Social Development and Family Changes
Social Development and Family Changes

Edited by

Cristina Gomes

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# Table of Contents

Preface ............................................................................................................................................... xi  
Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 1  

## CHAPTER ONE  
Part I: Reproduction of Family forms, continuities and diversity: mediations between structural trends and freedom to choose ................................................................................. 43  

### Changing Patterns of Mate Selection in Taiwan  
Lorne Tepperman  
* Aileen Lin  
* Weeda Mehran  
* Chin-Chun Yi  

1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 44  
2 Literature Review ........................................................................................................................ 49  
3 Current Trends ............................................................................................................................. 51  
4 Method .......................................................................................................................................... 56  
5 Binary Logistic Regression Analysis ............................................................................................ 63  
Conclusions ....................................................................................................................................... 66  
References ......................................................................................................................................... 67  

### Following in family’s footsteps or going one’s own ways?  
Families between patterns and individualization  
*Rudolf Richter  
*Karin Sardadvar  

1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 70  
2 Data, method and research question ............................................................................................. 73  
3 The sample ....................................................................................................................................... 74  
4 Results ............................................................................................................................................ 75  
   Example 2: Sharing care .................................................................................................................. 79  
   Example 3: Separation and divorce ............................................................................................... 81  
5 Conclusions ..................................................................................................................................... 83  
References ......................................................................................................................................... 84  

### Addams, Blumer and Simmel look at LAT relationships  
*Jan Trost*  

1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 86  
2 Non-marital cohabitation and LAT relationships .......................................................................... 87  
References ......................................................................................................................................... 94
### Part II: Structural crisis changes family: How people and family act in past and contemporaneous collective experiences of war

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Changes Under the Conditions of a Destroyed Society and Stagnation of Social Development</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andjelka Milić</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Women, labor market and family</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Family violence</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Concluding remarks</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### War Diaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irene Levin</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Norway during the war</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The diary of 1942</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Afterword</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part III: State, gender and family: Institutionalization around domestic and public spheres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family and Women in Social Development: Historical Experience of Russia</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyacheslav Kuznetsov</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vladimir Kultygin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Social institute of family under sociological scrutiny</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Family in the Russian social thought history</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Social transformations and family values change</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neo-Liberal Globalization and Conciliation of Work and Family: A Comparative Case from Bahia, Brasil, 1975 and 2000</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Giffin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Family, Work and the State in Brazil</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Women in law, medicine, engineering and architecture: 1975</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER TWO

Part I. Population as a human base of social reproduction:
generations of real social actors interchange values, care and resources ......149

The Reproductive Revolution

John MacInnes

Julio Pérez .............................................................................................................150

1 Introduction ....................................................................................................150
2 The consequences of the reproductive revolution .........................................154
3 The origin of the concept of reproductive revolution.....................................160
4 The relevance of sexual reproduction, or human sexual genesis....................162
5 Some implications of the reproductive revolution..........................................164
6 The future of the family..................................................................................167
7 The state and the collectivization of reproduction..........................................168
8 The myth of population ageing and catastrophic population
decline ...............................................................................................................169
9 Demography and the state ..............................................................................171
10 The transversal, the longitudinal and the demographic
transition ............................................................................................................173
Conclusions .......................................................................................................176
References .........................................................................................................177

Family Change and Social Change: The Far-Reaching Consequences of
Population Aging and Globalization

Norella M. Putney

Vern L. Bengtson ....................................................................................................183

1 Introduction ....................................................................................................183
2 Demographic and Social Trends: Consequences for Families and
Generations ............................................................................................................184
3 Changes in family structures and relationships ..............................................187
4 Globalization and the Contract between Generations ....................................189
5 The retreat of social welfare programs ...........................................................190
6 Consequences of population aging and globalization for families and
individuals .............................................................................................................191
7 The multigenerational family—a model of age integration.........................192
8 Two Case Studies on Multigenerational Families and Changing
Lives..................................................................................................................192
9 Women’s changing lives: A longitudinal study of middle age .................................................194
10 Summary and Conclusion ........................................................................................................195
11 Future Directions .....................................................................................................................196
References ......................................................................................................................................197

Problems of the Elderly: An Indian Family Perspective
Mona Sharma ..................................................................................................................................202
1 Status of the Aged .......................................................................................................................202
2 Studies undertaken .....................................................................................................................204
   2.1 Factors affecting the problem of the aged .......................................................................205
   2.2 Classification of the Aged ...............................................................................................205
3 Ensuring quality of life for the elderly .......................................................................................206
4 The current possibilities of policies and families .....................................................................206
References ......................................................................................................................................207

The Impact of different Social Security Legislations on family income
Kaizô Iwakami Beltrão
Sonoe Sugahara ............................................................................................................................208
1 Introduction ...................................................................................................................................208
2 Evolution of the population according to social security and labor market ties between 1982 and 2002 ........................................................................................................212
3 Effects of eliminating pension benefits from family income .................................................219
4 Effects of eliminating benefits for some specific age groups .................................................223
5 Effects of eliminating benefits with means testing ...............................................................228
6 Effects of eliminating multiple pension benefits .....................................................................232
7 Comments and conclusions .......................................................................................................235
Annex .............................................................................................................................................237
References ......................................................................................................................................238

Poverty, ageing and family in Mexico
Cristina Gomes .............................................................................................................................239
1 Introduction ...................................................................................................................................239
2 Demographic transition and changes in family .......................................................................240
3 Relating ageing and poverty .......................................................................................................242
4 Evolution of poverty by age: heads of the households .............................................................245
5 The presence of the elderly in the households and poverty condition ....................................246
6 The domestic position of the elderly .........................................................................................248
7 Households composition and economic contributions ..............................................................249
8 The relative contribution of the elder’s income .........................................................................250
9 Size of the households and poverty ..........................................................................................253
10 Number of children in the households ......................................................................................254
11 Generational composition of the households and poverty .......................................................256
12 Dependence Economic Index ....................................................................................................259
Table of Contents

