide a framework for discussing and negotiating these issues. Housework is more visible and political in Norway, and Norwegian interviewees had higher expectations concerning equality. Even though some of them argued that they had 'slid into a traditional pattern,'

of sharing housework, what they conceived of as “traditional” would be considered quite radical in the Turkish context.

Income levels of the women and men do not seem to have a significant influence on the ways interviewees arrange housework. Interestingly, the two Turkish men who were actively sharing the housework were earning less than their wives.

In terms of differences between older and younger couples, the two groups again differed: older Norwegian couples provided detailed and informative stories on how societal expectations and standards concerning the divisions of housework have changed from 1970s onwards, and they evaluated their own practices in this historical perspective. The practices of younger and older Turkish couples, on the other hand, were not significantly different, mirroring the nonexistence of this topic on the societal agenda. The availability and pervasive use of relatively inexpensive household help prevents gendered conflicts in this area.

Given these basic differences, there are also certain similarities between the two groups: though there have been developments towards more equal sharing of housework in Norway, general organization and standard-setting is still mostly women’s work, as in Turkey. Another similar tendency among those who struggle for a type of sharing is the strategy of defining separate domains of responsibility for the woman and the man, instead of trying to divide all work equally. Let us now hear the story of Lise and Lars on how they ended up in practicing this model.

4.5 Case B: Lise and Lars: Gendered Sharing of Housework

Lise and Lars are both 36 years old. They have been married for 10 years and have two children. The interview with them has been one of the longest and they had many interesting stories concerning both their own family practices and their evaluations of gendered patterns in society at large. Lars is actively involved in care of their children and Lise mentioned several times how lucky they are to have a support network concerning childcare. They have both relatives and neighbors who help them with child care when necessary. Both Lise and Lars underlined several times that they like their jobs but ‘family comes first’.

Lise and Lars have provided a detailed historical account of the emergence of a pattern of sharing in time. I conceive their story as reflecting the typical Norwegian pattern: believing in the importance of equal sharing, disagreeing on standards and settling down with defining separate domains of responsibility, based on personal preference and skills. In the final analysis, both are satisfied but Lise sees a gendered pattern in this and feels greater responsibility for household standards:

Lise: Once upon a time we had many discussions. We would make work-division lists and we sat down and made a list of all the tasks which had to be done and then we distributed them. We had to even agree on a time when we should do certain things, because it irritated me. For example small stuff like how long dirty pans should stay in the kitchen had annoyed me! (*laughs*) We’ve given that up now. But we share in a customary way. Lars has the responsibility

for the car while I don't and if something is broken it is he who fixes it. The only exception is that he is also best in ironing!

Lars: I feel like we share the tasks quite equally. After many years it has fallen into this pattern. Lise does not like vacuuming, so it is mostly me who does it, and I also wash the windows. It is Lise who washes the clothes.

Lise: And I have the kitchen, at least tidying it.

Lars: Yes, because we are a little different on that. Even though I tell her 'you can go to bed, I will tidy it later' she says 'no, I want it done now!'.

Lise: I cannot relax otherwise. I mean, I cannot sit down and relax when everything is in flux. I must have a minimum level of order in things. And also I feel a greater responsibility for seeing that things get done. For example, if somebody comes to visit us and it is not tidy around, I feel like it is my responsibility. Even though it shouldn't be like that, that is how I feel.

Lars: Yes, obviously you feel a bigger responsibility for the housework than I do. Maybe therefore, things fell in that pattern. But generally, there is some inequality only in shopping for food and cooking, other things we share.

Lise: And you have the 'man's work', with reparation and painting, while I do the small tidying.(...) I think when everything gets to be too much Lars can let things go more than I can...I mean you share equally, but there is a gender-role pattern there all the same! I just can't sit down and relax when things are waiting to be done around me; I just get restless.

Lise and Lars have disagreements concerning standards for housework, yet they feel satisfied with the present model they have. Lars has the responsibility for paying the bills and for the typical 'man's work' like painting and maintenance. Lise regrets that she is not better at practical reparation tasks because she wants to be a good example for her children and does not want to socialize them into a gendered pattern. Lars had an interesting comment on one disadvantage of doing 'man's work' which reflects a significant change that took place for some of the Norwegian fathers:

Lars: I think we are sharing quite well. But there is one thing that annoys me at times. For example when I have to paint the house, I have to use the week-ends and evenings, and then I cannot spend any time with the kids and that really makes me crabby. I feel like it is unfair that she can be with the kids all the time, when I have to go out and do this work!

This focus on the importance of time spent with children was an emerging characteristic of most younger Norwegian fathers. Let us now take a closer look at the ways Turkish and Norwegian couples organize childcare.

4.6 Organization of Childcare

One of the main problems dual-earner couples with children face is finding high-quality, reliable and affordable childcare services. Lack or scarcity of good childcare arrangements is a factor forcing mothers out of the labor market, at least until the child approaches school age. Depending on their specific family policy models, different countries have distinct arrangements concerning public childcare. Due to the prevalence of a 'familialistic' policy logic problems related to the care of children are not defined as public issues in Turkey. Having a child is seen as one of the most personal aspects of life, and individual couples are supposed to arrange childcare either by receiving support from close family or relying on private alternatives. Ideological factors are at play here. Defining motherhood as women's most sacred duty is prevalent, and women prioritizing home and children are idealized (Koray 1998). A complex combination of ideological, cultural and economic factors play a part in defining childcare as a private issue, contributing to a lack of public policies and public debates.

In Turkey, policies designed for working parents are limited. For example, maternity leave periods are short. Mothers that are employed in the public sector are entitled to a leave of absence 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after birth. They may take up to 6 months of unpaid leave. As a result of the strength of the ideology which assumes that care for young children should be carried out in families (i.e. by women), publicly financed daycare centers are few in number and have low standards. Existing private centers are not affordable for even most middle-class families. Full time home-care is cheaper and therefore preferred, especially for children under 3. Most dual-earner families use private arrangements like paid household help and private childcare centers, or they receive help from grandparents and other relatives.

Compared to Turkey, childcare services are comprehensive and highly institutionalized in Norway. Costs of the child care services are shared between the state, the municipality and the parents. Percentage of children in the age group 1-5, attending to a state-subsidized daycare center has increased from 19.3 in 1980 to 61.1 in 1999 (Statistics Norway).

In the last decade policies directed at dual-earner families have stressed the importance of enabling *both* parents to combine employment and parenthood. Motherhood and fatherhood have been 'politicized' (Ellingsæter 1999). The sharing of care work became the key issue in the 1990s. The most important reforms have been those that allow women to combine motherhood and employment and encourage fathers to take greater responsibility in caring for their children. Parental leaves of absence have gradually been increased.²⁴ An important (though not sufficient) aspect of institutionalized family policies in Norway has been the increase in the supply of state-subsidized daycare centers for children (*barnehage*) in the last decade. Norway has been a late-comer among the Scandinavian countries concerning the development of family policies (Wærness 1998). Since 1970s there has been a gap between the supply of and

²⁴ Family policies in Norway will be analyzed in detail in Chapter 6.

demand for daycare in Norway, though this gap has been constantly decreasing since the late 1980s. There is general agreement in this society that attending daycare is beneficial for children over the age of three: “access to high-quality, state-sponsored daycare for children over 3 years of age has come to be regarded as educationally advantageous and as contributing to children’s equality of opportunity” (Knudsen & Wærness 2001: 70). This issue has been more controversial, however, for younger children. Let us now proceed from this general introduction to the childcare arrangements prevalent in Turkey and Norway to an analysis of the practices and evaluations of interviewees. There are divergences between the Turkish and Norwegian groups concerning the ways they organize (or have organized) care for their pre-school children. There are also significant differences between the younger and older couples in both countries.

4.6.1 Norwegian Interviewees and Ways of Organizing Childcare

Most younger Norwegian interviewees stated that they have preferred to send them to public daycare, if available, immediately after the 1 year parental leave of absence. One important difference between the Norwegians who had small children in the 1970s and those who had them in the late 1990s is the length of leaves of absence and the availability of daycare (See Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Prevalent Childcare Arrangements of Norwegian Couples in Two Different Decades

1970s	1990s
Shorter maternity leave: 3 months	Longer parental leave: 12 months
Only the mother taking parental leave	More fathers sharing parental leave to varying degrees
More use of private full-time caretakers at home	Preference for state-subsidized daycare centers (<i>barnehage</i>) vis-à-vis cash for care or private caretakers.
More limited places in state-subsidized daycare centers	

Both prevailing ideologies and existing services have changed in the last three decades. In the 1970s, the husband’s career often had priority. Furthermore, it was not taken-for-granted in society, as it is today, that mothers would continue employment after having children.

In early 1990s, parental leave was lengthened and the 1-month quota for fathers was introduced. These policy changes went hand-in-hand with attitudinal changes concerning appropriate arrangements for the care of pre-school children. Support for the idea that both mothers and fathers should be active in childcare, and have the opportunity of combining employment with parenthood, increased (Knudsen and Wærness 1996).

These differences were reflected in the accounts of both younger and older Norwegian interviewees. Most female interviewees who had small children in the 1970s mentioned the difficulties they faced when they attempted to combine full-time work with motherhood.

All the Norwegian interviewees who had small children in the 1970s had full-time private home-care at various times, since public daycare centers were very limited. Inger (58) was the mother of three small children in the 1970s, and she combined several strategies in arranging for childcare. She stopped working for a short while, then had a private caretaker at home, and finally, when the child reached the age of 5, they got a place in state-subsidized daycare:

In those times, it was very difficult to get a place in daycare...so they had a place in daycare maybe only for a couple of years.

Elin (56) explained how she “assumed” that she would be a housewife after having a child and how this resulted in serious conflicts:

We were married for 4 years and then we had our first child. I had the idea that I should stay home, because that was what my mother did...at the same time, I am not fit as a stay-at-home mother. I became more and more crabby, more and more difficult to get along with. I had not finished with my studies at the university either; I had 1 year left to get my degree. In the end, our relationship got worse. I was not satisfied. When Endre (her husband) came home, I demanded that he tell about his whole day, and I complained and nagged that I hadn't been out to meet people. In the end, he said ‘enough is enough! You should get out of the house again.’ So, I left the stay-at-home mother role, the housewife role, and all that and started studying again. We found a babysitter (...) I completed my studies and then started working. And since then I've worked full-time, and everything has gotten better.

The younger Norwegian mothers did not assume that they would stay at home after having children. All returned to work after the legal leave of absence period. Some of them were eager to start working full-time again. Grete (33) said that it felt very good to start working after one year at home:

It was delightful being at home, but in the last months of my leave I started looking forward to working again. It was very nice to start working again.

The satisfaction concerning the length of leave depends on several factors. Most parents feel good about going back to work full-time if they find high-quality childcare. Another important factor is the type of occupation. Jorunn (35) explained that it was hard for her to start working again due to her job's specific characteristics:

When I started working again, it was hard to motivate myself because I have the kind of job in which many people depend on your contribution...on your physical availability. That can be tough from time to time...I like working...but right now I could imagine spending more time with Jens (*her child*).

Younger fathers are more actively involved in childcare than were older interviewees when they had small children. With one exception, all younger fathers took leaves of absence (of varying lengths) to care for their newborn children. The only young father

who did not take an official leave was the one who had a high-level managerial position in the private sector.

The way some fathers talked about childcare arrangements showed that they conceive of themselves as highly responsible for the care of their children. Arne (33) took the longest period of paternal leave to care for his children. He used 3 months of the 1-year leave period:

Arne: Now he has started daycare. He started when he was 1 year old. During the first year, Ann had the leave for the first 9 months and then I took leave for 3 months.

Ann: So we had eighty per cent of the salary.

(later in the interview) Arne: It was very good to be at home those three months. But I think it also is related to the fact that you know you will be back at work after a while.

The changes in actual practices and expectations related to fathers' involvement in childcare became clear in interviews. Henrik, a fifty year-old father of two explained how he 'got away easily' in the 1970s:

It was sure easier for me, since Hilde took most of the responsibility when the kids were small...At that time *(in the 1970s)* it was my education, my career, which was defined as the first priority. I had first choice in a way...so I got away easily that time.

The interview accounts signal a change concerning Norwegian fathers' involvement in childcare and an appreciation of the policies that help couples to combine employment with their parenthood obligations²⁵. How do Turkish couples arrange for care of their children given the absence of such policies?

4.6.2 Childcare Arrangements of Turkish Couples

There is greater variation in the Turkish group in terms of how childcare is organized. Most couples rely on a combination of arrangements, while the dominant solution for those who can afford it is having a full-time, private caretaker (See Table 4.2). Economic factors are more determinant in Turkey. Female interviewees who have lower paying jobs with little flexibility were forced to stop working for a while after giving birth. This was especially common in 1970s. Conversely, women who are more career-oriented and who have high salaries returned to work relatively quickly. These couples have the means to afford full-time caretakers.

Table 4.2 Prevalent Childcare Arrangements of Turkish Couples in Two Different Decades

²⁵ Norwegian interviewees' evaluations of state childcare policies will be analyzed in detail in Chapter 6.

1970s	1990s
Longer withdrawal from the labor market for mothers	Competitive labor market pressuring mothers with demanding careers to return to employment after a relatively short maternal leave
Scarcity of private daycare centers	Increasing number of private, expensive daycare centers Preference for full-time paid home-care

The length of maternity leave or withdrawal from the labor market depends on a woman's career orientation and the relative significance of her income in the family budget. At the time of these interviews, the average amount of money that a caretaker received monthly was almost equal to the salary of a teacher working in the public schools. It would have been impossible for a couple to afford this if they both worked in the public sector. In the last decade, there has been an improvement in the availability of private daycare centers for children, though with considerably high prices. Accordingly, only couples with relatively high incomes can afford private daycare centers.

Interviewees who had small children in the 1970s argued that it was even harder than today to combine motherhood and employment. Berna, a fifty-one-year-old woman who had two children in the 1970s explained the difficulties they faced:

We had hard days when we were raising children...we did not have the family nearby to support us. My husband and I raised them on our own. We lived in (*a smaller city*) and there were no daycare centers there. Now I see what a nice education they give to my nephew at the daycare where he goes...The babysitter we had was just like a guard; she only watched them...They were not tolerant at the workplace either. The directors were very rigid. They would make a hell of a fuss if you were 5 minutes late to work...so if the babysitter was late, Bora had to call his office to say he would be late and he would wait at home. And of course I would be preoccupied with it at work: 'did she come or not?' So we had many problems.

Dilek (41) stopped working for 3 years after giving birth. She explained that this was not a necessity but a choice:

After Demet (*her daughter*) was born, I stopped working for three years because I thought that it was necessary to enjoy the child. We did not have much money, and we had problems making ends meet, but I felt it would be so meaningless to make my mother take care of this child. If you are going to do that, you shouldn't have one. What is the meaning of having a child if you cannot experience it? So I quit my work for three years.

It was mainly mothers who took long breaks from employment to care for children. A few of them received active help from their husbands. Those fathers who had flexible work-hours, especially, were more involved in caring for their newborns. Emre (37) explained how he took care of their son while his wife Elif (37) worked long hours:

At that period, I did not need to work continuously. I could choose my working hours. So I took care of him more intensively than his mother did. I took over the whole duty...but after that period, we had to find a babysitter. My mother also came to care for the baby.

Fathers taking over of childcare by taking leaves of absence from work is not a common practice. One father did this, but the couple explained that this happened as a result of economic necessity. It was not designed to achieve equal parenting:

Tulin: After birth, I was at home for 3 months. After that we started looking for somebody to care for him, but we couldn't. At that time, my salary was higher than Tolga's. So he stopped working and I started again. I was able to arrange my work hours around nursing. We found a babysitter when he was 6 month old. Of course it is not easy to leave him with the babysitter, so Tolga was at home with them for an additional month. After that he also started working.

For several couples who have close family living in the same city, the active involvement of grandmothers has been an important form of support. It is common to test different solutions and to settle on a combination of different types of care-giving arrangements. Sevim (44) explained the arrangements they tried for the care of their daughter:

When she was small, my mother made an important contribution. At the same time, we tried babysitters and daycare centers...In fact we tried everything possible. First we had a babysitter, but it did not work. Then my mother started coming. When (our daughter) grew up a little, she started at a daycare center. But of course, she went to my mother's house after daycare since she got off early.

'Trying all possible ways' is a common practice among dual-earner couples for finding the optimal childcare solution. Many interviewees mentioned that they had to shift caretakers several times due to different problems, ranging from disagreements on payment to caretakers' treatment of children.²⁶ Ipek (35) argued that it was easy to find a babysitter, but also very easy to lose one:

Babysitters can be found easily, but also lost easily, because you can never be really happy with one...Especially in families like ours, with only one child and a child who was had at a late age, the babysitter knows the importance of this child and does a good job using this knowledge to blackmail you, saying 'I can do housework, but then my time to care for your child will be less, or I will only take care of your child and she will be happy'...so you say 'all right' even though they leave the house dirty.

Despite these issues, having private caretakers was the most widespread arrangement among Turkish interviewees who had children under school age. For the Norwegian

²⁶ Caretakers are found either through professional agencies that charge a high commission, or through informal networks. Women who do not have formal education can become caretakers.

parents, on the other hand, state-subsidized daycare centers were the most common solution.

There are important differences between the two groups in terms of childcare arrangements. The most significant factor is the lack of public policies concerning childcare in Turkey. Public daycare centers are very few in number and the paid maternity leave period is short. In Norway, parents have the benefit of one of the most generous parental leave schemes in the world. The availability of state-subsidized daycare centers has increased in the last decade, though there is still a gap between supply and demand. Another major difference is fathers' active involvement in childcare. Young Norwegian fathers use their right to a month's leave of absence from work, and this gives them the opportunity to be involved in the care of their children from an early age. A last significant difference between Turkish and Norwegian interviewees is the availability of grandmothers to help with childcare. In the Turkish group, grandmothers were active caretakers. Norwegians reported that this was not possible, mainly due to the fact that either their parents were also still in full-time employment or they were living in another city.

In this chapter we have analyzed the myriad ways dual-career couples organize housework and care work that is so essential for healthy continuance of their lives. We have seen that arrangements for the domestic work has key gendered aspects and nation-specific characteristics. Now let us turn to the ways these couples reconcile their family and work lives.

Chapter 5 Balancing Work and Family Lives

“Anyone who would talk about the family must also discuss work and money, and anyone who would talk about marriage must also talk about training, professions and mobility, and specifically about *unequal* distributions despite by now (largely) *equal* educational prerequisites” (Beck 1992: 103).

This study is about the practices, problems and balancing acts of families in which both the woman and the man work outside the home. Why is this a significant issue in the new millennium? For modern, urban individuals, work is becoming more and more a source of self-realization and satisfaction, rather than only a means of earning money (Hochschild 1997). Work, especially when defined as a ‘career,’ becomes an important source of identity and a key element in life-planning. Family relationships are also furnished with new, higher expectations and demands in late-modern times (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). One of the basic contradictions in late-modernity is that work outside the home is organized differently than work inside the home: market forces apply outside, while at home unpaid work is taken for granted. Individual competitiveness and mobility, encouraged by the job market, run up against the opposite expectations of the home, where one is expected to sacrifice one’s own interests for the collective project called family (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995: 26). The demands of these two spheres often clash, given the limitations of time and energy available to individuals. The problems are aggravated when there are two careers being pursued, and especially when there are children in the picture who need constant time and care. A major factor creating these conflicts is the organizational logic of the labor market, which often conceptualizes workers as ‘free’ individuals and ignores their family and care responsibilities: “Jobs in all advanced industrial countries are structured for individuals, not for family members. Thus, parents are hampered by employment policies and practices, as well as by cultural norms, that engender competition between work and family roles” (Moen 1989: 5).

Women’s move into the labor force in steadily increasing proportions in the last couple of decades has been a ‘social revolution’ leading to important changes in the ways family practices are organized. Unpaid housework and care work, previously done by housewives, must now be done by others or shared by husbands. However, many studies point to a ‘stalled revolution’: women have gone to work, but the workplace, the culture, and most of all, the men, have not adjusted themselves to this new reality (Hochschild 1989, Shelton 1992).

The findings of my prior study made visible the centrality of these issues in the lives of young and highly educated Turkish and Norwegian women (Sümer 1998, 2001). Their

reflections concerning the difficulties of combining family and work were based on their own observations of the practices of people around them, since none of them were yet mothers. However, they all thought they would face problems if they were to combine motherhood and full-time employment in the future. These stories of troubling expectations made me wonder how men with similar backgrounds would talk about the phenomenon of ‘clashing demands.’ Would they see any problems related to combining fatherhood and employment?

5.1 Clashes of Work and Family Demands for the Norwegian Interviewees

There is variation among Norwegian interviewees due to life-phase differences. The clashes of contradictory demands of work and family are felt more severely when there are small children to raise. Younger Norwegian interviewees provided lengthy accounts of their problems and older ones reflected on their experiences of having small children and working full-time in earlier phases of their lives. The main problems most Norwegian interviewees mentioned concerning the effects of work on family life are related to time-pressures. Parents with small children feel a ‘squeeze’ between the demands of work and their families, and at times feel like their whole lives are steered by the clock. Lise (36), mother of two children aged 5 and 7, explains the time pressures she experiences in her daily life:

Sometimes I feel like everything is a big rush...Delays and deadlines start in the morning: you have to be at work at 8:30 and there are many things that need to be done before that – finding clothes for the kids, preparing breakfast, making lunch-boxes – really a lot of organization. Then you come to work and face many deadlines there: “Did you finish that report?” “Yeah, I am trying to...” and then before you know it, it is close to 3. There is someone in your office, willing to discuss an important issue, but you start checking your watch. Then you rush to pick up the kids and they say “Mamma, you should have been here at 3!” and you see that it is already 3:30. So there are a lot of moments of stress concerning time, and in between it feels like a great rush...I feel like the watch is steering my life. Sometimes I feel like it is a train driving at full speed and I am just hanging on... I do not have any control anymore!

Lise’s is a typical story of time pressures that most parents of small children report. She is actually one of the luckier ones, since her husband Lars (36) is almost equally involved in childcare. They also have a family-network that can step in and help with childcare when necessary.

Contemporary working mothers have to deal with difficult balancing acts, but their conditions are more favorable compared to the difficulties faced by mothers in the 1970s. At that time, the husband’s career was usually given first priority, places in state subsidized daycare centers for children under school age were very limited, and the social environment was more infused with traditional attitudes concerning working mothers

which assumed that children would suffer if their mother worked (Knudsen and Wærness 1999).

Bente, a 52 year old Norwegian woman explained how she felt that her career proceeded at the expense of her children in the 1970s:

Did you ever feel that your work influences your family life negatively?

Yes, I actually did, when I had small children. I had a very busy job but I felt I should try not to let it influence the family, that I should try to manage everything at home at the same time. Sometimes one gets so tired that one cannot manage it anymore, and that happened to me now and then. But the times that my conscience bothered me the most were the times when I traveled in connection to work. Then I always felt terrible about my children. So my experience was that the work went on at the expense of my family.

There is an interesting pattern concerning the career developments of older Norwegian interviewees. Most of them received additional education after their children grew up. In that way, they could shift to better paying, more challenging and prestigious jobs. Inger (58) who took higher education after her three children grew up and moved out, told about the expectations that prevailed in Norwegian society in 1960s and 1970s:

In my generation, it was unthinkable for women to invest too much in education. When I first started high school, it was the highest education I could consider...This is one of the reasons that there are not so many women in high-level jobs now, because we were trained to think that you should have a job that you can combine with having children. And being ambitious was not seen as positive.

In Norwegian society definitions of good motherhood and good fatherhood have changed radically since the 1970s. The welfare state took active steps to implement policies that would enable women to combine employment with motherhood and encourage fathers to be more active in childcare. In the early 1990s almost revolutionary measures were taken: the parental leave period was widened and time-account schemes that allow parents to take portions of their paid leave in combination with part-time work were introduced. Attitudes have also changed, toward a general acceptance of the employment of mothers with pre-school children and toward higher expectations regarding sharing parental and bread-winning responsibilities between spouses (Knudsen and Wærness 1996).

However, the labor market has its own logic of organization, and some Norwegian interviewees mentioned that it is not always easy to get managers to accept their priorities. Lise (36) and Lars (36) mentioned still existing gender inequalities:

Lise: The job I have is very important for me, but still, in relation to the children, I give priority to the children...So I gave a message at work that I would rather do my work at work, and not take much overtime...But it is not always easy to get them to agree to that. (...)

Lars: I think it is hard for women to pursue a career. Women struggle more if they choose to give priority to their careers...Because if you choose to have a career and have children, and if you do not always choose to put your children first, in a way that becomes visible to friends or family, then it is much tougher for women to justify that choice than men who do the same thing. There is a gendered expectation that women should take care of children, and it is still much stronger than for men. At the same time, if as a man you take care of your children just a little, it does not take too long before you receive a lot of positive feedback. And it does not take long before a woman receives a lot of negative feedback, when she fails to put her children first...

Lise: There is a long way to go for real equality.

Lars: So in that area, the relation between work and family, and the priorities of each, women struggle much more than men do. That is so obvious.

Lise:...when women apply for a little higher position, they get the question 'do you think you can manage this job with 3 children?' Do you think any man would receive that question?

The conversation above illustrates the still existing discrimination and barriers in the labor market facing mothers. Even though a majority of the population supports the employment of mothers at the ideological level, practices in the labor market change only slowly.

Due to changes in expectations, both men and women experience the demands of success, both at work and at home, as stressful. Both mothers and fathers with young children provided detailed stories concerning the pressures and problems they experience. Younger Norwegian fathers, especially, articulated the conflicts they experience in balancing their work and family lives. In Norwegian society, expectations related to fatherhood have changed quite dramatically in the last few decades. Almost all of the younger Norwegian fathers interviewed reflected on the clashing demands of the labor-market and their families.

Societal expectations concerning men's priorities and their participation in childcare have changed. Cato (31), father of two children under school age, argues that the labor market has changed, but that there are still 'old-fashioned bosses':

A modern boss knows that there are these things called children, and that the father must also go to the daycare center to pick up the kids. He knows because possibly he also takes care of his own children. An old-fashioned boss is maybe not so aware of this...And it is almost like people who do not take any part in the care of their children are not appreciated, I mean those who only bother about their job. This has almost become an inferior status position. Also, it is now considered high status for a man to say that he takes care of his children. At least that's the way I have experienced it.

Bjarne (58) reported that he could not spend much time with his children when they were growing up because of his work, and argues that today he might have done things differently:

There were times earlier in my life in which I probably would have prioritized things differently if it were today...Not that my children turned against me because I worked too much. But this was the 70s, when people thought that in the end, working hard would be the best for the family, and that when they got that promotion, the budget would be in order.

Lars (36) who is a father of two children committed to 'putting the family first' also mentioned that there have been important changes in the ways men think and behave in relation to their children:

Maybe in the 50s and 60s, men did not have a guilty conscience because they were not with their kids, since it was socially accepted that men did not need to feel guilty for providing for the family. But today, I think many men struggle with a guilty conscience because they have to prioritize, or they feel that they have to prioritize their work in relation to their kids... An important reason that I continue working at the same job is that I have a great deal of freedom...I can adjust my job to the family instead of having to adjust the family to my job. That is terribly important for me.

Men talking about adjusting their jobs to their families is a new trend. Those who choose to do this face several problems. Magne (38), father of two small children, explained the pressure he feels from the expectations that he should be available both at home and at work:

There is a little pressure because it is expected that one should be everywhere. Sometimes I am pulled between different expectations. In the professional world, it is expected, maybe in an undefined way, that you should be more available than you actually can, if you are also going to participate at home, as is expected. So there can be time pressures.

Time pressures and the stress related to them are common, and are reported by both mothers and fathers of small children. A factor which many couples experience as problematic is the demand of working overtime. Too much overtime work was mentioned by a majority of interviewees as a problem that has a negative influence on family life. Both men and women report instances of overtime that they consider problematic. Ann (34) and Arne (33) discuss this issue and how it influences their relationship:

Does your work influence your family life negatively?

Ann: Hmm, this is an interesting question! (laughs)

Arne: Sometimes I work in the weekends. Some days I work double-shifts. One of my responsibilities at work – beyond my regular functions – is to repair the computer system. When something happens in the system, I have to go and fix it.

It is not mandated that ‘you must be at work,’ but it is expected that you will be available. The degree to which I take this on as necessary versus the degree to which it is a real expectation is hard to tell. But at the very least, that extra function I have necessitates that I am update about the conditions equipment all the time and handle whenever problems arise. It is a type of overtime, and of course it influences (my family life)... You cannot say ‘no’ to that too often.

Ann: And I have a feeling that I prioritize the family more than you. If that is reality, or my imagination, is another issue.

Arne: We have discussed that a couple of times... At home, I do not mention the times that I said ‘no’ to working overtime, so in a way it is not visible. And also that extra function I have talked about makes it so that I must take on responsibilities that are not always imposed by others...but that I impose on myself. But there is of course a conflict between family and work.

In this context of clashing expectations and conflicts, Norwegian couples have developed several solutions to reduce the time-pressures and resulting stress.

5.1.1 Strategies for Balancing Family and Work Lives

In general, there is a common tendency regarding balancing work and family among younger Norwegians with small children: to decrease their working hours and give more priority to their families, at least while their children are small. Mostly, it is women who talk about cutting back at work. Some have already started working less than full-time after having children. Jorunn (34), mother of a 2-year-old child explained the reasons:

I chose to start working eighty percent, and I have experienced it as very positive: the fact that I do not need to use all my time at work, that I have the opportunity to be home one day, or that I have days in which I can use my time exactly as I want to. Of course I have to consider Jarle and Jens (*their child*), but at least you do not have the work demands and pressures. That is very positive I think...I have a job that exhausts me and then my utilization of time at home is not always as good. When you are so tired and exhausted, you can’t use your time as rationally...So ideally, I could think of working even less, maybe fifty percent. There are so many other ways to use time other than working, like being at home, being with Jens and all three of us doing things together.

In Jorunn’s case, the high stress level, physical exhaustion, and relatively low pay have been important factors leading her to the decision of cutting back at work.

