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The Arab Family in the Age of Transition:
Challenge and Resilience
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***Multiple families in changing
societies in the Maghreb: the
case of Morocco***

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From the Arab Family to the case of Morocco

Taking into account relevant old references such as the ***Arab Family and the challenge of change*** (Barakat, 1993; 1985), trying to discuss the basic characteristics of the Arab Family not only as a central socioeconomic unit, but mainly as a microcosm of the demographic transformation of the society, as well as the first and intimate educational space for the creation of the **self** and the **identity** (Caputo, 2006), we move into the complex and delicate subject of the evolving contemporary families in the Maghreb.

Within this context, we start from the meaningful work conducted for years by the ***Arab Families Working Group*** (AFWG, 2008; 2013), trying to understand the links between gender and family in the Arab world, going back to the patriarchy and up to the deep demographic, social and cultural transformations of the last fifty years in the Arab countries.

Within the Maghreb, we choose to focus on Morocco in order to understand that besides the demographic changes and many other transformations such as the quick urbanisation, the degree of gender participation and an important change of the values, families are very much changing not only as far as their structures are concerned, but also as far as the **relationships** among their members.

In this paper we will propose an interdisciplinary analysis of the multiple families in the changing society of Morocco, with a main **anthropological approach**.

Demography will offer the starting point of this research, focused on anthropology but enriched by other contributions such as those of the sociology, the history, the political sciences, the pedagogy, the philosophy.

The modernisation of a country like Morocco is one of the most visible aspects.

Most of the political discourses, as well as the discourses of the media and the civil society, are based on the idea of "progress", together with ideas of democratisation, gender equalities, education, good governance.

So, today more than in any other period, we need a realistic vision of the changing society, able to promote initiatives and to assume risks.

Within this framework, the King of Morocco Mohammed VI has called for many values of the so-called "modernity" among which the **responsible citizenship**.

Morocco is at the core of meaningful and original social and cultural change process, but also of an important reform process, concerning also the specific field of the *Code of the Family (Mudawwana al-Usra al-Maghribiyya)*

Some qualitative researches have been achieved by some of the Moroccan sociologists and anthropologists (and others), in the period of the last ten-five years, attesting this changing dynamic that needs to be observed.

Zirari (2008) debates around women's rights in Morocco focusing on four dates

- 1) **1958**, when it was elaborated the first *Code of the Family* by the reformist Salafis;
 - 2) **1993**, when the *Code* was revisited because of the pressures of the women's associations;
 - 3) **1999**, at the occasion of the approval of the *Plan of Integration of the Women in the Development*, which opened a huge debate among different ideological sensibilities on the feminine question;
 - 4) **2003**, when it was approved the new *Code of the Family*, marking a change in the philosophy and the juridical treatment of the women's rights.
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A main point of this new *Code* is the articulation between **the religious dimension** (represented by the King, as being the Commander of the Believers (*Amir al-Mu'minin*) , according to the art.3 of the National Constitution) and **the modern legislative dimension** (thanks to which the project of law was debated in the Moroccan Parliament).

Moudawwanat al-Usra al-Maghribiyya – Wizarat al- 'Adl wa al-Hurriyat – Al-Mumlaka Al-Maghribiyya / Code de la Famille – Ministère de la Justice et de les Libertés – Royaume du Maroc – Dahir n. 1-04-22 du 12 Hija 1424 (3 Février 2004) portant promulgation de la Loi n. 70-03 portant Code de la Famille.

- The new *Code* reflects partially the new mutations of the Moroccan society (urbanisation, mass education, employment, reproductive health individualisation process, spatial mobility, change of values, etc.).
- As Zirari reminds, “**the nuclearisation of the family does not bring to a social and ideological rupture with the traditional family**, which still survives (with all these references such as the authority of the male, the honour, the solidarity) and still interferes within the relations of the couple” (Zirari, 2008, p.241).
- Nevertheless, the new *Code* is a tentative of “democratisation” of the society (assuming that the democratisation of the private spaces is a condition to the democratisation of the public ones) and **it expresses the reaffirmation of both the reference to the Islam and the dynamics of modernisation.**

As El Harras (2006) very well shows, the actual *Code* proposes a new and ***unforeseen reconstruction of three instances: the individual (the self), the conjugal (we as parents) and the family (we as a family).***

That means a new approach to the *reciprocity* of the relationship of the parents and the growing importance of the ***negotiation processes*** of the conflicts among the family members.

