Research article

Multiple families in changing societies in the Maghreb: The case of Morocco

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ABSTRACT

Taking into account relevant old references such as the *Arab Family and the challenge of change* (Barakat, 1993; 1985), trying to discuss the basic characteristics of the Arab family not only as a central socioeconomic unit, but mainly as a microcosm of the demographic transformation of the society, as well as the first and intimate educational space for the creation of the self and the identity (Caputo, 2006), we move into the complex and delicate subject of the evolving contemporary families in the Maghreb. First of all, we try to analyze the difficult reformulation, within the families, of educational models and values. Nowadays, we are faced with new and multiple typologies of families in the Maghreb, shifting from the traditional models of the Arab and Islamic society to families quite far from such models.

Within this context, we start from the meaningful work conducted for years by the *Arab Families Working Group* (AFWG, 2008; 2013), trying to understand the links between gender and family in the Arab world, going back to the patriarchy and up to the deep demographic, social and cultural transformations of the last fifty years in the Arab countries.

Within the Maghreb, we choose to focus on Morocco in order to understand that besides the demographic changes and many other transformations such as the quick urbanization, the degree of gender participation and an important change of the values, families are very much changing not only as far as their structures are concerned, but also as far as the relationships among their members.[1]

The modernization of a country like Morocco is one of the most visible aspects. The Moroccan main towns are the core of this "modernity" showing at the meantime the most engaging promises and the most paradoxical poverty. Most of the political discourses, as well as the discourses of the media and the civil society, are based on the idea of "progress," together with ideas of democratization, gender equalities, education, good governance.

So, today more than in any other period, we need a realistic vision of the changing society, able to promote initiatives and to assume risks, including the positive aspects of both the "modernity" and the original identity of the country. Within this framework, the King of Morocco Mohammed VI has called for many values of the so-called "modernity"[2] among which is the notion of "responsible citizenship." With such premises, a focus on Morocco is very relevant because the country, during the last years, is not only at the core of a very meaningful and original social and cultural change process,

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[1] In this paper we will propose an interdisciplinary analysis of the multiple families in the changing society of Morocco with a main anthropological approach. Demography will offer the starting point of this research, focused on anthropology but enriched by other contributions such as those of the sociology, history, political science, pedagogy and philosophy.

[2] Using the terms "modernity" and "tradition" we are deeply aware of the main anthropological debates concerning their multiple meanings. Among the others, we refer especially to: Arce, A. & Long, N. (eds.) (2000) *Anthropology, Development and Modernity*. London: Routledge. Briefly, we share the opinion of the authors who affirm the necessity to reconfigure the ideas of modernity and development from an anthropological perspective (Arce & Long, 2005).

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but it is also at the core of an important reform process,[3] concerning also the specific field of the *Code of the Family* (*Mudawwana al-Usra al-Maghribiyya*). In addition to that, some qualitative researches have been achieved by some of the Moroccan sociologists and anthropologists (and others), in the period of the last ten-five years, attesting to this changing dynamic that needs to be observed.[4]

CHANGING MOROCCO: THE NEW CODE OF THE FAMILY (MUDAWWANA AL-USRA)

Zirari (2008) debates around women's rights in Morocco focusing on four dates that she considers milestones in the historical evolution of gender roles: 1) 1958, when it was elaborated the first *Code of the Family* by the reformist Salafis; 2) 1993, when the *Code* was revisited because of the pressures of the women's associations; 3) 1999, at the occasion of the approval of the *Plan of Integration of the Women in the Development,* which opened a huge debate among different ideological sensibilities on the feminine question; 4) 2003, when it was approved the new *Code of the Family*,[5] marking a change in the philosophy and the juridical treatment of the women's rights.

A main point of this new code is the articulation between the religious dimension (represented by the King, as being the Commander of the Believers (*Amir al-Mu'minin*), according to the article 3 of the National Constitution) and the modern legislative dimension (thanks to which the project of law was debated in the Moroccan Parliament).

The new code reflects partially the new mutations of the Moroccan society (urbanization, mass education, employment, reproductive health individualization process, spatial mobility, change of values, etc.). Anyway, as Zirari reminds, "the nuclearization of the family does not bring to a social and ideological rupture with the traditional family, which still survives (with all these references such as the authority of the male, the honor, the solidarity) and still interferes within the relations of the couple" (Zirari, 2008, p.241). Nevertheless, the new code is a tentative of "democratization" of the society (assuming that the democratization of the private spaces is a condition to the democratization of the public ones) and it expresses the reaffirmation of both the reference to Islam and the dynamics of modernization.

So, since 2004 the *Code of the Family* affirms the duties and the rights of the man and the woman, trying to establish their equality, as well as a consensus and a co-responsibility. As El Harras (2006)[6] very well shows, the actual *Code* proposes a new and unforeseen reconstruction of three instances: the individual (*the self),* the conjugal (*we* as *parents*) and the family (*we* as a *family*). That means a new approach to the *reciprocity* of the relationship of the parents and the growing importance of the *negotiation processes* of the conflicts among the family members.

Therefore, a "multiple mutation" is now ongoing in the contemporary Moroccan families and it concerns their structures as well as the continual re-elaboration and re-invention of the intergenerational relations and the re-definition of the relationships between men and women.

