

Traditionalism, Modernity, Postmodernity - Functional Aspects of Manifestation

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Abstract: The evolution of social systems has a direct impact on the family, which influences the mode of functionality, the variety of types of relationships between partners, role structure, gender relations, etc. By taking into consideration common conceptions, the Romanian family is considered to be a modern one, but, scientifically analyzing the landmarks of functionality, the logic of role distribution and gender relations, it is rather a society in transition to modernity. Of course, the landmarks of modernity are not unknown to contemporaneity, but, as a whole, the Romanian family still feels traditional influences. The study aims to highlight the functional patterns of these marital structures, showing the specific ways of organizing functions, role dynamics, evolutionary resources, but also the value intersection specific to this transition from one marital system to another.

Keywords: *traditionalism, modernity, postmodernity, conjugality, relational individualism.*

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1. From traditionalism to postmodernity - functional landmarks of the manifestation of conjugal systems

When assessing their evolution, the transition of conjugal systems from traditional to modern is gradual, differentiated, either according to the cultural resistance of communities, or according to the ability of the partners to adapt to novelty.

Therefore, without pretending to find the only form of classification of conjugal systems that marks the transition from traditional to modern, on such an axis we can find five systems: the classical traditional system, the family transitioning to modernity, the modern system, the hybrid conjugal system (mostly modern, but with postmodern influences) and the postmodern marital system.

1.1 Marital dimensions - functional aspects

In the first category, that of the traditional classical system, classical conjugal structures are observed, in which the rules are established by the community and the couples adhere to them. The traditional family is characterized by a type of mechanical solidarity (Durkheim, 2008), individuals having a collective personality, the rules being a construction of the community, not their own. For this reason, the relations between the spouses, the distribution of roles, the relations with the extended family, the fulfillment of its functions were fixedly defined by sets of imperatives transmitted through the community culture.

The family transition system marks the moment of detachment from the rigid structure of traditionalism. In itself, the system of rules that guarded the traditional environment was so well constructed that one could not understand the way out of such a system. The high social instances controlled everything, the community culture stimulated the hierarchical orientation and the family was evaluated, both from the outside and from the inside, by its own hierarchical system. Therefore, if within the family, "sin" could have found resources of tolerance, the village moral instances had the role of ensuring cultural conformity and sanctioning behaviors considered undesirable. The evolution of the Romanian family from traditionalism to modernity is triggered by actions that are external to it and to the cultural environment that censors any "lack of morals", the main moment for this being industrialization. The high number of jobs has prompted the authorities to take over the male labor force from the agricultural area and move it to factories. In the absence of men, women began to assume new decisions, new roles, some of them also engaged in industrial work, so the whole

construction of the old imperatives became weaker and weaker. The transition period was characterized by a set of family actions focused on traditional behaviors, but with a tendency towards modernity. Inheritance dependence, as the only form of subsistence in the traditional space, strongly supported obedience. Industrialization offered the alternative of being able to obtain material resources, independent of the family's decisions regarding the inheritance and the possibility of employing the woman became the basic premise in this beginning of the construction of autonomy.

From another point of view, the autonomy of young people would further weaken the authority of the extended family group and the authority would gradually change its values towards cooperation. Families are becoming less and less numerous, the intimacy of partners is increasing, external influences are diminishing more and more, and community life is gradually changing to a nuclear family.

The social stage can be seen as that of an intermediate marital system of resistance, thus stepping more and more in the area of modernity. The functional bases of this couple are no longer the traditional ones, but the transitory ones, in which the capacity of adaptation and assimilation of the new roles is much greater than in the case of the couples in the first phases of transition to modernity. This category of couples lasted until the phase of the last duels with the traditional imperatives and the idea of "resistance" derives precisely from the discomfort created by these forms of cultural dissonance. Socialized according to the mentalities of the parents, therefore, in areas of traditional influence, young people try to build new relationships in which love, equity, gender balance, marital role, individual and common satisfactions offer the level of quality of married life.

