

A NEW-GENERATION FORUM. FAMILY HISTORY IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE*

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Abstract: *This essay proposes an overview of the rich scientific contribution brought within HISFAM GLOBAL research seminar new series sessions hold during Academic Year 2023–2024, thanks to George Barițiu Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca. The aim was building comparative interdisciplinary frameworks towards a history of the family without frontiers, which meant keeping a research approach transcending space and time limits, thanks to a new-generation flexible international forum based in Cluj. Along the year, senior researchers, including well known academics from various disciplinary horizons and backgrounds, expressed their ideas and experience. During these regular productive international academic encounters, a bunch of doctoral students and promising early career researchers presented their work in progress. Exciting new research papers and valuable new books were discussed. The present article summaries presentations and arguments. It stresses main innovative points resulting from these Family History seminar sessions and corresponding debates in global perspective. Overall, seven main topics have been tackled, ranging from family formation and migration, family models of intergenerational transmission, family labour and female agency, impact of laws and customs and questions of health care and stress.*

Keywords: History, migration, family formation, transmission, gendered agency, laws, health, sex ratio and environmental stress.

Introduction

Academic Year 2023–2024 was marked by the successful development of a new series of international research seminars dedicated to History of the Family in Global Perspective (HISFAM GLOBAL). This seminar was hopefully based in Cluj-Napoca, „George Barițiu” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, with the agreement of Director Professor Ioan Bolovan, and the kind support of eminent Colleagues, including the Doctoral School of History and Archeology¹. Taking

* The present article presents the main scientific results of the research seminar sessions held in partnership with Marius Eppel, since October 18th, 2023, at the „George Barițiu” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca, during Academic Year 2023–2024.

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¹ See Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, *Towards a family history without frontiers*, „Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «George Barițiu», Series Historica” [Yearbook of the „George Barițiu” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy], Cluj-Napoca, LXIII, 2024, p. 345–368.

account of the major globalization of historical research within academic rules, digitalization and new ways of debating questions online with international experts of high repute, Marius Eppel and Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, joint conveners, considered that it was time to launch a new type of regular research forum without frontier of space and/or time. The aim of this seminar was to transcend history, suggesting new approaches of family systems using large scientific interdisciplinary knowledge, at the same time through anthropology, historical demography, economy, sociology, history of mentalities, gender, medicine, biology, archeology, philosophy etc., revisiting the international spirit developed in Paris, beginning 1929, by Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, around the journal „Annales d’histoire économique et sociale”, and „School” developed by historian Fernand Braudel and followers² around „Annales. Economies, Societies, Civilisations” (ESC)³.

I. A New-Generation Forum

Looking beyond the context of the „Annales School” tradition, history of the family should presently combine qualitative and statistical data, family reproduction studies (including family structure and transmission systems), political knowledge, detailed religious and cultural background in comparative space and time perspective. Previous research in this direction has shown that family models and reproduction systems have been always adapting to circumstances, resisting to various kinds of stress and other pressure with flexibility and resilience⁴. Whatever the new research tools and concepts, important historical sources are today easily available. Anyway, it remained a big challenge to start a new discussion forum and encourage free debates and brainstorming on a simple and trustable academic basis. The present essay shows how we succeeded, offering valuable regular learning opportunities both for senior researchers and graduate students from multiple origins and different cultures, as HISFAM GLOBAL network includes scholars from other

² Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, *Historical Demography, Natural Daughter of the Annales School*, in vol. *Jednostka, rodzina i struktury społeczne w perspektywie historycznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Cezaremu Kukli z okazji 45-lecia pracy naukowej* [Individual, family and social structures in historical perspective. A Jubilee book dedicated to Professor Cezary Kuklo for the 45th anniversary of his scientific work], Piotr Łozowski, Radek Ponią (eds), Białystok, Instytut Badań nad Dziedzictwem Kulturowym Europy [Research Institute on the Cultural Heritage of Europe], 2022, p. 270–286.

³ After World War II, „Annales d’histoire économique et sociale”, academic historical journal, was renamed „Annales. Economies, Societies, Civilisations” (ESC), from 1946 up to 1993. Starting with 1994, it was called „Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales” (HSS). All issues are currently online from 1929 to 2023. <https://www.persee.fr/collection/ahess>, consulted July 15th, 2024.

⁴ Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, *The European rural stem family as a determinant of illegitimacy*, „Romanian Journal of Population Studies”, Cluj-Napoca, XVI, 1, 2022, p. 9–44. Source accessible at: <https://doi.org/10.24193/RJPS.2022.1.01>; <https://rjps.reviste.ubbcluj.ro/volume-xvi-number-1-2022january-june/fauve-chamoux-2022/>

continents than Europe (South and North America, Asia, Africa and Australia)⁵ in connection with other academic bodies and international professional organizations⁶.

With academic year 2023-2024, a regular new HISFAM GLOBAL Research Seminar took place monthly online from Cluj-Napoca (Romania), in hybrid mode, each session including one or two presentations on major topics⁷, followed by questions and general discussions. It was scheduled to take place usually on Thursday, beginning at 15:00, Bucharest time (EET), this means beginning 14:00 Paris time (CET). Some extra sessions were organized in Paris⁸, bringing together paper givers, discussants, doctoral students and researchers, registered junior and senior scholars⁹ in the frame of thematic panels. On May 24, 2024, a full day international Workshop meeting was organised¹⁰, in Spanish partnership¹¹, thanks to the hospitality of the *Colegio de Espana*¹², Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CiuP)¹³.

All seminar sessions were in French and/or English, in the frame of basic academic European rules. The main topics discussed during this 2023–2024 academic full period are presented and commented below.

