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# FAMILY IN THE FACE OF TRANSFORMATION. SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

### RODZINA W OBLICZU PRZEOBRAŻEŃ. SOCJOLOGICZNE UJĘCIE PROBLEMU

## ПРЕОБРАЗОВАНИЯ, С КОТОРЫМИ СТАЛКИВАЮТСЯ СЕМЬИ. СОЦИОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ ПРОБЛЕМЫ

#### Abstract

This publication is an attempt to describe the transformations to which the basic cell of social life is subject. The collected material outlines the traditional conditions and the ways of perceiving the community of family life and emphasizes the nature of change, strongly reverberating over the last decades. In the publication, the author presents the following issues:

1. Family as a community of social life.

2. Directions of changes in family life.

3. The institution of a family at the crossroads of modern times.

Keywords: family, family models, transformations, changes, social cell, society.

#### Streszczenie

Niniejsza publikacja stanowi próbę opisu przemian, jakim podlega podstawowa komórka życia społecznego. Zebrany materiał zarysowuje tradycyjne uwarunkowania i sposoby postrzegania wspólnoty życia rodzinnego oraz podkreśla charakter przemian, silnie wybrzmiewający na przestrzeni ostatnich dekad. W publikacji autorka prezentuje następujące zagadnienia:

- 1. Rodzina jako wspólnota życia społecznego.
- 2. Kierunki przemian życia rodzinnego.
- 3. Instytucja życia rodzinnego na rozdrożu współczesności.

*Słowa kluczowe:* rodzina, modele rodziny, przeobrażenia, przemiany, komórka społeczna, społeczeństwo.

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#### Аннотация

Эта публикация представляет собой попытку описать преобразования, которым подвержена ячейка общества. Собранный материал описывает традиционные условия, способы восприятия обществом семейной жизни и подчеркивают характер перемен, сильно отражающийся на ней на протяжении последних десятилетий. В публикации автор поднимает следующие вопросы:

1. Семья как ячейка общества.

2. Направления изменений в семейной жизни.

3. Институт семьи на перекрестке современности.

Ключевые слова: семья, семейные модели, трансформации, изменения, ячейка общества, общество.

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## Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

The family is a space where various phenomena interact with each other. These phenomena sources can be found in political conditions, work, economic processes, etc. The external environment confronts the family with many challenges, postulating the need to redefine traditional patterns and acceptable forms being. The implications of social transformation are beginning to be disorganizing and unclear for social life. It may seem that the family is a significant obstacle in terms of the requirement of mobility, flexibility and the need of self-development. On the other hand, the family community remains irreplaceable in terms of basic support and care, stabilization and mutual responsibility of individual members.

The question can be asked, what is the main interest of modern researchers in a field of family sociology? The answers may vary. On the one hand, some researchers describing specific social changes, which naturally falls under the institution of family life. On the other hand, there are also pioneers predicting a serious crisis and even the twilight of the family. The nature of these transformations is reflected in the following article.

#### Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.

In Poland, sociological research on the family field has rich and relatively long tradition. Peasant families in Polish lands and those who immigrate to the United States were studied and described by Florian Znaniecki, thus facilitating the way for later empirical analyzes of the essence of the family in Europe and America. Before the First World War, works on the discipline of cultural anthropology were created, in which Ludwik Krzywicki touched the aspect of the family. Later also Bronisław Malinowski, in his ethno sociological studies focused on the problems of marriage and family (Tyszka, 1991, pp. 9-12).

In the interwar period in Poland, as in other European countries, sociology od the family as the sub discipline of general sociology did not exist. Social studies on the subject of the family were carried out within

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the framework of rural sociology and ethnography, social pedagogy and within the issues related to "social affairs" (Tyszka, 1991, pp. 9-12). The intensive development of Polish sociology, including family studies, took place after 1956. Initially, the family was categorized under the sub discipline of rural sociology and ethnography, where studies were concerned mostly on the peasant family. Then the issue was extended, as part of the urban sociology, urban, mostly working-class family was studied, later the family theme appeared in the sociology of work and occupations and an interdisciplinary field of research focusing on the aspect of social derailment or resocialisation of minors. The rise took place at the end of the sixties, when publications began to be published. Publications that time discussed mostly urbanization and industrialization and the family, issues of family education, marriage institutions, preferences for the selection of spouses, which clearly distinguished and made independent the sociology of the family. In the sixties and the early seventies, three centers specializing in family research were clearly formed in the Polish society, including the

