Marriage and Parenting in the Contemporary Family

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Abstract: In contemporary times attention has been dragged to the fact that marriage is no longer seen as the institutional and symbolic representative of what is a couple or a family and so, many marital and family arrangements gained ground, favoring the absence of a single model relationship, such as families composed of remarried, divorced, cohabitants, single parent, among others, considered unfit awhile ago. This article aims to encourage discussion about the need to find a place for the new family being formed, taking into account the marriage bond as a founding element of the family, whatever its configuration. From a literature review, in order to contextualize the dilemmas of the contemporary family living, situations leading to divorce, shared custody and the role of family mediation as a protective strategy of intergenerational ties, discusses marriage's fundamental aspects. Therefore, it is believed that by submerging thoughts about building fields of interpretation of marital interaction, it becomes possible to discern, in the view of the couple, knowledge about how humans have been building their marital experiences and assigns meanings.

Keywords: Marriage, Parenting, Contemporary family.

Article Received: 01 May 2019 Revised: 17 May 2019 Accepted: 28 May 2019

Introduction

In half of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, the ideologies and practices of marriage, as well as patterns involving male and female identities, began to be questioned, creating a crisis of identities and social roles in the family and, consequently, patterns of marital interaction, which caused changes in the man-woman relationship, producing new forms of subjection and subjectivities.

This article, discusses the wedding in its fundamental aspects, in order to contextualize the dilemmas of living for the contemporary couple, situations that often lead to divorce, shared custody and, in the meantime, the role of family mediation as protection strategy of intergenerational ties.

The definition of love choice is a fundamental aspect of adult life. According to the job, politics, knowledge of the truth and meaning of life, marriage organizes priorities and directs the decisions facing the various challenges that arise in the everyday flow. A security that derives from the relationship between spouses living quality wedding has implications not only for mental health but physical health and professional lives of men and women. [23]. Getting married can match the performance of new roles, as well as the strengthening of concrete and symbolic nexus that contribute to the development of personality.

The marriage begins long before the ritual that saddles it, marked by gestures whose meaning goes beyond the exchange of rings and signing papers. As a key area of the bond, the marriage covenant is placed between the pledge and the presence of an unknown dimension.

Everything that happens before the gaze of civil and / or religious authorities, sponsors, witnesses, family and friends comes from an unconscious and unconfessed “secret pact” made between the bride and groom. The ritual makes explicit the couple's decision to publicly take their choice of a company that tends to all, and so, that survives the limits of circumstances.
It is a milestone that puts the relationship between the couple in the promise of lasting love "[...] in sickness and in health, in joy and sorrow [...] all the days of our life." But this expectation can only be relevant in the context of a fullness of meaning that will support it.

For the ritual be valid, and its meaning is fully experienced by spouses, two requirements are needed: awareness and freedom to pronounce the 'yes', because in his ontology, the human being, a dual unit, is opening to the other. All this means that the affective relationship of the couple enters a new, more beautiful and full level, where it is accepted to live with all aspects of the other person and confirms the intuition that it is worth closing ties and remain in them in a temporality that tends to hug the arch of existence.

From the point of view of civil law, marriage is the conclusion of a contract between the state and two persons with the aim of creating a family. This concept varies historically and across cultures, but in most countries there is a consensus on the definition of marriage as socially sanctioned union between a man and a woman, with or without children, by communion of life and property. This definition is close to the anthropological concept of Levi - Strauss [19].

Juridically, the main consequence of marriage is the situation of the past, present and future possessions that will receive different treatment from the property regime adopted by the couple. Currently in Brazil, marriages can be registered under the regimes of partial communion or separate property. Independent from property regime, civil marriage formalizes assignments in areas such as inheritance, support obligation and responsibilities towards children. (CF/1988 arts. 226 a 230) [5] As a result of the marriage, the marriage relationship is established between the spouses.

Recent sociological research confirms that family born from a public pact inspired by a lasting love between a man and a woman, on which are raised and educated children, is a way of life perceived by different institutions and members of different generations, especially the Young ones, as capable of transforming the affection and freedom, giving meaning to life and producing invaluable “social capital” [26]. The marriage bond is marked by autopoietic vitality, namely, having a tenacious capacity for self-organization, feeding back by ties of other orders such as the original family, friends, work and neighborhood entangling each spouse into progressively complex relationships, marked by dramatic with high qualitative potential.

