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Family Ideology as an Approach to Understanding Conflicts between Eastern and Western Civilization

Western family – modern family?

Regardless of how we define civilization and where we draw the line between Eastern and Western Civilization, we all know that there are differences and potential conflicts between them, and that these conflicts can be serious. In fact, they can even give rise to motivations for war^[1].

Differences in political views and economic interests are not the only factors that can breed high levels of antagonism. The same can be said about different views on civil matters, such as the various ideologies involving family formation and the morality of relations between the sexes.

When seen from a modern and liberal Western point of view, the traditions of Eastern civilization – particularly Muslim traditions, but not only these – are often regarded as outdated, paternalistic and suppressive with respect to women. The customs of arranged marriages are frequently mentioned, as are those that contrast with Western ideals of romantic love and liberation of the sexes.

When seen from the viewpoint of typical Eastern traditions, the perspective might be turned on its head. The West is being accused of immorality, a causal factor in the exploitation of Western women as mere sexual objects. Some have mentioned statistical data from Sweden, which indicate that only on half of all young Swedish girls will ever get married^[2]. As for Britain, it has been said that half of those who get married will eventually get divorced. And as for demographic data from Italy, it has been said that women there are giving birth to only half as many children as is necessary for maintaining population levels at current rates. I have also seen references in IslamOnline to approximately thirty American

research reports, which indicate several forms of statistical risks with respect to the development of children living in households with no father^[3].

Here we are facing conflicting accusations from two sides, whereas we might have expected some sort of dialogue between them instead, a quest to determine how valid these accusations are: Perhaps sides could learn something from each other? In any case, an appreciation of the relativity of one's ideals might have led to less arrogance on behalf of one's own ideology.

Since I am a Westerner, I will concentrate in this paper on a number of critical perspectives concerning the assumption that the West has seen the light – or, less poetically, that contemporary Western culture represents a universally rational response to the challenge of modernity. I will be implicitly critical of a famous sentence written by the American historian Frances Fukuyama, who wrote after the fall of the Berlin Wall: "What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of western liberal democracy as a final form of human government."^[4]

However, I am not going to romanticize family traditions in Eastern civilizations. Nor do I pretend to understand these traditions from an insider's vantage point, in a kind of hermeneutic interpretation of the reasons given for the status quo. I will simply argue that contemporary Western societies, in fundamental areas, have not developed in a functional way in recent years, and should therefore be more modest with respect to the validity of their own values and traditions. What I actually mean is that, so far, no civilization has found the ultimate answer to the challenges of modernizing the reproductive institution, one that meets the challenges of the century ahead.

Definitions of families

Before we say more about family formation in relation to civilizations, we should ask what we mean by a family. The *US Bureau of Census* has offered the following definition: "A family consists of two or more persons who are living together and who are bound to each other by kinship, marriage or adoption."

Others have given more comprehensive descriptions of what may rightly be called a family. Family researcher Dolf Zillmann of the University of Alabama has listed nine characteristics as the most important, durable and valuable hallmarks of the family:^[5] (1) A couple consisting of a man and a woman constitutes the core of a family. (2) This couple commits itself to live together for an indeterminate period of time, potentially for life. (3) The couple reckons with having children, and they ultimately do so. (4) The couple is prepared to care for their children. (5) The couple will support their children with a view to their mental, emotional, moral and financial independence. (6) The couple contributes to a common future financial goal. (7) The couple accepts sexual exclusivity. (8) The couple accepts the fact that family happiness depends on a constant investment of time and initiative. (9) The

couple accepts the fact that it must resist temptations that would disrupt the family and cause potential conflicts and violence.

The first of these definitions could be called a “minimum definition,” one *without* moral aims; the other could be called a “maximum definition” *with* moral aims. But even with the minimum definition, it will not always be meaningful to speak of a family in every instance where we find a couple of people living together – let alone instances in which individuals constitute a housekeeping unit.