Warsaw, Poznań and Katowice-Krakow centers. In the initial phase of the development of sociological considerations of the family in the post-war period, the following interests of the researchers were as follows: "1) the working family (F. Adamski, W. Mrozek, Z. Tyszka); 2) peasant family (D. Markowska, B. Tryfan, partly B. Gałeski); 3) family and work, especially the work of women (A. Kurzynowski, J. Piotrowski); 4) industrialization and urbanization and the family (J. Turówrowski, Z. Tyszka); 5) family and culture and family awareness (F. Adamski, A. Kłoskowska); 6) marriage, engagement and marital selection (B. Łobodzińska); 7) family and crime (B. Maroszek) "(Tyszka, 1990, p. 238). It is worth noting that in the mid-sixties, the Center for Research on the Contemporary Family was set up in Warsaw, which focused its activities on collecting and exchanging information and organizing scientific discussions. In 1970, the National Section of the Family Sociology of the Polish Sociological Association was established, which was the initiator of nationwide meetings and also stimulated a net-

## Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion.

centers.

#### **1.** Family as a community of social life

According to Jadwiga Izdebska, the community of the family means ,, natural union of family members due to common goals, pursuits and mutual feelings[...].Special community of emotionally close people, different from others by its genesis, development and functioning [...]. Intimacy of family relations, strong emotional bonds, spontaneous, direct interactions between family members, constant contact with each other, unlimited possibilities of individual contacts, common traditions, customs, norms, values, mutual responsibility and caring for each other, common aspirations, helping the child in satisfying its needs - create a climate of family life "(Izdebska J., 2003, p.71).

work of cooperation with related foreign

According to Franciszek Adamski, a family can be "recognized in terms of community - understood as natural bonds of a small group of people due to the shared

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goal, similar mutual feelings and common pursuits" (Adamski F., 2007, p. 307).

The family as a social institution fulfills its functions towards specific individuals as well as the whole society. Family functions are connected with its structure, the layout of social positions and roles, the nature of mutual relations, and cohesion. These functions should satisfy the basic needs of family members, but it should be noted that they also have a significant impact on its structure and the nature of interpersonal relations.

Particular functions of the family are divided in sociology into many categories. The most important include:

- A financial and economic function - to satisfy the economic needs of individual family members. Among them, four important sub-categories can be specified: production, profit, economic and consumption.

- A guardianship function that financially and physically protects family members. It should include caring support for people with disabilities or sick, the elderly or small children who are formal family members.

- The procreative function of the family regulating the reproductive needs of society and satisfying the parental needs (the need for fatherhood and motherhood). In many societies an intense pro-family policy is being conducted due to the low birth rate, especially in the twenty-first century.

- The sexual function of the family, which was once treated as a component of the procreative function, because the satisfaction of sexual needs served the reproduction of the family. In the 20th century the possibility of separating sexual activity from reproduction began to be possible.

- A legal control function that sanctions incorrect behavior and actions of family members. It is supervision, in order to prevent possible violation of the rules and values nurtured in the family. Most often it is control (mutual) of spouses and parental control in relation to minor children etc.

- A socialization function - preparing a child for life in a specific society and its culture. It is a preparation to fulfilling social roles and compliance with generally applicable rules. As part of socialization a transfer of information about the world, the hierarchy of values, principles, is performed.

- A stratification (class) function - pre-conditioning the social position of members of a family due to its origin. For example, the minor child of the worker will be classified as a working class person etc.

- A cultural function - the inclusion of the young generation in the area of cultural life through the introduction of the cultural heritage of a given society, the memory of monuments, memorial sites, national holidays, and history. The individual contact of the youngest generation with cultural institutions (theater, cinema, concert hall) is important.

- Recreation and social function, free time management – this function the family performs by taking care of improving the atmosphere in everyday life, mutual contacts as well as socializing with other units. In a well-functioning home environment, there is full freedom and possibility of relieving tensions and stress, which is necessary for well-balanced emotional life.

- An emotional-expressive function, which should be understood as the need to provide emotional stability and expression of one's personality. The emotional relationship between the partners in the marriage, mutual emotional ties between parents and children and between siblings is satisfying family members emotionally and create an opportunity to display their individuality (Tyszka Z., 1991, pp. 62-74).

The different types of functions are the basis for describing intra-family bonds and

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determining family relationships with the social environment.

