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COURDURIÈS J., TARNOVSKI F. L., 2020, *Homoparentalités: La famille en question? [Same-Sex Parenthood: The Family in Question?]*, Paris, Éditions François Bourin, 208 pages.

In this book, Jérôme Courduriès and Flávio Luis Tarnovski examine the question of same-sex parenthood through the prism of anthropology. In the context of the 2021 revision of the French bioethics law that made adoption available to same-sex couples, they look to improve our understanding of the related public debates, research positions, and the people most directly affected. The book delves into lived situations, particularly through interviews, and presents responses to the various arguments featured in discourses on the legalization of same-sex parent families.

In the first part of the book, Courduriès and Tarnovski document the conditions that led to the emergence of the desire for children and the need for the recognition of that desire. They resituate the study of same-sex parenthood in the context of changes in the family in general that took place in the second half of the 20th century (the decline of marriage, increasing divorce rates, parenthood outside marriage, blended families, contraception, and the development of medically assisted procreation). These changes produced the conditions for the increasing value placed on the desire for children within a freely chosen family. The autonomization of the erotic function of sexuality with respect to its procreative function has allowed homosexuals to adopt the same aspirations as heterosexuals, with children born in the context of a plan, and not by chance. The child becomes the result of an individualization of parental choices, rather than the continuation of a lineage under ancestral influence. For same-sex couples, the issue is no longer the impossibility of having children together, but the legitimacy of doing so and the ability to be recognized as parents. This legitimacy was particularly called into question in France through the instrumentalization of psychoanalytic theories around the importance of the difference between the sexes—in particular, by conservative organizations during the debates on the marriage equality law of 2013 and then more recently on the bioethics law—although countless sociological studies fundamentally contradict their arguments. The questions of the right to be a parent and the right to have children monopolized these debates, to the detriment of attention to the practical reality. The authors detail the heterogeneity of same-sex parent families that have been formed over time and their multiple configurations with all the questions they raise about Western kinship systems.

In the second part of the book, the authors examine the possible effects of same-sex parenthood on the transformations of the family. The multiplicity of same-sex families accords with that of different-sex families, but in access to medically assisted procreation (MAP), increasing emphasis is placed on a couple with joint plans to parent a child (through MAP or surrogacy). The use of these techniques is now favoured, to the detriment of the previously more common model of co-parenting—which is closer in form to blended families, more

subversive in its construction, and less conducive to legal protection. A long passage on surrogacy provides some context on situations that do not violate ethical standards in countries that offer social and legal guarantees. Medical procreation techniques such as surrogacy and reception of oocytes from the partner (ROPA) also enable the creation of parental bonds that intertwine biological and legal parenthood in the context of a carefully constructed and potentially contractual plan. The ethnographic aspect of the study examines the symbolic ties that parents mobilize through different strategies for 'making family' in a given societal context. For example, the choice of first names and of godparents may help to embed the child in the network of family ties within the couple and with their friends and their relatives. One passage also shows how the everyday lives of same-sex parent families continue to contribute to the redefinition of gender equality.

The third part of the book concentrates on the effects of these family aspirations on same-sex sexuality. This question was central in early same-sex visibility after Stonewall. It created divisions within homosexual milieux, between those who were for and against legitimization through normalization to the detriment of existing gay culture. The authors argue convincingly for the following thesis: more than assimilation, change in this domain has transformed broader social norms, with innovation through original family constructions displacing the frames of official recognition. And, they suggest, so much change has occurred that the existence of these families must be taken into consideration, and the important protection provided by legality in the absence of social equality acknowledged. This reflects the still-widespread stigmatization of same-sex individuals, as seen, for example, in the excesses of the 'Manif pour tous' movement against marriage equality in France.

How, then, can filiation and parenthood be rethought more generally? The authors present some possible ways to revise how parenthood is established under the law. As a legal certification of the relationship between parent and child, it is based on the presumption of blood ties. To create a neutral conception of filiation in this sense, one interesting avenue would be to de-essentialize motherhood, promoting the registration of birth by declaration for the woman who gives birth as for all parents. This does not mean that the idea of biogenetic ties is absent from the various forms of same-sex parenthood that are attached to it in many examples encountered today—even if for some it means diluting them in the context of surrogacy with multiple participants or ROPA. Parents also use these strategies to counter insufficiencies in the available routes for legal recognition. But in daily life, the ties between parent and descendant are established first and foremost by the intention to become a parent and the desire to found a family. The recognition of a legal commitment to act as a parent could thus be the basis for a filiation recognized by law.

To conclude, the authors emphasize the existence of same-sex families and the need to provide documents certifying filiation in this context: a legal framework

of rights and duties that can allow these families to exist beyond what is allowed by personal choice alone. This demand is part of a historical movement of transformations of the family towards the model of the intentional family.

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