

[Family Changes in Spain] Some Theoretical Considerations in Light of the Wellbeing of Everyday Life

Title (original): Transformaciones familiares en España: algunas reflexiones a la luz del bienestar cotidiano

Abstract: An analysis of family changes does not usually take into account the importance of well-being in daily life. This article offers some theoretical reflections on this issue in the light of some studies carried out in Spain on this apparent shortcoming. First of all, some studies about family changes are reviewed. Then the article focuses on factors that may explain the issues raised. These include generational changes, among which the late coming of age of young Spaniards. The changes in dual-earner couples, especially young couples, are noted. Changes relating to the calling into question of male hegemony will also be discussed. And, lastly, in the light of the results of a recent study on the difficulties of promoting *Long Term Care* (LTC) services, it proposes taking into account the necessary relationship between well-being in daily life and family changes.

Keywords: Family Changes, Well-being in Daily Life, Gender Gap.

Initial reflections

The family changes discerned in studies on family structure seem to be an indisputable fact. This finding becomes one of the main indicators of the modernization of contemporary societies. And it is usually considered a sign of the inexorable globalization in which we are caught up. In the EU environment it is also said that these family changes are largely the result of family policies that the Welfare State has developed. Particularly in the European countries where such interventions have taken place, with different approaches and paces throughout the second half of 20th century. The current economic crisis, which began in 2007, has called welfare policies into question, among which family policies. This issue is particularly evident in countries such as Spain, owing to the austerity policies with which it has dealt with the crisis. However, it must be acknowledged that this problem is not only the result of austerity measures, since that viewpoint overlooks the controversy about family policies that was going on in Spain long before the crisis hit. Among other reasons because these interventions do not always take into account the orientation and content of those welfare policies: family policies that tend to lump together factors involving work, education, health, culture and housing as if they were exclusively family issues. Interventions that do not take into account the socio-demographic structure of Spanish society, which has seen more than three decades of an increased and habitually non-confronted aging process. A process, despite the aforementioned changes, whose family model continues to impose a sexual division of labor marked by a persistent, tenacious gender asymmetry. All issues that should be added to the distrust of Spanish society toward the services offered by the Public Administration, given the long tradition of paternalistic and interventionist welfare policies in Spain, a tradition responsible for the chronic neglect of family needs. And, last but not least, it continues to promote a family policy that, like other welfare policies, recognizes the social rights and duties of individuals but that winds up applying them to families.

The reasons for this situation are discernible among the theoretical assumptions that dominate the analysis of family changes. Whenever such research is carried out it becomes evident that most of these studies tend to aim towards a macro-perspective that prioritizes a family model which allegedly exists, namely a nuclear family

consisting of a couple with two children, which makes it possible to observe the undoubtedly varied changes and diverse types of family models. But the underlying idea of a family considered as a harmonious and functional whole, beyond those recognized as new. This vision is precisely what, among other things, impedes observing the existence and persistence of the sexual division of labor. A division that, despite the aforementioned changes, persists within the household. And that the analyses of families, developed from the macro perspective, seem incapable of delineating. Perhaps because analyses of this kind continue to be too preoccupied with quantifying how the coexistence or separations of couples affect the number or rearing of children, in relation to the careers of parents, or in obtaining permits or parental resources, or other services offered by current family policies. And too far from discerning why the sexual division of labor remains glacial, as indicated by researchers of the EU policies in favor of women, which have been implemented over the past thirty years or more (Crompton, Lyonette 2005; Karamesini, Rubery 2013). That is, the analysis of family changes in Spain are often obsessively concerned with the family from the viewpoint of Welfare policies, and hence the macro outlook. And less for the family that, although considered as the basic institution of society, does not contemplate as a theoretical horizon the space of daily life. A space that is an essential key for focusing on the environment where it seeks out and obtains its daily welfare or well-being in daily life. And, what is most disturbing about this macro perspective, it takes for granted that that daily well-being is sought out obtained within the family, as something natural and harmonious. A harmonious situation that most of the Spanish population continues to believe, even though the family has increased in value as the most valued institution in the last thirty years.

