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The transfer of values in the families of genealogists

Transmisja wartości w rodzinach genealogów

Abstract

Aim: Genealogy has particular importance for Polish people, which is the result of Polish history and the fact that the country has changed its borders a number of times; it has been invaded and occupied, and Poles were subject to forced resettlement, exile, repatriation, and emigration. Numerous Polish families have their roots in many countries, and the information regarding their heritage is held in the archives of a number of countries. Genealogical investigations have become a common passion for entire families, which, at the same time, makes it possible to observe a clear and specific transmission of values in the families of genealogists.

Methods: In the conducted research the following questions were formulated: What values are perceived as particularly important in the families of genealogists? How are they preserved? In the qualitative research the form of a short essay was employed. The essays were written by members of the families of genealogists.

Results: In the families of genealogists such values as a sense of belonging and identity, taking care of the image of the family, as well as a sense of "being needed" among the older generations, a sense of security among the adults, and common family adventure among children are clearly outlined.

Conclusion: The values conveyed in family stories are a bond that connects representatives of different generations. Common goals in the care of the image of the fam-

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ily, nurturing a sense of belonging and identity guide both the older and younger generations. The implementation of these goals also leads to mutual learning and strengthening the sense of individual value of family members.

Keywords: migration of Poles, genealogy, intergenerational transfer of values.

Streszczenie

Cel: Genealogia wśród Polaków ma szczególne znaczenie, co wynika z historii tego kraju, który wielokrotnie zmieniał swoje granice, doświadczał najazdów i rozbiorów, przesiedleń, zesłań, repatriacji i emigracji. Wiele polskich rodzin ma korzenie sięgające kilku krajów, a informacji o swoim pochodzeniu poszukuje w archiwach różnych państw. Owe genealogiczne dociekania stają się wspólną pasją całych rodzin, co jednocześnie pozwala zaobserwować wyraźną i specyficzną transmisję wartości w rodzinach genealogów.

Metody: W prowadzonych badaniach postawiono pytania: Jakie wartości uważane są za szczególnie ważne w rodzinach genealogów? W jaki sposób są one przenoszone pomiędzy pokoleniami? W jaki sposób są pielęgnowane? W badaniach – mających charakter jakościowy – wykorzystano formę krótkiego eseju, przygotowanego przez członków rodzin genealogów.

Wyniki: W rodzinach genealogów silnie zarysowane są takie wartości: poczucie przynależności i tożsamości, dbałość o wizerunek rodziny, a także właściwe dla określonej generacji: poczucie „bycia potrzebnym" wśród pokoleń starszych, poczucie bezpieczeństwa wśród dojrzałych dorosłych i wspólną rodzinną przygodą dla najmłodszych.

Wnioski: Przekazywane w rodzinnych opowieściach wartości stanowią spoiwo łączące przedstawicieli różnych pokoleń. Wspólne cele w postaci dbałości o wizerunek rodziny, pielęgnowanie poczucie przynależności i tożsamości przyświecają zarówno pokoleniom osób starszych, jak i młodszych. Realizacja tych celów prowadzi również do wzajemnego uczenia się od siebie i wzmacniania poczucia indywidualnej wartości członków rodziny.

Słowa kluczowe: migracje Polaków, genealogia, międzygeneracyjne transmisja wartości.

> Don't tell me it's going to be all right, it doesn't help. Tell me that my life had a meaning.
>
> Diana Klimek, 23.07.2013

Introduction: the migrations of Poles

Since medieval times the rulers of Poland introduced policies aimed to attract people to settle down in their lands in order to farm and increase tax revenue. Numerous villages and towns were established on the basis of the Magdeburg Law. In the regions of Lower Silesia and Pomerania German settlements

led to the Germanization of the lands. Farther to the east the German-speaking rural and urban inhabitants would assimilate to a significant extent. Knights and soldiers from the neighbouring countries and Western Europe entered the service of the Polish rulers. With the end of the Middle Ages Poland became a country of Jewish settlements.