From the relational point of view, in the marriage are present three constitutive elements: two individuals and a relationship. The strength of the third element, the conjugal state, is so incidental as the unique characteristics of each spouse. It arises from the sharing of expectations, stories and ideals that shape the symbolic content and relational in need and qualify marital intimacy [24]. The dynamism that characterizes the couple depends on the formation of a marital identity constructed in the interaction and interlace between two individuals. “It is on this relational fabric in permanent establishment that emalham similarities and differences, proximities and distances, complementarities and symmetries unite” [22].

Over time, the shape and intensity of expression of affection between the spouses alters, the organization of everyday life, the influence from the original family and other institutions that set conditions for the double cross transitions in a evolutionary cycle. The concept of the family life cycle, inaugurated by Carter e McGoldrick [8], emphasizes the systemic premise that the family interacts with other systems and changes over time, constituting a changing relational dynamic.

Their model is based on the observation of disruptive and normative events that lead to breaks with crystallized relational patterns and require reassessment of goals. Includes the following stages: the new couple; family with young children; family with teenage children; launching children and moving on; and families in the late stage of life.

Following this model basically focused on the development of children, some authors have identified marital stages, reaching an interesting discussion about the movements made by the spouses in search of resolve issues regarding conflicts, communication styles and leadership, the critical events to
what we call “coping strategies” or “marital coping”.

If the couple has children or not and how to handle them is an important issue for how the different circumstances are faced and, consequently, the phases of the couple’s life cycle, namely: falling in love, bridal link, end of the romantic period, stability, commitment, co-creation or shared collaboration. [7]

There are other models of evolutionary cycle, but in all of them, the central point is that the couple must face the stresses inherent to each new phase to maintain genuine interest in continuing the love relationship. The existence of models that emphasize other processes reveals that, beyond the transitions and coping strategies built by the couple, it interacts with possibilities to live marital status, requiring constant decision making regarding the bond, including as to custody, in a situation of marital disruption, in which the bonds between man and woman give rise to ties between father and mother, ex-spouses.

In the presence of current family / marriage so different from the traditional romantic style they learned from their parents, contemporary couples are challenged to reconcile individual and marital needs, inaugurating a new model of trade. There is the need to find a place for the new family being formed and spouse family, without losing sight of the construction of the couple’s intimacy, but it also accepts the possibility of resolving unsatisfactory relationships with marital breakup.

Perlin e Barros [25] attest that the contemporary conjugal bond, for being so private, individual and dependent on explicit symbolic contracts or not from each partner, is more fragile and prone to divorce, just that it happens in a more flexible and dynamic context, with contradictory coexistence with what is seen as current or emerging.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper to investigate the contemporary marital and dilemmas, the relationships between genres and generations against divorce and shared custody helps to deepen the knowledge about how humans have been building their marital experiences and assigns meanings.

Transformations of Marital and Family Dilemmas in Contemporary

In the last decades, the Brazilian society passes through profound transformations of nuptiality profiles, divorce and fertility resulting not only from changes in socioeconomic character, but mostly from new concepts and practices that organize family life and intimate relationships. Marital dynamics previously restricted to industrialized and economically developed countries are said to characterize the relationship as a couple from current Brazil.

Most couples keep their traditional hospitality, proximity and collaboration with other generations, networks of kinship and friendship, while incorporating new practices dissonant from them in many aspects.

In reviewing the subject, Scabini [27] shows that among most oh the European couples being married is less relevant than the actual marital union, because they tend to live the private sphere away from hierarchies and sociocultural ties.

This expresses the incidence of individual rights and the requirement of satisfaction dissociated from the gratuity inherent in the bond. Possibly so not provided, the distancing of the public sphere has introduced a new dilemma for the marital relationship: a constant feeling of incompleteness and imminent collapse by the fact that the partners remain willing to find someone else. This increases the difficulty of establishing the “secret pact” as well as fear of compromising himself face to intuition liquidity and fugacity. [2]

In Brazil, infidelity has been a major reason for divorce, especially for providing the opening of new loving horizons, recognized by Scabini e Cigoli [28] as one of the “baffling events” that require reorganization of the marital bond.

