Atatürk's Legacy to the Women of Turkey

by

Janet Browning
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PREFACE

In the late Spring of 1981, my friend and teacher John Mortony, Head of the Turkish Department in the School of Oriental Studies at the University of Durham, told me of the special scholarships being offered by the Turkish Government to commemorate the centenary of Atatürk’s birth, and urged me to apply. At the time I had only just completed and submitted my MA thesis and was enjoying the relief of at last having only one job to think about, for I had been working full-time in a quite demanding administrative job in London for the previous eighteen months while at the same time trying to write my thesis. But the appeal of doing research in Turkey for eight months on a subject that I could mould to match my own area of interest, combined with the challenge of competing for one of only two scholarships open to applicants from all over the world, was irresistible.

I submitted my proposal and attended an interview at the Turkish Consulate in London. After long weeks of waiting and not knowing whether to start making preparations for departure or not, at the end of October a letter congratulating me on my successful application at last arrived. The next two months were a frantic scramble to complete some preliminary research in England as well as dealing with more practical matters, such as selling my flat and packing up.

On 5th January 1982, I arrived in Ankara, and was grateful to find a car sent by the Ministry of Education to meet me and take me to the Hotel School, where a room had kindly been reserved for me.

While I cannot offer any suggestion as to the basis of the Turkish Government’s selection of research proposals for the Scholarship Award, perhaps I should try to explain the rationale of my own application and of the research proposal on which this report is based.

First of all, my interest in Turkish society and Turkish culture dates back to my first visit to Istanbul in 1973, when I came as an ordinary tourist, but became fascinated by the land and the people. I embarked on serious, full-time study of the language, history and culture of Turkey in 1975 and graduated from the Turkish Department of the School of Oriental Studies in Durham in 1978. I remained a member of the same department of the university for a fourth year, doing research for my MA thesis on "The Portrayal of Women in Modern Turkish Literature". This gave me the opportunity to combine my interest in the position of women in society with the reading of a broad range of popular modern Turkish novels, dramatic works and short stories. In the course of this research, I naturally became very aware of the important role played by Atatürk in the advancement of women’s rights in Turkey and in the struggle for recognition of women as equal citizens of the new Turkish Republic. It was the desire to examine the effects of the inspiration, example and guidance provided by Atatürk’s leadership in the sphere of women’s rights and the improvement of women’s position in society that impelled me to apply for one of the special Atatürk Centenary Scholarships.

With the perspective of almost half a century from which to look back and assess the events and ideas of the period of Atatürk’s leadership, much of my research has been concerned with the impact of those events and ideas on the lives of women in Turkey today. Hence my choice of the word "legacy" in the title I have given to my report.
Unfortunately, neither time nor opportunity permitted me to carry out an original survey or fieldwork, and this report is thus in the nature of a library research. Much has already been written, both on Atatürk and on women in Turkey, and on the two together; however, Women’s Studies is a burgeoning and vital field and, by drawing in particular on the most recent and theoretically significant works emerging from women’s studies in England, and applying these latest theories and methods of analysis to the Turkish situation, I hope that I might have made a positive contribution to the study of women in Turkish society. What I feel I can bring to the subject as a whole is an independent approach, moulded by the different social, political and historical experience of life in England, encompassing the facts of much earlier industrialisation and capitalist development, as well as the different experience of sexual inequality: an approach which I make no claim to be more objective than that of a Turkish writer, but simply based on an alternative perception.

Finally, in presenting this report as the outcome of research carried out as an Atatürk Centenary scholar during eight months in 1982, I wish to express my thanks to the Turkish Government for giving me this opportunity and for their generous grant during this period; also to the Ministry of Education, through which the grant was administered and under the protection of which I was placed. In particular I should like to thank Necla Şenol in the Department of Foreign Relations at the Ministry, whose helpfulness, kindness and friendliness made each visit to the Ministry a pleasure. I should also like to express my gratitude to the Turkish History Association, and the Turkish Language Association, both of which readily made their facilities available to me; and my thanks, too, to the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography at the University of Ankara, to which I was affiliated. I should especially like to thank Prof. Kaymaz and Dr. Kartulus Kayali for their sensitivity and unobtrusiveness in carrying out their roles as mentors and advisers. There are, of course, many others to whom I owe my thanks, not least my kind and generous friends who helped to make my time in Turkey so enjoyable; I cannot name them all. My greatest source of support and encouragement, however, regardless of his own problems and preoccupations, has been my constant friend and counsel, Dr. Zülfü Aydin, assistant Associate Professor in the Political Science Department at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara.

Ankara, 1982
1. INTRODUCTION

Under Atatürk's leadership, the government of the Turkish Republic adopted a constitution and passed a number of laws such that women would enjoy much more nearly equal rights with men than they had ever done previously in the Ottoman Empire. We can summarise briefly the main formal changes affecting women in Turkish society during the period 1923-1938 as follows:

(i) Polygamy, and marriage without the consent of both partners were made illegal.

(ii) Divorce by repudiation was made illegal, and divorce was made equally obtainable by either party through application to a court of law.

(iii) Inheritance rights were equalised for male and female heirs.

(iv) The principle of equal pay for equal work regardless of sex was established.

(v) The right to own and dispose of their own property was granted to women.

(vi) The right to vote and stand for election in municipal and national elections was granted to women.

(vii) Compulsory and free primary education for all children was established by law.

(viii) Adult literacy classes were organised throughout the country and attendance was made compulsory for both men and women who were illiterate.

(ix) Women were allowed to enter the army.

Atatürk's role in the government's enactment of these laws was always active - indeed he was often their instigator - and has been well-documented [1].

In addition to his influential role within the Grand National Assembly and among his ministers, Atatürk made many speeches stressing the vital contribution women had made in the War of Independence, and their important role in building the new Republic, trying to instil the idea that women were of proven equal worth as citizens of the new Republic. He was careful, also, always to set an example of treating women as equals in public. It was at his instigation that Halide Edib-Adivar was the first woman to be appointed to the rank of sergeant in the army; that women were appointed as representatives in the National Assembly, and that women were encouraged to participate in public debates and join in the dancing at European-style balls and the like. He even took his own marriage as an example to others, stating "My desire to marry is not only in order to marry. I should set an example myself, first, in order to create a new life for our nation." (2) And, indeed, he insisted that his bride, Latife, be present at the marriage, although it was not at that time customary for the bride to be present at the ceremony.

Following their marriage, Latife accompanied Atatürk on official tours of the country. The Islamic Encyclopaedia comments on this fact as follows: "In a country where it was not usual for husbands and wives to travel together, the trips made by the Head of State in the company of his wife made a profound impression on the people." (3)
Furthermore, Atatürk's public support for the recognition of equal rights for women was unquestionably rooted in a genuine belief in women's intrinsic equality with men. His conduct towards women in private as well as in public, and his private thoughts regarding the position of women in society generally illustrate the sincerity of this belief. For example, the corrections and notes he made to the play Tag Bebek show his ideas clearly: Atatürk crossed out the lines in which one of the characters expresses disbelief in women and suggests that they should be loved from a distance, like ornaments. In the margin he wrote: "We cannot think of women in this way! The presence of women is fundamental to the nation on a thousand and one points. It is not right to go on renewing the idea that woman is an ornament..." (4)

Clearly Atatürk did much to try to improve the position of women in Turkish society. Through constitutional, juridical and political reforms, through reform of the educational system and through his attacks on the prevailing ideology, he sought to accomplish changes in the superstructure, making inroads from all directions. Indeed, he was so determined that people would accept the changed social institutions that he was prepared to use force if necessary - a measure much facilitated by the Law for the Maintenance of Order which had been passed originally in order to quell armed rebellions in the East. For instance, in the enforcement of the Mat Law some men who refused to comply were hanged as a warning to others, and Atatürk referred to this exigency measure himself in his long speech to the National Assembly in 1927, stating, with reference to the abolition of the fee:

We did it ... while the Law for the Maintenance of Order was still in force. Had it not been, we would have done it all the same, but it certainly is true that the existence of the law made it much easier for us. Indeed, the existence of the Law for the Maintenance of Order prevented the large-scale poisoning of the nation by certain reactionaries. (5)

However, Atatürk's approach to changes affecting the habits or customs of women was much more circumspect. In the matter of veiling, for example, no direct government action was taken until 1935, when local municipalities were empowered to enforce prohibition of the veil. But women were discouraged from wearing the veil by gentler methods: they were not allowed to attend public meetings veiled, and certain groups of women (such as students and wives of government officials) were not allowed to wear veils. At the same time, public meetings were arranged for various causes to encourage women out into the open (6). Atatürk's wife, and the wives of other prominent figures, were important examples too, of course.

Nevertheless, there are still some laws which clearly ascribe a secondary status to women, mostly in the area of "family law". For instance, the husband is legally the head of the household, and has the right to choose the place of residence, to withhold permission for his wife to go out to work, and has the final word in terms of guardianship of children. Still, the formal legal equal equality gained by women in Turkey may in fact be no more than a useful pre-condition for advancing on other fronts towards the real emancipation of women, for it is the economic base of society which, in the final analysis, determines the nature of the social formation, and hence women's position in society.

In order to understand the process of the emancipation of women in Turkey since Atatürk, we must, therefore, look at the economic changes towards which he worked. That is not to say that economic transformations alone can secure the emancipation of women, for there
are forms of oppression other than those deriving from class or economic exploitation (7), which are mediated through such institutions as marriage, and in which familial ideology plays a considerable role. Furthermore, an economic analysis alone is not sufficient for an investigation of relations of production, since these are grounded in a deeply ideological division of labour. Thus it is impossible clearly to separate the economic from the ideological (8). Yet, at the same time, economic aspects of the household and the ideology of the family are separate things: familial ideology ensures the production of individuals brought up in conformity with prevailing notions about male and female roles and functions, while housework and childcare are the activities carried out through the household structure, which in turn is related to the wider economic system of production. Recent theoretical research finds that together the combined role of familial ideology and the household structure is a "stabilising and conservative" one (9), and that the family-household system of contemporary capitalism constitutes not only the central site of the oppression of women but also an important organizing principle of the relations of production of the social formation as a whole (10).

I shall therefore concentrate my study first on the economic base of the Turkish Republic, as set up under Atatürk, and then go on to examine the developments in the superstructure, mainly at the ideological level. I shall conclude my report with a look towards the future, trying to draw implications both from the specific history of women in Turkey and from the situation of contemporary women in the advanced capitalist countries of the West.

Notes to Chapter One
1. See for example such works as Taşhkiran, 1973, 1976; and Afetinan, 1975
2. İlguç, 1961, 12
4. And, 1981
5. Cited in Lewis, 1968, 270
7. Molyneux, 1981, 179
8. Barrett, 1980, 40
9. Ibid., 204
10. Ibid., 211
2. THE TURKISH SOCIAL FORMATION UNDER ATATÜRK

When the Ottoman Empire entered the World War there were fourteen million people living within the boundaries of present-day Turkey; and a backward agricultural economy which was largely feudal and patriarchal prevailed in Anatolia. According to the industrial census of 1915, within the same boundaries there were 284 workplaces employing five or more workers. Of these, 148 were in Istanbul, 62 in İzmir, and most of the remaining 74 were in western Anatolia. Generally speaking, capitalist relations of production were not very much developed in Anatolia at this time (1).

The most widespread ideology in Anatolia at the time of the War of Independence was Islam, the official religion of the Ottoman State, which reflected the feudal quality of that State. However, in the course of the War of Independence, Islam, nationalism and socialism became caught up together and were used together as a weapon against imperialism and the Istanbul government. Thus it seems that, under the harsh conditions of war, a limited and hesitant socialist ideology took the place of the westernism which had characterized the earlier reformers of the Ottoman Empire (2).

During the War of Independence, it was necessary to rely on the nobles and tribal and religious leaders of Anatolia to mobilize the masses, who were exhausted, insecure and full of hopeless resignation by the end of the First World War, when Turkey was invaded by the forces of the Allies. Loss of life had been high, and many peasants had lost their properties through high taxation at a time when the availability of labour for working on the land was at its lowest. The fact that the Anatolian nobles, landlords and religious leaders played an important role in the War of Independence determined the direction of Turkey's development during the following years, for they expected to reap the rewards of victory when it was all over.