The situation changed with the turn of the 18th century when Poland was partitioned by its neighbouring states (1772, 1793, and 1795). The inhabitants of Poland began to migrate because of political and economic reasons. In the 19th century, after the national uprisings in the Russian partition, some of the insurgents emigrated (e.g., after the November Uprising over 10,000 former insurgents emigrated to Western Europe, mainly to France)[1], a number of the insurgents were deported to Russia (after the November Uprising over 20,000 Polish officers and soldiers were drafted into the army of the Russian Empire fighting in the Caucasus)[2]. By the end of the 19th century (after the abolishment of serfdom) the migration of the rural population increased. The migration was temporary or permanent. The destinations of the migration included Germany (to the farming and industry of the Ruhr), France, the USA, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina. It is estimated that by 1914 3.5 million of Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, and Lithuanians emigrated from the lands of the former Republic of Poland[3]. Economic emigration also took place in the interwar period – about 1.2 million people left Poland then[4].

Politics, particularly those of World War II, were paramount in generating migration in the 20th century. In 1939 masses of the Polish and the Jewish population were deported out of the lands which were incorporated into the Third Reich (nearly 1 million people). Later nearly 3 million people were deported out of occupied Poland to work in Germany. Deportations also took place in the areas occupied by the USSR. Ca. 1.2 million people (with ethnic Poles constituting about a half of this group) were deported into the USSR from the lands of the former Second Republic of Poland[5].

In 1944 Poles and Jews were repatriated to the lands of the new Poland, with its borders moved to the west. In the post-war period, among the 2.5 million people removed during the war, around 600,000 returned from the Soviet occupation zone of Germany, around 600,000 found themselves in the Regained Territories, and in the years 1945–1947, about 800,000 repatriates from the West

[1] W. Łazuga, *Historia Powszechna wiek XIX*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 2001, p. 45.

[2] W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914–2001*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2002, p. 32.

[3] K. Głowiak, *Zjawisko migracji – rys historyczny*, „Historia i polityka" 2012, no 8(15), pp. 91–112.

[4] A. Janowska, *Emigracja zarobkowa z Polski 1918–1939*, Państwowe Wydawnictwa Naukowe, Warszawa 1981, p. 15.

[5] C. Łuczak, *Polityka ludnościowa i ekonomiczna hitlerowskich Niemiec w okupowanej Polsce*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 1979, p. 18.

decided to return to the country[6]. At the same time about 0.5 million Ukrainians, Belarussians, and Lithuanians were deported to the USSR. Over 3 million Germans were deported from those areas of the Third Reich which Poland received in 1945. After 1956 ca. 1 million people left Poland for Germany (among other things, as part of the *action of connecting families*), and about 200,000 returned from USSR[7].

Numerous Poles who had fought against Germany alongside the British army never returned to the communist Poland. They remained in the UK or emigrated to Canada, South Africa, Australia, and other countries. After World War II the great majority of Jewish Holocaust survivors as well left Poland for Israel, the USA, and Western Europe – mostly in the years following the war and in the years 1968–69. After 1959, when the borders of Poland became more open, the wave of political and economic emigration of Poles grew. This was caused by political repressions as well as the search for better living conditions. From 1956 to 1980 over 800,000 people left Poland permanently, and only about 300.000 settled in the country (mainly the aforementioned returnees from the USSR who arrived between 1956 and 1958). Emigration surged after 1981 as a result of repressions connected with the introduction of martial law in Poland and the deteriorating economy. Ca. 1.3 million Poles left, mainly for Germany (the then Federal Republic of Germany) and the USA[8].

Since the accession of Poland into the European Union in 2004 numbers of people have temporarily emigrated to Western European countries in order to study and work. It is estimated that by the end of 2007 2.3 million Poles worked outside the borders of Poland[9]. Among the immigrants and residents with non-Polish citizenship the most numerous in 2016 were: Ukrainians (83,490 people, 37% of the immigrant population of Poland), Russians (10,034 people, 4% of the immigrant population of Poland), Belarusians (10,577 people, 5% of the immigrant population of Poland)[10]. There is also a significant minority of Germans (nearly 150,000 in 2011)[11].

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[6] K. Głowiak, *Zjawisko migracji – rys historyczny...*, op. cit., pp. 91–112, 107.

[7] S. Jankowiak, *Łączenie rodzin między Polską a Niemcami w latach pięćdziesiątych*, „Prawo i Historia", source: http://www.polska1918-89.pl/pdf/laczenie-rodzin-miedzy-polska-a-niemcami-w-latach-piecdziesiatych,6035.pdf [access: 29.05.2018].

[8] GUS, Główne kierunki emigracji i imigracji w latach 1966–2014, source: https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosci/glowne-kierunki-emigracji-i-imigracji-w-latach-1966-2014-migracje-na-pobyt-staly,4,1.html [access: 29.05.2018].