Mohamed El Harras proposes a deep sociological analysis of the new *Code* in a working paper achieved for the *Espace Associatif* and the University of Rabat in 2006. Among other analyses of the *Code*, especially focused on gender equality and heritage issues, see the special number of the scientific review *Prologues* (2009) n.38.

Changing families: new demographic profiles and new re-articulations of values

- Morocco lives today an advanced demographic transition: the Moroccan population has deeply changed in half a century and is still evolving. The demographic changes partially reflect the new attitudes towards the family and the State. Already from the 60s to the 90s the employment for women had seen a *crescendo* and the feminine universe opened to the external, out of the family circle, creating and diffusing a “real mental revolution” (Courbage, 2006, p.26).

The politicians have invested in demographic public policy, in the awareness of having to manage the demographic variable. In fact, **the demographic profile in Morocco is very much characterised by the young people** and for many years the population having less than 30 years have constituted the majority of the country. **Today, the population with less than 15 years represent the 30% of the whole population and the population among 15 and 59 is the 62%.**

To sum up, the family is no longer the main key cellule in the social process and it has no more the exclusivity of ***the production of meaning.***

We can find a not explicit **cohabitation of tensions** among the different generations, whose symbolic references and whose material interests are no longer or not always compatible.

According to Goody we should consider the family as a legal unity and a unity of production, and we should consider the multiples strata that shape both the reality of the family and its living experience (Goody, 1976; Bargach, 2006).

The family of today is not a homogeneous institution. Its place of origin, its place of residence, its values and its social belonging are some of the important factors affecting the multiplicity of the families. With “family” in Morocco nowadays **we refer mainly to the nuclear family and therefore to the Arabic word *al-usra* (a conjugal unity) more than *al-'ayla*, which means mainly, instead, the enlarged family (Bargach, 2006).**

Along with the solidarities inside the family group, we can observe other **organic solidarities referred to the class of age, the place of residence, the scholar status, the professional profile and so on.**

The **National Inquiry on the Values** (achieved in 2004) had showed, already ten years ago, that the solidarity inside the family and the importance given to the marriage, in the contemporary contexts, were still meaningful references.

The Inquiry revealed the existence of **282 typologies of *ménages familiaux with a complex structure***, 183 of which *characterised by the cohabitation of at least three generations*.

According to the Inquiry, in 2004 more than 60% of the families were nuclear (while in 1982 they were around the 50%), more than 20% of the *ménages familiaux* were directed by women and 8% were mono-parental (El Ayadi, 2007; Gandolfi, 2010).

- Within this frame, not only the number of the members has diminished, the vertical relations of authority have changed in the direction of an individualisation (giving the family members much more freedom and, at the meantime, more responsibility), but we can also gradually observe the transition from a family where the members' roles are related to their status (father, mother, child, etc) to **a family more oriented to the person and where the socialisation of the members is much more horizontal** (Cherkaoui, 2006).
- Finally, we'd like to underline that **the crisis of authority of the father (as we observed, mainly due to the economic independence of the members of the family), might be solved by means of *dialogue* instead of *violence*.**

In order to choose this direction, the society needs strong references of philosophers, educators, pedagogues (Tozy, 2006).

Otherwise the actual most widespread references would be too distant from the growing complexity of the reality.

Since 2004 the new *Code* officially affirms the conjugal relation should be based on the equality, the consensus, the agreement, the sharing of responsibilities.

Also to face this, **the Moroccan society should need an intellectual system of reference and an adequate cultural support.**

- Even if we do not find many specific surveys on the effects and the incidence of the *Code of the Family* on the living experiences of the families,

- **few qualitative researches attest** this on-going **multiple transformations** of the families: at **the level of the family structure (much more close to the mononuclear unit)**, at **the level of re-articulation of the intergenerational** relations and at the level of an on going **redefinition of the gender relations.**

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- **Recent fieldworks adds complexity to the results of the *National Inquiry on the Values*** that had already showed difficult ways to approach the authority and the delicate process of individualisation of the youth.

- My own anthropological researches achieved since 2000 to nowadays in different areas of Morocco show a very much diversified context of living (urban and rural) where very often **the parents' and children *histories of life and the history of their families are the keys to understand the engagement in*** civil society, the political activism, the social movements, the cultural and artistic participation of the youth in the urban contexts, the direct and indirect use of violence in micro and macro contexts of life, and few other objects of research.

Among the rare **ethnographies and histories of life** attesting this multiplicity, we may also point at the interesting research ***Casablanca. Metropolitan figures and scenes* (Peraldi & Tozy, 2011)**, where both doctoral students and eminent researches tried to collect ethnographies and in-depth, in “miniature”, profiles of some social actors of the town.

