



INVISIBILITY OR FAMILY ANACRONISM? FAMILY SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS IN THE FAMILY STATUTE (PL 6583/2013)

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Abstract: The family consists of a social construction, variable over time, the historical context and social changes. However, Bill 6583 of 2013 (PL 6583/2013) aims to institute the Family Statute in the Brazilian legal system and recognizes only the heterosexual and monogamous nuclear union as a family and stigmatizes other family arrangements. This article, supported by the Theory of Social Representations, through bibliographic review and documentary analysis, analyzed the original wording and justification of PL 6583/2013 and found that the social representation of the family in this proposition consists of a front ideology evangelical parliamentarian in the Chamber of Deputies. It was concluded, therefore, that the purpose of PL 6583/2013 is the attempt to reaffirm the family as a “natural” institution and works as a mechanism for controlling social behaviors.

Keywords: Family; Social Representations; PL 6583/2013; Family Statute.

1 Introduction

In the Brazilian legal system, laws, in the broad sense, refer to the normative acts provided for in the legislative process, contained in Article 59, items I to VII, of the 1988 Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil (CRFB/88), and include constitutional amendments, declaratory statutes, ordinary laws, delegated laws, provisional presidential decrees, legislative decrees, and resolutions. In such terms, a law consists of an official text of norms for general compliance, whose function is to order, regulate and protect individuals living in society by the State. They “are primarily intended to function as stabilizing elements for people’s movements, which are eternally mutable” (ARENDRT, 2012, p. 515).

Brazil adopts the bicameral legislative system at the federal level, that is, the “Legislative Branch consists of the National Congress, composed of the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate” (BRASIL, [2020]), where the “Chamber of Deputies is composed of the people’s representatives, who are elected by the proportional system in each state, in each Territory, and

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in the Federal District” (BRASIL, [2020]), and the “Federal Senate is composed of representatives of the states and the Federal District, elected according to the majoritarian principle” (BRASIL, [2020]).

In this system, either one of the Legislative Houses can initiate the legislative process, the House in which the proposition occurred being designated the Initiating House, and the other the Revising House, so that a bill or proposal appreciated and passed in one of them will be sent to the other for its revision. Thus, the two Houses must express themselves on the formulation of laws, in order to keep a balance and avoid exceptions in lawmaking. Therefore, “the legislative organization of a society plays a fundamental role in terms of working out what should be expected from each and every one” (NOVELLI, 2008, p. 113).

Under the scope of ordinary laws, and understood as primary normative acts containing, as a rule, general and abstract norms, bills (PLs) are propositions destined to create a new or to modify an existing law. A bill, according to Article 61 of CRFB/88, can be proposed by any Congressman or Senator, a committee of the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate or the National Congress, by the President of the Republic, the Attorney General of the Republic, the Federal Supreme Court, higher courts, and citizens, in the manner and cases provided for in CRFB/88. However, there are matters that are the President of the Republic's exclusive initiative, which are hypotheses provided for in § 1 of Article 61 of CRFB (BRASIL, [2020]).

Thus, a bill that has been passed by the National Congress is sent to the President of the Republic for him/her to either sanction or veto it, in whole or in part, within fifteen days. In the case of a presidential veto, it can be rejected, provided that, in a joint session, within thirty days of its receipt, the National Congress considers it and obtains an absolute majority of deputies' and senators' voting for it. With this, that bill will be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment, who will have forty-eight hours to do so. If he/she fails to do it, the law will be enacted by the President of the Federal Senate and, if he/she fails to do so within the same period, by his/her first vice-president. Once enacted, the law will be published in the Federal Union's Official Gazette to produce its effects in the national legal system (BRASIL, [2020]).

That said, on 10/16/2013, Bill No. 6583 of 2013 (PL 6583/2013) was presented to the Chamber of Deputies by the then Federal Deputy Anderson Ferreira, a representative of an evangelical caucus in the National Congress, whose purpose was to establish the Family Statute (FERREIRA, 2013). Deputy Ronaldo Fonseca was initially appointed as a rapporteur for that bill, which was still going through procedures in the Chamber of Deputies, by the Special Committee instituted, and he issued a favorable opinion to its proceedings by considering its constitutionality, legality, and good legislative technique. He also presented a substitute amendment to add to the bill the prohibition of child adoption by homosexual couples (FONSECA, 2013). In January 2015, the bill was shelved due to the end of the legislature in December 2014, according to Article 105 of the Internal Rules of the Chamber of Deputies. In the first legislative session of 2015, the bill

was resumed. Deputy Diego Garcia was appointed as the new rapporteur and issued a favorable opinion for the bill's proceedings and its consequent approval. He also presented the second substitute amendment to the proposition (GARCIA, 2013).