[9] J. Ziobrowska, U. Kalina-Prasznic, *Uwarunkowania i przebieg emigracji Polaków przed i po wstąpieniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej*, „Studenckie Prace Prawnicze, Administratywistyczne i Ekonomiczne" 2015, no 18.

[10] M. Szczepanik, *Cudzoziemcy w Polsce – zjawiska i charakterystyka kulturowa wybranych grup*, [in:] E. Ostaszewska-Żuk (ed.), *Cudzoziemcy w Polsce: Podręcznik dla funkcjonariuszy publicznych*, Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka, Warszawa 2016, p. 16.

[11] GUS, National Census of Population and Apartments 2011, source: https://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/lud_raport_z_wynikow_NSP2011.pdf, p. 106 [access: 29.05.2018].

Poles and persons of Polish descent (those who admit to it) who reside abroad are called the "Polonia". The Polonia is estimated to include up to 20 million people. The highest numbers of Poles and persons of Polish descent live in the USA (over 9 million), Germany (ca. 2 million), Brazil (1.8 million), and France (ca. 1 million). The Polonia of Canada, the UK, Argentina, Belarus, Lithuania, and Australia is also numerous[12].

Internal migrations are as important in genealogy as external migrations. A number of internal migrations took place in the years after the war and they mainly consisted in people moving from rural areas to cities. Returnees from the USSR and the inhabitants of central Poland settled in the formerly German regions incorporated into Poland in 1945. Contemporarily one can observe economic migration to the largest economic centres of Poland located in the cities of Warsaw, Kraków, and Wrocław.

The aforementioned data ought to allow one to understand one crucial question: there are millions of Polish families whose members are separated. That is why genealogy – a search for ancestors, a precise recreation of human fate, investigation, organization, recording – is immensely popular in Poland.

Genealogy in Poland

In the history of genealogy in Poland three stages can be clearly outlined. In the times of the First Republic of Poland it was a practical genealogy, focused on finding proof of the nobility of families which had bearing on their social and legal status, wealth, and the positions they occupied. It was only with the March Constitution of 1921 that genealogical appanages were deemed void and the division into social classes was abolished, thus all Poles were made equal.

The second stage of the development of was initiated after World War II. The hobbyists call this stage the shameful genealogy because, in the communist system, descent from nobility was unwelcome if not dangerous. The authorities of the People's Republic of Poland persecuted the attempts to discover genealogical identity, assuming that it was only those with noble origins who sought out their ancestors, which was frowned upon by the officials, as the government cherished the families of workers and farmers.

Following the political transformation of the 1980s, after the borders were opened, and when it was declared that numerous secret documents were to be made public, the third stage of the development of genealogy began. It was the amateur genealogy of hobbyists. Since this time all Poles have had the right to inquire about their ancestry and family history. Although genealogists originally

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[12] GUS, Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach emigracji z Polski w latach 2004–2016, source: https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosci/informacja-o-rozmiarach-i-kierunkach-emigracji-z-polski-w-latach-20042016,2,10.html [access: 29.05.2018].

focused on their own lineage, they soon formed associations and cooperate in a number of projects aimed to facilitate the access to all types of data, starting with the noting down of information contained in parish metrics to the digitalization of official documents. The hobbyists who began with oral accounts of family members and simple genealogical trees, in time, developed great, scientifically documented works documenting histories of families, communities, and regions, which led to the formation of professional and social genealogy.

First, the Genealogical and Heraldic Association was established in Poznań in 1987. Then, the Silesian Genealogical Association was created in 1992. The members of the latter focus on the genealogy of the families of townsmen, peasants, farmers, and workers, and they participated in the research project pertaining to the transfer of values in the families of genealogists presented here, as well as other didactic and scientific endeavours resulting from the cooperation with researchers of the University of Wrocław and the representatives of the local administration and regional institutions.

Currently the Polish Genealogical Association is active in Poland. It encompasses the entire country and coordinates the works of Polish genealogists. What is more, there are 21 active regional genealogical associations, and there are a number of other organizations, associations, and clubs who have included genealogical investigations in their statutory aims.

Research assumptions

The aforementioned data leads to certain conclusions. First of all, the search for one's ancestors and attempts to complete family histories are immensely popular in Poland. Second of all, the work of genealogists is also institutionalized, establishing a network of mutual support in seeking out one's relatives. Projects reaching far beyond the borders of Poland, reaching Siberia or South America, are not at all uncommon.