Among the many examples, we propose to gaze upon **few single Moroccan women’s histories of life and their ways of co-housing in Casablanca** (Cheikhi, 2011).

The research attests of some of these multiple new convivial relations and **modalities of co-habitation of the youth**, which are the result of the mass education, the individualisation process and the increasing of the horizontal relations.

We can also read **the narratives of few divorced women, living the stigmatisation of the society and adopting creative strategies of self presentation, as well as tactics of survival in the social spaces** (Debarre, 2011).

Actually, many other life histories may be quoted. For example, that of a **migrant entrepreneur moving among the valley of the Ouneine (in the Souss region), Casablanca and Shangai.**

By means of his narrative we arrive to understand not only about his life and his work, but also a lot about the specificity of **his family of origin, in the 70s, in a rural context of Morocco, his own family living in Casablanca and his children's composite living experience of a "modern" and "mobile" family among Morocco and elsewhere.**

Hence, we need to deeply take into account such precious **ethnographies and researches attesting the complexity of daily lives and daily practices** of the Moroccan citizens, from **the micro viewpoints of single individuals, as such and as members of a family.**

The National Inquiry on the Values I showed that the **autonomy of the children and the dialogue emerged as values more consistent than the obedience** (that was one of the main values in the families of the past).

All that partially questions the traditional concept of authority (Marcuse, 1969) and **the relation "master-disciple" (Hammoudi, 2001) in the Moroccan families,** but also in the scholastic contexts.

The youth should be really accompanied by the school in their analysis and comprehension of its familiar experiences, even if complex and contradictory (Arnot, Dillabough, 2000).

Last but not least, we should consider the connection among educational processes, family relations and the "religious dimension" of life. **We intend here to consider the religious sense or attitude towards life, much more than the religious practices in the daily life.**

- In every family, independently from the religious identity or the secular attitude or, at the meantime, the co-presence of a religious and the a secular identity - as many socio-anthropological researches show (El Ayadi et al., 2007) - the members of the family somehow "*give a body and a figure to their religious meaning*" (Moscato, 2006; El Ayadi et al., 2007). And this suggests a new important field of investigation.
- The idea is to understand how a family, as being a participative model of an educational relation, becomes the reality where each cultural horizon is mediated.
- Now, what about if we should consider religious horizons, as well?

Even if we choose not to focus, in this paper, on an investigation about the families in Morocco from the point of view of the religion, nevertheless the relation to the religion – of course – might be revelatory of many transformations. Here, we just suggest few ideas in order to understand the range and the complexity of the issue.

In the frame of contemporary change processes, which is the religion that is mobilised by the youth? Essentially, it is not the religion of the fathers but the one coming from their individual choice.

In fact, the actual generations adopt the religion after having studied it in many ways and by means of different sources (Tozy, 2006; El Ayadi et al, 2007).

In the context of the religion, **since the religious proposals are so much diversified and not completely controlled by the State, the Moroccan people often try to recompose their own “religious menu” (Tozy 2006, p. 231) and allow themselves to a sort of syncretism** within the Islamic religion of different approaches and sometimes with other religions and approaches, too.

Here comes the importance of the school and its responsibility in giving the youth the instruments to navigate in the free market of these multiple religious values (Tozy, 2009; El Ouazzani et al., 2010; Gandolfi, 2010; 2012b; 2012c).

The process of an “intellectual secularisation” is late, compared to the process of a “social secularisation” (Tozy 2006).

Therefore, within this field, as well, there is an urgency of an intellectual system of reference able to accompany these delicate change processes, at a religious level, too.

The analysis of the so-called "traditional values" (both at a cultural and a religious level) **is not only in terms of continuity and rupture**; rather, **between these two extreme points, we may find many other behaviours** attesting a change. **To better understand these "nuances" of the change, we may consider –among the rest - that one peculiarity of Morocco is still a fundamental gap between the rural and the urban contexts of life.**

First of all, we need to underline that **the enlarged family is less and less valorised in the rural areas**, too. (Chekroun,1994; Kerrou & Kharoufi, 1995; Haut Commissariat du Plan, 2006)

Even if **Rachik used to define the relations parents-children in terms of "respectful distance" and "expected satisfaction"** (Rachik, 2006, p.208), **he was also suggesting that, in several rural contexts, values such as the autonomy, the individual property, the intimacy of the couple were quite widespread since the 90s.**

Within the rural regions, we can easily observe **the re-composition, the reactivation and the invention of communitarian values** around new collective goods introduced by the public powers, the international organisations, the associations (Rachik & Larabi, 2002; Rachik, 2006).