It became imperative that the new Turkish nation should decide what system was to be developed in Turkish society, and what economic policy was to be based on the system adopted (3). The opportunity was taken when the Lausanne Conference was adjourned: the İzmir Economic Congress opened on 17th February 1923 and more than one thousand members attended, representing workers, farmers, merchants and industrialists from each province. However, it would be untrue to say that the interests of any other than the dominant classes were likely to be advocated, given the method of election and the nature of the representatives themselves. Ahmet Handi (Bagar) wrote at the time:

I thought the peasant class was very well represented at the Congress. The agrarian delegates who were in the majority were aware of the distress and poverty of the villagers. However, they gave no thought to the large number of landless peasants. When the division of the farms of the absentee landlords was proposed, the so-called agrarian representatives were the first to rebel. (i.e. they represented the landlords rather than the peasants). (4)

In his opening speech at the İzmir Economic Congress, Atatürk expressed very clearly his ideas on what stance should be adopted towards imperialism, and what direction the development of the new Turkish State should take. It is evident that he considered economic policy of paramount importance, stating, "However great political or military victories may be, their gains and rewards will not be lasting unless they are crowned with an economic victory" (5). In the same speech, Atatürk made it clear that he was willing to accept foreign capital into the
country, but he was determined that all such foreign capital should be subject to Turkish law. He explained:

Our country has not sufficient capital to develop its resources in a short space of time. It is therefore in our interests to make use of outside capital and resources. Let it not be thought that we are hostile to foreign capital. No, ours is a vast country requiring much capital and great efforts. Provided that our laws are respected, we are always ready to give the necessary assurances to foreign capital. (6)

The lasting independence, both military and economic, of the State was the ultimate and paramount goal; Atatürk declared:

Let the whole world know that this nation will not stop on the road she has begun to travel even for a moment, until she can see that her independence is assured. (7)

In an interview with the Soviet Ambassador Aralov, Atatürk stated:

My aim is to open factories, to discover the riches underground, to help the merchants of Anatolia and to guarantee their becoming rich. These are the tasks confronting the State ... (8)

Atatürk envisaged the path the new nation was to follow as one of industrialisation, mineral exploitation and commerce. In order to assist progress in this direction, he was willing to accept foreign capital, and therefore the State had to align itself with one block or another in the western world. The block that conformed to the ideological and class structure of the War of Independence was the Western block (9). Thus Turkey was set on its path towards becoming an industrialised nation in the western, i.e. the capitalist, mode.

Political power at the close of the War of Independence rested with an alliance of bureaucrats (the civil-military leaders), landlords, merchants and, to a very limited extent, industrialists. They used taxation to accumulate capital, which was then used in favour of merchants and the bourgeoisie in order to speed the process of industrialisation. State policy aimed to develop capitalist production in agriculture and to transform merchant capital into industrial capital.

The fundamental ideology accompanying this economic policy and forming the core of "Kemalism" was that all differences of race, sex, creed and class were to be subsumed into one nation working towards the goals set by the State. Indeed, at the outset, Atatürk explicitly refused to acknowledge the existence of conflicting class interests as opposed to individual conflict. In his speech at the İzmir Economic Congress, he stated:

At this moment, my listeners are farmers, artisans, merchants and workers. Any of these can become the antagonist of another. But who could deny that the farmer needs the artisan, the artisan the farmer, the farmer the merchant, and all of them need one another and the worker." (10)

The idea of "populism", which had been used as a weapon against the ruling bureaucracy in the War of Independence, was thus turned into a weapon to prevent a class struggle (11).

The nine principles which were drawn up by the Economic Congress, and which Taner Timur suggests can be considered the first programme of the Republican People's Party, included statements setting out the economic policy that was envisaged. Among these were proposals that
agricultural credit should be increased and agricultural machinery imported, and that there should be an educational campaign. Overall, the nine principles expressed the views of the economically dominant classes, while containing no proposal of material benefit to the workers or the poor peasants. Yet the workers' representatives had put forward a number of concrete proposals concerning working conditions and trade union rights at the Congress, most of which had been accepted in the vote. But they were not incorporated into the nine principles adopted by the Congress (12).

Basically then, the socio-economic programme adopted by the new Turkish government was one of capitalist development, the nature of which was clearly influenced by the prevalence of the civil-military intelligentsia in the government, which was in alliance with both the commercial bourgeoisie in Istanbul and the Anatolian notables. The plan was to develop capitalism in agriculture and to turn the commercial bourgeoisie into an industrial bourgeoisie.

Taking the situation in agriculture first, as mentioned previously, a natural economy prevailed in Anatolia in the 1920s, which was largely self-supporting and had a subsistence character; alongside this there existed handicrafts and petty commodity production. In areas where the natural economy prevails, human labour is not, in fact, free, and women especially are bound. Taner Timur states unequivocally: "Under the guise of 'marriage' Turkish women are bought and sold. The 'brideprice' is the exchange value agreed upon in this sale. Indeed, in some areas a woman's being 'married' or 'sold' are used synonymously."

And yet, in family patriarchal production which had only recently begun to enter the market, it was generally the woman who was the main worker; the men took on the job of ordering and controlling production (13).

One of the important measures taken to develop capitalism in agriculture was the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code as the basis of the new Turkish Civil Code. This recognised the private ownership of land, thereby consolidating unequal distribution and male ownership at the same time. It also liberated women from the legal reinforcement of their dependence, and brought them to the same status in law as men.

Another measure was the considerable increase in agricultural credits which were made available through co-operatives. However, these were of little benefit to the peasants, serving mainly to facilitate capital accumulation among the wealthier members of the local communities. Despite all efforts, capitalist relations did not develop as expected in agriculture because of the prevalence of primitive and patriarchal relations of production in Anatolia at the time.

Measures were also taken to develop capitalism outside agriculture. The banks established after the War of Independence played an important role in this, encouraging industrial investment in the private sector and facilitating capital accumulation in the private sector by taking all the risks. In addition, a Law for the Encouragement of Industry was passed in May 1927, by means of which the government guaranteed financial support to private enterprises if they were recognised by the Ministry of Commerce, exempting them from certain taxes, and providing certain assets free of charge.

Monopolies were another means employed for the development of capitalism. Foreign capital was also used, in combination with Turkish capital, within Turkish companies.

In short, the period from 1923 to 1931 saw the mobilisation of the State apparatus for the capitalist development of both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. Thus Atatürk sought to achieve his main aim for Turkey: that it should become a 'contemporary civilisation' through economic development. In other words, Turkey was to take its place among the industrialised nations of the West: "which nation has
aspired to civilisation without turning towards the West?" (15).

It was important that the course of economic development should not be impeded by class struggles, and to this end Atatürk used the ideology of populism. The article relating to populism in the programme of the Republican People's Party stated that "One of our basic principles is to regard the people of the Turkish Republic not as two separate classes, but as one community, separated as regards division of labour for individual and social life into various occupations and professions" (16). Faced with the problem of how to mould the Turkish nation into an industrial society like those in the West, Atatürk was well aware of the fact that a nation's development could not be achieved by means of "a number of reform initiatives such as the adoption of European laws, or European regulations, or the donning of European dress" (17). He knew, no doubt, that the laws of a society cannot be effective if they are more advanced than the economic conditions of the society and the level of civilisation corresponding to it. In other words, he was well aware that, in the final analysis, the economic structure would determine the social structure and that, therefore, without radical economic change there could be no fundamental social change. But he also knew the power of ideology, having seen how Islam had defined and determined the daily lives of the Turkish people for centuries. Therefore he had to try to replace that dominant ideology with one that would serve his economic plans.

In 1929 the Western world entered an economic crisis, and the Turkish government lost its confidence in free trade and a liberal policy. The depression affected Turkey badly, for the fall in prices of agricultural products, which comprised the bulk of Turkish exports and formed an important source of income, was drastic. It was the liberal regimes of the West that were suffering the crisis, whereas the Soviet Union, far from being caught in the world depression, had entered a fast and planned development process. From 1932, therefore, State intervention in the economy gradually increased. In the period 1932-1939 the State was directly involved in production and the accumulation of capital was secured through direct and indirect taxes.

The policy of State intervention in the economy was incorporated in the principle of 'Étatism', which was described as an alternative to both socialism and capitalism. In effect, 'Étatism' meant State intervention in the fields where it was impossible for private enterprise to be realised, for example in the construction of railways, roads, power stations, iron and steel works, etc. Speaking at the Izmir Fair in August 1939, Atatürk explained that:

"Our 'Étatism takes as its basis the private initiative and personal aptitudes of individuals, but at the same time, taking account of all the needs of a great nation and a broad land, and of the fact that so much still remains to be done, it rests on the principle that the State must take charge of the national economy." (18)

It is clear, then, that the reforms implemented by Atatürk were all designed to serve the ultimate purpose, which was to make Turkey into an industrialised nation, like those of the Western capitalist world. Not only had this to be done, it also had to be seen to be done; as Atatürk explained in his long speech to the National Assembly in October 1927, it was necessary "to demonstrate that the Turkish nation, in its mentality as in other respects, in no way diverges from civilized social life." (19)

Let us now turn to examine the oppression of women within the capitalist state of Turkey. The most crucial elements of this oppression have been identified and classified in a recent important work on the subject as the division of labour and relations of production, the
educational system, the operations of the State, and familial ideology together with the economic organisation of households on which it is based (20).

Notes to Chapter Two
1. Timur, 1971, 21-22
2. Ibid., 44
3. Aydin, 1980, 19
4. Basgöz and Wilson, 1968, 48
5. Timur, 1971, 54
6. UNESCO, 1963, 191
7. Timur, 1971, 55
8. Aydin, 1980, 23
10. Lewis, 1968, 467
11. Timur, 1971, 65
12. Ibid., 86
13. Ibid., 95
14. Ibid., 95-96
15. Atatürk, Vol III, 67-68
16. Timur, 1971, 197
17. Atatürk, Vol I, 198
18. Lewis, 1968, 287
19. Cited Ibid. 268
3. WOMEN’S PART IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TURKEY

The first figures available giving the number of women working outside agriculture relate to the war years, when as many as 30 per cent of industrial workers in Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa and five other urban centres were women, most of them employed in the traditionally low-paid textile and food industries (11). However, this figure was inflated by the number of women brought in to replace men called to war, and, once peace was established and men began to return to the workplace, women in paid employment were likely to be regarded as depriving men of their jobs.

Thus, in the first years of the Republic the number of men working in agriculture rose very slowly, from 2.5 million in 1927 (21) to 2.8 million in 1935 (3), while the number of women working in agriculture rose dramatically from 1.6 million (4) to 2.7 million (5) over the same period. The number of women working as administrators, civil servants or technicians, or in private enterprise was very low: only 8,656 in 1927 (6). The majority of women, however, were engaged in domestic work and in unpaid family labour, as an extension of the household activity in the pattern of subsistence farming that typified the national economy still prevalent in the 1920s. On the other hand, as indicated by the figures above, there were almost equal numbers of men and women involved in agricultural work in 1927, and of course their labour was also largely unpaid. Even in the years of the Second World War, Turkey was still predominantly an agricultural country, with 83 per cent of the total workforce engaged in agriculture (7). By 1955, the number of women engaged in agriculture was actually greater than the number of men: for every 100 male workers in agriculture, agricultural management and stewarding, there were 112 women, and almost 96 per cent of female labour was employed in agriculture, mostly as unpaid labour (8). The significant point to make here is that the determinant social relation is wage-work, even though the number of peasants is greater than that of wage-workers. But, as recent analysis shows, crucially, the transformation of all work into wage-work is not taking place; in other words, capital itself is reproducing its own non-capitalist surroundings (9). We can see this clearly in the case of female employment in Turkey, where the proportion of the economically active female population working without pay rose from 80 per cent in 1950 to 90 per cent in 1965 (10), these women being mostly rural, of course. As a further illustration of the pattern of female employment through this period, figures for 1965 show 56.6 per cent of women over fifteen working, this figure comprising 28.5 per cent of the total workforce, whereas in 1965 the latter figure was 45.9 per cent (11).

