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**THEORIES REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT
AND FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY**

Abstract: The paper deals with several distinctive historical aspects regarding the family, as well as with other important family writings made by the great founding figures.

The 19th century sociologists consider the family to be a natural intermediate purpose which connects the individual to the society. It gives the scientist a special method to observe and discover the hidden laws of the social world, also constituting a double entrance: theoretical and methodological.

Several founding figures that have come up with important writings on the family will be illustrated in the following lines (Cicchelli-Pugeault & Cicchelli 1998):

Family – an important component of the sociological study (Auguste Comte)

Follower of the positivistic philosophy, Auguste Comte⁶ (1798-1857), in his works dedicated to social order he defines the real domestic regimes represented through the healthy conscience of our nature. Comte does not imagine studying family life and social life separately: if the family is the source and the element of society, society will apply an autonomous action on to the family. Analogically, he highlights the natural and spontaneous character of family and society, character ensuring an objective observation both of the family as an element of the society and of the society as a whole. In principle, the family constitutes a real sociologic element.

Defining the nature of positive morality based on the principle of universal love, Comte argues that there is continuity between the individual, the family and the society. Affection of the family contributes to raising the moral individual. Domestic affection (or conjugal affection) is fundamental to Comte, because it

⁶ Auguste Comte (1798-1857) – French philosopher and sociologist, founder of positivism and one of the founders of sociology.

crystallizes in a way the feeling of devotion based on a mutual agreement, being even a guarantee of the matrimonial link of indissolubility.

The Family and the Social Status (Alexis de Tocqueville)

Alexis de Tocqueville⁷ (1805-1859) is remarked amongst the founding figures who have elaborated valuable studies on the family. Even if France has misunderstood the contribution of his work for a long time, his writings on the family represent a sociological undeniable interest.

In Tocqueville's conception, organising the family depends on the organization and form of the society, and on the internal operation varying according to social status. He highlights the primacy of society over the politic and believes that a democratic state based on the equalization of living conditions, on the progress of a market economy where social mobility is much greater, and impregnates all the social institutions with its characteristics.

Tocqueville discovered the American society due to a trip in 1831, with his friend Gustav of Beaumont, in order to study the penitentiary system. On this occasion he is able to study the American family comparing it to the European one from the perspective of the consequences of social democratic status and other beliefs, attitudes, behaviour of people. Following his analysis, he tries to identify the contribution of families for maintaining the social order. Evoking the American family, he compares it to the European one which does not form a pure type but retains many features of aristocracy. Regarding the American side, the most important element which characterizes the family is the flattening of family relationships between generations and in particular the lack of worries regarding the perpetuation of human kind. This is the element which characterizes the series of transformations that Tocqueville detected and examined based on the European example. If family remains in the same stage in aristocratic nations for several decades, in democratic ones the contrary happens.

In Tocqueville's conception, the earth is the inheritance ensuring the future. The family represents the earth and earth represents the family: it perpetuates the name, origin, glory, power, virtue. The right to succession is the centre of attention. There where succession is organized around the first born, earth is passed from generation to generation without being divided. But, where succession legislation establishes the equal division, the family is preoccupied with the present and providing for the future generations.

Opposing the aristocratic family to the democratic one, Tocqueville is one of the first to elaborate a veritable sociology of family relations.

The Evolution of Family Organization Forms (Lewis Henry Morgan)

⁷ Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) – French liberal aristocrat, renowned for his studies related to the family, being one of first to elaborate a true sociology of domestic relations.

With his studies, mainly field studies, Lewis Henry Morgan⁸ (1818-1881), came closer to the scientific harshness. He has studied the life of Hurons in the State of New York for 20 years, and based on the discovered domestic relations he has obtained useful information in correctly explaining and interpreting the family in other regions of the globe. His important finding is that in Huron family life there are two different types of relations (Iluț, 1993): emotional relations between the family group members; domestic relations based on clearly defined norms and regulations.

Following his research, Morgan discovered that Hurons have a monogamous type of family named pair family, weak and unstable, where the real father is being recognized, a thing which is not realized in anterior marriage forms. The task for supplying with food and working tools is taken over by the male. Enhancing the economical and social importance of the male, he becomes interested that the goods of the family will be inherited by his legitimate children and therefore he imposes the interdiction that the female will be in a relation with other males. Therefore, the change from a matriarchal to a patriarchal family, the appearance of the private property and of the right to succession, have changed the relation between sexes and afterwards between classes.