It is easy to see that both the form and the ideal of the family vary from one society to another, and that these have changed over time. This does not imply, however, that all forms of family are equally functional for all societies and population groups. Nor does it imply a boundless breadth of variation. Those forms of the family that we can study – in practice, this means a selection of forms functional enough to have survived to this day – all share certain similarities. In the first place, every society regards the family unit as an important aspect of individual identity and sense of belonging. Establishing and uniting a family has been universally ritualized in all societies, as far as we can observe. These marriage rites follow rules determined by the community; they are not just something that couples decide to do. In these rituals, representatives for the couple’s two families will normally be present. In addition, a priest, a shaman, or a representative of the community at large will officiate at rites that mark the couple’s change of status. This suggests that the establishment of families is universally perceived as a community matter, not just a private matter.

This background suggests that something quite dramatic might be taking place in our day – and in our part of the world, in particular – if what has always been the most fundamental social cell in society throughout history has become a private matter in a market for couples, while the political authorities and our cultural elite assume a studied neutrality in their quest for as much equality as possible between the different types of inter-sex relationships.

Progressive/regressive development or functional/dysfunctional adjustment

The fact that the cultural elite in the West has been rather uncritical of recent changes in norms related to family formations must be viewed in relation to cultural references in our part of the world. Historical change here has generally been interpreted as progress, either understood as part of an inevitable evolution or as a result of human liberation. The dimension for judging change has been limited to progress or regress, called reaction. This is certainly not the best premise for a critical approach to the changes that have taken place.

An alternative perspective on social and cultural change could be a measure of functionality or dysfunctionality. The main question would then be if an observed change should be interpreted as a functional adjustment to conditions for durable life, or if the observed changes promote a destruction of a viable civilization, instead. The family theories of Talcott Parsons and Anthony Giddens fit bigger theories of liberation, differentiation and evolutionary adjustment.^[6] Interpretations made by other family theorists, such as Carle C.

Zimmerman or David Popenoe, would better fit a frame of functional judgment, and eventually a solution suggestive of dysfunctionality.

Carle C. Zimmerman can be regarded as a family historian, not just as a family sociologist. In his book *Family and Civilization* from 1947, he claimed that several forms of what were regarded as modernization at the time could be compared to processes of decline in earlier civilizations.^[7] As for the Greek and Roman civilizations, he felt there were good reasons for claiming that the decline of these nation states was due to fairly similar changes involving the institution of the family. Zimmermann listed eleven hallmarks of the decline:^[8] (1) the spread of quick divorces; (2) a decline in family birth rates coupled with an overall decline in population; (3) the elimination of the true significance of getting married; (4) support for negative interpretations of heroes and virtues of the past; (5) the spread of theories which claimed that comradeship or looser family forms would solve problems; (6) people who had been married under older family traditions were not allowed to continue these traditions, while younger people shirked the obligations of their elders; (7) the spread of anti-familism by urbane and pseudo-intellectual circles; (8) the breakdown of most barriers to divorce; (9) the revolt of young people against their parents, making parenthood more difficult; (10) the spread of juvenile delinquency; and (11) a widespread acceptance of various forms of sexual perversion.

Another scholar, one who has made cross-cultural comparisons on sexual norms and their relation to different types of civilization, is Joseph Daniel Unwin. The conclusions he drew from studies of various cultures around the world cannot be dismissed out of hand as moralistic, though Unwin did make use of provocative terminology that we would consider discriminating today.^[9] One of the virtues of his studies is that they had a historical dimension as well as a cultural and geographical structure. He felt he could provide convincing evidence for the conclusion that cultural change, in the direction of higher or lower forms, would be established three generations after a change in morality in the direction of higher or lower thresholds for need satisfaction. The moral and theoretical conclusions that can be drawn from this type of study is supported by psychological explanations.^[10]

So far, we conclude that it is not obvious that family forms adjusted to dominant cultural patterns in contemporary Western civilization will prove superior in the long run. Here we need to distinguish between an individual adjustment to a contemporary form of a particular civilization and the adjustment of this civilization to unavoidable challenges in the years to come.