II. HISFAM GLOBAL Main Topics Discussed. Academic Year 2023–2024

II.1. Family, migration and mobility

Claudia Contente (University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona), attached to the Research Group on Empires, Metropolis, and Extra-European Societies (GRIMSE)¹⁴, presented the collective book that she edited in 2023 together with Isabelle Séguy (Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques – INED, Paris). This publication,

⁵ Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, Ioan Bolovan, Sølvi Sogner, *A Global History of Historical Demography. Half a Century of Interdisciplinarity*, Bern, Peter Lang, 2016.

⁶ As International Commission for Historical Demography (ICHD), Family/Demography network of European Social Science History Conference (ESSHC), Social Science History Association (SSHA).

⁷ The two HISFAM seminar convenors received, from the invited speakers, their original PowerPoint presentation and/or written text in advance, even in a draft form. The paper presentation included a bibliography and was not circulated, unless a discussant was in charge of specific comments. Certificate of Attendance and /or Attestation of paper presentation were delivered by the convenors, as appropriate, according to European academic rules.

⁸ These special face to face sessions took place on Jourdan Campus (75014 Paris) or at Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CiuP).

⁹ Participants were Research Members, Registered Junior Research members (Post Doc etc.), Registered free listeners and invited Colleagues as Speakers, Experts, Discussants and/or Chairs.

¹⁰ <https://www.colesp.org/fr/events/seminaire-international-4/>. International Research Seminar „HISFAM GLOBAL”, Family History in GLOBAL Perspectives, Friday May 24th, 2024, 9:00 am – 9:00 pm.

¹¹ Spanish speaking colleagues deeply involved with these encounters were Ofelia Rey Castelao, *History Department, University of Santiago de Compostela* (Spain), Claudia Contente, *University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona* (Spain) and Ruben Castro Redondo, *University of Santiago de Compostela* (Spain), Coordinator.

¹² <https://www.colesp.org/index.php/es/contacto>

¹³ <https://www.ciu.fr/en/>, consulted June 6th, 2024.

¹⁴ <https://www.upf.edu/web/grimse/>, consulted January 4th, 2025.

untitled *Human Migration and Mobility through Time, Transdisciplinary Approaches*¹⁵, resulted from a large international group research, the *International Network – Historical and Osteoarchaeological Past Populations Exploration* (IN-HOPPE)¹⁶, supported by INED and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), UMR 7264, Laboratory on „Cultures et Environnements. Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen Âge” (CEPAM)¹⁷.

The editors of this mentioned 2023 book selected eleven contributions on migration questions from highly innovative perspectives. A wide variety of sources and methods were used by pre-historians, bioanthropologists, archeologists, historians and demographers to reconstruct some human movements over time on the planet. We learn much of early settlements, from information collected on human remains, burials and other testimonies. Results are quite different from what is revealed by contemporary and quantitative data when other (more traditional) historical sources are under observation and analysed, offering more familiar frameworks for interpretation. It is fascinating for historians and prehistorians to compare different research perspectives emerging, given the different types of material under observation.

In this 2023 volume, jointly with Arnaud Bringé (Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques -INED, Paris), Dr. Claudia Contente dedicated a chapter to the specific models of colonial settlement she has previously identified concerning eighteenth and nineteenth century Argentina, for the Rio de la Plata region¹⁸. Claudia Contente's presentation was entitled *Moving here and there in the countryside of Buenos Aires (1869–1895)*, combining short distance micro mobility models at regional level and longdistance macro immigration models from Europe. Since the very founding of the city of Buenos Aires, migration had a leading role in the gradual settlement process of the surrounding countryside. Earlier generations of inhabitants of this area had been essentially coming from Iberian Peninsula, this means Spaniards, Creoles, and Portuguese people, including some enslaved population. Since the last decades of the eighteenth century, important changes and reforms impacted local regional economic circuits¹⁹. With a first wave, individual

¹⁵ *Human Migration and Mobility through Time, Transdisciplinary Approaches*, Claudia Contente, Isabelle Séguy (eds), Barcelona, Bellaterra Editions, 2023.

¹⁶ IN-HOPPE, *International Network – Historical and Osteoarchaeological Past Populations Exploration* was created in 2013 as an INED scientific research group dedicated to past populations and health approaches. https://in-hoppe-reseau.web.ined.fr/reseau/Charteconstitutive_reseau_IN-HOPPE.pdf, consulted June 6th, 2024.

¹⁷ <https://www.cepam.cnrs.fr/>

¹⁸ Claudia Contente, *Familias en la tormenta. Tierra, familia y transmisión de patrimonio en el Río de la Plata, siglos XVIII y XIX*, Buenos Aires, Prometeo Libros, 2015.

¹⁹ For more on main local reforms, see Dario G. Barriera, *Institutional Construction in Late Eighteenth-Century Río de la Plata*, „Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales” – English Edition, Vol. 73, No. 1, 2018, p. 55–80. Translated from the French by M. Biberson. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ahs.2020.11>. Work first published as Dario G. Barriera, *Gouverner les campagnes. Analyse micro-sociale et construction institutionnelle (Río de la Plata, fin du XVIII^e siècle)*, „Annales. Histoire,

people came to settle from all parts of the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, sometimes from far away from the Buenos Aires port city. Soon they developed new family households with a spouse and kin members joining them. In the 1830s, English-speaking migrants, particularly Irish and Scots, arrived from Europe. There were also French and Italian newcomers²⁰. The migratory movements accelerated later, as shown through two successive censuses taken in 1869 and 1895, sources which were very well studied in detail and compared by Dr. Contente. Immigrants offered then a new labour force. Many workers moved around in this period, searching better and better job opportunities. In this zone, there remained some deep-rooted local families. In rural areas further away from Buenos Aires and within the process of colonization, many migrants „of the interior” still had the possibility of making a future for themselves, and in those remote areas, even single and unmarried women could be at the head of a farm. But, in the multigeneration process, an important fraction of the native population experienced harder living conditions, isolation and downwards social mobility, particularly those who had not been able to consolidate their access to the means of production or did not know how to read and write.