13 Household structure, ageing and poverty .....................................................261
14 Factors related to poverty of the households with elderly ............................263
Conclusions .......................................................................................................267
References .........................................................................................................268

Part II. Reproduction of children: fertility, resources, institutions and ethnicity ..................................................................................................................271

Demographic Transitions, Family Changes, and Social Developments in Ireland
Rudy Ray Seward
Donal G. Igoe
Valerie Richardson
Deborah Cosimo...................................................................................................272
1 Introduction ....................................................................................................272
2 Population Changes and Demographic Transitions ........................................273
3 Changes in Families and Convergence...........................................................281
4 Challenges to Patriarchy and More Democracy at Home and Outside
Families and Marriages .....................................................................................284
5 Smaller Families and Households ..................................................................288
6 Exception, Transition, or Convergence?.........................................................289
7 Factors Associated with Population and Family Changes..............................290
Conclusion.........................................................................................................294
References .........................................................................................................295

Value of Children and Fertility Strategies in Cross-cultural Comparison. Ideal Family Size and Targeted Fertility in Eleven Societies¹
Bernhard Nauck ..................................................................................................300
1 Problem ..........................................................................................................300
2 The Starting Point of the “Value-of-Children-Studies” ..................................303
3 Value of Children or: Children as Intermediate Goods in the Social
Production Function ..........................................................................................307
4. The framing of fertility decisions ..................................................................312
5 Data Base and Variables .................................................................................315
6 Empirical results.............................................................................................322
References .........................................................................................................339

Fertility and Contraception of the Indigenous Rural Women in Mexico
Germán Vázquez Sandrin ....................................................................................345
1 Introduction ....................................................................................................345
2 Some data characteristics ...............................................................................346
3 Principal findings ...........................................................................................347
    Graphic 1 Cumulative fertility by groups of generations and ethnic
## Table of Contents

- categories.......................................................................................................348
- 4 Natural fertility and transition towards Malthusianism.........................353
- 5 Involuntary non-use and induced use of contraceptive methods.............356
- Conclusions ..................................................................................................362
- References ....................................................................................................364

### Part III. The Reproduction of Space: housing and inheritance transformed by and transforming families .........................................................365

The family implications by the 1992 Agrarian Reform. The new intergenerational relationship framework of the ejidal families in Veracruz, México  
**Alberto del Rey**.................................................................................................366
  - 1 Introduction .................................................................................................366
  - 2. Land management in the familial organization and succession:  
    the “Mesoamerican family system”..................................................................367
  - 3 The antecedents and causes of the 1992 Agrarian Reform: the economic crisis and the new development model of the country .................371
  - 4 The Reform to the Article 27 of the Constitution and Program PROCEDE: changes in the management and transfer of the land ..........372
  - 5 The implications of the Reform: the development of the mobility to the north and the problem of inheritance at the south of Veracruz ..........376
  - 6 The new intergenerational relations framework in the ejidatarias families of the south of Veracruz..............................................................386
  - References ..................................................................................................390

Family through housing  
The family-house process in Santo Domingo, Mexico City  
**Iliana Ortega Alcázar** .....................................................................................395
  - 1 Introduction .................................................................................................395
  - 2 Santo Domingo.............................................................................................396
  - 3 The self-help housing process and the family process .............................397
  - 4 Rethinking the house..................................................................................409
  - 5 Rethinking family.........................................................................................412
  - Acknowledgements .......................................................................................415
  - References ....................................................................................................415

### Contributors
........................................................................................................417
This book is the result of the Social Development and Family Changes’ meeting, an academic activity of the Committee on Family Research of the International Sociological Association. The objective of the meeting was to encourage studies on family and to extend this effort to Latin America. This book reflects the advances of this effort.

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INTRODUCTION

The chapters of this book analyze the family reproduction processes and the interactions with the social development from the transdisciplinary perspective. In the first chapter the continuities and diversities of the familiar practices and forms, the crisis situations that change said practices, the role of the State, the institutional transformations that seek the gender equity and institutionalization and deconstructions of the domestic roles are analyzed. In the second chapter emphasis is made in the demographic dynamic as the social base of the social reproduction processes and in particular the family. The reproduction of generations, the historical experiences and the availability of different generations to establish exchanges are in the centre of the transformations and distribution of resources and cares in the families. The analysis of the population trends from the sociologic point of view makes evident the role of increases of the survival and reductions of the fertility in the modernity, in the transformations in gender roles and women empowering processes, as well as the new relationships established between generations. The temporality and duration of life as well as the number of children are related with the changes in values, practices and relationships of couples, parents, children, grandparents, and grandchildren. Finally, it is analyzed how the families build and rebuild the physical spaces and resources in which they live, from their daily practices, reestablishing the rules and social structuring processes, and transforming the daily life and at the same time the societies in which they live.

CHAPTER ONE

PART I: REPRODUCTION OF FAMILY FORMS, CONTINUITIES AND DIVERSITY: MEDIATIONS BETWEEN STRUCTURAL TRENDS AND FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

Teperman et al. analyze the changes observed in the choice of a partner in a society undergoing the process of development and modernization: Taiwan. The authors ask why and to what extent the new generations, with increasing freedom of choice, adopt the criteria of love and romance when choosing their partners, thus replacing marriages arranged on the basis of family, ethnic and local community traditions that characterized the behavior of former generations. They show how the modernization process impacts on individual choices. In accordance with the perspective of modernity, the industrialization and urbanization processes and massive access to the media generate mechanisms that turn away from local
contexts. Social and economic development, in particular higher levels of education and greater employment opportunities, promote a greater degree of autonomy, freedom and independence for the new generations when selecting a partner, getting married and forming a family.

In order to explain these results, the authors make reference to the dichotomies and mediations between “the individual and society”, “action and order”, “micro and macro social” contexts, making reference to one of the subjects of the seminar:

“globalization and economic reforms have changed patterns of employment, health assistance, education, and social policy”.