The original wording of Bill 6583/2013, in its Article 2, defines a "family entity as a social unit formed from the union between a man and a woman, through marriage or a common-law partnership, or by a community consisting of either parent and his/her descendants" (FERREIRA, 2013). The second substitute amendment presented by the deputy rapporteur has the same definition and adds that this family model is the basis of society and worthy of social protection, as well as introduces a single paragraph to Article 2 of the bill to state that "kinship relations in the ascending or collateral line, as well as relations deriving from welfare rights, through guardianship or tutelage, shall enjoy the specific protection provided for in the respective laws" (GARCIA, 2013).

Given this scenario, it is inferred that the Bill 6583/2013 aims to legitimize, for all legal purposes, as well as to be a recipient of specific public policies, only the union formed by a man and a woman through marriage or a common-law partnership and their children, that is, it is an excluding model of a heterosexual and monogamous family, also referred to as the nuclear family. For that matter, in addition to this ideal family model, the only acceptable family arrangement is the single-parent family, formed by either parent and his/her descendants, which results from widowhood, divorce/dissolution of a common-law marriage or single parenthood, insofar as it stigmatizes all other family formations, such as, for example, homosexual unions, simultaneous unions and polyamorous unions (FERREIRA, 2013).

The justification for the bill is based on the fact that the family - in this case understood as a monogamous heterosexual nuclear family - functions as the basic unit of society, so that "great importance must be given to families and to the changes that have altered their structure over time" (FERREIRA, 2013), since those changes would be responsible for the social problems that emerge in the contemporary family, such as drug use and early pregnancy, given that, according to Deputy Anderson Ferreira, "a balanced family, with its self-esteem valued and assisted by the State, is synonymous with a more fraternal and also happier society" (FERREIRA, 2013). The creation of the Family Statute, according to the deputy, is also based on the alleged "deconstruction of the family concept, an aspect that afflicts families and has an impact on individuals' psychosocial dynamics" (FERREIRA, 2013).

However, unlike the idealization of the family concept presented in Bill 6583/2013, homogeneity should not be attributed to the various forms of affective unions, given that there is not a unison family concept, as there is not a consensus, nor a single definition for a family, and its definitions by different authors from different fields of study are vast (BOURDIEU, 1996; ENGELS, 2019; FEDERICI, 2019; GOLDANI, 1993; LEVI-STRAUSS, 1983; LÔBO, 2020; VASCONCELOS, 2013; SARTI, 2004). That is why the expression family can be described, that

is, “[...] the various structures or modalities shown by families over time can be described, but it is not possible to define families or find any common element to all forms of this human grouping” (BORSA; FEIL, 2008, p. 2).

In this respect, the family described by Lévi-Strauss (1986), for example, consists of the short- or long-lasting, socially approved union of two individuals of different sexes originating in the alliance between partners through marriage, united by legal ties, economic and religious rights and duties, and a network of sexual rights and prohibitions, and feelings, who have founded a home, procreate, and educate their children. These unions function as an alliance system between different groups and aim at the exchange between them in order to disseminate their ideals for the strengthening and growth of their group, since, therefore, the foundation of a family, in this view, is social and not natural.

In this perspective, according to Sarti (2004), a family involves constant confrontation between the identity that distinguishes it and the otherness that forces openness and brings dynamics to it, through a mechanism of exchange between those who are different. Therefore, a family is not a “natural” institution, but a reality that is constituted by language and defined by signifiers that create the links of meaning in relationships. Thus, biological ties unite families because they are significant and have symbolic power, so that a family is constituted by alliance and not by consanguinity, therefore, it cannot be understood as “natural” (SARTI, 2004).