Unavoidable challenges and civilizational response

The ultimate standard of measurement for judging a civilization is not whether we like it or not, or whether it corresponds to our ideas of progressive development. These can only be secondary rules of thumb, after a determination of whether a given civilization is structuring responses within the limits of unavoidable challenges.

Such challenges can be of an external nature, involving ecological adjustment and the question of whether reproduction and consumption lies within sustainable limits of nature.

We can ask questions about how civilizations relate to each other, whether they are provocative or not, and whether they are able to defend themselves or not. The challenges may also be of an internal nature – that is, whether a given civilization makes an adequate institutionalized response to challenges of reproduction and socialization and to the challenge of moral motivation and social cohesion. The issue of adequate family formation is but one of several challenges that require institutionalized answers in a civilization, but it is a vital challenge, all the same.

Before asking whether contemporary developments in countries within Western civilization have provided an adequate response to the conditions for the survival of the family as an institution, we should ask whether the family as an institution continues to be crucial for civilizational survival.

This leads to the question of what the family's social functions are. From a historical perspective, or even a comparative social anthropological perspective, we could compile a long list of functions that have been associated with the family. The family has been a deciding factor in people's sense of belonging and their sense of security; it has helped ensure the production of food and other necessities of life; it has cared for the young and the old, the sick and the helpless; it has figured in the exchange of goods and services and served as a link between the individual and society at large. Modern life has led to a differentiation and specialization of these functions. Thus, the question is: can we still find vital functions that require an institutional framework for the family?

Talcott Parsons addressed this issue by pointing to three or four family-related requisites which no society – especially contemporary ones – could do without. These involved reproduction, the primary socialization of children, and being an identity-preserving primary group that most people would depend on. The regulation of sexuality has also been mentioned as a separate "requisite." No society can survive without erotic ties between people, or without a regulation of these ties. This implies regulations that hold people responsible for their offspring.

Reproduction is the most indisputable task, and the one that can most easily be dealt with in terms of functional analysis. Without an infusion of new recruits, any society will die out. The extent to which this can take place through immigration from other societies and cultures is limited, if new generations are to pledge primary allegiance to a society with a given historical tradition and be willing to defend and carry on that tradition. In the old days, people gave birth to a large number of children who did not survive into adulthood. We could conceive of more humane, and yet functional, alternatives to those conditions. But we could also conceive of a development that points in a dysfunctional direction, even if the first generation were to experience this kind of development as personally beneficial. Overpopulation is one form of dysfunctional adjustment that can threaten a society, particularly if emigration is not an option. Another dysfunctional adjustment would be underpopulation, caused by a birthrate that remained below the reproductive level for long periods of time.

Deinstitutionalization of the family

There is a lot of data that can tell us something about changes in Western families in recent years. It is easy to cite data on conflicts and problems within families; but this is not necessarily the same as saying that family development is headed in a dysfunctional direction. Crucial to our emphasis is data concerning the institution of marriage and the family, and its ability to respond adequately to vital challenges.

In the mid-1990s, British demographers noted that 56% of all English women over the age of 16 were married, 23% were single, 14% were widows, and 7% were divorced. These same demographers estimated that by the year 2020, only 48% would be married, 25% would be single, 13% would be widows, and 14% would be divorced.^[11] This kind of data, of which there is an abundance, might tell something about the deinstitutionalization of the family.

Changes in the family's status could be viewed as a form of anomie, a lack of norms. More to the point, it could be interpreted as a consequence of market norms on the family fields, which from a functional point of view should have been governed by other norms. However, there is little point in blaming economic differences for all the variations in marriage and divorce. In 1965, Canada had 46 divorces per 100,000 inhabitants, while the same year the United States had 250 divorces. This difference cannot be explained in terms of minor discrepancies in economic structure between these two countries.