Even if still far from a full equality of rights, the *Code of the Family* guarantees to the woman the freedom to marry and to establish conditions to the polygamy, the possibility of choosing the divorce, the possibility to make appeal to the tribunal in case of divorce and to ask for the legal protection of the children. All these points are the results of an endogen and capillary associative work, acting inside the social tissue over many years, thanks to which the question of women's rights has finally shifted from a private and religious sphere to a public and political one.

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[3]The reform process promoted by the King Mohammed VI, since the beginning of his government in 1999, has included the creation of the *National Council for the Human Rights; the IRCAM (Royal Institute for the Amazighe Language and Culture)*; the adoption of the *Chart of the Education* and the *National Educational Reform*; the IER *(Instance Equity and Reconciliation)* including the *Process of National Reconciliation* concerning the period of political turmoil during King Hassan II's reign, and the *The Code of the Family*. See Gandolfi (2010); Vermeren (2010).

[4]Among the others, we already make reference to the *National Inquiry on the Values* (Bourquia, et al. 2006). See also the *Rapport pour le Development Humain* (*Le Maroc possible, 2006* - www.rdh50.ma) and El Ayadi et al. 2007.

[5]*Moudawwanat al-Usra al-Maghribiyya – Wizarat al-'Adl wa al-Hurriyat – Al-Mumlaka Al-Maghribiyya*/Code de la Famille – Ministère de la Justice et des Libertés – Royaume du Maroc – Dahir n. 1-04-22 du 12 Hija 1424 (3 Février 2004) portant promulgation de la Loi n. 70-03 portant Code de la Famille.

[6]Mohamed El Harras proposes a deep sociological analysis of the new *Code* in a working paper achieved for the *Espace Associatif* and the University of Rabat in 2006. Among other analyses of the *Code*, especially focused on gender equality and heritage issues, see the special number of the scientific review *Prologues* (2009) n.38.

Since the individuals signing a contractual relation as the marriage have rights and responsibilities, the code states the rules of this relation, starting by fixing the age of marriage and terminating by ruling the divorce and the heritage issues.

Considering the family as one of the most important educational places within an Arabic-Islamic society, it becomes inevitably important for other educational spaces—first of all the school—to observe and to deal with the families daily life and changes. With these premises, before coming to examine in depth the possible relations school-family, we might need to focus more extensively on the specific transformations affecting the contemporary families in Morocco.

CHANGING FAMILIES: NEW DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES AND NEW RE-ARTICULATIONS OF VALUES

Morocco lives today an advanced demographic transition: the Moroccan population has deeply changed in half a century and is still evolving.[7] The demographic changes partially reflect the new attitudes towards the family and the state. Already from the 60s to the 90s the employment for women had seen a *crescendo,* and the feminine universe opened to the external, out of the family circle, creating and diffusing a "real mental revolution" (Courbage, 2006, p. 26).

The mortality and fertility rates have widely diminished, as well as the age of the first marriage, because the politicians have invested in demographic public policy, in the awareness of having to manage the demographic variable. In fact, the demographic profile in Morocco is very much characterized by the young people and for many years the population having less than 30 years has constituted the majority of the country. Today, the population aging less than 15 years represents 30% of the whole population, and the population among 15 and 59 is the 62%.[8]

The families are less numerous than in the past, the family relations are still an important reference, but they have lost part of their power, and the family structures grow weak, with some exceptions during the periods of crisis and festivities. To sum up, the family is no longer the main key cellule in the social process and it has no more the exclusivity of the *production of meaning.*

Actually, the increase of the age limit of life, the generalization of education, the access of women to the employment market, and other transformations, imply a not explicit cohabitation of tensions among the different generations, whose symbolic references and whose material interests are no longer or not always compatible.

According to Goody, we should consider the family as a legal unity and a unity of production, and we should consider the multiples strata that shape both the reality of the family and its living experience (Goody, 1976; Bargach, 2006).

Sometimes, we still find a representation of the Moroccan family of the past as an ideal portrait of the altruism and solidarity, but this idea hides the hierarchies and the inequalities that for a long time have lived inside the families. The family of today is not a homogeneous institution. Its place of origin, its place of residence,[9] its values and its social belonging are some of the important factors affecting the multiplicity of the families.[10] With "family" in Morocco nowadays we refer mainly to the nuclear family and therefore to the Arabic word *al-usra* (a conjugal unity) more than *al-'ayla*, which means mainly, instead, the enlarged family (Bargach, 2006).

Along with the solidarities inside the family group, we can observe other organic solidarities referred to as the class of age, the place of residence, the scholar status, the professional profile and so on.

Concerning the marriage, we can suggest that the family in Morocco has been historically tied to the tradition and to the religion and the "attachment" of the family structure so the institution of the

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[7]In the future, instead, the population will be affected by a reduction of the youth and an augmentation of the average of the estimated life.

[8]See the data and the statistics quoted in the *Rapport du Cinquantenaire* (2006). The Report is available online (http://www.rdh50.ma) or in the published book *Le Maroc possible* (Rapport du Cinquantenaire, 2006).

[9]It's interesting to note that the marketing and the advertisement world strongly promote the image of an ideal conjugal cellule (a couple with two children) as a sort of "prototype" of the "modern family."