In this context, a family can be thought of as a symbolic construction between the outside world and the subjective world, and, therefore, “each family builds its myths from what it hears about itself, from the internalized external discourse, but it returns a discourse about itself that also contains its own formulation, objectifying its subjective experience” (SARTI, 2004, p. 14). It concerns the way individuals build their self-image and the image of the outside world through language that is socially produced and internalized, and is, therefore, a value that orders individuals’ standing in society.

On the other hand, from a materialist perspective of family, Engels (2019) states that the fundamental objective of the nuclear family that emerges in modernity, with the advent of the capitalist mode of production, is the maintenance of private property through inheritance. Therefore, the production of material life explains the form that social institutions take in each context and in each historical period, as the mode of production of material life is the fundamental dimension from which social institutions, such as families, can be explained.

In his turn, and from a materialist perspective of family, Federici (2019) makes connections between the beginning of capitalism and the current period, which shows how the family was used as an instrument to implement that economic system in Western Europe. Thus, one of the strategies used to dominate, silence, isolate, destroy women’s knowledge and bodies, and remove women’s collective strength was the creation of the bourgeois patriarchal family and the ideal of domesticity through the control of women’s sexuality and through women’s

confinement at home. Thus, it is observed that a family is not a natural institution that is independent of the various social factors, but rather, it confirms that it represents one of the most elaborate social constructions, since it can function as a regulatory and guiding instrument for the interests of dominant groups in order to achieve specific purposes (FEDERICI, 2019).

Given these arguments, it is clear, in fact, that the form of organization of social actors as a family is not homogeneous, nor can it be thought of as a natural and generalized institution that is immune to any external factors. On the contrary, it is inferred that the idealization of the family by the human imagination consists of a social construction, which varies according to time, historical context, and social changes, besides being directly influenced by economic, political, and ideological factors. Therefore, the various family arrangements, whether heterosexual or homosexual, monogamous or polygamous, correspond and hold family-entity content without any distinctions from the nuclear family defended by Bill 6583/2013. They are only different in their formulation and organization, which are attributes that do not influence the development and maintenance of these affective unions as socially normal and legitimate, much less congregate any negative burden for the full development of their members (GOLDANI, 1993).

In fact, according to Goldani (1993), the idea of family transformations as a decline, in which families that are formed differently from the bourgeois nuclear family model are seen as destructuring must be refuted, since the constitution of families in alternative forms concerns social changes that directly and indirectly affect individuals in society, such as demography, economy and life expectancy, so that a hegemonic model of family rooted in ideological preconceptions cannot be considered, but rather that its social representations are constantly revised by several aspects, confirming the mutability of family arrangements.

Thus, despite the naturalization of the monogamous heterosexual nuclear family by Bill 6583/2013, social subjects organize themselves as families in various ways, which is not an obstacle to their being understood as such, and nor do they represent inferior and/or unstructured family models. This is because, as advocated by Bourdieu (1996, p. 135), “the family is certainly a fiction, a social artifact, an illusion in the most common sense of the term, but a ‘well-founded illusion’, since by being produced and reproduced with assurance from the State, it always receives from it the means to exist and subsist”.

Moreover, attention should also be paid to the fact that the original constituent contemplated the principle of family pluralism, since the caput of Article 226 of CRFB/88 “is, consequently, a general clause for family inclusion, and it is not admissible to exclude any entity that meets the requirements of affectivity, stability and ostensibility” (LÔBO, 2020, p. 95). Therefore, “we have that the family that used to be founded on patrimony, today is governed by Eudemonism (the pursuit of happiness), solidarity and respect for the human dignity of each of its members” (VIEGAS; POLI, 2015, p. 58). Therefore, the limitation of the monogamous heterosexual nuclear family as the exclusive form of family arrangement by Bill 6583/2013

contradicts and violates CRFB/88 itself, since with its advent, “Brazil inaugurated the paradigm of the Democratic State of Law, founded on principles and rules that aim to realize and promote human dignity, essentially changing the family concept, which has expanded day by day” (VIEGAS; POLI, 2015, p. 56).

Therefore, differently from the justification presented in Bill 6583/2013, the plurality of family arrangements found in contemporaneity does not represent deviations of conduct subject to correction or oppression, but rather, they result from the fact that, in the 21st century, as a rule, social actors have greater freedom to relate affectively in today’s society, either by the greater acceptance of the social body or by the State’s recognition of alternative family arrangements, even if, many times, social subjects are still required to follow predetermined family models in order for their union to be protected by specific public family policies (GIDDENS, 2002).