The trend in Sweden is interesting: it is here that the deinstitutionalization of family formation has made the greatest strides – at least in our part of the world; and it is here that we find the most clearcut political programs for promoting this policy as something positive.^[12] According to some studies, Sweden also stands out as the Western country in which marriage enjoys the weakest public support, despite the fact – or perhaps because of it – that Sweden has gone to great lengths to remove some of the bothersome obligations that legally applied to formalized marriage.^[13]

In the Swedish study on marriage and the family from the 1970s we read the following: "Theoretically, the birth of children in contemporary societies, with their medical opportunities, specialization and differentiation of work, could be separated from the family and reduced to a mere biological event. As far as we know, sociology has not been able to report of any society where this has been the case."^[14] Normally, this would suffice to put the burden of proof on the advocates of cohabitation in deciding whether cohabitation can serve as the functional equivalent of marriage. It says a great deal about the strength of a framework of meaning dominated by values associated with individual-oriented liberties, when our society demands a justification for the stance that people should get married.

One of the most frequently employed arguments for legitimating cohabitation is that it acts in the capacity of a trial marriage, enabling the parties to become acquainted with each other before they make a firm commitment. This was supposed to lead to the selection of compatible partners, which in turn was expected to lead to more stable marriages. To a large extent, cohabitation unions are also regarded as less binding. Those who are willing to commit themselves tend to get married.^[15] In Germany it has been claimed that the inherent instability of non-marital cohabitation can be traced back to a personal selection. It

is those with the fewest predispositions for stable family formation who wish to avoid marriage. Still, this line of reasoning is somewhat incomplete when it is broadly applied to legitimize trial marriage. The proportion of “risk candidates” is not constant over time or from country to country. Sweden, which has gone to great lengths to legitimize non-marital cohabitation, also has the highest percentage of such risk candidates. Data from the United States does not suggest that those who have spent some time in a cohabited relationship are prone to form more stable marriages than those who have chosen the more traditional route to marriage. As for having been through a cohabitation with a partner other than the one with whom one has children, the data seems to suggest that the risk of family dissolution rises further down the line.^[16]

In the United States it is estimated that the number of cohabiting couples rose from 0.5 million in 1970 to 1.5 million in 1980, and to 2.5 million in 1990. Though these figures may not be completely reliable, it is quite clear that marriage in the US has fallen somewhat out of favor in recent years. Relatively speaking, fewer people are moving into marriage and more people are moving out of it.

Have women benefited by these changes?

On April 2, 1997, the United Nations Human Rights Commission submitted a report by Radhika Coomaraswamy on the spread of rape, forced prostitution and sexual harassment in recent years. The commission concluded that women all over the world are the victims of increasing levels of violence. Studies at American, Canadian and British universities suggest that one out of six women has been the victim of violence with sexual overtones.

Based on American data of recorded incidences of violence, it is estimated that their husbands abused approximately 57,000 married women each year between 1979 and 1987. But during this same period, 200,000 women were reported to have been abused by their *boyfriends* and 216,000 by their ex-husbands. Of all registered violent crimes committed against women during this period, 65% were committed by these “friends” or by ex-husbands, compared with 9% by husbands.^[17] The differences here are too great to be attributed to women being more prone to report violence from their ex-husbands than their current husbands. Measured in rates for criminal abuse of women 12 years and older for the period 1973–1992, the percentage was 43 for unmarried women, 45 for separated women, and just 11 for married women.^[18] Another study concluded that for every pregnant woman reported to be abused by her husband, there are nearly four pregnant women who are abused by their unmarried partners.^[19] Even though different selections for different forms of cohabitation unions can be cited, the data suggests that marriage, in general, inhibits the spread of violence toward women.