[10]Unfortunately, in this paper, it was impossible to take into account another interesting and important aspect of the multiplicity of the families: the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of their members. The bilingual and plurilingual competences of the different members of the family create spaces of negotiation, dissent and demand of legitimacy concerning the uses and the knowledge of the mother tongue and of other peripheral or dominant languages within the "symbolic market of languages and cultures" (Boukous, 1996). All that has much to do with the re-articulation of the modern and the traditional in everyday life. For sure, it would be a very promising path to further the research.

marriage has been nearly exclusive. The *National Inquiry on the Values* (achieved in 2004)[11] showed, already ten years ago, that the solidarity inside the family and the importance given to the marriage, in the contemporary contexts, were still meaningful references. The Inquiry revealed the existence of 282 typologies of *ménages familiaux* with a complex structure, 183 of which characterized by the cohabitation of at least three generations. According to the Inquiry, in 2004 more than 60% of the families were nuclear (while in 1982 they were around the 50%), more than 20% of the *ménages familiaux* were directed by women and 8% were mono-parental (El Ayadi, 2007; Gandolfi, 2010).

Most of all, the intergenerational relations inside the family had changed towards an important process of individualization and autonomy of youth: the partially questioned authority of the father and the figure of the working woman happened to redefine the roles in the family. The employment of women has meant an economic autonomy, but often also a step towards a majeure social consideration and a majeure participation in the public life.

Within this frame, not only the number of the members has diminished, the vertical relations of authority have changed in the direction of an individualization (giving the family members much more freedom and, in the meantime, more responsibility),[12] but we can also gradually observe the transition from a family where the members' roles are related to their status (father, mother, child, etc.) to a family more oriented to the *person* and where the socialization of the members is much more horizontal (Cherkaoui, 2006).

Finally, we'd like to underline that the crisis of authority of the father (as we observed, mainly due to the economic independence of the members of the family), might be solved by means of *dialogue* instead of *violence*. But, in order to choose this direction, the society needs strong references of philosophers, educators, pedagogues (Tozy, 2006). Otherwise the actual most widespread references would be too distant from the growing complexity of the reality.[13]

Besides, as noticed above, since 2004 the new *code* affirms the conjugal relation on the equality, the consensus, the agreement, the sharing of responsibilities. Also to face this, the Moroccan society should need an intellectual system of reference and an adequate cultural support.

LIFE HISTORIES AND MULTIPLE LIVING EXPERIENCES OF THE SELF AND OF THE FAMILY

Even if we do not find many specific surveys on the effects and the incidence of the *Code of the Family* on the living experiences of the families, as we have already observed, little qualitative research attests to this on-going multiple transformation of the families: at the level of the family structure (much more close to the mononuclear unit), at the level of re-articulation of the intergenerational relations and at the level of an ongoing redefinition of the gender relations.[14]

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[11]*The National Inquiry on Values* was achieved in 2004 in the frame of the Report of the 50 years of Human Development in Morocco (*Rapport du Cinquantenaire*, 2006). The Inquiry was directed by Rahma Bourquia, Abdellah Bencherifa and Mohamed Tozy, and the final report was redacted by Hassan Rachik. The authors underline in the introduction of the work that such inquiry is the very first ever achieved in Morocco and it represents a "change of values with respect to the values." It actually constitutes a fundamental contribution to the research in social sciences and to the knowledge of the system of values in Moroccan society. See www.rdh50.ma - *Le Maroc possible, 2006*.

[12]Mass education implies the transformation of the vertical relations between youth and adults and the horizontal relations among men and women, as well as new ways of being a couple, including multiple and more convivial relations. All these mutations facilitate the diffusion of the middle class, even if with all its ambiguities. For an in-depth analysis of this issue, see the many contributions in the *Prospective Maroc 2030, La Société Marocaine*. (Haut Commissariat au Plan, 2006). See also the old but still fundamental contributions on the middle classes in the Maghreb proposed by the CRESM-CNRS (Zghal et al., 1980). (I consider a deserved act to underline, here, the sharp and innovative research work achieved since the 60s on the main social and cultural issues of change processes in the Maghreb by (the recently departed) Abdelkader Zghal, director of the *Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales (CERES)* in Tunis. Quoting such a dated work confirms the quality and originality of its approach up to now).

[13]Within this frame, a discourse on the contemporary elites becomes necessary. Even if here we don't get into depth with the issue, I'd like to underline, at least, how the intellectual, professional and global environment of the elites has deeply changed in the last years and how theses new elites are more composite and feminine than in the past and charged by many different responsibilities. Very briefly getting to the point, we may argue that the presence of these multiple elites is the essential condition to the stability and the progress of Moroccan society (Vermeren, 2002; 2006).

[14]We make reference to the researche achieved by the multiple centres of research and working groups devoted to gender studies or the womens' rights, especially in the Faculties of Letters and Human Sciences (or Law) in the Universities of Rabat, Casablanca, Fes, Kenitra, Mohammedia, Meknes, Marrakech.

