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UDC 316.356.2:316.4
Original scientific paper
Received: Jun, 2011.
Accepted: October, 2011.

The family in the context of contemporary social changes

Abstract

This paper examines the family as a social group in the context of contemporary social changes and relationships – its transformations along with the changes taking place in society, what changes are taking place in the family, its place and importance in contemporary society. In order to shed light on the problem of the transformation of the family, it is necessary to review various aspects of family change, internal processes and dynamics of these changes, to capture the reality of family. When considering the relationship between society and the family, it is evident that the changes in contemporary society influenced changes in the family, its structure, functions, dynamics, relationships, and that they are result of transformation of value-normative framework in the individualized society, economic and demographic changes.

Keywords: *Contemporary society, transformation of the family, social changes, economic changes, demographic changes.*

Introduction

Studying the processes and trends of changes in family in the context of significant and deep social changes is one complex theme for studying – we have to keep in mind the complex dynamics of global society, changes that are result of that dynamics, as well as the overlap in the family's historical changes, changes within the group and all of the changes that occur in the life course of the family

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members.² Modern, postmodern, global society is marked by the great speed of changes, fading of many landmarks that formed the lives of people, importance and desirability of individual choice and achievement, increasing of uncertainty, increasing the speed of life courses etc. This is reflected on the life of individuals and families – there are no clear borders between house and workplace, private and public life, for arrangement of living together there are no 'inherited' instructions – the established family norms and values, but it is necessary to invest effort all the time to develop different strategies for successful functioning and the arrangement of the life space. On one hand, the speed of changes in society does not allow individuals nor families to create long-term strategies, but on the other hand, this society is open for all options and activities. In striving to achieve genuine fulfillment, individuals can more easily choose to end the community that does not fulfill their expectations and to try finding the other solution towards achieving their goal, which was not easy to achieve in the past (stigma that followed the divorce, strong influence of religious beliefs regarding the marriage and family, existence of mutual values in society that stabilized the marriage, mutual economic dependence of partners and similar.)³ In the context of these changes in society the postmodern (re)shaping of the family is happening – it is characterized by volatility, dynamism, 'laxity of the ties and obligations to revoke'⁴, inside it there is not a strong integration or hierarchy of relations, family has opened towards the social world (towards social institutions, accepting the values from different sources), its existence is fully opened towards all systems of the company, it became a totally loosened form. Fluidity of life flows, social instability frames, noticeable of processes of individualization for result have disappearance of marital relations, trading marriage for instable community – cohabitation, people enter the marriage late, children are being borned in later life age, or partners in legal marital communities disclaim parenthood, there

² Tomanović, S., *Changes in the families*, : Milić, A., Tomanović, S., *Families in Serbia today in comparative perspective*, Institute for sociological research of Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade, 2009, pp 152.

³ In postmodern society it came to the coming closer of roles of men and women regarding the education, employment, economic independence, career and family, which caused different view on the marriage and accepting different values than those that other generations had, the change in the attitudes of people regarding the marriage, sexual behavior, the sexual division, etc. In young people, especially women, there is a wish for independence and fulfillment, through the job and different arrangements of family and marital forms, but also bigger readiness on changes and experimentations with different life practices regarding the cohabitation rather than previous generations. Freedom for women to work, to achieve control over the birth, freedom to choose their own way of living, are novities that were not available to the previous generations, and that in modern society give young people opportunities for different choices.

⁴ Bauman, Z., *Fluid life*, Mediterran Publishing, Novi Sad, 2009, pp. 13.

are same-sex cohabitations, solidarity with ancestor weakens, etc.⁵ Weakening of the modern form of the family and more common phenomenon of different partnerships and family forms are global trend. The form of the modern family stops being the only required and dominant form of cohabitation of individuals in developed (and less developed) societies in modern world—changes in family forms and life styles of society have not at the same time started in all societies in the world, but are certainly, to a greater or less extent, present in all societies.⁶

Theoretical frame for consideration of problem of transformation of the family in modern world can be built based on the analysis of the next questions: evolution of the family, transformation of the functions of the modern family, changes in the structure of this family and relations between its members, transition of the marriage and model of the parenting, impact of the social, and demographic factors on the transformation of the family, so it can be shown on changes in marriage and parenting, that by the influence of the mentioned factors affect on changing the function of the family, its structure, etc. Although, we are talking about the global trend of changes in basic aspects of family life, our focus of observation and proving is limited on the observation of European-American social and family set, where these changes are the most visible.

Elements of the transformation of the nuclear family

When we are talking about the transformation of the family in modern society, we think about deep and comprehensive change that froms the roots and reshapes essential components that defined the family from the start of modern civil society.⁷ The term and practice of the family are modern achieve-

⁵ On the round table “*Family in Republic of Srpska today – state and perspectives*” in organization of Ministry for family, youth and sports in Government of Republic of Srpska, held on 20.11.2009. in Banja Luka, professor dr. Anđelka Milić, professor at Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, exhibited the paper ‘Family in modern society’, where she showed the characteristics of modern society and transformation of modern, nuclear family in modern, post-modern society, as well as the periods in which this family lived through serious earthquake.

⁶ Milić, A., *Sociology of the family- Criticism and challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001.

