POSTER PRESENTATION

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BEING PARENTS: THE ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

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The family, in the last ten years, has been the subject of particular attention, from different angles: it has been considered as an institution in decline, its changes were analyzed, has been rediscovered its dimension of vitality and resource. What appears clear, analyzing the most recent studies on this topic, is the vision of the family as an entity diversified, both in structure and in its relations inside: talking about pluralization of forms, new families, new parents, changes and modification in the mode of doing and being family (Donati, 2001; Georgas, 2006; Liefbroer, 2008; De Rose et al., 2008; Di Nicola, 2008; Ruspini, 2010; Zanatta, 2011; Saraceno, 2012).

In the contemporary society, have occurred important changes in the context of family realities, in particular, the last ten years have experienced a substantial structural changes in the socio-demographic scenery, especially compared to the width of the number of members of the families and the pluralization of forms.

The major changes in the Italian scenery relate to the increase in separations and divorces, with the consequent growth of blended families, the decline of marriage and the rise of cohabitation, as well as a greater number of children born to unmarried parents, and again, the declining birth-rate, with a shift towards older motherhood, and finally, the number of the members of the family is certainly diminished.

These dynamics that have characterized the main demographic events seem to be interpretable as a result of the living conditions and environment of the individual, but also through the transformation of the economic and social situation, which seem to have led, or just favorite, behaviors often radically different from the past, especially in the area of reproductive choices and family.
The new family forms are characterized by a series of break with the past (Fruggeri, 2005; Ruspini, 2010; Saraceno, 2012): discontinuity that relate to the lack of coincidence between parenthood and conjugality (single-parent families, unmarried couples with children), on the non-immediate overlap between first family and actual family (blended families), the absence of homogeneity between family culture and social culture of the community to which they belong (mixed families), the lack of blood ties (foster families or adoptive families) or split between sexuality and procreation (families "at any cost", with the Assisted fertilization) and finally, the lack of correspondence between family roles and gender roles (homosexual families).

The "family-reality " in every sense, is still closely tied to parenthood which has gone from being a must in the life of a couple, to be a precise and reasoned choice.

We’re talking about parenting choice: the choice of how (biological children, procreation techniques, adopted children or foster care, childfree), the choice of when and with whom (spouse, cohabitant, single parenthood, homosexual couple).

To be more precise, this research wants to focus on one of the forms of parenting, that is, on families who have adopted children in intercountry adoption: this choice of parenting is in fact one of the most radical forms of parenthood, since there isn’t the presence of blood ties. Adopt means in fact recognize and take the difference of the child, difference that it is given, mail from the outset and made visible by the lack of somatic similarity, which is often added, in cases of international adoption, a difference in ethnic, cultural and linguistic, where the challenge lies in being a parent having to build the family membership, which in biological parenthood is instead a matter of fact, hiring and valuing differences, the history and origins of the child (Rosnati, 2010).

Adopt means in fact recognize and take the difference of the child, difference that it is clear since the beginning and made visible by the lack of somatic similarity, which is often added, in cases of international adoption in fact, an ethnic, cultural and linguistic difference: the challenge of being a parent is to build the family identity, which in biological parenthood is a given, hiring and valuing differences, the history and origins of the child (Rosnati, 2010).

In adoption the construction of the parental bond is derived from a process of legitimation, since becoming a parent is not a role acquired as a result of a birth, but it is sanctioned by a court. In this sense, this type of parenting is split from the purely affective aspects, but involves the assumption of a role that must also be socially recognized.

The data of the Commission for International Adoptions, shows that from 2000 to 2013, couples who have applied for entry clearance for foreign minors in Italy, were 28,197, up to a maximum reached in 2010, with 3,241 adoptive couples.

In this sense, international adoption is an emerging phenomenon in Italy, and not only, as demonstrated by the many studies conducted recently (Grotevant, McDermott 2014; Rosnati, Ranieri, Barni, 2013; Weir, Broadzinsky, 2013; Rosnati, 2010; Palacios et. al., 2010; Chistolini, 2010; Juffer, van IJzendoorn, 2009; van IJzendoorn, & Juffer Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2007).

In addition to the relevance of the phenomenon in Italy, what drives to investigate this issue is the choice of these families to become parents of the child of someone else: we wonder what motivates a couple to prefer this type of parenting, beyond the problems related to infertility (over 90% of couples who have adopted declaring the inability to have biological children), rather than to employ procreation techniques or the choice to be “childfree”.

The central hypothesis is that there may be paths of life and social, institutional, economic conditions that contributing or less in the processes leading to a choice rather than another. The sample consisted of 15 families who have adopted with international adoption in the last three years (2010-2013) in the territory of the Veneto region, that is the fourth region in Italy for the number of couples adopting in 2013.
The methodology used is qualitative and involves the collection of life histories of selected subject, since through the narration, the person can explain the meaning of their own choices, to bring out their own self-identity, but also familiar, cultural and context elements, that surround and affect (Bruner, 1992).

The areas of investigation include: experiences of the families of origin, information on value models, on the experience of a couple and of first marriage, information about the school, business and economic environment. We also investigate the motivations that led to the choice of social parenthood. The current state of research does not allow to provide the results, since they are not yet collected data for the entire sample. It is assumed that for the month of September 2014, the collection and subsequent analysis will be completed.

References