Camilla (31), who decided to decrease her work hours to half-time, explained that she has been work-oriented and ambitious for several years, but now feels like she is done in that sphere. She wants to be at home with her kids more, without totally losing contact with the world of work:

I don’t have great ambitions at work...I decided to work part-time from now on. I will have more time for the house and the kids. At the same time I will have contact with my work environment, so I will have both. But I do not have any big ambitions at work; I am done with it! ...It is as if I am shifting my ambitions from

work to home. I would rather do that. Here in Norway, we measure everything in money and success at work, I think, but there are ways of seeing oneself in other ways as well... One must try to plan so that one can manage economically without having to work more, rather cut off at work and get more time. Time becomes more and more important. It does not help having all the world's income if you don't have time to enjoy yourself.

Grete (34), mother of two small children, feels like her days are too turbulent, and plans to decrease her working hours in the near-future:

I would like to spend more time with the children. I feel like daily life has become too hectic...when the kids start school, I would like to work less. Also, economically it will be less expensive to have them at school (*than at a daycare center*), so I will be able to afford working shorter days and be at home more, at least in that first period when they are at school.

There are also fathers of small children who expressed a desire to work less, even though none of them have yet taken concrete measures. For example, Nils (37) explained how he wants to be more family oriented in this phase of his life:

Now I define myself very strongly as a 'father of small children'...the smaller they are, the more dependent they are on you...so right now, while I have such small children, I want to be more family oriented and less work-oriented.

Flexible work hours and the opportunity to adjust work life according to family is appreciated by Norwegian fathers who are active in the care of their children:

Lars: One of the reasons that I continue in my job is that, first of all, it gives me a lot. I think it is interesting, and I also have a great deal of freedom. I have so much freedom that I can adjust my work to meet family needs, instead of adjusting my family to meet work needs.

New technologies also enable some parents of small children to balance work and family responsibilities. Jarle (36), father of a 2-year-old child, has been working long-hours lately and is not very satisfied. He explained that he has arranged a home-office, and hopes that he will be at home more from now on:

Does your work effect the family negatively?

Yes, it does sometimes, when I have too much to do, so there is always a conflict between doing things well at work and being present here at home. But I think of it this way: much of my work does not depend on people, so I can just as well sit at home and work in the evening. Before I worked extra overtime at work, but now I have PC at home with an internet connection, so it will be easier to sit at home and work, when Jens is sleeping.

Jarle feels lucky to have a job that allows for such arrangements. Most Norwegian interviewees talked warmly about the flexibility they have at their jobs and presented this

as the most important factor enabling them to balance work and family in less stressful ways. Magne (38), father of two children, explained the reasons for his job satisfaction:

My work means quite a lot to me. I use a lot of time at work and have many social contacts. I am very content with my work. It is also related to the fact that I have a great deal of flexibility, especially the ability to work here at home, when the kids are sick or something. I have a home-office here. I think that is very practical.

These young fathers of small children who play an active role in their care solve the problem of clashing demands by establishing home-offices. Flexibility at work, defined as controlling one's own working hours and opportunities of working at home is an appreciated benefit. As the interview accounts demonstrate, younger Norwegian fathers actively try to incorporate clashing demands of work and family obligations. How do Turkish fathers talk about balancing employment and parenthood?

5.2 Turkish Interviewees and Family-Work Balance

One significant difference between the Norwegian and Turkish groups is the absence of Turkish male voices on these issues. One father mentioned that he suffers from a 'guilty conscience' due to the limited time he spends with his children, and another said that he stopped taking about work at home after their child was born, but none of them gave detailed accounts or reflections regarding conflicting demands of work and family.

Utku (43) has 'abnormal' work hours and this prevents him from being with his family:

I suffer from a guilty conscience because of my long work hours...I cannot be at home when they are awake, I cannot take care of them, we cannot eat together. So there is such a vicious cycle.

Utku felt bad about the limited time he spends with his children, but he did not consider taking any measures to change the situation either. Most Turkish fathers conceived childcare as mainly their wives' responsibility. In some couples differing priorities concerning family and work led to important conflicts. One such case will be analyzed at the end of this section.

Compared to the Norwegian interviewees, the Turkish group in general reported fewer cases of stress and time pressure related to having small children and full-time work. There is a basic difference between the daily arrangements of the two groups: while all the Norwegian couples with children under school age use daycare centers, Turkish couples have full-time in-home care. Having a full-time caretaker at home reduces time-pressures. The issue that needs careful planning and organization – namely delivering and picking up children from daycare centers, which is a pressing factor for Norwegian couples – is not a problem for most Turkish couples.

In general, long working hours, high stress levels and limited time left to spend together are common themes mentioned by many younger Turkish interviewees. Most older Turkish interviewees either are retired or have grown-up children, and therefore are

not experiencing problems now. But they all reflected on the difficulties they had earlier, especially when their children were small. The type and sector of work had more visible and dramatic effects in the lives of Turkish interviewees. Jobs in the private sector demand longer hours and are more stressful. Gender differences are also more visible. While most women talked about their experiences concerning the difficulty of combining motherhood and employment, few men talked about fatherhood/employment issues.

The couples who reported a balanced work and family life are those who receive full-time support (either paid or unpaid) for childcare, and those who are able to adjust their work-hours with respect to children's needs. Parents of small children who have a relatively high degree of flexibility at work appreciate this as an important benefit that enables them to reconcile work and family, especially childcare demands. Tulin (38) acknowledged the importance of having a certain amount of freedom in deciding one's working hours:

Does your work life influence your family life?

No. Because in the firm where we work, there is a lot of work and sometimes 8 hours is not enough. But in return we can rearrange our working hours. Even though we can't rearrange them for the whole day, I can say that it is pretty flexible compared to what is common... For example today, there was a meeting at the kindergarten for parents, so I left early. But I stayed longer yesterday to compensate for that. We can make such adjustments and this is a big advantage.

Balancing work and family life is a pressing issue, especially when the couple has children under school age. Several of the older female Turkish interviewees took longer breaks from work after giving birth, due to the non-existence of good and affordable daycare. Those who reported that they have managed to reconcile work and family are the ones who had a network of support mechanisms, usually a combination of paid and unpaid helpers. Mine (62) explained how she managed to combine having two small children with working:

I can say that I received quite traditional supports; such things are common in Turkish families...When my children were small, I received a lot of help from my mother. She did not stay with us or anything like that, but she was always present as a controlling agent. And we had a helper (*caretaker*) at home all the time...So I was very lucky, to have all that help...But I remember that it was a difficult period. But as a woman, I believe that you must carry on, even though it is one step forward, two steps back. I believe that one can conquer all the difficulties at work without neglecting the children.

Nermin (68) was not forced to interrupt her career, as she had a large support network and several paid helpers:

Work was quite heavy in those days (*1960s and 1970s*). I had a helper who lived with us. In addition, there was a woman who came for cleaning 3 days a week. And also, two years after we got married my father-in-law passed away, so my

mother-in-law started living with us. Therefore, there was a grandmother present at home as well.

The availability of private daycare centers has increased in the last decade. They are high quality, but also expensive. Younger couples choosing this alternative are the ones who do not have close family members in the same city and those who have high income levels. Having a full-time babysitter at home is a more affordable solution.

Couples working in the private sector, in particular, mentioned the general problem of not finding enough time for themselves and their families due to their long work hours. Hale (30), mother of a 3-year-old boy, thinks that she is able to synthesize her career and family life, but this, at times, results in exhaustion:

I think I manage to keep both work and family going, but of course this is very exhausting for me. I have nervous breakdowns from time to time. Right now I work in two different companies and sometimes at nights. And all of this work coincides with childcare, shopping and the like. I have no time to spare for myself. My job prevents me from getting sufficiently involved with my child. Fatigue and stress influence my relation to my husband as well, from time to time. I become more nervous and irritable at home...maybe it wouldn't be like this if I had a more comfortable job.

Both Ceyda (35) and Cemil (35) hold high managerial positions within demanding careers, and have always had long working days. After having a child, the time they have been able to reserve for themselves is almost non-existent:

Ceyda: I did not work for 1.5 years after the birth, but we were abroad at that time. Cemil was attending a very intense school, and I was with Canan (*their child*) all the time. We did not have any time for ourselves... I started working again after we returned to Turkey, and now, because of my work and Canan, we do not have time for ourselves. And we have a mentality that is different from the general mentality in Turkey. For example, it is very common for people to leave their children with the grandmother and go out. We don't do that. I mean, since the amount of time we spend with Canan is so limited, we do not want to use it for ourselves and leave her with somebody else. Therefore, we always try to plan to do things with the three of us, together...

Having children is a major factor that disrupts the family/work balance by reducing the time available for each, and it is mainly women who talked about this issue. In Turkey, children are still seen as mainly the mother's responsibility, and few men reflected on the difficulties of combining work and fatherhood. On the other hand, the problems women experienced in trying to combine motherhood and employment formed a recurrent theme.

In Turkish society, motherhood has a high priority and a sacred status, while arrangements to help working mothers are limited. Unfavorable arrangements for childcare is a main factor driving many women out of the labor market. Elif (37), who has frequent contact with working women through her job, mentions some of the problems to which this group is exposed:

Working women are facing serious, really serious problems concerning how to secure care for their children. A portion of them give up working, if they do not have a very important contribution to the family budget. That is to say, until her child is old enough for kindergarten, the woman is restricted to the house and really goes through a depression. That sudden transition from work to home life, spending time only with a child, leads the woman to become depressed. Therefore, this is a very serious problem, the problem of reliable daycare where the working woman can deliver her child with confidence.

Those women who have demanding careers that do not accommodate long breaks start working soon after giving birth, and this causes distress for many of them. Elif (37) belongs to this group of women and reflected on the specific problems she faced after having a child:

The normal maternity leave was 42 days; I was working in the public sector then. I did not think that 42 days was enough, so I took 3 months unpaid leave...In fact I would have liked to have taken 6 months, and I felt the need to do that...but I thought, in terms of my profession, being away from work for too long would disadvantage me. I worried a lot at that point, and I remember it was so hard to start again...I mean when my child was 4 months old, I had no choice but to leave him to a foreign woman and go to work. Every morning I was deeply distressed.

Ipek (35), mother of a 2-year-old baby, explained in detail how difficult it was for her to decide on having a child in the first place, and how the 'masculine world of work' started excluding her afterwards:

After having children, you leave your career plans in the background...in fact it was very difficult for me to decide to have a child; my job was too important for me at some point in my life...I decided to have a child after I talked to many women, after a survey with many women (*laughs*). I asked: What is a child? What does it mean? Does it evoke a different emotion? Must it be experienced? I have a story, it is quite funny: In our work lives, we feel well adapted to working, feel a little masculinized... after a while, from your clothes to the way you walk, everything you are becomes a part of the masculine world. I mean you start identifying with it: you cut your hair short, wear suits, low-heels. I see similar characteristics in most of my friends. And one of them, who is also a woman who decided to have children very late – when she was 39 – said to me “Ipek, what is easier for women like us: to have an operation and become a man or to get pregnant and become a woman?” This was a very interesting question and it made a lot of sense to me...And after having a child, my career ambitions diminished, and at the same time, the work world starts excluding you. It is interesting, when you become a mom, you are diverted from a career, and this is not a pleasant thing. They (*managers*) say, “yes, you did a very sublime thing by becoming a mother,” on the one hand and imply, “stay away from career plans!” on the other, even though being a mother is not necessarily an obstacle. ...But they think that you can climb up the career-ladder only if your private life also becomes work, and maybe it is really like that (*laughs*)...in Turkish society, the world of work is a world of men. In the world of men, there are lobby activities, constant talking, politics, etc. But this can only be done if you have a lot of time. I mean you will both do

your work concretely, and have conversations with people and influence them politically. This can only be done if you do not have the problem of going home to your private life, only if your child is not waiting for you. You should be able to go out to dinner with your colleagues until late in the evening, and of course this is not a suitable condition for a mother of small children.

Ipek's story exemplifies the hidden mechanisms that function to exclude mother's of small children from the labor market which is built on premises that "completely ignore private commitments." (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995: 96). Most women working in the competitive private sector in demanding careers have experienced similar problems related to the conflicting demands of the 'world of work' and the 'world of home and family.' Sevim (44), who had high ambitions at work, explained how she had to lower them due to the various difficulties she faced:

After Sinan (*their child*) grew up a little, he started going to a daycare center. But of course the center closed early, so Sedat had to pick him up and take him to my mother's house when I had meetings...Sometimes I came home very late. I heard many comments from my parents like 'poor kid! He has to stay here until so late at night; he doesn't have a proper home life.' And all those things affect you, naturally. You cannot concentrate on your work... they push you to the edge. You come to the point of having to choose a preference. You have to decide: either an active career life or a proper family...It is very difficult for a woman to combine a family and child with a career. The family, the child and other invisible things prevent you from working intensively...Either you will be very insistent and say "I want to do this no matter the cost," or you will make a choice. If you try to carry on both together, you wear yourself out, and both are left half done.

The quotation above is a vivid example of the visible and invisible (attitudinal) barriers that women face in combining motherhood and an active work life. Sevim also explained how exhausting workdays influenced her relation to her son in the earlier years of her career:

I have been in this profession for the last 20 years, and to tell the truth, now I have more comfortable workdays. I have much more time for myself now. But in our earlier years at work, we had a much faster tempo. I had to get up very early and run around the whole day...and stay at the office until 8 or 9 in the evening. In my working life, the thing that I have experienced as most difficult is going home so late. You come home exhausted and you don't feel like doing anything at that hour. But you have to prepare dinner. My son would have returned from school by then, and he would want to tell me what happened in school. I would prepare meat on the pan and make the salad at the same time and say "yes, yes" to my son. And after a while he understood that I was not listening to him and he was very frustrated...So I went through a period of intense work, but I have been much more comfortable in the last 5 years.

For a majority of the Turkish mothers combining full-time employment with motherhood feels like juggling that requires careful planning. Ceyda (37) mentioned how her thinking patterns changed after having a child:

And of course in planning, instead of thinking about, 'me and my career,' you start thinking about, 'me, my career and the child's school.' Next to a very intense working life, you always think, 'how is her school going today,' or, 'that book must be bought today,' so there are always things that keep your mind busy.

What are the specific measures taken when the family-work balance is disturbed?

5.2.1 Solutions/ Strategies/ Submissions

Since the family/work balance is defined as a women's (especially mothers') problem in Turkey, it is usually women who develop strategies to restore a balance, to find more time to spend with their partners and children. Some of them decide (or are forced to) take long breaks from work after giving birth. Those who are 'lucky' find a balance by relying on help from both their mothers and paid caretakers.

The only solution Hale (30) sees to solve the problems she experiences in combining motherhood and work is to find a helper with good qualifications who would live with the family:

What do you think could help you in balancing your work and home lives?

A helper who could stay here for 24 hours. If I can find somebody who has the qualifications that I seek, I will want her to start immediately. That would be the only solution that would comfort me.

While Hale sees the solution in hiring full-time household help, several other women decided to reach a better family/work balance by cutting back at work.

Dilek (42) and Devrim(42) complain about the lack of time they have to spend together, and have decided to solve this problem by agreeing that Dilek will cut back at work. Devrim has 'abnormal' working hours, i.e. he works in the evenings and on weekends. Dilek works from morning to evening (5:30 p.m.) on weekdays. That is why they cannot see each other. She is not very fond of her job, while he likes his job and started earning a better salary in the last few years. The family now is not dependent on two full-time incomes. She will start working at 20 percent time, that is, one day a week. She states that this is an offer that nobody gets in the firm, and it will allow her to stay in contact with her workplace. Yet, she still conceives of this reduction as 'quitting':

Dilek: There have been tasks at which I was very successful and which made me happy. But when I look at it in general, I can't say, 'oh, how happy I am to be working in this firm!' And it was not so important anyway, since after putting our budget in order, I decided to leave my job at once, and this will happen next month.

Devrim:...If we think about the conditions of today, the biggest imbalance in our family is that my wife and I are not together so much, that my working hours are a little too long.

Dilek: So even though I am successful, I am quitting my job for the sake of love! ...First, the firm resisted a lot, but in the end they agreed that I will come only 1

day a week, and this is not an offer that is given to anybody else. So even though I have been successful, I am leaving...We decided to increase the time we are together by adjusting to Devrim's work rhythm.

The fact that it is the woman adjusting to the man's rhythm by stopping working has several related reasons in this case. The main factor is that her husband's income is higher. In addition Dilek is not a career-oriented person and she was not very fond of her job. The couple did not problematize the gendered aspects of this decision. Dilek and Devrim preferred to explain the reason for this adjustment in romantic terms, instead of economic or gendered ones.

Umut (39) decided to lower her ambitions at work and decrease her work hours after having her second child. She explains that having a second child was a conscious choice for her that she wanted very much, and therefore was willing to cut back at work and prioritize time with her newborn:

I decided that I will not be very active at work and I will cut out the extra activities I had besides work...But this my own choice, I mean spending as much time as possible with my kid, especially in the first year. And my work allows for this; I have flexible work hours...Of course I run around in haste the whole day, but still I think that I have a more comfortable working life than those who work full-time...I don't feel that I am left behind in my career because I am a mother, but also, as I said before I don't have very high ambitions either!

As the accounts above reveal, Turkish couples use different strategies to reconcile their work and family lives. A common solution to restore the family-work balance when the problems arise is to cut back at work and lower ambitions, and this is primarily a gendered response carried out by women.

Some couples experience the family/work discrepancy as a major and chronic problem which mainly stems from economic necessity, combined with differences in priorities. I will conclude this section by presenting a case-study in which all of these issues stand out in bold relief.

5.3 Case C: Figen and Faruk: Differing and Conflicting Gendered Priorities

Both Figen (33) and Faruk (34) have the same level and type of education, but Faruk works at a private firm in which he is a partner and Figen has a lower-level job at another firm. She does not have high ambitions concerning work, but she enjoys doing it. Faruk spends long hours at work, usually until late in the evening.

How important is your work?

Faruk: Oh, I like my job!

Figen: His job is his everything

Faruk: Yes, work is important. Because, according to me, people have certain pleasures in life, and doing something, accomplishing something is an important pleasure, an important excitement. Seeing that you have succeeded in something is very nice. I don't get the same pleasure out of many other things...and our work is a little exciting, since you have deadlines counted in days and hours; the adrenaline rush is there, and I like that. It is very fun.

To the woman: How is it for you?

Figen: I am at work at 9 in the morning and leave at 6...I mean work is important for me, but not as important as it is for Faruk. I like my job and do it with pleasure, but it is not my whole life. I must have a private life apart from that. Work must have its place and must not transcend that. I must work until a certain time in the evening and then be able to do other private things.

After giving birth to her first child 4 years ago, Figen decided to cut back at work. She stopped working for 3 and a half years and recently started working full-time again at a nearby company, after placing their child in a private daycare center in the neighborhood. Figen is critical of Faruk's extreme attachment to work and Faruk is critical of Figen's devotion to their child. They have different expectations related to work and family. The following conversation explicitly displayed their clashing priorities and expectations:

Does work life ever affect family life?

Figen: It affects it a lot. That is what affects our family most. I find his attachment to work extreme. This topic leads to problems between us. He thinks one way, I think another. Of course when he puts his thoughts into action, we have no coordination. The times we are at home, the times we see each other, they are never clear, they are inconsistent, and sometimes non-existent. Especially after having the child, I am quite sensitive on this issue, or to put it more correctly, I react more to this lack of coordination.

Faruk: Yes, that's right. This results in the fact that, Figen and Filiz (their child) become a team, and I am a team alone. So it is divided exactly into two...

Figen: Yes, that is really what happens, because I experience many things with Filiz. We became a duo, we both enjoy each other's company, walking around together, playing at home...We do everything together and then come home to tell Faruk that we did this and that.

Faruk: And I get pleased to hear these things and say 'well done!' (laughs) But Figen is very sensitive when it comes to the child.

Figen: That is what Faruk thinks. He thinks that I am too sensitive and too involved.

Faruk: But she is giving from herself while doing this. Like I said, I get pleasure from my work. Figen gets pleasure from the child. He has become her most important goal in life. For example, when I say, let's go somewhere, she first of all

thinks how she will leave Filiz. You can always find a solution for that, but she thinks that this will not be good for the child and she makes a sacrifice... Therefore, the child is very important for her. I mean it is the purpose of her life.

Figen: It is not that much. The thing is you do not see the outcome, or the outcomes do not effect you.

Faruk: And therefore we disagree a lot on these issues. I mean, she was more ambitious at work, but after the child she changed. For example, she interrupted her PhD...

Figen: I think about that issue in this way: The birth of the child has distanced me from my profession, and I must now start everything from scratch. But at least it should be worth the sacrifice I made, at least the thing that comes into being will be better, that's what I think.

Due to their diverging priorities and expectations, Figen and Faruk live a divided life. Figen spends a lot of time with her child at home and Faruk with his colleagues at work. They criticize each others' attitudes but cannot propose any way out of this dilemma either. They seem to have 'agreed to disagree.'

Faruk is an example of Hochschild's respondents for whom, "home has become work and work has become home" (Hochschild 1997). He sees his work as a source of personal and social satisfaction. His colleagues are also his close friends, and they spend a lot of time together outside of work. He does not have clear boundaries between his work and his personal life. And Figen reminds him that he is able to maintain this style of living since he does not assume any responsibility in the care of their children.

Faruk: I don't want to live my life very programmed and scheduled. I think that I must be able to do things that I enjoy... Life should have some surprises. Instead of getting up, going to work at 9 and back to home at 6, and have such a routine, I want to experience surprises. That is why I like my job: you can face many problems and challenges.

Figen: But you have that comfort, you don't need to go and pick the kid up at 6 o'clock. You don't have the obligation of preparing food for the kid at a given time.

As this case makes perfectly clear, there are differences in women's and men's priorities, as well as opportunities, concerning the ways of balancing family and work.

5.4 Cutting Back at Work: A Typical Feminine Response?

A general look at the stories provided by both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees shows that balancing work and family is a significant area of concern for all the couples. The problems often manifest themselves in the form of overtime, which lead to conflicts at home. Such conflicts are often experienced as sources of stress in the daily lives of

these individuals. Parents of children under school age are specially exposed to time pressures. An important factor that reduces conflicts is a certain amount of flexibility at work that allows individuals to arrange their working hours according to family obligations and other priorities. Those interviewees who do not have the option of flexible work hours report higher levels of stress and strain. Among the Turkish interviewees, women had more to report on this issue, since the care of small children is still defined as mainly their responsibility. Women working in competitive environments in the private sector, in particular, are exposed to high levels of work-family conflicts. Both Norwegian women and men experience and reflect on clashing demands of work and family. The parents of children under school age, especially, report time-pressures. An interesting pattern emerges concerning young Norwegian mothers: all report a desire to decrease their working hours to spend more time at home with their children. In both Turkish and Norwegian groups, cutting back at work to meet the clashing demands of work and family lives appears as a women's strategy of coping.

Compared to Turkish fathers, Norwegian fathers had much more to tell related to conflicts of combining parenthood and employment. The ways these young Norwegian fathers talk about childcare give hope about the possibilities of a development towards 'revolutionary parenting' (hooks 2000). This necessitates new definitions of masculinity in which 'caring' is included as a positive trait. Equal responsibility for care taking also demands more opportunities for fathers' involvement (Gerson 1993). Radical changes in the organizational logic of the workplaces in which caring responsibilities of all workers are acknowledged and social policies that support combination of parenthood and employment are needed. Norwegian state has been active in politicizing both fatherhood and motherhood in the last decade by policies that aim at changing the existing childcare practices (Ellingsæter 1999). In the next chapter we turn to a detailed analysis of the ways state policies influence individual lives.

Chapter 6 State Gender Ideologies and Family Policies

“Welfare states are centrally implicated in gender relations, both directly in the form of the orientations of their policies and indirectly in terms of norms that they embody and the processes they set in train as regards resource distribution among, and the appropriate roles of, men and women” (Daly 2000: 43).

In this chapter, the state, which has been more in the background in previous chapters, will be the focus. The perspective I apply in approaching the Turkish and Norwegian states attempts to delineate their basic gendered aspects with a recognition of internal ambiguities and historical variations in their organizational logics, legal frameworks, and ideologies. States are complex wholes that comprise a set of bodies, each with its own rules, policies, and practices (Harding 1996). Given this complexity, the strategy I follow will be to limit my approach to legislation and policies that directly influence gender relations and family practices. The chapter is organized in four sections: In the first section, I will briefly introduce the general social security programs in Norway and Turkey in light of some existing comparative state policy models. In the second section, I will move to a more detailed analysis of basic gender-related legislation and institutions in the two countries. The third section will review specific family policies that are currently in place. In the fourth section, I will analyze interview accounts related to Turkish and Norwegian interviewees’ conceptualizations of and expectations from the state. The ultimate aim will be to reach an understanding of the ways different state policies are felt as enabling or constraining elements in the lives of the interviewees.

6.1 Social Security Systems in Norway and Turkey

Turkish and Norwegian states have differing organizational and ideological characteristics. The Republic of Turkey is constitutionally defined as a ‘democratic, secular, and social state.’ The first two fundamental aims and duties of the Turkish state, according to the Constitution are, ‘to safeguard the independence and integrity of the Turkish nation...and to ensure the welfare, peace, and happiness of the individual and society’ (Official internet pages).

The Constitution of Norway, on the other hand, does not make any reference to the welfare and happiness of its citizens. It declares that ‘the Kingdom of Norway is a free, independent indivisible and inalienable realm’ and mainly specifies the King’s power and responsibilities. A detailed analysis of constitutions will not be our concern here. Suffice it to say that the most striking difference between the two is the more modern and secular nature of the Turkish constitution, with its wider content. The Turkish Republic does not

have an official religion, while Article 2 of the Norwegian constitution specifies the Evangelical-Lutheran religion as the official religion of the State. The Norwegian Constitution has the same basic form as it did when it was laid down in 1814, and is not as detailed concerning social and economic rights as the Turkish Constitution, which was amended in 2001.

In this section, my main aim will be to compare the general social security policies of the two countries based on an analysis of different official documents. In this context, policy is understood as the ongoing actions of state organizations, which have a degree of stability and which affect people's lives in significant ways. Social policy specifically is concerned with social purposes, including distribution of life chances, well-being, and quality of life (Harding 1996).

Even though specified as a constitutional duty, the goal of ensuring social security to all citizens has not yet been achieved by the 'social' Turkish State. The Norwegian State, on the other hand, is customarily referred to as a 'welfare state.' Before analyzing Turkish and Norwegian state policies in light of existing policy models, a note on the concepts of 'welfare state' and 'social rights' will be in order.

The most essential element of a welfare state is governmental legislation that guarantees income maintenance and other support for citizens in case of occupational accidents, disease, old age and unemployment (Esping-Andersen and Korpi, 1987). The concept of "social rights" is useful in analyzing the bases of welfare states. T. H. Marshall has distinguished three types of rights associated with the expansion of citizenship (O'Connor 1996: 49). *Civil rights*, refer to the rights of the individual in the eyes of the law – like freedom of speech and religion, the right to own property and the right to equal justice before the law. *Political rights*, refer to rights to participate in elections and to stand for public office. *Social rights*, refer to the freedom of every individual to enjoy a certain minimum standard of economic welfare and security. They include such rights as sickness benefits, social security in case of unemployment, and the setting of minimum-wage levels. The broadening of social rights is the basis for what has come to be called the welfare state. In their comparative analysis of welfare states, Esping-Andersen and Korpi (1987) distinguish between a 'marginal' (residual) and an 'institutional' model. The marginal model is premised on a commitment to market rule. In this model, governments play only a limited role in the distribution of welfare. The institutional model promotes the principle that all citizens should be equally entitled to a decent standard of living. The policy model in Turkey shows marginal model characteristics, due to its basic commitment to market sovereignty and conceptualization of state support as a last resort. Norway, on the other hand, exemplifies the institutional model, since the welfare of the individual is seen as the responsibility of the social collective.

According to the welfare state models identified by Esping-Andersen (1990) that were reviewed in Chapter 2, Norway can be classified as belonging to the social democratic regime, while Turkey displays both liberal and conservative characteristics. In Norway, the basic principles of the welfare model are universalism, decommodification of social rights, and equality at a high level of social welfare (Esping-Andersen 1990: 27). 'Decommodification' refers to degree to which social rights permit people to meet their living standards independent of pure market forces. In Turkey, liberal elements are

dominant: benefits are modest and the state encourages reliance on the market. Decommodification effects are minimal. However, a commitment to the preservation of traditional family structures – with indirect support of the male-breadwinner/female-housewife family model – signal the existence of conservative elements. These features will be analyzed in detail in section 6.3.

Actual social expenditures of the two countries confirm these differences: according to the World Labor Report (2000), total social security expenditure as a percentage of total public expenditure was 27 percent for Turkey and 57.7 percent for Norway. In 1996, Turkey used 5 percent of its Gross Domestic Product for social protection benefits. The corresponding percentage for Norway was 19 percent.

Norway has a comprehensive and universal social security program. All persons in residence or working in Norway are compulsorily insured by the Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme (NIS) (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs Documents). Persons insured under the NIS are entitled to old-age, survivors', and disability pensions, as well as occupational injury, single parent, sickness, maternity, and medical benefits. NIS is financed by contributions from employees, self-employed persons, employers and the state. The contribution rate of employees is 7.8 percent of pensionable income. The NIS combines universalist and employment-related benefits. Old-age pensions are made up of two parts, a basic pension and a supplementary, income-related pension. All residents are guaranteed a minimum income when reaching the age of 67, irrespective of previous income or contributions. Housewives had the right for basic pensions prior to 1992, yet in that year, a revolutionary change took place, enabling unpaid caretakers to earn entitlement to supplementary pensions if they provided care for children under the age of seven, or for sick or elderly persons who were not in institutional care (Leira 1996: 29).