⁷ “Family is formed from two elements that vary in historically changeable measures: (1) cohabitation and working under the same roof of the group of people and (2) kinship connection between them. Its fulfillment this match experiences in modern epoch, since when we can talk about the true meaning of the term family.” *Family*, Anđelka Milić, *Sociological dictionary*, done by A. Mimica and M. Bogdanović, Institute for textbooks, Belgrade, 2007, pp. 414. Modern family presents something totally new with regard to all the previous forms of cohabitation of individuals with kinship connection in European societies— in it the interest of the individual become even more important than the interest of the group, it has smaller number of the members and social functions, production activities of members are set outside of the family. It is primary social group

ments-family is the product of modern, civil society- the symbol, reality and foundation of it existence, the pattern of family life in which the content of the family is reduced on the necessary biological minimum of reproduction- parents and their children (nuclear family).⁸ The period from 16th to 18th century is the period in which the consolidation of this family pattern is happening, in the end of 19th century its blooming, and in mid-twentieth century this pattern experienced universalization and spreading to every society and cultures in the world. Modern family as a column of civil society, endured all of the needs of individuals in their lifetime achievement, and in cultural meaning it was carrier of socialization, system of the values, standards. This family experiences serious earthquakes in Europe at the beginning of the World War, and in the USA in the thirties of the last century when the economic collapse in the state destroyed its economic existence. After these first strikes, the process stopped, transformation of the family took place slowly thanks to the development of the state, that alleviated the strikes that family was facing. To the full transformation of this family form came in the eighties of the 20th century.⁹

Strengthening of the secularism, even more intense expression of individualism, advancing consumer-hedonistic philosophy of life, the rejection of solidarity, the gradual deconstruction of patriarchal authority in family, accepting the values about gender equality, separation of sexuality from reproduction and achieving the control over the reproductive processes, abolition of double standards of sexual behavior for men and women, women going out into the public sphere, appearance of the new reproductive technologies, facing the

that occurs based on the recognized marriage relationship and their children (born or adopted), and which is independent and apart from kin groups in which spouses belong. Independent marital dyad represents the base of the modern family. Here the fusion of the family from the blood-kin group and household as housing and consumer unit is done, and it represents the result of the gradual historical reduction and collecting the kin relations on the nucleus necessary for biological reproduction (marital couple and their children), specific for modern industrial epochs and urban lifestyle. Socialization of the kids and emotional support and trade between the spouses and their progeny become the main function of this family. Bobić, M., *Demography and sociology – connection or synthesis*, Public corporation "Official Gazette", Belgrade, 2007, pp. 215 – 216.

⁸ Nuclear family is a term for the family formed by few adults that live in one household with their own or adopted kids. E. Durkheim started this term by which this sociologist wanted to point to marital dyad as a support of the modern family that represents the end of mutual 'gathering', respectively the development of family form. Stronger family 'unity' disappears by the exit of wider and more narrow groups of relatives from the family group. With the term nuclear family T.Parsons tried to point out important characteristics of modern American family. *Nuclear family*, A. Milić, *Sociological dictionary*, done by A. Mimica and M. Bogdanović, Institute for textbooks, Belgrade, 2007, pp. 417.

⁹ On the round table "Family in Republic of Srpska today – state and perspectives" in organization of Ministry for family, youth and sports in Government of Republic of Srpska, held on 20.11.2009. in Banja Luka,

risks, globalization, informatization of the society and similar from 60s of 20th century in developed states had for result falling down of the universality of marriage, which was first registered through the jump of divorces, then the fall of the first nuptiality, the rise of common-law unions – different types and age models, which caused the fall of fertility under the level of necessary for simple reproduction of population. The epicenter of the earthquake is located inside the marital dyad, in the center of the family.¹⁰ While the marital couple in the traditional family represented only one part of the family system, in modern society, with the fall of economic role of family and by the foundation of the marriage of love and sexual attraction, the couple came in the center of family life, it represents the essence of the family.¹¹ The essence of partnership is the affective relationship of partners (love, satisfaction) – in this relationship is invested to the proportion to the satisfaction that comes – that is why partnerships, including marriage, fall apart easily, but re-establish again. Therefore, the focus of the family shifts from the parenting to the partnership. With this is in the modern society changing the concept of the marriage and family. Marriage is freed of its “instrumental reproductive sexuality”.¹² Couple relationship (more or less permanent relationship of partners) becomes the primary, compared to children and relatives, and all other relationships adapt to it (with children, relatives, etc.). Radical changes in sexual and reproductive behavior of individuals have broken the thousand years, religious and social norms established the conditionality of sexual activity and marriage. From this period intimate relationships become something that is not in itself implies, but people in relationships are becoming active entities.¹³ So, all these changes (social, economic, demographic) was caused by the so-called. deinstitutionalization of marriage, the weakening of the nuclear family and the emergence of new forms of partnership and family time to get legitimate recognition. As the causes of decomposition of marriage in contemporary society A. Milic distinguishes: the sexual revolution of the 60s of the 20th century, the emancipation of women and the individualization process.¹⁴ De-institutionalization of marriage has caused an increased number of divorces, the spread of cohabitation, a growing number of

¹⁰ Bobić, M., *Reorganization of marriage, relationships and family in contemporary society*, Population, 1 – 4, 2003, pp. 68.

¹¹ Giddens, E., *Runaway World - How is globalization reshaping our lives*, Columns of culture, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 83 – 84.

¹² Giddens, A., *In defence of Sociology*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 241.

¹³ “Emotional communication has become central not only to refer to sexual love, but also for the relationship of friendship and interaction between parents and children.” Giddens, E., *Sociology*, Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 186.