The result of the combination of uncertainty which is established in the contemporary couple, besides the difficulty of assuming the link in the social and personal spheres, is the desire that the potential of the other, ie, their professional performance, financial condition...
and interpersonal skills meet the expectations. paradoxically, increases the charging between spouses more attentive to signs of crisis and likely to question and reformulate their commitment. Thus, in summary form, contemporary conjugal union tends to be characterized by major reference to the loving feeling, married life relatively impoverished; greater investment in aspects of personal life and individual interests; great importance of sexuality in the constitution and maintenance of the marital relationship.

All this shows, according to Aboim [1], that couples find themselves facing the sometimes irreconcilable tension, between the ideal of affective fusion and investment in the individuality of each spouse. It’s the difficult to sustain collusion, reciprocity and harmony between the couple while they want to achieve high goals for personal achievement. The author also notes that the romantic ideal persists even transformed by increasing women’s equality and the realization that love is a dynamic process.

Demographic indicators tend to reflect the dynamics described above, as practices such as lower frequency of formalizing the marriage, increased cohabitation, increasing of consensual unions and divorce and declining birthrate alongside more structural indicators reveal the nuclearization of the Brazilian family. Marital changes are in line with profound social changes that impact on the way adults develop affection and way of being a family.

The work structured in a precarious way and distanced of its meaning expands its logical to the relations of intimacy. The substantial increase of consumption demands requires constant professional expertise in order to maintain individuals in a highly competitive job market, distancing spouses [3]. These processes alter the rhythms that mark the marriage, postponing the couple's union and providing the option to be single, interfering the decision to have children, the timing and methods of family planning, in addition to interfering in the contents of married life, imposing concerns, frustrations and expectations that were not understood in a reflexive manner by the spouses.

In 2012, Brazil recorded a gradual trend of increasing rates of marriage and divorce. For every four civil marriages registered there was a separation, reaching a rate of 1.8 per thousand. Couples formalize their union with greater frequency than in the decades of 1990 and 2000, however, their marriages tend to last less. Noteworthy are the indicators of Salvador showing the rapid advancement of nuclearization of the family as large inequalities socioeconomic conditions persist. Increasing numbers soteropolitans who choose not to marry and, among those who are married, many decide not to have children or have them above 30 years of age. The birth rate in Salvador fell by 3.3% in 2011 compared to 2009, above the national index fell by only 0.42%. [17] The range between 20 and 24 years was the most decreased to have their first child (-8, 51%) while those aged 30 to 34 experienced an increase (4%). It was also recorded a 6% increase in the number of women over 50 who had children between 2010 and 2011. [17] Even with a greater tendency to delay age to gestate the first child, there has been growth in demand for infertility treatments. [15]

These numbers show that young people are postponing the start of married life and reproductive life. But this does not necessarily imply greater sexual freedom, as shown by recent research on sexual and amorous practices. [9; 14; 6] The most accepted hypothesis is the influence of improved standards of education and health on male and female sexual careers [20] providing more individual targets as priority compared to most group plans.

The Relations between Genders and Generations in Divorce Cases
Forgiving each other in their radical uniqueness and failure to meet the complex of demands may be the most difficult learning in the wedding. It’s also needed to forgive the circumstances, ie, leave room for the unexpected and seek the resources needed to embrace it.

Accept and adapt the plans to reality enables the update of the “secret pact” between spouses after each step of the life cycle, marked by crises, ruptures with ways of acting consolidated over the years and followed by the redirection of life trajectories. Update the couple’s unconscious and implicit contract nurtures the goals that give meaning to be together. When this is not
feasible, the couple reaches the threshold of divorce that, if consolidated, introduces the bereavement in front of unfulfilled promise to love and be loved unconditionally.

The person who experiences the divorce goes through moments of preparation of denouement that start with memories about the beginning of the relationship and the search for each spouse’s share of responsibility. Then they reflect about themselves and their family history as a function of the bond. And finally, recognizes what is good and right in order to get it safely in their memory. [21]

However, in some cases, Divorce can not be just the division in relation to other, but a new way of destructive attack to the bond. It turns into a war intended to annul the value of marriage or strengthen it in reverse, ie, through continuous attempt to depredate any hint of positivity between spouses. In these cases, reconciliation is hampered by the hypothesis that the other acts so prearranged in order to disqualification or loss of resources to reestablish social life and remake love life.

