



## **Editorial:** ***The Family in Antiquity and the Modern Times***

The reflection undertaken in this issue is the family as the oldest and fundamental social group present at all stages of the development of society. Many researchers of family issues emphasise that the family is an inherent and irreplaceable element of the social structure, because it is a natural and indispensable environment of human birth and development; an environment in which different generations – both children and adults – coexist and interact with one another. These mutual interactions carry with themselves both social and upbringing significance.

Perceived as a basic and natural environment of human life, functioning, development and upbringing, constituting a fundamental element of the social structure, the family itself is subject to various transformations, regarding, among others, the family structure, fertility and births patterns, the age of entering into marriage, in and out of home (including professional) activity of family members, as well as the way of shaping the relations between particular family members. These transformations to a large extent depend on the era in which the family functions, on ideological perspectives dominating in a given period, on social and economic changes taking place in this period, as well as on liberalization of social views. The development of the family model is closely intertwined with political history. According to Jean-Luis Flandrin<sup>1</sup> (1998), a researcher of the history of the family, the history of the family complements political history. In order to understand the causes of numerous conflicts and wars, the interests of families and entire families must also be analysed, as, in many cases, the interests of the state have, in fact, proved to be the interests of particular families.

Placing the family in a broad social context reveals that other social institutions, such as the Church, school or army, also play an important role in the changes that have taken place and are still taking place within this social group. Transformations in the area of financial foundations of the family life are equally meaningful. Taking a historical perspective in analysing the transformations of the family model and its functions, we seek answers to the following question: How did old families differ from contemporary families? What was the relationship between the spouses? What attitude did parents have

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<sup>1</sup> Flandrin, J.L. (1998). *Historia rodziny*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, Liga Republikańska.

*Horyzonty Wychowania*

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towards their children? What was the responsibility of the family for the upbringing of the young generation?

The texts published in this issue do not attempt to create a synthesis of the process of the development of the family over the centuries, but are a contribution to reconstructing the road the European families covered in the period from the antiquities to the 18th century, revealing at the same time various dimensions of the family life.

We hope this volume will be a source of your intellectual satisfaction, meaningful reflection and will lead to numerous scientific benefits, especially in terms of inspiration to continue, deepen or undertake your own research in the area.

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