The possible indicators of this contradiction must be found, for example, among the data concerning parental work permits. Maternity leave, whose tracking points exceed 98% (according to the latest 2014 data), while paternity leave (13-15 days) has not increased either in duration or in the percentage of the number of fathers who request it. A situation that has remained unchanged in the past eight years, ever since the passing of the Spanish equality law, in force since 2007. No success either, at least in relation to its media impact, in the reconciliation of work and family life, which has also been regulated by law since 1999. The afore-mentioned contradiction is also worth tracing among cases of gender violence, which also persist despite the fact that Spanish law has been combating it since 2004. And Spanish society's growing tolerance vis-à-vis these issues. But where the reality of the figures¹ shows how most women and children are assaulted in the household. Without forgetting the increasing abuse of the elderly when they become fragile and require continued care in their daily lives. Or, in more genteel terms, the tolerance toward the care drain (Bettio, Simonazzi, Villa 2006) with which the Spanish society accepts that their dependent family members be cared for by immigrant women whose work status is, to say the least, questionable.

Important studies were carried out by pioneering feminist social scientists since the 1970's: by Laura Balbo in 1987, by Chiara Saraceno 1986; by María Angeles Durán *et al.* 1988, to mention just a few Spanish and Italian examples. And the analyses carried out from a gender perspective, including those promoting a critical view of male hegemony (Connell 1995, Guasch 2012), usually the theoretical approaches that in broad outlines show the importance of maintaining a micro perspective about the relationship between the family and daily well-being. A perspective that makes it possible to observe the tensions and conflicts that underlie family relationships (Chabaud-Richter, Fougeroylass 1985). He has noted certain tasks conceptualized as domestic work and care (Carrasco, Borderías, Torns 2011), which take place in a setting that transcends the family to become daily life. And they have provided the best analyses of the inequalities in the social uses of time between men and women, such as the *Encuestas de Empleo del Tiempo* indicate. But despite the plurality of these perspectives, the macro and micro approaches that somehow hinge on the family and its changes and daily welfare are hardly touched upon. Possibly because the gender perspective, more or less feminist, is usually confined to a kind of theoretical ghetto that has been unable to contribute to the core of knowledge in the social sciences. Perhaps because the plurality of paradigms is inescapable in sociology, as in other social sciences and epistemological plurality that barely exists under the current hegemonic model of science. Or, probably, because of the trend of superspecialization, which

¹ According to official data (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality), the law on gender violence has claimed a decline in the number of fatalities. Thus the 72 women killed in 2004 have decreased to 54 women who died in 2014. But 66% of them were victims of their partners, spouses or boyfriends in 2004, and that percentage has barely budged in 2014, reaching 67% .

at present holds sway in the academic community. A situation where a certain Anglo-Saxon model of science seems to prevail, beyond language, without the time and willingness to devote greater theoretical reflections, as something easy or feasible.

Changes in family patterns

So, arguably, the most common analyses of family changes habitually typify and particularize in a rigorous way the existing diversity of different family patterns, while maintaining a family concept based on minimal common features. First and foremost among those traits considers that the family «is the most universal of social institutions, but its historical forms have been too diverse to subsume them into a single concept» (Iglesias de Ussel 1998: 293). A broad and abstract vision that underlies the idea of seeing the family as an institution that differs in its morphology but with a few intrinsic functions which are basic to the proper functioning of society. Namely, the rearing of children of up to three years of age and basic care for people affected by functional dependence. A situation, the latter, which includes care for the elderly, when they become or are frail, given the widespread practice of this care within the family (Casado 2014). As it is easy to see, these features do not take into consideration, in the first case, the growing intervention and influence of the health care system, present even before childbirth. Or the active participation of the educational system of which, however, families increasingly demand greater involvement in the tasks of parenting². In the second case, something similar takes place. Thus, one can see how the appeal to the widespread practice of caring for dependents tends to mythologize the relatively recent history of family care within the family (Montigny 1994). At a time when we are forgetting how the increasing process of aging has become a problem of enormous proportions, which barely existed a few decades ago. An appeal and an oversight that converge in a growing paradox: family studies tend to focus on the relationship of parenthood, in a context like the Spanish one which presents a low birth rate. While they hide or do not sufficiently show the conflicts and tensions that occur in family relationships as a result of ever-increasing dependence. A paradox that for the most part involves women in the family's daily life. And that while the above-cited concept of family makes explicit mention of functional care and extended family practice in the care of its dependent members, the analyses based on this concept of the family does not make it possible to observe the family changes that the above-cited paradox provokes from day-to-day in family life. That is, these analyses do not take into consideration how such care includes, beyond conventional domestic-family tasks, the related emotional support and attention provided to its dependent members. Or, of course, the tasks relating to the organization and management of its dependent members, which form a key part of so-called family management. A set of tasks that even in the best of cases is hardly in keeping with the satisfaction and positive values associated with raising children, which are the basis of a harmonious vision of positive family values. On the contrary, they cause a large number of women to pay a high price (measurable in time and health) for taking on that care (Duran 2006). Because most of them, although they may not undertake the hardest of the care tasks toward dependent family members, sense them as an inescapable moral obligation. A particularly powerful feeling among women of the sandwich³ generation (Williams 2004), especially visible among working class women (Torns, Borràs, Moreno, Recio 2014). Women who, moreover, also lack the personal, monetary resources or access to adequate information, such as engaging the services of an immigrant woman who frees them or helps them to cope with the harshness of the situation (Bettio, Simonazzi, Villa 2006).