Morgan manages for the first time to draw the family history based on the classical steps of its development. He discovers several forms for the family in its historical development. (Voinea, 1978):

- *Blood related family* where there is no regulation for sexual relations; the conjugal groups are divided on generations not excluding brothers, sisters, or cousins from the sexual relations;
- *The punalua family*, which excludes marriage between the closest relatives (e.g. brothers and sisters);
- *The pair family* (male and female) appears based on the extension of the sexual and marital restrictions to 2nd and 3rd degree cousins and other relatives; this formula is weak and unstable and therefore may be easily broken.

Morgan's as well as Bachofen's studies need to be regarded critically, because they have not studied the problems of the family and the evolution of its forms from a sociological point of view, and only from a religious, ethnic or other nature point of view.

The Family – The Image of Society (Frederic Le Play)

Examples of the first sociologic thinking are perceived in the work of the catholic conservator Frederic Le Play⁹ (1806-1882), witness to the political crises

⁸ Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881) – American anthropologist and ethnographer known for his studies on Indian tribes.

⁹ Frederic Le Play (1806-1882) – French thinker known through his wide research on the family, especially his fundamental monographic method of approaching the family.

of 1830, 1848, 1870, moments which have marked his thinking for the solution of the social problem.

Le Play's postulate is clearly enounced "Society is composed of both isolated individuals and families and the structure of the society varies depending on the family's regime" (Cicchelli-Pugeault, 1998, p.35). Social and family organisation are connected, the first expresses the smaller scale of the later, keeping its proportions, the family being the exact image of the society.

The theoretic core of Le Play's sociology is based on field work and the methodology is based on a monographic observation of working families. He has studied the prosperous families of labourers being convinced that their life is influenced by the environment, being able to offer conclusive aspects for the survey of the society influence on the domestic life. Presented only after fifteen years, his work, "*European Labourers*" describes the means of existence and the way of life of a labourer family. The collected data (ethnographic, demographic, etc.) regarding the family budget, ensures the scientific character of his study. The establishment of the budget of a family is preceded by preliminary observations which define the condition of several family members, accompanied by information regarding the frame of life, civil status, family history, and its moral traditions. The family budget is presented together with the use of the familial economies. This expresses an essential supposition of Le Play's approaches: if families are the source of social life, the organisation of this one forms a cosmos subordinated to the domestic universe.

Granting a main place to the social environment, Le Play's sociology presents the existence of a connection between the family and the society and uses a series of observations on the established connections between them. The analysis of these proportions introduces the theoretical study of the social function of the family and of its moral place in society.

The typology is based on the mean of transmission of the patrimony, which is not the exclusive object of the analysis. He classifies the family in three main types:

- *The Patriarchal Family* is a first type studied by Le Play. He takes care of maintaining the patrimony and the tradition, the patriarchal family values the designation of an heir and does not impose celibacy, allowing all the children to get married. After marriage, the children do not leave the parents' home.
- *The Modern Family (unstable)*, where children, after marriage, leave the parents and become independent. Children do not stay in their parents' home only until they get married and form a family limited in size, menacing the society with depopulation. This type of family seems to be unstable, as long as it does not really depend on a home. The unstable family decreases slowly

once the adult children leave and disappears when parents die, dividing the inheritance, leaving nothing behind and not being able to stimulate brothers and sisters to keep in touch. The equal division of the patrimony by the children creates less favourable conditions in maintaining a social organisation based on family unity. He identifies equal division as being a destruction factor of the family stability, and menacing the continuity of the family.

- *The Stem Family*, where only one of the children remains with the parents, leaving together with them and his own family. The organisation of the family is structured by the ownership of the home, transmitted from generation to generation. The first born marries, has children, inherits everything and learns the same occupation as his father.

In his opinion, the ideal type is the Stem Family, which represents the optimum environment capable to fight against social disorganisation.

As well as Tocqueville, Le Play has been slightly forgotten in France, while in Anglo-Saxon countries his image still lives.