What I'd like to draw the attention to is that, more and more often, in these rural areas, we find a **meaningful role of the new young and educated leaders of associations, managing the collective properties.**

That's why we might arrive to consider a vision of the modernity not as a refusal of the tradition but - instead - **as a reflected, rational, "modern" adaptation of the traditional norms.**

The youth is the main actor of this complex process.

Contemporary youth

“While often referred to as ‘builders of the future’ by the power elites, the young are also stigmatised and ‘feared’ as ‘disruptive’ agents prone to radicalism and deviance”(Bayat & Herrera, 2008, p. 3).

Even if youth is hardly an analytical category or an homogeneous reality, the young might “share a certain *habitus*” and an “historical consciousness” (Bourdieu, 1969) that may be underlined and deeply explored.

Since the independence in Morocco, the researches about the youth have been carried out mainly using quantitative surveys, with few meaningful exceptions (Adam, 1962; 1968; Pascon & Bentaher, 1969; Bennani Chraïbi, 1994; Bourquia et al., 1995).

Afterwards, few studies from the academia have played a role in attesting the diversity and the specificity of the Moroccan youth (Bourquia et al. 2000, El Ayadi, 2007, 2010; Boudarbat & Ajbilou, 2007, etc.).

Observing the attitudes, cultural behaviours and tendencies, we might find a **“dialectical interplay”** (Bayat & Herrera 2010). between different forces and actors and we might find how the **Moroccan youth is “in constant negotiation” among being Muslim, modern, young and Moroccan.**

Class, gender, education and cultural divides interplay in the construction of the youth, as well (Gandolfi, 2010).

In Morocco, as elsewhere at a global level, **“the new information communication technologies, from mobile phones to internet, have changed the landscape of youth learning, culture, sociability, and political engagement”** (Bayat & Herrera, 2010, p.10).

Being at the meantime producer and consumers of meanings, the young interacts with the peers in a not hierarchical way, with multiple aims such as interaction, leisure, consumption, information, political action

See the research on “Being Moroccan today: to educate the youth among imaginary, cultures for change and artistic creations. See especially Chapter 6 in Gandolfi (2010). See also Gandolfi (2012).

Making the best of what is available seems to be the *art* of these young people, their “politics of possibility” made of “accommodating strategies” that can also be transformative (Gandolfi 2012b; 2012c).

According to Bayat (2009), the **“youth operate within and use the dominant (constraining) norms and institutions, especially religious rituals, to accommodate their youthful claims, but in so doing they creatively redefine and subvert the constraints of those codes and norms”** (Bayat & Herrera, 2010, p.18).

Within this frame, from my point of view, it is fundamental to understand how the very first level of these “accommodating strategies” and “politics of possibility” happens within the family contexts, in daily family life.

The intergenerational relations are, somehow, one of the first fields where the young members of a family in contemporary Morocco invent their own way of negotiating among the past and the future, among multiple systems of norms and values.

It would be interesting **to read the recent movement of protest** (*Mouvement du 20 Fevrier*) and the political and social action of the Moroccan youth during the last years – but also its failure - in **relation to this “politics of possibility ” and to these “subversive accommodations”, as well as in relation to the specific characteristic of contemporary Morocco.**

Moreover, it would be fascinating **to try to understand these social and political movements of the young people going back to the intimate family contexts of “experimentation” of change and dissent in their daily practices.**

Before than in social and political contexts, **ordinary people can make meaningful change through the practices of everyday life, in their most intimate contexts of life, such as –primarily- their families.**

The first level of **these “subversive accommodations” deals with an elsewhere and with alternative models** of lifestyle and values coming from the new media, the internet, the satellites, the activism of the associations, the artistic creations, the transnational practices and mobility.

Stressing the attention on this last component of the transnational mobility, Id’ like to suggest that the originality of the demographic transition in Morocco may be exactly in its migratory specificity.

Actually, **in many regions of the country, nearly each family has at least one member living abroad** (1 person above 11 of the total Moroccan population lives abroad - Courbage, 2002).

Then, we need to consider the visible and hidden roles of the diaspora on the transformations of the society (Vertovec & Cohen, 1999).

Doubtless, *migration contributes to reinvent the habits of consummation, the aspirations towards best conditions of life, the re-evaluation of the costs and advantages of the children.*

All that has changed the demography of the families (as well as the access to school) in urban and in rural areas (even if a strong gap between them persists).