Recent fieldwork adds complexity to the results of the *National Inquiry on the Values* that had already showed the importance of the autonomy and the dialogue in the relations among parents and especially among parents and children. The daily life experiences at the core of these fieldworks show the different and difficult ways to approach the authority, the delicate process of individualisation of the youth and the families as possible spaces of gradual democratization of the society.

My own anthropological researches achieved since 2000 to nowadays in different areas of Morocco[15] show a very much diversified context of living (urban and rural) where very often the parents' and childrens' *histories of life* and the history of their families are the keys to understanding the engagement in civil society; the political activism; the social movements; the cultural and artistic participation of the youth in the urban contexts; the direct and indirect use of violence[16] in micro and macro contexts of life, and many other objects of research. Among the rare ethnographies and histories of life attesting to this multiplicity, we may also point at the interesting book *Casablanca. Metropolitan figures and scenes* (Peraldi & Tozy, 2011*)*, where both doctoral students and eminent researches tried to collect ethnographies and in-depth, in "miniature," profiles of some social actors of the town. Among the many examples, we propose to gaze upon few single Moroccan women's histories of life and their ways of co-housing in Casablanca (Cheikhi, 2011). The research well attests to some of these multiple new convivial relations and modalities of co-habitation of the youth, which are the result of mass education, the individualization process and the increasing of horizontal relations. In the same text, we can also read the narratives of a few divorced women, living the stigmatization of the society and adopting creative strategies of self-presentation, as well as tactics of survival in the social spaces (Debarre, 2011). A clear testimony of the very delicate life condition of these young women (much beyond the new *code* and the general assumptions) to assume her divorce and to deal with the social representations and stigmas, as well as with their own families' expectations and reactions.

Actually, many other life histories may be quoted. For example, that of a migrant entrepreneur moving among the valley of the Ouneine (in the Souss region), Casablanca and Shanghai. By means of his narrative we arrive to understand not only about his life and his work, but also a lot about the specificity of his family of origin, in the 70s, in a rural context of Morocco, his own family living in Casablanca and his children's composite living experience of a "modern" and "mobile" family throughout Morocco and elsewhere.

Hence, we need to deeply take into account such precious ethnographies and research attesting to the complexity of daily lives and daily practices of the Moroccan citizens, from the micro viewpoints of single individuals, as such and as members of a family.

The Moroccan contemporary families are living a transition, a change, a passage, all that needs to be observed and studied. In fact, it comes to be the sign of a change not only in the Moroccan changing society but also, and may be before, in the most intimate spaces of construction of the *self* and of the individual meant as a *person*.

FAMILIES AS PLACES OF RENEGOTIATION OF CULTURAL (AND RELIGIOUS) HORIZONS

Since "the family is the educational place for excellence" where a person finds his origin and grows the roots of this dynamic identity (Caputo, 2006 p. 14), it is essential to investigate in depth the difficult on-going re-composition of the family itself, especially in Morocco, where the family keeps on having a main role inside the society, even if its situation is quite paradoxical.

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[15]We refer to the fieldwork achieved by myself in the frame of my anthropological research (on migratory mobility and social and cultural changes in Moroccan migrants' contexts of origin and other related issues) in the regions of Tedla (2003–2006), Sousse (2005–2008), Haut-Atlas (2003–2006). We also refer to other anthropological and pedagogical researches in the urban contexts of Casablanca (2007–2010) and Rabat (2007–2014). See Gandolfi (2005; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2012).

[16]Even if we did not focus on this delicate issue in this paper, we cannot avoid considering the family also as a place of violence and abuse. Some associations and NGOs have produced important reports and documents on this subject. In addition to that, among the rare research, see Guessous & Guessous (2004). We may also argue how, in the last ten years, in Morocco, the possibility of discussing about violence in public contexts has gradually evolved. This has slightly contributed to consider violence as not natural. Nevertheless, it is not only important for the state to provide with suitable laws, but also to create some adequate structures able to help the victims and re-habilitate the convicted (Bargach, 2006). Concerning violence against the woman see also the survey achieved by the United Nations and published in Arabic (Al-Umam al-Muttahida, 2006).

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As we have already observed, the family is still a source of affection and repair in the case of moral and material crisis, but it is also at the core of a crisis of values, since the "traditional" ones have been destabilized by the external models, especially coming from the media, the satellites, the new media and the migratory mobility. Therefore, the family faces a tension between an evident process of individualization and a living experience full of constraints, still structured by the patriarchal family.

Within this frame, what might be or become the relation between this main educational place and one of the most important agencies of education such as the *school,* especially since in Morocco it has intended to become a "space of democratization and education to the citizenship"? (El Ouazzani et al., 2010; Gandolfi, 2010) What about the cultural project of the school, if it wants to be aware that the cultural values are constantly mediated or reinvented nowadays in the multiple institutions of the society and, first of all, in the contemporary families?

The National Inquiry on the Values in Morocco has showed a main change concerning the relations among parents and children. The *autonomy* of the children and the *dialogue* emerged as values more consistent than the *obedience* (that was one of the main values in the families of the past). All that partially questions the traditional concept of authority (Marcuse, 1969) and the relation "*master-disciple*" (Hammoudi, 2001) in the Moroccan families, but also in the scholastic contexts.