¹⁴ Milić, A., *Sociology of the family - Criticism and challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001.

reconstructed families, single parent households, households with children of homosexual partners, households in which one person lives.¹⁵

Parsons' ideal representation of the nuclear family - married couple (mother, housewife and working father) and their children, has grown into a myth that has little in common with the methods and forms of modern private life. The modern reality reflects the presence of diverse family forms, whose survival is obvious (the European average of families in relation to its nuclear composition is about 25%).¹⁶ Rooted common sense notions of the family or, rather, about how they should be governed relationships within it, are not in accordance with the "reality" of family life, ie. how people actually organize their partner and family relationships. Since the mid-twentieth century in Western culture is rooted idea of the nuclear family as the social norms of the organization of family life, so that all other forms of family life and the ways defined in relation to it. "The idea of a nuclear family as the dominant form of family life has been widely accepted, because all other forms are seen as 'unusual', 'reflective' or even 'pathological'. Images of the nuclear family are so firmly rooted in the moral, political and media 'family discourse' that easily usurp the power of discernment of what is a normal family, what is acceptable and what totally unacceptable."¹⁷ However, different arrangements of partner and family relationships undermined the dominance of conceptual and empirical models of the nuclear family, but have not led to the disappearance of the family as a social group. Family grows into social space and negotiating a settlement on all issues of common life, without an idea of permanent commitment and solidarity, and the most significant change that occurred in the modern conceptualization of the family is "the subjective attribution of importance of the intimate relationships, rather than the 'objective' formal (family) or blood ties."¹⁸ However, it should be noted that, regardless of family forms in which it is established, the basic "family relationship" seems dyadic relationship between child and parent - the basic units which remain or are transferred to any other family form are the parent (s) and child. In line with this understanding, caring for a child is the only constituent element of the definition of family, and who, at the same time, differs families from other living together arrangement in which parental relationship is not a necessary or constitutive - partner relationships, marriage relationships, households and kinship.¹⁹

¹⁵ Puljiz, V. and others., *Social politics*, MFIZ, Zagreb, 2005, pp. 323 - 328.

¹⁶ Rener, T., *Some difficulties in defining the concept of family*, in: Milić, A., Tomanović, S., *Families in Serbia in Comparative Perspective*, Institute for Sociological Research, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 37.

¹⁷ *The same*, pp. 36.

¹⁸ *The same*, pp. 37.

¹⁹ *The same*, pp. 32 - 33.

Emotional relationship that is established between parents and children in the family is very important for individuals. The relationship between parent and child (children) is a complex (bio)-psychological and socio-cultural connections that occurs, which is held and which turns into various forms of families (and households). This relationship, therefore, is not necessarily based on biological grounds - the transformation of marriage, increasing divorce, with the emergence of different partner and family arrangements, with the development of new reproductive technologies, the adoption of children and the like. comes to the emergence of different forms of expressing the relationship between parent and child (children) - one-parent households, bi-nuclear families (stepmother and stepfather), shared parenting, adoption, foster care, surrogate mothers, homosexual households with children and so on. New dimension to the diversity of family relationships provide new reproductive technologies - which impair the vision of the family that consists of a heterosexual couple and their children, poor cultural understanding of the couple as a natural reproduction whole and introduce individuals in the reproduction process outside the family.²⁰ The development of modern reproductive technologies in the 80s of the last century has increased the uncertainty in determining the nature of relationship by descent²¹ - creates different sets of relations with the respect to the new reproductive technologies that allow a woman to give birth to a baby from another woman's genetic material, and this does not exclude close relatives.²² These technologies eliminate the biological limits of family formation and expansion of the family and the creation of different family forms (available to heterosexual couples, lesbians and women who are not married).²³ However, some sociologists express fears about turning a mere function of the birth into aof technology, especially its second part - raising the offspring.²⁴ On the other hand, the quality of parenting is emphasized as essential for the welfare of children and their adaptation in later life, not a biological connection between parent and a child (children), or sexual orientation of parents.²⁵

²⁰ Calhoun, C., *Family outlaws: rethinking the connections between feminism, lesbianism and the family*, in: Nelson, H. L. (ed.), *Feminism and Families*, Routledge, New York, 1997, p. 142 – 143.

²¹ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clio, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 51.

²² Surrogate motherhood means that women carry the fetus emerged from the egg of another woman. Nineties in the U.S., a noted that the woman gave birth to own grandchildren, acting as surrogate mothers, given that her daughter could not be delivered. The question is what are the kinship of women and children?

²³ The adoption of amendments to the law on artificial insemination by the Spanish government the day, 07.11.2006. the non-biological mother is recognized for the mother of a child born to a lesbian marriage. *Lesbians podrán ser madres de los hijos „in vitro“ de sus parejas*, Yahoo, 07/11/2006, <http://es.news.yahoo.com/07112006/185/lesbians-podran-madres-hijos-in-vitro-parejas.html>

²⁴ Milić, A., *Sociology of the family - Criticism and Challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001, pp. 51.

²⁵ Mršević, Z., *Same-sex relationships and children*, Population, number 1, 2009, pp. 33, pdf.

The emergence of “transnational families” contributes to globalization, which implies a global “transfer”, “distribution” of emotions, the globalization of parenthood, particularly motherhood (“import” of maternal care in developed countries) comes to the fore in the globalization of chains of care (personal connections between people around the world based on paid and / or unpaid care). Parents in developed countries because of business commitments have to engage people outside the family that will care for their children (both the old and sick parents), because less and less can rely on relatives (today a large number of grandmothers and other relatives in developed world is performing paid work). Women in the Third World “temporarily” abandon their families and migrate to developed countries to act as nannies. The money they earn caring for children from families in the developed world, they send to their families, their children are kept by relatives, or are themselves forced to hire, pay nannies to keep their children. In this way are developed a “global” care chains which are usually connected by three sets of persons responsible for the care - the person who cares about mother-migrant’s children, another that takes care of children of a woman who takes care of mother-migrant’s children, while the third - the mother-migrant, cares of children of employees in the First World. These migrant workers became emotionally attached to the homes and people who they left five or more years ago, even though the only thing that went home were their salaries. Regardless of the physical separation of members, these families have not fallen apart, but have become transnational families, responsibilities for them have not ceased, but have increased. Mother-baby-sitters are at the same time adapting to the culture of motherhood shared with relatives and friends at home, but also believe that being a good mother means to spend time with their children. Of course, here can be asked the question regarding the position of a child whose parents pay the nanny in the Third World to take care of him, but also the position of a mother who hires a nanny to take care of her child. Can the “paid” care and emotions really replace attention and emotions of the child’s mother, is it from the chain of emotions a child- a nanny (partially) excluded the mother of a child? Worlds of the participants in this chain of care, globalization has obviously split. It turns out that in the modern world except of unequal distribution of money, care and love unevenly distributed also.²⁶ The emergence of transnational families can be seen in the example of couples who have their own biological offspring, but adopting children from around the world.

