

# ECONOMIC HISTORY *of* DEVELOPING REGIONS

## CALL FOR PAPERS: FAMILY SYSTEMS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The family is a universal institution, and fundamentally responsible for limiting or increasing an individual's freedom of choice and life opportunities. It is the most important locus of child socialization and essential for transmitting values from one generation to the next. Yet families' ways of organizing themselves differ significantly across the globe, especially as regards the position of women. Although a number of historical institutions (such as colonial governments, or religion) have been the subject of extensive research, the family as a historical micro-institution has received little attention. This is unwarranted neglect – an increasing body of evidence points to the family as a crucial determinant of both socio-economic and political development. Greif and Tabellini (2010) and Greif (2006), for instance, argue that while the nuclear family in Western Europe has produced strong society-wide institutions, such as guilds and universities, the communitarian family, dominant in China, has produced institutions based on kinship relations, and that this difference is to a large extent responsible for the economic divergence between these two regions. Duranton et al. (2009) provide evidence of the role that regional variation in family structures in Europe plays in determining various development outcomes (such as GDP per capita, educational achievement and fertility). Alesina and Giuliano (2010) show that family ties are a strong predictor of female labor force participation, and Galasso and Profeta (2010) point out parallels between family obligations, captured by family systems, and pension systems. The norms, beliefs and values transmitted by the family are crucial for economic, political and social outcomes, such as the position of women or notions of equality.

More research is required to understand the mechanisms by which the family persistently influences development, particularly when it comes to gender roles. This special issue, scheduled for December 2015, invites papers that seek to explain development outcomes on the basis of family-level values and institutions. Papers using new data and methods of capturing these institutions are welcome. Full papers must be submitted online at [mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ehdr](http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ehdr) by 1 February 2015.