Such questioning of the analyses of family changes, however, does not preclude recognizing changes in the morphology of family composition in Spain. Specifically, according to a renowned family sociologist, such changes can be summarized in the existence of a greater verticalization of family relationships and in the consequent emergence of a “beanstalk” family structure. Because in his words: «82% of people are part of a family network composed of at least three generations. However, the gradual decline in fertility has also decreased the number

² A definition accepted according to the criteria of the International Family Conference, held in Doha in 2014.

³ The Sandwich Generation, a term coined by Anglo-Saxon, are those women in contemporary societies who must attend to the care of their children and spouses, as well as take responsibility for the care and attention of their elderly as they become incapacitated.

of children from generation to generation. Both processes are generating a structure of kinship networks that can be described with a graphic metaphor of a “beanstalk structure”: one has many ancestors but few lateral kin and descendants» (Meil 2011: 188).

In that same vein, family changes can also be seen from the data of Spain’s Housing Census. In this case, the 2011 figures note how in 10 years many families have shrunk by 3.2%. At that time 573,372 families were eligible for social aid geared to that family type (grants, scholarships and tax relief). Aid which under the Spanish law of 1998, of a markedly natalist orientation, favored families composed of a couple and three children, characteristics that were beyond the reach of families with children affected by a recognized disability. A large family categorization that includes rights to receiving such aid to families with ≥ 3 children up to 25 years of age who are still in school. Or that, since 2007, extended such aid to families with two dependent children in the charge of a single parent, irrespective of civil status. An expansion that currently extends to gay marriages recognized by law since 2005, thanks to the policies of Zapatero’s last Socialist government. And that, given the widespread acceptance it has met with so far in Spanish society, the current conservative Popular Party government has not dared to change.

Generational changes and family changes

Without wishing to enumerate the multiplicity of factors that affect family changes, and with the sole aim of highlighting those that affect daily well-being, it seems beyond doubt that there is a need to emphasize generational change. This change includes first of all the late coming of age of young people in Spain, and secondly, the changes in dual-earner couples, most of them young, and lastly, the emergence of so-called new fathers, who are demanding greater participation in parenting.

The late coming of age of young people is one of the most important changes of those mentioned, along with the already mentioned aging process, some of whose issues we will look into in greater detail. Spain shares this late youth empowerment with other Mediterranean countries experiencing this situation in sharp contrast with other European countries. In this scenario it seems beyond doubt that a large part of the responsibility belongs with the economic crisis, which has plagued the country since 2007, as a factor explaining this late youth empowerment. Or in its most evident consequences, observable in Spain’s high rate of youth unemployment which this crisis has caused⁴. However, we must not forget other analyses which indicated, even before the crisis, how family strategies encouraged a late coming of age in Spain. This was true more than two decades ago, especially among young males (Gil Calvo 2002). Gil Calvo has confirmed his previous certainties, emphasizing that the present widespread tendency of families to favor a higher level of education for their children has contributed to this late coming of age. Because, although an increased level of education is evident, particularly among young women, it has also had a certain perverse effect, as he explains:

The low quality of training received (...), manifested by two interrelated features: early abandonment of compulsory secondary education above 25%, with the highest figures in the OECD (...), and a strong mismatch between supply and demand of skills among most young people, given Spain’s upside-down educational pyramid with its excessive preference for a long study period to the detriment of a short one, which condemns them to overqualification and underemployment at a thousand euros per month as the only alternative to the prevailing standstill (...) Hence the fear of a loss of social status (...), because of the devaluation of educational degrees and qualifications. (Gil Calvo 2014: 33).