These were the core issues at the seminar on Social Development and Family Changes: what happens with families in face of political, economic and institutional transformations? And in turn, what role do families play in the processes of globalization and diversification of behavior that accompany those transformations? In Giddens’ words:

“Modernity is to be understood at an institutional level; but the changes caused by modern institutions are directly intertwined with individual lives and, accordingly, with the I. One of the distinctive features of modernity is the increasing interconnections between the two “extremes” of extensionality and intent: globalizing influences, on the one hand, and personal dispositions, on the other.”

At present, the globalization process and economic policies of structural adjustment have promoted flexibility in employment rules and relationships, reorganization and privatization of the education and health systems, and the group of social policies that are being increasingly governed by the focus and results evaluation criteria. However, as Teperman et al. show, these institutional reforms are not imposed automatically on families and individuals. Neither have the governments regulated family relationships directly. But institutionalization and regulation of employment, education, health and social security reforms have transformed the opportunity structures for families and individuals. Likewise, new social rules and institutional changes reshape the new mechanisms for the creation of identity and individual behavior, which in turn also reshape the rules. Although individuals do not assume a passive position determined by external changes, the individual decision making process occurs under new rules and new economic, social and demographic conditions.

Teperman et al. acknowledge that expansion of the structure of opportunities and institutions represents the backdrop against which a diversity of potential individual choices is globalized. On the one hand, the gender gap is reduced and female autonomy increases, with increased access to education, employment, income and different resources. Institutional coexistence in broad and diverse
environments of employment, school and urban areas, as well as increased access to information through the media promote increased coexistence among different social, religious and ethnic groups. With a higher level of education, diversity of employment opportunities, knowledge and information, individuals develop greater reflexive capacity. In this scenario of institutional reflexivity, the mechanisms that enable turning away from traditions expand, releasing social relationships and choice of a partner from local, community and family relations bonds and circumstances. Social relationships and the relationship within a partner are now being redefined, with greater emphasis on individual decisions, tastes and preferences.

These elements establish the connection between globalizing trends of modernity and everyday life. Greater freedom for individual choices, a structural and structuring feature of modernity, results from and promotes increased education, knowledge and information levels. According to Teperman et al., freedom of choice is the mediation and in turn the main driver of changes in forming a couple and a new family. This autonomy allows individual choices as to the number of children, when to have children, whether to have an abortion, cohabitation, divorce, assuming sexual preferences and choosing a partner in accordance with preferences and feelings. The structure of opportunities is diversified, the range of options and potential partners is widened in the matrimonial market, the differences between individuals are more easily acknowledged and accepted.

Therefore, changes in the criteria applied when choosing a partner and forming a family are not the direct result of social development and of the specialization systems accumulated in the education, employment, gender equity, media environments, they are not forced by the various authorities within the said systems in an automatic fashion. On the contrary, this multiplicity of institutional environments expands and offers a complex diversity of opportunities, options and possibilities, promoting freedom of choice and individual autonomy to successive generations.

The authors show that age becomes the most significant expression of the process of historical and social change. That belonging to a birth cohort combines with the level of education attained. Age expresses the different historical experiences, the structures of opportunities, the rules and institutions of a time. Successive generations live through different levels of progress in the post-traditional order, their life trajectories reflect the contexts in which the decision making processes are developed (Elder, 1975, 1987; Hareven, 1978, 2000; Lopata, 1986). Likewise, passage of time indicates progressive reproduction of the values of the new order: individual choice of a partner on the basis of love, romance, sexual freedom and gender equity. Globalization of these values and coexistence of men and women of the same generation in institutionalized education and
employment systems facilitate approaching players of the same age, level of education and converging values.

Transition from the old to the new order occurs at different times and with different intensities, not through ruptures but through processes with space-time continuity and ambiguity. In Taiwan, degrees and times of change vary among cultures and religious beliefs. Even though individual choices on a romantic basis are increasing, parents are not completely absent from these choices, although the weight of their preferences in the decisions of couples decreases.

On the other hand, these changes take place in countries and groups with different levels of social development. The differences between levels of education and resources also reflect heterogeneity of the structures of opportunities, options and possibilities of choice. Moreover, we should ask whether it is always to be expected that higher levels of education will directly increase employment opportunities and changes in families via greater autonomy. No matter how reflexive the decision making process is, unexpected and ambiguous results can also be observed in the relationship.

Perhaps the results for the country under analysis, Taiwan, reflect the country’s greater economic and cultural homogeneity, as well as its more successful economic experience in recent decades, compared with Latin America, for example, and other developing countries, where modernity and globalization have generated growth, but also exclusion and segregation of certain groups, greater social inequity, and emergence of winning and losing regions and social groups.

However, in these contexts, great inequality in the structures of opportunities and the contradictory results of institutional reforms could promote multiple unexpected behaviors, even diverging from the results expected from the relationship between education, employment and autonomy. In many countries in Latin America, the great majority of women get married, have children early in their lives and do not work. Indigenous groups continue taking into account family preferences or the economic, cultural and religious patterns of their communities; they have sexual relations, get married and have children at earlier ages than non-indigenous individuals. The socio-economic and spatial differentiation and segregation generate different and excluding matrimonial markets. The sphere of choice of a partner for individuals with lower levels of income and education, even if they enjoy certain capacity of choice and decision, is fairly limited to their same social and educational level.

Another interesting aspect that disrupts Teperman et al.’s discussion deals with emergence of risks in modern life. In the same manner as in other papers in this book, the authors assume that there are no more risks at present than in the past, on the contrary, there is more certainty in respect of survival and acquisition of knowledge and information. However, this extension of life and knowledge includes the possibility of suspecting, quantifying and anticipating risks. The
possibility of projecting the future taking into account the multiple options offered at present, and the mutating nature of rules and abstract systems, increase each individual’s reflexive capacity, and open up multiple possibilities for choice, evaluation, rechoice. The various individual possibilities multiply when decisions are to be made as a couple. Matching preferences, tastes and reflexive and mutating decisions of two individuals entails acknowledging at all times limits and dissatisfactions of one and the other in the relationship of the couple.