It was interesting to compare Claudia Contente's complex Latin American expansion or „frontier” model with the North American colonial example presented previously by Marie-Pierre Arrizabalaga (Cergy Paris University – AGORA EA 7392, France), with her study of marriage strategies among the many French migrants settling in California, during the second part of nineteenth century. Since the birth of California state in 1850, it welcomed thousands of American men (but few women) and Europeans immigrants, all convinced that they contributed to a conquest of the American West that would quickly enrich them. This was the Westward Movement. California became then a territory of successful immigration, a new North American El Dorado.

Professor Ofelia Rey Castelao (University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain) major work on women and migration within Spanish Europe, during the early modern period²¹ is currently well known. Concerning Central America, Ofelia Rey Castelao exposed her research about the role of the Catholic Church in colonial context. She had an opportunity to discuss and explain the strenuous efforts made by Catholic priests, in colonial Mexico, to keep the local population under religious control: Indian communities lived there very far from urban centres. Pastoral visits

Sciences Sociales”, Vol. 73, No. 1, 2018, p. 57–82. French translation by Sébastien Malaprade. <https://www.cairn.info/revue-Annales-2018-1-page-57.htm>, consulted June 15th, 2024.

²⁰ Each group had specific inheritance customs that they tried to reproduce later on. See Blanca Zeberio, *Les héritiers de la terre. Famille, patrimoine et reproduction sociale dans la Pampa argentine (XIX^e–XX^e siècles)*, „Etudes rurales”, N° 169–170, 2004, p. 131–148. <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesrurales/8059>; <https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesrurales.8059>, consulted June 15th, 2024.

²¹ Ofelia Rey Castelao, *El vuelo corto. Mujeres y migraciones en la Edad Moderna*, Santiago de Compostela, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela editora académica, 2021.

to rural parishes by Spanish archbishops based in Mexico City were rare and extremely difficult, given climatic and epidemic problems, poor road conditions and the fact that senior Catholic clergymen were often too old and sick for facing long and problematic travel ventures. Consequently, many „dysfunctions” have been observed among native Indians. These ignored all canonical rules concerning degrees of consanguinity and/or spiritual kinship and were exposed to contracting „void marriages”, particularly after receiving Confirmation sacrament²². Besides, Ofelia Rey discovered, for European Spanish Galicia, astonishing occurrences of corpses transportation from one parish to another during the early modern time. This forced mobility of deceased bodies happened in case of severe inheritance conflicts, when a rural property put in competition family members from different parishes. Once transplanted and reburied (often at night) in another parish – for example, where he or she was born – the ancestor’s dead body justified, by his/her physical presence, that one of the heirs could be recognized by the peasant community as legitimate. This was not easy to carry out in secret, and required the complicity of religious members, paid for the occasion, especially since notable families used to bury their parents under the paving stones of churches or in crypts. The main topic of family formation models, where the Church played such a major role in the past, was further discussed.

II.2. Family formation

For nineteenth century, Patryk Pankowski (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland) studied affinal relatives in St. Margaret Catholic parish of Poznań, through isonymy. With this method, intergroup relationships were noted, evidencing the frequency of identical surnames in a population. The author intended to assess the degree of relationship between individuals migrating to urban and suburban Poznań from Greater Poland villages. Marriage register books of St. Margaret parish were examined and surnames of spouses considered within the *Poznań Historical Population Database* (PHPD)²³. Then a coefficient of random inbreeding was calculated. As a result, a low percentage of isonymic marriages and a very low value of the random inbreeding coefficient allowed to suggest a rather low degree of kinship in this Poznań population.

For his part, Jan Golian (University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia) reconstructed family life courses in the Detva parish for the period 1781–1920, relying on parish registers of marriages, births and burials, following classical Louis

²² Ofelia Rey Castelao, Rubén Castro Redondo, *Confirmation et recatholicisation en Galice au XIX^e siècle*, in vol.: *Le Sacrement oublié, Histoire de la confirmation, XVI^e–XX^e siècles*, Michaël Gasperoni, Vincent Gourdon (eds.), Tours, Presses universitaires François Rabelais, 2022.

²³ See <https://poznadatabase.pl/index.php/459-2/>, consulted July 6th, 2024.

Henry's Historical Demography method²⁴. Located in central Slovakia, this zone was quite isolated and homogeneous in terms of religious denomination, with 97 percent Roman Catholic inhabitants. The author commented the general demographic trends of this population for the mentioned long period, including crude birth rates and the rise in the proportion of illegitimate births.

He also studied marriage models in great details, according to types of marriages and remarriages, age gaps between partners and seasonality. Mortality trends were not forgotten, with their various episodes of crises. He concluded that the population under study belonged to the Southeastern European family type, corresponding to classical Hajnal's historical European marriage pattern typology²⁵.

For Northern Portugal, Cláudia Novais (Universidade do Minho & Lab2PT Braga, Portugal) focussed her research on family dynamics for the preservation of female honour in eighteenth century Minho region. For women, she argued that honour was mainly focused on the sexual sphere, as it was seen as an object of exchange in sexual relations between the sexes. By contrast, for men, honour involved other qualities such as respect, physical agility or economic and professional ability. The author relied on specific Portuguese historical sources, the *perdões de parte*, where honour was the foundation of family and individual agreements, within an essentially moral exchange that could also be financial. There were different types of registered notarial acts signed by partners and family members, in order to avoid further conflicts.