The same situation can be observed through data provided by the *Observatory for the Emancipation* of Spain’s Youth Council, on the residential autonomy of young people in Spain. Specifically, the government agency cited how for the third trimester of 2014:

The rate of autonomy of the population of 16-29 years of age in Spain in 2008 marked a record high since the beginning of the century, until the third quarter of 2014, where a fall of 16.46% is given. And in the intervening six years, the rate of residential autonomy of young people in Spain went from 26.1% to the current 21.8%, which means that just over two out of ten young people today achieve residential

⁴ The youth unemployment rate is 52.4% for young people between 16 and 24 years of age, according to data from the Labor Force Survey (LFS), 3rd. quarter of 2014.

autonomy and a peak of three out of ten has never been reached. In absolute terms, the reduction between 2008 and 2014 of the residential autonomy of young people has been much sharper, 32.02%, but it is a figure influenced by the decline that has also been seen in the youth population as a whole, 18.62% (Observatorio de Emancipación 2014: 2).

In short, it might be said that this late autonomization is the underlying reason for the previously mentioned strong verticalization of family relationships. And it helps to explain, if only in part, the low birth-rate in Spain. However, the relative increase of young dual-earner couples is the second factor that best explains the impact of generational changes in family changes. On this point it is worth noting the results of the studies that account for the difficulties encountered by young couples in establishing symmetric gender relations, when it comes to facing the tasks of child rearing. This problem, on which even the most optimistic data on how dual-income couples work out this problem do not seem sufficient in themselves. Thus, in a recent study that has qualitatively analysed how young Spanish couples are facing the tasks of raising a first child, one reads: «as concerns dealing with the difficulties of dividing up these tasks, it is still women who show a greater willingness to adapt their work lives to their child's needs, developing in great measure "adaptive preferences"». (Abril, Amigot et alii 2015:3). A vision, however, that is not shared by other analyses which indicate that the difficulties of reconciling work and family life among young couples appear precisely in regard to the tasks of child care. These difficulties reinforce the dominant social image in a Spanish society where the strong family tradition is firmly rooted in the family model of the male breadwinner/female caregiver (Torns, Moreno 2008). A model and tradition that, far from vanishing, maintain an enormous symbolic weight despite the family changes we have mentioned. And in the face of this young Spanish women cannot but show surprise and a relative ambivalence. Since they believed that these difficulties had been overcome, were a memory of previous generations of women, and that they have changed, having a life project of their own. A project that has led most of them to be present on the labor market, a position they defend, although unemployment and insecurity continues to plague them to a greater extent than they do their male peers (Torns, Recio 2012; Plantega, Remery, Lodovici 2013). Moreover, they grew up under the protection of equal opportunity policies, which they believed enabled them to make their own way in life, in contrast to their mothers and grandmothers. But the arrival of the first child is a rude awakening, in the discovery that a reconciliation of work and family life is not possible because they are left with little or no personal time. And, furthermore, they become aware that these policies of equality, besides being insufficient, tend to treat them as mothers rather than citizens.

Difficulties of this kind, which young couples experience on an everyday basis, are also highlighted by studies based on the *Encuesta de Empleo del Tiempo*⁵. These analyses reiterate the persistence of sexual division of labor among young couples before the arrival of the first child (Wormwood, Garcia 2011). With the data from their 2002-2003 Survey, these sociologists observed how, despite the changes in the male breadwinner/female caregiver family model, some of its features have remained. The main reason for such change is due, according to them, to a higher participation of young women in the female labor force. And they sustain the validity of this model's characteristics after comparing the daily time distribution in dual-income couples and those where only the man is employed. They see the most equitable situation where double income or cohabiting young couples have no children and the woman's job affords her a decent purchasing power. And the greatest degree of inequality in couples with children present in the home, especially highlighting the emergence of this inequality with the arrival of the first child.