Industrialisation in Turkey has occurred at a fairly highly-developed technical level and thus requires relatively little labour. At the same time, the development of productive forces under capitalism involves a decrease in the employment of labour in favour of an increase in the use of machinery, and thus the possibility of absorbing the total labour-power declines, while at the same time the process of industrialisation and generalisation of commodity production and the expansion of the world market destroys pre-capitalist modes of production, freeing more labour-power. The outcome of all these mechanisms is "the increasing consolidation of an industrial reserve army" (12). The most obvious function of this reserve army’s availability is to lower the general level of wages. But, in addition, an important point to be made is that, being marginal to the capitalist system, the reserve mass is responsible for its own reproduction, i.e. it engages in subsistence work and makes its labour power cheaper. Important implications can be drawn from this analysis:
When a section of the population is responsible for its necessary subsistence work, the appropriation of surplus labour for capital increases enormously. Furthermore, the mere fact of being subsumed as a whole by capital and predestined through their sheer existence to be used as available labour-power, makes any work rendered by the marginal mass exploitable. (13)

Thus, in fact the marginal mass is not outside the capitalist system, but very much within it: the work of these people is valorised by capital, although they are responsible for their own subsistence; this means that "only a minimal part of the necessary work for their reproduction appears as a cost for capital" (14).

Women have formed a potential industrial reserve army since the beginning of capitalism, and it is important for an understanding of this phenomenon that we should examine subsistence production and the way in which it is connected to accumulation within the capitalist mode of production in general. The conclusion to be drawn from the above is that the laws of accumulation themselves reproduce capitalist reproduction relations which do not adopt the wage form: "It is the general law of accumulation, the progressive production of an industrial reserve army, that reproduces these non-wage forms which are directly linked to subsistence production" (15).

Thus it seems that, while unemployment levels continue to rise among the working population in general, the number of women engaging in subsistence work is also likely to continue to rise. Demographically, Turkey's population is very young: a factor which will intensify the problem in the future. But this does not mean to say that women should be expected, or allowed, to continue to form the majority of the marginal mass, or the unemployed. Let us consider the steps that were taken under Atatürk's leadership to ameliorate women's position in the labour force, and how effective they have been.

The most important formal step to be taken was probably the law passed in 1926, which stated that, in any one place of work, for work of the same quality and equal productivity, there should be no difference in wages paid to men and women workers on the basis of sex difference (16). This law evidently sought to remove injustice against women once they had entered the workforce; what it cannot do is remove the prior obstacle of women's concentration, almost to the degree of exclusiveness, in certain branches (most notably textile and food industries). And, despite the law, women continue to receive on average, a lower wage than men. Taking figures from 1963 in the State sector, women received a lower hourly payment than men in each of the following branches: food industry 82.4 per cent; tobacco industry 79.3 per cent; textiles 92.9 per cent; printing and publishing 70.6 per cent; medical-chemical industry 91.5 per cent, and the iron and steel industry 90.0 per cent (17).

Furthermore, it should be noted that, in 1965, when 83.5 per cent of women workers were concentrated in only four areas of production (carpet-weaving, textiles, food and clothing industries) the daily rates in these branches were 28.26TL, 28.39TL and 30.36TL in the textile, food and clothing industries respectively, while the national average daily wage in industry at that time was 36TL (18).

This leads us on to another problem, illustrated by figures taken from the census for Adıyaman Province in 1970, which show that, in weaving industries eighteen per cent of women were family workers, and 50 per cent were working on their own account, while only 31 per cent were wage workers (19). It is significant that in the 1970s in agriculture where the overall percentage of paid workers is low, women comprise 30 per cent of the paid workers (20), while in non-agricultural work in Turkey women comprise only eleven per cent of paid workers (21). Thus the
proportion of paid women workers is highest in agriculture, where surplus value generated per capita is lowest (22). Indeed, it can be stated generally that the employment of women is concentrated in those activities which are low-paid and labour-intensive; i.e. where capital expenditure per worker is low also.

Let us look, then, at the measures taken to encourage women to undertake paid work outside the home. First of all we can consider Atatürk’s speeches. In a public speech at Izmir in 1923 he stated:

Obviously society creates a division of labour, and in this division women should carry out their own duties as well as contribute to the general effort to improve the happiness and well-being of our society. Domestic duties are not necessarily the most important of a woman’s responsibilities. (23)

This statement calls to mind Lenin’s words:

... as long as women are engaged in housework their position is still a restricted one ... Even with the fullest equality, women are still in an actual position of inferiority because all housework is thrust upon them. Most of this housework is highly unproductive, most arduous and it is performed by women. (24)

However, radical as these proposals for the removal of prime responsibility for housework from women might have been at the time, and to whatever extent such a strategy would attack the roots of subordination of women, it is not clear in Atatürk’s statement what form he intended women's other, non-sexually defined contribution to society to be. Looking at other speeches he made, we can see that he made references to men and women sharing equally and being “partners in everything”, and to the need for women to be valued as “colleagues” in economic life (25). In a speech at Konya towards the end of 1922, he said:

It is necessary to make the illustrious women of Turkey share in our work, to lead our lives together with them, to make Turkish women the partners, the helpers of their men in scientific, social and economic life. (26)

The relegation of women to the role of helper (yardımcı) in the final phrase is a disappointment after the initially exalting proclamation.

Alongside his arguments against the urban traditions of seclusion and veiling, Atatürk stressed the important contribution of women in the economic life of agricultural villages, as well as the crucial role women had played in the War of Independence. Many of his speeches emphasised the innate equality of women with men, and the equally important role that women should play in building the new Republic, but nowhere in his speeches did Atatürk explicitly call on women to join the industrial workforce, and indeed he made it quite clear that all activities and occupations were to be considered subordinate to motherhood for women. In his speech at Izmir in 1923, he declared “The highest duty of women is motherhood”, explaining that “If one realises fully that education of both boys and girls starts in infancy, the importance of motherhood becomes evident” (27). This “duty” he defines as being “to bring up and educate a strong new generation of people who will defend the country with determination and courage and pass on the spirit of our nation to future generations” (28).
We are left in no doubt, then, as to Atatürk's judgement concerning the division of labour: women are charged with prime responsibility for social reproduction, their role in production being secondary. I shall deal with the ideological mechanisms brought into play to validate this division of labour in a later section. First let us examine in more detail the occupational distribution of women in the labour force.

In a report on a seminar held in Istanbul in May 1978 on "Women in Turkish Society", sociologist Beniz Kandiyoti points out how the paper presented by Gülten Kazgan showed that women are being channelled into almost the same occupations now as in the past, while men's occupations are increasingly diversifying. The distribution of female labour as a percentage of total labour in the first half of the 1970s shows a high degree of occupational concentration among women, with 86 per cent of active women engaged in agriculture, compared with less than four per cent and eight per cent employed in industry and the service sector respectively. Furthermore, the occupational segregation index, which relates to the percentage of active females who would have to change occupations in order to achieve the same distribution as the active males, has risen from 32.05 in 1950 to 39.95 in 1975 (29). At the same seminar it was suggested that if, since 1926, the State, as a major employer, had institutionalised job opportunities for women in new areas, the present level of problems relating to women's labour force participation would not have been encountered (30). In other words, the State could have played an active and exemplary role in opening new areas of employment and opportunity to women. However, during the 1940s and 1950s, State policy to maintain Turkey as an agricultural country, in line with the Marshall Aid Plan, meant that the female labour force was best kept in agriculture, and indeed that is where they stayed. A report based on the 1965 census figures shows that while women made up 38 per cent of the active population, 94 per cent of these women were working in agriculture (compared with a figure of only 58 per cent of active men working in agriculture) and a high proportion of female agricultural workers were not paid a wage (as high as 97 per cent in Adiyaman Province) (31).

Nonetheless, in 1955 an interesting experiment was undertaken, when military schools were opened to female cadets. Several women entered, and finished their courses successfully, but in 1961 the decision was reversed. Furthermore, a recent study of women government employees shows a trend towards female employment: between 1936 and 1976 the number of female employees increased nineteen-fold, while the increase in male employees during the same period was only six-fold (32). However, women are by no means evenly distributed among government agencies, almost 70 per cent being concentrated in the Ministries of Education, Health and Welfare and the Post Office Directorate. In fact, the Ministry of Education alone employs almost half the total number of female employees (33). Moreover, the same study shows that women government employees throughout the Ministries tend to be concentrated in the lower echelons of the employment structure, in sex-typed jobs. Among health personnel, for example, where 61 per cent of employees are women, 73 per cent of these female employees are concentrated in occupations such as nursing and midwifery, while among the male employees there is a much higher proportion of doctors. Thus, while the number of women government employees has increased steadily and massively, they have remained typically in 'feminine' occupations, as secretaries, typists, switchboard operators, nurses and teachers. In other words, women are in jobs of a 'helping' nature rather than an autonomous one (with the exception of teaching), and with fewer opportunities for advancement than men (34). Women attached to the Ministry of Education, employed mostly as teachers, comprise about 40 per cent of all female civil servants (35) and, in institutes of higher education and universities,
women make up a quarter of the teaching staff and assistants (36). This leads us to an interesting phenomenon in female distribution in the workforce in Turkey: statistics show that the proportion of women in the professions in Turkey is twice that of women in the non-agricultural labour force as a whole (37). However, this is almost certainly attributable, in part, to the rapid expansion of jobs requiring specialised higher and technical education, and the difficulty of upward social mobility for men from working class or peasant backgrounds into such spheres. Consequently, women from the top end of the social hierarchy are able to take advantage of the vacuum created. At the same time, teaching and medicine are two areas which have traditionally required women practitioners, due to the past years of segregation and seclusion, when women generally were not able to have male teachers or be examined by male doctors. Thus it is not surprising to find that women employed mostly as teachers and attached to the Ministry of Education comprise almost 40 per cent of all female civil servants (38). Furthermore, it is those women who have the greatest ability to overcome the practical problems of combining work outside the home with their domestic responsibilities: they can afford to pay for child-care facilities and domestic help.

The phenomenon also illustrates one of the problems that are created out of the implementation of reforms dealing with women when they are geared towards urban middle-class women. This point was raised at the Seminar in Istanbul in 1978 by Fatima Mernissi, who suggested that such reforms could create a cleavage between two classes of women: those who are educated, skilled and integrated into the modern sector of their economies, and those who are uneducated, unskilled and remain unintegrated into the modern sector. She also pointed out how restricted the options remain for women consigned to work as unpaid labourers in agriculture, low paid wage earners in urban areas, domestic workers and such like (39).

One further point on this subject: the entry of women into the 'top' professions, and their appointment to top positions is often quoted and highly publicised, thereby fostering the illusion that women are entering traditionally male preserves in ever-increasing numbers, and that they are earning wages comparable to those available to men. In fact, not only is the proportion of employed women falling, but a substantial and increasing proportion are engaged in part-time and very low-paid occupations.

That Turkish women are ready to enter the labour market in a higher proportion, under the right conditions, and to reject the notion that they should be consigned to social reproduction because of their sex, is vividly illustrated by the percentages of women working or wanting to work abroad, where not only the financial rewards but also the social gains are perceived to be greater than at home. Figures for 1975 show that women comprised 17.6 per cent of Turkish migrant workers abroad, with an equal percentage registered on waiting lists to go abroad, as compared with a figure of only eleven per cent of the home labour force (40). This also reinforces the view that it is "the developing capitalist relations of production, rather than the legal rights brought by the Republic, which pushed women to become economically active in the Republican period" (41).