Rather than the most people think, a large proportion of divorces is not due to the fact that the bond be irrelevant, but, for being so important that the spouses do not accept that it does not meet the expectations. Women are applying for divorce more often and in most cases, for understanding marriage as unsatisfactory love affair.

However, men understand marriage as family formation, then the simple love failure does not justify the end of the marital relationship, with some exception in cases of sleeve treason. Few studies address the phenomenon of divorce as unicasual. Issues such as extramarital sex, financial difficulties and alcoholism, for example, relate to it, but not necessarily determine.

Divorce for being a complex phenomenon should be studied in the concrete case considering the peculiarities of each couple [12]. Regardless of the stage of the life cycle of the couple, Divorce is always painful and stressful for generating losses in various fields of life. However, separation can have constructive effects on family members, especially when the price to pay for maintaining the marital status is the destruction of themselves and/or other. The separation restructures the existing relationship patterns.

The marital relationship focuses on the emotional development of children. So much so that a significant portion of emotional problems presented by children can be solved with simple monitoring and parental guidance. The children often react with anger, fear or guilt to divorce and are aided when they ensure that their parents distinguish the parental and marital functions and make sure their love and care will not be interrupted or canceled with the end of marriage.

Family mediation is a technique which contributes to the rescue of positive feelings between the couple in order to enable the exercise of parental functions and the protection of children. It may result in referral of the couple to other professionals, including, for psychotherapy. Mediation does not prescribe the maintenance or disruption of the couple, but is committed to preserving marital resources that enable not complete rupture of relations and the consequent loss of connections with the origin of the family [12].

Men tend to remarry more quickly than women. Remarriages are seen as complex because of the interaction between members of different relationships, however they are just as capable of promoting health as the relations of first marriage. The subsystems constituting the family in remarriage are more permeable, the figures of maternal and paternal authority exercising many styles, sexuality is more relevant, and it tends to greater sharing of the financial burden [29].

The Shared Custody

The legal institute of custody integrates the familiar power that governs the care of children after divorce. He predicts that children and adolescents as well as incapable by reason other than age should be under the daily care of a parent or both. Since the beginning of the Republic in 1890, Brazilian law provides for custody, taking the blame for the separation as one of the parameters to be observed to determine the responsible parent. In the civil code made in 1916, the guard was provided by agreement between the parents.
or determined for the innocent about separating.
In case of dual culpability, took up the sex and age of the child as selection criteria until the Law 4,121 from 1962 established that the guard would be reserved for innocent spouse or mother. In case of dual culpability, considering the best interests of the child. Only with the 1988 constitution guilt is no more discussed and passed to emphasize the dignity of the human person, full protection and best interests of the child and adolescent as principles to guide the right of children to family and community. [10]

This enabled broaden perspectives for the family as a whole, comprising not only the common daily familiarity of the parents but mainly, the incidence of relational assets of intangible nature of both parents on the child's personality. Under this new approach is a new image of parenting, longer available to the conviviality and lucid, participatory interaction of education and maintenance of children.

In this sense, it is worth considering what notes Edward Teyber in 1995 in this regard: Parents need to balance two essential requirements in all determinations of custody / access agreements. Firstly, one of the premises needs to be continuity of the child's relationship with both parents. Secondly, there's the need to conduct negotiations on access agreements (visits) to protect their children from parental conflict. [apud 10]

Thus, among the possibilities inherent in the institution of custody, shared custody is the modality that aside of the unilateral, is provided by the Civil Code (and by Law no. 11.698/2008) [4] and constitutes in the upbringing and education of their children jointly by both parents after separation or divorce. It differs from the unilateral guard for attributing to both parents joint accountability and the exercise of common rights and duties of father and mother who does not live under the same roof, concerning the sons of the family power.