#### 2. Directions of changes in family life

The family as a basic cell of social life is an integral part of the broader context of relationships and social changes. In the sociological context of relations between society and the family, three approaches can be specified (Kwak A., 2005, p. 10). The first assumes the holistic dependence of the nuclear family on the processes that take place in society. The second approach emphasizes the full independence of the family from the social world, while the third indicates a clear separation of the family and society, however, the inevitability of the connections and the necessity of mutual dependence are outlined (Dyczewski L., 1993, pp. 15-16). The last one emphasizes the mutual network of connections and influences of society on the family and the family on the society. Zbigniew Tyszka outlines the above dependence "(...) global society, or more precisely one of its developmental stages (pre-industrial, industrial or post-industrial society), along with the hierarchical social systems, affects the family, modifying it and its subsystems and the modified family exerts transformable influences on global society, its subcultures and processes. These interactions intensify in the areas of rapid transformation of society. Therefore, the family is an important element of social interactions "(Tyszka Z., 2001, p. 14).

While studying the changes that the family has been subjected to throughout the history, Zbigniew Tyszka notices the presence of a certain relationship between the specific properties of society and the family, and a given epoch. The type of society, the level of development, the layouts of social macrostructures or cultural transformations form the basis for shaping the family in a specific period. Therefore, three stages of family transformation should be distinguished, strictly conditioned by the forms of development of a pre-industrial, industrial or post-industrial society (Kwak A., 2005, pp. 12-13).

Pre-industrial family is described as a traditionally patriarchal family, fully subordinated to the superior power of the father. The functioning in that way family had a production workshop that was managed by the father / husband - the head of the familv. Often the interest of the family was more important than the needs of individuals. The family of this period had institutional features (close bonds with social microstructures, close intimacy with the local community), and the social status was determined by belonging to a specific family. In the lower classes, the work of the wives with their husbands was noticeable, while in the upper classes, the husbands were supported by the wives in the management of property. Children were also involved in a wide range of production activities. working for the family from an early age. The division of duties was strictly conditioned by gender. The women's domain was to take care of the order at home, prepare meals, prepare clothes and take care of children and sick family members. The basic principle of the social order in the 16th and 17th centuries was that the man was always higher rank than woman, whose primary role was to perform household duties and raise children.

The family of the industrial era was characterized by a gradual change of the family model, functioning in the previous period. The type of the modern family was created, the basic of which was reduction to two generations (children and parents), running their own separate household. It was commonly a non-productive family, where apart from a professionally active husband; the wife also remains active on the labor market.

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Roles and social norms were not stiffly determined. Relations between individual family members were changing, and the awareness of the importance of individual needs got a new dimension. The family of the industrial era was relatively closed internally; contacts with neighborhood or local community were weakening. At the same time, due to the less permanent personal ties, family systems began to be more susceptible to decay or crisis, and the stability guaranteed in the previous era was no longer irrefutable. Faith Robertson Elliot distinguishes the early and later (after World War II) period of the industrial era. The first stage of industrialization is clearly defined as the time to extend the role of the mother- the lady of the house. Inequality resulting from gender differences was maintained, and married women were still excluded from work outside the household. The 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century bring an interest in the aspect of caring for a child. The importance of motherhood and the relationship between mother and child determine the introduction of legislative provisions on limiting the work of women (Elliot F.R., 1986, p. 86). The turn of the 19th and 20th centuries significantly improves the situation of women in society. They are gradually receiving electoral rights; they can acquire knowledge and, consequently, higher education and profession. There are provisions regulating the independence of women in the matter of controlling earnings and possessions. From a political point of view, the status of women has improved significantly. In fact, women were still seen in terms strictly connected to the home, as economically dependent on the man, who played an important role in the family system.

The family in the post-industrial era got new changes, conditioned by a series of processes of the post-industrial society (Tyszka Z., 2001, p. 18). A characteristic feature of the newly created order was the transfer from public space to private space (including family life) - independence and freedom tendencies. The increase in employment of women, broadening their professional aspirations and the pursuit of selffulfillment set out tangible changes in the scope of family functioning. Among the consequences of the deepening egalitarianism of the family life, it is necessary to specify: changes in norms and moral values, weakening of family unity and cohesion and increase in the importance of the child's values. The end of the 1970s is characterized by the widespread influx of married women into the labor market, taking up full- or part-time employment, and an impressively fast return to employment, right after the birth of a child. The reduction in the size of the family was important in this aspect, which freed women from the need to provide permanent care for the voungest child. Motherhood remained a relatively short stage in a woman's life, not a base of her lifestyle. When, what should be clearly articulated, the role of the mother and the housewife was seen as the primary and the foreground, all other professional duties were in the background. Consequently, the attempt to combine domestic duties, motherhood and paid work generates a number of negative consequences, which include: physical and psychological overload, no time to meet mothers own needs or inspiration, low mobility and weakening of contacts with family and friends (Kwak A., 2005, pp. 20-22).