To summarise, then, it seems that, despite a significant numerical increase in paid female employment, the percentage increase has not been great, and the division of labour has remained largely undisturbed: the primacy of women's function in social reproduction has not been threatened or challenged. As Sirin Tekell concludes in her recent study on women:
The increase in the number of women in employment does not indicate that there has been a qualitative change in women's participation in social production. On the contrary, women's entry into employment takes the form of part-time work, for example, and is turning into new forms of work which enable their prime responsibility to remain as the provision of the reproduction of the worker. (42)

A final point to be made in terms of State policy concerning female employment relates to 'protective legislation' for women workers, which prohibits the employment of women (and children) on night shifts in certain occupations, from work with sophisticated machinery, and in situations deemed dangerous (e.g. mining). Surely it is desirable that all workers be protected from being forced to do work that is too physically demanding for them, and special care should indeed be taken of pregnant women, but, as Molyneux points out in her study, the inability of women who are pregnant to perform very physically demanding work slides into a more general representation of women as weaker and therefore in need of 'protection' from certain kinds of work (43). But rural women often engage in very heavy labour, and it is precisely these women who are unprotected, either by law or through union membership and social insurance. It is largely the more highly paid, heavy jobs or shifts that are legally closed to women, rather than the more menial ones, where the 'protective' legislation might cause inconvenience through lack of male employees due to the low wages or status involved, such as in nursing or night cleaning, as well as agriculture. Molyneux comments:

There is virtually no job which a healthy woman who is not pregnant cannot do, yet the legitimate concern to protect pregnant women is often translated ... into a much more diffuse ideological interpretation of women being feeble and disqualified from playing a full economic role. (44)

Another point to bear in mind in this respect is how easily and rapidly attitudes change according to convenience. Thus the belief in women's 'frailty' is discarded when they are needed in heavy industrial or agricultural work because of major wars, only to be renewed "with a barrage of propaganda about a woman's place being in the home when the men want the jobs back" (45). This is a phenomenon that has been experienced in many countries, and Turkey is no exception, though the process may perhaps have been complicated by uncommon factors. At the close of the War of Independence, Atatürk was eager to praise the heroic efforts of Turkish women and their role in the military victories:

No-one can deny that in this war, and in the wars before, it is the women who have kept the nation going. Working the plough, planting the seed, cutting and carrying wood from the forest, taking produce to the market to sell, keeping the home fires burning and, on top of all this, rain or shine, carrying munitions to the front, on her back, in a wagon with a baby at her breast, were our wonderful, self-sacrificing, blessed Anatolian women ... (46)

It is significant, I think, first that Atatürk did not mention the contribution of women who entered the factories and, second, that he did not omit to point out that in all their labours these brave women did not neglect their familial or domestic duties. Exactly in line with the socio-economic structure which he envisaged for the Turkish nation,
Atatürk's speech reinforces the notion that women are best suited to agricultural work and familial duties. The only rather surprisingly divergent note is the reference to activity in the market, for this is traditionally very strongly a male preserve in many parts of Turkey, even today. However, he does not seem to have followed it up by any further encouragement to women specifically to enter trading or marketing, either in this or in subsequent speeches.

The main theme emerging from this discussion is that women are still mainly involved in domestic labour and reproductive work: tasks which are not financially rewarded and which do not bring social status or recognition. And yet it is precisely these tasks which form the foundations of society. While a sexual division of labour, entailing different spheres of activity and segregated sexual roles does not necessarily imply subordination, nevertheless it is apparent that domestic labour is considered inferior.

My next questions are therefore: why is domestic labour viewed as inferior? Why are women ideally confined to the home? In other words, what is the dominant ideology relating to women in society, and in which these questions are rooted?

Notes to Chapter Three
1. Tayanç and Tayanç, 1977, 111
2. Özkaya, 1970, 390
3. Topçuğlu, 1957, xiii
4. Özkaya, 170, 390
5. Topçuğlu, 1957, xiii
6. Ibid., xvii
7. Kazgan, 1979, 157
8. Topçuğlu, 1957, xiv-xv
9. See, for example, Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1981, 24
10. Tayanç and Tayanç, 1977, 118-119
12. Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1981, 26
13. Ibid., 27
14. Ibid., 27
15. Ibid., 28
16. Caporal, 1982, 552
17. Ibid., 595
18. Ibid., 593 and 595
19. Tüm İktisatçılar Birliği, 1975, 65
20. Kazgan, 1979, 163
21. Ibid., 160
22. Ibid., 163
23. Taşkiran, 1976, 56
25. Taşkiran, 1976, 59
27. Taşkıran, 1976, 56
28. Ibid., 63
29. Kandiyoti, 1978, 12
30. Ibid., 15
31. Tüm İktisatçılar Birliği, 1975, 53 and 65
32. Çiğ, 1979, 245
33. Ibid., 33
34. Ibid., 263-264
35. Ibid., 248
36. Tan, 1979, 151
37. Youssef, 1974, 34
38. Çicek, 1979, 248
39. Kandiyoti, 1979, 15
40. Kazgan, 1979, 160
41. Tüm İktisatçılar Birliği, 1975, 52
42. Tekeli, 1982, 362
43. Molyneux, 1981, 184
44. Ibid., 184
45. Rogers, 1981, 19
46. Cited by Saval, 1973, 69
4. IDEOLOGY OF THE STATE

Following the French philosopher Althuser, we have to examine ideology in the light of its basic function, which is to ensure the reproduction of the relations of production, thereby securing the continuation of the mode of production which it determines. Althuser suggests that, in contemporary capitalist countries, the dominant ideological state apparatus is the educational system, for schools take young children and drill them in the state-sanctioned ideology. Another author describes the process as follows:

Around the age of sixteen a huge mass are ejected, as workers or peasants; others continue to become the petty bourgeoisie; others proceed further to emerge as agents of repression or professional ideologists. Each group is provided with the ideology to suit its role, yet the mechanisms whereby this occurs are disguised by the apparently neutral character of the school. (1)

In other words, the school not only serves to equip the worker with the technical skills and qualifications appropriate to the production process, but also teaches how the worker should behave. These rules of behaviour obviously are shaped by the dominant ideology of the ruling class, and are mediated through other social institutions also: religion, the family, the army, government legislation, trade unions, the mass media and cultural institutions; but in this section I am concerned only with the direct role of the State in education.

Drawing on an article by another author, Michele Barrett describes the way in which the education system is related to the sexual division of labour in society:

There is a division of labour within the family whereby women (through their domestic labour) reproduce not only the future generation of labour power, but also current members of the employed labour force. This division within the family is paralleled by the sexual division of labour in employment, where women habitually occupy the 'secondary' sector of the labour market with its characteristic features of low pay, little training and ease of dispensability. These two systems are closely linked, and the educational system 'functions to satisfy the requirements' of both. (2)

If we remember that children are in school during much of the period when they are maturing sexually and becoming aware of the definitions of adult masculinity and femininity, it will be clear that the children's perceptions of themselves in terms of gender identity will be consolidated largely in accordance with the perceptions of the teachers, which in turn frequently reflect the ideology of gender in society at large (as well as being generally reinforced by the family and society at large). Thus, for example, we should not be surprised at the research findings which uncovered "some of the ways in which male teachers tended to marginalize or simply ignore the female students and the extent to which this contributed to the passive and self-deprecating perceptions the girls had of themselves" (3).

Thus, in examining the education system in Turkey I am concerned with the two processes that are carried out within it: training appropriate to the concrete division of labour in society, and the transmission of ideologies. Of course, alongside an investigation of the qualitative impact of the education system, we must also consider
1926, when the expansion of the training of city council members won
the support of the National League of Education, it was an indication of
the growing interest in and support for educational programs in city
councils. The National League of Education, through its Committee on
Curriculum, was able to foster new curriculum ideas and promote
educational reform in city councils. The League's efforts were
recognized by the growth in the number of city councils that adopted
educational programs and adopted new curricula. Despite the
adoption of educational programs, however, it appears that the money
was not particularly interested in agricultural education, and the
educational programs suffered from

ators and manualists

was developed from the

The modern educational

AGRICULTURAL IMPACT.

AGRICULTURAL IMPACT.
... Who determines and distributes the obligatory educational expenses? Who are the persons who become members of the city councils in the province? According to the present structure of the councils, some of their members are persons who are afraid that the people will become enlightened, and who, like all parasites, benefit from the ignorance and blindness of the masses in order to fill their stomachs and their purses. ... How can we possibly imagine that these local notables and landlords, these men of influence who take away all that the peasant produces with the sweat of his brow and his own labour without spending any effort themselves, will sincerely work towards providing education for the people?(8)

The centralisation of the education system, putting schools under the direct control of the Ministry of Education, was accomplished in the first years of the Republic as an essential measure in establishing the means for transmission of the dominant State ideology as well as for the propagation of courses that would train people in the skills needed for the production process.

Atatürk constantly stressed the importance of education of the people for, if the nation was to develop and take its place among the scientific, civilized nations of the world, the people must have a knowledge of science and technology in order to contribute to that progress. The education of women was important not only for the direct contribution it would enable them to make, but also because of the role of women as mothers of the future generations:

The upbringing that mothers have to give their children today is not as simple as it was in the old days. The qualities which mothers need to have today in order to bring up their children and make them into active members equipped for the life of today, are many and challenging. Consequently, our women have to be more successful, more knowledgeable and more educated than even our men, if they really want to be the mothers of the nation. (9)

And so, in 1926 the Ministry of Education discussed the weaknesses in girls' education and decided to introduce co-education throughout the State system, with the exception of vocational schools. The importance of this step should not be overlooked, for research indicates that mixed schooling and co-education "foster comradeship between boys and girls, motivate girls to pursue their education and clearly develop their ambitions, interests and determination by putting them on the same educational, social and vocational footing as their male fellow-students" (10). But the fact that girls' and boys' vocational education were to come under separate departments of the Ministry of Education left the way clear for the development of curricula for the girls which would be based on the roles 'naturally' ascribed to women.

Thus, on the one hand, while recommendations were put into effect in the 1940s to make boys' training a more appropriate preparation for entry into the workforce through the development of apprentice schools, evening classes and travelling trade courses for small craftsmen, through the improvement of secondary trade schools to train skilled labour for factories, and through the creation of special centres for the training of technicians and skilled engineers, on the other hand, as Bşgş and Wilson point out, vocational education for girls was rather different.
The curricula of the Trade Institutes for Girls focused on preparing the girls as successful homemakers, as well as practitioners of a vocation, in other words reflecting and reinforcing the link between women's education and motherhood that Atatürk described so explicitly in his speech quoted above.

The number of trade schools for girls was increased from two to thirteen between 1927 and 1939, and the number of students rose from 456 to 2,175 - an increase of nearly five-fold. The same period saw only two new trade schools for boys, bringing the total to eleven, and less than a three-fold increase in the number of students (11). Vocational education was not available to village women, however, until the mobile courses were created in 1939 (12). Courses provided included child-care, cooking, sewing and home-economics as well as millinery, fashion design, flower-making, embroidery and dress-making; courses in the humanities were presented in 'concentrated' form. This pattern of vocational education for girls continued until the 1960s, and was initially very popular (as the figures above indicate), especially with middle-class parents, who were not so concerned that their daughters be taught functional skills to qualify them for entry into the workforce.

Turning back now to the question of primary education, figures show how effective Atatürk was in encouraging parents to make their daughters take advantage of their equal opportunity at school. For in the period of Atatürk's leadership girls began to attend primary school in numbers that increased at a faster rate even than the increase in the numbers of boys. For example, while the number of boys at primary school increased less than two-fold between the school years 1923-24 and 1938-39 [from 273,107 to 547,800], the number of girls attending increased more than four-fold [from 62,954 to 266,456], thus closing the gap between boys' and girls' attendance figures considerably; while girls constituted only 18.73 per cent of primary school students in 1923-24, this figure had risen to 32.75 per cent by 1938-39 (13). Similarly, the figures for attendance at high school show a remarkable increase in the total number of students, from 1,241 in 1923-24 to 24,364 in 1938-39; but girls only made up 23.51 per cent of the total in 1938-39, which was a lower percentage than in many of the preceding years, and considerably lower than in the first few years of the Republic, when girls made up 27.39 per cent of students in 1924-25 and 30.02 per cent in 1925-26 (14). So it seems that there are certain factors weighing against girls attending high school which come into play less frequently at the level of primary school or vocational school.