In Turkey, old age pensions cover employees and their dependent spouses, and presuppose a minimum period of contribution of the employee²⁷. Housewives are covered as 'dependent spouses' only if their spouses are employed. In 1999, the social security law underwent a major review, and two important changes took place: the retirement age was increased from 55 to 60 for men and from 50 to 58 for women. Minimum contribution periods were also increased. A positive development was the implementation of unemployment insurance, which had been lacking until that date. In her analysis of the social security system in Turkey and women's place in it, Zirhli (2000) mentions that this new law does not solve the problems of women who are housewives or unpaid agricultural family workers. These two groups together form the majority of women in Turkey, and both groups lack direct social security coverage. She criticizes neo-liberal attempts to limit further Turkish social rights, which are already among the least developed globally, rendering Turkey 'one of the weakest welfare states of the world' (Zirhli 2000: 109).

²⁷ There are three major social security institutions in Turkey. A significant part of wage earners in manufacturing, industry and service sectors are under the social security program of Social Security Institute (SSK). The Pension Fund (Emekli Sandığı) provides security to civil servants and Bağ-Kur is the institution covering self-employed.

Let us now move on to an analysis of some of the gender related legislation and gender-equality institutions of the Turkish and Norwegian States.

6.2 Gender-Equality Policies and Machinery

Turkey and Norway display significant differences when their legal framework is analyzed with a gender perspective. In both countries legislative action has been central to promote gender-equality, yet the strength and the contents of the policies show great variation.

6.2.1 Turkey: Positive Changes and Remaining Ambiguities

Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution states that, ‘all individuals are equal without discrimination before the law, irrespective of language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion or sect.’ However, an analysis of specific legislation yields a picture in which the gender-equality principle is violated. In what follows, I will provide examples of ambiguities and gender-inequalities existing in the legal framework, as well as in the operating ideologies of certain state institutions.

Until recently, the Turkish Civil Code, which was revolutionary at the time of its adoption in 1926, included clauses that supported a traditional gender role ideology and a male-breadwinner/female-housewife family model:

- Article 154: The husband has the legal standing to represent the conjugal union.
- Article 152/2: The husband chooses the domicile and duly provides for the maintenance of wife and children.
- Article 153/1: The wife acquires the husband’s surname.
- Article 153/2: The wife, to the extent of her ability, must assist the husband by word and deed in his effort to maintain the home; the wife is responsible for household management.

These articles have been the subject of numerous feminist analyses that criticized the ways they function to preserve the sexual division of labor and institutionalize women’s social and economic dependence on men (e.g. Arat 1994).

After contentious negotiations and decades of delays due to successful obstructions by conservative politicians, the Civil Code was finally amended in 2001. The clauses mentioned above were terminated or rephrased in gender-egalitarian terms. According to these changes, each spouse can represent the conjugal union: the ‘head of the household’ clause is eliminated. Women can use their own surname, but only as a second name in front of their husband’s surname. Earlier, the legal age for marriage was 17 for men, and 15 for women. Now, the legal age is equal for both spouses at 18.

The clause related to sharing property after divorce was the one that was most heatedly discussed during the amendment negotiations. Earlier, the law provided for a separation of matrimonial property. Under this regime, women often suffered severe economic problems after divorce, since a majority of women were housewives and it was

customary to register property in the name of the man. With the new regulations, property acquired during the marriage is to be shared equally in cases of divorce.

As another positive step towards legal gender equality, Turkey has removed all its reservations from the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2000. The reservations were based on the clauses of the Civil Code presented above, which had to be amended before a full acceptance of the Convention. Apart from the Civil Code, which had non-egalitarian articles that have been recently eliminated, the Criminal Code and the Labor Law also include gender discriminatory articles:

The Turkish Criminal Code differentiates between rape of minors, rape of adults, and rape that violates virginity. There is a more severe punishment for violation of virginity.²⁸ Article 17 of the Labor Law allows employers to cancel work contracts in case of pregnancy or birth. Due to this article, Turkey has not yet accepted the ILO convention (no.103) prohibiting the firing of women workers during the period in which they use maternity leave.

A positive development has been the annulment of an article of the Criminal Code that defined adultery separately for the husband and wife. The earlier version of the law stated that 'a married woman can be charged with adultery if she has had sexual intercourse with a man other than her husband only once.' For the husband, a continual and prolonged relationship with another woman must be proven. In 1999 both articles on adultery were annulled: adultery is no longer punishable by law.

Another step towards gender equality was taken with a change in the tax system. Earlier, in accordance with the practice of defining a 'head of the household,' the couple forming the household had to submit a single tax declaration. In that system, the tax rate was calculated by adding the income and property of both the husband and wife. This joint taxation led to injustices for dual-earner couples until 1998, when the law was changed and married women were allowed to submit a personal tax declaration.

All of these positive developments took place thanks to small but aggressive feminist organizations and the works of the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women (DGSPW) that was established in 1990. The Directorate operates with a gender-egalitarian (at times radical feminist) gender ideology, and has been an active agent in initializing and coordinating social research and political activities on the basic problems of Turkish women, despite its limited budget and ambiguous institutional position.

A final note before concluding this limited analysis of the gender-related controversies and ambiguities existing in Turkish laws, regulations and official institutions: after the last elections, the coalition government decided to appoint a male director to the Directorate (DGSPW). Feminists criticized this decision while the government defended it, claiming that it is 'gender discriminatory' to argue that a man cannot understand the problems of women. I see this incident as another example of

²⁸ Due to this legislation and existence of taboos on pre-marital sexuality, virginity tests and surgeries take place in Turkey. These practices have been subject to many popular discussions as well as scientific research (e.g. Cindoğlu 1997).

gender insensitivity, mainly caused by a naive ‘equality’ orientation and ignorance of the multifarious dimensions of gender.

6.2.2 Norway: Legal and Institutional Steps Towards Gender Equality

Norway has developed rather strong instruments for the promotion of gender equality in the last three decades. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, since 1972, has had the coordinating and initiating responsibility for gender equality (Report 1994). The Ministry manages shelters and hot lines for battered women and incest centers, and also administers funding to women’s NGOs. The Ministry is also responsible for childcare policies, parental leave and related policies, and measures that seek to reconcile work and family life.

According to the Gender Equality Act of 1979, all public authorities are obliged to promote gender equality in all areas of society. On this basis, gender mainstreaming has been applied since 1986. This means that all Ministries are expected to integrate a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality in policy formulation, decision-making, and executive procedures at all levels and in all policy areas. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for creating awareness of gendered societal processes and outcomes (Ellingsæter 1999). A committee of State Secretaries on gender equality has been set up in order to reinforce the mainstreaming strategy. The Gender Equality Ombud and the Gender Equality Complaints Board enforce the Gender Equality Act.

The Gender Equality Act, which was put into practice in 1979, prohibits discrimination between men and women, as well as treatment which in reality has the effect of placing one sex at an unreasonable disadvantage. Its purpose is twofold: to eliminate direct discrimination and to influence attitudes. The law allows for affirmative action, that is, differential treatment that promotes gender equality. Affirmative action has mainly been implemented in favor of women, to secure their representation in male-dominated areas (National Report 1994). The law is presently under revision, especially to strengthen the clause on equal pay for equal work, which does not function effectively in practice (National Report 1999).

As a result of these collective steps, Norwegian legislation is gender-neutral and active mainstreaming policies have helped women become better represented in politics, the labor market, and educational institutions, though full equality has not yet been achieved.

6.3 Family Policies

Concerning family policies, there are significant differences between Turkey and Norway, both in terms of their conceptualizations of “family” and in terms of the level of support.

Even though Article 41 of the Turkish Constitution declares that, ‘family is the foundation of Turkish society,’ specific policies to support families are not well

developed.²⁹ Family is still conceptualized as predominantly ‘private’ and the state is supposed to step in only as a last resort in cases of extreme poverty or violence. In general, the prevailing gender regime underlying family policies in Turkey can be labeled ‘familialistic’: the assumption that childcare and care of the elderly can and should be met within the family leads to low levels of public provision. Norway, on the other hand, is characterized by an ‘individualistic’ gender regime, since state provisions for childcare and elder care are based on the assumption that everyone will be in paid employment (Drew et al. 1998: 3). In Norway, problems related to having children are defined as social problems, and the welfare state is seen as a responsible agent in offering support to all parents. In Turkey, on the other hand, these problems are defined as primarily private, and the state is conceived of as responsible for help only for the poorest families.

According to the family policy models identified by Anne Helene Gauthier (1996), Turkey can be classified under the “Pro-family but non-interventionist model” while Norway fits into the “Pro-egalitarian model.” In what follows, I will provide the reasons for these classifications, mainly by focusing on cash benefits (family allowances, means-tested family benefits, tax relief for dependent children) and work-related benefits (maternity/parental leave, childcare leave) as key indicators for family policies (Gauthier 1996: 10).

6.3.1 No Policies to Support ‘the’ Turkish Family

The Turkish State does not have a definite family policy, other than a minimum-security offer to families in need. In 1990, a General Directorate of Family and Social Research, which mainly operates within a traditional family ideology, was established. Its main aim has been specified as, ‘contributing to the formation of a national family policy by carrying out projects to strengthen and preserve the unity of *the Turkish family* and developing policies to increase its welfare,’ (FRC 1991: 88, my translation and emphasis). Historically, the practice of referring to this institution in the singular, as *the Turkish family*, and attaching well-defined ideals, moral rules, and values to its structure and functioning has been prevalent in both official documents and popular discourse. At the institutional level, the concept of *the Turkish family* to which the official documents refer is the traditional, nuclear family, preferably with a housewife mother and a breadwinner father. According to the family ideology with which they are operating, divorces, cohabitation without formal marriage, single parenthood and homosexuality are all ‘deviations’ from the normal (ibid.: 19).

As the underlying aim of the Directorate makes clear, a national family policy is yet to be developed in Turkey, since the existing social services directed to families are ‘disorganized and lacking standards’ (FRC 1991: 255).

In Turkey, being married and having children are not factors that influence tax ratios (FRC 1991: 386). State employees receive a meager lump sum in relation to childbirth, for

²⁹ Together with the recent amendments of Turkish Constitution in 2001, a gender-egalitarian note was added to this article: ‘The family is the foundation of the Turkish society and based on the equality between the spouses’.

a maximum of two children. Official demographic politics is anti-natalism in Turkey since 1965 (DGSPW 1998).

Mothers working in the public sector are entitled to a leave of absence 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after birth. Maternity benefits during this time equal 66 percent of monthly earnings. Insured women (who have paid an insurance premium for a minimum of 90 days before birth) and non-insured wives of insured men are eligible for maternity leave. Mothers may also take unpaid leave for up to 6 months.³⁰

As a result of the strength of an ideology that assumes the care for younger children and the elderly should be carried out by families (i.e. women), publicly financed kindergartens and institutions for the elderly are few in number and have low standards.

A gender-sensitive analysis of the legislation of Social Insurance Institution (SSK), shows the traditional gender role assumptions built into the structure: the social insurance system functions with a male-breadwinner family ideology, providing women entitlements as dependants. Both children and one's parents can be defined as 'dependant,' as long as they cannot provide their own livelihood. However, the law discriminates between the boy and the girl child. Boys lose the right to be covered by their father's insurance when they reach the age of 18 (21 if they are students) while girls are covered until they are married, or start working, regardless of age. The underlining logic of this formulation is based on the expectation that girls will most probably pass from their father's coverage to their husband's. Boys, on the other hand, are supposed to be the breadwinners of their future families and are encouraged to find their own employment and individual coverage right after they reach the age of 18.

6.3.2 Norwegian Policies Supporting Parents and Children, not 'the' Family

Norwegian Welfare State's official ideology is "gender equality in both public and private spheres" (National Report 1999) and there is a close link between family and gender equality policies. Family policies in Norway have the main purpose of offering financial support to all parents and to make it easier to combine employment and parenthood. Questions related to changes in family structures and gender relations rank high on the political agenda in Norway. As argued by several researchers (Hernes 1988, Leira 1996), discussions around the family within Scandinavia have a special tone due to the more 'public' character of families. In the Scandinavian welfare model, the issues of care for dependents and of combining parenthood and employment are defined as public issues, and the state is seen as a responsible agent in offering support in these areas. State interference in family matters is widely accepted (Leira 1996). The equality ideal, which includes gender equality, underlies formulations of Scandinavian welfare policies. Generally, the state is expected to redistribute economic resources, power, and influence among social classes and regions, as well as between genders (Leira 1996: 9).

³⁰ Currently, there is a law draft proposing lengthening of the leave period as 6 weeks before and 12 weeks after birth (total 18 weeks paid leave) and arranging unpaid leave as 'paternity leave' to enable fathers to share the leave.

Norwegian law seldom refers to 'the family' as a unit, but deals rather with the rights and duties of individuals who are related to one another by ties of descent or marriage, or by legal contracts (Leira 1996). The Marriage Act contains an explicit assumption that spouses are under a reciprocal obligation to economic maintenance. The Children and Parents' Act assumes that parents are under the obligation to maintain their dependent children, but not the adult children. On the other hand, adult children have next to no formal obligations towards their aging parents.³¹ Parents of children under the age of 12 are entitled to a tax allowance for childcare.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Norwegian family policies tended to provide support for women in their traditional roles as full-time housewives (Wærness 1994). In contrast to the rest of Scandinavia, the large-scale investment in public childcare in Norway came too late to facilitate mothers' entrance into the labor market. However, starting in the early 1990s, important reforms took place with the general purpose of enabling *both* parents to combine employment and parenthood responsibilities. Policies are based on a model of a symmetric family of two worker-caretakers (Ellingsæter 1999).

The period of paid parental leave was gradually extended, and in 1993 was set at 42 weeks with full pay, or 52 weeks on an 80 percent wage.³² Three weeks before and six weeks after birth are reserved as mother quota. A new father quota – 4 weeks' paid leave which cannot be transferred to the mother – was introduced in 1993. Though fathers had the opportunity to share paid leave with mothers earlier, only 2 % of them took advantage of it. After the introduction of this quota, which cannot be transferred to the mother, the percentage of fathers taking leave increased to 80 % (Ellingsæter & Hedlund 1998). Studies show that the likelihood that a father will use the quota increases when the mother works full-time and earns a relatively high income (Brandth & Överli 1998). If the father chooses not to make use of his four weeks, the weeks must be forfeited. In 2000, the National Insurance Act has been amended to allow the father to receive parental benefits based on his own rights regardless of whether the mother has earned rights in the labor market.

There are two weeks of unpaid 'daddy leave' in connection with childbirth. Parents have the right to unpaid leave for up to 2 years. Each parent with a sick child under the age of 12 has the right to 10 days of fully paid leave per year. Parents with more than 2 children are entitled to 15 days each.

A "time-account" scheme allows parents to take portions of their paid leave in combination with part-time work. Parents have the opportunity to work shorter hours without a reduction in income until the child is two or three years old. This scheme was introduced in 1994, but has not been widely used. In 1998, only 2,6 per cent of the

³¹ A clause in the family legislation mandating children's responsibility for the care of their old parents was abolished in the 1960s. Ve Henriksen and Holter (1978) argue that the attempt to shift the responsibility for the old and the ill from the family to the public sphere was perhaps the most radical political measure toward a 'functional draining' of the family (Ve Henriksen and Holter 1978: 56).

³² Women who do not qualify for parental leave receive a lump sum grant which was around 3.500 Euros in 2000.

mothers and 0,8 percent of the fathers used the time account (Holter & Brandth 1999). Insufficient information about the scheme and a low degree of flexibility in relation to regulations were mentioned as main problems inhibiting the use of the time-account scheme (Holter & Brandth 1999).

In 1998, a new 'cash for home care' (*Kontantstøtte*) policy was introduced. This policy implies that parents can choose a cash benefit instead of a daycare center if they want to take care of their children themselves. The arrangement entitles all parents who have children between 1 and 3 years of age, who do not use state sponsored childcare, the same amount of money as the state subsidy per child.³³

Childcare policies have been controversial in Norway. The official childcare policy has been declared as providing full coverage in state subsidized daycare centers (National Report 1999) however there is a historical legacy of a lack of political consensus on the issue of public childcare (Ellingsæter 1999). Daycare institutions for children over 3 years of age have traditionally been more widely accepted than for those under 3. The new 'cash for home care' policy has been one of the hottest topics in social policy debates (Wærness 1998). Feminists are divided in terms of their evaluations of this policy. Some argue that the reform is a positive development since it implies that more money will be transferred into the field of childcare and it may offer better choices, especially for women in low paid, unattractive jobs (e.g. Wærness 1998). Others interpret the policy as a potential threat to gender equality through a weakening of women's labor-market relations (Ellingsæter 1999). Another critical claim is that this reform will lead to a decrease in public support for childcare centers and a potential increase in the unregulated informal market of private caretakers (Ellingsæter & Hedlund 1998). A recent evaluation of the reform documents that cash-for-care policy did not have significant effects, neither on the work and time-use patterns of parents, nor on the implementation and demand for state-subsidized day care centers (Knudsen and Wærness 2001).

6.4 State Gender Ideologies: Historical Transformations and Ambiguities

As the brief analysis of family policies in Turkey and Norway make clear, though it is possible to identify a dominant 'gender policy regime' (Sainsbury 1999) at a given point in time, state policies concerning gender have been historically variable and often ambiguous.

In Norway, the family model that welfare policies support has changed in the last decade. In the 1970s and 80s, the basic ideology was reducing women's dependence on individual men by providing them public support in their traditional roles as mothers. In the 1990s, the family model with which state policies operated was a dual-breadwinner family, in which both parents are supposed to work in the labor market and care for their

³³ This amount was ca. 375 Euros per month in 2002.

children at the same time. Apart from these historical variations, there are also ambiguities concerning interpretations of family policies exemplified by the new 'cash for home care' reform. In the Norwegian context, "care" is expanding as a basis for social citizenship rights. However, different rights to care, such as parental leave vs. cash-for-care, might have different implications for the gendered division of labor (Ellingsæter 1999).

According to Sainsbury (1999), the strength of the Christian parties and the resulting party alliances promote ambiguous policies and a mix of separate-gender roles and social democratic regimes in Norway.

As Mósesdóttir (1995) indicates, the policies of the state may be inconsistent from one time to another and from one department to another. In Turkey, the existence of the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women and the General Directorate of Family and Social Research in two floors of the same building, under the same Ministry, operating with totally different gender ideologies exemplifies the ambiguities that state gender ideologies may take.

Traditionally, there have been gender-discriminatory articles in the Civil Code that violate the gender-egalitarian clauses of the Turkish Constitution. In 2001, the Civil Code was amended and the clauses that advocated a male-breadwinner/ female-housewife model have been replaced with those advocating gender equality in the family. How much these legal changes will influence cultural practices is a question that can only be answered in time. The increasing popularity of the Islamic parties that support separate gender roles will introduce further complexities to the already existing ambiguities concerning the construction of gender relations in legislation in Turkey.

6.5 States in the Lives of Individuals

A comparative look at Turkey and Norway provides the opportunity to study how different state policies interacting with cultural and institutional formations operate as enabling and constraining structures in the lives of individuals. The dual-career, urban couples of this study live in contexts which are infused – to varying degrees – by expectations and regulations related to gender relations and assumptions about 'normal' families.

States influence family practices and gender relations through a variety of means that include specific family policies, institutions of gender equality, and legal frameworks with well-defined or ambiguous gender ideologies. These factors, which were analyzed above, can be seen as the 'supply' side of the state-family-individual relationships. The 'demand' side of this relationship can be analyzed through studying people's expectations directed at the state, in terms of social policy issues in general, and family-related policies in particular.

Both the actual ways the state is organized and people's conceptualizations related to the state as an institution differ considerably in Turkey and Norway. A question in the interview guide was designed to learn about what individuals expect from the state. The formulation of the question was easier for the Norwegian context. As a matter of fact,

the key position that the welfare state had in the lives of the Norwegian women in my prior comparative study (Sümer 1998) is what compelled me to include a state-centered question in the current interview schedule. Most Norwegian women that I interviewed previously had high expectations from the state: as a source of educational finance, a potential employer, a promoter of gender equality, and a childcare supplier. For the Turkish group, on the other hand, the key institution providing support was still the family, and the state was a distant entity.

Based on these findings, I was curious to analyze in a more detailed manner both the different ways states are conceptualized and the ways actual policies operate in the two countries. Apparently, this question was more relevant for the lives of the Norwegian group, who live in a social context highly influenced by the policies of the institutional, social democratic welfare state. In the Turkish context, the state is defined as a ‘social state,’ yet the range of its policies is far from universal. Family and gender-equality policies especially, which are fondly discussed by Norwegians, are close to being non-existent. There must be a realistic supply-side for an individual to develop demands and expectations. Accordingly, the question of the state fits the realities of Norwegian respondents better, and had to be formulated differently in Turkish and Norwegian. Yet, this fact does not make an analysis of the answers provided less interesting.

6.5.1 Great Expectations Directed to the Norwegian Welfare State

I asked to the Norwegian interviewees what they thought about welfare state policies in general and what they personally expected from the state in particular.

Most Norwegians mentioned the merits of having a system that functions as a basic security-net. Lars (36), for example, expected that the state will ‘lift him up’ if he falls out of the system in one way or another:

Expectations from the state...it is hard to say, because it is so context-dependent, right? In a way, you expect that, if you fall out of the system in one way or another, you will be picked up again.

Some of the respondents compared Norway with countries that do not have an extensive social security system to explain what they appreciated most in Norway:

Inger (58): We pay high taxes for it, but I have always thought that it is worth it to have that safety net. We have, after all, lived in the USA and seen what happens when society does not provide security. So we have been positive about it all the time.

Bjarne (57): We have traveled around and seen other countries, especially Mediterranean countries, and have understood how important it is that people have managed to build up such a safety net in this country... It is enormously valuable in a society to have that security, to have the safety that if young families have problems making ends meet, there are arrangements.

The interview accounts above also show that most Norwegians conceive of the existing welfare model as an arrangement that concerns everybody, not only as a system for the

poor. Some of the interviewees, however, mentioned that they have good economic resources and therefore not much need for welfare state policies:

Grete (33): The way we have it now, in our situation, we are well off and have no need to complain about anything. But we are persons who have more than adequate means and who earn a good living, so in that way we don't have much use for the welfare state.

While a majority of the interviewees were positive regarding the general principles upon which the welfare model is built, many also mentioned the fact that policies do not always function in practice as is claimed on paper. Bente (52) thinks that the welfare state is important, especially for women, since state policies have been crucial in making it easier for women to work in the labor market. However, she also added that some arrangements do not work as they should:

I think that we have many good arrangements, but they don't always function equally well for all individuals... There is often a group that falls out of the system, because one must really be quite strong to secure one's rights... One must have up-to-date knowledge of the rules and regulations, and one must also have the means to be able to make all the phone calls and write all the letters. But having the welfare state is good because the alternative would be to stand all alone penniless when something happens. Or of course, relying on the family is an alternative, but then you are dependent on having a family which can help. And not all families can. So, in principle, the welfare state is good.

Appreciating the general principles upon which the welfare state is built, some interviewees talked about specific policies of which they were especially fond or critical. The policies that were most commonly mentioned by Norwegian interviewees were longer leaves of absence related to childbirth, subsidized childcare centers, care of the elderly, and free healthcare services.

The most valued policy is the one that allows parents, especially mothers, to combine having small children with work. One year long paid maternity leave is mentioned as a 'big benefit' by all Norwegian women and some men as well. Jorunn, a thirty-five year-old mother of one, especially likes the way leave of absence policies function almost automatically, without leaving much bureaucratic work to parents:

Maternity leave is very nice. Having the opportunity to be at home one year is after all a big benefit. And it is very well established; it functions well, that you have a child and you get the money without doing much about it.

Grete (33) thinks that the long maternity leave is such a good benefit that it certainly makes other countries jealous:

Established leave of absence arrangements are a great advantage. If you think about Norway compared to other countries, it is totally fantastic that we can be at home with the child with full salary for 1 year. I think this is something that most countries in the world are jealous about. I feel that I was very privileged to be able to do it.

Magne (37), who is a father of two children, used his 'quota' of one month leave of absence for both of his kids, and appreciated this arrangement:

I think getting a leave of absence for the first year is very nice. Even when the kid is one year old, it feels a little early to deliver them to the daycare center, but it works out. I think that having that arrangement is very good.

Older Norwegian women compare their own experiences of combining motherhood and employment with the present conditions, and identify the positive developments:

Bente (52): In the years when I had small children, we had maternity leave but it was much shorter than it is now. I think it was 3 months, or something like that...From a woman's perspective, without some of the welfare arrangements we have, it would be much more difficult for women to come out to work.

This field, namely state support for families with small children, is also characterized by high expectations. Acknowledging the benefits of existing policies, some interviewees specified extensions or new policy directions that they would like to see. For example, Ann (34) mentioned that she would like to see more policies that aim at making fathers more active in childcare:

I think we have good leave of absence arrangements. But the only thing that I find unfair is that the man's opportunity to take leave depends on the woman's attachment to the labor market...I wish that was different. It has been all right for us, because I have worked all the time, so there was no problem. But for example students: if the mother is a student, the father does not get any leave of absence, and I think that is wrong.

Hilde (49) also valued the existing policies but thought that more action is needed to increase men's participation in childcare:

We have gained very good welfare provisions. If you look at the rights gained in relation to pregnancy and childbirth, at the time when I had my first child in 1975, the leave of absence was 3 months... And now, we have 48 weeks with full compensation, so it is quite a lot of progress. The fact that the authorities have put so much pressure on the fathers to take their share, I think is also positive...because if women always take that 1 year at home, maybe with 2 or 3 children, then it is very easy for them to fall off the 'merry-go-round'.³⁴ So, I believe we still have things to resolve, when it comes to fathers taking care of their children more and mothers letting them. I see it this way: Norway needs lots of labor power, and now that women go to university, it is important that their education gets used, and that it is not only the male half of society that manages to hang on and use what they know and get paid for it.

State-subsidized childcare centers were among the most commonly mentioned and appreciated benefits related to the welfare state, though most Norwegians also mentioned that they expect more in this area. Mona (35) and Magne (37) were very satisfied with the

³⁴ A metaphor for the labor market.

state-subsidized daycare center they use for their two children, yet they had even higher expectations:

Mona: There are many good (*childcare*) arrangements...but they do not have full coverage in daycare centers, for example, and that is negative... Also, we wanted to share the leave of absence more equally, but since I did not have a job at the time of birth, we did not have the right to do that. I could not both receive unemployment insurance and share the maternity leave.

Magne: And even though I am very fond of the daycare center, and think that it is worth every penny we pay, it is still terribly expensive...Even though our economic means are adequate, childcare expenses are very visible in the total budget. And it gets absurd to think that, under the new cash-for-care policy, we would earn 7000 Crones a month if we decided to let our kids be taken care of by a babysitter! I think that is scary politics.

The policy to which Magne referred, the recently introduced 'cash-for-care' reform, received negative comments from several other interviewees. Several interviewees argued that this was an 'unfair' arrangement, since, they believe, some of the parents use the money to hire a nanny instead of staying at home themselves. Another factor that has influenced interviewees' attitudes is the fact that they have high incomes, and the amount of cash they would receive under such an arrangement is not sufficient for them to prefer it. Some interviewees conceived of this reform as a 'backlash,' policy that is designed to send women back into the home. For example, Henrik (50) was highly critical of this new arrangement:

There are many welfare arrangements which are good. But recently there has been a lot of talk of forcing women down, I mean down the spiral that they have climbed up... I think that the cash-for-care arrangement is a terrible thing, for example. In a way, it is a plan for women to go back to the role they had one generation ago.

Another issue that was mentioned by several of the interviewees was care of the elderly. While many appreciate the existence of well-developed institutions for the elderly, some mention that they sometimes feel guilty for 'leaving the old mother to the care of the state.' Jarle (36) reported that he was worried about the development in this area:

I think it is very good that care for the elderly is public and available for everybody. But I am also worried about how this has developed in relation to taking care of one's own parents or grandparents. Maybe there is a tendency to work very hard to place them in an institution...Some have very little contact with their parents, and this leads to a lot of loneliness and depression among the elderly.

The accounts above exemplify that most Norwegians have concretely formulated expectations related to welfare state policies and a relatively homogeneous understanding of the state.

6.5.2 Turkish Interviewees and the Distant State

The question related to the state was harder to answer for Turkish interviewees. Some of the younger interviewees, especially those working in the private sector with comfortable incomes, responded to my question in a surprised and bewildered manner. Here are some examples of the first reactions I received to my question from three male interviewees:

Gökhan (38): What type of an expectation can we ever have from the state? I mean what type of an answer do you expect us to give?

Faruk (34): We do not expect anything from the state as a family. I think that would be very unrealistic; why should you expect anything in Turkey?

Cemil (35): How can the state be of any help for anything? I don't understand.

In some cases, I explained the reasons behind the formulation of this question, mentioned the findings of my earlier research, gave examples from Norway, and specifically asked if there is any policy they wished had existed. Political orientation and level of involvement were the major factors that influenced interviewees' conceptualizations of and expectations towards the state. Those who held social democratic views had clearer expectations directed at the state. In general, older interviewees had higher expectations and a belief in the state, while younger interviewees mainly express a lack of basic trust.

Several of the older interviewees displayed a relative optimism concerning the state, even though they were critical of its present condition. Bora (59), who defines himself as a "secular social democrat", claimed that the state, and not the private sector, should take care of basic social services:

In Turkey they are trying to make the state smaller. I think this is politics gone astray. The state must not get smaller. There are important affairs that the state must take care of...For example social services. Today, we can take care of ourselves, but families are getting smaller and we will need certain institutions when we get older, like rehabilitation centers and homes for the elderly. It is the state that must build these. I think this is something Turkey lacks. You cannot expect such things from the private sector. Because, if the private sector does it, it will do it with the purpose of profit and then your economic situation will determine a lot...It is impossible for us to afford private institutions for the elderly with the pensions we get from the state...So I believe that we must expect certain things from the state.

Mine (62) who is an idealistic believer in Turkish modernization, expects state support for families:

The mentality of the 'social state' must be established in Turkey. Social justice is as important as are economic problems...As I see it, the number one problem of Turkey is the problem of population. It has a very big population...The state must establish organized family-planning policies...I believe that the state must support

the family in many ways. There must be official support for working mothers, especially.