I believe we still have to deeply investigate the educational models and practices of the migrants' families and how they affect the Moroccan society.

In the past, we observed many fathers going abroad for several years, leaving their families in Morocco in the first phase of their migration. In some rural areas, we still find sometimes the case of fathers who have migrated and have never brought their families abroad. But the examples might be more numerous and diversified and each of them generates a specific living experiences of the family that deserves to be studied in depth.

Among the many records, we may refer to the **many migrant families living ambivalent relations with their country of origin and the *myth of the return*.**

Moreover, **nowadays some children** - born abroad or migrated when they were little - **face themselves to a repatriation because of the actual international economic crisis.** Actually, the case-studies might be much more detailed and numerous.

The children living abroad and coming back to Morocco during the summer holidays, **sometimes find different educational and cultural models in comparison to those they daily live abroad.**

Sometimes **they experience how their parents' educational practices are rigid and far from the ones widespread in the contemporary Moroccan families.** In this situations, their families expresses a sort of "**specific educational incongruity**" (Moscato, 2006, p.135).

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Investigating about the continual localisation and re-localisation (Basch et al, 1994) of values and cultural practices and their effects on the living experiences and the daily relations in the families, has an essential importance, not only in the migrants' living places, but also in their contexts of origin, in contemporary Morocco

Ambiguities and creativity of transnational practices in-between multiple families

Few researches focused on **migrant women and their transnational living experiences *in-between*** (Bhabha, 1994) multiple social contexts, in Morocco and in Europe (Salih, 2003), (Lacroix, 2005; Gandolfi, 2005; 2009).

Some surveys on the interrelations among migratory mobility and transformations in the contexts of origin show that the **multiple daily cultural practices of the migrant women are very much articulated and complex**, and **they bring to similar practices also among other women in Morocco, especially within their own family or among their friends, relatives and neighbours' families.**

The transnational women live a sense of disorientation between here and there **but they also find creative ways of articulation and they translate these in composite daily cultural practices** (Salih, 2001; Gandolfi, 2005; 2010).

Probably, gender studies in contemporary Morocco should take into account an analysis of gender in transnational contexts.
Family studies as well.

Such surveys should focus on the creative re-elaboration of women's daily practices and should come to underline the complex and ambiguous educational models in the family contexts, in-between Morocco and migrants' places of residence.

Ruba Salih's brilliant research was showing how Moroccan migrant women between Italy and Morocco hardly know where to imagine their **self** and their **home** (in Morocco? in Italy? elsewhere? in-between Italy and Morocco?). Nowadays, I think the unconditional next step of the actual researches about migrant women is **the investigation of how they conceive and imagine their being "mothers" ("daughters", "wives", "sisters"...)** and how **their educational and cultural practices impact their places of living, as well as Morocco.**

Which are these women's re-elaborations of the educational and *care practices*?

How can **a transnational living** have an impact on the educational styles and the relations among the members of the family also **in the contexts of origin**?

What kind of ambiguities and contradictions, together with original articulations, we might find among such different family lifestyles and care practices?

All that suggests the necessity of an investigation with a full gender approach and **an analysis of women's transnational practices in-between multiple family representations.**

In migratory places and in Morocco, where women's living experiences meet some endogen feminine change processes and some Moroccan families' lifestyles already in a continuous flux of transformation, **between roots and elsewhere.**

Roots and freedom

With all these premises, we face **the need to build a process of socialisation able to educate children to build up an autonomous personality**, which will not necessarily follow the orientations proposed by their parents.

The family, paradoxically, finds itself to elaborate some relational strategies towards children who cannot have the same model of socialization of the past generations and whose visions of life cannot refer uniquely to the certitudes of the tradition.

Hence, **the family searches for a *meaning* and, most of all, needs to comprehend a *meaning* which derivates from a *difference*.**

So, it has to look for **“itineraries of meaning”** moving among the acts of the present and the memory and the reinterpretation of the past.

This the main issue: **there is a mystery in the life of children**, as Pasolini (1992) wrote in his book *Petrolio*, a **mystery that renovates at each time the titanic clash between the old and the new, the “roots” and the “freedom”** (Fabien, 2002).

And the encounter between the present and the past produces the change process.

In contemporary Morocco, the relations of power, the ways of communication, the social values, the parents’ role are tied to an education of the children producing something of necessarily *different*.

That difference so clearly evoked by **Gibran’s (1923)** words in his poem **“On children”**

On children

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. (...) For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams”.