However, despite the impressive increases in numbers of students, school attendance figures overall remained sadly low. By 1935 there were still only sixteen per cent of eligible girls and 28 per cent of eligible boys attending primary school (15). These low figures are partly explained by lack of facilities, which was of course most severe in rural areas. In the school year 1939-40, out of 40,000 villages only 9,000 had a primary school (16). The problem lay not only in trying to find sufficient teachers for the villages, who would be prepared to tolerate village conditions, but also in the attitudes of the villagers towards the teachers who were appointed. The following extract from a contemporary commentary, selected by Başgöz and Wilson, vividly illustrates the problem:

The teacher sent by the Ministry to the villages looks down on the villagers. He does not like the children. Moreover, he wears clothes that are objectionable to the villagers. The village pupil cannot use the theoretical knowledge that the teacher gives him. The imam of the village,
on the other hand, taught the Koran ... to the village children, led the villagers in prayer at the village mosque five times each day, went to weddings and funerals and visited the sick where he performed his ritual of chasing away evil spirits by blowing on the patient ... Since the imam also settled disputes among the villagers, he was held in higher esteem than the teachers. (17)

Lack of interest in education for education's sake, especially with regard to women's education, is also evinced by the participation and success rates of the compulsory adult literacy classes that were instituted following the change of the alphabet in 1928 from the Arabic script to Latin characters. This change brought everyone, including that small elite minority that was literate in Ottoman Turkish, temporarily to the same level of illiteracy in their native tongue. At the same time it served as a permanent reminder to the people of the disjunction between the obsolescent Ottoman culture and the new, modern culture of the Turkish Republic. But the figures show that, out of all the literacy diplomas awarded during the period of Atatürk's leadership, only 25.34 per cent were awarded to women (18) and the percentage of women who were literate remained disappointingly low, reaching only 8.16 per cent in 1935 (19), compared with 4 per cent in 1923 (20). Thus, in adulthood too, attendance figures for women show a lack of importance attached to female education.

Furthermore, parents were reluctant to send their children to school if they needed their help in domestic or agricultural work. Perhaps the greatest obstacle to higher attendance figures, however, was the lack of any worthwhile benefits deriving from state education (as opposed to religious education, which had the advantage of at least winning favour in God's eyes). Tonguç expresses the problem as the villagers saw it:

The businesses, fieldwork or techniques of school graduates show no improvement; their animals and houses have not become better than those of the others; they do not speak a better Turkish, nor do they think differently from the rest of the villagers. They still use the same wooden plow, hire someone to plant and grade trees .... (21)

The eventual outcome of this situation was the adoption, as the basis of the majority of educational theories propounded in the 1930s, of the idea that had been put forward at the Izmir conference in 1923. Education was to be matched directly to the needs of the village economy and proposals for the incorporation of the teacher's role into village economic production were adopted in preference to the old idea of agricultural education for military conscripts. Thus, in 1937, following a successful experiment, the Law on Village Educators was passed, according to which young men who had successfully completed their military service, who knew how to read and write, and who came from farming or peasant families, would be trained and then sent to work in the village, where they would not only teach in school but would also take part in constructing school buildings, would teach adults at least two evenings a week and would set up plant nurseries, develop orchards, encourage the planting of trees, help in improving farm productivity, and introduce new seeds, new implements, and new methods, as directed by the Ministry of Agriculture (22). When the Village Institutes were created in 1940 they incorporated the Educator Training Programme.
In conclusion we may say that one of the most important developments in the field of education during the period of Atatürk's leadership, after the introduction of compulsory and free primary education for girls and boys, was the emphasis given to training in practical skills appropriate to agricultural production in the rural sector. At the ideological level, in terms of reinforcing the ideological basis of the social division of labour, it is significant that the 'production' educators - the models who were to lead the peasant producers to improved production methods and greater success - were all male, and the perpetuation of male appropriation of this role was ensured by using the army as the primary training ground. Women's role in agriculture is inevitably relegated to one of helper, while men, given training and education, are enabled to take on the role of initiator, decision-maker, and hence controller.

In considering the ideology of the State during the period of Atatürk's leadership we have to consider not only the role of the formal education system, but also the important part played by the People's Houses in the transmission of ideologies.

The first People's House was opened in Ankara in 1932, in the main building of the former Turkish Hearth Club. The latter had been established in the Young Turk period, in 1912, but were abolished by Atatürk in order to "rally all nationalist and republican forces around the Republican People's Party" (23). Indeed, 1932 may be said to be one of the worst years for the Turkish economy, and the People's Houses were set up in an attempt to ensure the political and ideological education of the people, in order to strengthen and mould the people into a classless, cohesive nation (24).

That the People's Houses were a part of the State ideological apparatus is evident from the fact that they were established, controlled and financed by the Republican People's Party (the single party of the government of the time) and that the party was financed out of the State budget. However, overt political indoctrination did not take place, even though the declared intention of the Houses was to inculcate the principles of the Republic, especially populism, nationalism, secularism and reform, into the minds of the people. The programmes therefore included such diverse activities as the study of literature and language, the fine arts and local and natural history, development of museum collections and libraries, theatrical and sporting events, social welfare, the publication of pamphlets and journals, and aid to rural villages.

However, in the area of village aid the People's Houses were, according to Bagdiz and Wilson, sadly unsuccessful. These authors conclude that a village aid programme that was purely philanthropic in character, with its major emphasis on social welfare, could not succeed in a country where 80 per cent of the population lived in small, impoverished villages, eking out a meagre living from an exhausted soil with primitive farm techniques; the real need was for government programmes for basic economic, agricultural and social reform (25).

By 1950 there were over 4,000 People's Rooms, and 500 People's Houses but, as the same authors suggest, rather than closing the gap between the educated elite and the uneducated rural masses, they became centres for bureaucrats and people who already had an education; the majority of uneducated people refused to accept the Houses as their activity centres, and refused to participate (26).

By the 1940s, however, the outbreak of the Second World War meant that agricultural production had to be increased in order to ensure sufficient food supplies for a large army to be maintained ready for mobilisation. Thus the Village Institutes were founded, with the aim, as expressed in the law passed establishing them, that "the peasant should be educated and made into a better producer" (27). At the same time, this aim also served the interests of the big landowners, and therefore won
their support. The method of education implemented in the Institutes is summed up in their motto: "The Institute student is taught within working life, through working, and for work" (28).

In their first years, the Village Institutes were co-educational, and many girls came from distant places to attend. Village Institute girls were much sought after as brides, and highly valued in terms of bride-price. But, as the numbers of successful, skilled and educated, free-thinking and progressive-minded peasants graduating from the institutes increased, so reactionary criticism of them grew, and at first focused particularly on matters relating to the girl students. As a result, in 1947, an administrative notice was circulated, stating that lessons should be held in separate rooms for boys and girls, and it was stipulated that boys' and girls' dormitories should be separate - as if to suggest that in the past they had been mixed. In the same administrative document it was ordered that girls be educated as 'housewives' and 'village mothers' (29). Thus the rare opportunity that the Institutes had offered for girls to acquire practical, functional skills that would fit them for an active role in production was soon curtailed, and girls were once again to be directed towards their 'primary role' in social reproduction. Indeed, after the 1950 elections girl students were separated completely from the Village Institutes.

But, in the end, the threat that the peasant graduates from the Institutes posed for the large landowners, and others whose interests lay in maintaining the status quo in society, was too great, and in 1954 the Village Institutes were closed. In their place ordinary teacher training colleges were set up. In Cumhuriyet newspaper in March 1967 H V Velicedefoğlu commented:

> The closure of the village institutes is the most pernicious document to ever pass into the history of Turkish democracy. If the village institutes had remained, apparently we would have become communists. Such talk is either the deliberate talk of those who don't want the peasants, either men or women, to wake up or they are totally baseless, empty words. (30)

Since the pioneering days of the Village Institutes it seems that little has been done to ensure the provision of education and training for women of a kind that would prepare them for and encourage them to participate in social production. The evening classes and mobile courses set up for women at the beginning of the 1950s were related almost solely to home management, offering courses such as cutting-out, sewing, laundry, embroidery and childcare, along with reading and writing, and health care.

In her study of the three Five-Year Development Plans (of 1963, 1968 and 1973) Güld Ergül reports that the majority of graduates from Girls' Technical Schools did not enter employment that was based on the education they had received: 24 per cent had continued their education, 30 per cent were working in jobs that for the most part had no connection with their school subjects and 41 per cent were at home (31). Mine Tan states in her study that proposals for the development of the programme for girls' vocational education in the third Five-Year Development Plan are based on the premise that "in Turkey housewifery must and will remain the number one profession for women" (32). However, the report by the Special Commission for Education for the fourth Five-Year Development Plan criticised the girls' vocational education institutions, saying that they "are not producing workers trained for any single part of the employment sector ... These educational institutions are continuing to produce consumers" (33). There is a vicious circle which comes into play to hinder women's entry into both education and employment: since
women's participation in the labour force is low now, it is expected to remain low, and so parents continue to consider investment in their sons rather than their daughters, in terms of education, to be more profitable and useful. The circle is then completed by the very clear, and direct relation between education and participation in the labour force (34). Indeed, figures show that not only does women's participation in non-agricultural work tend to increase as the level of education increases, but also that women with higher levels of educational attainment are comparatively more likely to find employment than men in the non-agricultural sector: out of the total female non-agricultural work-force in 1975, 56.63 per cent of women had attended at least middle school or the equivalent, whereas only 26.82 per cent of the total male non-agricultural workforce had attended middle school or its equivalent and above. However, at the bottom end of the scale, while just 218,312 women who had attended only primary school (or were uneducated) were in non-agricultural employment, the number of men in that position was 1,130,869 (35). These figures represent nine per cent of primary school or uneducated women, as compared with 32 per cent of men with the same level of education (36).

In her study of the effects of education on rural and urban women in Turkey, Ferhinde Ozbay draws the conclusion that "the relations between the Turkish education system and the professional structure have not been arranged very soundly: rather than education having the function of increasing social activity and ensuring social change, it can be said that it plays a protective role towards the existing, and in many ways traditional, social structure" (37).

The process of differentiation and channelling starts in primary school, where the materials used reinforce the stereotyped notions about women's roles that are fostered by society at large. Mine Tan reports that, in a supplementary textbook, The New Alphabet, adopted in 1972, out of twenty-five drawings of female figures, seven were of primary school teachers, while fifteen were housewife-mother figures engaged in activities such as laying the table, hanging out the washing, looking after or feeding children, knitting or meeting guests; the others represented two grandmothers and a nurse (38). Furthermore, as part of a deliberate policy, it is only the girls who have art lessons that include activities such as patching and darning socks, knitting, weaving and sewing. The pattern continues through middle school, where girls are offered courses in 'home economics' while boys are given 'crafts' courses. In the standard high-school curriculum there is no difference in the courses offered to boys and girls, but the high-school-level trade and vocational schools are separately organised, as mentioned earlier, with the result that the only trade or vocational schools for girls that are directly concerned with production are the agricultural schools, which have approximately 300 girl students (39).

In terms of the nature of education provided for women in Turkey we have to conclude that it continues to prepare women for their role in social reproduction, and to channel them into activities within the superstructure and not at the level of production.

Regarding the qualitative participation of women in education, while the percentage of female students is still increasing slowly at both primary and high-school levels, girls still only made up 42.30 per cent of students at primary schools in 1970-71 and 26.69 per cent of students at high schools in the same year (40). It is clear that the proportion of girls among high school students is being held down by the low numbers of girls attending high schools in rural areas: in the year 1970-71, in ten provinces not a single girl attended high school while in 39 more provinces the numbers were so small as to be insignificant (41).
This brings us to the question, mentioned earlier, of factors influencing parents in deciding whether or not to send their daughters to school. Aside from perceived obstacles, such as the need for assistance in domestic or agricultural work, or the undesirability of sending children unprotected to non-local schools, which keep overall attendance figures down, pervasive notions of the greater need for boys to be educated in order that they might have a better start in life, and the greater vulnerability of girls are both factors that lead to lower attendance figures for girls, especially in rural areas. We should now, then, turn to consider the different roles and different needs that cultural practice, which is the manifestation of ideology, accords men and women in Turkish society.

