



***The family in contemporary society***

Maurizio Andolfi e Anna Mascellani

The modern family has developed in its configuration, assuming different features from the traditional family typical of the first part of last century. The typologies of family that currently exist are several and include households with a single parent, others with more than two parents, others with two different ethnicities within them, and so on. Irrespective of its structure, however, each family can be accepted as valid if fulfills the development tasks of all its members. In particular is the coexistence of clearly identifiable functions and roles that can ensure children a peaceful growth.

***New geometries of the family***

Silvia Vegetti Finzi

The essay records the changes in family organization for the importance of grandparents in these years of crisis. Their contribution is made in three areas: significant economic aid, organizational support, emotional support. It is an extraordinary contribution that has alleviated the consequences of the collapse, not just financial, of our country. But led by the generation that is usually defined as 'lucky', a heavy existential commitment. The presence of grandparents, essential in cases of family separation to ensure security, continuity and identity to the grandchildren, would entail the risk that their children, especially when they return to live in the family of origin, regress to a state of infantile dependence. The problems are not lacking, but the ethics of solidarity and generosity that are testifying (which should have an attitude of gratitude) is a heritage rich in possibilities and promises a view to a redefinition of 'family form'.

***In what sense the family would be abolished***

Rino Genovese

An immanent criticism of family criticism. Beyond the concept of authoritarian family, typical of the Frankfurt School particularly in order to grasp the sources of totalitarianism, the article considers that modern family system dedifferentiation is the objective process of its abolition at the present moment. This in two different ways: with the massive return of old family systems as clans and tribes, and through feminist and gay power revendications. The final suggestion is a *social individualism* in order to support without trauma the current family perishing.

## ***Family and minimal marriage***

Vera Tripodi

The present article examines a recent proposal defended by Elizabeth Brake of a new and innovative form of marriage, that she labels «minimal marriage». According to Brake, the current marital laws are discriminatory as they are grounded on «heteronormativity», namely the idea that the dyadic heterosexual marriages are the family norm and the only model that is worth of social recognition, and «amatonormativity», the idea that the only dyadic intimate relationships involving romantic love are the nucleus of the family. In the first part of the article, I show that dyadic monogamous relationships are essentially a form of adult caring relationship. In the second part, I analyse how the reform of the marriage laws (in minimal terms proposed by Brake) allow other forms of caring relationship to receive social and institutional recognition.

## ***The slow affirmation of premarital cohabitations in Italy***

Monica Santoro

The aim of this article is to investigate the phenomenon of cohabitation in Italy through Istat data on the cohabitation trends in the last decades and the results of a qualitative research, based on in-depth interviews among people who cohabited or married after cohabitation, with or without children. The analysis of the interviews shows that the meaning of cohabitation changes according to the experiences of leaving the parental home and the life course stages crossed by interviewees. Marriage is valued for its legal and functional aspects, as a protection of the less financial independent partner. So it becomes a necessity only if the financial condition between partners is unbalanced in order to redress this asymmetry. If the partner conditions are equal – which is the case of the interviewees – marriage does not add benefits. Therefore all social and religious aspects of marriage are excluded by interviewees who were married or plan to marry only for instrumental reasons.

## ***Lesbians, gays, family***

Daniela Danna

‘Family’ has been a contested institution for the first Italian gay movement in the Seventies, sharing the feminist rebellion against patriarchy. It was Arci Gay that started using the word *famiglie* (in the plural) in the 90s during the political campaigns for a legal recognition of same-sex couples, while more radical groups still contested the term. In the mainstream political debate, the use of the singular *family* vs the plural *families* became a sign of closure or opening towards the GLBT movement’s requests. National polls and Eurobarometers have tested the level of social acceptance for same-sex unions and adoptions overtime, and are a good source to describe the changing social situation for families with lesbian and gay parents. In 2000s political groups formed specifically around the issue of GLBT parenting. The word *omogenitorialità* was coined after the french example, and used in the political debate. Notwithstanding the long debate and the diffusion in many countries all over the world of the recognition of same-sex partnerships and parenthood, in Italy no law has been approved yet, and opposition is still strong.



***Turnaways. When women are denied abortions***

Chiara Lalli

What happens to women who are denied abortions? Abortion is a very controversial issue, and there are many attempts to restrain or ban safe and legal access to it. A few studies claim to demonstrate a connection between abortion and mental – and even physical – health. Politicians and *pro-lifers* use this kind of misleading arguments to justify unfair limitations to abortion access. Not many people ask themselves what happens to those women who would want to get an abortion but are turned away. The *Turnaways Study* is the first study on the consequences of denied abortions.

***The community, from myths to law. A comparison between Gemeinschaft and Comunidad***

Roberto Cammarata

The article shows a comparison between two ideas or ‘models’ of community, Tönnies *Gemeinschaft*, reworked by Schmitt, and the Latin American indigenous peoples’ *Comunidad*. A comparison that starts from the respective origin myths (the biblical Genesis on one hand, and the Maya cosmogony narrated in the Popol Vuh on the other) and arrives at the reflections on the subject of rights and freedoms that these narratives still produce today, in contemporary intercultural societies. The study focuses in particular on how the element of identity and belonging to a community can be used to motivate policies and laws oriented to the exclusion or inclusion, to discrimination or emancipation.

***Health is also socially determined? Theories, values, proposals***

Giulio Formoso

Is medical care the only determinant of individual and population health? Of course not, but different opinions exist on this issue: supporting the relevance of the ‘inherited’ conditions in which people are born, grow, live and work; or supporting the relevance of lifestyles and individual characteristics in determining social conditions, associated with health status. This essay offers an analysis of these different points of view, starting from the decennial debate in the scientific literature and from the related proposals, highlighting WHO positions and the influence of Amartya Sen’s thinking.



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