II.3. Transgenerational family models

Maria Marta Lobo de Araújo (University of Minho & Landscape, Heritage and Territory Laboratory-2PT, Braga, Portugal) showed the charitable action of the Braganza ducal family, during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries towards the *Misericórdias* (Mercies) institutions²⁶ of their city, Braga. Dukes and duchesses of Braganza made important donations and legacies for the poor of this region. First, an hospital to treat the sick was build and later another hospital for patients with syphilis. At the same time, we note a long-term investment policy of wealthy local families in these charitable institutions, in order to help the poor, particularly women in needs.

²⁴ Michel Fleury, Louis Henry, *Des registres paroissiaux à l'histoire de la population: manuel de dépouillement et d'exploitation de l'état civil ancien*, Paris, Institut National d'Études Démographiques (INED), 1956; Michel Fleury, Louis Henry, *Nouveau manuel de dépouillement et d'exploitation de l'état civil ancien*, Paris, Institut National d'Études Démographiques (INED), 1965 (revised version). Reprint in 1976.

²⁵ John Hajnal, *European Marriage Patterns in Perspective*, in vol.: *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography*, David V. Glass, David. E.C. Eversley (eds), London, E. Arnold, 1965, p. 101–143. [https://u.demog.berkeley.edu/~jrw/Biblio/Eprints/%20G-I/hajnal.1965.europe an.marriage.pdf](https://u.demog.berkeley.edu/~jrw/Biblio/Eprints/%20G-I/hajnal.1965.europe%20an.marriage.pdf), consulted July 6th, 2024.

²⁶ For more on Portuguese *Misericórdia* see Maria Antónia Lopes, Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *História Breve das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 1498–2000*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008.

Finally, a college for orphaned children was also created. For these three institutions, the House of Braganza gave much money and goods to secure food, linen and maintenance, ensuring their proper functioning for long, without further burden for the responsible brotherhood administration in charge. This financial help and support corresponded also, for the Braganza noble family, to a visible symbolic capital being granted to local institutions.

Besides, for the city of Braga, Luís Gonçalves Ferreira (University of Minho & Landscape, Heritage and Territory Laboratory-2PT, Braga) considered other actions of charity towards poor, old, and lonely women during the early modern time, seen through the case of the local Hospital of Santiago. This institution was housing and giving assistance to vulnerable impoverished urban women as elderly, single or widows with few or no surviving family relationship²⁷, this means experiencing a situation of economic and social needs.

II.4. Family and female agency

Christiane Fevre (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris) presented her original research on transmission models via women, within the family, as seen through French novels and short stories written by Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (1873–1954), a very successful female writer, between 1900 and 1954, signing „Colette” and known as such. Four representative books by Colette were selected for this study: *La maison de Claudine* [*Claudine's house*]²⁸ (1922), *La naissance du jour* [*Break of the Day*]²⁹ (1928), *Sido*³⁰ (1929) and *Gigi* (1944)³¹. Colette had three older siblings³². Second husband of her mother³³, her father, Jules-Joseph Colette (1829–1905) was an army officer who had lost one leg on a battlefield. Colette's mother was Adèle Eugénie Sidonie Landy said *Sido*

²⁷ Luís Gonçalves Ferreira, *Poor women and urban assistance in Early Modern Portugal: the case of Hospital of Santiago of Braga*, „Revista Portuguesa de História”, 52, No. 4, 2021, p. 77–106. DOI: 10.14195/0870-4147_52_4, consulted September 7th, 2024.

²⁸ Published in 1922, *La maison de Claudine* was translated in English and published as *Claudine's house*, London, Hesperus Press Ltd, 2006. See Colette, *Oeuvres*, Alain Brunet, Claude Pichois et al. (eds), Tome II, Paris, Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1986.

²⁹ Published in 1928, *La naissance du jour* [*Break of the Day*] was translated in English and published in New York, Strauss, 1961. See Colette, *Oeuvres*, Alain Brunet, Claude Pichois et al. (eds), Tome III, Paris, Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1991.

³⁰ Published in 1929, *Sido* is a portrait of Colette's mother. See Colette, *Oeuvres*, Alain Brunet, Claude Pichois et al. (eds), Tome III, Paris Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1991.

³¹ Published in 1944, *Gigi* was the basis for the 1958 film directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Audrey Hepburn as Gigi, and a 1973 stage production. See Colette, *Oeuvres*, Alain Brunet, Claude Pichois et al. (eds), Tome IV, Paris, Gallimard, La Pléiade, 2001.

³² Colette had a maternal half-sister, Juliette (1860–1908), a maternal half-brother, Achille (1863–1913), and a full brother, Léopold (born 1866).

³³ Sido's first husband was J-J. Robineau-Duclos (1814–1865). Sido remarried quickly after he died.

(1835–1912). The family was initially well off but became impoverished, following some disastrous financial family management by Colette's father. Consequently, in 1893, aged twenty, Colette married Henry Gauthier-Villars (1859–1931), a writer who used a pen name „Willy”.