In a relationship between two individuals, a divorce does not always express freedom of choice of both spouses, because it is possible that one of them wants a divorce and the other doesn’t, regardless of whether the marriage was arranged by the family or the individuals themselves on the basis of freedom of choice and love. In both types of marriages, individual dissatisfactions and different mechanisms to compensate same may arise individually, ending up in a divorce or not. Both a marriage and a divorce involve two individuals, who have different perceptions, expectations and degrees of satisfaction in respect of the relationship with the other.

Lastly, in Taiwan, the authors do not find greater satisfaction among younger generations that have chosen a partner on the basis of love, when compared with arranged marriages. This result, contrary to expectations, may be due to the very same reflexivity that characterizes modern life. On the one hand, security offered by local traditions has not been fully replaced by freedom of choice. On the other hand, reflexivity and freedom of choice also entail doubt and constant reevaluation of decisions made in everyday life.

This radicalization of reflexivity, of doubts and ambiguities surrounding globalization of traditional and modern values finds expression in the discourse of youths in Latin America on their sexual and partner choices: “Not only love saves you” is the title of a book on reproductive health of young people in Colombia, in view of the risks of AIDS.

In spite of the globalization of freedom of decision in the choice of a partner on the basis of romance and love, the authors finally describe a set of elements that diversify the matrix of individual choices and allow each member of a couple to be open to multiple, non-normative matrimonial trajectories. The next paper shows how this diversity of nuptial trajectories reproduces itself within and among families.

**Richter and Sardadvar** recover the historical and inter-generational nature of the forms of family reproduction and show that socialization of behaviors among generations in turn gives rise to family patters and diversity. The discussion revolves around plurality of family forms, and family individualization and deinstitutionalization in contemporary Austria. The authors clearly identify universal and early marriage and the nuclear household as the normative pattern for families in Western Europe solely in the 60s and 70s.
Nowadays, though the nuclear household still has an important influence, family forms have diversified. Divorce and subsequent marriage, cohabitation, the “living apart together” (LAT) relation, pre-marriage conception, sexual relations and extramarital births, illegitimate children, step families, especially between youngsters, urban groups of higher educational level and resources, compose an every time more frequent diversity of family forms.

However, authors call for attention to the fact that those are not recent phenomena, exclusively associated to individualization processes of free choice that feature modernity and post-modernity. Moreover, in the agrarian societies of the beginning of the XX Century, different social groups presented a multiplicity of family types, formed under strict marriage control regulations, in the middle of the two world wars and with high mortality levels, associated to couple absence, widowhood, second wedlock, step families, extramarital relations and children. Obviously, the circumstances in which such practices are observed in the two historical moments are different; in the past they were associated to crisis, war, epidemics and famine, and they were due to high mortality and migration. Nowadays, family diversity is associated to individualization processes and freedom of choice between multiple trajectories and family roles, what becomes more frequent in much longer life courses, as a result of an extension in life expectancy.

What is new and original in this article is that authors separate from the automatic and organic relation between a type of society and a family type emerging from it, as if no family diversity could exist in every time and historical context. Authors show that atypical family forms existed in generations born at the beginning of the XX Century as well as nowadays. Likewise, other aspects to be taken into consideration in the reproduction of atypical family forms: social inequality, deinstitutionalization of life course and atypical practices socialization between generations within the same family are analyzed.

These aspects are particularly important since social inequality is evidenced and reproduced in demographic patterns, within and between countries, as is shown by Amartya Sen, when comparing mortality differences between ethnical groups. Besides, social inequality has increased in many developing countries and among groups excluded from the globalization process, suffering more economic restrictions. Restrictions in structures of opportunities may also promote the postponement or non commitment to marriage. These behaviors have been observed both in the past, related to land restrictions and heritage (see Seward et al.), and nowadays associated to free choice, but expressing the search for resources to migrate (see Del Rey), promoting changes and diversification in family forms. Consequently, not all changes and diversity of atypical family forms may be exclusively inferred from contemporary processes of individualization and individual autonomy.
Secondly, the deinstitutionalization process of the life course, accompanied by new family forms, is mainly observed between youngsters and elder adults, and thus it is mediated by demographic transition stages. For example, the households of elder women living alone are not always the result of individual choices and female empowerment of these women.

Finally, matching the idea that individualization processes are the main mediation and motor for change in families, authors refer to interaction processes and to socialization processes to know the way in which the institutionalization of typical and atypical marriage trajectories emerge throughout the life course in successive generations within each family. To that end, they recover the biographies and action reports and tales from social subjects in everyday life, identifying typical behaviors that stabilize rules and values along time, and also ruptures and atypical behaviors. This analysis includes different decision making environments regarding the family inside and outside: education, space mobility, political, religious and cultural activities, illnesses and accidents, among other experiences involved in family formation, reproduction and diversification.

When separating typical and atypical patterns of important universalizing explanations or trends, authors achieve to break the exclusively transversal and diachronic analysis of social and family processes. They adopt a historic and generational follow-up perspective of the different family groups and succeed in identifying the mechanisms through which typical and atypical family forms are reproduced along synchronic time. The biographies of successive generations permit to recognize the reproduction of similar socialization practices and mating options, marriage and divorce, as well as their variants. Universalized ruling patterns are identified by birth cohorts in every historic period; socialized practices are revealed within the same family group, between generations and along time; and at the same time the behaviors influenced by individualizing trends that are common nowadays are analyzed.

Examples show interesting repetitions in couple selection among three generations: husbands and children with the same profession, couples with an important difference of age; short lasting relations, quick marriages followed by divorce; or the repetition of women’s core role in children and elder people’s care. These patterns may also be broken, but exceptionally and, in these cases, it depends more precisely on individual preferences and experiences. In fact, authors find families that do not have a sole value pattern as to marriage or divorce, others in which divorce never occurs, but negation or hiding mechanisms of conflicts and dissatisfaction are created, and others in which divorce assumes multiple meanings and values.