Hence, we might underline here how gender relations and equality of rights between men and women, should be investigated and debated at school, starting by the students' living experiences within their own families and their daily practices. The youth should really be accompanied by the school in their analysis and comprehension of familiar experiences, even if complex and contradictory (Arnot and Dillabough, 2000).

Last but not least, we should consider the connection among educational processes, family relations and the "religious dimension" of life. We intend here to consider the religious sense or attitude towards life, much more than the religious practices in the daily life. In other words, we refer here to the psychological condition of welcoming a new life and the implementation of care reserved to this condition. In every family, independently from the religious identity or the secular attitude or, in the meantime, the co-presence of a religious and a secular identity—as many socio-anthropological researches show (El Ayadi et al., 2007)—the members of the family somehow "*give a body and a figure to their religious meaning*" (Moscato, 2006; El Ayadi et al., 2007). And this suggests a new important field of investigation.

The idea is to understand how a family, as being a participative model of an educational relation, becomes the reality where each cultural horizon is mediated.

Now, what about if we should consider religious horizons, as well?

Even if we choose not to focus, in this paper, on an investigation about the families in Morocco from the point of view of the religion, nevertheless the relation to the religion – of course - might be revelatory of many transformations. Here, we just suggest few ideas in order to understand the range and the complexity of the issue.

In the frame of contemporary change processes, which is the religion that is mobilized by the youth? Essentially, it is not the religion of the fathers but the one coming from their individual choice. In fact, the actual generations adopt the religion after having studied it in many ways and by means of different sources (Tozy, 2006; El Ayadi et al, 2007).[17]

In the context of the religion, since the religious proposals are so diversified and not completely controlled by the State, the Moroccan people often try to recompose their own "religious menu" (Tozy 2006, p. 231) and allow themselves to a sort of syncretism within the Islamic religion of different approaches and sometimes with other religions and approaches, too.

Again, here comes the importance of the school and its responsibility in giving the youth the instruments to navigate in the free market of these multiple religious values (Tozy, 2009; El Ouazzani et al., 2010; Gandolfi, 2010; 2012b; 2012c).

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[17]In their daily life, the Moroccan young people find that the places and the sources for religious information and formation have multiplied and diversified. Media, new media, the Internet and transnational practices have brought fragmentation to the conventional religious authorities. They move among tradition, school, daily practices, family, associations and much more. Above all, they are constantly re-composing their way of believing and they consider themselves as actors of their religious knowledge. See chapter 5 in Gandolfi (2010).

The process of an "intellectual secularization" is late, compared to the process of a "social secularization" (Tozy 2006).[18] Therefore, within this field, as well, there is an urgency of an intellectual system of reference able to accompany these delicate change processes, at a religious level, too.

If the family is the horizon where the cultural (and religious) references are constantly renegotiated, a serious educational process should deeply wonder on how the educational practices, within the family and within the schools, might integrate each other but also enter into collision.

"MODERN ADAPTATION" OF TRADITIONAL NORMS: YOUNG ACTORS OF CHANGE IN THE RURAL AREAS

The analysis of the so-called "traditional values" (both at a cultural and a religious level) is not only in terms of continuity and rupture, but also between these two extreme points, we may find many other behaviors attesting to a change. To better understand these "nuances" of the change, we may consider—among the rest—that one peculiarity of Morocco is still a fundamental gap between the rural and the urban contexts of life.[19] Then, we choose to deepen the issue of the changing values in the contemporary families, directing our attention, for a little while, to the rural areas of the country.

First of all, we need to underline that the enlarged family is less and less valorized in the rural areas, too (Chekroun, 1994; Kerrou & Kharoufi, 1995; Haut Commissariat du Plan, 2006). Half of the people living in rural contexts do not choose to cohabit with their parents, also before the marriage, if they have the possibility to gain money, even if in precarious ways. Even if Rachik used to define the relations of parents and children in terms of "respectful distance" and "expected satisfaction" (Rachik, 2006, p.208), he was also suggesting that, in several rural contexts, values such as the autonomy, the individual property, and the intimacy of the couple were quite widespread since the 90s.

Within the rural regions, we can easily observe the re-composition, the reactivation and the invention of communitarian values around new collective goods introduced by the public powers, international organizations and associations (Rachik & Larabi, 2002; Rachik, 2006).

What I'd like to draw attention to is that, more and more often, in these rural areas, we find a meaningful role of the new young and educated leaders of associations, managing the collective properties. Within this frame, the communitarian values are less focused on the compromises and the reinterpretation of the past and more related to a pragmatic discourse with a universal approach. That's why we might arrive to consider a vision of the modernity not as a refusal of the tradition but, instead, as a reflected, rational, "modern" adaptation of the traditional norms. In my opinion, this is the main issue at stake in the change processes affecting the rural towns and villages, both at the level of the young leaders of the associations managing the collective needs and at the level of the intimate contexts of the family circle. And the youth is the main actor of this complex process.

MOROCCAN YOUTH: POLITICS OF DISSENT AND MEANINGFUL CHANGES THROUGH THE DAILY PRACTICES

Among the many different methodologies of analysis, we might approach an investigation on the changing families in Morocco by focusing on the *children* and, therefore, on the contemporary *youth*.