As the number of divorces rises, it creates a complex network of family relationships - marriage break-up, therefore, does not mean the decline of the family, but a different way of realization of parenthood, where connections with

²⁶ Hohšild, E. R., *Global care chains and emotional surplus value*, in: Haton, V., Gidens, E. (*On the edge - living with global capitalism*, Plato, Belgrade, 2003, p.p. 170 – 192.

children do not stop and where it is created a new quality of relations between parents and children. After the divorce children tend to stay to live with one parent while the other parent is living apart from them. In this way, children receive two reference's home, but the relations (emotional, psychological, economic, social, kinship, etc..) of parents and children do not stop because of the partners divorce, or parental responsibilities towards children, they still make one family system (and two households). So, after the divorce, if the partners had a common child (children), family system has not disappeared, he still maintained between parents and children, no matter what the child does not live with both parents. If the parents (one or both) remarry or enter the cohabitation it leads to duplication of parents, family members (stepmother, stepfather half and false brothers and sisters, six grandmothers and six grandfathers, etc.).²⁷ These re-established families form a marital couple (of which at least one already had a spouse or illegitimate experience), their children from previous marriages (relationships), as well as the children born in the new marriage. These are the multi-parent families as the "social role of newer compounds is associated with the parental status is suddenly divided into few persons. The child has no longer just one but two fathers, biological and the mother's partner, who may (but does not have to) be his social father."²⁸ Types of kinship relationships that develop these families are completely new to modern societies, such as new difficulties arising from the entry into a new marriage after the divorce, because it requires special ways of adjustment due to the diversity of connections and relationships. In these families there is a new dynamic of relations arising from a range of kinship ties that are established in them. The nature of relationships in these families is different than in the families of the previous decades - they need more negotiation than it was needed before when the relations between relatives "were often taken for granted on the basis of trust, the trust now has to be negotiated and guessed ..."²⁹

Increasingly frequent phenomenon in contemporary society is to raise children in non-traditional households - in which both parents are absent or they are the same sex. Children in homosexual households are born from previous heterosexual relationship partner, or adopted (in countries where allowed) or are born with the help of modern reproductive technologies. These households are similar to family households with children living with one biological parent and with other non-biological parent, but assumes the role of the child's parents (step-father, step-mother). Given that the emotional communication is primary

²⁷ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clivo, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 201.

²⁸ *The same*, pp. 202.

²⁹ Giddens, A., *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1992, p. 96.

in relationships between parents and children in contemporary society, as well as taking care of the interests and development of children, sexual orientation of people should not be crucial in the implementation of parenting - many studies show, that for child development basic requirement is a close relationship that they establish with their parents, care and support that they receive from them, life without stress.³⁰

Given the turbulence that occur in marriage and family, it is not uncommon for the child to remain neglected (children in the family become victims of violence, neglected, etc.). For this reason it is necessary to define categories of responsible parenting - parenting achievement includes not only biological reproduction or co-existence with a child, but the willingness and ability of a person that as a parent provides the conditions for quality child growing up and that takes into account the promotion of its interests.

In order to be able to observe changes in the family life in modern times, it is necessary to distance ourselves from the ideological and political “imposed” shows about family, and to cautiously approach the setting and reviewing the questions about the “crisis” of the family, its “disappearance”, the basis of the family life and so on.

Changes in the family life and modernity

In the independent marital dyad - socially legitimated sexual relation of partners compared with the primary goal of having children - and that was the basis of modern families, in the 60s of the 20th century there have been significant changes taking place - marriage is no longer the sole basis of the partnership. Increase of the number of divorces and common-law communities (legally sanctioned and standardized) calls into a question the model for marriage where it was the only way to start a family. Also, part of the redefinition of marriage is the decline in fertility rates.³¹ In the form of civil marriage, there was still some significant changes that are manifested in the reduction of marriages, postponement of entry into first marriage to a later age and acceptance of some alternative forms of partners communities (such as cohabitation and Living Apart

³⁰ Of course, this does not rule out problems that the children in these families may face. First of all, at certain stages of their growing up experience difficulties accepting the fact that their biological parent has a same sex partners, and may face the problem of “too much information on one sex and none on the other.” Mršević, Z.: *Same-sex relationships and children*, Population, Number 1, year 2009, pp. 33 – 34, pdf.

³¹ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clio, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 145.

Together forms³²), as well as increase of celibacy.³³ These are complex processes that change the content of marriage and family - family focus shifts from the parenting to the partnership, the tendency to partnership becomes the basic framework of family life, there is a shift from marriage as an institution to the fragile, constantly questioning *the clear partnership*³⁴, based on the emotional connection between partners (love, pleasure) and is free of instrumental procreative role (of that period sex is not in an exclusive relationship with procreation, and marriage is no longer the sole, exclusive and socially desirable framework of biological reproduction and sex identification intercourse) - *sexual and natality decomposition of marriage*.³⁵ Partnerships are easily broken because their essence makes the loose base (affective relationship of partners - the essence of modern marriage, which ultimately leads to its demise).³⁶ This caused a violent transformation of the family that is expressed in the diversification of life styles - plurality of family forms and partnerships. All these changes occur, then, in the center of the family, ie. the marital dyad. Of the three essential constituent elements of traditional marriage: procreation, cohabitation and legitimation in the partnership unity (legal or common-law marriage) no longer necessarily implies the presence of all these elements. Marriage is released of instrumental sexuality - not entered into solely for children, and procreation is not present in marriages without children, homosexual partnerships, and the like. More and more people in more developed countries opt for a partnership without a formal legal recognition - non-spousal partnership, and as for the children that are born from this relationship, are fully equal in rights with respect to children born in wedlock. In the LAT forms is not present the cohabitation (couples who live together - youthful dating couples who do not work in the same city, country, etc.).