Colette's first four semi-autobiographical novels, *Claudine à l'école* (1900), *Claudine à Paris* (1901), *Claudine en ménage* (1902), and *Claudine s'en va* (1903), were out of press under her husband's name who took much profit of his wife's writing talent³⁴. Willy had introduced Colette into libertine Parisian circles, encouraging her sexual freedom. Colette and Willy officially separated in 1906. Having no access to the earnings corresponding of her *Claudine* published series, Colette decided to turn to journalism activities. She had then female partners and some hectic life in Paris. In 1912, Colette remarried with Henry de Jouvenel (1876–1935), a diplomat, then chief editor of „Le Matin” a daily newspaper³⁵. She had a daughter, her only child, Colette Renée de Jouvenel born in 1913. When Henry de Jouvenel became an international political figure, Colette divorced in 1924, after she had a love affair with Henry's son Bertrand³⁶ and had published a novel about it, untitled *Le Blé en Herbe* (*Green Wheat*) (1923)³⁷. In 1925, she remarried with Maurice Goudekot, who remained her husband until her death in 1954, when aged 81.

Colette was then so popular, much appreciated as a French famous female writer and independent woman that a national funeral day was organised for her in Paris, on Saturday, August 7th, 1954³⁸. The official secular funeral ceremony and the impressive popular homage took place outside, within the Palais Royal Garden (her appartement was situated looking on this historical Paris Garden). Her family members were present including her domestic servant.

Colette's mother, Sidonie said Sido, occupied a central and determining figure in her daughter's all writings, particularly through *La Naissance du jour* (*Break of the day*) (1928). Sido's non-conformist personality helped shaping much of her

³⁴ These four first novels are published in English as *Claudine at School*, *Claudine in Paris*, *Claudine Married*, and *Claudine and Annie*. The story they tell is semi-autobiographical.

³⁵ „Le Matin”, a very popular French newspaper was published daily from 1884 to 1944. In 1910, 700 000 copies were out of press and sold every day and up to one million copies in 1914. See for example, issue dated January 1st, 1912, including 8 pages, a few photographs and many caricatures. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k570023h?rk=21459;2#>, consulted September 7th, 2024.

³⁶ Tatiana Pignon, *Colette, Henry et Bertrand de Jouvenel. De Sidi à Chéri, un triangle amoureux*, in vol.: *Les couples illustres de l'histoire de France*, Patrice Gueniffey, Lorraine de Meaux (eds.), Paris, Perrin, 2019, p. 317–336.

³⁷ Published in 1923, *Le Blé en Herbe*, was translated in English and published as Colette, *Green Wheat*, New York, Farrar Strauss, 1955. See Colette, *Oeuvres*, Alain Brunet, Claude Pichois et al. (eds), Tome II, Paris Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1986.

³⁸ See the video films (3:16 mn), disseminated the same day, on Saturday August 7th, 1954 and on August 12th, 1954 (2mn), as *Les Actualités Françaises*, in all Paris movie theaters. Various documents were archived by the Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA). <https://www.ina.fr/ina-eclair-actu/video/caf90005630/les-obseques-de-colette>; <https://www.ina.fr/ina-eclair-actu/video/afe85005771/les-obseques-de-colette>, consulted September 7th, 2024.

daughter's identity. This was thanks to the lessons received in childhood and to the numerous letters exchanged. Mother and daughter loved gardens and pets. Plants, flowers and animal wellbeing were also discussed in their correspondences³⁹ and remained source of inspiration for Colette. Sido taught her daughter the cult of the beauty of the world, love and respect for living creatures and natural environment. Sido passed away in 1912, aged 77, when Colette was age 39. Then Colette reconstructed a mythical mother Sido, a tutelary figure who seems to embody the power of a dominant female who knows how to decipher natural phenomena, governing her family and ecologic household with love. Beyond memories of childhood, Colette, a hard-working female writer, was seeking to recreate the enchantment of a protected world within a genuine warm family home. For Christiane Fevre, this corresponded to an auto-fiction approach, more than simple autobiography.

Far from literature, Beatrice Moring (University of Helsinki, Finland and Cambridge, UK) presented her last book, published in April 2024, entitled *Women in the Factory, 1880–1930*⁴⁰. Relying on historical archives and monographs, the author studied the nature of women's factory work in Northern Europe, Britain, European countries, Russia, USA and Australia, in comparative perspective. She considered that by the late nineteenth century, the industrial sector had expanded considerably in Europe, the US and elsewhere. Around thirty percent of the industrial workers were women. In certain sectors like textiles and food product manufacture, even larger numbers of female workers were employed. A large focus was kept on the many social advancements that the first generation of female inspectors succeeded bringing to factories of the time, given their sense of responsibility and skills. These strong-minded educated women, depicted in this publication, managed to handle many everyday problems that women workers had often to face at work, according to age and marital status within the factories of the time. This included sexual harassment, lack of privacy and hygiene inside the workplace and other questions related to their pregnancies, family background and charges, particularly when they were breadwinners, without a male partner. The author relied on female inspector reports, biographies and contemporary context of the period. She also referred to corresponding political debates and various social reforms as the 8-hour day problem, safety measures, maternity payments and night work question. In this light, Beatrice Moring argued that early regulations tended to restrict the work of women as well as the work of children. Conservative men tended to see women mostly as potential mothers and they preferred to exclude them from the job market and have them staying at home. Female activities in agriculture and domestic service were not included in this study.

³⁹ See Sido, *Lettres à Colette 1903–1912 suivies de vingt-trois lettres à Juliette*, Gérard Bonal (ed), Paris, Centre d'Études Colette, Libella, 2012.

⁴⁰ Beatrice Moring, *Women in the Factory, 1880–1930. Class and Gender*, Rochester, NY, Boydell and Brewer, 2024.