Your children are not your children./They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,/And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts./For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,/For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

Gibran K.Gibran, *The Prophet*, Martino Fine Books, 2011. Original edition by Alfred A.Knopf, New York, 1923



Finally, **one of the suggestions of the qualitative researches analysed in this paper** is that it's not necessary to eliminate the antagonistic expressions of the opposite discourses of tradition and modernity, of parents and children, **because these antagonisms do not bring necessarily to the *division* of the families.**

In fact, **in the internal dynamic of the family there is a on-going process of restraint of the contradictory discourses.** On closer inspection, this is exactly what happen in some families of migrants, as we observed above, who adopt different ways of living, different values, trying to live *in-between* different cultural contexts and references.

Actually, **the aim is not to eradicate the tension** generated by the (assumed) antithetic nature of discourses and practices, instead **the aim is to enlighten the main ability of the contemporary families to restrain the tensions** created by the coexistence of "opposite" (?) tendencies, **in innovative ways.**

In the contemporary Moroccan reality marked by such deep and rapid change processes, **the families who choose one single direction mostly lose part of their vitality, since the multiple directions are psychologically and pragmatically indispensable to live daily contemporary life.**

In addition to that, we might add that **along with multiplicity of visions and directions, also *creativity, invention and original re-composition* are key-words to habit these delicate and complex contemporary times.**

Is it a matter of resilience?

If we intend **the clash between the past and the present within families in terms of difficulties or crisis** (if not even sometimes traumatic situations), we might find appropriate to refer here to the concept of **resilience, meant as the capacity of emerging from a crisis or to crossover the difficulties.**

In which ways the families are able to integrate the experiences of such crisis and go on with life? Which are the processes of a family able to manage their inner difficulties ?

As we know, **the resilience implies the existence of useful energies in difficult conditions and it implies the resources and potentialities of a family to face such situations.** It means, in other words, a positive transformation and an evolution (Walsh, 2008).

Instead, as we have observed up to here, **at the light of the growing complexity of the Moroccan families, today, not only we cannot refer to a single model of family but “the family” should include different typologies, different forms of relation among couples and different, formal and informal, family networks.**

All the families, according to Walsh (2008), dispose of an adaptive, auto-regenerative potential. Essentially, **it is the “*art of the possible*”**, as she affirms. In her perspective, **the resilience within the family might be understood as a sort of “*relational resistance*”**.

In such a complexity, **each family appeals to its histories, its myths, its narratives.**

There are histories and rituals that permit to maintain a relation to the **“family cultural heritage”** (Walsh, 2008)

(and ***we can just imagine how these narratives play an important role in migratory contexts***).

Therefore **it's a matter of fragile balance among the multiple tensions of the present or future and the memory (and care) of the past.**

From this point of view, to remember and to keep the memory alive means to live in more than one world., in more than one context of life.

Mary Bateson used to say **“Composing one life means to constantly re-imagine the future and re-interpret the past to be able to give meaning to the present”** (Bateson, 29-30, 1989).

I suggest that a family living experience is a constant dynamic of re-imagination of the future and re-interpretation of the past, with the aim of searching a meaning for the daily life.

Within this frame, **the apparent opposition between the past and the future** or “tradition and modernity”, in the changing Moroccan context, **might be lived as a difficulty or a crisis.**

But creativity, sometimes, comes along with adversities and imagination can bring out of crisis.

In conclusion, I propose to read the contemporary Moroccan families' living experiences by means of **their ability** or, at least, **their possibility to invent new paradigms of interaction.**

In my opinion, **the invention and the continual improvisation, the possibility to create unforeseen and innovative situations is the key-factor** in the changing Moroccan society.

And the **multiple researches and narratives** quoted, here above, **attest of this "art of the possible".**

Somehow, it's an **"exercise of thought"** from generation to generation (Lizzola, 2009), a **"capacity of presence"** that needs creativity and courage.

After all, as the philosopher Agamben has very well shown, **being contemporaneous means to live in his own time, but - at the meantime - to take distance from it, by means of a sort of *anachronisms* (Agamben, 2008).**

Being contemporaneous is "a matter of courage" (Agamben, 2008: 16).

Contemporaneous is this threshold between the "no more" and "not yet". It's a **"variance"** that has its basis in the "proximity to the origin". **It's the possibility to transform the time, putting it into relation with other times, in an unforeseen way (Agamben 2008).**

**Isn't it a matter of resilience?
Isn't it a matter of courage?**