We have seen that in the 60s of the last century, the focus shifts from family parenting to partnership, a plurality of family forms and the related expression of parenthood with it comes into play (single parenthood, social parenthood, homoparenting, etc.). *The transition from traditional to modern and post-modern model of parenting* was due to separation of parenthood from marriage, there-

³² Popular lifestyle of (not) living together couples in industrial society, who due to business or other obligations much time spend apart. See more in: Milić, A., *Sociology of the family - Criticism and Challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001, pp. 115.

³³ Avramov, D., *Individuals, families and households on a limb*, Science Book, Belgrade, 1993, pp. 105.

³⁴ Gidens, E., *Runaway World - How is globalization reshaping our lives*, Columns of culture, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 86 – 87.

³⁵ Milić, A., *Sociology of the family - Criticism and Challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001, pp. 122 – 128.

³⁶ *The same*, pp. 124.

by changing the essence of parenting in contemporary society.³⁷ Increasingly, it is more and more real departure from traditional concepts and procedures by which a marriage is assembled for the children, for whose performance the children were required and for who more often people stayed in the marriage. Amended social reality affects the notion of parenting and its contents need to be restored. Unlike the parenting in the modern family, modern family based on partnership and fellowship, an aspect of self-realization of individuals becomes parenthood. In the early 21st century concept of parenting reached its full development, it is used for postulating symmetrical positions and partnerships of family members - the balance in parental roles becomes noticeable, where the role of fathers is coming more to the fore due to the establishment of spiritual and physical closeness between father and children. Emotional communication in relationships between parents and children plays an important role, as in all other relationships.³⁸ As family relationships are becoming more and more an expression of choice, the notion of parenting and choice is taking central place (couples decide at what point is the most suitable to become parents, and the number of children they want to have). Changes that occur in marriage and family relations lead to the creation of different, new forms of relationships that are established by descent, in which the choice also has a significant place. The transformation of marriage, increasing divorce rate, family recomposition, medically assisted procreation, adoption and so on had a significant effect on this.³⁹ In contemporary society are expressed unfavorable conditions for the implementation of parenting (insecure environment, the dominance of secondary agents of socialization, poverty, etc.), which deteriorate the relations between parents and children (an increase of autonomy of children in relation to parents, weakening the authority of parents, etc.).⁴⁰ This has resulted in developing a strategy and form of uniform behavior in parents and children (young): parents delay having children and reduce the number of children, young postpone the marriage and the family is leaving the origin.⁴¹ However, a smaller number of children in contemporary family does not mean the reduction of costs related

³⁷ Blagojević, M., *Parenting and fertility - Serbia in the nineties*, Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade, 1997, pp. 46.

³⁸ Giddens, E., *Sociology*, Faculty of economics, Belgrade, pp. 186.

³⁹ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clio, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 207.

⁴⁰ Tomanović, S., Petrović, M., *Risks and safety in the neighborhood from the perspective of children and their parents*, in: Tomanović, S. (ur.), *A society in turmoil*, Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade.

⁴¹ Milić, A., *A review of the results of surveys of families and households in the Institute for Social Research in the last 20 years*, in: Milić, A., Tomanović, S., *Families in Serbia today, in a comparative perspective*, Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 20.

to their lifting, care, socialization, and so on, because increasing of the standards in relation to this requires from the parents a major investment and use of the resources (time, energy, knowledge, skills, emotions and health).⁴²

Changes in the family are reflected in changes in its functions, its structure and relationships between family members. Compared to traditional family forms, modern families are essentially distinguished through the universalisation of the marriage institution, which on the one hand ties the spouses intimately, and on the other hand, sets them up as free, independent but accountable holders of family wellbeing. From the family point of view, the spouses are primarily confirmed through their parental functions that are clearly gender-segregated, and socially through the responsibility for the stability of the family group, which is dominated by the authority of the male breadwinner. These important structural determinants are affecting the definition, or narrowing the once numerous functions of the traditional family. This decline can be analyzed through the four basic functions (biological, economic, safety and socialization functions), where the socialization function that needs to prepare young people to accept and take a role in the social system is the most important.⁴³ In contemporary society, many changes occur that are affecting the family - to change the living conditions of most families, their quality of life, the contents of family functions and the possibility of their execution (from reproductive bio-psycho-social to the economic and social).⁴⁴ But that does not mean that the family still is not primarily a place where they arise and develop biological functions that transform an individual into a social being, it continues to meet basic household tasks through correspondence (socialization of children, housing selection, earning wages, provision of everyday survival of the jobs that are repeated again and again and so on.).⁴⁵ In contemporary society, adult sexual behavior has undergone drastic changes - relations between spouses are not reduced to the satisfaction of procreative sex drive and function, as between spouses in the family there is also an affective connection that should make the essence of their relationship. Thanks to the progress in medicine, the development of sophisticated methods of birth control and different techniques of medically assisted

⁴² Blagojević, M., *Parenting and fertility - Serbia in the nineties*, Institute for Sociological Research, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade, 1997, pp. 64.

⁴³ With the emergence of modern societies are changing the basis on which the family is set- the character of economic functions (production function relocated from the family household in companies and factories), placing emphasis on family psychosocial function, and reduction of family functions and their transfer (in whole or in individual segments) to specialized social institutions. Matović, N., *Cooperation between secondary schools and families*, Institute of Pedagogy and Andragogy, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Belgrade, 1994, pp. 15.