According to Cezar-Ferreira [10] is the most desirable method, however, exercised with difficulties since it requires constant dialogue between ex-spouses. This implies recognizing that the type of custody is not sufficient to define the best approach for parents towards their children. In fact, is cooperation between them and the quality of interaction with the children that focuses positively on their development? Parents can be prepared to live a more cooperative and affective way raising children.

The mediator main challenge, therefore, is to separate the of parental marital roles, rescuing the symbolic meaning of the bond in the transition of divorce so that the couple take the children, nexus that unites them independent of desire. For this, should help ex-spouses to remain in the here-and-now, to increase their negotiating skills for the welfare of the children and the distinction between the termination of the couple and the beginning of a new stage of life. That means dealing with the paradox of having to refer to the other, in many cases, source of anger, disappointment, humiliation and coercion. [21]

The mediator is facilitated in this task by identifying a gap between the generations that need to be rebuilt and protected so that the bond does not assume a bitter and superficial aspect such as becoming an insurmountable barrier. This demand is due to the fact that the marriage and family union does not constitute private matter, but a relational property that has repercussions for the couple and the community. It is known that the children's (un)adaptive development?

Therefore, shared custody is successful when the former spouses consent to the exercise of co-parenting, ie, the set of reciprocal involvement and both parents in education, training, and decisions about the lives of their children. Co-parenting is not confined to sharing responsibility with their children's education, but it means that parents cooperate effectively in each other's decision
support and absorb them into their own individual relationship with their children. Concretely, this implies agreement or disagreement in parenting practices; division of work related to the child; support (or sabotage) of the co-parental role; joint management of family relationships. The co-parenting resulting of interdependence these components in which the variability of interaction patterns among families is a consequence of the type, degree and intensity of connections between its components. [18]

The co-parenting allows ex-spouses cope and take their parenthood, because that which is born of them and through them can not be erased by any fact, not even by death. Thus, the ex-spouses can move on without undoing the children as a page of life to be erased or forgotten.

The processes that mark the affective life of the adult are born with the idealization of love and are, with the assistance of time and the elements of family mediation, a way to glimpse the decisive face of human personality: the myriad of needs and evidences that give rise to it. The dilemmas of the contemporary family living suggest that there is an ongoing way to answer these questions, which invites us to study the challenges of interaction between genders and generations with a research agenda that is linked to family policies.

Conclusion

Given the state of the art of family therapy that includes greater attention to the individual within the family group, arousing aspects that are specific to the person, their responsibilities and commitments, the intention of this article is to stimulate understanding of new marital organizations and ways of dealing with the dilemmas of the contemporary couple.

The transformations that families are passing reach the marital relationship, since the couple lives with the difficult task of experiencing a transformation of the self, from new ways of thinking, acting and feeling including parenting. The institutional nature of marriage is no longer the only way to start a life together, since the formal union gave way to various marital arrangements.

This psychosocial and institutional crisis of conjugal reveals itself in many ways: the number of marriages, official or not, the decision by marriage in old age; the emergence of alternatives to the traditional model and the occurrence of the increased number of divorces. Marriage is no longer an institutional protection for the loving bond and thus created a rift between married life and marriage: two people can live together without getting married because the relationship does not follow an institutional logic, but affective.

Individuals expect to find in their relationships an affective, intellectual and sexual compatibility, which, according to Dias [13], are characterized as factors that will determine the continuity of the bond. In this sense, This article aimed to highlight the emergence of a renewed interest in the individual inside the couple, bringing the importance of the emotional and cognitive field in the construction of interpretation field of marital interaction.

The society went through a period in which the marriage was seen as an institution in crisis, experienced moments of restatements and adjustments, but now seems to sketch a resumption of marriage as a new and flexible outfit. What defines a couple today is mainly the emotional bond, sharing experiences, the strength and quality of the relationship, happiness and satisfaction of its members. People express an interest in establishing stable marital relationships, committed to building lasting marital bonds, only in different ways and for other purposes.

And if that journey, find themselves dissatisfied or unhappy, have divorce as an the alternative for reconstruction of new marital ties, remarrying and opting for shared custody, because they are in conditions of understanding that children are part of the marital bond in order to legitimize and authorize the intersection between the roles of spouse and parent, even if for this the action of a family mediator is necessary, able to promote an environment conducive to performance of co-parenting.
References