In their investigations into histories of families genealogists rely on diverse sources. One can list official and private documents, visuals (photographs), audio-visual recordings (filmed family events), which K. Konecki has called "prosthetics of memory"[13]. In the words of Susan Sontag: "the power of photography lies in the fact that it opens for analysis the moments that time immediately replaces with subsequent ones"[14]. The analysis of the photographs presenting fragments of the past, frozen in time, is of crucial importance to genea-

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[13] K. Konecki, *Wizualne wyobrażenia. Główne strategie badawcze w socjologii wizualnej a metodologia teorii ugruntowanej*. [Visual representations. The main research strategies in visual sociology and the methodology of grounded theory], "Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej" 2005, no 1(1), pp. 42–59, 44.

[14] S. Sontag, *On photography*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, Nowy Jork 1978, p. 111.

logical investigations and they are an impulse to search for further sources – interviews with family members. This domestic interview comprises of information passed down orally, family stories, and conversations, which typically take place at Christmas, Easter, or All Saints' Day. They become the pretext to discover and discuss the aforementioned private documents, which results in the broadening of knowledge about the history of families. Grzegorz Mendyka states that "undertaking genealogical investigations frequently leads to the idea to organize family get-togethers and events, where the young can learn from the seniors that, to their astonishment, computers may not only be used to play games, but also to stay in touch with the kin"[15]. All official and private documents, regardless of their location in reality or cyberspace, carry certain contents. Genealogists aim to decode them independently, but it is more frequent that the documents become subjects of conversations and lead to the initiation of contacts with persons whose lives are connected with the history of the families. That is why it needs to be emphasized that genealogical investigations serve a communicative and integrative role.

In the conducted scientific explorations focus was placed on the family members of genealogists, who, through the hobby of one person or more, are often asked to strain their memories and bring out recollections, and who are at the same time presented with family stories which are documented in chronicles, albums, or films of events or periods in the lives of the families. Members of the families of genealogists are systematically motivated to take part in family get-togethers, which often take more than one day. The following questions were, therefore, formulated: what significance does the genealogical work of a family member have for the members of their immediate and extended family? What are the values transferred through genealogy? Genealogists themselves were engaged in the conducted research. The genealogists carried out interviews, asked family members to write short essays on a given subject and sent out email queries. Employing various channels of communication they undertook an attempt to motivate the representatives of many generations to speak. It ought to be emphasized that research material is still being collected and the contents addressed in the course of the research have not been exhausted. However, even at the present stage of the research clearly outlined axiological categories can be defined.

Therefore, the work of genealogists cannot be ignored in research in social sciences. Until now a number of projects have been carried out which allow one to look at genealogy from various perspectives: a pedagogical perspective (a didactic dimension, an andragogical dimension – the prevention of digital exclusion of seniors by training them to use computer software to construct

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[15] G. Mendyka, *Genealogy as a seniors' hobby*, [in:] E. Jurczyk-Romanowska (ed.), *The Third shift: Andragogical Reflections on the @ktywny Senior Project*, Publishing House of the Institute for Sustainable Technologies, Wrocław 2012, p. 58.

family trees), or a sociological one, particularly in the area of visual sociology – photographs and films which inevitably accompany the work of genealogists have undergone analyses.

One should also discuss the axiological perspective consisting in searching for the answers to the question of the values that are connected with the activities of genealogists. Individuals' systems of values allow them to describe and evaluate the world around them, which is expressed in that certain phenomena, facts, and objects are perceived by the individuals as particularly important. Values have a bearing on the direction and the way of one's behaviour in diverse situations; they are, therefore, regulators of conscious and deliberate actions. However, a mere recognition of values as being important has no direct regulatory influence on human behaviour until it reaches a sufficiently high status in the hierarchy of these values and until it is properly cognitively processed. Cognitive processing consists in attributing values to subjective content on the basis of the experience which an individual has acquired. The content attributed to the values is the result of educational influence[16]. Originally, a child embraces values and the content connected therewith in the form in which they are received from meaningful persons. Such a primal, external system of values is gradually internalized through educational influence of parents, and as a result it is considered one's own and implemented.

Values and their transfer

In the conducted research values common to all generations as well as values specific to the particular generations became clearly defined. I shall start with a discussion of the first group.