⁴⁴ Vuković, D., *Social security and social rights*, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 336.

⁴⁵ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clio, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 279.

reproduction, they introduce into reproduction process and individuals outside the family, which assemble the new circuits of relation. The increase in unemployment, stagnation in the mechanisms of social security, low incomes, the economic crisis and other conditions that ensure the quality of life impact on the economic function of the family. However, in modern conditions the role of household survives, only the households are multiplied into countless smaller units.⁴⁶ Some forms of care that families provide to their members such as the involvement of parents in connection with the raising, nurturing and keeping the child, family solidarity and support, assistance, economic protection (higher standards in caring for children in their care)⁴⁷ - child support, inheritance of property and the like remain no matter what changes occur in the family and in contemporary society. In a global society, as we have seen, are created “paid” care chains. Although the function of education of children in modern society is to a large extent transferred to the particular authorized institution (kindergarten, school, media, etc.), it can not be said that the family still has no significant role in this regard. However, reducing the impact of established traditions and values in terms of globalization (“social codes” to a great extent lost their force), moving to a new individualism, with the entry into a local communities to interact with the new global order⁴⁸, in the most societies, especially Western, parents are left to individually find their way on the formation of the form of socialization of the child (there is no clearly defined collective form of socialization of the child). In the modern family, because of the frequent absence of parents, children are exposed to the influence of mass culture interests of profit, and they express various forms of risk behavior (substance abuse, increase in violence among children and youth, etc.) Changes in the structure of modern families are reflected in the reduction of the number of its members - it is a two generation family consisting of parents and their children (nuclear family) in which fewer children are born. It was previously thought that the only legitimate form of family is nuclear family. The variations that existed in family forms were completely ignored. Numerous data indicate that such a picture of the family did

⁴⁶ Binuclear families that arise after a divorce if partners have common children include two households - parent household where the child lives and parent household where the child is not living. Divorce apart from breaking a marriage is reflected in the lives of individuals in the economic way. Households with one parent, on average, are among the poorest groups in contemporary society, faced with economic uncertainty, and the appearance of new poverty often associated with them. Re-entry into partnerships after divorce or death of a partner can be explained by economic reasons in the sense that the partners in the society of risk and crisis of the welfare state provide more security by merging the two incomes.

⁴⁷ Gidens, E., *Runaway World - How is globalization reshaping our lives*, Columns of culture, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 85.

⁴⁸ Gidens, E., *Sociology*, Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 67.

not reflect the actual reality.⁴⁹ By the synthetic reviewing of the consequences of observed changes and their individual factors it can be clearly seen that the new forms and structures of living together are in fact the most striking indications of the transformation processes in modern families. New diverse structures of family relationships are a unique consequence of de-institutionalization of marriage in contemporary society, which is, both theoretically and empirically, the core of transformational movement. The crossed path of modern family history, whose beginning was actually the constitution of the family, took place over the legal guaranteed freedoms of individuals that makes a family in its sole discretion and with the consent of the spouse, then the way to the postmodern transformation process was determined precisely by deconstruction of marriage, ie. its institutionalization. The result is the emergence of cohabitation, re-marriages, marriages without children, homosexual partnerships and families and new family structures such as the renewed family, single-parent households, new forms of homosexual households (s) and households are with singles. The weakening of the nuclear family and the increasing of the diversity of family and partnerships forms is a global trend. It is the wider range of family types that become eligible, and their existence is receiving the legitimate award.⁵⁰ The emergence of various forms of communal life must be viewed in the context of contemporary gender relations, different generations and a reorganization of the social world. The increasing diversity of family forms reflects a new reality of independent choices and increasing tolerance, even more families do not have to be unnecessary nuclear family.

Changes in relations in the modern family can be seen primarily through the change of the place of individuals in it. Under the influence of social, economic and cultural factors of the sixties of the 20th century began a revolutionary course of family change, which in the center put an individual whose main strategy becomes how to change the family as it could meet his needs and alternative choices.⁵¹ This positioning of the individuals in the family affects the relationships within it. Changes in the roles of men and women, in their mutual relations, liberation from traditional roles assigned to them, especially the release

⁴⁹ Here we give examples of Great Britain: the proportion of households made up of a married couple with children is constantly decreasing. In early sixties the number of these families was 38 percent, and in the late nineties, 23 percent. The share of single households in the same period increased from 11 to 28 percent and the percentage of single parent households increased by more than three times (from 3 to 10 percent). The source: *Social Trends*, HMSO, London, 1999, p. 42. in: Haralambos, M., Holborn, M., *Sociology - Themes and Perspectives*, part I, Golden marketing, Zagreb, 2002, pp. 538.

⁵⁰ Gidens, E., *Sociology*, The Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 186.

⁵¹ Milić, A., *Sociology of the family - Criticism and Challenges*, Čigoja press, Belgrade, 2001, pp. 316.

of women reflect on family relationships. We are becoming witnesses to a new movement of individualism in which people need to be active participants in building their lives and define their own identity. Under the influence of global social processes our every day lives suffered significant changes. The influence of tradition and established values is reduced and it has a significant impact on all aspects of human life, especially those related to family relations. Individuals in modern times, free from the pressures of tradition, have more opportunities to shape their own lives, to live in a more open and reflective way than it was the case in previous generations where the traditions and specific factors (social class, gender, ethnic and / or religious affiliation, etc..) guided their activities and way of life.⁵² In modern society there is a breakdown of integrity of the family and the roles of its members are increasingly moving from family to public areas of life. The family has no more the character of relations that are protected from the world in which the mutual solidarity and loyalty to the members is set through the understanding of the specific identity of the family as a group, but also its personal identity that it is created in it and that it is thanks to it won.⁵³ In modern society there are new values orientations. In the fifties of last century the goals that were stived for by people were connected with a happy family life (a new car, a good education for children, enhancing their living standards, etc.). Today, the goals of people are focused on self-realization, development of personal qualities, the search for personal identity, etc.⁵⁴