"While often referred to as "builders of the future" by the power elites, the young are also stigmatised and "feared" as "disruptive agents prone to radicalism and deviance" (Bayat & Herrera, 2008, p. 3).

Even if youth is hardly an analytical category or an homogeneous reality, the young might "share a certain *habitus*" and an "historical consciousness" (Bourdieu, 1969) that may be underlined and deeply explored. Since independence in Morocco, the researches about youth have been carried out mainly using quantitative surveys, with few meaningful exceptions (Adam, 1962; 1968; Pascon & Bentaher, 1969; Bennani Chraibi, 1994; Bourquia et al., 1995). Afterwards, few studies from the academia have played a role in attesting to the diversity and the specificity of the Moroccan youth (Bourquia et al. 2000, El Ayadi, 2007, 2010; Boudarbat & Ajbilou, 2007, etc.).[20]

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[18]Concerning the actual subject of the evolution of the religious sphere in Morocco see Tozy (2009; 2013).

[19]In order to understand this gap within an historical and anthropological perspective, among others, see the special issue of *Prologues* (2000).

[20]Even if sometimes the media have kept representing them in two main polarised groupings (roughly, the Islamists and the secular).

Briefly, the data (as well as the qualitative researches) about the Moroccan youth have been very rare for many years (Tozy, 2006), even if it was widespread the conscience that the youth is one the main vectors of change and of tension, too.

We might address different questions about the Moroccan young people, from their own perspective or rather from the perspective of political and religious authorities, from the viewpoint of the market, the media, the new media, the civil society and many other viewpoints. Observing the attitudes, cultural behaviors and tendencies, we might find a "dialectical interplay" (Bayat & Herrera 2010) between different forces and actors, and we might find how the Moroccan youth are "in constant negotiation" about being Muslim, modern, young and Moroccan. Class, gender, education and cultural divides interplay in the construction of the youth, as well (Gandolfi, 2010).[21] In Morocco, as elsewhere at a global level, "the new information communication technologies, from mobile phones to Internet, have changed the landscape of youth learning, culture, sociability, and political engagement" (Bayat & Herrera, 2010, p.10). Being, in the meantime, producers and consumers of meanings, the young interact with their peers in a non-hierarchical way, with multiple aims such as interaction, leisure, consumption, information and political action. A main part of this youth is educated and has a "growing consciousness" about social issues such as justice and human rights, partially coming from civil society's activism, partially by the new media and finally by the contemporary cultural production (Gandolfi, 2012a). One of the main issues to observe is how young people act, write, chat, sing, shoot videos and film, protest, join organizations, take advantage of the opportunities and bypass constraints as well as social and political controls (Herrera & Bayat, 2010).

Making the best of what is available seems to be the *art* of these young people, their "politics of possibility" made of "accommodating strategies" that can also be transformative (Gandolfi 2012b; 2012c). According to Bayat (2009), the "youth operate within and use the dominant (constraining) norms and institutions, especially religious rituals, to accommodate their youthful claims, but in so doing they creatively redefine and subvert the constraints of those codes and norms" (Bayat & Herrera, 2010, p.18). Within this frame, from my point of view, it is fundamental to understand how the very first level of these "accommodating strategies" and "politics of possibility" happen within the family contexts, in daily family life. The intergenerational relations are, somehow, one of the first fields where the young members of a family in contemporary Morocco invent their own way of negotiating among the past and the future, among multiple systems of norms and values. Before then in social and political contexts, ordinary people can make meaningful change through the practices of everyday life, in their most intimate contexts of life, such as, primarily, their families.[22]

MIGRANTS' FAMILIES: ORIGINAL ARTICULATION OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

The first level of these "subversive accommodations" deals with an *elsewhere* and with *alternative* models of lifestyle and values coming from the new media, the Internet, satellites, activism of associations, artistic creations, transnational practices and mobility. Stressing the attention on this last component of the transnational mobility, I'd like to suggest that the originality of the demographic transition in Morocco may be found precisely in its migratory specificity. Actually, in many regions of the country, nearly each family has at least one member living abroad (one person out of 11 of the total Moroccan population lives abroad, Courbage, 2002). Then, we need to consider the visible and hidden roles of the *diaspora* on the transformations of society (Vertovec and Cohen, 1999). Doubtless, migration contributes to reinventing the habits of consummation, the aspirations towards best conditions of life, the re-evaluation of the costs and advantages of the children—all that has changed the demography of the families (as well as the access to school) in urban and in rural areas (even if a strong gap between them persists).

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[21]See the research on "Being Moroccan today: To educate the youth among imaginary, cultures for change and artistic creations." See especially Chapter 6 in Gandolfi (2010). See also Gandolfi (2012).

[22]It would be interesting to read the recent movement of protest (*Mouvement du 20 Fevrier*) and the political and social action of the Moroccan youth during the last years—but also its failure—in relation to this "politics of possibility" and to these "subversive accommodations," as well as in relation to the specific characteristic of contemporary Morocco. Moreover, it would be fascinating to try to understand these social and political movements of the young people going back to the intimate family contexts of "experimentation" of change and dissent in their daily practices.

With such premises, I believe we still have to deeply investigate the educational models and practices of the migrants' families and how they affect the Moroccan society.