Most Turkish interviewees were critical about the present condition of the state. They think it is disorganized and lacks the capacity to solve even the basic problems of health-care and education. A general pessimism prevailed. Umut (39) explained how she felt powerless vis-à-vis the state:

These days, neo-liberal trends have declared this out of fashion, I mean expecting something from the state, but I find this very meaningless...The state must provide support for people in the areas of education, health and childcare...But I feel this way about Turkey: I pay taxes, I mean they are directly taken from my salary, but I have no say in anything, no say in the politics that might concern me. In Turkey, the state has turned into a total extortionist, I think it is in terrible condition...People have no confidence anymore.

Most interviewees mentioned the need of a total reorganization to 'clean up' the state. Oya (52) had some expectations, but a reorganization was the precondition:

Well, I do have expectations from the state. They are talking about the need for a 'clean society,' but the state itself is very dirty. First of all, this rottenness – the politics which are remnants of very old times and rigid discourses – must change. As I see it, Turkey needs new brainpower to develop new projects and broaden its horizons...I think that the state in Turkey must be reorganized all over again.

Some younger interviewees appeared to have totally given up on the idea of expecting anything from the state. Levent (32) explained why he 'gave up' on the state:

I don't have any expectations. I had some earlier, then I gave up. I mean one learns not to expect anything. For example, I had applied for scholarship and the like several times, but I did not receive anything, and after that I gave up... So the state should not expect anything from us either.

State assistance is generally conceived of as relevant only for those employed in the public sector or those who are in poverty. Figen (33) believes that mainly people with lower income levels expect something from the state, and that expectation comes as a result of need. She and her husband, on the other hand, prefer private solutions, for example for the education of their child:

We started saving money to be able to send him to a private school. Nobody prefers state schools because they have a lower quality, lower level of education. It is the same in health. There is a big difference between the private and the state hospitals. Therefore, we always have this notion in our minds that even if the state does something, it will not do it well and it will not be sufficient for us.

Opting for private social goods, especially in the areas of education and health, is commonplace among Turkish dual-career couples with relatively favorable economic means. Ipek (35) explained how she and her husband tried to find individual solutions, without expecting anything from the state:

I do not have any serious expectations from the state, for my old age, or anything else...If we are earning well today, we will make our own investment. To be able to send our child to a better school, we must work in jobs in which we will earn better. So, we seek all the solutions individually, or in our close personal relations.

Dilek (41) thought that family policies would be 'luxurious' for Turkey given the lack of health and pension policies. To clarify my question concerning expectations from the state, I asked if they thought that the state could support families in any way.

Dilek: State support for families? (*Interviewer: Like public childcare centers or longer leaves of absence?*) No, these are very extreme things, I mean they are not related to Turkey's realities. In Turkey, the state cannot handle the most basic social services, I mean it cannot solve two basic problems: the first one is the health problem, and the second one is pension security...When these problems prevail, you cannot demand that working women be allowed to work less or leave early. I mean you just cannot make such demands. Unemployment is high, and there are many people who can fill your place, so you cannot make such a demand. We do not have the luxury!

Dilek's reaction to my question is an example of the 'market logic' that is a predominant approach to social problems in Turkey. The dominance of the neo-liberal policies renders any expectation from the state unrealistic and out-dated. In general, the state is a distant, and in some cases even scary entity. Tulin (38) and Tolga (40) stated clearly that the only thing they want from the state is for it to stay away from them:

Tulin: I just expect that it does not expect anything from me! (laughs) I mean I will pay my taxes, I just do not want it to touch me...

Tolga: In my head, the state is like a center of dictatorship; therefore, I am always a proponent of keeping a distance...In a way, I am afraid of the state. Therefore, I do not expect anything. I feel in one way or another the state will always be against me and never with me.

This couple exemplifies an extreme case of a total lack of confidence in the state. Even though this attitude is rare, what united most Turkish interviewees was a basic cautious and critical approach to state policies and ideologies.

6.6 Concluding Notes on the State

As I had expected, the answers given to this question showed great variation between the Turkish and Norwegian groups. Norwegians emerged as relatively homogeneous concerning their expectations from the state, while the variation among Turkish interviewees was high. In general, Norwegians had much higher and varied expectations, while many Turkish respondents had little to say concerning what they might expect from the state. The major variation in the Turkish group was caused by the level of political involvement. Those who had social democratic ideals had more clearly formulated and concrete expectations.

Norwegians were mainly positive about the state and they appreciated having a system that provided a basic “safety network.” Their criticisms were mainly directed toward aspects of specific policies that they conceived of as ‘unjust’ or ‘non-egalitarian,’ not toward the general principles upon which the welfare system is built. Turkish interviewees, on the other hand, were critical of some of the basic principles underlying the state and would appreciate a ‘total reorganization.’ The state, as an entity, had different connotations for Turkish and Norwegian interviewees. In broad terms, the state was distant, authoritarian, and disappointingly corrupt for most Turkish interviewees, while it was a familiar, well-organized and active source of support for Norwegians. A key issue that Norwegians were most positive about were gender equality policies of the state. Reflections on gender is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 7 Gendered Experiences and Ideologies

“Gender relations are structured in contexts – employment, families, and state institutions – that play a major part in reproducing the gender order (or gender system). However, these structures are negotiated and interpreted by changing and flexible gendered subjects. Both the structures, and the manner in which individuals and groups work on them and interpret them, may be investigated empirically” (Crompton 1999: 7).

In this chapter the main theme is different aspects of gender in the two countries. The interviewees’ evaluations related to the gender arrangements in their societies will be analyzed in light of their personal gendered ideologies. The main focus will be interviewees’ personal gendered experiences and their evaluations related to women’s and men’s societal positions in Turkey and Norway.

Gender refers to socio-culturally constructed components attached to each sex and these socio-cultural definitions of biological sex have an important part in organizing social activity –alongside with class, race and ethnicity. The totality of the relationships between women and men can be conceptualized as a ‘gender system.’ (Crompton 1999) The gender system is instantiated through the development of institutions such as welfare states, employment regimes, family law and national cultures. Gender relations are produced and reproduced via already existing institutions, norms, and practices, as well as through the ongoing relationships between individual men and women (ibid: 19).

The interacting influences of specific historical, geographical, cultural and economic conditions give way to specific ‘gender orders’ and ideologies in different national or regional contexts. Gender ideologies are taken-for-granted assumptions concerning proper societal ‘roles’ of men and women and ‘normal’ models for division of paid and unpaid labor between the sexes and are often ambiguous and historically changeable. Individuals also often display ideologies that are apparently gendered. These can be well-articulated and active, or latent and almost unconscious. Gender ideologies are products of interacting influences of diverse factors, like an individual’s socialization, family background, education, occupation, religiosity, sexual orientation and so on. Gender ideologies are never fixed at a given time; they develop, change and gain different levels of significance in interaction with others. As Barbara Marshall (1995) also indicates, there is an inherent tension between the term ‘woman’ (and ‘man’) as a theoretical construct which implies gender as universally constitutive of the subject, and the realities of really existing ‘women’ (and ‘men’) who may or may not share a unified gender identity (Marshall 1995: 112). Therefore it is more appropriate to speak of “gendered identities” implying a recognition of plurality and difference without abandoning the notion that

gender does play a part in constituting the subject. Accordingly, we must understand gender as *relational*. The recognition of the tension between subject and structure allows us to proceed in dialectical fashion in re-conceptualizing gendered identities as historically *interpreted*—multiple, often contradictory, and actively constructed according to historically available modes of interpretation (Marshall 1995).

At the interview guide, there were several questions directly or indirectly related to gender. Gender is a theme that is inherent in the basic research problem of analyzing the relationships between states, families and individuals and forms one of the main dimensions of comparison between Turkey and Norway. One question in the interview guide was formulated to gather interviewees' evaluations of their ideas about societal positions of women and men, as well as of their own gendered experiences. The question takes two forms: "What do you think about being a woman/man in Norway/Turkey?" (asked of both the woman and the man separately); and, "Do you see any advantages/disadvantages attached to being a woman/man in Norway/Turkey?" In answering these questions, interviewees both talked about their own experiences and evaluated what they see as 'gendered patterns' in society at large.

7.1 Reflections on Gendered Experiences in Turkey

The main characteristic of the Turkish interviewees' accounts on gender is that there is no agreement concerning the significance of gender as a basic social variable. Most interviewees argued that the heterogeneity of Turkish society and the impact of differences between groups of men and women based on location, class, and educational level are more important than gender in influencing individual lives. Many women pointed to the existence of gender-based discriminations both in the labor-market, education system and families, but at the same time claimed that they themselves do not experience such discrimination in their own environments.

There were few reflections related to the experiences of being a man in Turkey. Most men spoke about women's position, instead of reflecting on their own. There were also few female interviewees who utilized examples from their own lives or referred to their own situations while talking about 'women's problems.' Most asserted that they belong to a 'luckier' section of the society and the issues they mention refer to mainly to 'other,' 'less lucky' women. A general belief that prevailed among Turkish interviewees was that things would get better with increasing modernization. In this context more modernization means urbanization and higher education for more people.

In most cases, men and women in a single couple agreed on issues related to gender. However, there were also couples who disagreed on important issues. One couple, especially, disagreed gravely on the basic meaning of gender as a social variable and started discussing the issue intensely. Their discussion will be used as a case study at the end of this section.

7.1.1 On Turkish Women: “Emancipated but not Liberated?”³⁵

The interview accounts concerning women in Turkish society can be analyzed under three general, and related, headings: Heterogeneity, restrictive moral norms and discriminatory labor market. Let us scrutinize each of these topics and their interrelations by concentrating on specific interview accounts.

a) Heterogeneity

It was difficult for most of the interviewees to generalize about “Turkish women” due to the huge differences between the lives of women belonging to different groups. Most Turkish interviewees stressed the differences between the living conditions of women in different regions. According to them, the heterogeneity of Turkey made it impossible to make generalizations regarding gender issues. Acknowledging the ‘secondary status’ of women, especially in rural areas, several interviewees mentioned that women in the big cities, who have attained higher education, are ‘luckier’ in most senses. The significant differences among women was often expressed with the standard statement: ‘I do not feel any disadvantages personally as a woman, but...’ This claim was often followed by observations on the problems of ‘other women’ who were conceived to be less lucky.

Tulin (38) pointed at the significance of class differences and reflected on her own position within that perspective. She started her reflections by mentioning that she did not think about gender-related issues very often:

These are not things that I think about often (*the disadvantages faced by women*). I mean, it is difficult to be a human being in Turkey, as in many other countries...Probably, being a woman has additional burdens, in traditional societies like us, but these are very standard things that you know about...But I guess women living in our environment – in Istanbul – and at our income-level – typically middle-class – they are luckier. We do not face the disadvantages of being woman as much. But I can’t distinguish clearly: Is it us who are not forcing the borders? – that is, we entered that traditional structure, at least in appearance – and they are not touching us; or is it them who accepted us? I mean, I don’t know if we entered their patterns of life. But frankly, I do not face the disadvantages of being a woman directly. Of course, you experience many small humiliations in daily life, but you learn to cope with them from when you are very young.

In this context, the ‘they’ she refers to are those with traditional attitudes towards women and men with strict role definitions. Operating with a ‘we/they’ distinction signifies the extreme heterogeneity of Turkish society and the co-existence of social groups with radically different value orientations. A major factor that defines those differences is individuals’ attitudes towards traditions, religion, and modernity. Even in urban areas, there are various groups with differing attitudes concerning ‘appropriate’ gender roles.

³⁵ I borrow this title from an article authored by Deniz Kandiyoti (1987).

Bora (59) believed that further modernization would bring gender equality. He also approached women's status in Turkey by focusing on internal differences. According to him, the main difference was between small towns and urban areas:

Turkey is a country of mosaics. And these mosaics spread in such a way from west to east, from south to north, that differences make themselves visible immediately. Accordingly, different interpretations on sexuality (*gender*) prevail in Turkey. Some regions are very conservative, very intolerant. We were lucky in a way, because the places we met and have lived since we have been married were among the regions that are modern on these issues (...) In smaller towns people are relatively conservative. Woman is seen as secondary relative to man, and it is expected that she will act accordingly in her life. People think woman can't work, they must return home absolutely before dark, they cannot go out to movies or cafes alone. It is a sad truth that these thoughts still prevail in those regions. But of course, it is not possible to say something like that in reference to Istanbul. There has been much development especially concerning the youth's understanding of sexuality. There also have been positive developments in (*the smaller city he comes from*) because recently they opened a university there. I believe that such developments take place more quickly in places where there are universities.

Bora's thoughts represent a common way of thinking about gender in Turkey. Many people believe that Turkish women have their basic rights, and therefore further modernization will erase existing problems. I call this attitude the 'liberated modern Turkish woman myth.' It is a powerful and widely held belief that leads many women and men to believe that modern women do not have any specific disadvantages. Dilek (41) also thought that 'urban, educated Turkish women are not much different than any other European woman, and stated that she did not experience any disadvantages related to being a woman in her own social environment:

One must not take Turkey as a unified whole. Turkey is a place that is made up of many small pieces. In Istanbul, and in my own social environment, there is no difference between being a woman and being a man...I mean in the big cities, I have never experienced any disadvantage from being a woman. But, I also did not go out at midnight, to tell the truth. There were times I returned home at 10 or 11. Inside Istanbul, there are also different platforms. I mean I can be out in (*a wealthy district*) but not in (*a suburban-poorer district*).

Dilek used 'freedom of going out' as a signifier for women's freedom and liberation while reflecting on gender. Restrictions on 'going out alone' were mentioned by several Turkish interviewees as a problem for women. Traditional practices of assigning women mainly to the 'domestic' (private) sphere continue to exist, even in the urban areas of Turkey. This point takes us to a deeper analysis of norms and attitudes of gender discrimination that continue to prevail.

b) Restrictive Moral Norms

Many respondents talked about social norms that are formed by the interweaving of long-lasting traditions and religious dogma and how they function in a gender

discriminatory manner. Most of these norms are products of religious morality, which demands 'purity' and 'decency' from women. This means that they should not be too visible, too comfortable, or too 'free.' Elif (37) was highly critical of 'moral double-standards' that function to restrict women. She was one of the female interviewees who displayed a relatively radical approach towards gender-related problems and stated that a complex interaction between religious, cultural and economic factors are at work creating restrictive norms about gender. She provided a vivid explanation of the ways these norms function to label women as 'good vs. bad':

According to me, both being a woman and being a man are difficult in this country... There are many social values, norms that are forcefully imposed on women. The woman experiences something akin to being both covered and opened up at the same time. On the one hand, it is expected that she have a creative, hard-working, skillful work life; but on the other hand, she has to be freer, unrestricted and relaxed to be able to accomplish this. When she does that, a social indictment appears immediately, labeling her a 'bad woman.'

The phenomenon of, 'being covered up and opened up at the same time,' refers to the conflicting expectations that most women face related to the modern and traditional definitions of their positions in society. Due to the strong ideal of, 'modernizing by holding onto traditional values,' such ambiguities are not rare in Turkey. Women are supposed to attain higher education and participate in the labor market, but give priority to their families or dress in a modern way but stay modest at the same time. A virtuous woman can be out in the 'public' if necessary, but her real place is the home. As Durakbaşa (1998) also argues, the 'Kemalist female identity' was based on a combination of conflicting images and "however modernist an ideology it was, Kemalism could not alter the traditional norms of morality that guaranteed a biologically defined and socially constraining femininity for women" (Durakbaşa 1998: 148).

Several respondents mentioned restrictions on women 'going out alone' as a main disadvantage. Oya (52) also mentioned how easily a woman can be labeled a 'bad woman':

Turkish women are unlucky in terms of going out, staying out until late at night talking to friends, or having dinner somewhere. They cannot do that easily, because if they do, they might be viewed as 'bad.'

Even in urban areas and among the most modernized segments of society, the processes of morally stigmatizing women based solely on their 'freer' behavior continue.

According to Ayla (54), sexual harassment was the number one problem in Turkey, and she saw socialization in families as a major factor in reproducing gender inequalities:

In Turkey, being a man is an advantage, and being a woman is a disadvantage. This is the thing that makes me very angry all the time, that women are not given enough rights. Women are second class citizens in all respects. Both in society and in families...From her childhood, she is always repressed, like, 'you are a girl, you cannot do that, you cannot go there'...I think this is the most important problem of Turkey. There is sexual harassment everywhere...People think that a woman

cannot go out alone at night, whenever she wants. I wish this would change soon, but unfortunately there isn't much progress.

Ipek (35) mentioned that traditional assumptions concerning women's domestic roles have not disappeared in Turkey:

The idea that, 'the female bird builds the nest,' is imposed on you from several angles. It is expected that women will continue their traditional 'duties' even though they work outside the home.

'The female bird builds the nest,' is a popular proverb often used in discussions concerning gender roles. It is an orientation that assigns all domestic arrangements to women, as their natural duty. References to nature are powerful tools for justifying unnatural human practices. Expectations related to being a good 'female bird,' that is a good wife and a mother, clash with expectations related to being a good employee in the labor market. This takes us to the third field most commonly mentioned by interviewees while reflecting on women's positions in Turkey.

c) Discriminatory Labor Market

Interviewees frequently mentioned problems that women face in the labor market. The difficulties have two major aspects: Gender discrimination practiced by employers in the labor market and a lack of organized support for working mothers. Elif (37) and Emre (37), who both display egalitarian gendered ideologies, used examples from their own environments on how employers discriminate against women:

Emre: I don't think that women and men are given equal opportunities. I mean definitely not in small places, it is not even worth mentioning. But I don't believe that they are equals in big cities either...because, I have friends who are employers, and I know that they prefer men. If they make investments or train workers, they think that women will be away for a long period after giving birth, so they prefer men.

Elif: I even heard that there are workplaces who ask for a signed paper stating that she will not have children in 2 years, or 5 years.

Berna (51) also mentioned the prevalence of gender discrimination in the labor market, especially concerning women who are – or may become – mothers:

There are some managers who think this way: 'If we employ a woman, she might take maternal leave and then work will be interrupted.' Therefore they prefer to employ men.

Gaye (36), mother of a 2 year-old child, first argued that she personally did not feel the disadvantages of being a woman in her environment. But upon reflection she remembered the difficulties she faced as a pregnant woman at work:

Being pregnant was a very stressful experience at work. The minute they learned that I was pregnant, they started asking 'when are you leaving?' We must find

another person to fill your place right away.’ There was a lot of tension. I had a very hard time proving that I could do this job while I was pregnant, and that I could do it after birth as well. When they saw that I could work, they forgot that I was pregnant for a while. But then they started again: ‘How will you take care of your child and work at the same time?’... This is one of the difficulties of being a woman, and I am mentioning it since I experienced it myself. I am not talking about women in general.

These reflections and experiences exemplify the processes that disadvantage women in the labor market, and all are related to women’s motherhood roles.

Women’s societal position has a strategic place in Turkish modernization. While some researchers use the label ‘state feminism’ to characterize the period of revolutionary modernization in which basic citizenship rights of women were established, others are critical of this usage. For example, Zehra Arat (1994) argues that Kemalist reforms were not aimed at liberating women or at promoting the development of female consciousness and feminine identity. Instead, they strove to equip Turkish women with the education and skills that would improve their contributions to the “republican patriarchy” by making them better wives and mothers (Arat 1994: 58). Atatürk saw motherhood as the most important function and virtue of women, and stated that women should strive to be good mothers and contribute to the modernization project by being ‘knowledgeable and enlightened’:

“Today’s mothers have to attain several high qualities in order to bring up children with the necessary qualities and develop them into active members for life today. Therefore, our women are obliged to be more enlightened, more prosperous, and more knowledgeable than our men are. If they really want to be the mothers of this nation, this is the way” (From Atatürk’s Speeches, quoted in Z. Arat 1994: 60).

This ambiguous female ideal of Kemalism is still alive and widely held, forming the basis of the ‘liberated modern Turkish woman’ myth in Turkey.

7.1.2. *On Turkish Men: An Unknown Territory?*

There were far fewer reflections on experiences and observations of ‘being a man’ in Turkey. Most male interviewees talked about issues related to women’s positions when asked about gender roles in Turkey. A pattern emerges based on the short comments interviewees gave regarding ‘Turkish men’ in general: There is a taken-for-granted use of the term ‘standard Turkish men,’ and most interviewees used this in a negative sense, placing themselves in opposition to this standard. This ‘standard Turkish man’ is often pictured as a ‘macho’ man, who has a ‘traditional’ attitude toward women who sees them as secondary or as ‘sexual objects,’ who does not do any housework, and who is not very involved in the care of his children.

Adnan (59) was proud of having been actively involved in the upbringing of his children and sharing the housework with his wife, but he warned me:

But this is how we, in particular, think. I must add that 90 percent of Turkish men cannot manage housework, or do not help... (*Later in the interview*) Our attitudes do

not reflect those of Turkish men in general. In general, men do not take responsibility for housework or for minding children. Whether their wives work or not, most men do not help.

Another area in which respondents depicted a picture of standard Turkish men was related to sexuality and sexual attitudes towards women. Ilhan (38) was supportive of gender equality in theory. He characterized Turkish men as 'undeveloped' in their approaches to women:

In the well defined men's jargon of Turkey, there are different categories of women: women to date, women to sleep with and women to marry...Men in Turkey are not very developed; there are certain evaluations claiming that they try to solve their Oedipus complexes through their wives...Turkish men are underdeveloped (sexually and emotionally). They still operate with categorizations of women.

Elif (37) also referred to these 'categories of women' while telling about how difficult it was for both women and men in Turkey to live with those moral-sexual orientations:

Men have categories like 'woman to marry,' 'woman to date,' and so on, so the woman faces such divisions and discriminations. I think in such a condition, the man is also in a pitiful state. So there is a mutual spitefulness.

Egalitarian male interviewees were careful to distance themselves from this 'standard Turkish man.' For example, Gökhan (38), who disliked the traditional norms concerning gender, mentioned that 'not being a typical macho man' might cause problems in Turkey. 'Being too soft' is a negative label and an assault on one's masculinity.

Two interviewees reflected on the situation of Turkish men by referring to the heavy 'duties' that are imposed on them in the traditional family structure. The 'breadwinner-role' and the expectations related to it may be experienced as problematic. Sevim (44), who is critical of the traditional expectations directed at women argued that the traditional family structure can be oppressive for men as well:

In fact, the situation of the man is also hard in Turkey; he has heavy responsibilities loaded on his shoulders. It is expected that he will provide for the family, ensuring the future of his wife and children. He has a real heavy load on his shoulders in fact. And he struggles to fulfill them. But men do not want to share that much either. I mean, they both refuse to share and are crushed under their load at the same time. That is a fact.

Tolga (40), an egalitarian and untraditional man, had a similar point about the traditional family lives' restrictions:

The biggest difficulty of men is the necessity of entering a family structure and continuing it, even though they don't want to. This did not reflect on me since from the start we had an equal line. Tulin never came to the situation of telling me: 'You earn the money, and I will stay at home and care for the child' or maybe, she could not. But maybe if my income were really very high, she would prefer staying at home... (*laughs*) Who knows?

The accounts above point at an awareness of the fact that traditional gender role expectations are detrimental for men as well. Being a sole 'breadwinner' for the family may be a stressful experience given the developments in the labor markets which involve higher risks in upholding a secure employment.

7.1.3 Divergent Accounts

In general, most interviewees talked about 'disadvantages' of being a woman or about 'men's dominance' when asked to reflect on gender in Turkey. Two interviewees provided accounts that diverge from the general arguments pointing at women's relative disadvantages analyzed above. Nermin(68) an ambitious career woman and Adnan (58) an egalitarian, yet highly traditional man argued that in some instances women can get too dominant and repress men. Adnan thought that, though few in number, some women tend to get too dominant:

In big cities, in some families, women are more unrestricted, have their own freedom, even more than the level of men. This is above equality...but of course these are in minority...And when women are superior, they get really superior, and start constraining men. This time men are dominated by their wives, get restricted. There are such persons as well.

Nermin was critical of the housewives who constantly nag and even implied that they destroy the health of their husbands with their capricious behavior:

According to me, well of course in Anatolia, women are oppressed. But in city life, it is mainly women who oppress men! (*laughs*) What I see in the city is that there are a lot of widows; many men die of heart diseases at the age of 50 or 55 (*laughs*). In the last 15-20 years, I see that young fathers are wonderful, they help their wives a lot. I mean, it is mainly women who are capricious...especially non-working women. Because working women do not have the energy to nag!

As the accounts above demonstrate there were many divergent approaches to the question of gender among Turkish interviewees. I will end this section with a case study of a couple that disagreed totally concerning the significance of gender in social life.

7.2 Case D: Ceyda and Cemil: A Dispute on the Significance of Gender

Ceyda is 35 years old. She has a degree in engineering and works as a mid-level manager at a private company. Her husband Cemil is also 35 years old. He has a degree in economics and works as a top manager at a private firm. Cemil and Ceyda have been married for 6 years and they have a three years old daughter. They have extremely long working hours and stressful jobs. Both are devoted to their careers, yet Cemil appeared to be the more ambitious one. A characteristic sets Cemil apart from the other interviewees: he was the only person who at times answered ironically to my questions. In the beginning of the interview he was reluctant to provide detailed answers and it took effort

to break the tension in the air and make him feel comfortable. After a hard start, he eventually became more interested and involved.

Ceyda and Cemil started arguing vehemently when I asked them to reflect on what they conceive as advantages and disadvantages of being a woman and a man in Turkey. Ceyda thought that women in general were disadvantaged in Turkey, while Cemil believed that other variables – mainly economic status – were more significant in determining one's position:

Ceyda: It is definitely difficult to be a woman in this country...I believe that, there is an equality of opportunities only in my own environment. And I, personally, experience very few negative reactions just because I am a woman. But this is because I am me. It is related to my own social environment. But there are still women who are beaten up by their husbands or sexually harassed at the workplace, so, if you look at it generally, I do not believe that women have equal opportunities...

Cemil: (*interrupts her*) You don't say so! Go and see in Holland; it is much worse than here.

Ceyda: In what sense?

Cemil: In terms of inequality between men and women.

Ceyda: But here, first of all there is the pressure of religion. I mean some women cannot even go out alone comfortably.

Cemil: Of course she can go out, why couldn't she?

Ceyda: If you only limit it to the 10-15 persons you see in Istanbul, then they can, of course... Even I cannot go out at night comfortably.

Cemil: I can't go out either.

Ceyda: You can do it more easily.

Cemil: (*louder*) I, as a man, cannot go comfortably to the places that you cannot go as a woman.

Ceyda: I am talking about walking on the streets.

Cemil: It is the same thing.

Ceyda: (*disappointedly*) Oh! How can you be so blind, for God's sake? (*later*) If women were so free, as Cemil says, there wouldn't be only five women in the Parliament. I mean gender inequality is so clear in the political life.

Cemil: But political life is a different type of life. There, you must be a member of the Mafia, or a big landowner, or something like that.

Ceyda: This is what I say, it is a men's world!

Cemil: It is the same everywhere! Is there a woman dominance in American Parliament?

Ceyda: (*laughs*) Let's continue discussing these after the interview. I guess we were waiting for this moment to take up these issues!

Cemil believed that factors other than gender were stronger determinants of social arrangements in Turkey. He claimed that the unbalanced distribution of income and low education levels are the main factors, and that if these basic problems were solved, gender inequalities would disappear. Ceyda, on the other hand, believes that traditional and religious views on women have a significant influence, independent of economic factors. Behind the tension that emerged lies a conflict in terms of gendered ideologies: Cemil was apparently egalitarian concerning gender roles, but he was hostile towards any problematization of existing gender arrangements. By assigning the determining status to economics and level of modernization and ignoring the significance of gender as a social variable, he was also making his hidden traditional gender ideology apparent.

7.3 Reflections on Gendered Experiences in Norway

In general, all Norwegian interviewees referred to a basic change that took place in Norwegian society towards greater gender equality, and most of them appreciated this development. Norwegian women also had more to say about, 'being a woman in Norway' than Norwegian men did about, 'being a man.' Yet, compared to Turkish interviewees, both Norwegian men and women had more to say on gender. 'Gender equality' is a topic that has been on the social agenda for several decades, and gender-related issues are highly politicized.

A common tendency among Norwegian interviewees was to appreciate the advantages of greater gender equality, while pointing to still-existing inequalities or newly established difficulties. A few interviewees mentioned certain difficulties that have been introduced as a result of the dissolution of traditional gender roles. One couple distinguished themselves from the other interviewees in that they thought that, 'equality had gone too far.' I will analyze their reflections as a case study at the end of this section.

Lars (36) is a father of two children who has been active in their care from when they were born. He appreciates the opportunities that exist in Norway that give individuals several choices in terms of 'roles.' However, he also thinks that this leads to very high expectations that are hard to meet:

I think both women and men in Norway get exhausted because there are such huge expectations for an insane number of different roles. There are high expectations that you will be successful at work, keep your home and house in a tolerably good order, take care of your children and support them in all types of activities, and keep yourself in good physical condition and work-out...Some say that what is positive in Norwegian society is the extensive role-freedom, that there are many types of roles you can try to achieve. But I think both women and men

wear themselves out while trying to live up to all these expectations; it gets extremely difficult.

While, many mentioned the toughness of living up to these new ideals and expectations, the general orientation of the majority of interviewees was an appreciation of the change towards a more gender egalitarian society. Especially women talked extensively and positively about this phenomenon.

7.3.1 *Being a Woman in Norway: 'We have come a long way but...'*

The pattern that emerged from the interview accounts concerning women's status in Norway can be summarized with this prototypical sentence: 'In Norway, we have come a long way in equality between the sexes, but...' This sentence was usually followed by reflections on the areas in which equality is not yet achieved. The most commonly named areas in this regard were positions in the labor market, arrangements of care work, media-images of femininity, and backlash trends.

In general, all Norwegian female interviewees appreciated the changes towards greater gender equality that have taken place in Norway. According to them, the biggest and most basic advantages of being a woman in Norway, compared to many other countries, are 'equality' (*likestilling*)³⁶ and 'freedom' (*frihet*).

