

Filial bonds. Illegitimates and other people's sons and daughters in the early modern period, special issue of *Proposte e Ricerche*, edited by Maria Ciotti and Marina Garbellotti

In recent decades, family history studies have gained considerable momentum as a result of input from women's and, most importantly, gender history. On the one hand, this research has shed light on the patriarchal family model and its consequences in terms of relations between members based on the hierarchy of the sexes, the importance of blood ties and the position occupied in the family by its members; on the other, the contribution of figures considered marginal in family strategies, such as wives and other relatives – brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts, illegitimate children – has also been highlighted.

Less attention has been paid to the ties between parents and their children, whether natural or born of adulterous relations, as well as between the latter and the other members of the household. Irrespective of their being legitimised, some bastard sons and daughters held prestigious posts in high-ranking families and offered considerable support to the family in terms of social affirmation or actual help. If the family lacked legitimate offspring, these sons and daughters were legally recognised and took on the same positions and responsibilities as legitimate descendants. In lower-middle class families, illegitimate sons and daughters generally played a significant role in supporting the family's economic activity and making up, once again, for the lack of legitimate offspring.

Family history studies have shown that family life also involved relations of mutual aid, economic interests, and the taking in of strangers. This wide-ranging view led to a broadening of the concept of family, no longer considering it as necessarily consisting only of persons united by a biological bond, and increasingly seeing it as a dynamic core that can change in relation to social and economic conditions. While many families abandoned sons and daughters, just as many men and women, whether married, living under the same roof or still single, took in minors and adults from other families to ensure support in work activities, domestic support, and in some cases descendants.

The latter research areas have been explored to a lesser extent, which is why this special issue is devoted to contributions that specifically address the interactions and actions of the various family members with natural, bastard and legitimised sons and daughters, or with persons outside the family unit who became an integral part of it for reasons of expediency and/or affection. The families referred to may be of humble origins, engaged in trade or of high lineage. They may belong to different social and economic backgrounds, and may reside in urban, suburban or rural areas. The geographical context is intended to be as broad as possible, so case studies that go beyond the borders of the Italian peninsula will also be appreciated. Therefore, scholars are invited to send contributions addressing the following themes:

- What role did bastard or natural sons and daughters play in the family context, and what was the nature of the relations they had with their parents, their relatives and other families? What was their attitude towards them? Was it one of full acceptance or marginalisation?
- What were the reasons that prompted men and women to welcome sons and daughters of relatives into their household, and what ties were established? Were they granted rights, e.g. inheritance rights? Were girls given dowries? Did these minors acquire the surname of the new family? Were they an integral part of it?
- What motivated men and women to welcome sons and daughters from other families into the household? The questions to be explored here too are: What ties were established? Were they granted rights, e.g. inheritance rights? Were girls given dowries? Did the children taken in acquire the surname of the new family? Were they an integral part of it?

- How did relatives and neighbours view the taking in of non-biological sons and daughters into a family?
- What did the married couples or single men and women who took in boys and girls – sometimes of adult age – to ensure support in work activities or in old age, offer in return? Were their relationships based only on expediency or also on affection?
- Did the taking in of illegitimate, natural or other children change according to the social and economic context?

Proposals for unpublished articles in Italian, English or French, should include an abstract of no more than 2,000 characters and a brief scientific profile of the author. Proposals should be sent to the e-mail addresses of the editors – Maria Ciotti (maria.ciotti@unimc.it) and Marina Garbellotti (marina.garbellotti@univr.it) – and the editorial staff (l.andreoni@univpm.it), including in the subject line of the email “CFP Proposte e ricerche Family”. The deadline for the submission of abstracts is 30 November 2024. Authors will be notified by 15 December 2024. Articles selected for publication must not exceed 50,000 characters, including spaces and footnotes, and must be submitted in their final version by 30 April 2025. Articles, written in Italian, French or English, will undergo an anonymous double blind peer review. The publication of the special issue in the journal *Proposte e ricerche. An Italian Journal of Social and Economic History* is planned for 2025.