The institutional perspective shows us that we are not necessarily facing a liberation from social pressure when we meet women who dress to attract as much attention as possible from strangers of the opposite sex. Rather, this should be understood as an adjustment to a market-oriented organization of sex. The typical norms deriving from the economic institution point to the perception of sex symbolism as a means of bartering in the

marketplace. Strong sex symbols take on meaning when they are perceived as an advertisement for evoking the interest of potential customers – one of whom, on being selected, might prove to constitute a lasting relationship. The reason this does not function very well is partly because men tend to think it is fair to consider women as sex objects in the marketplace, as a means of satisfying their own needs, or as a means of finding a partner who will confirm men's preconceived views of themselves.

Once again, we may ask whether the deinstitutionalization of family relationships means that women generally have gained more freedom to make their own choices, and whether this has set the stage for new forms of personal development. There are several studies of rapes among acquaintances with a weak family institutional setting.^[20] One of the sociologists who first dealt with the consequences of deinstitutionalized relationships was Willard Waller.^[21] According to him, in relationships that were not bound by institutionalized forms, those who were least interested in continuing the relationship were the ones who had the most say in determining the rules of the game. Where children were involved and mothers had a vested interest in keeping the family intact, the husband often had a disproportionate advantage. Waller's observations fit well with other sociological explanations of the way institutions tend to regulate opposing interests, and do so in a way that preserves society. Some interpersonal norms were primarily intended to limit infringements; others were intended to cause people to grow together.

Demography and functionality

In the public debate, if not necessarily in demographic circles, the most common explanation for the fall-off in births is the potential of birth control and women's heightened technical potential for having the last word on their own fertility. The era of involuntary births is over, it has been said. However, this does not mean that the low birth rates of Western women can be attributed to their primary ideals.

In 1975, I had Gallup carry out a pilot study. A representative sample of Norwegian women were asked to tell whether their low level of reproduction was due to some sort of primary preference.^[22] Of those who had children at that time, 23% responded that they had only one child; 36% responded that they had two; 22% had three, while approx. 20% reported having four or more children. To the question how many children they thought was appropriate for a Norwegian family, less than 1% of all those polled answered "no children," 2% responded one child, 44% two children, 41% three children, 10% four or more children, and only 4% responded "don't know." This distribution of responses showed already at that time that the primary desire for children was higher than the number that women could be expected to have. To the degree that there was a mismatch between ideals and reality, this ran counter to propaganda, although in some cases there was a match.

Another study of the same matter was carried out in the 1980s in a number of Western countries.^[23] It showed the same trend, to an even more marked degree. The ideal number

of children for European women at that time was about one child more than they could expect to have. At the same time, comparisons showed that while the number of realized births in all the countries that were studied, with the exception of Ireland, was under the reproductive level, the ideals in every country were higher than the reproductive limit. The reason Europeans had not reached a higher reproductive level cannot be explained on the basis of women's primary wishes.[\[24\]](#)

The fact that more women than ever are giving birth, since it has become more common for unmarried couples to have children, does not compensate for the effects of a weakened marital culture. Comparisons between fertility among cohabiters and married couples must be tempered by the somewhat uneven age distribution; more cohabiters than married couples can expect to have fertile years ahead of them. Nonetheless, the difference in birth rates between groups is so large that it is unrealistic to assume that age variation will ultimately compensate for differences in reproductive behavior.

This suggests that the deinstitutionalization of family unions is a key link in what appears to be a dysfunctional adjustment. The cultural aspect of the decline in births enters into the picture in part through attitudinal changes in the direction of increased emphasis on self-realization instead of family realization. In part, this change can be seen as an unintended effect of the privatization of the institution of marriage, in accordance with interpretations congruent to the new liberal cultural complex.