The Family – a Social Fact (Emile Durkheim)

Emile Durkheim¹⁰ shows a profound interest towards the family. Until his death he deals with the “Household Organisation” column from the sociologic Annual, magazine founded by him in 1898. In an introductory lecture on the sociology of the family he taught 10 years before the important works in 1890, he left aside any psychological explanation, establishing a rank of the societies which he adds to the study of the family and constitutes, and in his opinion, the oldest and the simplest *social space* possible. In all his works the modality of defining the social under the angle of his spontaneous character, of his own reality and family organisation is distinguished. He proposes to examine the family respecting the natural order of things. In order to reach the structure of a real family type clearing any prejudice, the identification of collective, regulated and constant practices is imposed. With the example of the family, Durkheim defines his study object to be the *social fact*. Considering this aspect, the social analysis is based on demographics, on law and on vice, with ethnographic and historical sources.

Durkheim is one of the most ardent critics of contractualists qualified as artificialists. For him, who gives to the affection an important place in his works on marriage, the family, even if it is not legally united, it is not really reduced to its legal expression. If divorce results from the decision of both partners, marriage should be supported by the will of the partners. The origin and the mutations of the family are a priority to him. The study of the past should allow the appreciation of the present. By

¹⁰ Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) – French sociologist who, influenced by de A. Comte, defined the object and method of sociology, considering the social phenomena as exterior in relation to the individual, and the representation and common feelings or collective as sources of religion and moral.

sociologically knowing the family, Durkheim states his most famous saying “Going back in the past, we never lose sight of the present” (Cicchelli-Pugeault, 1998). The intergenerational dimension is no longer the essential element which structures the family relation.

Durkheim does not isolate the family from its social environment. He is interested by the contemporary family inserted into a liberal, industrial, democratic European society and defines the main family relations stopping on those viewing the state as an expression of the connections between the domestic area and the social one. He emphasises the external structures’ force pushing down on the family, in other terms on the definition of the social.

The Perspective of the American School

In the U.S.A., the sociology of the family has developed before the European one. In the '30 one of the analyses represents the study of the traditional immigrant family decomposition in the American society. This form is studied by the Sociologic School of Chicago sensitive to the urbanisation phenomenon. The American Society of that period confronts with serious social problems (unemployment, crisis, cultural adaptation, etc.) which are acutely felt on a family level. These problems impose the immediate intervention of the state which wanted to take decisions especially based on scientific information and therefore they have encouraged a series of studies in this direction.

In such a research, with an essential role in the evolution of family studies *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: The Monography of an Immigrant Group* (appeared on 1918-1920, in Chicago) W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, based on the analysis of correspondence of Polish families to immigrant members (to America) highlights several changes in the authority structure inside the family. The authors try to demonstrate that the comunitary solidarity function, which animate the families in the beginning, disappear with the second generation. With all its theoretical composition, this monography, together with other works, does not surpass the level empirical data comment, mainly researching the historical dimension. The studies of this period have used a series of procedures (document analysis, questionnaires, talks with the family members, etc) and envisaged especially the families with serious problems, mainly economical problems. All these researches may be reunited under the name of the *Social Assistance American School* the contribution of which has been the elaboration microtheories related to misunderstandings inside the family (Iluț, 1993).

The American sociologist Reuben Hill, highlights in his studies the superiority of the isolated nuclear family, compared to the widened family because it may adequately respond to the requests of the industrialised society. Hill make the distinction between 7 possibilities of approaching the family (Mitrofan, 1989): the historical institutional perspective; the perspective of learning analysis and intellec-

tual development; the perspective of family roles interaction; the situational – psychological perspective; the structural – functional perspective; the economical organisation of the household perspective; family development or family cycle of life perspective.

Previously, in 1960, Hill and Hansen reduce the schematics of theoretical approaches within the study of the family to five criteria: interactional criterion; structural-functional criterion; situational criterion; institutional criterion; family development criterion.