Determinants of the family transformation

Social changes in modern times are certainly a major factor, causes of transformation of the family. This relates primarily to the effects of a number of interrelated factors that create a framework for change in family or act as an agents of family changes - the sexual revolution, the struggle for women's rights and the feminist movement (s), technological changes in the field of human reproduction, computerization of society, impact of globalization on private life, the "new" individualism, and the legalization of the same-sex marriages. These factors have a different field of action and a different measure of intervention in family life and its organization, but all are very important challenges in contem-

⁵² Gidens, E., *Sociology*, The Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 66 – 67.

⁵³ Milić, A., *Classes and families - Sociological section of the state and perspectives of development of modern family*, The working press, Belgrade, 1978, p.114.

⁵⁴ Bek, U., *Living our own lives in a world that is rapidly changing: individualization, globalization and politics*, in: Haton, V., Gidens, E. (prir.), *On the edge - living with the global capitalism*, Plato, Belgrade, 2003, pp. 217.

porary family life. The process of social change that started in 60s of the 20th century, quickly and in the long run has changed a lot of things - it was broken by a unique life context, social institutions have experienced drastic changes (marriage, family, nation, etc.), leading to a redefinition of the various aspects of our lives - personal and intimate (family, sexuality, personal identity, etc.), the relationships that we establish with each others, the way we think about ourselves, our attitude towards work and the like. The influence of tradition, established rules and values is reduced, as well as the factors that used to have a significant impact on the course of human life (social class, gender, ethnic and religious affiliation, etc.), the local community entered into a interaction with the new global order, and individuals must be active in defining their own identity and build their own lives⁵⁵, the human body is free from sexual reproduction, and new relationships that are established get “social legitimacy” and still are not molded by marriage, family, etc.⁵⁶ The result of these changes is a structural shift towards new forms of communal life.

Trends of changes in the economy - the labor market transformations, development of service sectors, which are directly related to creating opportunities for the education of women, their employment, gaining economic independence of women, had an impact on the transformation, first of all, the internal relationships within the family, the changes in marriage and family - a change of power, the reduction of marital fertility, increasing the divorce rates, and a change of uniform (nuclear) family systems and households to a variety of forms, but also some of the key trends and indicators of demographic changes in family and society which are manifested in the increasing of the aging of population, lower rates of birth rates, lower nuptiality rates, increasing divorce rates and the like. As for the impact of economic changes on the transformation of the family, except the inclusion of women in paid work through employment, it must be borne in mind a new division of labor and power in the household as a result of previous⁵⁷, and the impact of technological changes and the (un) employment of women.⁵⁸ An important step towards the transformation of the family is paid

⁵⁵ Gidens, E., *Sociology*, The Faculty of Economics, Belgrade, 2005, pp. 66 – 67.

⁵⁶ Giddens, A., *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in modern Societies*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1992, p. 27.

⁵⁷ Delphy, C., Leonard, D., *Familial exploitation, A New Analysis of Marriage in Contemporary Western Societies*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992.

⁵⁸ In contemporary society, changes in the economic sphere have resulted in job creation, new markets, flexible labor, work part-time, work performed at home, working weekends, holidays, and exploitation of women's resources. “It fits well with female life script, and their double burden (in the family and the household and the labor market), and in terms of the insufficient participation of men in the private domain.” Bobić, M., *Demography and Sociology - connection or synthesis*, Public Enterprise “Official Gazette”, Belgrade, 2007, pg.195.

work of women in production and services, as evidenced by a strong increase in female employment in the European Union, and more and more educated women.⁵⁹ This means a new quality of family and relations in it, because it is a family with two rather than one breadwinner. Further, this change has an impact on gender relations in the household, through the less segregated division of labor within the family and through reducing the husband's dominance in family relations. But the entry of women into the public sphere through employment has its darker side: there is the increasing number of women with qualifications and without them that can not find jobs, and they want it or expect it, an increasing number of women losing their jobs and that because of the already achieved changes in their families (divorced, abandoned by their husbands or partners, or independent and minor children), are losing their livelihood and are becoming a problem that has to be delt by the state and its institutions. Still, the motivation of women for employment in many cases it is not intrinsic, but is the result of pressure from outside.⁶⁰ The position of individuals and influence on the decisions they make regarding the marriage and family, are largely determined by economic and social coercion - the decisions that spouses bring in regard to divorce and restoring families depend, for example, and from employment - whether they work in government or private companies or they do not have a steady job.⁶¹ Socio-economic factors - continuing education, late entry into the world of work, unemployment and work insecurity, lack of harmonization of family and work obligations, led to later entering the marriage of the young people, the increase in divorce, as well as lower fertility rates. Also, technology has an increasing role both in the workplace and private life - thanks to the modern information technologies, there was an overlapping spheres of work and private spheres - on the one hand, they allow employees to better combine family and work obligations⁶², On the other hand, technological and other innovations that are happening in the world of work requires continual learning and improvement, which is not compatible with the involvement of the family.⁶³ The development of today's global economy, technological changes in work, new ways of doing business, changes in work organization, job uncer-

⁵⁹ The share of employed women aged from 25 to 54 years in the European Union in the seventies of the last century was 40%, to the share of employed women in this age contingent has increased to 60% in 1999. year. Puljiz, V., *Family politics*, u: Puljiz, V. and others. *Social Policy: History, System, Glossary*, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, 2005, p. 325.

⁶⁰ Garhammer, M., *Familiale und gesellschaftliche Arbeitsteilung – ein europäischer Vergleich*. Zeitschrift für Familienforschung, 9 (1), 1997.