Similar and more interesting conclusions were reached by Sara Moreno (2015) in a recent study with data from the last TSE, corresponding to 2009-2010. Her analysis confirms that the tasks of caring for and maintaining a family-household «represent a limit for the equal distribution of housework by gender» (Moreno 2015: 2). But she also notes how the female employment rate affects the unequal distribution while introducing the importance of the life cycle as a factor explaining this inequality. That is, the data show at first how the unequal distribution of housework by gender depends on whether or not the woman is employed and whether she works full- or part-time. Something relatively obvious because, in principle, it seems logical that if she has more free time she can

⁵ It is the Spanish version of the *Harmonized European Time Use Survey* (HETUS).

devote more of it to these daily tasks. And it is well-known that the vast majority of part-time workers in Spain, as well as in most European countries, are women. But where Sara Moreno's analysis is most interesting is when she notes how women's employment does not explain the greater or lesser degree of the fathers' participation in these tasks. A participation, as other studies have pointed out (Torns, Moreno 2008), that focuses almost exclusively on childcare. And concerning which Moreno points out how this greater participation of fathers in childcare, particularly young fathers, is the factor that best explains the change or improvement in the unequal distribution of tasks. Inequality in the distribution of basic tasks in order to seek and obtain daily well-being is, in Moreno's opinion, the cornerstone of gender equality. A confirmation made repeatedly clear in social science studies which are sensitive to the gender perspective and which should be kept in mind as the keynote of some of their most telling arguments. Namely, although the greater female participation in the labor market is absolutely necessary for promoting greater equality in couples, it does not seem sufficient to bring about a change in daily well-being. Since the change of mentality of males is a major factor to be considered in this scenario. A change of mentality that makes a crucial difference, as this study points to its contribution to daily well-being through their increased participation in childcare. And whether they forget or not to participate in the daily well-being throughout the entire life cycle. But which is essential for questioning the norms, values and practices that establish the hegemonic standards of males in contemporary societies.

This calling into question is, as is evident from the sum of what we are saying here, an obligatory change to the end of renewing the social contract between the genders, today expressed in the afore-mentioned male breadwinner/female caregiver family model. And, as will be recalled, it has been recommended by the best Welfare State specialists of the past decades (Lewis 1998; Orloff 2009), to mention just some of them. Of like importance at this point are some of the analyses that examine the consequences that the huge volume of unemployment among men has had in the rejection of male hegemony. A rejection deriving from the difficulties that prolonged unemployment has created for young men, especially noticeable among the young sons of the industrial working class (McDowell 2003). Because this prolonged unemployment has prevented them from building a life around the workplace, as their parents did. A study conducted in Spain (Borras, Moreno, Castelló, Grau 2012) shows how the unemployment and precarious, discontinuous work histories of young men have devastated their expectations of carrying on with the oft-cited family model. And how, however, the risk of not being able to become the main breadwinners opens the way to other expectations of living their masculinity. Thus, the study shows how the consequences of the male employment crisis are establishing new models of masculinity, where work activity no longer occupies the center of their life project, expressing itself instead in the family changes evident among young men in their greater presence and involvement in domestic work and care. A situation that, far from being prevalent, manifests itself especially among young men of the urban middle classes. And this probably has to do with the growing process of individualization characteristic of prosperous societies where consumption and leisure time seem to fill with content the time freed by the loss of stable employment and decent working conditions⁶.

Daily welfare and family changes

From the arguments presented in the preceding sections there appears beyond doubt to be a need to consider the importance of daily well-being in family changes. And to consider the crucial role that care, a hegemonic concept that seems to prevail in the specialized literature, plays in this well-being. It is equally important to acknowledge the afore-mentioned contributions of feminist social scientists in indicating the limits of the Welfare State. In addition to their efforts to outline the socioeconomic and historical contribution of women to the well-

⁶ See the results of the latest research carried out by an investigative team led by Carlos Prieto at the Complutense University of Madrid, where I myself have spoken together with three Spanish researchers, which analyses the objectification and perception of work, care and free-time phases in Spanish society. The research, soon to be published in a Cinca edition entitled *Trabajo, cuidados, tiempo libre y relaciones de género en la sociedad española*, analyses and compares the data from the TSE in Spain (2002-03 and 2009-2010). Starting from various typologies of class, gender and age, it carries out a qualitative analysis to see how men and women of different generations and with different professional and work situations perceive the relationship between those time phases and their contents, in accordance not only with what they experience on a daily basis but with what they believe it should be.

being in daily life. Contributions and assistance that, at present, become fundamental for shedding light on the difficulties afflicting the European social model. Difficulties that were already present in the origins of the welfare model, as the feminist analyses have made clear, and that the current crisis has only aggravated.