Notes to Chapter Four
2. Ibid., 117
3. Ibid., 141
4. Timur, 1971, 101
5. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 57-58
6. Ibid., 123
7. Ibid., 124
8. Cited in Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 103
9. Cited in Öğuzcan, 1961, 19
11. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 175 and 176
12. Ibid., 178-182
13. Figures taken from Caporal, 1982, 744, Table 1
14. Figures taken from Caporal, 1982, 755 Table 7
15. Tayanç and Tayanç, 1977, 128
16. Esenkova, 1951, 264
17. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 130-131
18. Caporal, 1982, 325
19. Tekci, 1982, 226
20. Özgaya, 1970, 340
21. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 130
22. Ibid., 148
23. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 152
24. Timur, 1971, 203-204
25. Başgöz and Wilson, 1968, 25
26. Ibid., 157
27. Timur, 1971, 249
28. Kirby, 1962, 103
29. see Kirby, 1962, 356
30. Velidedeoğlu, 1967
31. Ergil, 1979, 230
32. Tan, 1979, 212
33. Ibid., 213
34. Kazgan, 1979, 172
35. Tan, 1979, 217
36. Ozbay, 1979, 200
37. Ibid., 213
38. Tan, 1979, 200
39. Tayanç and Tayanç, 1977, 135
40. Caporal, 1982, 744 Table 1 and 755 Table 7
41. Ibid., 299
5. POPULAR IDEOLOGY

First of all it is important to make the point that difference in gender in contemporary society does not mean merely difference, but rather division, oppression, inequality and internalized inferiority for women. For women to realize the effects of being labelled "women" or "female" as distinct from the natural consequences of being a woman, is perhaps the most vital step in terms of raising their consciousness about the plight of women in society (1).

It is an indisputable fact that sexual hierarchies persist in characterising capitalist societies, and it is equally true that sexual hierarchies presuppose social inequalities. But, rather than physiological differences as such, it is the social usage and the social meaning that is attributed to them that explain these sexual hierarchies. And they, and the social inequalities they give rise to, are legitimated by ascribing them to natural facts (2). In other words, nature is the means by which hierarchy and sub-ordination are justified ideologically. As Stolcke writes:

When social hierarchies and supremacy are explicitly or implicitly explained in terms of natural attributes (race, biologically transmitted capacities) rather than as products of environmental factors (for instance the unequal access to the means of production), heredity becomes a fundamental concern. This has immediate consequences for women: ... control over procreation in the form of control over women's sexuality. (3)

Certainly in Turkish society insistence that social and genetic identity be one and the same, i.e. that the man taking the social role of father to a child should also be the genetic father, is a fundamental element of Turkish social ideology. Stolcke continues:

If women's primary function in life is to produce genetically legitimate heirs, she must be effectively controlled by the man of her family. This control is achieved by confining her as far as possible to an exclusively female sphere ... But at the ideological level, the domestic confinement of women ... also requires that women accept motherhood as their primary mission in life, and dependence on and domination by men. Motherhood is presented as the source of gratification for women, and it is impressed on women that this is their natural function ... Moreover, since bearing and rearing children are women's natural vocation, they do not require any special skills. They are not work, and thus deserve no compensation beyond the so-called joy of satisfying women's innermost instincts of bearing children and seeing their offspring prosper. (4)

Stolcke is careful to point out, however, that

This does not mean that motherhood is not recognized by society as a valuable function. In fact, it is considered so valuable it needs to be protected and controlled. And what better way to justify and exercise this control effectively than by instilling in those to be controlled their dependence and need for protection by men, i.e. by demonstrating their
Reinforcing the imbalance in worth attached to male and female roles is the notion of progress in society. The nineteenth-century European notion of progress, which Stolcke identifies as that which "regards as socially valuable only those activities related to material production" (5), has by now pervaded capitalist Turkey too. According to this still current notion, "it is men who work, it is only work that produces; and it is thus only men who actively participate in the progress of society, and accordingly deserve respect and power" (7). Thus women are allotted a role in social reproduction and not social production, and are therefore accorded less respect and power because of it. Stolcke points out that social reproduction entails the perpetuation of existing relations in society, including male-female domination. And it is institutions such as marriage, the family and inheritance that act as the agencies for ensuring social reproduction. But this requires (and therefore determines) both women's primary assignment to domestic labour, and also the undervaluation of this function [8]. In order to understand the institutions of marriage and the family, Stolcke suggests that we must first understand why these institutions persist among the dominant class, for it is this class which sets the rules of socially acceptable behaviour. First of all she points out that there is, in her words, "a permanent tension between a hierarchical reality and a seemingly egalitarian ethos". She concludes that it is the definition of a woman's role primarily in biological terms - a woman's function in life is motherhood because nature made her so - which serves to bridge this contradiction (9).

Turning to another author concerned with women's oppression, Michele Barrett draws attention to the drastic changes brought about in the family through the development of capitalism: the separation of home and workplace (related to the developing wage labour relations of capitalist production); increased possibilities of divorce; increasing incidence of 'romantic' free choice of marriage partner; increasing number of years of children's dependence - all of which developments have been observed and well documented in Turkey (10). Barrett identifies as most important the fact that, in the nineteenth century, the 'ideal' family form emerged, within which the wage-earning husband provided for the dependent and caring wife and mother (11). This model has been rapidly embraced by the popular ideology of modern capitalist Turkey. Barrett stresses the significance of this model:

... for although few families have in fact depended only upon the male wage, the belief that they do underlies our present sexual division of labour in a fundamental way ... It is in the context of women's role in the home, financially dependent upon her husband, unpaid for domestic labour except in her upkeep and badly paid outside the home, that we must consider the dominant features of female sexuality - passivity, maternalism and so on - as they have been developed in the ideology of contemporary capitalism. (12)

Barrett also points out that the separation of home and workplace has entrenched women more firmly in domestic and familial responsibilities and has detached and disadvantaged them in the sphere of wage labour (13). The relatively modern family-household system which characterises
contemporary capitalism is basic to the social formation as a whole: it is within families that ideologies of domesticity and maternity for women, of breadwinning and responsibility for men, are articulated so strongly. It is according to family ideology that male and female children are socialised into their 'proper' gender roles, and it is within the household that there exists not only a division of labour but also a set of relations between its members by which the females are systematically dependent upon, and unequal to, the males. Barrett concludes that the combined role of the ideology of the family and economic aspects of the household is a stabilizing and conservative one (14). She further suggests that there is a mutually strengthening relationship between the ideology and the material relations which work together to reproduce women's dependence on men (15). It is the family-household system that is the basis for women being used as a 'reserve army' of labourers and as cheap reproducers of labour power. Finally, to quote Barrett once more:

The tendency of the family household system is to encourage conservatism and militate against protest, and the close relationship between the economic aspects of household support and highly intense personal and economic relationships is an important factor in this. (16)

The system thus constitutes an extremely effective method of ensuring continuity through time: it guarantees the reproduction of labour power and it provides protection for personal life, especially valuable in times of major social change. It is, however, as described above, a major site of women's oppression. Changes that would bring about a real equality for men and women at the level of the family-household system would be: a redivision of labour and responsibilities of childcare (i.e. shared labour and responsibility); the disappearance of women's actual or assumed dependence on a male wage (or capital), and a transformation in the ideology of gender (17). What is at issue is not women's natural roles in pregnancy, childbirth or lactation; nor is it a question of whether different spheres of activity and segregated sexual roles necessarily entail subordination or hierarchy. The issue is rather whether segregated roles fulfill complementary functions to the benefit of the society or whether they are an instrument perpetuating social inequality (18).

Let us turn, then, to see whether any changes were wrought in either the economic organisation of households or in the accompanying familial ideology under Atatürk's leadership, or following his example; for, if the family-household system lies at the root of women's oppression, it is here that we must seek a transformation.

Certainly it has been claimed that Atatürk, in formulating the reforms relating to women's position in Turkish society,

... was thinking first of their place within the Turkish family. By liberating Turkish women, he wanted to lay down the foundations for a more egalitarian and harmonious family life. (19)

However, the Turkish Civil Code clearly does not admit absolute equality between husband and wife, (nor indeed does the Swiss Civil Code on which it was modelled). Thus contradictions persist between the equal status ascribed to men and women in the Constitution, and various articles in Turkish law which erode that equality. These anomalies formed the basis of a number of demands made at a congress organized by 27 women's organisations in December 1975, some of which are still being considered, but have not yet been met. The focus of dissatisfaction centres on the laws relating to the institution of marriage, which apportion the
greater part of power and control to the husband. For example, the husband alone is considered the head of the family, he has the right to decide where the family is to live and whether or not his wife should work, and he has the last word in case of any disagreement in decisions concerning the children of the marriage.

There are further inequities to be found in questions such as the definitions of and penalties for adultery according to whether the party is male or female, and there are areas in which laws aimed at removing injustice towards women have been passed but have not been implemented satisfactorily such as the laws proscribing the payment of a brideprice on marriage, and the performance of a religious marriage ceremony without prior civil registration. The latter is important because a woman whose marriage is not registered is deprived of any of the legal rights or protection deriving from marriage, particularly important in the event of widowhood or separation (for example, rights in inheritance, State pension, maintenance for herself and/or children, tax concessions, etc.). However, in social terms, and in rural areas especially, civil registration is not necessary for the marriage to be considered valid. The Professor of anthropology, Paul Stirling, writes about the law and village society in Turkey:

> The women know nothing of the law, and the men have no motive for taking any notice of what little they may happen to know of it. The relationship between man and wife in the village is regulated by the current norms and the informal sanctions of village life. (20)

Stirling explains the villagers' indifference to the new laws in terms of their inconsistency with the informal system of custom and tradition that is embedded in society; he concludes that, if the law is used "as an arm of reform", the people will find the law unsatisfactory and refrain from using it; thus "automatically minimizing its social effects" (21). A vivid example of how people do willingly comply with the law when it can be seen to serve their interests is related in an article by Hizir Timur, who describes the occasion when a law was passed during the Second World War offering financial aid to the families of men in the Armed Forces. In order to be eligible the thousands of women applying had to prove that they were married, and so the Turkish Army was obliged temporarily to release its men "so that they could convert their religious marriages into civil ones". Timur points out that the same process occurred during the Korean War; he also suggests that tax laws giving relief to married couples and those with children play a part in encouraging civil registration of marriages (22). The results of Serim Timur's survey, which were published in 1972, show that, while almost 50 per cent of marriages were by both civil and religious ceremony, about fifteen per cent were by religious ceremony only (23).

As mentioned above, the law banning the payment of a brideprice has also been widely ignored. On this question, Timur's survey found that a brideprice had been paid in more than half the marriages taking place (24). A discussion of this custom is beyond the scope of this study, but it is clear that the payment of a brideprice is a mechanism which reinforces the subordination of the bride (subordination not only to her husband, but to his family also), as well as encouraging the marrying-off of girls at an early age to men whose suitability is, to a greater or lesser degree, assessed according to their ability to pay the price. Indeed the question of free choice of marriage partner is also important.

When the new Civil Code was introduced, it required for the first time in Turkey that the bride be present at the marriage in order to
express her agreement to the contract in person, rather than through her representative, as had previously been the custom. This was an important innovation, for which Atatürk set a precedent at his own marriage, before the law was introduced. Of course the girl's personal participation in the ceremony does not prove or guarantee her willing entry into the contract and, according to the results of Serin Timur's survey, more than one in ten women married according to the decision of their families, and against their own wishes (25). However, it is true to say that girls are increasingly being consulted on their preference for a marriage partner, and the great majority of girls do marry the partner of their parent's choice without dissent (26). This development is in natural concordance with the increasing freedom enjoyed by young men in choice of marriage partner (27), and is accompanied by an increase in the frequency of elopements, often initiated by girls; a phenomenon which has been linked to women's rising consciousness (28).