This stage shows the assimilation of values at the ideational level, but the actual behavior needs time until the "final update". The social moment of this intermediate stage of development of the Romanian conjugal structures cannot be considered to be a over. It is still present in many marital or non-marital structures. Often, the reluctance of the man, primarily specific to the man due to the loss of certain status values, tends to slow down this process of modernization in role behavior. In today's social space, arguing the superiority of male status is difficult with objective reasoning, which is why the trend of social argumentation based on social stereotypes becomes, in itself, a strategy. With its alleged social "legitimacy" generated by the fact that they are widely known and little disputed, social stereotypes are often used to argue: " Who should cook in the family? A: The woman !; Who is the best cook? A: The man! ". Therefore, the adaptation to equality of the conjugal role is atypical - men assume the values of status, but not the related roles.

(Apostu, 2013, p. 212) We often have a modernity of statements rather than concrete facts that define the relationship between the sexes.

The modern family system is based on the total structural detachment from the traditional system. In this system, modernity is also legitimized by traditions, but some new ones detached from the reluctance and imperatives of classical traditionalism. Although in the previous conjugal system we can speak of a small number of people that adhere to that stage, still modernity defines marriage mainly as a nuclear structure. Nuclearity refers not only to the number of members that make up a family but also to the type of cultural structure. A family may have a small number of members, but if that family is a subsystem of an extended family group (totally governed or influenced), then we cannot speak of a nuclear structure.

The modern family is characterized by a balanced role structure, by a functional dynamic influenced by the life context of the two partners (births, career, etc.), by independence and autonomy, by egalitarian attitudes regarding the gender relationship, etc.

For a greater evidence of these types of structures we will theoretically build an extended framework on what the traditional family, the modern family and the new orientations of postmodernity mean.

The hybrid marital system encompasses cultural influences from several backgrounds and has its origins in the differences in the cultural evolution of the partners. During the transition from traditional to modern, individuals have differentiated evolutions depending on the ability to take on novelty, depending on the willingness to participate in such a structure or depending on the strength of cultural imperatives working in the background. The availability of one partner's postmodern commitment is not always at the same level as that of the other partner. There are conjugal structures in which, based on expectations of status, one partner combines landmarks of modernity with others of a traditional nuance, while the other partner thinks of its individual fulfillment. Gradually, the value controversy between the two partners regarding the principles of life, the way in which they share their roles and functionally participate in the common life creates the premises for a faster evolution towards the functional landmarks of postmodernity. In other cases, of course, the difficulties of adaptation open the premise of dissolution rather than the value update for the harmony of the couple.

The postmodern marital system sees the evolution of the couple from the perspective of two individual accomplishments. Each partner is seen by the other as a resource for personal fulfillment and the happiness of each of them subsequently creates common happiness and codependence. Thus, if in the case of modernity, solidarity could be seen as a function to

which the partners adhered through the very culture of conjugality in which they were socialized, in postmodernity, solidarity becomes the natural consequence of the two individual accomplishments from which common happiness derives.

2 From solidarity to relational individualism - the social evolution of marital systems

2.1. The traditional family

In its traditional image, the village was represented by a type of closed society, static, and with too few relations with the outside. Relations with nature and the succession of generations were coordinated by traditional forms of practice and religiously inspired codes of ethics that veiled the need for individual manifestation. Thus, the social man based his behaviors on religious conscience, feelings shaped by tradition and customs, placing special emphasis on the extended family and its general rules, to which they consecrated together. This framework, which expands the sphere of manifestation beyond family to relatives, friends or neighbors, has made for the individual personality to be absorbed in the collective personality, individuals largely dependent on both family and society (Mitrofan & Ciupercă, 1998, p. 29).

The main activity of the village was agriculture, the land being the economic base of the family, all its members concentrating their strength and attention on the agricultural exploitation that guaranteed their income (Ciupercă, 2000, p. 97). Everything that was produced was consumed in the family, with few products being used for exchange. Therefore, the household, as a unit of work, is the nucleus of the village.

At the base of each family was the man, who dominated all the other members. This meant that in the traditional family, the focal value of the lifestyle was the authority, which was supported by values such as hierarchy, conformity or repression. This lifestyle enshrines the authority of parents over children, the elderly over young people, men over women, older siblings over younger ones, and so on. (Mitrofan, 1999, p. 173).

Characterized by conservatism and stagnation, the basic characteristics of this type of family are reduced to three: the authority of the patriarch, the complete dependence of children on the family and the instruction that family was important, not personal fulfillment (Mitrofan & Ciupercă, 1998, p. 34).