II.5. Family laws and customs

Catherine Canel-Dol (EHESS, Paris), historian of adoption⁴¹, particularly in France for the period 1789 to 1923⁴², analysed the French Law of June 19, 1923, authorizing the adoption of children. The centenary of this legislation was celebrated in June 2023⁴³. Adopting minor children became possible in France with this 1923 Law, born in the context of the upheavals caused by World War I mortality impacting all French society. Many orphans needed to find a family, with board and lodging. The new Law created a legal filiation link between the adopted child and the adopting adult. The main question raised by Catherine Dol was whether this reform was a real pathbreaking measure, opening modern family models of reproduction, or was a minor change. Up to 1923, adoption was very limited in France, strictly limited within the framework of the French *Civil Code* of 1804⁴⁴. Conservative policy makers proposed new rules which were adopted within the 1923 Law. Some had unexpected consequences: the new adoptive process established multi-filiation links, which were innovative changes. With inventing „double filiation”, the new legal multi-parenthood tool took – at last – into account the „interests of the child”, which was also fully innovative. Therefore, the situation of the child was seriously considered, and, overall, the child was allowed to construct his/her own personal identity on a solid basis, over his childhood and adolescence. Another important change was the lowering of the age at which one could adopt.

Besides, the 1923 Law granted powers to the adopter, and the attribution of this paternal power presupposed the agreement of all people involved. At the same time, the new legislation maintained the inheritance provisions provided for by the 1804 *Civil Code*. Previously, during the nineteenth century, parental power had been exercised after the age of majority of the son or daughter⁴⁵. This concerned

⁴¹ Catherine Canel-Dol, *Adoption et processus de reproduction sociale*, in vol. *Familles, parents et enfants de l'Antiquité à nos jours: sensibilités, stratégies et conflits: actes du colloque des 17, 18 et 19 novembre 2016 / Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales de Tunis, Groupe de Recherche Mouquaranat*, Al Hassan Annabi, Olfa Boudaya, Sihem Kchaou (eds.), Tunis, Edition Latrach, 2018.

⁴² Catherine Canel-Dol, *Les adoptions en France de 1789 à 1923, rêvées, instituées et vécues* [Adoptions in France from 1789 till 1923: Dreamed, Instituted and Lived], Paris, *L'Atelier du Centre de recherches historiques*, Les thèses du CRH, 2021, Source accessible at: <http://journals.openedition.org/acrh/24371>; <https://doi.org/10.4000/acrh.24371>, consulted June 25th, 2024.

⁴³ An international conference took place in Angers, France, entitled „Un siècle d'adoption des enfants en France 1923–2023”, June 20–21, 2023. This event followed a special report published by Yves Denéchère, Fábio Macedo, *Étude historique sur les pratiques illicites dans l'adoption internationale en France*, Angers, Université d'Angers, 2023. Source accessible at: angers.hal.science/hal-03972497v1, consulted July 6th, 2024.

⁴⁴ *Code civil des français: éd. originale et seule officielle*, Paris, Imprimerie de la République, 1804 (An XII). <https://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:12148/cb339642859>; <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:12148/bpt6k1061517>. Texte Image#, consulted July 6th, 2024.

⁴⁵ The French *Civil Code* (1804), in its article 488, set the legal age of civil majority at 21 years old (but 25 years for boys for matrimonial majority and 21 years for girls). This provision remained in force until a revision of the *Civil Code* came with the law of June 21, 1907, which unified the various majorities at 21 years, for both sexes. In France, the age of majority was set at 18 years for both sexes, by the law of July 5, 1974, which is still in force today.

young males and females, up to the age of 30, if they wanted to marry. Before getting married, they had to ask the parent's authorization even if one could override it. In 1923, it remained mandatory to inform parents of a marriage plan. Catherine Canel-Dol finally concluded that the 1923 Law contained still some archaic elements. Whether old practices really changed (or not) must be anyway further checked through the corresponding French jurisprudence.

For his part, through the example of the Principality of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, Kamen T. Dontchev (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Ethnographic Museum, Sofia, Bulgaria) compared the role of the municipality in Switzerland with rural Bulgaria in the application of customary law. In medieval Bulgaria, customary law was used alongside written law transposed from Byzantine period, which in many cases was not applicable to Bulgarian reality. In medieval rural villages, as previously in Byzantine time, arable land was private property of individual families, while uncultivated land – pastures, forests, wastelands – was common property of the local community. The total of all types of land available to members of a rural commune was called „rural land”.

It is on the territory of „rural land” that Bulgarian customary law was implemented as a regulator of relationships between people and families in the process of land occupation and use. Moral and patrimonial relationships within the family group were also included, with contractual relationships, relationships governing the acquisition, protection and limitation of property and possession rights, as well as relationships in the event of some crime. It is this democratic character of the autonomy of the Bulgarian rural commune that significantly distinguishes it from the Swiss commune, where autonomy was only reserved for a certain social layer – called the „bourgeoisie”.

For Romania, following with her earlier work on the juridical status and living conditions of Gypsy slaves in early nineteenth century Wallachia⁴⁶, Dr Julietta Rotaru (INALCO, EPHE-PSL – ILARA, Paris⁴⁷) presented her major book, together with historian and historical demographer David Gaunt (Södertörn University, Sweden)⁴⁸, entitled *The Wallachian Gold-Washers: Unlocking the Golden Past of the Rudari Woodworkers*⁴⁹. Thanks to their joint work on 1838 census data and other historical documents, the authors were able to build a digitalised large tool, the MapRom

⁴⁶ David Gaunt, Julieta Rotaru, *The living conditions of Gypsy slaves in early nineteenth-century Wallachia*, „Romani Studies”, 5, 31(1), 2021, p. 29–55.

⁴⁷ ILARA, the Rare Languages Institute, Paris, is a training centre and centre of expertise and resources on rare languages. It is one of the four Institutes of the École Pratique des Hautes Études – PSL. The EPHE-PSL institutes act as a relay between academic research and civil society or public institutions. <https://ilara.hypotheses.org/>, consulted July 6th, 2024.

