**Gabriella Melis**

**Title**: Modelling Social Attitudes: the influence of family background for an intergenerational perspective

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**PhD summary:** I propose to investigate the intergenerational transmission of social attitudes from individuals’ families of origin to their adulthood, whilst also looking at how attitudes relate to other sets of theoretically relevant covariates over time, such as socio-economic status (SES), social participation and cognitive abilities (Heath *et al.*, 1993; Schoon *et al.*, 2010).

The research would track how specific latent constructs such as attitudes toward gender equality and racism are defined and measured; how attitudes might link to one another; how these relate to sociological concepts such as family background and social class. Therefore, the primary research questions are as follows:

1) Which sets of opinions and beliefs could be defined as part of an attitude structure that hypothetically shapes individuals’ worldviews? 2) Does this structure change over time and, if so, to what extent and how? 3) Can a mechanism of intergenerational transmission of attitudes be identified? That is, is there a correspondence between the attitude structure of family of origin, children and adults? 4) What is the relationship between attitudes, SES, social participation and cognitive abilities?

Both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses will be carried out by using the British Cohort Study 1970. In particular, the availability of longitudinal data on social attitudes for cohort members and their family of origin will enhance the analysis and assessment of the process of intergenerational transmission.

The intended methods are based on longitudinal structural equation models, with integration between factor analysis and Rasch models (Bollen & Curran, 2006; Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012).

**Biography:** Prior to joining CCSR I obtained a BA in Sociology and an MSc in Methods and Techniques for Social Research at The University of Rome “La Sapienza”, where I also worked in the field of attitude research as a research assistant from 2005 to 2009. In September 2012 I completed the MSc in Social Research Methods and Statistics at The University of Manchester and then enrolled in the PhD in Social Statistics, both in CCSR.

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