

THE GRADUAL ISSUES IN THE ANALYSIS OF MARITAL AND FAMILY RELATIONS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Svetlana Radtchenko-Draillard

Family and marital lifestyles have diversified in Western European countries to varying degrees and cultural rates. In conducting this study, I find that its stakes are gradual and that many multidisciplinary analyses (psychological, sociological, medical, anthropological, etc.) show that there are different axes of analysis of the interactions of spouses in the family unit and cuts with or without their children in Western European countries. In this sense, Radtchenko-Draillard (2016) write: "In these permanent interactions, each individual belongs to several groups (family, friends, colleagues, nation, humanity) and any encounter with the other (other) implies a certain degree of interculturality in social identity" [1]. Knowing that family identity is a part of social identity, Eigner (2002), shows that in the relationship between couples (married or cohabiting): "the bond implies an intrasubjective and intersubjective dimension and is the result of an interaction between two psyches that influence each other: the psychic circulation between the members of the couple, according to the author, allows the feminine to be comforted and nourished by the male of the man and vice versa"[2]. In reference to Freud's book "To Introduce Narcissism" (1914), Eigner distinguishes the forms of choice of objects in the married couple that determines their solidity or fragility: 1) the narcissistic choice, the husband (or wife) is looking for an object that resembles what one is oneself, 2) the anaclitic choice, one of the spouses (husband/ wife) is looking for a partner looks like a parental image (father or mother); 3) the oedipal choice, the couple's alliance is complex, because it also involves the psychic bisexuality of both spouses. The socio-cultural context has now changed the family concept of the desire of the child and other forms have emerged, including mothers and divorced or single fathers with or without children. Evolutionary psychology (Barrett et al. 2002) takes up some evolutionary perspectives: "The characteristics of reproductive strategies related to ecological conditions or specific economic and kinship systems that influence the size of the family or the choice of sex of children and the interval between births to optimize the survival of offspring"[3]. The desire to have children is subject to the social and cultural dimensions of these countries and associated with opportunity costs and the satisfaction of couples. Charton and Lévy (2017) identify three main axes of a child's desire in a contemporary Western-European context:" 1) the axis of transmission, where the child presents himself as the guarantor of heritage continuity; 2) the axis of the covenant, where it symbolizes the emotional relationship of the couple-"symbol of love"; 3) the existential axis, where it is experienced as allowing family tradition to a broader socio-national identity."[4] I should point out that while the motivations for a child's desire vary according to the couple's personal background, the motivations for not wanting a child are also due to various reasons and the individual and interpersonal causes that combine. It should be noted that in Western Europe marriage and fertility have been delayed, the prevalence of cohabitation is very high, but its role in the family formation process differs greatly from country to country (Sobotka, Toulemon, 2008). The cross-analysis of several socio-demographic studies of Western Europe allows me to distinguish the three groups: a) the first group includes countries from Northern Europe and the British Isles and presents various combinations of identity values of their own with different forms of family base (united and blended couples, concubinages, etc.) and at least two out of

ten families are single parents (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, UK, Ireland, etc.); b) the second group includes the countries of Central and Western Europe with the increasing number of families and couples-concubines in recent years (82%) but with the decline of single-parent families (France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, etc.); c) the third group includes the countries of Southern Europe and has a large number (79%) married and traditional Christian families (Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain, etc.). I would like to point out that many studies have analyzed the transition of women to motherhood (Munkeiek, Bras, 2017) and find that the current marital status can also mask the influence of significant changes in family life such as concubinage, variable marital status in family life. In order to understand the link between marital experiences and motherhood, it is necessary for us to examine their marital history as couples. The various studies analyze the typical links between the transition to first motherhood and the late reproductive age (30-35 years) of women in Western Europe, distinguish the following categories: 1) never having relationships of a couple, 2) cohabiting with the spouse, 3) married, 4) married after concubinage, 5) being alone after divorce, 6) separated, breaking up the couple. Finally, it was found that the lack of desire to have a child or the failure of a reproductive project due to infertility are major problems of concern for couples in Western European countries. According to Rijken, Liefbroer (2009), being confronted with an infertility problem has varying consequences in Euro-Western societies (voluntary choice to live without children, negative impact on the couple's relationship, marginalization and societal stigma of infertile couples, etc.). In conclusion, the definition of all these very gradual problems requires several comprehensive multidisciplinary analyses of marital and family relationships.

Reference Notes :

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