In the past, we observed many fathers going abroad for several years, leaving their families in Morocco in the first phase of their migration. In some rural areas, we still find sometimes the case of fathers who have migrated and have never brought their families abroad. But the examples might be more numerous and diversified and each of them generates a specific living experiences of the family that deserves to be studied in depth.

Among the many records, we may refer to the many migrant families living ambivalent relations with their country of origin and the *myth* of the *return*. Moreover, nowadays some children—born abroad or migrated when they were little—face themselves to be repatriated because of the actual international economic crisis. Actually, the case studies might be much more detailed and numerous. The children living abroad and coming back to Morocco during the summer holidays sometimes find different educational and cultural models in comparison to those they live daily abroad. Sometimes they experience how their parents' educational practices are rigid and far from the ones widespread in the contemporary Moroccan families. In this situation, their families express a sort of "specific educational incongruity" (Moscato, 2006, p.135). Finally, investigating about the continual localization and re-localization (Basch et al., 1994) of values and cultural practices and their effects on the living experiences and the daily relations in the families, has an essential importance, not only in the migrants' living places, but also in contemporary Morocco.

WHICH GENDER APPROACH? AMBIGUITIES AND CREATIVITY OF TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICES IN-BETWEEN MULTIPLE FAMILIES

Some research focuses on migrant women and their transnational living experiences *in-between* (Bhabha, 1994) multiple social contexts, in Morocco and in Europe (Salih 2003), underlining their role in the cultural changes, in light of their specific feminine practices and their key role within their families. Some of the researchers come to define women as the main vectors of change in the migratory processes and as the first characters of change dynamics "from the bottom" also in their contexts of origin (Lacroix, 2005; Gandolfi, 2005; 2009). Some surveys on the interrelations among migratory mobility and transformations in the contexts of origin show that the multiple daily cultural practices of the migrant women are very much articulated and complex, and they highlight similar practices among other women in Morocco, especially within their own family or among their friends, relatives and neighbors' families.

These pieces of socio-anthropological research attest to a re-elaboration of norms among different cultural contexts of reference. Very often, these transnational living experiences are sources of incertitude, disease, insecurity, yet—more often than how we might expect—the women also find *creative* ways of articulating between *here* and *there*, and they translate these articulations in *composite* daily cultural practices (Salih, 2001; Gandolfi, 2005; 2010).

Probably, gender studies in contemporary Morocco should take into account an analysis of gender in transnational contexts. In fact, it becomes important as a gender approach to the change processes in specific relation to the feminine transnational mobility. Such surveys should focus on the creative re-elaboration of women's daily practices and should come to underline the complex and ambiguous educational models in the family contexts, *in-between* Morocco and migrants' places of residence.

Ruba Salih's brilliant research showed how Moroccan migrant women between Italy and Morocco hardly know where to imagine their *self* and their *home* (in Morocco? in Italy? elsewhere? in-between Italy and Morocco?). Nowadays, I think the unconditional next step of the actual researches about migrant women is the investigation of how they conceive and imagine their being "mothers" ("daughters," "wives," "sisters"...) and how their educational and cultural practices impact their places of living, as well as Morocco.

Which are these women's re-elaborations of the educational and *care practices*? How can a transnational living have an impact on the educational styles and the relations among the members of the family also in the contexts of origin? What kind of ambiguities and contradictions, together with original articulations, might we find among such different family lifestyles and care practices?[23]

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[23]For an in-depth view and comprehension of the care practices see also Mortari (2006).

Among the rare research that tried to understand the living experiences within the families in contexts of migration, I'd like to draw attention to the comparison of Italian and Moroccan parents and their educational representations and care practices with children of the first childhood in Italy (Zaltron, 2009). This work showed that the tensions and transformations, as well as the roles of the father and of the mother and their negotiations, were much more connected with gender differences than with cultural differences between the Italian and the Moroccan parents. The research showed that the main changes in the parental relations and the modalities of being responsible in the migrants' families where in terms of gradual reconfiguration of the gender roles and of original articulation of multiple daily practices and care practices. All that suggests the necessity of an investigation with a full gender approach and an analysis of women's transnational practices *in-between* multiple family representations. In migratory places and in Morocco, where women's living experiences meet some endogen feminine change processes and some Moroccan families" lifestyles already in a continuous flux of transformation, between *roots* and *elsewhere*.

ROOTS AND FREEDOM

With all these premises, we face the need to build a process of socialization able to educate children to build up an autonomous personality, which will not necessarily follow the orientations proposed by their parents. The family, paradoxically, finds itself to elaborate some relational strategies towards children who cannot have the same model of socialization of the past generations and whose visions of life cannot refer uniquely to the certitudes of the tradition.