Thus, as these specialists state, the welfare model created in Europe after the Second World War was intended to guarantee social protection of the active participants in the labor market, mostly males. But such guarantees did not take into account the variability of care and welfare needs of people in their daily lives, throughout their life cycle. Nor was it able to show the importance of the male breadwinner family model/female caregiver family model that made it possible. A situation that was considered natural and not the result of a gender contract, and although it was understood that such daily care needs were of paramount importance at the beginning of life, it was not foreseen that the lengthening of the life cycle would eventually expose the model's limits. A question that remains at present, beyond the budget cuts that neoliberal policies have imposed on the more basic welfare policies (education and health). And that becomes visible in the enormous impact that these actions have had on the career paths of men and women. Or in their inability to adequately address the needs of daily care and welfare as a result of the increased aging of the population.

In fact it could be said that to review the basis of the current European social model, which has always prioritized the production of goods and services, there is an urgent need to rebuild and find new answers to the challenge of rethinking daily well-being. And that to date the European social model has neglected or taken for granted the fact that any adult person could cope with their daily well-being on their own terms. An assumption that masks the fact that the vast majority of the population seeks and obtains its daily well-being through more or less equal exchanges of care work, money, time, love, expectations, etc .. Exchanges that in Spain, as a Mediterranean country, have their main place in the context of the family. A situation in which we must remember the importance of a daily care and welfare that exist, even though that European welfare model has neither recognized nor valued them sufficiently. And that the main reason for this lack of appreciation lies probably in the fact that this daily care and welfare are usually referred to as an exclusively private or family matter. An institution that, from what has been said here, is far from providing adequate and comprehensive attention to a problem whose tensions and conflicts between genders and generations fully affect people's everyday welfare. The second reason is that the tasks necessary for ensuring that daily well-being are almost always paid for by female family members, as has been shown in the previous sections. Or they are carried out by women in a condition of extreme subordination, as occurs in Mediterranean countries with immigrant women. As we have repeatedly stressed, and as other targeted studies on the Spanish situation have shown (Martinez 2011; Parella, Ferber 2012). A situation that makes Spain a clear example of implicit and supported familialism (Saraceno 1995). And that the Spanish situation is a good example of how the cultural model of family care has implications for the assessment of public structures. Because family care support coexists with a welfare vision of public services, and society perceives and agrees that such services are a logical and natural substitute for the family and are not claimed as an individual, universal right.

The results of a recent study on how to professionalize *Long Term Care Services* (LTC) in Spain (Torns, Borràs, Moreno, Recio 2014) confirm the validity of the arguments in the preceding sections. The study has tried to find proposals that would make feasible the social organization of care services⁷ (Daly, Lewis 2000), through a greater and better professionalization of existing services in this area. Services considered necessary to address the increasing social needs arising from the aging process. The study combined an analysis of existing quantitative data on the size of the population concerned⁸ and a qualitative analysis, in order to form an idea of the dominant social perception of the care tasks for elderly dependents. The qualitative analysis was performed through interviews with social workers and specialists involved in existing services. And through interviews with people employed in direct care services both in institutions and in licensed homes, regardless of whether they had a formal employment contract.

The results showed that the need to professionalize the services mentioned barely occurred in the speeches of those interviewed, but what did was a family care culture. And, most important, a social assistance guided by

⁷ *Organización social* is the Spanish translation of social care by the above named British authors.