Among the common values the one which was the most significant and typical of all the research participants was the sense of identity. Persons' identities can be described from many diverse perspectives; however, the proper one is the context of two relations, described in psychological theories. Apart from *distinctiveness* (i.e. being distinct from others) an important aspect of identity is *sameness* – i.e. remaining the same[17]. The sense of one's "self", placement in time through autobiographical recollections, etc., is, therefore, one's original relationship with society, which presents otherness, and the second signifies continuation[18].

The research subjects unequivocally stated that thanks to the actions of their relatives resulting in their awareness of their ancestry they feel intensely their

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[16] H. Elżanowska, *Międzypokoleniowa transmisja wartości w rodzinie*, „Studia z Psychologii w KUL" 2012, no 18, pp. 97–113, 99.

[17] J. Nikitorowicz, *Pogranicze, tożsamość, edukacja miedzykulturowa*, Trans Humana, Białystok 2001, p. 74.

[18] L. Jakubowska, *Tożsamość kulturowa Polaków z Kazachstanu w kontekście tendencji globalizacyjnych*, Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa im. Witelona w Legnicy, Legnica 2011, p. 13.

belonging to their families, know their place in the family, and they know of the relations among their members. For the research subjects genealogy is "the awareness of your roots, the belonging to a particular social group" (IV, 40[19]). Simultaneously, what was clearly outlined in the replies was the belonging to a family in contrast with "aliens", "outside the family". This needs not generate negative attitudes; it is merely a statement of the lack of a relationship. In the course of the research the contents of a welcome at a family get-together was quoted. In this family a division into colours was introduced to signify a person's belonging to a particular generation. Red (symbol of blood), yellow (symbolizing cheerfulness), and blue (the eye colour dominant in the family) were the colours of the family crest:

> "Here we meet again, so you are welcome with great enthusiasm:
> The Older – the red as the heart of the family, they have started the family events.
> We welcome the yellow – the medium ones, let the family colour mean something to them.
> We welcome the blue – the young generation, who are hoping for future events.
> We welcome the white – the guests at the event, let them feel like they are members of the family" (III, 48).

In the quoted welcome one can clearly see the significance of we vs. aliens, expressed verbally as well as in colours. Genealogy, therefore, "gives me the feeling that I'm a part of this family" (III, 59), it is connected with "information about my family, my roots, my belonging. [They are] family roots and bonds of kin thanks to which I can find my place within the entire family" (IV, 31).

In the concepts of collective identity[20], which is now understood rather metaphorically, self-definitions of collectives, families, in this case, are discussed. What is key in the construction of these collective identities is the knowledge possessed by the subjects creating the collective. Knowledge as a factor was an important category in the replies of the research subjects. Genealogy is "a source of knowledge [...] I'm learning about my family" (V, 12). Through knowledge about the family its members self-define themselves: "Sometimes knowledge about the family, the personalities of my ancestors, can be an explanation (a justification?) of my own character, my own personality. Genealogy teaches you to be humble and to accept things. You cannot change your ancestry; you cannot change the mistakes of previous generations. We are the sum of our ancestors" (III, 40). "Thanks to genealogy we can learn who we are and where we come from. After World War II millions of people were forced

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[19] Roman numerals are used to signify the genealogical generation, Arabic numerals denote the age of the research subject.

[20] Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamości zbiorowe*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2005, p. 57.

to leave their family places which made family history "less available" for further generations" (IV, 25). Simultaneously with knowledge and belonging intergenerational integration is a crucial value, "the knowledge passed on from generation to generation, fostering values and family relationships. Genealogy strengthens and creates mutual relations among family members, it makes it possible to get to know the family members and to better place them in the history of all the family" (IV, 31).

Along with self-definition through the collective, the sense of belonging and identity comes the care for the image of the family and historical truth. Family members are active in their defence of the good name of the members of the family and take care of the places connected with their history. "...I was in Kępno and what hurt me was the image of my family home and the hurtful memories of our father, I have just, at 2 AM, sent an email to Mirosław Łapa, a writer, the author of "Niezłomnie z Pogranicza" [Invincibly from the Borderlands], asking him to contact me" (II, 79). Actions aimed to protect locations and buildings which do not even belong to the families anymore are a crucial element of the protection of the image of the family, which is proven by the memories of a mill which belonged to a family over 100 years ago. "The current owner of the land with the mill was unaware that the mill was much older than he had thought. In the Encyclopedia of the City of Mielec one can read that is was built at the beginning of the 20th century, which is contradicted by a map that was discovered, which dated from 1895, so the mill is at least 150 years old, which the encyclopaedia fails to inform of. It is a pity that the authorities of Mielec are not interested in including the mill in the registry of historical sites because the building is deteriorating" (I, 93).