Hence, the family searches for a *meaning* and, most of all, needs to comprehend a *meaning* which derivates from a *difference.* So, it has to look for "itineraries of meaning" moving among the acts of the present and the memory and the reinterpretation of the past. Within this framework, the adult generations should transmit delicate models of reference and a knowledge of the past that should even look toward the future. This is the main issue: there is a mystery in the life of children, as Pasolini (1992) wrote in his book *Petrolio,* a mystery that renovates at each time the titanic clash between the old and the new, the "*roots*" and the "*freedom*" (Faben, 2002). And the encounter between the present and the past produces the change process. In contemporary Morocco, the relations of power, the ways of communication, the social values, the parents' role are tied to an education of the children producing something necessarily *different.* That difference is so clearly evoked by Gibran's (1923) words in his poem "On Children:" "Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. (. . .) For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams."[24]

Finally, one of the suggestions of the qualitative research analyzed in this paper is that it's not necessary to eliminate the antagonistic expressions of the opposite discourses of tradition and modernity, of parents and children, because these antagonisms do not bring necessarily to the *division* of the families. In fact, in the internal dynamic of the family there is an on-going process of restraint of the contradictory discourses. On closer inspection, this is exactly what happen to some families of migrants, as we observed above, who adopt different ways of living, different values, trying to live *in-between* different cultural contexts and references. Actually, the aim is not to eradicate the tension generated by the (assumed) antithetic nature of discourses and practices, instead the aim is to enlighten the main ability of the contemporary families to restrain the tensions created by the coexistence of "opposite" (?) tendencies, in innovative ways. In contemporary Moroccan reality, marked by such deep and rapid change processes, the families who chooses one single direction intensely, loses part of their vitality, since the multiple directions are psychologically and pragmatically indispensable to live daily contemporary life.[25]

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[24]"Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you. And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts. For they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls. For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow. Which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams." Gibran K.Gibran, *The Prophet*, Martino Fine Books, 2011. Original edition by Afred A.Knopf, New York, 1923.

[25]One very important study on the families of refugees showed that the discourses and practices of opposite tensions may also enrich the living experiences of the families, obliging them to choose most creative ways of acting (Papadopoulos, 2002).

In addition to that, we might add that along with multiplicity of visions and directions, *creativity*, *invention* and *original re-composition* are keywords to inhabit these delicate and complex contemporary times.

IS IT A MATTER OF RESILIENCE?

If we intend the clash between the past and the present within families in terms of difficulties or crisis (if not even sometimes traumatic situations), we might find it appropriate to refer here to the concept of *resilience*, meant as the ability to emerge from a crisis or to crossover the difficulties. In which ways are families able to integrate the experiences of such crisis and go on with life? Which are the processes of a family that is able to manage their inner difficulties?

As we know, the resilience implies the existence of useful energies in difficult conditions, and it implies the resources and potentialities of a family to face such situations. It means, in other words, a positive transformation and en evolution (Walsh, 2008).

If we idealize the family of the past, the existence of new values, new configurations of the family and new gender roles might only appear as dysfunctional and compromising. Instead, as we have observed up to here, in light of the growing complexity of the Moroccan families, today, not only can we not refer to a single model of family but also "the family" should include different typologies, different forms of relationship among couples and different, formal and informal, family networks.

All the families, according to Walsh (2008), dispose of an adaptive, auto-regenerative potential. Essentially, it is the "*art of the possible,*" as she affirms. In her perspective, the resilience within the family might be understood as a sort of "*relational resistance.*"

Then, we might reaffirm that there are multiple tensions within the Moroccan socio-cultural context: the changes of the family configurations, the changes of the gender roles, the cultural complexity and the growing socioeconomic differences, the changes within the cycles of life. In the case of such a complex set of considerations, each family appeals to its histories, its myths and its narratives. There are histories and rituals that maintain a relation to the "family cultural heritage" (Walsh, 2008) (and we can just imagine how these narratives play an important role in migratory contexts). Therefore it's a matter of fragile balance among the multiple tensions of the present or future and the memory[26] (and care) of the past.

As Walsh reminds, Mary Bateson used to say: "Composing one life means to constantly re-imagine the future and re-interpret the past to be able to give meaning to the present" (Bateson, 29–30, 1989). I suggest that a family living experience is a constant dynamic of re-imagination of the future and re-interpretation of the past, with the aim of searching for a meaning of daily life.

Within this frame, as we observed, the apparent opposition between the past and the future or "tradition and modernity," in the specific and rapidly changing Moroccan context, might be experienced as a difficulty or as a crisis. But creativity, sometimes, comes along with adversities, and imagination can bring out of crisis.

In conclusion, I propose to read the contemporary Moroccan families' living experiences by means of their ability or, at least, their *possibility* to invent new paradigms of interaction.

In my opinion, the invention and the continual improvisation, and the possibility to create unforeseen and innovative situations is the key-factor in the changing Moroccan society. And the multiple research projects and narratives quoted, here above, attest to this "*art of the possible.*"

Somehow, it's an "exercise of thought" from generation to generation (Lizzola, 2009), a "capacity of presence" that demands creativity and courage.

After all, as the philosopher Agamben has very well shown, being contemporaneous means to live in his own time, but—in the meantime—to take distance from it, by means of types of *anachronism*s (Agamben, 2008). Being contemporaneous is "a matter of courage" (Agamben, 2008: 16).

Contemporaneous is this threshold between the "no more" and "not yet." It's a "variance" that has its basis in the "proximity to the origin." It's the possibility to transform the *time*, putting it into relation with *other time*s, in an *unforeseen* way (Agamben 2008). Isn't it a matter of resilience? Isn't it a matter of courage?

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[26]From this point of view, to remember and to keep the memory alive means to live in more than one world, in more than one context of life.

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