Nevertheless, it has to be said that there is still a fairly low degree of autonomy for girls selecting a marriage partner and correlative to this is the generally young age of girls on marriage. In an effort to counter this trend, the Civil Code when it was first implemented set the minimum ages for marriage at seventeen and eighteen for girls and boys respectively, but this was so obviously unrealistic that in 1938 these ages were reduced to fifteen and seventeen (girls of fourteen and boys of fifteen may seek special permission from the court to marry). But evidence from various research studies shows that these limits are frequently disregarded; figures from Serin Timur's nationwide survey carried out in 1968 show that almost one in seven girls were married between the ages of ten and fourteen (29). Another survey carried out in 1974 indicates that almost 53 per cent of women marry between the ages of fifteen and seventeen (30). It is no coincidence that the younger the woman's age at marriage the more she will tend to be compliant, and the more likely that she will be placed in a dependent, subordinate role in her marriage (31). It is clear that compliance is one of the qualities expected in a wife, as indeed in all subordinates and dependants. Furthermore, marrying young increases a woman's childbearing period, thus reducing the possibility of her being able to orient herself to different roles (32).

Thus, in summarising the legal reforms relating to the institution of marriage, it has to be said that, while they went a long way towards restoring women to equal status, nevertheless they clearly maintain male hegemony in marriage, and in terms of their effectiveness as a tool for social reform they have inevitably achieved little success. This is the sad conclusion to be drawn with the benefit of a 60-year perspective. In the heady days of the 1920s, progress seemed to be marching ahead in all spheres of life, and not least in the field of women's rights. There was a general mood of optimism about the future of the new young Republic, and there was a marked desire to present the western world with evidence of the successful transformation of Turkish society. This, and an element of wishful thinking, explain the tone of a report in The International Woman Suffrage News (p 53) of January 1926, of a lecture given by Halide Edib - a staunch supporter of Atatürk at the time - about the Turkish women of the day, describing a perfect state of sex equality, equal moral standards and no divorce, "polygamy being practically, if not entirely, non-existent, and the women being unveiled", there being "few illiterate women in any of the larger towns" and "social life differing little from the social life of the West".

Affected by the same euphoria, the Women's Union (Kadinlar Birliği), founded before 1920, ceased to function after the establishment of the Republic; but in 1930 it was formed anew as an organisation befitting a modern western state. In 1935, the International Suffrage Alliance held
its conference at Yıldız Palace in Istanbul; however, having thus
provided the platform to proclaim the emancipation and equality
of Turkish women to the western world, the Women's Union had served
its purpose, and so the day after the conference ended the organisation
was dissolved again. Women in Turkey had, indeed, won more complete
legal and political equality with men than many of their European
sisters at the time. Atatürk himself was persuaded that there was
nothing further to be achieved for women, and he even made a statement
to that effect that women now had all their rights and consequently
there was no further need for women's organisations (33). But had he
really achieved all that he set out to do for women? I think we can
interpret his statement in two ways. First, he had established a
formal base for the organisation of society, in terms of constitutional,
judicial and political rights, that was more egalitarian with respect
to the male and female citizens of Turkey than many of the European states
enjoyed at the time, and which was totally unprecedented in any Islamic
society. On this basis his statement is unexceptional. However, if we
be arn in mind that Atatürk's aim in pursuing reforms to improve women's
position was to "lay down the foundations for a more egalitarian and
harmonious family life", and not merely to have a set of commendable
articles on the statute books, then we have to look at what changes
were brought about for women in their families. On this basis
Atatürk's statement was, at best, premature.

In 1936, the General Inspectorate of Thrace published a booklet
entitled Turkish Woman, Village Woman which, while mainly taking the
form of a panegyric of the Turkish peasant woman, turns into an
exhortation to the reader (who is evidently assumed to be male) to show
due respect to Turkish peasant women in general, and 'his own woman'
in particular. The panegyric illustrates clearly the basis of a
harmonious family life:

It can be said that Turkish women are the most
obedient, submissive and respectful women in
the world. For a Turkish woman obedience to
her husband is a most natural and happy duty. (34)

Even in homes where harmony is jeopardised by a husband who comes
home late and drunk, or who creates trouble, the Turkish woman

... has learned not to be perverse towards
such a husband - she knows that womanhood
requires her not to react harshly to her
man, and this shows her greatness and
purity of soul. (35)

The booklet also has something to say on egalitarian family life:

The peasant woman ... does as much work as
her husband in the field, the vineyard or the
orchard. The woman is thus more than the
foundation of the family or a member of the
family: she is also an economic member, in
other words, a contributor of money and
labour. (36)

The peasant woman's reward for being 'foundation' of the family
and 'chief helper' in economic production for the household is to
be loved and shown respect. The fact that the essential purport of
the booklet is to exhort its male readers 'to love your woman' as
'both a human and a national duty' and to show her respect as 'a
higher obligation than any other' (37) tends to suggest that the
Turkish peasant woman in Thrace was not receiving her just reward.


It would be wrong to suggest that Atatürk had in mind the same degree of 'womanly' obedience and submissiveness as the basis for a harmonious family life, for he certainly favoured a much more independent character in women. For example, his favourite novel is reputed to have been Galihuge, which portrays a young, city-bred girl of independent spirit, who becomes a teacher in Anatolia; alone in the world, she earns her own living and lives according to her own judgement. Furthermore, in his choice of bride, Atatürk was attracted to a young woman who had spent several years, and been educated, in Europe, and who was used to what was, comparatively, a very high degree of independence. However, neither Atatürk's example, nor his speeches, nor the changes in the law that he instigated, could undermine the centuries of tradition augmented by religious beliefs and customs. Without wishing to embark on an analysis of the ways the religion and customs of Islam have impinged on the position of women in Turkish society, suffice it to say that one of the most fundamental tenets pertaining to the organisation of an Islamic community is the complementarity of male and female, both in nature and, consequently, in ascribed roles. According to interpretation of the Koran, men naturally have authority over women since they are superior, and a good woman is defined as one who is obedient (38). This belief in the complementarity of male-female natures and roles is basic to the prevailing popular ideology and pervades the organisation of society at almost every level. It is particularly effective in maintaining the invisible wall that separates the male, public domain from the female, private (or domestic) domain, and in upholding the view that a woman's primary responsibility is to provide her husband with legitimate heirs.

Against the weight of Islamic beliefs and customs, government edicts were bound to remain ineffective, even despite the progressive example and persuasive speeches of a leader as popular as Atatürk. But, in any case, the insistence on motherhood as women's first and foremost duty was in no way contrary to government policy. Due to heavy losses of men in the many years of war preceding and during the establishment of the Republic, the government adopted a policy of positively encouraging population increase; the distribution of information on contraception and the use of contraceptives were prohibited by law, and financial incentives were given for large families. Atatürk, too, encouraged the exaltation of motherhood, saying, "The highest duty of women is motherhood" (39). It was not until the early 1960s that government policy with regard to the rate of population increase was changed. However, as was pointed out at the Seminar in Istanbul on "Women in Turkish Society" in 1978, although motherhood is idealised and presented as women's supreme duty, in practical terms little is done to assist women in this role, and particularly in childbirth. Figures quoted at the seminar estimated the maternal mortality rate for urban areas in Turkey at thirteen times that in Sweden in 1968, and showed a much higher death rate for women between the ages of fifteen and 44 than for men of the same age group (40). Furthermore, it was pointed out that women do not - or cannot - make the necessary dietary additions during pregnancy or lactation, and this, combined with the often very young age of the mother, results in an increased number of underweight and underweight women, for the foods consumed during pregnancy are sufficient for the growth of the foetus but not the adolescent mother (41). However, fertility rates remain high in Turkey: in 1975 the mean number of pregnancies was 4.6 (42). As a 'natural' consequence of their being the bearers of children, women are held responsible for the care of them through childhood, and in the same way they are expected to nurse the sick, care for the aged or infirm and to do all domestic tasks.
Prof. Abadan-Ulu has pointed out that there is little hope of the family ceasing to be the source of provision of such services until and unless "better distribution of wealth, appropriate institutions such as rural social security insurance, efficient co-operatives, good public services, hospitals or whatever other devices become established as aspects of social life in villages" (43); and there is likewise little hope of women being relieved of the responsibility for such services within the family in the meantime.

Women's performance of domestic work, however, especially the care of children within the home, as Mackintosh points out, not only "expresses their dependence and subordination within marriage (since men actively benefit from this work)" but also "weakens their position within the wage labour market, contributing to their low wages and poor conditions as wage workers" (44).

Furthermore, on the one hand women are made more vulnerable the more they are isolated by domestic life (45), for the identification of women with the domestic sphere and men with the 'outside world' of the modern economy is both cause and effect of the virtual monopoly by men of the important positions in the socio-economic hierarchy and their associated control of the main institutions of modern society: law, politics, public administration, the armed forces, the police, commerce, industry and banking, the media, etc (46). The isolation of women from the public or social world is thus a means by which women are effectively controlled:

The more households are organisationally separate, the more women are confined and isolated within their domestic space, the more total is their dependence on those men who represent them and speak for them in public. (47)

On the other hand, imbued with the ideology of their reproductive destiny, women who do enter the work-force tend mostly to do so out of economic necessity, and continue primarily to perceive themselves as mothers and wives; they consequently experience their jobs as a hindrance in the performance of their primary role. This subjective view is endorsed by the fact that women's wages tend to be lower than men's (despite the article in the 1961 Constitution which states the principle of equal pay for equal work), since it is generally supposed that women have husbands to support them and their children. Moreover, as a number of studies on working women in Turkey have shown, women who only work through economic necessity (and not in order to make use of their education, or to achieve economic independence and such like) generally give either the whole or a large part of the money they earn as a supplement to the family income (48).

A British anthropologist, Ann Whitehead, has identified one of the sets of values influencing women in decisions about their own income as "the ideology of maternal altruism", by which "the mother and wife always puts the family or the children first". She goes on to cite another study that suggests that "the power of married women vis-à-vis their husbands could decrease when they acquired earnings of their own, because this meant that their husbands could keep more of their earnings for personal expenditure, while the women's earnings went to pay for collective family expenditure" (49); and she draws the salient conclusion that, despite what ideology would have us believe, "the household is not a collectivity of mutually reciprocal interests" (50). The TİB study points out that a woman "who does not see herself as a working woman cannot benefit from the economic independence that earning money could bring her, nor the personal freedoms that accompany it" (51).

Such attitudes are accompanied and reinforced by the lack of social recognition enjoyed by women's work. With respect to village women,
Deniz Kandiyoti points out that, regardless of the extent of the economic contribution generated by female labour, and despite the fact that investigation reveals "a pattern of heavy, unrecongnised labour", village men would often state that their wives did not work, since the exclusion of women and the restriction of their activities to daily household duties was considered prestigious and more 'urban' (52). Kandiyoti draws the conclusion from her study that, for rural women, status is still defined according to the traditional criteria of age and childbearing (53). In small towns, Kandiyoti reports women working as gardeners, domestics and launderers, but these jobs were not considered 'work' by men, despite the cash income they brought. The men interviewed regarded single girls working with more tolerance than married women, but their reluctance to let women work was not coupled with a belief that women could not have a successful professional life, and this is mirrored in the fact that the most prestigious occupations for women were teaching, the civil service and secretarial work (54). Prof. Kiray, writing about a small town on the Black Sea coast in the early 1960s, found a similar variation in attitudes towards married and single women working, and according to the occupation in question. She also found variation according to the age group of the men being asked: most against was the 25-34 age group, while men aged between 35 and 44, and between 55 and 64 were the least opposed to women working. Prof. Kiray allies this to the possibility that the younger generation have small children at home, while the older generations have mature, sensible wives and are therefore more likely to tolerate their working (55). A different interpretation is offered by Prof. Caporal, who links the tolerance of the 35-44 age group to the fact that they were brought up in the 1930s, "the most fervent period of Kemelism", while the 25-34 age group were brought up in the period of Menderes' administration, "When traditional values had become effective again" (56).