Apart from the outlined values common to all the generations of the investigated families, i.e. the well-defined identity, collective and individual, belonging, integration, care for the good name of the family, there are the values typical of particular generations. Five generations took place in the research, and their boundaries defined by age and function are only approximated:
I – the oldest seniors in the family, person aged 85–100 (they were not present in all of the research)
II – seniors of the family/grandparents, persons aged 60–85,
III –mature parents and young grandparents, persons aged 35–60.
IV – young adults/young parents, persons aged 20–35.
V – children and young persons aged 0–20.

What needs to be stated is that the categories are arbitrary. Taking into account first and foremost the age differences between the research subjects is not correlated with the level of kinship, and, what is more, the fact that the research is still being conducted, the presented classification has been created only for the sake of the current presentation and its purpose is to illustrate only.

Genealogy makes the oldest seniors "feel needed". It is outlined in two cases: when the oldest senior is a genealogist or when he or she helps the family recreate family histories. It is significant in the reversal of roles of the pre-figurative society[21]. In Poland the phenomenon of exclusion of persons in their late adulthood is significant, which is why the fact that the oldest seniors find themselves in genealogical families is important. That is also why in numerous centres genealogical activity is promoted among seniors, trainings are organized in which one is not only introduced to the arcana of genealogy, but also taught to use simple software which can generate family trees. A beautiful illustration of this is "Książka do napisania" [A Book-To-Be-Written] which was received by accident by T.Ł. (I, 93). Let me quote a longer piece:

"... near the end of my life I found myself in a hospital. The illness was serious, I underwent a series of surgeries, and my stay in hospital grew longer and longer. Anyone who has stayed in a hospital longer knows well about lying in bed looking at the ceiling and thinking about your life. [...] When I was lying like this one day with my eyes staring at the ceiling thinking of my past life the door opened and a nurse walked in. In the four-person room there were 3 patients, me one of them. The nurse said to me:

I'm collecting donations to finish renovating the bathroom.

It was something typical to do to improve the facilities at that ward. He said that they had used donations to renovate one of the bathrooms and now they were trying to raise funds to finish the other one.

When you get up you can see how beautiful the tiles are.

I gave him a few zlotys and he, in turn, gave me a book. He said that one of the patients left the books at the hospital to distribute them like this. When he left I took the book in my hands and started reading. It was titled "A Book... To Be Written", and after turning the cover I read:

THE MESSAGE

Everyone ought to write something more in their life than a CV. That is all the more true because EVERYONE'S life makes for at least one book. Everyone is in constant movement, on the road. They have been placed there when they were born and they constantly follow their aims. As long as they are on the road, they are alive!

Everyone is also a poet, but only a few have been granted the gift of talent that allows them to express that poetry and pass it on to others. But everyone can, and even should, write their own unwritten book. To preserve their footsteps on the road. To reserve the beauty of the moment, the taste of adventure, the power of dreams, their confessions, a memorable photo, an illustration which they have drawn themselves. Regardless of whether they're 16 or 60. And the book is already here! Just grab a pen or a pencil, think, meditate, concentrate, and fill the white pages.

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[21] M. Mead, *Kultura i tożsamość*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2000, p. 23.

> *So, good luck, good flow, and enjoy a family reading!*
> *Signed, First Prompter*
>
> I was enormously surprised with the way Providence placed this book in my hands. I'm not superstitious; however, I considered this a sign that I must heed this call of Providence. From that moment on, lack of time was no excuse because in the hospital I had all the time in the world..." (I, 93).

Awareness of being needed, of a mission, an aim in life is particularly important to seniors. The described story is that of a representative of the oldest, who are few, but the necessity to be needed is also experienced by generation II, the seniors who are no longer professionally active, whose physical agility is declining, and their social lives, instead of slowing down, develop new, increasingly complex technologies.