From this perspective and supported by the Theory of Social Representations (MOSCOVICI, 2011; JODELE, 2001), this paper aims to analyze the social representations of family in Bill 6583/2013 (Family Statute) through the method of literature review and document analysis. More precisely, it aims to analyze such representations in the bill’s original wording and in the justification by Deputy Anderson Ferreira, since the aforementioned bill conceptualized only the heterosexual monogamous nuclear family for legal purposes and State protection, even in the face of a diversity of family arrangements that are not different from that model but are formed and exist differently from the ideal family in the legislative proposition under study. Thus, Bill 6583/2013 is the *corpus* of analysis herein.

2 Methodological Procedures

This paper used documentary research and literature review as methodological strategies. Its object of analysis is Bill 6583 proposed in 2013, also known as the Family Statute, notably the bill’s original wording and the justification presented by Deputy Anderson Ferreira, which were used as primary sources for data extraction.

Documentary research was chosen as a method for data collection and analysis because documents “are not merely a source of contextualized information, but they exist in a given context and provide information about that context” (LÜDKE; ANDRÉ, 1986, p. 39), thus making it possible to scrutinize the social representation of family in Bill 6583/2013, which is the object of analysis.

To this end, content analysis was performed, which is understood as “a category of explicit textual analysis procedures for social research purposes” (BAUER, 2002, p. 191), that is, it is “a method to produce inferences from a focal text to its social context in an objective manner” (BAUER, 2002, p. 191). Finally, a descriptive qualitative analysis was conducted, based on the literature on the subject, especially, in studies by classical authors who investigate families (BOURDIEU, 1996; BRUSCHINI, 2000; ENGELS, 2019; FEDERICI, 2019; GOLDANI, 1993;

LEVI-STRAUSS, 1983; SARTI, 2004) and in texts selected by searching the “Google Academic” platform for the keywords “Family”, “social representations”, “PL 6583/2013” and “Family Statute”, cumulatively, in a total of 05 (five) specific studies (PEREIRA, 2015; VASCONCELLOS, 2013; CARDOSO et al. , 2020; BELFORT et al., 2015, LOBO, 2020).

3 Family Social Representations in the Family Statute

Legislative propositions emanate from the human perception of how people understand social facts and the consequent need for their positivization in the legal system, in order to guide and regulate individuals’ behavior in the society where they live. Thus, from the presentation of a bill to create or modify a norm, there are several arguments that subsidize its content, notably those arising from the mindset formed by the social representations of an individual/group responsible for its presentation and by its advocates (CANDAU, 2005).

With this regard, the discourse supported by Deputy Anderson Ferreira in the presentation of Bill 6583/2013, more precisely in its original wording and its justification, which constitute the *corpus* in this study, provides rich content to determine and analyze what family Social Representations (SR) are evoked and mobilized, considering that “social representations are almost tangible entities. They circulate, cross and crystallize incessantly through discourse, a gesture, an encounter, in our everyday universe” (MOSCOVICI, 2011, p. 41).

That said, the Theory of Social Representations is relevant to study the family as an analytical category from the discourse assumed by the deputy responsible for the legislative proposal in an attempt to convince other representatives for the passing of Bill 6583/2013, as this method of analysis enables us to understand how the contents of family SR are structured by the deputy, as well as to apprehend how he perceives the family transformations that have occurred over time (ARRUDA, 2002). That is, this method allows working with the social memory about the family and the transformations of family social representations (SRs) in time and space (CANDEU, 2005).

This is because individuals represent to dialogue based on a collection of consensual meanings - knowledge function. Such meanings work as preliminary guidelines of how a group should act towards a specific object - orientation function - as well as enable these behaviors to be justified later - justification function. Moreover, the representations can also act as a structure for the formulation and protection of the social identity of the members of a given group - identity function (ABRIC, 2000).

In this perspective, SRs are a form of knowledge that is socially constructed and shared, having a practical vision and contributing to the construction of a common reality for a social group (SÊGA, 2000). This means that SRs, as a mental process, always carry a symbolic meaning. Therefore, according to Sá (1998, p. 68), an SR is “a mode of knowledge generated through communication in everyday life, with the practical purpose of guiding behavior in concrete social

situations”, in which the unfamiliar is incorporated.