Grete (32), a mother of two children, works at a private firm, in a 'male-dominated' environment. She compared Norway with the USA when reflecting on gender:

I believe that Norway is one of the countries in which equality between the sexes has gone furthest...I think we have gained much more gender-equality here in Norway, compared to the Americans, for example, who think that they are far ahead on everything possible, but who are actually far behind when it comes to equality. For example, I had an education that was male-dominated and now work in a male-dominated environment, but I don't experience this as a problem at all.

The achievement of gender equality is conceived as a 'freedom' to participate in all areas of society as a woman, including in fields that earlier were mainly reserved for men. The majority of Norwegian female interviewees believe they can get an education and find a job in any field they choose. Jorunn (35) stated the existence of this opportunity, and questioned the fact that she has chosen a 'typically female' occupation:

I experience that I, as a woman in Norway, have access to many opportunities. In relation to education, I can educate myself in the field I choose; and in relation to equality, I expect to be taken seriously as a woman in all areas. I mean, nobody will stop me in reaching leadership positions because I am a woman...The opportunities have always been there, and in a way the challenge for me as a woman has been to use them. But I ended up in a quite traditional female-occupation, and I've thought about this many times. What is the reason that I did

³⁶ The term *likestilling* refers to equality between the sexes and implies both 'sameness' and 'equal status' (Gullestad 1992: 185).

not choose to get a more non-traditional education? This is really not so easy to answer!

Another opportunity brought about by greater gender equality is the freedom to venture ‘outside the home’ alone, as a woman. Bente (52) appreciates these benefits, and thinks that there are neither formal nor attitudinal obstacles that constrain her as a woman:

Yes, I think I am glad to be a woman in Norway, because the type of freedom that women have here is the type of freedom I appreciate. I have the freedom to work, and I can go out and do all the things I want to do alone, as a woman. Theater, movies, concerts, anything at all. I can go to a restaurant alone without it being seen as negative. In my experience, there are no formal obstacles to my development as a woman. And I don’t think that there are any attitudinal obstacles either, at least I do not experience it that way.

While some interviewees were satisfied with the developments unconditionally, others were more careful in pointing out both positive and negative consequences of these changes. Camilla (32) is satisfied with gender equality but criticized the societal trend of measuring success only with labor market status:

The advantage must be gender equality, that leave of absence policies give us the chance to have kids. I have a feeling that you can deal with both a family and a job without being obliged to choose one; you have a chance to manage both. And the fact that it is normal for women to attend university makes it much easier to do for others. It is much harder to be the only one. So I have a feeling that this is good here. And also I have a feeling that maybe it is not totally allowed to be a woman without having a job or a career as well. It is not totally accepted to be only a housewife... it is actually only money and status that count in a way, and I have a feeling that there we have lost a little. But the advantage is that we are equals in many ways.

Besides talking positively about changes towards greater gender equality, most Norwegian interviewees mentioned areas that are still characterized by inequalities and disadvantages for women. Many interviewees reflected on gendered aspects of the labor market, and a few of them criticized ‘media images’ of women. In Norway, the labor market is still highly segregated by gender, and there are few women in top positions. Women still face hidden and overt discrimination in the labor market, especially in relation to motherhood.³⁷

Ann (34) explained how difficult it was for her to work in a male-dominated work environment:

My job was originally a male dominated profession. In many ways, it still is. I remember that in the beginning I had to prove myself. My boss was a sixty year-old man who prioritized my male colleagues in front of me and I had to take up a fight with him. It was quite tough. It is hard to say, ‘I am as good as he is,’ rather than them seeing it themselves.

³⁷ An in-depth analysis of reflections on mothers in the labor market was taken up in section 5.1.

Ann added that the conditions became better in later years, but that she had to struggle for changes. In contrast to Ann, Jorunn (35) worked in a female-dominated profession. Her main complaint was that the salaries in her field were lower than in typically-male professions that demanded an equal amount of education:

I think a lot of work has been done in Norway to achieve gender equality. If you look at the last twenty years, there has been an enormous change...but there are still things to do, for example concerning equal pay for comparable work. My education can be compared to an engineering education, but there is a wide gap between salaries.

Some of the interviewees pointed to definitions and expectations related to 'femininity' as contradictory, as well. Ann (34) sees the dominant femininity-ideal as one of the obstacles to the achievement of full gender equality:

I think Norway has come a long way, not the least with family politics. There are some good regulations for achieving gender equality. But at the same time, I don't think that we have come as far as we want to believe. There are still things that are left. For example, there are certain trends, like it is 'in' to be feminine and womanly. Feminine is defined in such a way that I don't recognize myself at all.

Nina (32) conceives of the "ideal woman" dominant in advertisements as unrealistic and repressive:

Just look at all the advertisements: lots of women with big breasts. You should be tall and slim and in good shape, but at the same time, you should also have a good education and money in the bank and a good apartment... There is an ideal for women out there that I don't think is very positive, because it is not something with which I identify.

Hilde (49) argued that young women especially were influenced by these images:

Changes in expectations related to femininity occur quickly and shift back and forth.... But there is always an underlying demand for femininity, and expectations about how women should behave, how they should look, to be regarded as successful, and to be among those who are preferred. I think there are very strong signals there, and they influence especially the younger generation.

Camilla (32) argued that the demands concerning femininity were so conflicting that it was hard to fulfill them no matter what one did:

You are expected to be effective at work, but if you have to manage everything, you cannot think about how you look. Nevertheless you are expected to be feminine and look feminine as well. So in that way, there is pressure...But at the same time, you should not be too feminine either, because then you don't fit to your job properly. So there is pressure in both directions and you feel that you cannot stretch yourself to cover all the demands, no matter what you do.

As the examples cited above make clear, many women feel that conflicting expectations and demands continue to exist in Norwegian society, though important steps have been

taken towards greater gender equality. Let us now move on to an analysis of men's ideas and evaluations concerning their experiences of being male in Norwegian society.

7.3.2 *Being a Man in Norway: 'I would not want to switch places with my father'*

In general, Norwegian men find it more difficult to answer questions related to their gendered experiences than do Norwegian women. Ingmar (61), for example, admitted this frankly:

I have basically no observations about being a man in Norway...actually, I haven't reflected much on it.

Bjarne (52) first argued that this was mainly a "woman question":

The question you are asking is maybe first and foremost a woman question, having to do with women's place in society. When you ask me how it is to be a man in Norway compared to being a man in other countries... I don't know if I could come up with many things to say.

Bente: You could have made the decisions more if you lived in another country.

Bjarne: Yes, maybe one feels that one could have more power...but for me, personally, having more power is not so terribly important.

However, a while later in the interview, after listening to his wife's comments regarding gender equality, Bjarne enthusiastically pointed out something that he conceived to be a positive development for men in Norway:

Yes, now I remember something that I can say on this! Namely, that I would have experienced marriage in another country, with a more traditional woman, as boring. Marrying a woman who stayed home, potting flowers and ironing sheets and stuff like that, would have been much more boring for me. I think it would have been dull to be married under such social conditions, compared to what we are experiencing now, when we are both active in the labor market... That makes a couple relationship much more interesting and exciting.

The general trend among male interviewees was to reflect on changes that have taken place as a result of changes in women's positions. A majority of the respondents appreciate these changes, while pointing to certain areas that they conceive as disadvantageous. The most frequently mentioned advantages were related to the possibilities of having more interesting couple relationships and closer father-child relationships.

The majority of male Norwegian interviewees appreciate the changes in women's positions, arguing that being with active and liberated women make their lives more exciting. Arne (33) feels that it would have been very hard for him to behave like a 'macho-guy':

I think there are advantages to being a man in Norway. It is more exciting to be with women who are allowed to be active, either in professional life or in dating...I

do not feel comfortable in a macho-guy role. It would be a burden if I had to take initiative all the time.

Henrik (50) reflected extensively on changes in male-roles in Norway, and explained how he would never want to 'switch places with his father':

Many people say that we have lost our positions and advantages. And of course, in a way, we have done that. It was very easy for my father to be at home, he did his own thing at work and he couldn't care less about what happened at home; he had zero interest. He had dinner on the table, and everything was delivered to his hands: clean clothes, ironed shirts. He did not need to bother about childcare. Some think that these are in a way lost privileges, but I don't see it that way. I think I had a much richer life than he had. Even though at times it has been problematic for me as well, in times of crises, when things are stressful and it affects my mood, then I think, "Damn! It would be good to be free from all this nonsense. How good they had it in the old days!" But in fact, they did not. So I would not really want to switch places. I do not see it as something lost, but the reverse. Thus, I do not feel my male-role threatened by anything at all.

Hilde: And you have a much closer relationship with your children than your father had.

Henrik: Yes, that's what I mean! I would never trade it; it can't even be compared. You gain something that actually is a benefit, and in some situations you lose something that only looks like a loss, but which actually is not a loss. It is a different way of organizing everyday life with which you gain many other things. And if you think of man's role sexually, I think we have it much better than our parent's generation since women's roles are much more independent. They make their own decisions to a much higher degree than before.

What, then, are the disadvantages on which interviewees commented in relation to changes in gender roles and relations in Norway? A main problem mentioned by several respondents is the difficulty of living up to the high expectations one faces, both in the labor market and at home. Magne (37) reported that he has had to deal with 'jokes' concerning his priorities at work:

How is it to be a man?...I think I enjoy my role as a man. It feels like one is quite free to choose. I mean there are not strong expectations that you will do this or that. You can almost pick and choose, and everything is accepted. On the other hand, maybe there is some pressure, because it is expected that you will be everywhere and at times you get pulled between different expectations. In the professional world, it is expected – though in an undefined way – that you will be more available than you actually can be, if you also want to participate at home the way it is expected of that role. So that there can be some time pressure, and sometimes people make old-fashioned jokes like, 'Aren't you coming tonight? Aren't you the boss at home?' They say it very playfully, but they say it so many times that I wonder if they mean it.

Jarle (36) thinks that gender equality, if misinterpreted as ‘sameness,’ can lead to a situation in which it can be difficult to find room for ‘typically male activities’:

I think it is all right to be a man in Norway. People constantly write about how men’s roles are changing, and they are perhaps changing, but I don’t feel that it is problematic...I take gender equality a matter of course, in relation to education, work, division of labor at home, and so on. But at the same time, it is important to be aware of the fact that there are differences between men and women. We have our strong and weak sides that are mostly determined by gender...In Norway, where equality is accomplished in many aspects of society, it can be difficult for men to find room for the special things that are typical for men. However, it is not totally clear what they would be.

This point brings us to the case study of this section. Camilla and Cato were critical of the ways gender-roles have dissolved ‘almost totally blown out’ and they long for more clearly defined ‘roles’ to make life easier.

7.4 Case E. Camilla and Cato: Missing More Defined Gender Roles: Traditional or Postmodern? Backlash or Progress?

Camilla and Cato are in their early 30s. They have two kids under school age. Both have been working full-time the last decade, but now Camilla wants to reduce her working hours and spend more time with the children. Cato has been actively involved in the care of their children, and he appreciates the increasing acceptance of fathers who give priority to their children. They had many discussions earlier concerning the division of housework, and they decided to get paid help to resolve them. They went away from the ‘sharing everything’ model, after trying and failing, and now define different domains of responsibility. Camilla is critical of the fact that in Norway, success is measured by labor-market status, and that it is no longer socially accepted to be ‘only’ a housewife. She feels that she has realized her ambitions at work and now would like to be at home with the kids more often. Both think that it should be possible to raise a family with one income only – not necessarily the man’s — and hope that money will be less important in the future.

Cato: We actually have a little trouble with that in a way, because all the gender roles got totally blown away, at some point in time.

Camilla: Do you mean here at home?

Cato: Yes, isn’t that right? You repair things and I clean the house, and in a way there are no clearly defined roles... And I imagine that, at least if you take the male role in other countries, it would have been much easier actually. I mean if you knew that father repairs things and drives the car, and he has nothing to do with cooking. I mean if role patterns were more defined, it would have made life much easier. At the same time, it is of course positive that men taking care of children is legitimate now, is totally OK.

Camilla: We clash a lot with each other. For example, we were out buying carpets and we had that big argument. In that way, I feel that we clash. It would have been much easier if certain things were defined as my domain.

Cato: I believe that slightly more rigid role patterns could have been an advantage in a way... I think it is all right to be a little different. So if the roles were more defined, maybe you could ...

Camilla: (*interrupts*) With the roles, I would like you to be a proper man and take care of everything related to it, while I sit back and decide things, damn it! (*laughs*)

Cato: I think it would have been easier that way.

Camilla: But being a man in Norway, wouldn't you say something about it?

Cato: Yes, I think I said something about it. I mean, in a way there is a little problem. Of course it is very positive that it is possible for a man to be at home and take care of his children, that nobody looks at you strange because of that. But, it has some negative aspects as well. There was something nice with the old role patterns, since you had more defined tasks. In the old days, it was the woman who was the boss inside the doorstep, and outside it was the man. And of course, we don't have that anymore...If everybody had a defined domain, it would have been much simpler. Then Camilla could be a 'real woman' who works at home, and would be the chief there, and I could be a 'real-man' in my own domain.

Camilla: We would sure have discussions anyhow...

Cato: Not necessarily, if the culture decided that women will make decisions in the home, or outside the home, and that is that! That is to say, if a little boy was used to the fact that it is mamma who decides everything inside, then things would be unproblematic, that's for sure.

Camilla and Cato long for 'defined' gender roles, but they also strive to differentiate this from the 'back to patriarchal roles' campaign of traditionalists. Camilla emphasized the fact that she wouldn't want to lose any of her decision-making power, but wishes that it would be more acceptable to be a housewife. Cato enjoys being active in caring for their children, but dislikes constantly having conflicts over housework. They see a biological aspect to these conflicts:

Cato: I think there are quite obvious differences (*between women and men*). For example, that thing we talked about; I can think that the house is nice and tidy, while you may think it is a rat house! (*laughs*) It is a trivial example, but there is something there. You want to have things done, while I am more process-oriented...I am absorbed by doing things myself, I think that may be biological, that men like mechanical things, have a need to master things, like household repairs. Women, to a larger extent, think that it is OK to deliver the car to the garage, while men like fixing it themselves, just to have it done. But if this is biological or not, that is hard to say. But there must be some difference; in a way it would be terrible if there is none!

Camilla: That was what I thought for a long while, that there weren't big differences between women and men. But I realize, after having the kids, that there are great differences after all.

These points take us to a closer examination of the interviewees' reflections on differences between women and men.

7.5 Biology or Socialization?

An important aspect of thinking and theorizing about gender is related to purported biological differences between women and men and their significance in social life. This issue is one of the burning themes of feminist theory, and most theorizing about gender roles in general. I formulated a question in the interview guide to hear what the individual men and women of this study had to say concerning differences between women and men. I was curious to see if there would be significant differences among the respondents in terms of nationality, age, and gender. The question was: "Do you think that there are vital biological differences between men and women that determine their roles in society?" Or alternatively, "Do you think gender differences are mainly based on biology or upbringing?"

No significant pattern occurred in terms of nationality, gender, or age when I grouped together interviewees who believed in the primacy of biology and those who believed in the power of socialization. In both the Turkish and Norwegian groups, roughly half of the respondents believed in the significance of hormonal, genetic, or bodily differences, while the other half believed in the significance of socialization and learned behavior. These groups included a balanced distribution of both gender and age.

The attitudes and beliefs of individuals concerning differences between men and women appear as a complex whole made up of personal experiences, observations, books, and media images. On top of this complexity, these beliefs are historically changeable as well. Many of the respondents, for example, told me how their ideas have changed after having children and observing them grow up. These changes manifested themselves in a shift from the belief in the supremacy of biology to a belief in the supremacy of learning, or vice versa.

Belief in Significant Hormonal, Emotional, Psychic, Bodily Differences between Men and Women

Irrespective of age, gender, or nationality, there were individuals who believed in the significance of the differences between women and men. However, there was no agreement as to what these differences were: Dilek (41) believed that 'women had higher emotional intelligence' while Faruk (34) argued that 'women lost their sense of judgment when they had their periods.' Jarle (61) thought that 'boys were more aggressive', while Grete (33) thought that 'women and men have different patterns of thought.'

The differences between the sexes that were mentioned by Norwegian interviewees can be listed as follows:

- 1) Physical (muscular) differences: "Men are stronger than women are."

- 2) Differences related to childbirth: "Giving birth to a child creates a special connection to children, a deeper focus on their survival, and a greater sense of responsibility for care."
- 3) Emotional differences: "Men keep their feelings more to themselves, women talk about them more easily."
- 4) Cognitive differences: "Men can focus on one thing at a time, while women may have hundred balls in the air."
- 5) Behavioral differences: "Men are more direct in solving problems while women go behind others' backs."
- 6) Sociability differences: "Men like to do things together, while women can enjoy only sitting down and talk."
- 7) Hormonal differences: "Men are more competitive and aggressive, while women are more care-oriented."
- 8) 'Sanitary' differences: "Women have higher standards for household cleaning than men do."

Apart from the first two points, only one interviewee mentioned each of the examples given above. People have myriad ways of conceptualizing differences between men and women and tend to focus on dissimilar aspects.

In both the Turkish and Norwegian groups, there were persons who held firm beliefs related to biological differences. One of the most extreme accounts came from a Turkish woman, who believes in sharp 'genetic' differences:

Dilek (41): I think that women are more adequate, biologically more qualified. I mean, first of all because they are mothers, women have higher sensibilities. Maybe this has been engraved into our genes for centuries, so women have an extra dimension of philosophy. I can bring several interpretations to events and look more impartially. I see this at work as well...I work with a lot of engineers, and even engineers with a Ph.D. have no practical intelligence! I see this in many men...Women have an ability to produce practical solutions in a way that I have not yet discovered how. Maybe it is because she approaches things in a more sensible manner, or maybe because she thinks continuously.

Another Turkish woman, Umut (39), also thinks there are differences between men and women concerning 'sensibilities,' but she was careful to add that she does not attribute these differences only to biology:

I think there are bodily differences between men and women. I mean, I think that the sensibilities of women's bodies are different from those of men...but of course this is also related to culture, not only biology...There are areas in which men are very blind...for example concerning children. Those men who have more interactions with children have different sensibilities. You can observe this. That means that this is not directly related to being a woman or a man, but related to interactions.

A Norwegian couple, Bente (52) and Bjarne (57) have discussed this issue a lot and find this question very interesting. They basically disagree on the significance of biological

differences between women and men, and provided several arguments for their respective beliefs:

Bente: Obviously there are biological differences. As long as women give birth to children and men do not, there are. But how much does this matter for personality outcomes? I think it means something. I think I am different as a woman than I would have been as a man, exactly because I can have children and I am meant to care for them. I mean purely biologically. But at the same time, in my work and daily-life I do not go around and think, "I am a woman"...I think it comes down to certain basic properties, maybe an awareness of other people's needs..., guilt that you always feel for not being flexible enough with respect to other people who you think need your help or attention. We, as women, talk about feeling a strong responsibility...for both our children and parents and our spouses, and I am not sure if men talk in the same way. I think that this has something to do with biology, even though it definitely has a lot to do with culture.

Bjarne: ...I am, for my own part, in serious doubt. Yes maybe these differences you describe can be thought of resulting from culture, environment, and tradition. I mean we are in a transitional period from a grandparent generation that had very clearly defined gender roles, a parent generation in which this still continued, and then a war. After the war came this thing about the man bringing home the money, the woman caring for the house, and the family being magnified... But asking biological questions, purely biological, makes me wonder if the things you describe should be thought of as being more a result of tradition and culture, and images that come from the generations that I just described. If you think ahead four generations from now, if things continue to go in the direction of greater equality and greater opportunities for women, will this biological thing still continue in women's being? I mean will she have, as you say, more concern for others' needs and care? I am not so sure. Many discussions we've had have ended in the conclusion that we - you and I - are alike. We have been surprised because we have the same attitudes towards moral questions... I can be equally interested in home, family, care and "soft" values as the person I am married to. So I am more in doubt, and wonder if what you described can still be thought of as a cultural phenomenon.

Among Turkish and Norwegian interviewees, many believed that learned factors and socialization were more significant in creating the differences between women and men:

Gökhan (38): I have a very short answer to that question, and perhaps it will be a standard answer. Surely there are some biological ones, but I do not believe that there are any social, cultural, mental differences between men and women.

Arne (33): I think the differences are learned, apart from minor physical limitations...What one gets a chance to do in life influences (behavior) a lot. As well as learned expectations and influences from other friends. And there are individual differences between children that are greater than differences between the sexes, like innate skills and temperament. I think there can be greater inborn differences between two boys, then between girls and boys.

These answers concerning differences between men and women left me at a point quite close to where I had started: it is neither possible, nor fruitful, to decompose differences between women and men into their hormonal, genetic, physical, behavioral and learned elements and analyze their relative weights separately. Human beings are complex wholes formed by interactions of all these factors from the moment they are born: “Bodies, minds and cultures interact in such complex and profound ways that we cannot strip them down and compare them separately. Only as the separate cultures of men and women become more alike will we be able to assess the possibility of unalterable sex differences.” (Fausto-Sterling 1985). Accordingly, it is more rewarding, both practically and politically, to analyze institutionalized gender differences both in families and social institutions as well as examining the situations in which biologically-based arguments are used to legitimate existing practices.

Chapter 8 Towards a Clarification of Main Wishes and Struggles

In this chapter several related aspects of Turkish and Norwegian interviewees' lives will be analyzed. The first section will take up the question of time-use. The second section will be an analysis of plans that the couples in this study are making for the future, together with the perceived constraints on such life planning. The third section will analyze different attitudes towards modernity. The overall aim of this chapter is to contribute to a clarification of the "struggles and wishes"³⁸ of these individuals – who are members of a specific social group in their societies – by analyzing their accounts of the main "public issues" of their times and "private troubles" (Mills 1959) of their lives.

8.1 Time-use: 'Americanized' Turks and Norwegians Seeking 'Family Time'

Time is a scarce good for most individuals in modern society. Dual-earner couples with small children face additional constraints on their time-use. As Daly argues "with the rapid emergence of the dual-earner family and the corresponding inflation in the value of time, the analysis of time differences for women and men is central to the analysis of gender relations" (Daly 1996: 177). In her study of the "time bind" that working parents in America face, Arlie Hochschild (1997) argued that family time has taken on an 'industrial' tone: "the more attached we are to the world of work, the more its deadlines, its cycles, its pauses and interruptions shape our lives and the more family time is forced to accommodate to the pressures of work" (ibid.: 45). Do the Turkish and Norwegian couples in this study feel that they are in a time bind?

Turkish interviewees working at jobs in the private sector with competitive work environments appeared to be most similar to the American workers that Hochschild described. Elif (37) actually used the concept of 'Americanization' when talking about her time problems:

I don't think that I spend my time the way I want to. In fact, my economic conditions could enable me to do many things, like playing tennis or other sports. But I think we became very Americanized. Recently, in an American film I saw, a woman was saying, 'when you earn a lot of money, you don't get the time to spend the money you have earned!' (laughs) We also experience something like

³⁸ I am applying these terms in reference to Marx' definition of Critical Theory as "the self clarification of the struggles and wishes of the age" (Quoted in Fraser 1990: 97).

this. And when you have a lot of time, you don't have the economic power to do anything to pass that time. So we live with such a contradiction.

Type and sector of occupation emerged as a major factor influencing time-related problems in the Turkish group. Those working in the private sector have longer workdays and less time for themselves. Ipek (35) underlined the significance of sectoral differences:

My work day starts like a programmed robot and continues at full speed like a programmed robot. Ilhan works in the public sector; he can organize his day more comfortably, but I do not have it that way. You have to work much more systematically in the private sector because you are in fact competing with time, and time means money. So in that framework, you have to organize your day and set your priorities efficiently.

Ceyda (35) and Cemil (35) are both top managers in the private sector and are highly ambitious concerning their careers. Ceyda explained their extraordinary long work hours and how having a child led to a slight decrease in the time they spend at work:

In fact we have always been working too much, haven't we? I don't remember a period in my life when I worked just a little. I mean the conception of standard working hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. never existed in my life, it is the same for Cemil. We always came home at 10 p.m. or at midnight. Now the same tempo continues, but I cannot do the same thing because of Canan (her child). If we did not have Canan, I am sure we wouldn't come home before 10.

Faruk (34) also commented on the harsh working conditions of the private sector, while his wife Figen (33) saw a gendered aspect of time-use:

Faruk: In Turkey, working in the private sector necessitates being a slave to your work. You cannot say, "I won't do this, I won't do that," to certain people. You do not have such a right in Turkey...Therefore you have to enjoy your work and try to make it more fun. So I don't think this is so bad.

Figen: I told you that he lives for his work, this is what I meant!

(later in the interview) Faruk: I don't think time is that important. I mean you mustn't always think, 'oh, I lost a lot of time again.' I do not want to live a life that is too planned or programmed...There should be some surprises in life.

Figen: But you have that comfort. For example you do not need to go and pick up the child at 6 p.m. The child has to come home and have dinner, but you do not have an obligation to make that happen.

Figen and Faruk had important disagreements concerning time-use at work. Figen thinks that her husband spends too much time at work and that most of that time is actually unnecessary. She believes that people simply waste a lot of time at work and that Faruk spends too much time with his colleagues apart from work for his personal pleasure.

Among the Turkish interviewees, it was mainly mothers of children under school age who talked about severe time constraints and lack of “free” or private time. Mothers of small children feel more constrained than fathers in terms of time use. Hale (30), who is the mother of a three-year-old child and who has a demanding job in the private sector, claimed that in Turkey, fatherhood does not entail as much responsibility as motherhood:

Hikmet’s work is more comfortable. At least in the evenings, he has more time for himself. In Turkey fatherhood does not entail as much responsibility as motherhood does. I am the one who takes care of everything having to do with the child. She spends most of her time with me when we are at home. Her father can watch TV but I can’t; not that I want to, but I don’t have such a luxury when she is awake.

Even an ordinary activity like watching TV can be regarded as a ‘luxury’ in the context of gendered time constraints. In addition to her demanding work life, Hale has the whole responsibility for the ‘second shift’ at home. She mentioned that she manages to reserve one hour each week to play tennis and this is actually the only personal leisure time she has. Are there such clear gender differences concerning time use in the Norwegian group?

Even though the differences are not as sharp as in the Turkish group, there is also a gendered pattern in the ways women and men experienced time pressures. Mothers of small children talked extensively on time-related problems. We had heard the story of Lise in section 5.1, who felt that, ‘the watch was steering her life.’ Several women share this feeling. Ann (34), the mother of two preschool children, complained about how little ‘quality time’ is left in the evenings:

Now we both work full-time and pick up the children from daycare, then come home and make dinner. It gets really hectic in the afternoon and suddenly it is bedtime. There is too little ‘quality time’ left at night.

Grete (33), the mother of two preschool children, does not feel that she spends her time the way she would really like:

I don’t feel I spend my time the way I want. I would rather spend more time with my kids. I feel that it gets too hectic. It is like this: in the two hours after we come home from work you make dinner, feed the kids, and put them to bed. It gets too busy. So if I could spend my time the way I wanted, I would have worked less, spent fewer hours at work, so that I could have had more time at home, definitely.

While Grete would like to spend more time at home with the children, her husband Geir (32) longs for more time for leisure and open-air activities:

I would rather spend more time outdoors, walk more, be in the open air more.

Some Norwegian fathers also expressed a wish of having more time both for themselves and their families. Jarle (36) is one of them:

I feel that I spend too much time at work. Lately, I feel I've had too little time for myself. But I don't know if it is because I am not good at structuring my time...I feel that I spend too much time at work and that means that I have too little time at home.

Magne (37) mentioned that he would like to have the opportunity to expand the time he has for the different "segments" in his life:

My time schedule is quite full and I've noticed that I cannot get to bed at nights on time. There is a need for that 'adult' time in the evening, the need to relax. So the nights get shorter and shorter. All at once, I have a feeling that I have too little time for work, too little time with the kids, and too little time with my wife. So I could think of expanding all those segments a little.

Magne does not want to decrease the time he spends at home for the sake of increasing his work time. He wants it all: both more time at work and more time at home. He enjoys both spheres and does not want to choose one or the other.

These accounts exemplify the phenomenon Wærness (1999) calls a 'life cycle squeeze.' Based on data from national time budget surveys in Norway, Wærness shows that greater number of younger parents in the 1990s, compared to the 1980s, are likely to experience a life cycle squeeze, that is a period in which heavy pressure is placed on their time resources (Wærness 1999: 213). Among Norwegian interviewees of this study, there was a clear difference between younger and older couples concerning perceived time-pressures. While most younger Norwegians feel time pressures in their daily lives, older Norwegians mentioned that they now have better control over their time, compared to earlier life phases. Henrik (50) explained that he felt tied up in the first 10 years of her career, but that this has changed now:

Do you spend your time the way you want to?

Henrik: Yes, to a large extend now. But earlier in life I was very busy. For many years my workdays were very binding with schedules and shifts...the first ten years after I graduated, I felt that other things controlled my time and there was very little time left over.

Inger (58) explained that she decided to invest in her career later in life. This has limited the time available for other activities, but she conceives of this situation as a result of a conscious choice:

I am quite conscious of the fact that I decided to invest in my career very late in life, and therefore I accept that it takes all the time and energy I have... Ideally I could think of having more time for other things, like going to the theater or reading more books...But actually I am quite satisfied with the way I spend my time because it was a very conscious choice that I made.

Younger interviewees did not talk about the way they spend their time as a result of conscious choice. They felt their schedules were sometimes hectic, leaving too little time for themselves and their families. For Camilla (31) and Cato (32), time has been an

important issue, and they have concrete plans to make changes in their work lives so that they have more time with the kids and more leisure time for themselves:

Cato: After we had the kids, we no longer had enough time, I mean leisure time, time to spend with friends or on hobbies. I wish I had more time, especially for people that I see very rarely (...)