In generations II and III, that is, those of mature parents and grandparents, genealogy brings peace of mind and a sense of security in relation to the fate of their descendants. The awareness that the family exists, that it has a strong sense of identity, that it defends its members, results in the feeling that the children and grandchildren will not be left alone, that they can count on support of their kin, even if life turns out not to be easy. "When I look into the past, my care is my children. My age lets me look at things from this perspective. We can experience a direct influence. What's going to happen when I'm not around anymore? – that is the question which many parents ask. And here we can see the power that genealogy IS[22], we are not left alone, we have a family, maybe friendly, it is events like this inspired by hobbyists that can change something in our lives" (III, 56). Being calm about the fate of children in the contemporary atomized society is a precious value. It is also experienced by the generation of younger parents, although in this group it is superseded by the sense of distance to problems and the awareness of the temporality of problems. As the research subjects stated: "[genealogy] is a reminder that life goes on without looking at your beautiful and hard moments" (IV, 25). The awareness of the stormy fates of real people from one's own family lets one perceive one's own problems experienced in everyday life from the perspective of a future family tale. The knowledge of the support that one's ancestors have received brings hope and strength. "When life is hard I go to the cemetery sometimes and I talk to my ancestors. I'm aware that this which doesn't let me sleep today will only be a fact, devoid of emotions" (III, 38). Other representatives of this generation point out that "tolerance is also a value associated with genealogy. When learning of the history of your family you can learn about its members of different nationalities, neighbours of different faiths, who would support one another" (IV, 25).

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[22] Original text.

For the youngest generations, in turn, genealogy is connected with fulfilling their curiosity, with adventure, with discovering secrets. "Why isn't there a wedding photo of my great grandmother in the documents?", "How to treat illegitimate children?", "Does the house on the sketch found in the drawer really exist?", "What does 'quiet like the grandfather' mean?" The youngest members of the families of genealogists often declare that they wish to continue this work. They are also aware of the importance of their roles as persons proficient in new technologies which are used in the investigations and in illustrating family histories.

Discussion

The values discussed above are not specific to the families of genealogists exclusively; nevertheless, this form of activity has contributed to the internalization, reinforcement, or creation of these values. It has been contributory in the significant intergenerational integration, in giving rise to a sense of community. In the investigated families the genealogical passion of a single person has influenced the remaining family members, strengthening their relationships and closeness. As one of the research subjects has rightly recapitulated: genealogy is "one of the bonds in our family, an area where the transfer of values takes place" (III, 50).

The transmission of values is a universal phenomenon. Every culture offers specific developmental niches and socialization practices for the transmission of values. Socialization practices vary according to different cultural values and developmental pathways which may be characterized by the culture-specific concepts of independence or interdependence[23]. However, studies that compare different socialization contexts with respect to value transmission are still rare and mostly refer to immigrants in different cultural contexts and in comparison to the values of their culture of origin[24]. Considering the fact that one of the factors to look for genealogy is the desire to get to know about relatives who left the country during migration, research on the transmission of values in genealogy families in the international context could provide new knowledge in the field of axiology. In the age of the information society and the dynamic development of medicine, international enterprises seeking to find biological relatives become more and more popular. Genetic genealogy develops dynamically, finding its reflection in the practice of organizations such as Family Tree[25], An-

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[23] P.M. Greenfield, H. Keller, A. Fuligni, A. Maynard, *Cultural pathways through universal development*, "Annual Review of Psychology" 2003, no 54, pp. 461–490.

[24] K. Phalet, U. SchOnpflug, *Intergenerational transmission of collectivism and achievement values in two acculturation contexts: The case of Turkish families in Germany and Turkish and Moroccan families in the Netherlands*, "Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology" 2001, no 32, pp. 186–201.

[25] Cf.: https://www.familytreedna.com/ [access: 16.07.2018].

cestry[26] or 23andMe[27]. It also becomes a subject of interest of representatives of various sciences, both biological and social, and even legal, as example International Family History Symposium, which took a place September 22, 2017 in Manchester, UK[28], may be mentioned. Treating genealogy as an implicator, a carrier, and, at the same time, an area of the transfer of certain values and as a contributor to intergenerational dialogue creates a number of educational and investigative opportunities. Genealogy can, therefore, be practical as a tool in preventing the social exclusion of seniors[29].

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[26] Cf.: https://www.ancestry.com/ [access: 16.07.2018].

[27] Cf.: https://www.23andme.com/ [access: 16.07.2018].

[28] Cf.: https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/185338/international-family-history [access: 16.07.2018].

[29] Such projects are also currently implemented in Poland, as part of the ERASMUS + project: "Learning tree" No 2017-1-TR01-KA204-045897.

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