In turn, ruptures with family patterns depend more on individualizing postures, but they are sometimes accompanied by alienation from the family group, or by
confrontations or negation of parents’ options. Many of these cases have a conscious intention to differ from family patterns.

Thus, authors go beyond the mere opposition between the determinations oriented by family tradition or the development of individualism. They evidence that, though nowadays individualization processes model family patterns, repetition of life trajectory in successive generations does not permit to reduce the analysis to individual choice, as if this were the main mechanism responsible for diversification of options. The longitudinal analysis of family forms provides a comprehension of complex connections between internal and external spaces of the family, between historical moments and intergenerational experiences, between macro-structural processes structuring and individuals’ multiple possibilities of action. These connections show that the matching of both aspects, the broadening of individual autonomy as well as the inter-temporal reproduction of certain family forms, have to be taken into consideration to understand the complexities in the process of everyday decision making and changes in families.

Trost, in a quite non-conventional article, invites three symbolic inter-actionist sociologists: Jane Addams, Herbert Blumer and George Simmel, to an imaginary debate to collectively analyze a contemporary emerging family form in Scandinavia: the Living Apart Together (LAT) relations. The principle of the 60’s, in which universal marriage and nuclear household prevailed, is taken as reference, to analyze the transit to new family forms in the region. In comparison with other articles, this dialogue does not center the attention on genre equity, education and female work, the media and modern contraceptive methods or individualization forms in formal and universal marriage deconstruction logics as family rule. Beyond the changes in family forms, the dialogue between interactionists is about the temporality of changes observed in events linked to marriage. In the first period, social rules connected four elements: cohabitation, forming a separate household from parents, commencement of sexual relations and pregnancy, which should only occur after marriage.

However, the last two elements were more ideal than real. Even in the universal marriage golden age, contrary to what was prescribed by the rules, most couples had sexual relations and pregnancies before getting married, in a silent and invisible way, being broadly accepted by the society.

In the 70’s formal marriage is preceded and displaced by non-marital cohabitation, which emerges and rapidly institutionalizes in Scandinavia. Life in couples, more socially visible than sexual relations, simply becomes less formal, what used to be an atypical behavior observed among poor groups, extended to all social groups.

And finally the fourth element of the marriage logics: living in a separate household deinstitutionalizes. Relations of couples formed based upon compromises, sexual relations and children (LAT relations) not living in the same
household emerge. In a recent stage, the couple’s compromise to “be together” separates from cohabitation or from “living together”. LAT relations imply everyday compromises, sexual relations and, in some cases, having children in common, but these events precede and also exist without a formal marriage, and are also organized in separate domestic spaces.

The language has an important role in the institutionalization of couple’s new relations and compromises. New linguistic terms to name “living together”, or “being together, but living separately” cause the new options for couple life (cohabitation and LAT) to be visible and recognized. And, in turn, these terms institutionalize a new civilian and citizen condition: every individual assumes the couple compromise with the society, the government, their respective families and children, even those who opt for living in separate houses.

Cohabitation causes legalization of couple unions and separation to become more flexible. Couple informality threatens several formal marriage rules: it ignores marriage and civil divorce legality; it disputes the durability of religious marriage, and puts the eternity of romantic love to test. It also opens the door to multiple preferences and family forms, even those not socially accepted or ruled, as homosexual relations and heterosexual relations between couples that are not legally divorced, enabling the visibility and recognition of identities and preferences, promoting negotiations and tolerance between family re-accommodation. The new ruling code is “marriage-like partnerships”, which is gradually substituting the “marriage” code.

In turn, for the author, LAT relations contribute to mitigate and negotiate conflicts for children custody and for jealousy between “step children” in the case of divorces and “step families” reconstruction. Agreements are transferred more to the private environment of the couple’s decisions, and these demand new family rules in the public sphere, to the justice and the Government. For example, custody acquires a new legal content and form. Children “shared custody” is settled, independently from formal marriage, or from parents living together or not, and from individual behavior. Marriage deregulation, space separation and couple behavior are separated from the responsibility for children. Family forms as they were traditionally settled and ruled are rebuilt. Law changes the focus from formal marriage, cohabitation or individual behavior and concentrates on parenthood and equality of responsibilities and rights. Several formal rules are deconstructed: rules linking children to a formal couple, those that provide the legal opinion on which parent is nearer to the ruling behavior and which is more “apt” to be awarded children’s custody. “Being parents” becomes the center of parental custody negotiations, which is equally divided between father and mother, except for the care, which continues being mainly in charge of mothers. Children alternation permits every parent to be a week with the children and vice versa. Every parent has his/her own time not only for his/her children of previous unions, but also for
the following partner that he/she may choose. Alternation between being a mother/father and living with a new partner is no longer subject to the obligation of getting married or coresidence between step parents and step children.

Trost and his symbolic companions suggest that the LAT relationships play an important part in the development of new and democratic ethics and of equality in the families. The rupture with the shared stages and spaces that regulate the families helps to breakdown the stigmas of illicit behavior, the conflicts of living together and the jealously between parents and children. That has an effect in the formation of the personality and in children’s’ socialization. On the one hand, children’s interaction and socialization processes mainly happen in the small family group, where the family ties are smaller in quantity. The conflicts and uncertainties in this arena have a stronger influence on them. For example: the rupture of a child’s coalition and trust with one of his parents can imply the loss of a big part of his social world. According to the author, when promoting tolerance and the social acceptance of family diversity, the LAT relationships also help to break up the social and institutional stigmas that may affect children’s development.

On the other hand, for the new couple, sharing and competing with the children from previous marriages also implies conflicts, due to the fact that one of them may feel relegated to a second level of priority and attention. The discomfort of “step child” and “step parent” relationships makes the continuity of the new couple’s daily relationship under the same roof difficult. For Trost, the LAT relationships are sufficiently flexible manner to mitigate these discomforts, since new ethics for couple relationships might include the respect and care of the children by both parents, and at the same time, respect for the new couples.

The fourth element in the formal marriage logic presented by the author, the decision of “making a separate space for the parents”, may also be related to the emergency of the LAT relationships.