Thus, from the contact with the family, its transformations and information about it, two processes will begin to form its social representation, namely, objectification and anchoring (JODELET, 2001). In these processes, cognitive activity, affective mobilization and social conditions are articulated. With this, “people give meaning to the object, anchoring it on the reference systems already possessed and change their structures to adapt to what is new and to the demands of social reality” (VASCONCELOS, 2013, p. 42).

Thus, the objectification process “implies a selective construction and a decontextualization, through which only some of the object’s elements are filtered and retained, depending on pre-existing meanings resulting from grouping” (VASCONCELOS, 2013, p. 42). The anchoring process, on the other hand, concerns the “assimilation of the new element into a system of familiar categories through some adjustments. The object is integrated into a value system, named and classified according to social insertion” (VASCONCELOS, 2013, p. 42). That is, “the new object is readjusted so that it fits into a known category acquiring characteristics of that category” (SANTOS, 2005, p. 33).

Thus, the whole information accessed about the family is selected and especially the ideals consistent with the values, practices and images shared by a specific group at a given time are preserved (JODELET, 2001). Therefore, the discourse assumed by Deputy Anderson Ferreira for passing Bill 6583/2013 comprises a theory that naturalizes the family as a social institution based on the exclusion of different arrangements in detriment of an idealization of the family that is intended to be legalized as an exclusive model, as will be analyzed next.

4 Analysis, Discussions and Results of Bill 6583/2013 and its Justification

Bill 6583/2013 was presented to the Federal Chamber of Deputies by Deputy Anderson Ferreira, who was born in Recife/PE and affiliated with the Liberal Party (PL) - known until 2019 as the Republic Party (PR). The representative, who held office until January 2017, when he resigned from the Chamber of Deputies to become Mayor of Jaboatão dos Guararapes/PF, is an evangelical and a member of the religious denomination Assembly of God, and as a deputy, he was a member of the following Parliamentary Fronts: Evangelical and Mixed for Family and Life Support.

Given this picture, firstly, the identity function of that representative’s family SR with the mindset of the religious group to which he belongs can be observed. Thus, his family SR corresponds to his group’s religious ideology and, therefore, understands the family as a “natural” and sacred institution, considering that, for the evangelicals of the Assembly of God congregation, only the affective union formed by two people of different sexes and their descendants can be considered a family, while all other family formations are marginalized by this group because they contradict their dogmas (PEREIRA, 2015).

Indeed, the definition of family in Article 2 of Bill 6583/2013 advocates this ideal, since the concept of family is based on the union between a man and a woman - excluding homo-affective, polygamous and simultaneous unions - based on marriage or common-law marriage - disregarding unions that have not yet been granted legal status by the State. With this, the representative intends to institute a closed concept of family in the singular when he does not contemplate the changes in its structure as part of social evolution and, therefore, makes the recognition and protection of other family arrangements impossible, just as occurs in the Christian ideology of family, confirming expressed religiosity in political affairs and highlighting the formation elements of his family SR (PEREIRA, 2015).

Thus, the intent of the original wording of Deputy Anderson Ferreira's bill when conceptualizing the family in an exclusionary manner, based on a religious mindset, is to legalize the family ideology of the group that he integrates, that is, it is the justification function of the family SR that he shares (ABRIC, 2000). This means that, by interpreting the family from a Christian perspective, the deputy's intention is to give legal clothing to the sacredness of relationships, as they are based on the complementarity of male and female bodies and on the Christian association of sex as procreation, attempting to disqualify homosexual relationships and ensure heteronormativity and monogamy (PEREIRA, 2015).

From this perspective, it is observed that the family SR in Bill 6583/2013 brings, in its objectification process, elements of the Christian family ideal, formed by the sacralized union between a man and a woman and their eventual offspring. These elements are decontextualized from religious ideology in order to be assimilated as a "natural" institution in the context of a secular State. However, an ideal of family based on heteronormativity, compulsory motherhood, and the sexual division of labor (ENGELS, 2019) can be noted. Therefore, in the process of anchoring the family SR in Bill 6583/2013, the Christian family is readjusted to a "natural family" as a sort of institution that is independent of the various social factors, contexts, and social changes.