The superior value of the family and the community favored conservative guidelines and rejected change. Marital relations were

themselves framed in the patterns of tradition that provided for the authority of the husband over the wife. She was submissive, without a strong personality, almost unpretentious, but instead had rights and obligations. On the other hand, the man had the dominant role in the family, this role deriving from the fact that he was the one who brought the income (Ciupercă, 2000, p. 64). He had a duty to ensure the proper functioning of the whole economic and social mechanism of the family, and although this set of roles would in itself be a resource of authority, the image of the value consistency of these roles was overshadowed by the masculine status around which they were placed and all the qualities that legitimized his priority in the domestic group.

Husband-wife relationships were based very little on love, but especially on respect. Their marriage was made on social and material grounds, and the choice of a partner was made exclusively by the parents, who made sure that the future partner was able to increase the wealth and ensure the survival of the family line. Therefore, it was not the feelings of affection and free choice of the future spouses that were the basis of a marriage, but the interests of the two families. Moreover, affective-sexual relations were dominated by the influence of the Church and the theological writings. They restricted sexual intercourse during certain periods, their frequency, and so on. The church forbade marriage for sexual pleasure, and sexual activity was justified only by procreation.

And not only did religion watch over the theological orientation of marriage contracting, but all cultural resources, often independent of the theological imperative. Thus, the very process of selecting marital partners is a discreet way of avoiding the "feeling of love." Regardless of the will of the young people, the material transactions made, as a priority, by the families before the marriage contract was conducted, show the optics and the importance of the legal fusion between two families and their children and less the emotional fusion between the young people who were going to get married. From another perspective, if the Church forbade sexuality for pleasure, the community tended to provide the framework for "sexual morality" by neglecting the feelings of young people through the imperative and independent marital decision of the families of origin. Moreover, the overcrowding of living spaces in traditional homes once again obscured young people's access to their own privacy.

Ethnographic data show that the age of girls who got married was between 15-20 years old, especially at 18 years old, and for men was 18-25 years old. And if girls sometimes got married under the age of 15, the boys who got married under the age of 18 were only exceptional cases (threatening

illness of one of the parents). They had to finish their army training, and this is why rarely was the marriage conducted earlier. From the age of 13-14, the girl's parents began the search for a suitable husband, which ruled out the problem of love from the very beginning. Thus, the traditional marriage was nothing more than a cohabitation agreement based on family economic conditions and the functionality of the partners, especially the woman, transactions made independently of the will of the young people. Because of this, the sex life had to find its balance within strict social norms, which protected the traditional family from the violence of feelings and passions outside the established framework. At the same time, the absence of love forced the couple to a minimum of functionality, a fact with profound implications on the satisfaction of family life (Ciupercă, 2000, p. 70).

Another element specific to the traditional family was the dowry. This rather important element in marital negotiations was not just a condition of a marriage. The dowry was a source of power for families. Not receiving land was tantamount to materially sabotaging one's own child. Therefore, the parents used the land and all the other elements of dowry not only in marital transactions but also as resources of authority in the relationship with their own child.

However, all the empirical observations show that, in the internal structure of family tasks, the mother was the main agent of care and education of the children, which is also recognized the men: "the woman takes more care of the children. Since they were little, she has had to take care of them. If she leaves home, how will she know what children need?" (Stănciulescu, 2002, p. 121).

Traditionalism, in its complexity, has thus imposed itself as an imperative force that has given clear prescriptions in all areas of social life. In this sense, Dumitru Sandu defines traditionalism as a probability of orienting behaviors and choices according to the "natural" instances of social life (community, church and family) and not for reasons of efficiency or compliance with the requirements of a court based on power from a source other than tradition. As such, the defining note of traditionalism is the consideration of tradition as the foundation of the social order, the normative character of tradition representing the force that ensures the perpetuation of society over time (Mitrofan & Ciupercă, 1998, p. 184).

In traditionalism, individuals did not have their own personality but a social one, which governed the communities, which imposed the rules and which in its structure led to conformity. The individual developed a rigid type of marital function because the family was the one who decided independently of their will when and with whom they would marry, what

would be the optimal time to give birth to children, etc. At the same time, within the pre-established community rules, the conjugal couple was free from the violence of emotions, family life did not have too many dilemmas, each partner having learned from home the specific elements in terms of distribution of authority, gender attitude, roles and other features.