Ataturk's power in forging changes in attitudes and in inspiring the adoption of new forms of behaviour is unquestionable, but his time of leadership was too short to ensure the continuance of his progressive and reformatory ideas. As pointed out earlier, the family form is a very conservative influence, and new generations tend to be socialised along similar lines to their parents. Girls thus tend to be socialised in preparation for a role similar to that in which their mothers find themselves. From her study of women in a small town, Prof. Kiray had identified the most crucial role of women in the family as being "to maintain smooth inter-personal relationships within the family, to avoid friction, preserve equilibrium and smooth trouble spots". Thus, "girls get socialised to make the best out of difficult situations and to adjust to a potentially hostile environment when they marry and leave home" (57). This seems to suggest a high degree of compliance, as well as tact and discretion, but Prof. Kiray shows how these characteristics can be turned to good account, since these patterns of socialisation and interaction mean that a middle-aged woman develops great skill in the management of human interaction and a very mature personality. She is virtually the oldest member of the family to whom everyone has independent access, and therefore occupies a very central role (58). Prof. Kiray does not fail to make the point that it is only members of the woman's family who are able to benefit directly from such a woman's skills in human management, and to ask the question: How can this resource be made use of in the public world too? (59) On the other hand, the point was made at the Seminar on women in Istanbul in 1978 that, with rising standards of living, emphasising consumption and waste, and with children increasingly exposed to extra-familial influences, middle-class housewives are now very "insecure, brittle and threatened"; "their traditional managerial function" has been taken away from them (60). Furthermore, it is these middle-class
housewives especially who tend to have high exposure to the mass media.

As one study reports, the popular culture embraced by women in the form of television programmes and simple reading material such as photo-comics and women's magazines "effectively imposes a consumption-oriented value system which leads to needless cravings, unsatisfied desires, and alienation from one's own class and consequent unhappiness to women". And women are "more affected and oriented by this culture that permeates through the mass media, exploiting their simple desires in simple, understandable terminology, symbols and images" than they are by "the alien bourgeois culture given in public schools" (61). Television has now overtaken the radio in terms of ownership of sets, and is probably the most influential medium in terms of its effect on male-female roles and attitudes. Unfortunately, the general tendency, whether in imported films or serials, or in home-produced films, programmes or advertisements, with regard to the portrayal of male and female characters and roles is a conservative one. For instance, Prof. Abadan-Unat cites the Turkish programme "Five Minutes" as an example of the way in which television programmes reinforce the view that women's primary functions are those of wife and mother (62), and in advertisements, while men are to be seen reading, drinking, driving, participating in sport, wearing "distinguished clothes and making decisions", women appear following the fashions, applying make-up, knitting, washing up, doing laundry, cleaning the house and looking after children (63). There is now at least one advertisement showing a woman reading, but this is an advertisement for the romantic pulp that is only 'fit for' women.

Of course, it should be borne in mind that, throughout the western capitalist world, as unemployment increases, women are more likely to be encouraged to stay at home than to exacerbate the problem by taking a 'man's job'. To cast women in the role of consumer is all too easily accomplished in urban areas, but in traditional settings, as Prof. Kray has pointed out, it is men, and not women, who bear a conspicuous consumption role. The woman's role here is one of regulating necessary consumption of the household (64).

A suitable conclusion for this section is a passage taken from Barbara Rogers' book, which applies well to the Turkish case:

At the same time as women are largely excluded from wage employment and other avenues into the cash economy, the ideology of their domestic destiny is strongly advocated. More recently, advertising and consumerism have become strong reinforcements for the message of domestication and the 'consumption' role. (65)

As long as women's role in social reproduction, rather than in social production, continues to serve the interests of the dominant socio-economic system, the impulse to bring about any change in the organisation of society that would radically alter the sexual division of labour as it exists now is also lacking; so too the momentum for change that is needed in the dominant ideology in order to bring about the alleviation of the burden of responsibility for domestic labour from women, and to dismantle the wall of dominant value judgements in society, is also lacking.

Notes to Chapter Five
1. See Barrett, 1980, 113
2. Stolcke, 1981, 46
3. Ibid., 43
4. Ibid., 44
5. Ibid., 44
6. Ibid., 31-32
7. Ibid., 32
8. Ibid., 34
9. Ibid., 35 & 36
10. See, for example Timur, 1972
11. Barrett, 1980, 77-78
12. Ibid., 78
13. Ibid., 78
14. Ibid., 204-205
15. Ibid., 211
16. Ibid., 212
17. Ibid., 254
18. Stolcke, 1981, 46
19. Abadan-Unat, 1974, 23
20. Stirling, 1957, 20
21. Ibid., 32
22. Timur, 1957, 36
23. Timur, 1972, 92
24. Ibid., 83
25. Ibid., 77
26. Ibid., 79
27. Kandiyoti, 1977, 64
28. Magnarella, 1974, 116
29. Timur, 1972, 95
31. Fox, 1973, 524
32. Kağıtçıbaşı, cited in Kandiyoti, 1978, 26
33. Woodsmall, 1960, 32-33
34. Kandemir, 1936, 9-10
35. Ibid., 11
36. Ibid., 12
37. Ibid., 13
38. Surah 4, verse 34, Koran, 1974, 370 translated by N.J. Dawood
39. Taskiran, 1976, 56
40. Tezcan, cited in Kandiyoti, 1978, 16
41. Baysal in Kandiyoti, 1978, 18
42. Tezcan, in Kandiyoti, 1978, 17
43. Abadan-Unat, 1974, 31
44. Mackintosh, 1981, 11
45. Young, 1981, ix
46. Rogers, 1981, 25
47. Harris, 1981, 66
48. See, for example, the works by Topçuğlu, Çitçi & TİB
49. Whitehead, 1981, 107
50. Ibid., 110
51. Türk İktisatçılar Birliği, 1975, 80
52. Kandiyoti, 1977, 62-63
53. Ibid., 65
54. Ibid., 64-65
55. Kiray, 1979, 372
56. Caporal, 1982, 598
57. Kiray, 1979, 374
58. Ibid., 374-375
59. Ibid., 375
60. Kandiyoti, 1978, 25
61. Şenyapılı quoted in Kandiyoti, 1978, 9
62. Abadan-Unat, 1979, 34
63. Şenyapılı, 1971, 102
64. Kiray, cited in Kandiyoti, 1978, 22-23
65. Rogers, 1981, 40
6. CONCLUSION

It was during the early years of the Republic, with Atatürk's encouragement and, indeed, in some instances at his insistence, that Turkish women began to appear on the stage, to enrol in universities, along with men, to participate in sports and to mix with men on social occasions. It was also during these years that women began to enter some of the most precious male preserves: 1927 saw the first woman lawyer, 1930 the first woman judge and prosecutor, and 1932 the first woman diplomat enter the Foreign Ministry.

There are many more 'firsts' of this kind, and in fact Turkey scored an international 'first', being the first country ever to elect a woman judge to the Supreme Court of Appeal. But, unless women can enter employment at all levels on equal terms with men, then these few exceptional professional women will remain exceptions: welcome symbols to be held up as 'evidence' of the egalitarianism of the system; 'proof' that equality of opportunity for women is there for those who seek it.

The number of professional women in Turkey and the range of their occupations are impressive, but this growing professionalisation of bourgeois women has not threatened the nature of the Turkish social formation, any more than the same process has, for example, in England. Women are still socially defined primarily as mothers. Their entry into social production is largely determined by the demands of the labour market, and it seems likely that the effects of technological change will be such that the first jobs to be lost will be those of the uneducated and unskilled women working in labour-intensive operations. Women's employment in general continues to be judged in accordance with the supposition that provision of the family's cash needs is the responsibility of the husband, while the housework, which is unpaid, is the responsibility of the wife. This supposition holds true for peasant households too, as soon as they enter into relations with the market, for studies have revealed that the division of labour on the family farm often results in women doing the routine hard work, confined to the family farm and the village, while the men do the work involved in production for the market and the business of marketing itself, thus denying women the opportunity of trading their own produce, and placing ownership of the produce and control of the exchange goods or cash in the hands of the men (1). Since women's work remains largely unpaid, it also remains outside the capitalist system; low productivity is the third element joining the vicious circle that is tending to increase the disadvantages suffered by women wishing to enter the labour force.

Furthermore, even though increased career opportunities might give women greater economic independence, this is generally achieved at considerable costs: either accepting double responsibility - for domestic and familial duties as well as career; or at the expense of motherhood; and if the first course is chosen, independence may still be forfeited under pressure of 'the ideology of maternal altruism'. The other alternative, of course, is not to forego the experience of motherhood entirely, but to abdicate responsibility for day-to-day care and attention of the child or children, and either pay someone else to take on that function, or take advantage of the availability of a relative to do so - in both cases almost invariably the substitute will be a woman.

Through all the major social upheavals that have occurred in the past 60 years in Turkey, the family as the basis of Turkish society has not been shaken. Indeed, it continues to be a firm principle of the Constitution that the family is the basis of Turkish society. The family ensures continuity in society and security for individuals in
times of social crisis. It is as efficient a system for reproducing labour power for the capitalist system as for peasant households, at the same time showing itself ready to accommodate new forms — as the shift from patriarchal to nuclear family households shows — and to accommodate some change in the roles of its members. If the working mother can be accommodated into the traditional family system, then it is hard to see why a working father could not also be accommodated, with accruing enhancement of the role of fatherhood. That is not to say that there is anything intrinsically wrong with a sexual division of labour, either within the family or in society. Nor do I wish to suggest that the subordination of women will be resolved by converting women into workers and men into fathers. But if women are to be able to escape the physical determinism of their role in society they must be freed from carrying sole responsibility for the domestic domain. As anthropologist Olivia Harris concludes in her article on "Households as Natural Units",

This means of subordinating women through the gender-typing of many activities and constraining those defined as female to a strictly circumscribed domain is found in many cultures and in widely-differing production systems. The ascription of natural status to this domain is certainly not restricted to western capitalist society ... (But) it is important to recognise that this is an ideology - that is, women's subordination or domestication is never complete or guaranteed. ... Only a limited number of units in fact conform to the ideal ... Women can only be fully domesticated where men are wealthy and powerful enough to dispense with their abilities and labour (in the market) ... It is surely because the project of fully subjecting women to the control of men is so contradictory that an ideological definition of the domestic in terms of a natural finality has remained so powerful and persuasive. (2)

Another recent work points out that women in western society, while consciously creating the illusion of their passivity, do not generally act as if they accept this ideology themselves; they constantly initiate action, though they often consciously disguise their own key roles in decision-making and implementation (3). The same can certainly be said of Turkish women; indeed, the incidence of elopements initiated by women is one example, but there are other much more dramatic examples. For instance, Halide Edib-Adivar reported in 1932 that when women were granted the municipal vote in 1930 they subsequently gave their vote to the Free Republican People's Party rather than to their 'benefactors', the Republican People's Party, and were then censured for being 'ungrateful' (4). A more recent, and somewhat intriguing example is provided by a survey on voting patterns carried out in selected villages: the results from one village showed that, while 84.8 per cent of husbands admitted to having instructed their wives how to vote, only 54.7 per cent of the wives said they had followed their instructions (5), suggesting that the women are exercising a degree of self-determination when possible, which their husbands are not aware of.

Furthermore, as was pointed out at the Istanbul seminar in 1978, Turkish women's potential for adaptation is demonstrated by their successful adjustment to new conditions such as external migration (6).
The obstacles that women face in the struggle to escape from their subordinate role and to emerge from their domestic domain lie not in themselves, but in the material conditions of the society and the dominant ideology supported by those conditions. Thanks to Atatürk, most of the legal, constitutional and political injustices have been removed, but the arrogation of power in the hands of men continues, and a society in which both men and women have equal opportunity to develop their potential is far from realisation.

Notes to Chapter Six
1. See, for example, Boran, 1981, 301-308 and Ozbay, 1979, 201
2. Harris, 1981, 66
3. Rogers, 1981, 30
4. Edib-Adivar, 1932, 355
5. Ozankaya, 1971, 204-205
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