Thus, it is observed that the family SR in Bill 6583 has the practical purpose of guiding individuals to behave in their private lives respecting the pattern of the monogamous heterosexual nuclear families in order to have access to specific public policies for the family, as it stigmatizes other family arrangements (GOFFMAN, 2004). Better saying, it is the implementation of the ideal of a political group (CANDAU, 2005), in this case, the evangelicals, over the entire social collectivity, considering that "the law assumes the function of a norm, a regulatory and corrective mechanism" (VASCONCELOS, 2013, p. 41). Therefore, it is noted that the idealization of the family is embedded in the power games "that are produced in social relations (sexual, family, knowledge, economic) and refers to the strategies that originate these forces and crystallize them in the state apparatus, in the formulation of laws and in social hegemonies" (VASCONCELOS, 2013, p. 39).

In this way, we can also show the identity function of the family SR in Bill 6583/2013 (ABRIC, 2000), given that Article 10 of the legislative proposition states that “elementary and secondary school curricula must include, in their common national base, the subject ‘Family Education’ as a mandatory curricular component” (FERREIRA, 2013). That is, the family SR acts as a structure for the formulation and protection of the social identity of the members of the evangelical parliamentary front in the Chamber of Deputies, since it intends to assign a legal status to their mindset for the maintenance of their ideals from the pedagogical interference in the primary socialization of individuals (PEREIRA, 2015).

Moreover, considering that CRFB/88 guarantees individual freedom as a fundamental right, as well as introduces the principle of family plurality, making a family SR based on the Christian imaginary into law, on the one hand, is clearly contrary to constitutional precepts, since it works as a legitimizing mechanism of prejudices and inequalities (VIEGAS; POLI, 2015). On the other hand, ignoring that actors organize themselves as a family in various ways and, in retaliation, delegitimizing these unions from being recipients of public policies amount to nothing more than reaffirming the interference of specific groups in the private world (PEREIRA, 2015).

Furthermore, the deputy cites, in his justification, that the “deconstruction” of the concept of family has an impact on individuals’ psychosocial dynamics”, by stating that:

I have made my term of office and my parliamentary performance into instruments for valuing the family. I firmly believe that a citizen’s happiness is centered, above all, on the happiness of the members of the family entity. A balanced family, with its self-esteem valued and assisted by the State, is synonymous with a more fraternal and happier society (FERREIRA, 2013, p.7).

Thus, when the deputy justifies his legislative proposal in the distortion of the traditional concept of family, his intention to marginalize other family arrangements in order to ensure the perpetuation of his ideals becomes even clearer, since he disregards the social processes that pervade the family and attributes abnormality to family models that are formed from other references (BOURDIEU, 1996). He even attributes contemporary families’ social problems, such as drug use and teenage pregnancy, to families that do not follow his family SR model, which justifies the creation of public policies by the State exclusively directed to his family ideal.

However, it is observed that this discourse concerns strategies for reaffirmation of a mindset and for restriction of identity formation (CANDAU, 2005). Therefore, according to Federici (2019), it should be considered that the family does not consist of a natural institution, regardless of the various social factors, but, rather, he confirms that the family represents one of the most elaborate social constructions, since it can function as a regulatory and guiding instrument of interests of dominant groups in order to achieve specific objectives.

That is exactly why it is essential to interpret the different bonding behaviors, the multidimensional roles and the different elements that constitute the family. From this point of

view, an idea of pluralism and family multiplicity should be apprehended, in order to refrain from a singular understanding of the family. This is because the “family structure, being diversified, is mixed by historical influences and by a specific internal organization of each family group” (CARDOSO et al., 2020, p. 30), which is why it is not possible to understand the family in a single model.

According to Goldani (1993), changes in family structures should not be seen as a decline, much less as a form of family breakdown, since the family institution is nothing more than a process of social construction that is directly influenced by social factors. Therefore, to understand the family as a linear unchanging constant is to ignore the very development of social subjects and their adaptations to the various circumstances that have an impact on the private sphere of life, so that the nuclear family model refers to a family form that proved to be interesting for its time and, erroneously, has been spread as a family ideal (BOURDIEU, 1996).