Studies of the difference between what is called the first and the second demographic transition suggest that we are facing changes of a cultural nature.[\[25\]](#) Whereas the first decline in birth rates could be explained in terms of parents' wishes to secure a higher financial and social status for their children, the decline in recent years must be explained in terms of a stronger desire on the part of parents to gain time in which to invest more in their own self-realization and their own well-being. A Dutch demographer describes the new ideals as a "secular individualism," with an emphasis on "the individual's right and freedom to define goals and the means of achieving them."[\[26\]](#)

Over the long term, a birth rate below the reproductive limit could mean a dysfunctional adjustment – that is, when there are no compelling factors to suggest a drop in the population figures. But we should stress that it is the chronically low birth figures, rather than year-to-year discrepancies, that are critical to the survival of a society and its culture.[\[27\]](#) A temporary decline in the annual birth rate could be due to an economic downturn that leads some married couples to postpone having children. The situation would be different if an entire birth cohort were to decide to have fewer children. During the 1930s, statistics of periodic figures were interpreted as though they were cohort figures. This later led to the view that those who cried "wolf" were being hysterical. The figures for the period after 1970 are unambiguous with respect to long-term development. In nearly all European countries, birth rates are headed to a level well below the reproductive rate of 2.1 children for women who survive their fertility period.[\[28\]](#)

In the mid-1990s, some of the European Mediterranean countries, renowned for their sensual cultures, had birth rates, on average, of 1.4 to 1.2 children per woman. We appear to be at the threshold of a new population law: The more sex in culture, the fewer children

in families! In certain districts of central Italy, the population figures are lower than one child per woman.

Calculations based on birth developments up to 1992 caused European demographers to predict an average childbirth rate of 1.48 for the younger generation of women in the 12 EU countries of that time.^[29] Even more disheartening was the fact that there was no realistic political plan for effecting a marked rise in the birth rate. It is against this background that we must understand what the former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Gaston Thorn, said when he claimed that Europe was committing collective suicide.^[30]

A self-destructive civilization?

Many conclusions about a dysfunctional development could be drawn from recent demographic data. This dysfunctionality can be related to structures and notions within the civilization itself and should not merely be seen as deviant behavior.

One of the more astonishing findings is that some of the most advanced societies, and most modern groups, seem to be clearly dysfunctional in their form of future adjustment. On the other hand, several supposedly outmoded groups and societies are able to reproduce at an adequate level. In non-Western civilizations, the problem is overpopulation, partly because of the import of western technology, medicine and notions of individual human rights.

If we ask people from North Africa about Western civilization, we might hear expressions of admiration concerning its technical and economic achievements, but at the same time criticism of a weak “spirituality and morality,” meaning religion and family loyality. Their hope, so it seems, is to reproduce western material achievements, without loosing their immaterial culture.

From the Western side it can be said that the backwardness in many of these countries is largely due to their religious traditions. Islam prevents people from asking constructive questions and from taking the whole adult population into the productive sphere. Islam lost its previous position, vis à vis the West, during the late renaissance. Since then the Western world has been leading.^[31]

However, the Muslim world has never suffered from a lack of children. The imbalance in reproductive rate has actually been an outgrowth of political conflict and fear of the future in various regions: in Lebanon, in Israel, in Kosovo, and also in other parts of Europe.

If the productive shortcoming of Muslim countries can be partly ascribed to their own civilization, reproductive shortcoming in Western countries can likewise be ascribed to Western civilization.

Muslim spokesmen criticize three cultural revolutions of the West. First they criticize the so-called Secular Revolution, which not only separated spiritual and political authority, but

defined science and religion in such a way that the two could not be combined. This led to a civilization where religious faith had to go private, and where public authority could no longer rely on religion. One result was confusion and an immorality without shame; also, Western civilization tried to find political and non-religious substitutes for transcendental religion, such as communism, Nazism and later a superliberal declaration of human rights that would secure individual rights but not public responsibility.

A civilization that could not serve as a religious guide to the morality of family formation welcomed the so-called Romantic Revolution, with its cult of strong individual emotions, allowing marriage to play second fiddle, as it were. When Romanticism became too complicated for decadent westerners, they invented the Pornography Revolution, in the name of openness. This simply meant that sexual satisfaction had not only been liberated from marriage and duties toward the family, but also from personal involvement. Pornography is then understood as a conglomeration of external stimuli designed to produce an erotic kick, quite apart from any relationship with another person.