⁴⁸ David Gaunt, Centre for Baltic and East European Studies and Member of Academia Europaea. See David Gaunt, *Rural Household Organization and Inheritance in Northern Europe*, „Journal of Family History”, 12 (1–3), 1987, p. 121–141. DOI: 10.1177/036319908701200107, consulted July 6th, 2024.

⁴⁹ Julieta Rotaru, David Gaunt, *The Wallachian Gold-Washers: Unlocking the Golden Past of the Rudari Woodworkers*, Paderborn, Leiden, Boston, Brill Schöningh, 2023, eBook full Open Access, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30965/9783657790388>, consulted June 6th, 2024.

database (as part of a project financed by Södertörn University and the Baltic Sea Foundation in Stockholm)⁵⁰. Sources include data on 800 „Rudari” households (a total of 3,096 people), cross-referenced with information from a late nineteenth century geographic dictionary. It was possible to locate about seventy localities where this population was principally attached in those days⁵¹.

The authors do not share the idea that Rudari originated from Transylvania. They suggest that Rudari had a Wallachian origin. Anyway, as other „țigani”, the Rudari were mobile people and many of them escaped their slavery condition, before settling around mid- nineteenth century. They considered that they were „free people” and expressed their specific identity along the centuries (documented at least for 1388–1838), with specialised jobs (as woodworkers, gold-washers) and own family forms and marriage formation– previously discussed in the frame of earlier join seminars⁵². This exciting book confirming the centuries-old identity and professional reconversion of the Rudari people, gold miners of Wallachia, would deserve some more comments and comparative discussion.

Diana Léia Alencar da Silva (Catholic University of Salvador de Bahia – UCSal – Brazil), together with Professor Dr. Elaine Pedreira Rabinovich, presented her research results on *ancestrality* within the intergenerational heritage of the women of Velho Chico. These women belonged to a community of rural environment. The methodology put into practice is a collaborative autoethnography⁵³. A field study was carried out on a large extended family, with twelve women who appeared as memory keepers. Interviews, direct observations and diaries were used, and many objects and artefacts considered. The aim was to understand the factors which conditioned and allowed the relative (im)mobility, between generations, concerning responsibility and perception of the place of women in the management of the family group. Their gendered agency contributed to their multiple actions which lead them to avoid violence, mostly keeping silence and subalternity.

II.6. Family health, care and sanitary policies

Luminița Dumănescu (Center for Population Studies, Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania) unravelled her exciting research, together with Nicoleta

⁵⁰ Julieta Rotaru, David Gaunt, *Project: MapRom Mapping the Roma communities in 19th c. Wallachia (2018–2021)*. Source accessible at: www.maprom.se, consulted June 6th, 2024.

⁵¹ Leonardo Piasere, *Samuel Augustini ab Hortis e la nascita della ziganologia nel Settecento, Bérose – Encyclopédie internationale des histoires de l'anthropologie*, 2023. URL Bérose, article2881.html

⁵² Dr Julieta Rotaru participated to previous seminar sessions. See Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, *Towards a family history without frontiers*, „Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «George Barițiu», Series Historica” [Yearbook of the „George Barițiu” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy], Cluj-Napoca, LXIII, 2024, p. 363.

⁵³ *Raízes da família extensa no Brasil: (re)conexões colaborativas*, Elaine Pedreira Rabinovich, Ana Cecília de Sousa Bastos, Lorena Márcia Nascimento Cardoso (eds.), Curitiba, Editora CRV, 2020. Heewon Chang, *Autoethnography as method*, Walnut Creek, CA, Left Coast Press, 2008.

Hegedűs (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romanian Academy). Up to now the process of medicalization of Transylvania had not been largely considered. The presented project developed thanks to a rising interest in the topic and a new research tool available, the *Transylvania Health Database* (THD)⁵⁴. This includes administrative and sanitary directories, various sources referring to the allocation of medical doctors' positions in the communities and the corresponding medical reports, press, publications, statistics, parish registers and other related accessible sources. The authors consider that even though Transylvania was a peripheral part of the Habsburg Monarchy, it experienced a process of medicalization similar to other regions and even they argue that local hospitals such the „Carolina” Hospital in Cluj created the basis of the modern public health system regulated by imperial legislation, as it was placed under the auspices of authorities.

A remarkable document was under study, the „Patient Discharge Register” of the Carolina Hospital in Cluj for 1876–1877. It allows approaching in details patient diseases and typology of hospitalisation in Transylvania in the nineteenth century. Concerning year 1877, we learned that male patients outnumbered female ones, and that they were mostly young and active people. There were more single individuals than married ones. More than half of them were poor. Therefore, expenses for medical care were covered by the counties. Many patients came from distant places in Transylvania, with various diseases such as syphilis, malaria, and other contagious illnesses. It was possible to study how long they stayed in this hospital and whether they could be healed or not, in case they were incurable. The case study concerned 1823 patients. Overall, 99 patients died in hospital during that year 1877.

Crinela Holom (Center for Population Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania), investigated the harsh reality of mortality from infectious diseases within Transylvania, in the period 1850–1914. For this study, she used the *Historical Population Database of Transylvania* (HPDT)⁵⁵ considering mortality in three different settlements during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century⁵⁶. As a main research tool, the author handled the *International Classification of Diseases*⁵⁷.