⁶¹ Segalan, M., *Sociology of the family*, Clío, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 10.

⁶² Šijaković, I., *The charm of the middle class*, Prometej, Belgrade, 1999, pp. 125.

⁶³ Puljiz, V. i dr., Puljiz, V. and others. *Social Policy: History, System, Glossary*, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, 2005, p 338.

tainy and job insecurity have negative effects on marriage and family - make it difficult for youth to become independent, the establishment of new families, as well as maintaining existing ones.

In order to understand the impact of demographic changes on the transformation of families, we must bear in mind the complex social-economic and demographic development of certain countries (regions). The effect of demographic factors (birth rate and fertility, mortality, population age, increased incidence of celibacy and divorce) is often overemphasized in the interpretation of the modern transformation of the family. However, their effects can not be ignored, because the occurrence of low birth rate and fertility and their disposal for a later age, has the effect of entering into marriage, the length of the procreative period and the establishing of emotional stability between spouses. On the other hand, reducing mortality and prolonging the life of the population, influence the patterns of marriage, divorce and subsequent re-marriage and cohabitational relationships during the lifetime of individuals. All of these demographic changes must be considered in light of a two new family phenomena: the increase in divorce and celibacy. One of the major trends that are reflected in the family patterns in most industrialized societies is the increasing of divorce rate. In the most European countries, with a decrease in the rate of marriages it has been an increasing number of divorces in regards to the number of marriages. Divorce in the individual countries of Europe occurs in varying degrees: in the south, the level is relatively low and includes between 10 and 20% of marriages, while the level in the north is between 40 and 45% of marital communities.⁶⁴ Also, in modern society it is visible an increase in the number of those who are permanently opting to live alone (celibacy), and those who do not want to have children. Education, employment, career, contraception, individual life goals, aspirations, and (class-conditioned) system of values, the decline of state support to families, increase the likelihood of not only biological, but also willful sterility (sociological sterility, childlessness).⁶⁵ The share of completion of celibacy is a clear indication of falling popularity of marriage as an institution.

When we talk about the future of the family, it must be taken into account society's attitude to violence in the latest developments and the transformation of society and family. The family for an individual and all its members and the community as a whole remains a priority and an important function of the community, but these changes require a radical transformation over the state, society towards violence (systematic, long-term and the immediate family-oriented social policy - family policy) and a different kind of relationship for all family members to maintain a family group and its development.

⁶⁴ Segalan, M., *The sociology of the family*, Clivo, Belgrade, 2009, pp. 187.

⁶⁵ *Celibacy*, M. Bobić, *Sociological dictionary*, Textbook Institute, Belgrade, 2007, p. 55.

Conclusion

Relying on the latest information on trends and changes in the sphere of family life, we tried to shed more light on the phenomenon of family transformation from different angles, making the procedure in depth and breadth of these changes, while opening up a new questions for research and discussion and contributing to a better understanding of processes and changes in the modern family, which should form the basis for further research.

Transformation does not mean the decline of the family, the disappearance of the family as a social group - regardless of the diversity of partner and family forms in contemporary society, relationships between partners are universal, as well as forms of common life, intimacy, sexuality and emotional ties, more people prefer informal relationships in which is given birth to an increasing number of children, rates of re-marriage are increasing and there remains a desire to live with someone as a couple. Indeed, in modern society the content of the marriage has changed (from the institution to a loose partnership) and the content of the family (shifting focus from parenting to the partnership), and the result is the diversification of the life styles (partner and family). However, the family as a social group and the institution has not lost its sense of its functions and duties. The tendency towards the creation of partnerships (legally sanctioned or common-law) and the pursuit of achieving parenthood (family) are still present in individuals. Although earthquakes and changes in marital dyad influenced the changes in the family, the social group still has an important role for most individuals, more as a resource (kinship solidarity, support and assistance), rather than as a refuge.

The increasing diversity of family forms reflects a new reality of independent choices and increasing tolerance, more and more families do not have to be nuclear families. But this does not mean that the nuclear family form disappears completely, but it certainly becomes less popular. In more developed societies there is an increasingly accepting of the new forms of partnership and family forms, and the legal basis that accompany these changes are create (for example, regulating the rights and obligations of partners living in a common law marriages, legalizing the same-sex marriages, etc.). Marriage is no longer an institution that establishes the relationship between partners, and fewer and fewer people choose to marry, but the partnership is still being established, and it si given the new meaning to the actors (cohabitation, “re-marriage” arrangements, etc.).

Regardless of the weakening of the dominance pattern of the nuclear family in contemporary society and the manifestation of various forms of partnership and family, it arbitrarily to assum, whether some of these forms will be accepted as the dominant and the best.

Given that the family in contemporary society has become part of both private and public spheres, and that this social group has further significance for its members, it is necessary to view social principles and adapt them to the new forms of partnerships and family. With this work we tried to contribute to the modern view of the family (family types), perception of reality in which the forms of partnership and family relations - appear, disappear and are re-created, as well as the directions of possible completions (and change) of the basic theoretical concepts (conceptual discourse) of the family, considering all of the changes that have occurred in the center of the family, its functions, structure, relationships among its members, and the relation of individuals to the family as a social group. Theoretical discourse on the transformation of the family should be taken in the direction of thinking about violence in the plural, which is increasingly repressing the nuclear family as a classical theoretical model and empirical indicator with regards to all of the other forms of family relationships that have been evaluated and determined. Research attention should be drawn to the fact that family relations always include the parent - child relationship (regardless of the form in which these relations are established / manifested), and to see from a different perspective the reality of family in contemporary society, creating an incentive to think about the future course of developmental of family changes or, better said, opening the question of where will these changes continue to unfold.

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