The result, as we can see, is a civilization dominated by greed, a civilization that offers little morality for family and reproduction. The West – deservedly – is loosing.

Of course, the West can respond to these accusations with political and economic counter-arguments directed against Muslim civilization. What I am saying here is simply that the West should not only direct its criticism and fear toward other civilizations. The West also has every reason to fear a contemporary version of its own civilization.

I have just written a book on this subject, entitled *Dysfunctional Culture. Why new liberalism is ill-suited as a guide to challenges of the new century*. The manuscript has been accepted by a Russian publisher, but at present I do not have an English-speaking publisher and would welcome any suggestions.

A Summary

Western and Eastern Civilization, particularly the moslem world, differ in their ideals about sex relations and family formation. A typical Western point of view is to regard Eastern traditions as outdated, paternalistic and suppressive to women. Eastern spokesmen may criticize contemporary forms of Western culture as immoral, and as having a view on woman as mere sexual objects.

In this article the arguments against Western culture is analysed from a functionalistic perspective, with references to sociological and demographic literature. In spite of Western success in the sphere of technique and production, the adjustment of the institution of family and marriage has developed in a rather dysfunctional way in

recent years. Eastern critique of the three cultural revolutions in the West - the secular revolution, the romantic revolution and the pornographic revolution - should therefore be taken seriously. Contrary to the claims of Francis Fukuyama, no contemporary civilization seems to have found a functional response to the challenges of the new century.

[1] References to various definitions of "civilization" can be found in the journal *Comparative Civilization Review*, published by International Society for the Comparative Studies of Civilizations.

[2] Moen, Bjorg (1981) Søs 47, Statistical Central Bureau, Oslo

[3] : www.manslife.com/family/fatherfacts/

[4] Fukuyama, Francis (1992): *The End of History and the Last Man*. Hamilton, London, chp. 4: The Worldwide Liberal Revolution

[5] Zillmann, Dolf et al. (1994): *Media, Children, and the Family*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ, p 200.

[6] Parsons, Talcott and Robert Bales (1955): *Family, Interaction and Socialization Process*. Free Press, NY.
Giddens, Anthony (1993): *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Polity Press, Oxford.

[7] Zimmerman, Cale C. (1947): *Family and Civilization*. Harper, NY.

[8] In addition to the account on p 760 f in Zimmermann's work, this is cited in Michael Anderson (1980): *Sociology of the Family*. London: "Two Classic Statements," p 175.

[9] Unwin, Joseph Daniel (1934): *Sex and Culture*. Oxford University Press – in an abridged version, Unwin, J. D. (1935): *Sexual Regulations and Cultural Behaviour, An address delivered before the Medical Section of the British Psychological Society March 27*, (ed. by Darrow, Frank M., Trona, California 1969).

[10] The classic example here must surely be Freud, Sigmund (1922): (*Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, Vienna 1930). But even anti-Freudian behavioral scientists can give evidence for this kind of interpretation. Cf. Eysenck, H.J. (1995): *Genius*. Cambridge University Press; Dean K. Simonton (1997): *Genius and creativity: selected papers*, Greenwich, CN.

[11] Cf. *British Stationary Office*, Jan. 1996.

[12] Cf. Part II, «The Case of Sweden» in Popenoe, David (1988): *Disturbing the Nest. Family Change and Decline in Modern Society*. Aldine de Gruyter, NY.

[13] According to an opinion poll made public by the Prime Minister's office in Japan in 1984, only 28% of Swedish young people at that time were purportedly in agreement with the statement that people ought to get married, and that it was better to be married than not to be married. In comparison, 78% of Japanese young

people concurred in that statement. Cf. Prinz, Christopher (1995): *Cohabiting, Married, or Single*. Avebury, IIASA, Luxemburg; p 74 f.