The flexibility of LAT relationships allows them to include a multiplicity of situations: not wanting to live together, or other reasons that makes it easier not to live together. It could also be possible to think about different kinds of LAT relationships, since these can vary among generations, according to the couple’s resources and children and their parents. In Scandinavia the pioneers of the LAT relationships are young people with innovative proposals. In Western Europe, young people are delaying leaving their parents households and creating a separate household. However, having a separate household can also be related to the restrictions in terms of employment and housing, not only for poor young people. A fundamental characteristic of today’s young people is that most of them have reached high levels of education and have set high standards for their life’s expectations, styles, and projects. Said standards are at stake with the employment and housing market opportunities. To have a separate household and family may not coincide with these high set standards. Therefore, the transformations
introduced by the young people in the rites for entering a union can provide new elements for the analysis of the institutionalization of new and diverse types of couple relationships.

On the one hand, the delay of marriage has been a historically used mechanism in the region, and assumed to be an important part in the decrease of fertility in Europe, as opposed to Latin America. In fact, Trost states that emergency and institutionalization of cohabitation in contemporary Europe is a totally different phenomenon from cohabitation observed in the indigenous groups in Latin America. The latter has historical roots since the formalization of civil and religious marriage were rules that were “imported” by the indigenous after the colonization processes. However, their reproduction among poor groups to date can be based partly in the high costs of formal, civil as well as religious marriages. Even like this, cohabitation is emerging in some countries from Latin America among young people from higher social groups, but it is a very incipient phenomenon.

However, the economic restrictions are also an element to be taken into account in the changes in formation and in the families in Scandinavia and Western Europe. For example, the pro-natal policies, which have had particular success in Sweden, offer resources such as housing, salary increases and time off of work for both parents. Might these policies have some kind of impact in the institutionalization of cohabitation and in the increase of LAT relationships?

Lastly, could it be possible to establish a parallel between the increase in the informality of the unions with the growing labor and housing informality in the terms stated by the economist Hernando De Soto? The empirical data produced by this author quantifies the number of bureaucratic procedures, the economic and time costs a family needs to invest in order to formalize a business or a property, which is the reason why poor families decide not to formalize their assets, and thus explains the informality in labor, housing and movable assets for families in different countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The difference is that the poor do not have enough resources to formalize their businesses and assets, and thus they are limited to reinvesting in them to increase their earnings. However, in the case of marriage and divorce, their formalization expenses can not be reinvested in new and better benefits for each member of the couple.

In short, the changes analyzed up to here regarding the individual choices of the couple based in love, cohabitation and LAT relationships progressively transform the meaning and marriage contents, the couple and filial relationships. All these processes are reproduced among the generations and within the typical family biographies, even though ruptures and atypical trajectories are observed. However, these changes and trajectories can also be analyzed by taking into account the opportunity structures and social inequality that come into play in the individual, couple, and family decisions, and they are present in any place or historical time. In a first historical moment, the individuals disconnect the couple’s preferences and
commitments from the scope of the parents and family group decisions: the individualization allows the affect and sexuality to have a heavier weight in the decisions, even though it does not eliminate the possibility that the individuals also take into account the preservation of their status and assets. Later, the marriage’s civil and religious formality is progressively eliminated and substituted by cohabitation; once more the couple’s commitments are set in the individual and private scope, setting aside the State and the Church’s legal-formal rules, but also avoiding the high economic and time cost implied in the formalization in marriages and divorces. Finally, the preferences, the relationships, and the couple’s individual decisions are reaccommodated and get more complicated; divorce and the formation of “step families” are decisions that also include the children’s preferences, the ex and new couples, but they do not prevent that all of them take into account the resources they have to set their preferences and to make decisions.

The democratization and flexibilization processes of the couple and parent relationships are institutionalized in a specific way in different times and spaces, among generations and social and ethnic groups, and within family biographies. Likewise, when there are exceptional situations, such as catastrophes or economic crises, these institutionalization processes are destabilized or they break up. The following works analyze different ways, times, and contexts of interruption of the formation logic and family reproduction.

PART II: STRUCTURAL CRISIS CHANGES FAMILY: HOW PEOPLE AND FAMILY ACT IN PAST AND CONTEMPORaneous collective EXPERIENCES OF WAR

Milić analyses the impacts of the recurrent wars during 15 years in Serbia on the families. The author defines a “catastrophic dynamics”, measured based on an events typology that take place in the daily life of families and households under State and society crisis circumstances. The multiplication of these events in moments of crisis indicates the intensity of the rupture in routines in the family life.

The density of multiple events the families experience reveals fearful situations, loss of resources, jobs, and friends, as well as the occurrence of diseases and accidents, as stressing events. Even though there is no similar information for the period previous to the wars, in order to identify which of these events correspond or increase in the moments of crisis and which stay unaltered, the author presents a very interesting contribution and an innovating proposal that includes a typology to measure the stressing events, and which can be useful to study the incidence of violence in contemporary societies and their effects in the families.

The construction of event indexes that happen in different spheres of the bioreproduction, physical and emotional well-being, careers and employment,
assets—among others—permits understanding of the gains and losses in each sphere, as well as their combinations. In the Serbia wars, the greatest losses happen in the bioreproductive sphere, as well as in the safety and death of the family members and material assets.

The experience of these crashes in the life course produces long term consequences and among generations. The political institutions are destabilized, the economy collapses, and uncertainty blocks the reform and development processes. Even after the wars, the recovery of the institutions, the social interweaving, the democratization, modernization, and the economic growth are delayed. Under these crises and insecurity situations, the individual behaviors, loaded with distrust and fear, go through a “rigidization” process, and in turn, reinforce the structuring difficulties of social recovery. In terms of Richter and Sardadvar, the wars and crisis produce experiences and behaviors that are reproduced among generations and within the families.