Camilla: I see that there was a big difference when I was on a leave of absence; then I could find time for everything else. So one should almost plan so that one does not need to work any longer, or rather, work less and get more time. Time is getting more and more important. It does not help to have all the world's income if you do not have the time to enjoy yourself!

Given these time-pressures and tight schedules, what are the concrete plans that these couples have for future?

8.2 Future Plans: Decommodified Norwegians and Pessimistic Turks

According to Giddens (1991) life-planning is a key characteristic of late-modernity: "Given the extreme reflexivity of late modernity, the future does not just consist of the expectation of events yet to come. 'Futures' are organized reflexively in the present... (ibid.: 29)" I have asked the interviewees about their future plans to learn about the conditions influencing their life-planning.

Turkish and Norwegian interviewees have dissimilar future plans. Economic factors have a greater impact for Turks, and most of their plans revolve around saving money and acquiring the means sufficient to secure their future. Norwegian interviewees, on the other hand, feel fewer economic constraints on their life choices. Their main plans revolve around the issues of time, leisure, and making their relationships work.

Several of the Norwegian interviewees mentioned maintaining their relationship as one of the most important life plans they have. Given the high incidence of break-ups for married and cohabiting couples, staying together crystallizes into a life plan that needs to be fostered. Jorunn (35) and Jarle (36) argued that staying together and contented takes work:

Jarle: We do not have any concrete plans, apart from seeing for that we stay happy with each other.

Jorunn: Hmm, that is a plan. I have a plan that we manage to stay together as a family. That is a plan, and it does not come automatically. It is something one has to work on.

For Geir (32) too, being contented as a family is the major life-plan he and his wife have:

Actually, the most important plan is that we keep on being happy together.

The life-plans articulated by Lise (36) and Lars (36) bring together most of the issues that are characteristic of Norwegian interviewees:

Lise: It is important to have a job, learn a lot, and feel that you can use your knowledge in your work. But it is also very important to find a balance between family and work, so that you have a surplus of energy and time to do other things as well, like spend time with family or friends, the way we do now. I think I have a good life, actually! (laughs)

Lars: Yes, it is important to keep ones' friends. And paying attention to the kids, and to my relationship with Lise, these things are important. Friends and family. (...)Balancing things in such a way that you feel good, both job, family, and leisure. I look around and think that we are lucky.

Lise: The plan is to do well together, that is the future plan. Continue with the same level of happiness as we have now...If there is any plan, it is to see to it that we do not work more than we do now, but rather have more leisure time.

Lise and Lars feel they have been lucky in their lives, managing to establish a good social network that helps them in combining work life with family responsibilities. One of the conditions they mentioned that will help them to continue with their current level of satisfaction is not to increase their working hours. Several other interviewees articulated a wish to slow down at work so they could spend more time with their families or on their own. Camilla (31), the mother of two children, had definite plans to work less and spend more time at home:

Most of my plans are realized, like establishing a family, and stuff like that. I do not have great ambitions at work. I just want to take care of my kids and have a job so that I have a certain level of income. I plan to work part time in the future. Then I will have more time for the house and the kids... So in general, both of us think about having more leisure time; we want more time both for ourselves and for the kids.

Ann (34), the mother of two small children, also expressed a desire to work less, at least while the children are small:

None of us have any special career plans. That you head for a place that is your target. We want to work with interesting things, rather than climbing up a ladder... since we have two small kids, it might be nice to try to get shorter workdays for awhile.

Some younger parents mentioned economic constraints that have influenced their life plans. These couples have many expenses, pay high interest rates on their educational loans,³⁹ and often have mortgages on their homes. Nina (32) expressed a desire for more family and leisure time, but also mentioned that it often depends on money:

³⁹ The Norwegian State provides loans for university students. The institution established for this purpose in the 1960s, the State Educational Loan Fund (*Lånekassen*) was initially founded to provide cheap loans to students, with favorable repayment conditions. However, in the last few

We do not have concrete plans, apart from that we want to spend more time together. I think Nils could consider working less, and I also could consider that. And we would like to travel away together. But it is all a question of money. If we won the lottery, we would probably travel far away and stay for a year or so! Or we would just do something totally different. I could change my job, so that I could have more flexibility, work on things that interest me most, and work when it is convenient for the family.

For older couples, major life-plans revolve around the timing of retirement and finding time to do the things that they always wanted to do. Endre (60) said that his main plans concern how to spend his time after retirement:

Yes, we have very definite future plans...I am looking forward to ending my work-career...I have been working since the early 1960s and think that I deserve to do some other things now. And we very much want to travel and see more of the world.

Bjarne (57) mentioned that they have reached the 'battered-side' of life, meaning that the struggles over time and money are minimized. Both Bjarne and Bente have jobs they enjoy, and they have no 'superiors' who can decide on their times. Mainly they feel that their major plans are realized, and that what is left are small plans like arranging travels and holidays. Hilde (49) also mentioned the pleasure of 'not needing to plan all the time':

I think it is delightful to be free from too much planning. That effort to make all of the puzzle pieces fit together, the way I did when the kids were small, was much tougher. I feel like I have more freedom now, and can take things as they come. I think that is really good.

Economic security gives Norwegians the opportunity to be more optimistic about their life-plans. This was the major factor differentiating them from the Turkish interviewees, among whom pessimism prevailed.

Most Turkish interviewees mentioned that it is difficult to make plans in a country characterized by political and economic instability. A general pessimism and hopelessness prevails, especially among those who have more limited economic means. Figen (33) and Faruk (34) explained how their life plans are determined by general economic conditions and therefore would more properly be called 'dreams':

Figen: Not plans, but we have dreams. We have dreams about a house and a life, I mean living outside the city, in a house with a garden, growing flowers. Or we have this dream about having a better economic situation so that we could work only for pleasure...we have serious thoughts about the child's education.

Faruk: What Figen says is true, in Turkey you must think of these as dreams. Because even though you make some plans about the future, politicians can

decades, the interest rates on student loans were increased and the time of repayment was shortened. Though this loan enabled many to attend college in the first place, it acts as a major economic constraint for many years after graduation.

destroy them with the decisions they make. One year ago, our jobs were going well and we started to think, 'we can do this and that if things go this way for 1 more year,' and then an economic crisis comes and everything dissipates.

Figen: The economy is very important in our life. All plans are built on it.

Elif (37) and Emre (37) mentioned the social and political determinants influencing their lives, and characterized their life as troubled by a state of 'uneasiness' concerning the future:

Emre: No, we do not make future plans, and perhaps the reason for that is that we are pessimistic.

Elif: I think it is more related to not trusting the system, since the equilibrium changes rapidly. I work in the private sector, and my life style would change if I were unable to work. There are certain societal unbalances and we live with the thought that, for example, there might be a Military Coup...

Emre: or religious fundamentalists may come to power

Elif: Even though we do not believe in such possibilities totally, they are in the back of our minds and unsettle us.

Emre: So we live in an uneasy condition.

Elif: Therefore we live more day-to-day, without making plans. But of course this also has something to do with our personalities.

The way Elif talks about how their whole life-style would change the minute she loses her job in the private sector denotes the high level of commodification in Turkey.

Those with better economic situations mentioned plans of 'filling up' or 'nourishing' their private lives. Ipek (35), who had explained that she felt like a 'programmed robot' at work, wants to find a solution:

I have realized most of my long-term plans to secure my survival, like getting an education and building a career...from now on, I do not have such long-term plans. But I should add this: I want to transform my work life into something more comfortable. I mean I want to nourish my private life, by working less, by not using so much of my day at work.

'Saving for the future' was also a commonly mentioned future plan among Turkish respondents. Oya (52) explained that they have to save money in order to maintain their standard of living after retirement:

We have to make plans for future. You asked earlier about our expectations from the state. We cannot expect anything, because the state cannot guarantee our future. We have a certain standard of living now, and the moment we stop working in the private sector, it will be impossible to retain that standard with the

pension the state provides. So of course we have to make plans and save money so that we can keep this standard of living in future.

The main difference between the Turkish and Norwegian interviewees concerning future plans is their level of 'decommodification,' that is the degree of upholding a socially acceptable standard of living independent of market participation (Esping-Andersen 1990: 37). Norwegian interviewees' life-plans are freer from economic constraints than are those of Turkish interviewees and this basically stems from the basic economic security provided by the well-institutionalized welfare state. A general pessimism prevails among the Turks, who feel that external factors (like political instability and economic factors) have a more determining and constraining power over their lives. The marginal welfare state does not offer enough security, neither for basic social rights during the economically active years, nor for old age. Decommodification effects of the social security system is minimal in Turkey.

Securing the future economically is the major aspect of life-planning for Turkish couples. For the parents of younger children, planning for their education is another main concern, influencing other decisions in life. The public school system is not satisfactory in Turkey. Maintaining a place in a private school and choosing between alternatives necessitate careful planning, as well as solid economic means.

Norwegians, on the other hand, appear freer in terms of life planning. A common plan among Norwegians concerns arranging for more leisure time to be spent either traveling or being with the children. Another major difference between the Turkish and Norwegian groups is that several Norwegians mentioned 'relationship work' as an important future plan to which they want to devote effort. Given the higher risk for break-up of marriages and cohabitation arrangements, the stress on careful planning that the relationships necessitate is comprehensible.

Building on these specific wishes and plans, I will now embark on formulating the major public issues and private troubles in the lives of the interviewees, together with the main wishes and struggles in the contexts of different modernities.

8.3 Different Modernities, Different Transitions

The social contexts of Turkey and Norway are characterized by different modernities. In the European context, Norway was a latecomer to industrialization and urbanization, yet the dynamics of modernization have been endogenous. Historically, the institutionalization of the welfare state was based on a widely-shared ideal of community and solidarity and a belief in universalistic principles. Keeping out of the European Union, yet being inherently tied to the global capitalist market, Norway is facing many challenges to its solidarity and egalitarian ideals in the new millennium.

Turkey is another interesting case in the context of global capitalism. Its top-down modernization has always been characterized by internal contradictions and its status as an officially secular and democratic country in which a great majority of the population is Muslim creates a specific type of modernity. There are great differences between social

groups, both in terms of economic standards and value orientations. The co-existence of traditional, early-modern and late-modern expectations, values, and practices can be conceptualized by using the slightly awkward, yet suitable term ‘in-between modernity.’

These specific characteristics of Turkey and Norway should be kept in mind while analyzing the attitudinal differences between the two groups of interviewees. A general look at the older and younger interviewees, in terms of their basic attitudes, makes the imprint of different modernities clear.

Among the Turkish interviewees, differences between older and younger couples were more visible. I conceptualize these differences as a transition from an ‘early-modern’ to a ‘late-modern’ outlook. Younger couples were significantly more ‘individualized’: they were more interested in maintaining the privacy of their nuclear families and were less constrained by traditional expectations. They invested more and had higher expectations concerning their relationship. Among the Norwegian interviewees the attitudinal differences between the younger and older interviewees was less significant. A common trait among both younger and older Norwegian couples can be labeled a ‘cautious-modern’ outlook. The indicators for this attitude are a critical approach to increased materialization and commodification and a desire to slow down the daily rush – by working less and getting more leisure and ‘family’ time. Let me now detail these postulations with concrete examples from the interview accounts.

Most older Turkish interviews had an ‘early-modern’ attitude, which I define as skillfully combining modern values with certain traditional orientations. They believed in the importance of further modernization in tandem with preserving traditional Turkish values of which they were proud, such as attaching a high value to family relations and a community-orientation.

Ayla (54) and Adnan (58) are perfect examples of the early-modern outlook. They are both highly idealist concerning their professions. They said, ‘being useful to the country’ is a vital factor that has guided their actions in life. Both conceptualize their work as a ‘duty,’ not a ‘career,’ and believe that by performing their jobs in the best possible way, they will contribute to the further development of the country:

Adnan: We are pleased with our professions. We become satisfied, knowing that we are working and being useful to our country. We have no complaints. We work with pride. We never thought, ‘I wish I worked in that country and earned this much money,’ or the like. On the contrary, we think we should work for our country so that it will develop and progress.

Ayla and Adnan are the first generation in their families who moved to bigger cities from rural areas. Their parents were farmers and did not have much education. They were the only ones in their families who enrolled at a university and became professionals:

Ayla: We realized everything ourselves within a context of big constraints. Our family was never very involved in our education, never asked ‘how is school going?’ We succeeded in our profession through our own struggle, dealing with registration and all that, by ourselves at such a young age.

Due to the hard-earned status of their education and professions, they also display a high degree of appreciation for their achievements in life. They have a moderate income but are satisfied with that. Both Ayla and Adnan mentioned that a respect for religion and tradition is important to them. They believe in a sort of modernization that will not lead to a disappearance of Turkish traditions and values.

Berna (51) and Bora (59) also belong to the 'early-modern' category, which involves a high level of idealism and a belief in progress through keeping traditions alive. They define themselves as 'children of the Republic.' This identification implies a type of positive nationalism, an appreciation of the historical struggles that resulted in today's republic and a belief in Atatürk's principles. Atatürk's ideology (Kemalism) is defined under six major principles: republicanism, nationalism, secularism, populism, statism and reformism. Bora thinks that Turkey's future depends on an implementation of these principles:

First of all, we are children of the Republic, children of Atatürk. I am a person who believes wholeheartedly in Atatürk's principles. And I think that Turkey's future depends on these principles. Accordingly I place myself in this framework: A secular person, who has respect for religion, and a social democrat.

Berna and Bora are critical of conservative governments and their deviations from these principles. They are also critical of existing gender inequalities and believe that further modernization (mainly increasing levels of education and urbanization) will bring more gender equality. They advocate further modernization by maintaining traditional Turkish values. This view contrasts with the ideas of many younger Turkish interviewees, who mentioned the need to question and change some traditions.

Elif (37) and Emre (37) display characteristics that are surprisingly similar to those of, "the agents of reflexive modernization," that Beck (1992) describes in detail. In his framework, the individualization processes take place in, "the welfare states of the West," and it dissolves, 'the traditional parameters of industrial society,' namely class culture, class consciousness, gender, and family roles. In the Turkish case, these 'de-traditionalizations' are enabled by the market, given the absence of the welfare state. Elif differentiates herself from all the other females in her childhood family by virtue of her having learned a profession, which gives her not only the reflexive skills necessary for writing her own biography, but also the solid economic basis to free herself from, 'traditional female duties':

Elif: The training I received in my childhood, which was in line with societal doctrines, said that the man works outside, has the authority at home, makes the major decisions, and has the initiative. The woman should adapt to this, and her duty is to do the housework, give birth to children, and raise them. This is how it was in my own family; these were the social roles that were taught to me. Of course, it is also because I grew up in a smaller city in which certain feudal structures still existed. But I started challenging this...because I got this feeling that it was unfair. I did not accept the lifestyle that was imposed on women, so I chose to get an education. I directed all my energy towards the university, since

having a profession was the only path of emancipation for me, and especially having a profession that would allow me to enter a masculine field.

The specificity of Turkish modernity is the way traditional gender role expectations continue to exist side-by-side with these late-modern transformations. A major source of conflict for the dual-earner couples in this study is the existence of these contradictory expectations and demands. These factors also influence internal relationship dynamics. Elif and Emre talked extensively about their relationship problems, and Elif argued that they were going through, “pains of individualization” since they have been questioning traditions all the time:

Elif: Approximately four years ago we had serious problems in our relationship. In that period, I was working more actively and Emre was not working. I started feeling a little masculinized...We started searching for ways to deal with these problems, started reading books...went to therapy... And I think these are the first steps we take toward individualization. This is something we have been experiencing recently, and we are feeling the pains of this. Of course there are many people who do not experience this. When I look at people around, many people, including university graduates and professionals, do not ask many questions. They carry on their lives within the old, traditional patterns and do not get bothered by this. And I look at them totally amazed, asking how they can live this way!

Emre: That means that you can continue with the traditional solutions already at hand. Whenever traditional solutions are insufficient, you start searching. I mean if we also had certain knowledge from the past to help us solve our problems, we could cope and wouldn't bother at all. But when you don't have such knowledge, you must put something in its place. When you can manage by using existing traditions, you won't have as much trouble. But of course, this would not bring any development; it would be a backward-looking life. I guess there is no growth without some pain!

These accounts shed light on the multi-faceted effects of reflexive modernization and individualization: opening new perspectives, promising expanded individual freedom, and introducing new risks and pains, all at the same time.

Several younger Turkish interviewees reflected on the ambiguities of individualization. As we saw in case A, in section 3.6, Ilhan thinks that individualization, which he identifies as, ‘a lonely path of development,’ is one of the reasons behind increasing divorce rates in big cities:

Ilhan: ...even though people do not specify individualization as a goal, they follow a lonely path of development, whether they want to or not. On this lonely path of self-development, even people in one's inner circle, that is the family, are not included, since you have a separate social milieu and a separate work environment. Maybe this brings with it a type of differentiation, and maybe individualization also decreases tolerance for certain things, because you don't feel like you have to persevere. You think, ‘everybody is free to behave the way they want.’ So you also behave the way you want...

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) also stress the ‘double-faced’ nature of the individualization process, implying opportunities as well as risks, freedom as well as new dependencies, possibilities of relationships based on pure love as well as loneliness.

None of the Norwegians used the more scientific term ‘individualization,’ the way several Turkish interviewees did. But many Norwegians also reflected on the double-sided effects of societal developments, contrasting on ‘individualism’ with a community orientation. Both older and younger Norwegian interviewees talked extensively about their concerns related to increasing materialization, decreasing ‘community’ spirit, and increasing stress on the ‘self.’ I conceptualize these concerns as the signs of a ‘cautious-modern’ attitude. Many Norwegians displayed a skepticism concerning the challenges that the ‘egalitarian’ welfare system faces, and the ways in which, ‘everything starts to be measured by money.’

Camilla (31) and Cato (32) talked passionately about how they disapprove of certain trends in Norwegian society, mainly of the increasing emphasis on money and labor-market status.⁴⁰ They do not like the fact that demands concerning acceptable standards of living have gone up and that both men and women must work long hours to meet those demands. Both Camilla and Cato are critical of trends in the labor market and of the development of the ‘information society’ in general:

Cato: There are many people who sit and do very insignificant things; all that talk about the information society, it is just ballyhoo! ...The more insignificant their work, the more money they earn. Stockbrokers are the most obvious example...Media jobs have a high status in society, but it is sheer nonsense after all. These trends will change eventually and being a farmer will be a high status again.

Camilla: I think that the trend will turn back and that money will become less important. Being able to take care of one’s family will gain a higher status the future. That is what I think and hope. Having more leisure time, being able to control one’s own life, these things will become more important. (...)

Cato: It should be possible to raise a family with only one income, with only one person working. But it is not possible now with all the emphasis on a big house, a fancy car, and all that stuff. It was not like that earlier; people were satisfied with renting a house until the kids grew up.

Camilla: I still think that it will change. In a way, society had to go through the opposite, with everyone in the labor market, to see all the faults of that.

Camilla and Cato display a cautious attitude concerning increasing materialization and hope that other values, related to relationships and self-development rather than money, become more important in future.

Elin (56) and Endre (59) are concerned about increasing material differences in society, which they think is threatening the basis of the welfare model in Norway:

⁴⁰ See case study E in section 7.4 for detailed information on this couple.

Elin: ... I miss the 'community spirit'⁴¹ among people. What we experience now is that money becomes more and more important, and that you don't do anything if you don't get a return for it. I think this is scary...

Endre: ...there are also some people who have so much money that they don't know what to do with it...For example we know of people who can buy apartments for their children as presents. What type of signals do you give then? Some people have too much, and that class difference is not something that a small country like Norway can tolerate for long.

Elin: No, it is exactly the fact that we have managed not to have those big differences that has made this country a good place to live. But the more the differences grow, the less people will care about each other. And I don't think that bodes well for the future. More class differences will lead to divisions and separations in our society.

Both Elin and Endre use typically Norwegian concepts, like collective spirit, solidarity, and equality, and voice a concern for their dissolution. They conceive of Norway as a society in which class-based differences are minimal, and they do not approve the trends that undermine this.

Another aspect of the cautious-modern attitude is a concern with increasing individualism. For example Bjarne (57) thinks that the most characteristic trend from the 1980s onwards is an increased focus on, 'one's own happiness and welfare.' Bjarne also thinks that this is a main factor behind increased divorce rates, and that it negatively influenced especially children. Magne (37) also mentioned that increased individualism and egoism was a general trend in society, and that he was skeptical about its consequences:

I think the ways people behave in relation to each other are quite individualistic these days. I read in different magazines and papers, that everybody should strive for self-realization and stuff like that, and I don't think that it was this way twenty years ago... Maybe this shows that people have become more egoistic and are not willing to compromise...I have a feeling the way people behave in relation to each other is more and more characterized by sharp elbows.

The interview accounts demonstrate that both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees reflect on conflicting aspects of modernization and individualization, and sometimes tend to compare the times we live in with an imagined past in which people were less selfish and more community oriented.

⁴¹ 'Dugnadsånd' in Norwegian. A term with a specific meaning and importance in Norwegian society.

8.4 Towards a Formulation of Main Wishes and Struggles

In the former chapters, we focused on many different themes and analyzed variation within the two groups. In this section, I will attempt to identify general wishes, troubles, and struggles that emerged recurrently in the accounts of Turkish and Norwegian interviewees.

Main wishes of Turkish interviewees revolved mainly around issues of increased modernization, meaning more democracy, better economic conditions, increased levels of education, and more gender equality. Norwegians, on the other hand, wished for more time – both for themselves, as leisure time, and for their families and friends, as relationship time.

The main struggles of Turkish interviewees crystallized as difficulties they face in handling the conflicts of ‘in-between modernity,’ which I conceptualize as the co-existence of traditional, modern, and late-modern expectations, both in the private and the public spheres. A related struggle is managing a type of ‘alienation’ resulting from a feeling of non-belonging and a sense of difference. For Norwegians, the main struggle, especially for younger interviewees, was living up to unrealistically high expectations of success and physical availability in many different spheres – the family, work, friendship, and leisure activities. Let me detail these assertions by interview excerpts and concrete examples:

As we showed in earlier chapters, most Turkish interviewees thought that the major ‘public issue’ in Turkey was that its modernization was not complete, and articulated a desire for increased material welfare, more urbanization, better education opportunities for more people, and increased gender equality – in short, more modernization. For example, Orhan (54) wished for better educational opportunities, and he thought that this would have positive influences on gender relations:

Orhan: Education absolutely has an influence in increasing equality between women and men. Inequality and women’s struggles decrease among persons with an average level of education.

Dilek (41) thought that rapid urbanization was a very positive development for Turkey, and this gave her hope for the future:

What is pleasing is that the literacy rate has gone above 90 per cent in Turkey and there is rapid urbanization. I think this gives one hope about the future. There is a generation that is very different from their parents, that experienced a great leap forward in terms of education and attitudes.

Literacy rate is above 90 percent for Turkish men, but still only 75 percent for Turkish women. Dilek displayed a tendency to be optimistic (and at times unrealistic) with reference to certain societal developments. She was also a strict adherent of the ‘liberated modern Turkish woman’ belief. She thought that “urban, educated Turkish women are not much different than any European women,” and accordingly wished for more education and urbanization to create a better life for everybody.

For Norwegians, their main wish was related to their own private troubles, namely a scarcity of time. A great majority of Norwegian interviewees articulated a wish to decrease their work hours, in order to have more leisure and family time. This was a common characteristic of both men and women, and especially of those with younger children. Here is a selection of expressions related to the desire for shorter work hours:

Mona (35): We both wish to work at 90 percent, so that every second week we could have a day off to be at home.

Lars (36): Our jobs are not so important that we will work overtime and let others take care of our kids. We work overtime for one or two days, but seldom...If there is any plan for the future, it is not to work any more than we do right now, and to have more leisure time.

Ingmar (61): In the last few years I have consciously chosen to slow down my work tempo. I used to sit down and work in the evening; I don't want to do that any more.

Jorunn (35): Ideally, I could think of working less, or maybe even going down to part-time. There are so many other things to spend time doing, besides working.

Grete (33): If I could spend my time the way I want to, I would work less and get more time at home with the kids, definitely.

Ann (34): When you have two small children, it can be okay to try to have shorter workdays for a period.

In the absence of major economic problems, and given the basic security provided by the welfare state, time has become a central issue for Norwegians. Not all interviewees think that they can reduce their work hours at this particular point in time, mainly for economic reasons, but they specified it as a major goal for which to strive. The decommodifying aspects of the social democratic welfare state enable them – to a certain extent – to reduce their working hours, without facing the threat of losing their jobs or facing severe economic problems.

A main trouble that several Norwegian interviewees mentioned was the high expectations they had to meet. As we have seen in section 7.3, Lars (36) thought that “both women and men in Norway get exhausted because there are such huge expectations for an insane number of different roles.” He also mentioned that many couples struggle with a ‘life-cycle squeeze’ (Wærness 1999), since they have the heaviest work load and worst economic conditions when they have small children:

Lars: Especially in the beginning, you have lots of student loans, and a house loan, and you have bad finances. The kids go to kindergarten and it costs a lot, then it gets scarce with the economy. It is in a way a problem with the whole division of labor, because you get the heaviest work load when you have small kids, and because then you have to work and get yourself a career, or you have a demanding, long education...Then you have kids and you will follow them up,

when you have the least amount of time to have children. So there are many conflicts in relation to that.

Bente (52) and Bjarne (57) also thought that many young people end up in trouble, since they start at the ‘wrong end’:

Bente: To a much larger extent, young people start with having kids and then get an education and a house and this may become very demanding. I think they create a lot of trouble for themselves by starting that way, because it takes a lot of energy to make the pieces fit together.

Bjarne: I totally agree with this and we’ve talked many times about it, namely that many start at the wrong end. The things we felt were very important now come last, that is having a good job and a good income. So (the sequence of things) is turned up side down.

The main struggles of Turkish couples emerge as difficulties in handling the conflicting demands of traditional, early-modern, and late-modern expectations. In earlier chapters, we analyzed many examples related to the conflicting demands of traditional and modern role definitions, especially for women. For example, Sevim (44) explained in detail how her main struggle has been her attempt to be politically active, besides her work and family responsibilities. But she had to give up on trying to do this, since traditional expectations of motherhood contradicted with her modern wish of contributing in the ‘public-sphere’ actively:

I stopped my political work, because it is not possible to do everything. I mean, I came to the point where I had to make a choice, either a proper family life – a husband and child – or politics, social activities...It is very difficult for a woman to carry on such activities when she has a child, since the responsibility for the child falls on her. It has been like that for hundreds of years; society sees it that way and expects you to prioritize accordingly. The child also expects that. I mean, maybe the child does not enjoy the meal that her father prepares as much as the one her mother prepares. It seems like the child expects the tenderness from the mother.

This is a typical example of the struggles that women face whenever they wish to make non-traditional choices and be active outside the home. As Sevim puts it, “certain invisible obstacles” hinder them.

The co-existence of traditional, modern and late-modern expectations, which I conceptualize as an ‘in-between modernity,’ characterizes the Turkish urban context, and the dual-earner interviewees of this study struggle to handle such conflicting demands. Another major consequence of this specific type of modernity is the existence of social groups with different value orientations and religiosity levels. Most Turkish interviewees mentioned that they belong to a minority: their practices do not always ‘represent’ general orientations. This sense of being a minority may in some extreme cases lead to a type of ‘alienation.’ For example, Ceyda (35) and Cemil (35)⁴² mentioned repeatedly that their

⁴² See case study D in section 7.2 for more information on this couple.

life-style is quite different from many other people living in Istanbul. They have built up an isolated lifestyle in which they work extremely long hours and try to spend the rest of the time together in the context of their 'nuclear' family. A sense of non-belonging results from this:

Cemil: We don't feel like we belong to any social group, there is such a problem

Ceyda: Yes it is true. I mean I feel like I belong to myself only!

For Ceyda and Cemil, being 'too different' than rest of the society has led to a type of 'alienation.' This feeling of non-belonging and difference was shared by several younger Turkish interviewees struggling to manage the contradictions of in-between modernity.

Chapter 9 Reviews, Connections, and Visions

In this chapter, I will summarize the main findings that were analyzed as separate topics in former chapters and examine the connections between them. I will argue that an understanding of the specific modernities and gender policy regimes that prevail in the two countries are crucial in interpreting the interview accounts and exploring the relationship between public issues and individual problems. I will then relate these findings, which are based on the practices and evaluations of a specific group of individuals, to larger societal trends and claim that they can be helpful for challenging particular societal myths.

The conclusions of this study are based on analyses of in-depth interviews with urban, dual-earner couples in light of information gathered through historical analyses, official documents, statistics, and surveys carried out by other scholars. What can the experiences and evaluations of these individuals tell us about the general patterns and dynamics of their societies? What do their reflections contribute to our understanding of the key public issues and private troubles of our times? Which practices, norms and myths are they reproducing and which ones are they challenging?

The findings of this study will contribute to a questioning of the arrangements that are perceived and generally accepted as 'natural' and 'universal' by showing cross-national variations. The depiction of shared problems will illustrate that what many individuals perceive as personal troubles are actually social, shared by others and prone to change by political action. Another contribution will be rendering the influences of state policies visible in those arenas of life that are seemingly most private and personal.

The interviewees of this study are privileged in many respects: They belong to groups that are less constrained by economic necessity and that have access to sources of self-realization due to their higher education levels and professional status. Agreeing to be interviewed for this study also signals the relative strength of their relationship and possession of a sense of accountability concerning their lives. Even though they share certain characteristics, it is important to note that there is a basic difference between the Turkish and Norwegian groups that were interviewed. Due to the homogeneity of Norwegian society, a balanced income distribution among the social classes, and prevailing egalitarian ideals, the Norwegian interviewees did not conceive of themselves as 'different' from the rest of the society and could more easily identify with larger societal groups. Turkish interviewees, on the other hand, live in a society characterized by extreme heterogeneity and great income and life-style differences. They thought that there is more difference between themselves and other socioeconomic groups. Nevertheless, the reflections of both Norwegian and Turkish interviewees on their own

practices, together with their evaluations of trends they witness, provide a basis to identify their main wishes and struggles, which in turn throw a light on the major 'public issues' and the key 'private troubles' in the two societies. The similarities that become apparent provide the grounds from which to reflect on 'global issues' that concern many individuals living under the conditions of late-modernity, and the major differences provide a basis from which to analyze 'local troubles' of Turkey and Norway.