Another reference item in American sociology is the study of **William Goode**, mainly his most famous work “*World Revolution and Family Patterns*”. Without contesting the general influence of industrialisation and urbanisation on to the family, Good considers that all the factors of industrialisation and urbanisation, which are the cause for the appearance of the conjugal family, can not be identified. Moreover, his conception is that the changes of a family are not just mere consequences of industrialisation but there are a series of internal factors which may influence the development of the industrial society. His affirmation – with examples from world cultures – is that not only the industrial revolution has managed to change the family but the family has changed the revolution as well: the types of family have determined, or at least have facilitated the industrial revolution. In Western Europe, especially in England where industrialism was born, the nuclear family is massively represented before its official appearance. In Goode’s conception, the family is the social institution which ensures the cohesion of the entire society. He develops as universal functions of the family those which prepare the individual for the society.

The Theory of Nuclearisation (Talcott Parsons)

The theme of western family progressive decrease developed by the American Talcott Parsons¹¹ (1902-1979) is often interpreted as a coronation of the classical tradition. Parsons considers the nuclear family to be a product specific for modernity. He believes into a reduction of the number of members and a transfer of family functions in favour of other institutions. For example the state, school, work, mass-media, all of them compete with the family both in the educational area as well as in the productive one. This aspect is correlated with the dimension decrease of the paternal authority, the American parental system being organised, mainly, around the conjugal dimension. Parsons has reduced the political, religious and productive functions almost completely, the most significant being, in his opinion, the socialisation, partner affective security ensuring, and consumption functions. The socialisation function is realised through the relation parents-children,

¹¹ Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) – American sociologist, representative of structural-functionalism, one of the founders of the social action theory.

and implies their attachment to one another. This kind of relation and implicitly the socialisation function depends on: the specific of the society and the family organisation inside the given society; the social class to which the family group belongs; the parent's occupation and the training level; the (urban or rural) environment to which the family belongs; the habits and mentalities specific to the environment (Voinea, 1978).

Parsons highlights two types of family: the first one is the one where the individual is born, also called *orientating family*, and the second one *reproduction family* created by marriage. The 'typical' conjugal family leaves in an independent home with its own economical resources, earned with the acquisition of household incomes independent of any particular connection to the parents. The adult presented by Parsons attributes more importance to the conjugal relations, with the extent where the relations with the ascendants and collaterals fall down.

Accordingly, Parsons' sociology about the family is based on the value of two central functions:

- On one hand, the author emphasises the primary socialisation, on the interiorisation of the values of society where the child is born. With the help of parents, and also the school, children manage to integrate in their age group, learn to develop the necessary motivations for personal success, important condition for the integration into the society founded on perfection;
- On the other hand, Parsons argues that couple's life and family life may ensure the condition for maintaining adult personality stability: choosing the partner is based on the feeling of love opposed to parents controlled marriages.

Considering these two functions, Parsons affirms that this type of family contributes to the formation of an individual capable of self control and action into a liberal and democratic society. The analysis of these two functions allows him to discover the eventual internal struggles. If the child is the object of an increased affection, he is exposed since his childhood to several constrains: the relations with his peers will depend on the status of his family; he will have to succeed in life on his own. Between the first socialisation and the beginning of his life in a couple, adolescence and youth do not form only periods of apprenticeship in life but is the tension period between the parental affective dependency and the orientation towards the acquisition of the personal status (Cicchelli-Pugeault, 1998).

In conclusion, the essence of his thesis refers to reducing the domestic group: the contemporary American family may carry out undiscovered functions, which agree with the needs of a modern society, the product of which it really is.

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THEORIES REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY

Articol descrie teoria de bază ale creării și funcționării de familie. The paper deals with several distinctive historical aspects regarding the family, as well as with other important family writings made by the great founding figures.

М.К. Шмидт

ТЕОРИИ СОЗДАНИЯ И ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ СЕМЬИ

В статье рассматриваются основные направления создания и функционирования семьи. Рассматривается особый исторический ряд аспектов, касающихся семьи, а также записи важных выступлений великих деятелей образования.

М. К. Шмідт

ТЕОРІЇ ФОРМУВАННЯ ТА ФУНКЦІОНУВАННЯ СІМ'Ї

В статті розглядаються головні напрямки формування та функціонування сім'ї. Розглядається особлива історична низка аспектів, що стосуються сім'ї, а також нотатки важливих виступів великих діячів освіти.

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РОЛЬ ФОБИЙ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ МИРЕ

Постановка проблемы. Количество фобий увеличивается с каждым днем и уже перевалило за тысячу. Только на букву «А» их 69. Наличие фо-