

Call for Articles

The Family in Times of Transition.

Global Perspectives from History and Cultural Studies

edited by Elisa-Maria Hiemer, Geena Carlisle, and Jana Tschurenev

This open access volume explores how questions of gender, family, parental rights and parental practice unfold during periods of political, economic, and social transition after 1945. While Europe and North America were profoundly shaped by events such as the Second World War, the Cold War, and processes of European integration, other regions experienced distinct yet equally transformative upheavals. In Latin America, revolutionary movements, military dictatorships, and subsequent democratic and economic transitions reconfigured social and political orders. Across Africa, decolonization, civil wars, anti-apartheid struggles, and state formation processes reshaped political communities and social hierarchies. In many parts of Asia, postcolonial restructuring and Cold War entanglements intersected with rapid industrialization and developmental state policies. In North Africa and the Middle East, political transformations have been deeply influenced by religious revival, the rise of political Islam, and mass mobilizations such as the Arab Spring.

We invite contributions that examine how family life, childhood, parenting practices and regulations emerge as particularly sensitive and contested arenas in times of systemic change. Rather than serving merely as beneficiaries of democratization, families often become sites where new political orders are negotiated, contested, and enforced.

The volume examines **how personal and collective crises intersect** with the organization of paid labor and unpaid care work, family planning, crisis management within families and how these intersections reshape gender roles and generational relations.

Scholarship on family has long been framed through conceptual lenses rooted in Western narratives of individualization and globalization as pathways to political freedom (as this has been shown by the concept of democratization of the family by Ulrich Beck, 1997). Yet recent developments point to a countertrend: processes of re-nationalization and re-traditionalization, expressed in tightened family planning laws, pronatalist policies, and the promotion of normative, often exclusionary, family models. By bringing together contributions from different world regions, this volume seeks to decenter Euro-Atlantic perspectives and offer a genuinely **global account of how historical transitions redefine gender orders, family structures, and the boundaries of political belonging.**



Call for Articles

Topics we are interested in (but not limited to):

- Post-conflict reconstruction of the social fabric through state policies, legal reforms, and everyday practices within families
- Fathers' rights movements, feminist activism, and competing claims over parental authority and gender equality
- The role of ethnic, religious, and racialized minorities in negotiating family norms and belonging
- Social media and digital communication: transnational networks, constructions of childhood, youth cultures, and new forms of peer pressure
- Alternative, non-normative, and post-traditional family forms in periods of political and social transition
- The evolution and application of children's rights and the best interests of the child in legal and societal discourse
- NGOs, grassroots initiatives, and collective movements advocating for parental and children's rights
- Literature, film, and the arts as arenas of critique and countermobilization, giving voice to marginalized, silenced, or contested family experiences
- The regulation of reproduction, care work, and intergenerational relations in contexts of economic restructuring or security politics

Deadline and schedule

We encourage both early career and senior researchers to apply. Please send an abstract of maximum 300 words with a short biographical note in one document by **April 30, 2026** to e.hiemer@fu-berlin.de. To foster coherence and dialogue, authors will be placed in small thematic groups (3–4 papers) and invited to share draft versions over the summer for peer feedback and cross-referencing. The finalized versions should be ready in December 2026 and will be submitted to a peer-reviewed series.

About the project

This call is released as part of the ERC project “*Democratising the Family? Gender Equality, Parental Rights and Child Welfare in Contemporary Global History*” (DEMFAM) examines how ideas of family, parenthood and parent-child relationships have changed in recent decades in legal and societal discourses across the world. <https://www.democratising-the-family.eu/>