In this regard, Sarti (2004) proposes that the family should be thought of as a symbolic construction between the outside world and the subjective world, and, therefore, “each family builds its myths from what it hears about itself, from the internalized external discourse, but returns a discourse about itself that also contains its own construction, objectifying its subjective experience” (SARTI, 2004, p. 14). It concerns the way individuals build their self-image and the image of the outside world through language that is socially produced and internalized, being, therefore, a value that orders individuals’ places in society.

Hence, the family is not natural, but social, even in face of the attempt to naturalize family relationships from definitions that are socially established by legal, medical, psychological, religious and pedagogical devices. These references “constitute the ‘models’ of what the family is and should be and are strongly supported by a vision of the family as a biological unit formed according to the laws of ‘nature’” (SARTI, 2014, p. 17). With this, “a ‘should be’ is established on the horizon, a positive reference from which everything else becomes a ‘deviation’ or an ‘abnormality’, if not a ‘pathology’ (SARTI, 2014, p. 17)”, being that, in fact, it is a normative discourse of an ideal to be followed.

Thus, it is evident that the concept of family advocated in Bill 6583/2013, in addition to disrespecting individual guarantees and individual freedom in particular, does not include all the transformations and changes that occur in society, since it aims to naturalize a family model in order to legitimize the stigmatization of the various family arrangements that form the social reality (LOBO, 2020). As shown by Cardoso et al. (2020), the description of the family in contemporary times is holistic, since it is necessary to include and reflect on the contexts and experiences of its different formats.

Therefore, the family SR in Bill 6583/2013 concerns a religious ideology of the evangelical parliamentary front in the National Congress, which aims to demonize the various forms of affective unions existing in contemporary society and reaffirm the Christian family as a

natural institution in order to ensure that this political group's mindset is confirmed and supported by the State, so that other family arrangements are stigmatized in the context of a Democratic State of Law.

Given these arguments, Bill 6583/2013, in fact, seeks to define the family in an exclusionary manner in order to ensure the hegemony of the conception of a religious ideology through direct State intervention in the private space. Thus, the family SR is based on a specific political group's mindset, which disregards the many changes in society and, especially, ignores the freedom of human subjectivity construction based on its references, to the extent that it attributes the family problems that emerge in contemporary times to family arrangements that do not fit its reference model (BELFORT et al. 2015). After all, the family SR for this political group is made of memory and of what is transmitted between generations, since it intends to guarantee its mindset by means of a law.

5 Conclusion

The family represents a social institution of great prominence for being one of the oldest and most fundamental institutions to social organization, and, therefore, in the social imaginary, there prevails a predisposition to think of it as something natural and generalized. However, as shown in this study, it is found that such an idealized family, in fact, consists of a social construction that varies according to time, historical context and social changes, in addition to being directly influenced by economic, political and ideological factors. Therefore, it is a mistake to attribute homogeneity to the various forms of affective unions, as occurs in Bill 6583/2013, which is in progress in the Chamber of Deputies.

Hence, based on this analysis, thinking of the family institution always in the plural by respecting its different structures is proposed, since love relationships cannot be entirely determined in an exclusive family model, and differently from what is advocated in Bill 6583/2013, a legislator would never be able to include all the different ways to constitute a family in a single model, since social facts always precede them and the various family arrangements are not inferior to the nuclear family format. In fact, the different family arrangements can be consolidated in so many forms that removing an affective union from the characterization of a constituted family because it does not fit into a dominant family model is denying social development itself, since the changes in the ways of relating to others affectively take place through a process of construction of autonomy and respect for the subjective choices of social subjects.

Given these arguments, the contribution from this paper can be highlighted as it shows that the concept of family provided in Bill 6583/2013 represents the family SR for the evangelical parliamentary front in the Chamber, of which Deputy Anderson Ferreira is a member, and is based on the elements of sacredness of affective unions, heteronormativity and monogamy. And,

therefore, it can be considered that the purpose of the legislative proposal consists of a mechanism to control social behavior and an attempt to reaffirm the family as a natural institution, since it intends to regulate and guide social actors to follow an excluding family standard to be recipients of public policies.

Finally, this study is aligned with the perspective of the literature used for its construction but differs from it in that it shows the interference of political groups, in this case, the evangelical congregants of the Assembly of God, in the organization of the State in order to maintain homogeneity in social relations based on their references. The attempt to perpetuate the political group's mindset in using the Legislative Branch to control social subjects' individuality, in an excessive interference in the private sphere of life, was evidenced.

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