The “rigidization” is expressed by the sticking to family forms from the period prior to the War and to the same modernization and socialism, in the family “re-patriarchalization” or “retradicionalization”, characterized by the proportional increase of large families, the return of the woman to the household space and job, by the family violence against women combined with male unemployment and alcoholism. In crisis and war situations, the coincidence between family violence, male unemployment and alcoholism, and the woman’s dependency is more evident.

Unemployment is combined with the loss of social position, incomes, and social security previously acquired by the women, and are replaced by the responsibility to rationalize consumption, to keep and distribute resources and basic assets, intensify care for the elderly, sick and handicapped, to keep the emotional balance during unemployment, conflict and family dissatisfaction conditions. It can be said that in crisis situations, the feminization of the care is intensified. In spite of this accumulation of family responsibilities, women consider that the men’s unemployment is worse than theirs.

Finally, the long period of wars and crisis is related to the increase of the proportion of large households, mainly in urban areas, where they go from 8 to almost 70 per cent between 1980 to 2003. It is also interesting that the author observes different extensions according to the social groups: the high and mid groups increase the vertical extensions and optimize, preserve, and create new resources and social capital. In turn, the poorest families use the horizontal extensions to survive and to avoid new internal crisis, divorces, unemployment, and migration.

The extension increases the financial support and care of the elderly towards the mid and young generations, while the mid generation takes care of the parents and handicapped. The new information from the analysis is the discovery of advantages of these arrangements for the young people, compared with their parents that live
apart, in rented apartments and under the permanent risk of unemployment. To the objective advantages is added the fact that all the members of the large families show insatisfaction with this arrangement, except the women and young people in vertical families.

The author produces the concept of “re-patriarchalization” in order to define the reproduction of patriarchal values, violence and female unemployment, and the “re-traditionalization”, that refers to the predominance of the large households in different social groups, as a result of the intense experience of losing housing and the lack of safety experienced by the families in the post-communist period for all of the countries of this block. Even that way, Milić highlights that in Serbia said period was longer and created more irregularities in the social life, also implicating negative personality streaks in the individual development.

In turn, the young generations look to build gender identities outside the family scope, “opening the possibility that the families of the future are an open field for new practices and experiences”.

One should ask if this process so delicately explored by Milić in crisis situations of families in the post-communist period, and by Levin during World War II have something in common with the changes observed in other societies in moments of crisis and violence situations. Up to which point the individualization processes, as shown by Teperman et al. in Taiwan, the reproduction of family cultures among generations described by Richter and Sardadvar in Austria, the democratization of the couple and filial relationships stated by Trost in Scandinavia, are interconnected with the crisis situations experienced among generations in other countries?

If the processes of change institutionalization in the families based on the interaction between free choice, equity, democracy, and the reproduction of family practices was already being developed in communist countries, how is it that a setback in the welfare and safety conditions result in a return to these practical processes? In times when it is necessary to set safety and trust opposite to external restrictions, the families, even after the communist experience, during and after the wars, reactivate again the living together ties through the family in order to share spaces and resources. However, in many cases this living together implies not only solidarity, but also conflicts, and even intra-family violence.

Levin studies how women give continuity and certain regularity to daily and family life in war situations. From the historical analysis and from the daily speech of a woman who lived in a couple relationship during World War II, the author wonders why, even under the threat of losing freedom, the jewish women in Norway did not scape from the war arena when their partners were arrested.

In her diary a woman records facts of her daily life in 1942: the beginning, development and end of the couple relationship, partially interrupted and later definitely interrupted by the arrest and disappearance of her boyfriend and her father. It is evident the late age of the Jewish couple of 31 and 33 years old
respectively, singles, that lives with their parents and belong to mid or high level social groups.

The regularity of the everyday life events is masked by codes and omissions that, on the one hand, guarantee the safety of the woman, her couple, and her family, and on the other hand, hides her deepest feelings. The ambiguity of the risk situation is reflected in the need to record ordinary and pleasant events, and in turn, by the omission of feelings and emotions. During the war, the life by a thread is only visible through the decoding of what can not be written about, but it suggests the presence of tenseness, fears, and insecurity. Sometimes reading this woman’s writings makes us think in possible ways of alienation from reality, sometimes in a codex of self-survival, patience, tolerance to the pain and hope. The woman does not assume that the men were “sent” to another prison, she records that they “travel away”. Her frequent trips to visit her boyfriend and her father, the obligated record when coming back to her own city, the deep feeling opposite to the bad treatment that sometimes she notices among her peers, the dedication to care for her own, the effort to maintain the dignity in everyday life, and to transmit this minimum of welfare to the men who were arrested.

In times of war, families keep being the main space of redistribution of material resources (clothing, food, being taken to prison), that are also symbolically loaded with affection, feelings of safety and dignity, transmitted through these objects, which are taken by the women inside the prisons. The female care is reproduced and it is transformed in a daily task of searching for and exchange of information, resources, and affection within and among families. What the author wants to call attention to is that the female care is not only maintained and intensified in moments of war, even when the family is about to break down, but also the woman can put the care of her boyfriend and her family above her own safety. To care, to hush, to follow the track of relatives and to escape to places less safe in order to keep searching are the attitudes that are most reflected in the daily codes during the war years.

Even though it seems that the regularity of everyday life persists in periods of crisis, the reader is forced to think up to what point this behavior involves something of alienation from the hard reality of life, combined with the need to maintain certain dignity for the emotional survival and to share it with the ones that are arrested. This daily base reproduced by the women helps to keep oneself in the waiting and in the search, as Levin says, to “make life easier”.

That is why the author points out the advantage of reading diaries from the real moment of the family life in crisis, not biased by a re-reading from the present, from other point of emotional balance. Levin’s innovating methodology eliminates the streaks of memory failures or reinterpretation of the past facts, under retrospective hypothesis. Intriguing codes are left, but they show the tips of an iceberg that Milić also analyses through a quantity methodology in today’s Serbia:
the topics of the roles, differences, and gender discrimination, as well as the solidarity among generations have another background and acquire different meanings in moments of social crisis that threaten the family survival. The family and the woman reunite again almost organically, in solidarity and conflict relationships, which demand the rebuilding of advances in the female autonomy and empowerment under new and renovated values of gender equity in the moments of peace. These authors do not state a utilitarian revision of the goodness of the female devotion to the family in times of crisis, in order to justify a reconnection of the woman to the domestic roles. On the contrary, they state that this situation from the human rights perspective, and the struggle of women for men and women dignity and for peace among generations.