2.2. The modern family

The modern family is a nuclear type of conjugal manifestation, the number of members is reduced, the functional structure and conjugal roles are much more relaxed and are based on equal relations between partners. Compared to the traditional family, the whole dynamic of functions, roles, status image acquire new differences that allow the partners to develop both individually and free solidarity.

Any change in family structure also requires a change in roles (Toffler, 1996, p. 203). This makes the traditional dominant model, in which the man dominates in conjugal and parental life, disappear in the modern family. The modern relationship captures the reciprocity of power and authority on different levels and different intensities. All tasks can be performed by both men and women. This leads us to another characteristic of the modern family - asymmetry. It highlights the tendency of one spouse to dominate. We thus deduce that equality can be understood through a complementarity of roles, attitudes and behaviors between the two sexes, through a balance of domains and levels in which the two exercise their authority and power.

The degree of involvement in family life depends on the perception of changing roles in the conditions of the existence of a professional career for one or both partners. When one of the partners is more focused on the career, the other has to take over some of the domestic tasks of the partner. Of course, the modern structure can also generate specific stresses and conflicts. Women's emancipation ensures a balance between partners but can also have negative effects if investing in a career neglects marital responsibilities.

The temptation of women's emancipation and the change of roles and division of labor, in fact, divides them between two directions: she fears that if she refuses to play the role of mother or wife, she could lose the security offered by the old feminine values. She loses her personality and this is because she constantly oscillates between her need for independence and her desire to relate to old values (Mitrofan & Ciupercă, 1998, p. 44).

On the part of the woman, working abroad increases her degree of happiness, self-fulfillment and self-realization. All this can be invigorating for the family only if the service of one of the spouses does not require a

high degree of involvement that would make them neglect the family and if the work they do does not enter into professional competition with the other partner. Otherwise, the career of one or both spouses may be an obstacle in their relationship. In this respect, because the family is no longer a self-sufficient productive unit, the problem of income in the modern family is a very important one. And because the husband is not the only source of family income anymore, as before, husbands are often put in a competitive position.

We thus see that the transition from community to society produces a substantial change in the conception of the family. The emancipation of women changes the power relations in the family, which stimulates equality between spouses. All these transformations of the family into modernity have led to major changes in its functions. Thus, in terms of its economic function, the family is no longer a self-sufficient productive unit, its members being dependent on income earned outside the household. The composition of the professional training of the descendants was then modified. The transfer of occupations from parents to children is less and less common due to the movement of the individual's workplace from within the family to the outside, in social enterprises. The contemporary family is also characterized by an unbalanced budget due to sporadic sources of income and large expenditures in a certain direction (especially those related to subsistence).

Socialization also undergoes transformations because the created social system has largely replaced the instructive-educational process in the family. In modern times, the school has replaced the education given only by parents. Parents can no longer pass on new knowledge to their children because it no longer meets current standards. By spending more time away from family, I spend less time with my children. Thus, they no longer have the time necessary to achieve a natural socialization, often they are not even aware of the need for educational actions (Voinea, 1993, cit. in Mitrofan, 1999, p. 475).

Family solidarity grows because it comes naturally. Partners are no longer required to play culturally predetermined roles, marital decision is a personal one, love becomes a basic criterion in partner selection, equity, adaptation, negotiation and flexibility of roles being resources that stimulate partners in building and substantiating marital solidarity.

The biological function also undergoes changes. If sexuality once had the sole role of reproduction, conjugal modernity has learned to separate sexuality from reproduction. Therefore, the intimate relations between the partners are no longer reduced to procreation but become a way of emotional communication, of experience in intimacy.

It should also be noted that sexuality in the modern social space can also have consequences of relational destabilization. An obsession with modernity is that of sexual addiction. The central position of sexuality in modern societies is indicated by the obsessive orientations of contemporary sexual behavior. Such an obsessive character is evident in the growing addiction to pornography, obscene magazines, movies, and in the determined pursuit of sexual experiences to which so many individuals devote themselves (Giddens, 1992, p. 169).

All these new concerns lead to a series of behaviors that often fall into two extremes: the desire to possess and the fear of not being good enough, going as far as inhibition. Therefore, the difference between the two lies precisely in the intensity and depth of these changes.

However, the social framework that modernity promotes is meant to increase the level of satisfaction and fulfillment of the partners. Freedom of decision, equity, lack of influence from the families of origin, the possibility of building intimacy without external influences are sets of advantages through which modernity offers families concrete resources for the construction of happiness.