9.1 Review of the Main Findings

In previous chapters, we have scrutinized the practices and evaluations of interviewees, by focusing on both variation and convergence between the two countries, age groups, and genders. Nationality, gender, age, and type of profession are factors that interact and influence individual lives. The interview accounts have provided material to reflect on in which situations one of these factors stands out and influences practices. It has been possible to map out a certain convergence in interview accounts that allows for tracing general patterns (See Table 9.1). In this section, I will briefly summarize these patterns and analyze the connections between them.

Changing Families

The concept of the 'family' has different meanings and family relationships bring dissimilar responsibilities in the two countries. The question 'who is your family?' appears to be ideologically loaded in the Turkish context. For decades, in the popular and scientific discourse, 'nuclear family' was associated with being 'modern' and contemporary. Younger Turkish interviewees tend to draw sharper boundaries between their nuclear family and the rest of their relatives. This can be interpreted as stemming from a need to claim privacy and the primacy of the small family given the context of often highly intertwined family relationships. Norwegians, on the other hand, were more relaxed when answering this question. They thought of persons whom they would invite for an important celebration as constituting their families. Whom you define as your family implies different obligations in Turkey and Norway. In Norway, the welfare state has an active role in providing care services for both children and the elderly. Especially elder care is highly institutionalized. The Turkish State is not conceived as a responsible agent of care. Care-work is still seen as women's most important and natural duty, and solutions for care-related problems are left to be solved in the 'private' sphere of the family. Family members are highly dependent on each other for the care of small children and the elderly. The 'strong Turkish family' ideal contradicts with the trends in the 'public sphere' of the labor market demanding individualization, independence, and mobility.

The two groups also reflected on different types of trends in family patterns and practices. Turkish interviewees saw a general change towards more 'democratic' families and appreciated this development. Older interviewees were concerned about the loosening of family ties, while the younger ones were more appreciative of the dissolving of traditional authority structures.

Table 9.1 Summary Findings Based on Interview Analyses

Key Differences		
	<i>Norwegian Couples</i>	<i>Turkish Couples</i>
Definition of family (3.2, 3.3) ⁴³	Include more persons, imply less practical obligations	Younger couples include less persons, stress primacy of the 'nuclear' family
Arrangements for Housework (4.2, 4.3)	Striving to share equally, 'sliding into' separate spheres of responsibility	Seen predominantly as woman's work, heavy reliance on paid help, devalued
Organizations of Child care (4.6)	Dominant preference for state subsidized day- care institutions	Combination of private arrangements
Family-Work Balance (5.1, 5.2)	Both women and men report on clashing demands	Mainly women's problem
Expectations from the State (6.5)	Comprehensive State as a 'friend'	Marginal State as a distant entity
Gender (7.1, 7.3)	More political Appreciation of the changes towards more gender equality	Less political The myth of 'liberated modern Turkish woman'
Future-plans (8.2)	Keeping together as a family	Economic constraints on plans
Main wishes (8.4)	More time for leisure and family	More modernization
Main Struggles (8.4)	(For mainly younger couples) Living up to unrealistic and conflicting expectations	Clashing demands of traditional, early- modern and late-modern expectations
Late-modern attitudes (8.3)	Towards a 'cautious-modern' outlook	Contradictions of 'in-between-modernity'
Key Similarities		
	Cutting back at work as women's strategy (5.1, 5.4)	
	Organization of unpaid work as women's responsibility (4.4)	
	Critical reflections on 'individualization' (3.5, 8.3)	
	Pressure on time resources (8.1)	

⁴³ The numbers in parentheses refer to the sections in which these themes were developed.

An important change in middle-class Turkish families is the declining birth rates. In dual-career families of urban Turkey, the number of children has fallen to an average of one per family. The interview accounts showed that most family decisions and practices are influenced by concerns about the child's daily care and education. This can be interpreted as a trend towards 'child-centered' families.

Norwegian interviewees mentioned several family trends, the most oft-cited ones being the increase in the number of working mothers and in cohabitation, as well as the high risk of break-ups. While most Norwegians are concerned about the negative consequences of divorce, mainly on children, there is a general acceptance that the normalization of divorce has had a liberating influence on women.

Divorce is becoming a more common phenomenon in urban Turkey as well, even though divorce rates are still low in the international context. Most interviewees evaluated the increase in divorces as a 'natural' result of certain economic and societal trends. Some were critical about the increased focus on 'the self' – as against 'the sacred family' – while many thought that having the economic means to be able to make this decision has been liberating, especially for women. There was a general tendency to see divorce as a 'woman's decision' among both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees. One reason behind increasing divorce rates is the unbalanced division of labor within families that disadvantage women. The interview accounts have provided material to study these patterns comparatively throughout Chapter Four.

Gendered Division of Domestic Labor

Division of work within the home and organization of childcare are crucial matters that need constant attention in the lives of dual-earner couples. Turkish and Norwegian interviewees display different characteristics in these areas as well.

Housework has the status of an 'issue' for Norwegian couples: it has been a topic of discussion and negotiation. Turkish couples, on the other hand, do not see housework as an important field of concern, and they did not have much to say about their (non-) sharing patterns. All Turkish interviewees hire help for housework, in varying frequencies – from twice a month to six days a week. Only two Norwegian couples receive paid cleaning assistance, both with a frequency of once every two weeks. Compared to most Turkish men, Norwegian men felt more responsible for the housework. A basic similarity between Turkish and Norwegian groups is that setting the standards, planning and seeing what needs to be done are still predominantly women's work.

One of the main differences between Norway and Turkey is the status of unpaid care-work and housework: It is evidently less valued, less significant, less political, and more gendered in Turkey. The trend in Norway has been towards valuation, negotiation, and redistribution. However, gender inequalities persist and a wide-spread recognition of the centrality of this work has not been achieved.

Preferred and available arrangements for childcare appear to be significantly different for Turkish and Norwegian couples. In the absence of public childcare policies, Turkish interviewees try different private solutions: full time babysitters, private daycare centers, and help from grandmothers. Norwegian interviewees, on the other hand, have access to

state subsidized daycare centers. Though Norway has been a latecomer among Scandinavian countries in the development of policies that make it easier for mothers to combine employment and motherhood, there have been important changes in this area in the last decade. Parental leave periods have been lengthened and the number of places in daycare centers has increased, however full coverage is not yet achieved. Norwegian interviewees who have preschool children stated that they prefer sending them to public daycare, if available, immediately after the one-year parental leave of absence. With one exception, all younger Norwegian fathers have used their right to a month's leave of absence from work, and this gave them the opportunity to be involved in the care of their children from an early age. As a result of more active involvement in childcare, balancing work and family responsibilities is becoming a significant problem for young Norwegian fathers, and not only mothers.

Balancing Family and Work Obligations

The interview accounts show that harmonizing family and work is a demanding task for most interviewees, and is especially hard for parents of small children. Work can be demanding in terms of overtime, which means that one cuts into 'home' time. This often results in a feeling of 'squeeze' between the desire to do good work and the wish to be present at home. A certain amount of flexibility at work is much appreciated by interviewees because it enables them to arrange their work hours according to the demands of their families. When the interviewees used the term 'flexibility' they referred to having a relatively high degree of control over their work hours and the ability to start work earlier or later when needed.

Turkish women who are mothers of small children and who work in the private sector professions were most severely torn between the demands of their 'careers' and their families. Turkish men did not talk about 'conflicting demands' so intensely. Norwegian men had much more to say on this issue. There is a key difference between Turkey and Norway in terms of societal demands on fathers for more active involvement in childcare and housework. In Turkey there is not a general expectation that fathers will organize their work lives according to family demands. Family issues are mainly women's area of concern. To meet the demands of housework and childcare, they rely on paid help or support from their female kin, mostly their own mothers. A key similarity between Turkish and Norwegian groups is that cutting back at work is a typical 'solution' for women when the family-work balance cannot be obtained.

One significant finding of this study is the frequently stated wish of Norwegian mothers for reduced work hours. A common plan among mothers of pre-school children is to cut back at work to get more time with the children. In that way, Norwegian women try to get, 'the best of the both worlds.' They are not cut off from the pleasures and benefits of the working world, but they have more time at their disposal to use the way they wish in their family lives. Flexible work alternatives are made possible by the specific policies of the Norwegian welfare state. In the last decade, there have been heated public discussions in Norway on the need of offering better choices to parents of small children in reconciling their family and work commitments. Turkish and Norwegian interviewees

appear to be living on different planets when it comes to level of support provided by the state for dual-earner couples with children.

States in the Lives of the Individuals

The ways the state is conceptualized by the social agents are amazingly divergent in the two countries. Norwegians spoke about the state as a friend, almost a member of the family, that is there to care for them when needed. Turks thought that the state is distant and authoritarian, and that its most positive function can be to protect them. Norwegian interviewees conceived state interference in family as essentially positive and had well-defined expectations. Most Norwegian women thought that the ‘transition from *private* to *public* dependency’ and ‘the family going public’ (Hernes 1987) have primarily been beneficial. In contrast to many other Western countries where care work has been marketized, the Scandinavian solution has been its incorporation into the public sector administered by the state and municipalities and an acknowledgement that care for the young and elderly are public concerns (Hernes 1987).

The interview accounts have shown that well institutionalized parental leave policies and subsidized childcare centers were the most appreciated arrangements of the Norwegian welfare state. Turkish interviewees, on the other hand, did not expect much support from the state, especially not in the fields that are defined as the family’s domain: namely, childcare and eldercare. State services were generally thought as having poor quality and interviewees preferred private (market) alternatives whenever they could afford it.

The institutional and universal characteristics of the Norwegian welfare state and the marginal characteristics of the Turkish model are reflected in the lives and accounts of the interviewees. The social democratic welfare regime prevailing in Norway operates with an egalitarian ideology which comprises ‘gender equality’ as a widely held ideal. Gender was another key topic throughout this study and was the focus of comparative analysis in Chapter Seven.

Reflections on Gender

Interviewees were asked to reflect on both their own gendered experiences throughout their life-course and on what they perceive as dominant societal gendered arrangements and ideologies.

Turkish and Norwegian interviewees’ reflections on gender, understood as both a social construction and a biological difference, are highly dissimilar. There is great variation among both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees concerning the relative importance attributed to biology or socialization in defining the differences between the sexes. In both groups, roughly half believed in the significance of hormonal, genetic, or bodily differences, while the other half believed in the significance of socialization and learned behavior. Moreover, these groups included a balanced distribution of both genders and age groups. Individual beliefs concerning differences between men and women appear as complex wholes made up of personal experiences, observations, books, and media images, which often change throughout one’s life course.

Gender related issues are politicized in Norway, while they are conceived as more personal in Turkey. 'Gender equality' is the dominant ideal among Norwegians, while 'difference' and 'complementariness' are more accepted among Turkish interviewees. Gender is not conceived as a highly significant social variable or a political issue by Turkish interviewees. I interpret this as stemming from their privileged class positions and from the special modernization history of Turkey.

Most – but not all – Turkish interviewees share a powerful myth concerning gender in Turkey. This is the myth of the 'liberated, modern Turkish woman.' A majority of the interviewees believed that urban Turkish women do not face discriminations because they are women; it is mainly lack of education that creates certain disadvantages, and more modernization will solve these problems. This powerful myth is mainly based on the observation that Turkish women were given their citizenship rights much earlier than most European women. The resulting pride usually leads to a blindness concerning enduring structural and cultural factors that have helped to establish a disruptive 'woman ideal.' This ideal asserts that women must first of all be good wives and mothers and subordinate their own interests to the success of their husband and bringing up of children. The 'liberated woman' myth also declares that modern women have the choice of participating in the labor market and competing with men under fair conditions if they wish to do so. This condition does not hold even for the most privileged upper-middle-class women, let alone working class and rural women who have additional burdens to bear. Women who choose to combine motherhood and work outside home get exhausted under the pressures of conflicting expectations and lack of support mechanisms. In early 1980s, Kandiyoti (1981) characterized Turkish women as "emancipated but not liberated." Sadly, this characteristic still holds, though in varying degrees, for even the 'most modern' and privileged women of Turkey in the new millennium.

The interview accounts reflect the strength of the 'liberated, modern Turkish woman' myth. Turkish female interviewees usually stated that they themselves do not face many disadvantages from being women, but they observe that there are 'other,' less lucky women who do. Those who reflected on problems influencing also 'modern' women mentioned the restrictive social norms and inequalities in the labor market. Turkish men had little to say about their experiences of 'being a man.' This was not an issue that they thought much about. There is no strong societal trend to question the existing 'male roles and identities' either. Obviously, gender is not conceived as a political issue that needs to be actively addressed.

For Norwegians gender is an issue that they have thought and heard a lot about. Norwegian society has been officially 'gender equality' oriented since the 1970s. Gender equality is a political issue ranking high on the agenda. Egalitarian ideals prevail among Norwegian interviewees and they have quite homogeneous attitudes concerning these issues. Most of the interviewees reflected on changes towards greater 'gender equality' that have taken place in an appreciative manner. They also mentioned areas that lag behind or things that can be done better.

In both the Turkish and Norwegian groups, men found the question related to advantages or disadvantages of being a man harder to answer, compared to women. Nonetheless, Norwegian men had a lot more to say on gender. Most Turkish men referred to a 'standard Turkish man' as a traditional 'macho' and strove to reveal how their behavior differs from this anti-hero. Norwegian men, on the other hand, usually reflected on the changes that are brought about as a result of changes in women's positions and greater gender equality. Many of them reported cherishing relationships with 'freer' women and claimed that their life was more interesting than their father's. A few of the interviewees mentioned that certain problems may emerge due to increased gender-equality. In these cases equality was often misconceived as 'sameness'. One Norwegian couple, in contrast to the others, thought that in Norway equality had gone too far. They conceptualized equality as 'sameness'⁴⁴ and thought that conflicts arise when there are no longer well-defined 'gender roles'. However, they did not want to go back to the traditional gender arrangements either. Questioning of traditional and modern 'gender roles' is one of the distinctive characteristic brought about by 'reflexive modernization' (Beck 1992). In Chapter Eight, several other key aspects of late-modern lives were scrutinized comparatively.

Life-planning, Wishes and Struggles in Late-Modern Lives

The interviewees have provided reflections on the changes brought about by increasing modernization and 'individualization.'

The interview accounts have demonstrated that "a reflexively-organized life-planning" (Giddens 1991) is a common concern for both Turkish and Norwegian individuals in their attempts of reconciling different expectations they face in society. Yet it has also been clear that this reflexively organized life planning does not function free from important material and cultural constraints, even for these individuals who are among the most privileged in their societies, mainly due to their relatively secure employment conditions.

The main difference between the Turkish and Norwegian interviewees concerning future plans is the general pessimism that prevails among the Turks. They feel that external factors (like political instability and economic crisis) have a determining and constraining power. For the parents of younger children, planning for their education is the main concern, and most other plans rely on this factor. Norwegians, on the other hand, appear to have more freedom in terms of life planning, and they talked about different types of plans. To find a better balance between work, family and leisure was a common theme mentioned by many Norwegians. Another significant plan characteristic of the Norwegian group is to 'stay together as a family,' by making efforts to strengthen their relationship. Given the higher risk of relationship break-up in Norway, Norwegian couples demonstrate an awareness that keeping together happily is a life project that demands efforts. In terms of life-planning, Norwegians are more 'decommodified' since

⁴⁴ For arguments on the cultural significance and consequences of equality misconceived as 'sameness' in Norwegian society, see Gullestad 1992.

the welfare state acts as a buffer between them and the 'free market' while Turkish interviewees still plan under economic constraints.

In the lives of dual-earner couples time is a scarce good that demands careful planning. Most interviewees reported that there are external constraints on the ways they use their time. Especially younger parents experienced strict time-schedules. In the Turkish group, it was mainly women who reported severe time problems. In the Norwegian group, both men and women articulated a desire to have more time for themselves, their families, and in some cases their jobs.

I conceptualize Turkey and Norway as contexts of 'different modernities' in which specific historical factors and cultural practices influence individual attitudes. A key argument that is confirmed by the interview analysis is that modernity does not follow a smooth transition path from simple to late- or reflexive stages and that societies may display traditional, modern and late-modern characteristics at the same time. Individualization is ambiguous and double-edged.

Among the Turkish interviewees, a transition from an early-modern to a late-modern outlook became apparent. Younger Turkish interviewees are more individualized and put more stress on self-realization, as well as investment in their first-degree relationships (i.e. nuclear family and close friends) rather than larger kinship relations. Among the Norwegian interviewees, the attitudinal differences between the younger and older interviewees are less significant. Both age groups display an attitude that can be characterized as 'cautious-modern.' The indicators for this specific outlook on life are: a critical approach to increased materialization and focus on 'the self,' and a desire to slow down the 'daily rush' – by working less in order to have more leisure and 'family' time. There was a common tendency to reflect on the double-sided consequences of 'individualization' among both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees, evidenced by references to the processes which lead to loneliness and a loss of community.

The main wishes of Turkish interviewees revolve around issues of more modernization, which involves more democracy, better economic conditions, and more gender equality. These are the major 'public issues' for the Turks. Norwegians, on the other hand, wish for more time – both for themselves, as leisure time, and for their families and friends, as relationship time.

The main struggles of Turkish interviewees crystallize as difficulties they face in handling conflicting societal norms and expectations (traditional, modern and late-modern), and a type of 'alienation' resulting from a feeling of non-belonging and a sense of difference. For Norwegians, the main struggles are living up to high, unrealistic expectations of success, and being physically available in many different spheres – in the context of their families, work lives, friends, and leisure activities.

National context appears to be meaningful in understanding the differences between the two groups on the issues of key wishes and struggles. The existence of a supportive welfare state is the most significant factor that differentiates practices of Norwegian interviewees from those of Turks, whose lives are more determined by 'free' markets.

9.2 Different Modernities and Gender Policy Regimes

An analysis of historical trends and official documents has made it possible to compare Turkey and Norway in terms of general characteristics of their modernities, state models and institutional and ideological factors that influence family and gender practices (See Table 9.2).

Table 9.2 Key Findings based on Macro-Level Analyses

	Norway	Turkey
Characteristics of modernity	Late industrialization Class-alliances Egalitarian	Top-down modernization Class-conflicts Elitist
General Welfare Models	Institutionalized Welfare State Social democratic	Residual Social State Liberal (with conservative elements)
State Gender Ideologies	Official Ideology is 'Gender equality' ambiguities remain	From early state feminism to conservative gender role ideologies ambiguities remain
Family Policy Models	Individualistic, Weak male-breadwinner, Pro-egalitarian	Familialistic, Strong male bread-winner, Pro-family but non-interventionist

Turkey and Norway have followed dissimilar paths in their modernization processes. Distinct class structures, religions and political economies interact and shape – and are also shaped by – different modernities.

Compared to its Scandinavian neighbors, Norway has been a late-comer in industrialization. The absence of an aristocracy and the proliferation of independent peasants combined to make Norway an unusually egalitarian country (Esping-Andersen 1985: 46). A remarkable feature of Norwegian politics is the extent to which the bourgeois parties incorporated social democratic programs. Traditional left/right divisions have been weakened in the Norwegian parliament and most welfare reforms are achieved through party alliances and compromises. The North Sea oil fortunes enabled Norway to sustain full employment and maintain welfare state expansion throughout the 1990s. Nonetheless, a neo-liberal orientation has become more visible in recent years, with a stronger emphasis on incentives to work and debates on the alleged detrimental effects of a comprehensive welfare state (Eitheim & Kuhnle 2000).

Turkish modernization is an example of top-down modernization. Turkish nation state is established through a revolutionary modernization of the Islamic Ottoman Empire (See Appendix 1 for more information). The Kemalist elites embarked on an ambitious political, social and cultural modernization program, which aimed at transforming all the institutional and symbolic aspects associated with the Islamic way of life. This project of top-down modernization has created conflicting attitudes towards the

issues of westernization and secularization and gave way to an extremely heterogeneous society, both in terms of material living conditions and value orientations. In the last decades, Turkey has been governed by predominantly liberal parties and has adopted a neo-liberal economic stabilization program supported and controlled by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Privatization of the public economic organizations and a minimization of government interference in the competitive market system have been stated political goals of successive governments.

At present, Turkey displays the general characteristics of the Liberal model in the framework identified by Esping-Andersen (1990). State intervention is subordinate to the market and public benefits are modest. Norway, on the other hand, fits more closely to the Social Democratic model. Social benefits are based on citizenship or residence, are financed by taxes and universalism is still a strong principle. A more detailed and historical analysis of specific policies and provisions display the existence of conservative model characteristics in Turkey, especially pertaining to the preservation of the traditional family.

In Turkey, the state officially supports gender equality and has recently withdrawn all reservations regarding the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women following the changes in the Civil Code. However, actual policies to eliminate discrimination against women in the labor market are not well developed, and in the context of severe economic crisis, gender-related issues are not prioritized.

In terms of gender and family policies, both states have gone through historical transformations and also involve ambiguities at the present time. Since 1970s, the Norwegian State's official ideology has been gender equality. However, until the 1990s, policies that would enable women to combine motherhood and employment were less developed in Norway, compared to other Scandinavian countries. This has led some researchers to argue that Norwegian policies correspond most closely to the 'separate gender roles' regime (Sainsbury 1999). The separate gender roles regime underlines a strict division of labor between the sexes and provides benefits to both the male provider and the female caregiver (ibid.: 79). The recent cash-for-care reform can be seen as an example of this policy regime. Yet, in the last decade there has been a dramatic improvement of parental leave policies and an increased investment in public child care in Norway. The establishment of a 'father's quota' and the active state involvement in providing entitlements to both men and women as earners and carers are the key characteristics of the 'individual earner-carer' gender policy regime.

The individual earner-carer regime envisions greater equality between women and men and "the transformation of the traditional division of labor between the sexes, so that each individual is involved in both caring and earning" (Sainsbury 1999: 260). This gender regime and the social-democratic regime have complementary logics, in that both individualize and thereby 'de-familialize' social rights. De-familialization refers to "the degree to which households' welfare and caring responsibilities are relaxed – either via welfare state provision, or via market provision" (Esping-Andersen 1999: 51).

In terms of the relationship between state policies and family practices, Turkey and Norway can be conceptualized as representing two different *Gender Policy Regimes* – i.e. the ways gender is conceptualized and acted upon in state institutions and policies. In

general, the prevailing ideology underlying the family policies in Turkey can be labeled *familialistic*: the assumption that childcare and eldercare can and should be met within the family (i.e. by women) leads to low public provisions, and indirectly supports the *male-breadwinner/female-housewife* family model. Norway, on the other hand, is characterized by an *individualistic* gender policy regime, since, in the last decade, the state provision for childcare and eldercare has been based on the assumption that both women and men will participate in paid employment. This gender regime supports the *dual breadwinner* family model.

These policy differences have been central in interpreting actual practices and ideologies of Turkish and Norwegian interviewees. It has also been clear that, though useful as analytic categories, these 'regimes' and 'models' often contain ambiguities and are historically variable.

9.3 Connections and Visions

A key change has taken place in Norwegian society concerning definitions of 'good motherhood' and 'good fatherhood,' enabled by the interacting influences of feminism, higher educational attainment, increasing female labor force and political participation, and the institutionalization of gender-equality policies. The last decade has witnessed a 'politicizing of parenthood' (Ellingsæter 1999b) with an emphasis on men's parental duties and on the need to develop policies that would support a dual-earner/dual-carer family model. A more symmetric family model, in which both the mother and the father are income-earners and carers, can be supported by policy measures, such as full coverage in public child care and access to flexible work hours in specific life-phases.

The interview accounts related to definitions and practices of fatherhood, especially, show that attitude changes and policies enabling these practices go hand-in-hand. The popularity of the 'father's quota' in Norway provides grounds to argue for possibilities of changing individual practices by universalistic state policies. After the introduction of this quota, which is a one month paternal leave (non-transferable to the mother), the number of fathers taking paid leave of absence to care for their children has increased dramatically: 80 per cent of Norwegian fathers who have right to parental leave use their paternity quota in the new Millennium (Brandth & Kvande 2001). Taking paid leave from work to care for their child became a majority practice among Norwegian fathers.

Norwegian interviewees who had used their paternity quota spoke positively of this policy and mentioned the importance of being actively involved in childcare from early on. Those Norwegian fathers were the same ones who mentioned the difficulties of balancing the demands of work and family. This is an indicator for the fact that traditional gender arrangements are not given by nature, but are social constructs, which can be transformed by organized human action. As Morgan (1999a) also stresses, there is an interplay between the division of labor within the households, on the one hand, and wider understandings of masculinity, on the other. Changing models of masculinity may give legitimacy to changes being negotiated within the household, while changes in family

practices themselves “constitute part of the shifting understandings of masculinity and femininity in the wider society” (Morgan 1999a: 35).

As a result of institutionalized egalitarian policies, there have been significant developments in Norway in the direction of reducing gender-based segregations. Women’s political participation has increased and policies related to care arrangements in society became critical political issues. Gender relations in Turkey are maybe more similar to those that prevailed in Norway in 1970s, before women started demanding more participation in the public sphere and equal representation. But I do not claim that things will ‘evolve’ in the same direction in Turkey. There are significant institutional, historical and cultural factors that influence the transformations in gender relations. In Turkey, the ideal of modernization by keeping the values of Turkish culture has been a widely held goal. This implied keeping Turkish family strong and establishing women’s main duty as ‘good wives and mothers’ (Koray 1998). The family model that is supported by this ideology is the male breadwinner-female housewife model and even though women’s higher education is encouraged in the spirit of modernization, they are expected to give priority to their families whenever conflicts arise. Another significant factor influencing gender relations is the economy. In Turkey, there is no economic base to finance gender-equality policies. Rather, prevalent economic crises lead to backlashes, signified by further decrease in urban women’s labor force participation rates.

In the interview accounts some of the ‘national myths’ of Turkey and Norway were both reproduced and challenged. The findings of this comparative study provides a basis to reflect on and confront these widely held myths.

In Turkey ‘the liberated modern Turkish women’ myth should be challenged by underlining the barely four percent representation of women in Parliament and the falling labor participation rates of urban women. Turkey still compares unfavorably with European countries in terms of women’s participation in the ‘public sphere’.

Among urban, middle-class Turks, a widely held and cherished “female ideal” prevails: a woman should be well-educated, and preferably have a prestigious profession, but she should first of all be a good mother and a devoted wife, who puts the family first. This ideal is internalized by many women, and works as a major source of ‘guilt’ when work and family demands clash. Living up to this unrealistic ideal is a major dilemma in the lives of most professional Turkish women. The competitive labor market demands long working hours and presupposes individuals who do not have caring responsibilities. Given the lack of institutional support (by state) and a lack of sharing (by men) of care work, the tendency to withdraw from professional life often results. Another widespread strategy is to lower one’s ambitions and sacrifice career plans to put the family first. The reliable and efficient factor encouraging women to make these decisions is their own ‘guilty conscience.’ Most women believe that these are their ‘personal’ problems, and that not being able to combine a career and family obligations is a personal failure. I anticipate that this study will contribute to demonstrate how ‘public’ these problems really are.

In Norway, the myth of ‘total gender equality’ should be challenged by underscoring that the organizations of both paid and unpaid work are still highly gendered. Norway has one of the most gender-segregated labor markets among the industrialized countries

and women's representation in top management positions are remarkably low. An area that needs constant attention is the status of care-work, both in the private and the public spheres. In the public sphere, care-workers are predominantly women and are poorly paid. In the private sphere, the major responsibility for arranging care work still belongs to women. Positive developments have taken place in this field but change is painfully slow.

A main similarity that crystallized between Turkish and Norwegian groups was the fact that in both countries it is still women who both *feel* more responsible for and who actually *do* more care work and housework. Another similarity was that it is mainly women who cut back at work whenever the clashing demands of work and family become unmanageable. I do not see anything inherently wrong with the decision of cutting back at work as long as it is a real *choice*. This can be a real choice only when there is a network of supporting agents around the 'working mother': a partner who does not free himself from care work, public institutions that offer child care at reasonable costs, friends and relatives living nearby who have some excess of time and energy.

The 'global issue' which appeared as a common problem for both Turkish and Norwegian women, was the unfavorable division of labor within the home. Although there have been positive changes in terms of men's contribution to domestic tasks in Norway, the recent time-use statistics show remaining patterns: women have dramatically increased the time they use in paid labor and decreased the time they use for housework. Men have slightly increased the time they use for childcare, but the time they use for housework is rather stable.

Even in Norway, a wealthy country, with official gender equality politics, the patterns in the division of unpaid labor could not be broken down. Social theories cannot explain this phenomenon unless they come to terms with their own contribution in devaluing care work and housework. Caring for others has traditionally been associated with femininity, and conceived as 'a labor of love' (Finch & Groves 1983), and not work. Gendered division of unpaid labor is a key factor in contributing to the reproduction of the conditions that disadvantage women in the labor market.

My vision of a good society is the one in which social reproduction and care work are valued and in which difficulties that parents of small children experience in reconciling their family and work commitments are conceptualized as 'public issues' and not as 'private troubles.'

The Norwegian example shows that the state is capable of designing policies that are felt as 'family friendly' by different segments of the population. Local and civil society solutions to these problems are also important, yet a legal back-up is vital in ensuring widespread change. Any radical change in gender arrangements requires working 'with' the state, not 'against' it. This involves operating with the vision of a 'friendlier' state, which has the potential to be radically transformed.