⁸ Population projections in the short term, conducted by INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadística), show how the old age dependency ratio (≥ 64 years of age of the population in relation to people between 15 and 65 years of age) was 26.14 in 2012 and will reach 35.1 in 2023.

an ideal of care dominated by the desire of the dependent elderly and their family members to be cared for “at home and with their family”. A preponderant perception that varies according to social class but that sees working class women as those most trapped by that ideal, in the absence of their own or other monetary resources to cope with this care. And this reflects a great complicity in welfare policies, in its restoring the loss of relief aid after the relative failure of the so-called law of dependency⁹. A failure that according to the survey results is not only due to the crisis. On the contrary, it is the afore-mentioned family and welfare context and socio-cultural values that underlie the problems of professional services for existing long-term care. But the root of these problems must be traced ultimately to the persistence of the observed ideal. An ideal that reinforces the need to consider family changes in the light of what is happening in the area of daily well-being, as we have tried to describe it in these pages.

Final considerations

If there is any doubt about the need to take into account the importance of daily well-being as a factor that affects family changes, it suffices to recall that Maria Angeles Durán (2012) reveals how the overwhelming majority of the Spanish population (91%) feels obliged to take on the care of their elderly dependents. Although the study also adds that this sentiment is accompanied by a sense of overwork on the part of the women of the family. Therefore, breaking the almost exclusive feminization of these tasks would promote and improve the social organization of the existing daily care services. Because the future, beyond other considerations such as the lack of adequate public services, is already an overwhelming present to a growing number of women. Women who cannot tolerate this situation in the same way, since inequalities of class, ethnicity and age also affect their attitudes toward and manner of realizing those care tasks. But they have in common the lack of cooperation or (perhaps more to the point) the absenteeism of males in daily care tasks. Absences that also imply a growing female presence, particularly on the part of those young professional women who live their life projects in the exclusive prioritization of their work and professional obligations. And who at most only begin to see the problems of daily well-being when the first child arrives. Hence the observed change among young dual-earner couples, involving a self-criticism of hegemonic masculinity which for now is just prodding the consciences of a small minority, especially young fathers eager to contribute to the daily care of their children. If that is so, the change will not be sufficient because, at least for the moment, the societies of southern Europe do not seem to realize that their aging populations require thinking through and reorganizing their daily welfare systems in a different way.

This is why, as a suggestion, we wish to offer some ideas to stimulate debate on the basis of these reflections. First, the social organization of the daily welfare of the citizenry is absolutely necessary. It should come from their immediate surroundings, and not from the family alone, that is from a broad and close cooperation of the public administration and community. There needs to be a utilization and coordination of those already existing educational and social health services, as well as leisure and free time. Not to mention the importance of rethinking the institutions that provide, along the life cycle, other housing and cohabitational solutions, to enable citizens in their everyday lives to find alternatives, if it is so desired or becomes necessary, to the sole resources of the family. Hence, probably, the need to continue by rethinking the city and municipal services and to promote timely policies (Balbo 1987; Torns, Borràs Moreno 2006). The environmental, social, cultural and family characteristics of the people that must be attended to should also be taken into account, so that their voices and interests can contribute to better serving their different needs. Therefore, to cite just one example, to the extent that the ideal of wanting to be cared for “at home with the family” represents in Spain the most desirable option, it would be urgent to promote new changes. An urgency that, in this case, should affect mainly the planning, organization,

⁹ In 2006 Spain approved the Law for the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent Persons (LAPAD). It was the first state law in the field of social services. It established a list of services (both institutional and home care services) and benefits (direct economic benefits). The law, now suffering broad setbacks, regulated the conditions of access to these benefits, depending on a person's degree of dependence. It recognized care as a legal right, and the need to develop care services and consequent professionalization. However, these objectives were not met, foremost among them the possibility of issuing cash benefits for non-professional caregivers. An option that eventually became the main resource granted but that the current crisis has brought to an end.

management and promotion of actions aimed at meeting the daily welfare needs of citizens in the last stages of their lives. This would imply accepting that family changes, as broad and diverse as they may be, will not always be able to seek out and achieve that daily well-being. And, in the process of socially organizing daily care to obtain new resources and promote a new social consensus (Lewis 2007), it would be useful to devote more time and effort to caring for oneself and others. And to devote less time and effort in order to produce fewer goods and services. Some calls for sustainability before the risks posed by globalization. Perhaps a good way to address the issue would be to meet the challenges posed by daily well-being, as we have tried to set forth here.

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