For her part, Alexandra Esteves (University of Minho & Landscape, Heritage and Territory Laboratory-2PT, Braga) presented her work on zoonoses, and the various illnesses transmitted to humans by animals. These specific diseases became a

⁵⁴ See Luminița Dumănescu, Nicoleta Hegedűs, Angela Lumezeanu, *Transylvania Health Database: A Historical Database of Medicalization Spreading in Transylvania Before 1918*, „Studia Historiae Oeconomicae”, 40(1), 2022, p. 41–58. <https://doi.org/10.14746/sho.2022.40.1.003>, consulted June 6th, 2024.

⁵⁵ The *Historical Population Database of Transylvania* (HPDT) is said to be a method-oriented database, built in MySQL. Consulted June 6th, 2024. See <https://ehps-net.eu/databases/historical-population-database-transylvania-1850-1914>

⁵⁶ Ocna Mureş, Ocna Dej and Nima.

⁵⁷ *The online International Classification of Diseases*, version ICD-10 (2016, updated in 2019). <https://icd.who.int/browse10/2019/en>, consulted March 14th, 2024.

major cause for concern in the nineteenth century societies of Europe and at the beginning of the twentieth century. It corresponded to a growing interest in animal welfare. With the trade of birds as parrots, the parrot fever became a danger (*psittacosis*). The author followed the rise of popular concern towards these questions, together through periodicals, the medical press, new legislation and the male and female action of the „Portuguese Society for Protecting Animals” through their journal, „O Zoophilo”⁵⁸.

Helena da Silva (Nova de Lisboa University, Lisbon, Portugal) presented the *Portuguese Institute of Oncology* (IPO) in Lisbon. This was the topic of her last book, dedicated to a large readership⁵⁹, as this major institution was created a hundred years ago, in 1924. The author looks at the essentials of its history, from the antecedents of its creation to today. She analysed the way in which this institution developed, grew and evolved, with its integration into the *Portuguese National Health Service* and the important transition from the *Ministry of Education* to the *Ministry of Health*. For decades, in Portugal, this Institute kept the monopoly of oncology, centralizing care, teaching and cancer research, in part due to a privileged relationship between medical power and political power.

II.7. Sex ratio, crises and stress

Grażyna Liczbińska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland), Marek Brabec (The Czech Academy of Sciences and National Institute of Public Health, Prague, Czech Republic) and Piotr Rachwał (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland) argued that single mothers gave birth to more daughters than sons, in a research based on evidence from the nineteenth century city of Poznań. Considering that married people had more economic resources, with a better standard of living including access to good food, they were expected to present lower death rates than single people. Single pregnant women were also at risk to deliver low birth weight illegitimate babies. At the same time, this research on Poznań clearly demonstrated that single mothers had a higher probability to give birth to a girl than married mothers. Actually, single mothers faced a much higher level of stress than married ones, given their poverty, harder living conditions and the local stigmatization of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Szymon Antosik (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), relying on the *Poznań Historical Population Database*⁶⁰, presented his current research on the city of Poznań, for the period 1848–1900, showing the impact of extreme high and low temperatures on sex ratio at birth. While, under natural conditions, it is

⁵⁸ See *O Zoophilo*; a newspaper *Orgão das Sociedades Protectoras dos Animais de Lisboa e Porto*.

⁵⁹ Helena da Silva, *O essencial sobre o ipo Lisboa*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 2024.

⁶⁰ Here 66.000 births were included from *The Poznań Historical Population Database*. See <https://poznandatabase.pl/index.php/459-2/>, consulted July 6th, 2024.

expected that the male-to-female ratio is about 105–107 boys per 100 girls⁶¹, recent demographers have evidenced negative impact of heat waves on reproduction and mortality⁶². It seems that long-term extremely high temperatures lead to a greater risk of miscarriages concerning male fetuses. It is possible to argue that sex ratio fluctuates due to environmental stresses such as natural disasters, economic stress, wars, famines, sanitary crises etc., so that the number of male births, is declining compared to female births. Historical sets of information on live births by sex were included⁶³, with data on temperatures and precipitation for Poznań for the years 1850–1900, available from an official local monograph published in 1925⁶⁴. Szymon Antosik found a clear correlation between temperatures in months of fetal development and the proportion of boys to girls in ratio at birth. This must be considered as a major scientific result, in a global historical perspective.

Conclusion. A growing comparative interdisciplinary seminar forum

The present article summaries discussions and main innovative points resulting from new series of international research seminars dedicated to History of the Family in Global Perspective (HISFAM GLOBAL), based in Cluj-Napoca, „George Barițiu” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy. During 2023–2024, main topics have been tackled along thematic sessions, ranging from migration, marriage and family formation, family models of intergenerational transmission, family labour and female agency, impact of laws and customs, questions of health care, sex ratios, crises and environmental stress, tracing continuities and changes in family models over space and time.

We are fully satisfied with the first quality scientific results of our new seminar series, along Academic Year 2023–2024. We decided to go further and deeper in exploring other relevant domains as the relationship between family and religion, among many other questions of interest, to be considered in interdisciplinary comparative perspective, in the fame of HISFAM GLOBAL academic encounters dedicated to History of the Family.

⁶¹ Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Walter Fred Bodmer, *Genetics of Human Populations*, London, W.H. Freeman & Co Ltd, 1971.

⁶² Rupa Basu, Varada Sarovar, Brian J. Malig, *Association between high ambient temperature and risk of stillbirth in California*, „American Journal of Epidemiology”, No. 18, 2016, p. 894–901.

⁶³ Szymon Antosik (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), with Grażyna Liczbińska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland), Arkadiusz M. Tomczyk (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland), Marek Brabec (The Czech Academy of Sciences and National Institute of Public Health, Prague, Czech Republic).

⁶⁴ Monograph by Władysław Smosarski, *Temperature and precipitation in Greater Poland*, Poznań, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, 1925.