#### **3.** Institution of a family at the crossroads of modern times

The fundamental character of the family's transformation over the years is based on changing the model, where the only source of income is the paid work of a man. Anthony Giddens notes that among all the changes taking place in the contemporary

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era, none is more important than the supranational lifestyle revolution, which includes emotional life, human sexuality, marital system and family (Giddens A., 2009, p. 199). The revolutionary scope of changes puts many researchers in the conviction that the necessity of a new definition of the basic cell of social life requires the unambiguous leaving of traditional family images and the creation of a new typology, fully captivating contemporary forms of its creation.

According to Tomasz Szlendak, two basic trends of changes regarding the institutionalization of social life should be specified. The first one stands on the transition from "unity (homogeneity) to heterogeneity" and from certain "stability to change" (Wasiński A., 2015, p. 29). It symbolizes consent and openness to the creation of new forms of family life, among which one can specify partnership systems, patchwork or reconstructed families, and samesex relationships. The second trend corresponds to a departure from "male domination to dismantled patriarchy" (Wasiński A., 2015, p. 29), which symbolizes profound social changes concerning, among others, division of labor, approving same sexes relationships, new conditions in relation to parental, guardianship or caring tasks and duties .

It should be noted that the once privileged role and social position of the family, in relation to other groups and institutions, has been highly undermined and very often requires reinterpretation. The perspective of modernity re-evaluates, if not canceling the traditional discourse around family life. It is worth noting that the following findings are systematically dispersed.

- The family is a natural environment for the social development of the individual.

- According to the above principle, the family creates the necessary conditions and

opportunities for the development of the individual's activity and provides with the "luggage" of life experience.

- The family is an autonomous system whose significant subsystems in the nuclear family are: interactions of spouses, relations between parents and children, relations between siblings. In the case of a three-generation family, however, the following subsystems are referred to: relations between parents and adult children, interactions between grandchildren and grandparents.

- "Healthy family systems are characterized by certain properties" (Barnhill L.R., 1979, pp. 94-100), which are reciprocity, individuality, plasticity, stability, clarity of communication, interchangeability of family roles, transparency of boundaries between generations. In turn, pathological family systems are characterized by opposite properties, among others: stiffness, isolation and disorganization of the family system, opaque perception, disturbed communication, vaguely defined division of roles and opaque borders between generations.

- The family is a space for interpersonal interaction with a special contact density and durability, which results from together living and cooperating over a longer period of time.

-"Family members are a reference system for each other, a source of patterns of activity and behavior, and transmitters of patterns and models of behavior "(Tyszkowa M., 2009, p. 16).

- The family as a primary institution with an special emotional closeness and stability of family bonds has a particular and greatest impact on the individual, his personality and emotional development. This influence was conditioned by socialization effects.

- The family being a community of life and upbringing is guided by "love and readiness for mutual sacrifices on the one hand

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and legal guarantees and indispensable restrictions on the other" (Janke A.W., 2004, pp. 32-33).

Changing from predetermined reference groups to articulating and creating one's individuality, undermines the traditional concepts of the family as a structure of stable and non-returnable 'modernization'. Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, while analyzing the process of family evaluation, in the era of universal globalization, paid attention to the new dimension of family perception in which the metaphor of a "common roof" is becoming obsolete (Beck U., Beck-Gernshein E., 2013, p. 30-31). It happens that spouses after a formally

#### **Conclusions.**

The family belongs to social structures, which, despite its small size, constitute a group subject to strong processes of external changes, which have a global character. Understanding the mechanisms of the familv life community contributes to the broadening of knowledge in the field of the theory of small social groups and its contemporary determinants and ways of creation. In the course of epochs, the fundamental change in the way of creating a family consisted in a gradual changing from the model of the patriarchal family, in which the family breadwinner and the most important figure was a man. This system expressed normative expectations included in the law and internalized by the unit regarding the superior position of the man and the subordinate role of the woman, doing unpaid work for the house. The last decades bring significant changes in the scope of the existing functions of family systems and, above all, the model of their functioning. The normative expectations, included in the law and internalized by the individual towards greater egalitarianism and the participation of universal gender equality, follow.

legalized relationship do not decide to live together, do not run a household together, the intensity of everyday direct relations and interaction is limited to the minimum and belonging to the same society or nation is not obvious "[...] they live together across borders (national, religious, cultural, ethnic, etc.); where the harmony exist between things that are not supposed to be able to create harmony together. Instead of predetermined traditions, there is active trust; it is supposed to succeed what, in the common sense, cannot succeed: different/strangers becomes beloved and loved one "(Beck U., Beck-Gernshein E., 2013, p. 30).

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