[14] *Familj ock äkenskap, (Family and marriage)* SOU 1972:412, Stockholm.

[15] Figures from the beginning of the 1990s show that of all cohabiters who started their relationships at 23 years of age and who continued to be together after five years, 79% had gotten married, while only 21% continued to live as cohabiters. – *Sosialt Utsyn*, SSB 1993, p 293.

[16] Maris, Alfred de and William MacDonald (1993): "Premarital cohabitation and marital instability: A test of the unconventional hypothesis." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*; pp 399-407. – Cf. also Saunders, Janic M. and John N. Edwards (1984): "Extramarital Sexuality: A Predictive Model of Permissive Attitudes." *JMF* Nov.; Fergusson, D.M., Horwood, L.J. and D.E. Dimond (1985): "A Survival Analysis of Childhood Family History," *JMF* May; Bennett, Neil G., Ann Klimas Blanc and David E. Bloom: "Commitment and the modern union: Assessing the link between premarital cohabitation and subsequent marital stability"; *American Sociological Review* 53 (1): 127-139.

[17] Harlow, Carol Wolf (1991): *Female Victims of Violent Crime*. Washington DC. U.S. Department of Justice, 1-2.

[18] U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (1993): *Highlights from 20 years of surveying crime*. Department of Justice, 18.

[19] Center for Disease Control and Prevention (1994): *Morbidity and Mortality*. Report 43, no. 8, Washington DC. U.S. Government Printing Office, March 4, p 135. – Cf. Blankenhorn, David (1992): *Fatherless America*. Basic Books, NY, chpt. 2.

[20] Jissm Nart O, and Sarag K, Cij (1993): «Facing the Facts: Date and Acquaintance Rape are Significant Problems for Women», chapt. 6 in Gelles, R.I. and D.R. Loseke (Ed.): *Current Controversies on Family Violence*. Sage, London.

[21] Waller, Willard (1951): *The Family. A Dynamic Interpretation*, Dryden Press, NY.

[22] Norsk Gallup, Nov./Dec. 1975: "Barneantall," ordered by S. Skirbekk/Institute of Sociology. The study was based on interviews with 436, 419 and 421 women during weeks 40, 42 and 45; the selection proved to be reasonably representative according to standard control measurements.

[23] Cf. tab 9.8 in Blom, Svein (1986): *Familieverdier (Family values)*. Report No. 22, Institutt for sosiologi og samfunnskunnskap, University of Trondheim. Women's attitudes were studied in the following countries: Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Ireland and Northern Ireland, Italia, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, West Germany and the USA.

[24] Cf. also Wetlesen, Tone Schou (1991): *Fertility Choices and Constraints: A qualitative Study of Norwegian Families*. Solum, Oslo.

[25] Kaa, D. van de (1987): "Europe's second demographic transition" in *Population Bulletin*, vol. 42, no. 1, march, Population Reference Bureau Inc., Washington.

[26] Lesthaeghe, R. (1983): "A Century of Demographic and Cultural Change in western Europe: An Exploration of Underlying Dimensions" in *Population and Development Review*, 9, no. 3, p 429.

[27] Cf. Gillis, John R., Louise A. Tilly, David Levine (Ed.) (1992): *The European Experience of Declining Fertility: A Quiet Revolution, 1850-1970*. Blackwell, Cambridge.

[28] Coale, Ansley J. and Susan Cott Watkins (1986): *The Decline of Fertility in Europe*, Princeton Univ. Press, NJ. – Kravdal, Øystein (1994): «Fruktbarhet under reproduksjonsnivået i Norge», *Samfunnsspeilet* 1/94.

[29] Cited in *The European*, December, 1993.

[30] This statement is cited in the issue of *Newsweek* dated December 15, 1986.

[\[31\]](#) Bernhard Lewis (1976): *Islam and the Arabic World*. Ny, Knoph (New ed. 2002)