In this age dominated by the discourse of globalization, arguing for 'more state involvement' is becoming ever more difficult and is often denounced as passé. The ideology behind economic globalization is 'neo-liberalism' entailing free market, privatization and deregulation. In the neo-liberal agenda, market solutions are presented as the best, most efficient, flexible and dynamic ones; while the state is presented as an

outdated, static and rigid entity (Wacquant 2001). However, when the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalization spread unequally, concentrating power and wealth in a selected group of individuals, nations and corporations, marginalizing the others. Many activities and goods that are critical to human development are provided outside the market. Care work – that is providing for children, the sick, the elderly, as well as “all the rest of us exhausted from the demands of everyday life” – is an important input for the development of human capabilities and establishment of both social cohesion and economic growth (UNDP 1999). Care consists of “everything we do to continue, repair, and maintain ourselves so that we can live in the world as well as possible” (Fisher & Tronto 1991: 40) and in that sense it is a fundamental aspect of social life. However, the market gives few incentives and few rewards for care since “the logic of the market” runs up against “the logic of care” (Wærness 1998). This phenomenon is also becoming visible as increasing pressure on time resources in everyday lives.

In the context of competitive globalization labor markets are becoming more risky and insecure (Beck 2000). Increased demands of time devotion, mobility and prevalence of short-term employment contracts conflict with stability demands of family lives. In both Turkey and Norway the labor market is putting pressures on individuals to be more mobile, competitive and work longer hours. Time pressures lead to a care-deficit at home. The findings of this study show that both Turkish and Norwegian interviewees are facing increased time-pressures and wish for more flexibility in work life, defining it as the opportunity to control their working times. The labor market will be more flexible when it is organized by a logic that acknowledges care-commitments of its participants, irrespective of their gender.

Remaining gendered patterns in the organization of both paid and unpaid work, increasing pressures on time resources and an urgent need to acknowledge the significance of care work are the ‘global issues’ documented by this comparative study. These areas call for further cross-national research in order to reach a better understanding of the local consequences and gendered outcomes of globalization as a plural phenomenon consisting of interacting economic, political and cultural processes.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Historical Trajectories

The following account of the historical trajectories of Norway and Turkey serves to draw a general picture of their developments as modern nation-states, and of the formation of their basic social institutions. The historical narrative is not exhaustive; rather it aims to provide the reader with some basic information about certain historical events that have influenced the characteristics of today's societies. I emphasize information that I believe to be necessary for understanding this specific comparative study, namely the formation of the welfare state in Norway and the process of top-down modernization in Turkey.

Norway's Transformation into an Institutional Welfare State

Norway was divided into small kingdoms until the 11th century, a period in which Viking chiefs introduced Christianity. During the 13th century, Norway experienced continuous territorial growth. The *Black Death* struck Norway in the 14th century causing the loss of almost two thirds of the population. This weakened the country in many ways, leading to a union with Denmark, in which Denmark was the dominating power. The union with Denmark lasted until 1814, after which a new and looser union with Sweden was formed. With the dissolution of the union with Denmark, Norway gained freedom in domestic affairs and a National Assembly was formed which prepared the first constitution. Sweden was the dominating power especially regarding foreign affairs in the new union. The conflicts around the ways Sweden handled Norwegian foreign affairs reached a climax in 1905 and the union was dissolved. The period 1905-1914 was characterized by rapid economic expansion in Norway. Its immense resources of water power provided a base for industrial expansion. During World War I, Norway managed to stay neutral, but was hard hit by post-war economic depression.

The Norwegian Labor Party, which was founded in 1887, increased its influence as a consequence of industrialization and the introduction of universal suffrage, forming its first cabinet in 1927. With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe in 1939, Norway declared itself neutral, but was invaded by Germany in 1940. This forced Norwegian political leaders to flee the country. An exile government was formed in London. After the liberation in 1945, general elections took place, giving the Labor Party a decisive majority and allowing it to govern the country almost continuously until 1965.

The postwar period, was a period of increasing international involvement for Norway. In 1945 Norway became a founding member of the United Nations and in 1949 a full member of NATO. The 1950s were years of reconstruction after the War. The government drastically increased its direct involvement in economic life. This resulted in

a series of clashes between the ruling Labor Party and the non-socialist opposition. During these years migration from rural areas to towns and cities increased dramatically. It was during the postwar period that the cornerstones of the modern Norwegian welfare state were laid.

The historical paths followed by the Scandinavian countries share certain characteristics which make their welfare model unique. According to Esping-Andersen (1985: 72) these common features are: the smooth process of political democratization and early extensions of suffrage, precocious alliance of peasants, farmers and workers in the struggle for full democracy, adoption of proportional representation which helped to advance social democratic mobilization and the unusually strong linkage between class divisions and the party system.

The postwar developments in the Norwegian welfare state were rooted in a broad political consensus (Esping-Andersen & Korpi 1987). Social policy issues did not cause major conflicts between parties. The Labor Party was a leading force in defining new social policy tasks, but other parties followed closely behind. A remarkable feature of Norwegian postwar politics was the extent to which the bourgeois parties embraced social democratic policies.

Rapid economic growth characterized the 1960s. In 1970, large deposits of oil and natural gas were discovered under the North Sea. Because of this addition of a new and important sector to the economy, Norway maintained full employment and a steady growth in real incomes and living standards throughout the 1970s. Norway's oil fortunes spared the Labor Party governments from divisive crisis policies and underwrote the continuance of welfare state expansion.

During the 1980s, Norway has become much more vulnerable to the international recession. Unemployment rose and the welfare state came under financial and political pressure. A number of social welfare programs have been modified in an effort to limit the rise in social expenditure in the early 1980s, but the total amount of funds allocated to social and health purposes increased steadily in real terms.

The trends in the economy have been generally positive in the 1990s. Norwegians voted against membership in the European Union in a referendum in 1994. A major political issue in the 1990s has been the one concerning immigration politics. The welfare resistance party, with its sharp views on immigration policies, has been one of the most important political actors defining the agenda on this issue. Norway had a Labor Party minority government until 1997 when a centrist minority coalition government, led by the Christian People's Party took over.

While all the other Scandinavian countries faced economic recession and had to cut back on certain welfare arrangements, thanks to its Oil revenues, Norway has even implemented more generous benefits in some areas (Eitheim & Kuhnle 2000). Widespread political consensus about the public responsibility for welfare provision continues, though there are constant discussions on possibilities of privatization and increasing competition in supply of social care services.

Turkey's Revolutionary Modernization and Punctured Democratization

In order to understand the dynamics of Turkish society today, it is crucial to have a basic knowledge of its Ottoman heritage and of its complex, top-down modernization. During the 11th century, a group of nomadic Turk tribes invaded Anatolia, establishing the Ottoman dynasty, which later became one of the biggest empires in world history. By the end of the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its power and wealth. In the 17th century, the Empire began to decline politically and financially, and started to lose control over some regions. Developments in Europe – the Industrial Revolution and new ideologies such as nationalism, liberalism, and secularism – had a powerful influence on the Ottomans.

When the First World War broke out, the Ottomans took the side of Germany and Austria, though the empire was in no condition to fight a serious war. The armistice that was signed after the war meant an Ottoman capitulation. The wartime leaders left the country and there was a power vacuum. Mustafa Kemal –later called Atatürk– coordinated the national struggle against the Allies, who had invaded Istanbul and planned the partition of Anatolia. After a successful War of Independence, a National Assembly was composed in 1920 and the Turkish Republic was proclaimed in 1923. Under the leadership of Atatürk and a small elite devoted to his ideology, *Kemalism*, the Ottoman sultanate and caliphate were abolished and the process of top-down reformation was initiated.

The second half of the 1920s witnessed radical reforms. The Kemalist elites embarked on an ambitious political, social and cultural modernization program. It started with the proclamation of the Republic and the abolition of the Caliphate, and continued with the separation of the religion and the state, and a complete secularization of the educational and legal systems. Kemalist reforms aimed to transform all the cultural and symbolic phenomena associated with the Islamic way of life: from the modernization of the alphabet and dress code, to the status and roles of women. However, this new ‘Western’ culture did not have profound effects on society at large, especially in rural areas. A gulf was created between the rulers and the ruled, each of which had their own distinct cultures: the Westernized, secular culture of a small but influential minority and the indigenous culture of the masses associated with Islam (Ahmad 1993: 92).

The Kemalists knew that their reforms would be short-lived unless they were backed by a corresponding revolution in the economy. They viewed industry as a vital component in the creation of the new Turkey. The economy of the early republic was predominantly agrarian and was in a state of chronic underdevelopment. The new economic strategy that was adopted called for the state to be the major actor in industrialization. Until 1946, the country was ruled by the Republican People's Party (RPP), which was founded on Kemalist ideology and its 6 principles: republicanism, nationalism, secularism, populism, statism and reformism. Even though Mustafa Kemal exercised an authoritarian leadership style until his death in 1938, the declared objective of his ideology was progress towards a democratic polity and a pluralist society (Kazancigil 1994). Turkey remained neutral throughout the Second World War. During

those years, the private sector had grown considerably and began to be bothered by the extensive intervention of the state in the economy. There were important polarizations within the RPP about economic issues, and these eventually led to the formation of the opposition Democratic Party (DP). The DP advocated private enterprise and individual initiative and won the support of businessmen, the liberal intelligentsia and the rural masses. Democrats won the first multiparty elections of 1950.

The period 1950-1960 was characterized by the political and military integration of Turkey into the Western alliance, rapid economic development, growing financial dependence on the US, and a downgrading of the secularist tendencies of the previous government (Zürcher 1993). By the end of the 1950s, the economy began to deteriorate. The government began to lose control, and political opposition increased. The army got restless due to political instability, growing inflation, and a general atmosphere of discontent in urban areas. In 1960, the economy was in a state of collapse and the first military intervention in the history of modern Turkey took place. A planned economy was set in motion with the goal of rapid industrialization based on the model of import substitution. A more liberal constitution was introduced, with stronger civil rights provisions (Ahmad 1993). Towards the end of the 1960s, the politics in Turkey became extremely contentious. Rising political tensions, world events and rapid societal change produced an explosive situation. Unemployment was rising and high inflation restricted consumption to a minority. There was increased political activity at universities. New political parties were formed at the extremes of the political spectrum. The left-right polarization led to growing violence in universities and on the streets. On 12 March 1971, a second military intervention took place. But the vicious cycle continued: unemployment and inflation increased, while social unrest and violence in the streets reached unprecedented levels, leading to the third military intervention in the history of modern Turkey on 12 September 1980.

The new constitution that was prepared after the coup included articles and clauses that imposed strict state control over political activities. Despite all its rhetoric about the secular Kemalist ideology, the strategy of the military regime was to counterbalance the revolutionary left forces by providing support to Islamic movements. This strategy would soon lay the groundwork for the revival of militant Islamic fundamentalism as a real threat to the very existence of the Republic (Eralp 1993). After the general elections in 1983, the Motherland Party (MP) came to power. The new right considered economic restructuring as its first priority and proposed a move from a mixed to a free market economy.

To effect economic restructuring, Turkey implemented an export-led growth model, which received the support of the IMF and World Bank. The Stabilization Program resulted in a major redistribution of national income. The net result has been a regression in the incomes of popular sector –agriculture, wages and salaries– and an increase in the share of profits, rents and interest in national income (Eralp et al. 1993). The transition to a full market economy has only been possible with the imposition of the military regime, which suspended all confederations and trade unions and proscribed strikes. However, as

the grip of the military regime loosened, democratic rights were restored and unions were reorganized in the 1990s.

Trends in the 1990s have not been all too positive, yet a new military coup did not take place. An apparent consensus among the divergent political forces is that the only path for Turkey to follow is to fully implement democracy. 1990s have witnessed many government changes. The most notable was the coalition between the liberal True Path Party and the Islamist Welfare Party. The threat of religious fundamentalism and corruption within the state are often specified as the major challenges for Turkey. While economic trends were signaling growth, the country was hit by a major crisis in 2001 and unemployment rose to record high rates. Full membership in the EU has been a major goal for the governments in the new Millennium. Several constitutional reforms have been introduced to comply with the criteria for membership.

Appendix 2: Official Documents and Statistics on Women

Two documents from Turkey and Norway, which were prepared as national reports to the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995), have been sources of comparative official information on changes in women's positions. In general, both documents try to present a picture of the changes as well as stabilities. The main difference between the two countries is that Norway has witnessed a strong women's movement in the 1970s and the ideal of equality between the sexes is integrated in both Norwegian culture and all areas of social policy; while Turkey has only recently witnessed an increased emphasis on women's issues and feminist movements have never been so strong due to serious differences among women and specific historical developments that make gender-solidarity difficult. These factors are reflected in the reports. While Norwegian report mainly revolves around the steps taken and results achieved; the Turkish report concentrates on documenting women's relative disadvantages and specifies targets for the future.⁴⁵

The Norwegian document opens with the following paragraph:

Since 1985 Norway has continued to see a steady improvement in the situation of women. The changes in political influence of women has been particularly marked... The strong position of women in politics has an impact on the political agenda, issues of particular concern to women are given high priority. These include measures to make it easier for parents with young children to combine family responsibilities with work outside the home (emphasis original, National Report 1994: 8).

The Turkish Report, on the other hand, opens with a reversed emphasis:

Women are universally disadvantaged in access to decision-making mechanisms and power... Since women's participation in political decision-making is essential for actualizing both democracy and gender equality, this poses a major constraint for the advancement of women (Turkish Report, DGSPW 1994: 4).

The Turkish report continues by presenting figures on women's participation in political institutions which are well below the egalitarian ideals. Mentioning this basic disadvantage of women, the report specifies certain mechanisms for the advancement of women. It is underlined that, the last decade has witnessed important initiatives both by the state and NGO's to develop mechanisms that will promote women's advancement in all fields. The most important national mechanism is the establishment of the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women (DGSPW) in 1990. The aim of the Directorate is "providing Turkish women the status which they deserve in social, economic, cultural and political areas in an environment of equality" (DGSPW 1994). Among other

⁴⁵ It is important to note that the Norwegian official report has been criticized by certain women's groups for overemphasizing the developments and underemphasizing the areas in which women are still disadvantaged.

activities, this directorate has initiated several research studies on working women with the purpose of documenting their problems in various sectors and specifying policies to improve women's labor force participation.

In the Norwegian Report, the second chapter is devoted to a historical presentation of the Gender equality machinery in Norway. It is underlined that Norway has rather strong instruments for the promotion and enforcement of gender equality. The report continues with specifying the statutory rights concerning women. The main law relating to women's positions is the gender equality act which entered into force in 1979. It is a sweeping law which aims at eliminating gender discrimination in almost all areas of society and influencing attitudes. The report continues by specifying the amendments of the gender equality act; including the provision that demands at least 40 per cent representation of each sex in all councils and committees. The Turkish Report also continues by examining the legal system in terms of gender equality and finds that "despite the principle of gender equality and the prohibition of gender based discrimination by the Turkish Constitution...contradictory articles are encountered in the law".⁴⁶

Both reports provide statistics and reflections on women's political participation, education and employment patterns. Below is a review and brief analysis of Turkish and Norwegian women's participation in the 'public sphere':

Access to Decision-making and Political Representation

The political participation of women is high in Norway and their representation levels compare favorably with the world averages. The percentage of Turkish women in the Parliament has decreased considerably after the first years of the republic in which women had a symbolic value in the revolutionary modernization efforts. After the first general elections in 1935, women deputies made up 4.5 % of the National Assembly. During 1970s and 1980s, women's representation revolved around 1 %. Feminist groups launched campaigns to expand women's political representation before the last general elections in April 1999. There has been an increase from 8 to 22 women deputies in the Parliament; however there is not a single woman among the 39 ministers of the new coalition government.

Table A2.1 Political Representation of Women in Turkey and Norway

	Turkey		Norway	
	1991	1999	1993	1997
Parliament	1.8 % (of 450)	4 % (of 550)	39 % (of 165)	36 % (of 165)
Cabinet Ministers	5 % (2 of 39)	0 %	38 %	42 % (8 of 19)
Municipal Councils	1994: 0.9 %		1993: 28.5 %	1995: 33%

Sources: National Reports from Turkey and Norway (1994) and internet pages of SN & SIS.

⁴⁶ Some of these articles are analyzed in section 6.2.

The significant problem in the Turkish context is not only the limited number of women in politics, but the fact that most women politicians keep a distance from specific women's problems. It is a generally accepted argument that women enter into politics on men's terms, and they become like their male counterparts in their interests and priorities. The reasons behind this lack of interest are many, and one of them is lower education levels.

Education Levels

In general education level of the Turkish population is not satisfactory; and women are especially disadvantaged. The majority among both men and women have only primary school education. In urban areas, 9 percent of men and 5 percent of women have higher education (SIS 1997). Females make up 38 per cent of university students in Turkey. One characteristic of the university education in Turkey is the extreme imbalance between the supply and the demand. A recent increase in the number of the universities still can not meet the expansion in the number of applicants. The pattern of admission also reflects great social inequalities; economically weak groups and those from rural areas are under represented among university students.

Full literacy is an indicator of Norway's comprehensive educational system. Compulsory education is given high priority within public activities in Norway. The ideal of equal educational opportunity for everybody has been the underlying principle for organization of education. There has been an increasing demand for higher education and an increasing equality between the sexes in the last decades. In 1986, 20 percent of men and 16 percent of women had higher education. These figures rose to around 25 percent for both sexes in 1996 (SN 1998).

In Norway, there has been a traditional difference between girls' subjects and boys' subjects in secondary schools. Even though the trends are towards equalization, some subjects are extremely female or male dominated. For example, in vocational schools, the percentage of girls among social services and health studies was 92 percent; while boys made up 94 percent of students following technical studies (Sosialt utsyn 1998: 78). Segregation is less dramatic at the universities. While the traditional dominance of women in humanities and teacher education continues, gender differences became less marked in subjects like economics, law and medicine.

Labor Markets

Women's labor force participation rate in Turkey is low compared to both western and many other industrializing countries. The underdeveloped economy of Turkey, the lower education of women and the prevalence of traditional attitudes towards working women can be mentioned as the most important reasons behind this phenomenon. Apart from the professional women with higher education, female workers are seen as second class labor in the work market and are first to be dismissed when the business is bad.

Table A2.2. Labor Market Characteristics in Turkey

		labor force participation		unemployment rate	
1997	General	urban	General	urban	
men	69.9	66.8	6.1		7.5
women	25.2	16.1	9.2		18.9

(source: SIS)

Table A2.3 Labor Market Characteristics in Norway

1996	labor force participation		unemployment rate	
	Men	women	Men	women
	87	76	4.1	4.2

(source: SN)

Economic activity of Norwegian women have been increasing steadily since late 70s, however two factors effect Norwegian women negatively: The labor market displays a pronounced segregation by sex and part-time employment among women is very high. Forty-six percent of women in the labor force, as against ten percent of men, work part-time. Although a majority of part-time workers have work contracts and favorable work conditions, they earn lower pensions and other work-related benefits. Occupational segregation means that women and men do not compete for the same jobs, and men generally retain the high paying jobs. Women are scarce in top management positions in business and industry. In 1998, less than 10 percent of senior management positions were held by women. There are also significant pay differentials between men and women. In 1980, women earned only 77 per cent of what men earned. This percentage increased to 81 per cent in 1991. The increase is highest in the public sector where women now earn 90 per cent of what men earn.

A comparative look at the national follow-up reports to the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women, provide information on the current official priorities in terms of gender-related issues in the two countries (National Report 1999, DGSPW 1999).

The Norwegian follow-up outlines the basic strategy for the further promotion of gender equality in Norway as the "mainstreaming" of a gender perspective. This means that all ministries are expected to integrate a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality in policy formulation, decision-making and executive procedures at all levels and in all policy areas. The objective is to:

"Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination. Wage discrimination is a subject of great concern. Women earn about 14 per cent

less than men, either simply because they are women, and their work is not valued as highly as men's work, or because they are employed at a workplace or in an occupation dominated by women”.

The report outlines the different strategies that have been drawn up by the Government. These strategies include amendments to the Gender Equality Act, designed to improve efficiency in resolving equal pay disputes; tools to measure the value of specific jobs; measures to encourage women to undergo further training and pursue a more active working life; schemes to promote non-traditional career choices as a means to eliminate occupational segregation; raising the status of female-dominated professions through the collective bargaining system and wage equality campaigns (National Report 1999):

“The Gender Equality Act is currently undergoing revision, the aim being to increase its impact in questions of equal pay and other issues relating to the labor market. There are also plans for an overall revision of the Act as it bears the marks of being drafted and adopted at a time when gender equality was a less observed and a more delicate matter than it is today. The Gender Equality Ombud finds that although the law is still an important tool in gender equality work, the law needs to be strengthened to be an efficient tool in the battle against more complicated and subtle forms of discrimination (National Report 1999)”

Turkey’s follow-up report to the “United Nations’ Fourth World Conference on Women” specifies eight critical areas of concern to take strategic action as follows⁴⁷:

1. *Education and Training of Women*: Ensure equal educational opportunities for women and men, reach the goal of 100% literacy by the year 2000, provide guidance for girls to direct them into all working areas, not just traditional feminine professions, review all school programs and educational materials at all levels to eradicate all gender biased perspectives and expressions.
2. *The Girl-child*: Ensure equal education opportunities for women and men, give support to families -if required- to prevent girls' early drop-out from school, provide guidance for girls to direct them into all working areas, not just traditional feminine professions.
3. *Women and Health*: Reduce maternal and infant mortality by one half by the year 2000, provide sexual education, reproductive health and care services for women, collect data and information concerning women's health in Turkey with the cooperation of all public and private institutions, establish special information centers and health units in all health institutions which will address women's health needs, design campaigns in order to raise awareness of women's rights to have control over and decide on the spacing and timing of births.

⁴⁷ From the internet pages of the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women

4. *Violence Against Women*: Develop campaigns and parental education programs to prevent domestic violence and violence in general against women and children, include the subject of violence against women and children in the in-service training of professionals like health workers, teachers, educators, social workers, psychologists, pediatricians and policemen and increase the number of counseling centers and shelters for women subjected to violence and provide free psychological and legal aid.

5. *Women and the Economy*: Make legal arrangements for sharing the responsibilities of child care among mother, father, and the state since it is the biggest obstacle preventing women from participating in the labor force, ensure parental leave for fathers after the birth for child care, make amendments in the regulations to oblige employers to provide nurseries in workplaces where there are 100 or more workers (currently it is obligatory for workplaces where there are 100 'female' workers), ensure that all public and private institutions have quotas for female employees in all professions, develop projects to increase female employment and find international sources of finance to support these projects, make provisions to ensure that domestic work by the unpaid female labor force is included in national calculations, and thus all women who are working at home and working the land will be insured (the existing BAĞ-KUR system is inadequate to satisfy this demand so there must be alterations made in the law).

6. *Women in Power and Decision-making*: Enact and enforce a frame equality law by giving more weight to the gender-sensitive perspective to maintain the continuity of women's policies, ensure legal preparations to allow political parties to establish women's commissions, ensure implementation of quotas to increase women's participation at all levels of decision-making and administration in political parties, implement a quota system to increase women's participation in local governments, form a unit within the national mechanism to collect information and do research about women in managerial positions in the private and public sectors.

7. *Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women*: Strengthen the national institution in terms of professional capacity and finance; reorganize the institution to enable it to distribute its services nation wide, establish women units in state owned institutions and organizations and ensure coordination among them and establish a network for information flow between these units and non-governmental organizations.

8. *Women and the Media*: Increase the participation and access for women in decision-making in and through the media and new communication technologies and to promote contemporary portrayals of women in the media and establish cooperation between Government, NGOs and media institutions for women.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

1 Family

How do you define a family? Whom do you think about when you say “my family”?

What do you think about the changes in family patterns and relations in the last decades?

What are the most important differences between the family relations you grew up in and your present family?

Do you witness an increase in divorces in your social environment? Why, do you think, is there an increase in divorces?

2 Housework and Childcare

How do you share the tasks of the household? (Cleaning, shopping, cooking, etc.)

How did you reach an agreement about this? Did you have any negotiations?

How do you organize childcare?

What type of help do/did you receive from others (relatives, childcare centers, etc.) for childcare? What kind of support would you prefer to have?

3 Work:

Could you describe a typical workday?

How important is your work in your life?

Did you ever think that your work has influenced your family life negatively?

(Is it difficult to balance/combine family and work responsibilities?)

4 The State

Do you have any expectations from the state? (Can the state offer any support for your problems?)

What do you think about the welfare state policies in Norway?

5 Gender:

What do you think about being a woman/man in Norway/Turkey? (Do you see any advantages/disadvantages attached to being a woman/man in Norway/Turkey?)

What do you think about the definitions of /expectations related to femininity/masculinity in society?

Do you think that there are “natural” (biological) differences between men and women that determine their roles in society? Do you think gender differences are mainly based on biology or upbringing?

6 Late-Modern Lives:

Do you feel like you use your time the way you wish?

Do you have more or less definitive plans for your future life? (Do you feel like you realize your potentials in life?)

Do you feel like you have control over your life-style choices? (Do you live the way you want to live?)

What kind of future plans do you have?

Appendix 4: Arrangements of Housework

Table A4.1 Norwegian Couples and Housework

	General Orientation	Importance as an Issue	Who has the responsibility for three key tasks⁴⁸
Ann Arne	Equal share: practices close to ideals	Housework is seen as important by both	Cleaning, Cooking: Both Clothes: Woman
Bente Bjame	Paid help for cleaning (2/month) Share the rest according to "natural efficiency"	Sharing of housework has not been an important issue	Cooking: both, but mostly woman Cleaning: paid help Clothes: woman
Camilla Cato	Paid help for cleaning (2/month) Share the rest by defining separate domains	Has been an issue of conflict leading to decision of buying help	Cooking: Share Cleaning: Paid help Clothes: Woman
Elin Endre	Share according to preferences	She had to 'fight' for this model of sharing	Cooking: Man Cleaning: Share Clothes: Woman
Grete Geir	Started with sharing, slide into the traditional model due to his long work-hours	Not an issue	Cooking: woman Cleaning: help from a female relative Clothes: woman
Hilde Henrik	A model of sharing now, but she did most earlier	It was a problematic issue when the children were small	Cooking: Man Cleaning, Clothes: Woman
Inger Ingmar	A model of sharing developed in time, woman is still the organizer	Was important when children were small and he was uninvolved	Cooking, Clothes: Woman Cleaning: Share
Jorunn Jarle	Share most tasks, sliding into a gendered pattern	Not a conflict issue	Cooking, Cleaning: Share Clothes: Woman
Lise Lars	Share most tasks	Differences in standards leading to minor conflicts	Cooking, Cleaning: Share Clothes: Woman
Mona Magne	Share most tasks, sliding into a gendered pattern	Not a major conflict, reflections on differences	Cooking, Clothes: Woman Cleaning: Share
Nina Nils	Sharing by defining separate domains	Earlier, a major conflict since woman had the organizing responsibility	Cooking: Share, mostly woman Clothes: Man Cleaning: Woman

⁴⁸ Cooking: Refers mainly to making dinner and washing dishes. Cleaning: includes vacuum cleaning, washing floors and dusting. Clothes: refers to washing, hanging, ironing and folding of clothes.

Table A4.2 Turkish Couples and Housework

General Orientation		Importance as an Issue	Who has the responsibility for 3 key tasks
Ayla Adnan	Helping husband	Important, proud of a type of 'sharing'	Cooking, clothes: Woman Cleaning: Paid help (2/ month)
Berna Bora	Traditional division	Not an issue	Cooking, clothes: Woman Cleaning: paid help (1/ week)
Ceyda Cemil	Woman doing most, relying heavily on paid help	Not a topic of discussion	Cooking, clothes: Woman Cleaning: Paid help (2/ week)
Dilek Devrim	Woman doing most	Not conceived as important	Cooking, clothes: Woman Cleaning: Paid help (1/ week)
Elif Emre	Sharing and relying on paid help	Man critical of gender-inequalities in this area	Cooking: Share Cleaning, clothes: Paid help (6/ week)
Figen Faruk	Uninvolved man, woman's responsibility	Unvalued by both	Cooking, clothes: woman Cleaning: paid help(2/ week)
Gaye Gökhan	Sharing	Not very important	Cooking: share Cleaning, clothes: paid help (1/ week)
Hale Hikmet	Woman's responsibility	Not a topic	Cooking: woman Cleaning, Clothes: paid help (3/ week)
İpek İlhan	Uninvolved man	Source of conflict	Cooking, clothes: woman cleaning: paid help (1/ week)
Leyla Levent	A type of sharing	Not seen as important	Cooking, clothes: share, mostly woman Cleaning: Paid help (1/ week)
Mine Murat	Traditional model, man 'helping' when necessary	Not a source of conflict	Cooking, clothes: woman Cleaning: paid help (1/ week)
Nermin Nadir	Relying heavily on paid help due to woman's demanding career	Not an issue	Cooking: Man Cleaning, clothes: Paid help (1/ week)
Oya Orhan	Woman's responsibility, helping man	Not an issue	Cooking: Woman Cleaning, clothes: Paid help (3/ week)
Sevim Sedat	Woman's responsibility, man helps if she asks him	Not a main issue	Cooking, clothes: woman Cleaning: Paid help (1/ week)
Tülin Tolga	Sharing	Not a topic	Cooking: Man Clothes: woman Cleaning: Paid help (1/ week)
Umut Utku	Woman's responsibility	Not a main issue	Cooking, clothes: woman Cleaning: Paid help (1/ week)

Table A4.3 All married Turkish women aged 15-49 according to who does the specified task (1993)

	Person who does the work				
	only woman	husband	woman& husband	woman and other family members	Other
Cooking					
Total	74 (87)	-	1 (8)	21 (1)	4 (4)
working women	65	-	3	26	6
Housewives	76	-	1	19	4
Cleaning					
Total	67 (69)	-	1 (7)	24 (8)	8 (16)
working women	58	-	2	29	11
Housewives	69	-	-	24	7
Shopping					
Total	30 (25)	31 (34)	19 (36)	4 (1)	16 (4)
working women	24	35	21	3	17
Housewives	31	30	19	4	16

Source: (Gender Statistics, SIS 1998)

Figures in parentheses in the table above refer to women with higher education. Women with higher education do equally or even more housework by themselves, but they receive slightly more help from their husbands. The help they get from other family members are markedly less. Women with higher education also get more help from others for cleaning in the form of paid help. This table documents the heavy work load of Turkish women in families and the highly traditional gendered patterns that prevail in the division of household labor.

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