2.3. The postmodern family

The postmodern family or the postmodern couple is a different structure from the two family types mentioned above. In the case of the traditional and the modern family we find the classical structure of the four great functions (biological, economical, socialization and solidarity), each of them fulfilled according to the cultural particularities of the respective society. Mechanically (the individual absorbed by the community and its rules and has a collective personality) or organically (the individual with his own personality), the fulfillment of conjugal functions and roles is achieved.

The first peculiarity of the postmodern individual is individualism. The new conjugal mentalities reverse the order of priorities regarding the sets of "benefits" that conjugality implies. "I" becomes the priority and then "we" begins to matter. This aspect has basic functional consequences on the structure of the postmodern couple. First of all, the selection of the marital partner is centered on a set of landmarks that primarily bring personal advantages: beauty, wealth, social position, fulfillment of personal needs, etc. The partners feel that they are no longer building their happiness in the name of their external principles, so they focus on it as a matter of priority. The consequences of such a relationship are seen at the level of functions. Marital individualists do not want large families, some couples do not even want a child because it would reduce their budget, limit their freedom or, in

the case of women who prioritize their figure and do not want to risk changes in body shape due to pregnancy or breastfeeding, would bring on such unwanted changes. Thus, the biological function is built structurally on eroticism and less on reproduction. This decision leads to a first major consequence on functionality - the disappearance of the socializing function.

Another trend of postmodernity is related to the protection of one's own budget. The international experiences of the countries that legalized the marriage contract show that in the set of clauses that are concluded on the occasion of marriage there are often rules of administration and protection of the personal events of each partner, rules of management of common expenses and rules of partition in case of dissolution. The current Romanian legislation recommends to the partners the common budget and equal access to resources. Postmodern mentalities of conjugal cohabitation tend to build strategies that maintain a distance between the two partners (distance commonly negotiated and materialized in specific mileclauses in the marital contract), one that ensures their personal comfort and security of their own resources.

In a direct relation with the economic resources and the tendency of protection towards the other, we also understand the dysfunctions that can appear in the function of solidarity. Protection from the other, legal separation of property, marital individualism are some of the many aspects that the functionality of the postmodern couple implies in their definition as life partners. The fear of risking losses due to the marital relationship, the self-protection strategies towards the other demonstrate a low level of trust in the conjugal partner. Establishing a priori the forms of property sharing, establishing the rules of failure at the time of marital merge rather shows a potential anticipation of failure. The moment of marriage should remain in itself, not only a legal action but also a moment of trust. Anticipating potential failure leads to reluctance, fear, restraint, and the intimate desire of each partner to protect themselves from the other. However, all these elements lead to a reconstruction of solidarity, this being more the effect of the two individual accomplishments and less a function that would produce effects on the couple, since the fusion phase.

3. Conclusions

The modern period should not be confused with the modernity of the family. Contemporary life still offers models of families with a traditional orientation, families of modern orientation but also families / couples of postmodern orientation. Communities have not evolved at the same time and to the same extent. In areas with strong cultural imperatives, the modernization of relations between spouses has been more difficult, gender

relations and roles being influenced by the classic patterns of the traditional family. On the other hand, going to work in the urban environment created the premise of a different logic of conjugality, even for young people who came from traditional backgrounds. The lack of community control, the lack of resources of domination and control allowed the construction of other forms of marital manifestation in the couple's life.

Émile Durkheim described two types of solidarity. One is mechanical solidarity in which the individual is absorbed by society, its rules being considered to be the guarantor of social solidarity. The assimilation of the norms of the society led to a type of rigid solidarity because the social construction of this set of norms offered to each gender a certain status, a certain functional value and a certain set of roles. The cultural assimilation of this set of norms had as a consequence the traditional solidarity, the mechanical one. For the modern family typology, Durkheim saw an organic type of solidarity. Individuals have access to decisions, they can express their own wills, emotions, they can decide together the style and the rhythm of life, therefore, the organic type of solidarity offered the couple the possibility to manage solidarity in all the aspects they considered optimal for their own happiness.

Conjugal postmodernity brings substantial changes to the function of solidarity. The importance of the other increases as the benefits of one partner can be realized and sustained by the other. Personal interest is more important than common interest. We could say that conjugal postmodernity corresponds more to self-solidarity and the feedback of the personal good creates the premise of codependence and solidarity of the two.

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