PART III: STATE, GENDER AND FAMILY: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AROUND DOMESTIC AND PUBLIC SPHERES

Kuznetsov and Kultygin put forward the historical and juridical evolution of the family rules, the family as a social institution, women’s roles and rights in Russia before, during and after the soviet regime. The authors question the classification of institutionalized families into two patterns and social structures isolated in a historical space and time. They question the contradictions of this perspective which links ideal types of families to types of societies. The authors propose the analysis of real families expressing a diversity of values, behaviors and daily practices; dialectically coexistent families in each society and historical time, flexible to changes in societies as well as to changes in the individual practices of their members.

Based on the family sociological theories, the authors raise the debate about the functionalist perspective of the nuclear family as a social and emotional model, with basic and irrefutable primary and secondary socializing functions. From this standpoint, “the child’s personality is formed on the basis of the prevailing cultural values and becomes an inalienable part of the person. Culture is reproduced in the individual”: the family reproduction of the independence and success values in the U.S.A. and of loyalty to family and friends in Russia would produce, in each society, individuals with these types of culture incorporated in an inalienable manner to their personalities. The family would stabilize the personality by offering emotional relations and security; the spouses would support each other and counteract the tensions of daily social life.

The authors point out that this exclusively solidarity-based and organic concept is limited to the predominance of the nuclear household of most of the occidental industrial societies – particularly the U.S.A. middle class – in which the nuclear family isolates itself from the other relatives and the couple depends almost
exclusively on the mutual emotional support. Besides, this reduction does not take into account the socio-economical, ethnical and religious differences existing in all societies, including the North American one, when even Parsons clearly differentiated the middle and working classes family types in his functionalist perspective.

The Russian Orthodox Church also contributed to institutionalize this reductive ideal family model, by reproducing for centuries the patriarchal values and rules, the authoritarianism and hierarchy in the familiar relations, the control of the economy, the private life and the selection of partners.

This model starts to be criticized in the middle of the XIX Century in Russia. The beginning and universalization of women’s education is promoted, gender equality, work and sexual and reproductive rights are fostered, as well as a resignification process of the family. Later, this trend is re-directed to questioning the role of sex as a mere mechanism for the reproduction of the species and the domestic role of women.

The institutionalization of the new family ideology based on the equality of gender undermined the patriarchy dominance in the Russian countryside since the ending of the XIX Century, when more than 80% of the population still lived in rural areas. The outskirts of the cities sheltered the young migrant workers, unmarried men and women. These groups represented more than three quarters of the urban population at the ending of the XIX Century; they married massively, but without complying with the religious rule of having the parent’s consent as established by the Church. Besides, later on, in the XX Century divorces also increase – generally started by women – and also contravening the Orthodox Church’s rules.

Russian legislation breaks apart from the nuclear household idealization as being the only means of establishing mutual support, well-being and the successful socialization of children and spouses. The actual existence of alternative kinds of families is brought to light.

Remarkable progress derived from this criticism process. They were institutionalized even in the juridical and constitutional areas. Gender equality started to become a growingly important issue in the Soviet agenda, together with that of civil marriage, the rights to sexual education, contraceptive methods and conception, subjects ruled as part of a kind of “marriage and family hygiene”. Marriage, children’s education and socialization, separating sexuality from reproduction become State matters. The recording of marriages and protection of the reproduction include rights and benefits for unwed mothers and large families. Abortion is legalized and the educative systems accept boys and girls.

Besides, the authors call the attention to the majority masculine participation on both opposite sides of woman’s emancipation debate. Women’s entry to these movements was mainly characterized by the fight for access to work and material
independence as well as to education. It was not until de 80s decade that independent women movements appeared.

Giffin raised the issue of the present debate on the changing relations between the production and reproduction spheres, between work and family in Brazil. The author establishes a new turn in the contemporary feminist debate. If in most of the contemporary societies the family and the patriarchal state have weakened, compensated feminine work is already a fact, the use of contraceptive methods and the fecundity control has become universal, then the critical axis of the patriarchal system and women’s domestic role loses its centrality for feminism.

The author suggests a new reading of the modernization and development theories, which stigmatize the family as “natural” place for emotional reproduction. On the other hand, the public sphere integrates the objectivity, rationality and efficiency of modern and industrialized life, place of the independent, enterprising and purveyor man. This reading maintains the duality of the patriarchal model which separates public from private life in an artificial manner, simply substituting the centrality of the familiar and private pole for the public pole but does not link them and promotes the “inter-gender” work division. The dichotomic reading of modernity enables some authors to classify Brazil as a traditional society that separates economy and family, with the latter performing the main social functions, as opposed to the centrality of work in United States men’ identity.

The author suggests that the post structural adjustment and work flexibilization period’s growing social inequalities demand feminism re-discussion under the gender equality combined with the socioeconomic equity logic. In the example of Brazil, a developing country, women of the highest educational and socioeconomic level who entered the labor market during the pro-development military governments were able to make progress in equity of gender as to work participation and social security, sharing domestic chores with their husbands and conciliating work and family. These conditions are accompanied by feelings of professional realization, social commitment, wish for independence and contribution to the budget and improvement of relations with their couples and children.

In this period education and health systems became universal, urbanization and industrialization processes were consolidated, but, at the same time an extreme socioeconomic polarization took place. This polarization is reproduced to our days: Brazil is the second country in the world as regards social inequality, based on unequal income and access to knowledge and technology.

However, even the patriarchal and authoritarian state of the military dictatorship did not foster gender repression as does the modern age perspective. On the contrary, the patriarchal family and State of the times promoted many women’s entry to public universities. The latter began to work in typically masculine tasks