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The Role of the Family in Realizing Educational Ideals in Poland during the Interwar Period (1918-1939)

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Abstract: In the interwar period, the potential of the family in Poland was appreciated by politicians (representatives of the two political movements, i.e. *the Endecja* – supporters of national education and *the Sanacja* – proponents of state education), as well as teachers, scholars and socio-educational activists. They perceived the family as an important socio-cultural and educational environment, on which the multifaceted development of children and youth depends, and thus the successful future of the nation and the state. Therefore, they strongly emphasized the need to support the family and strengthen its cooperation with the school, which was to contribute to educational success. This article presents the educational ideals propagated in Poland in the interwar period and the role attributed to the family and its cooperation with school in realizing these ideals.

Eet/Tee keywords: Educational Ideal; National Education; Educational role of the family; Poland; Interwar Period; XX Century.

Introduction

The formulation of educational ideals and aims is related to the concept of *teleology of education*, which defines the principles of their formulation, examines the relationships between them and the conditions of practical application[1]. When interpreting the term *educational ideal*, it can be assumed that it is a comprehensive description of integrated human qualities, valuable

[1] M. Nowak, *Teorie i koncepcje wychowania*, [*Theories and Concepts of Upbringing and Education*], Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2008, p. 346.

from the point of view of welfare of the developing individual and society. It is a certain theoretical construct relating to the desired personality of a person. On the other hand, the *aims of education* are states of affairs that are desirable to achieve in the process of education. They are derived from the educational ideal, and their realization brings the learner's personality closer to that ideal[2]. That is why the ideal of education is also understood as a set of aims to which one strives, which can be more or less specific, short-term or long-term, single or constituting a certain whole.

The ideal of education to be implemented in the process of upbringing and education constitutes a matter of overriding importance. It determines the selection of educational and instructional content, which in turn shapes the choice of teaching aids, as well as the methods of training and professional development of teachers and educational administrators. The content of this ideal consists of basic spiritual (primarily moral), material and organizational values, which are most valued and desired by society. It can also be interpreted as a set of desirable attitudes of the human individual (resulting from the preferred axiology), referring to himself/herself, as well as other people, social groups, nature[3].

F.W. Araszkiewicz explained that the formation of ideals of education and the derivation of educational aims from them occur in connection with many factors, including: social and economic conditions and the balance of political forces; educational ideology (which is a derivative of the social ideology of certain social classes); with the current state of pedagogical sciences at a given time[4].

Presenting the genesis of Polish historical teleological concepts, it is possible to point to the occurrence of several motivations that conditioned their formation. One of them was the metaphysical-religious motivation, which occurred (most likely as the only one) in the Middle Ages. From the sixteenth century onward, secular motivations began to develop alongside it. Concepts of an individual useful for public service, understanding state life and capable of creative social functioning were put forward. In the seventeenth century, the ideal of a person and citizen was exposed. In the difficult period of the Partitions of Poland, heroic-messianic, positivist, and national motivations prevailed. In

[2] J. Górniewicz, *Teoria wychowania (wybrane problemy)* [*Theory of Education (Selected Problems)*], Olsztyn, Wydawnictwo Olsztyńskiej Szkoły WyŻszej, 2008, p. 75.

[3] A. Smołalski, *Ideały wychowawcze w polskiej myśli pedagogicznej od XVI w. do końca II Rzeczypospolitej*, [*Educational ideals in Polish pedagogical thought from the sixteenth century to the end of the Second Republic of Poland*], Opole, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 1994, p. 7.

[4] F.W. Araszkiewicz, *Ideały wychowawcze Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej,* [*Educational Ideals of the Second Republic of Poland*], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978, p. 14.

the interwar period, on the other hand, the most common were: the ideal of national education and the ideal of state education[5].

It should be emphasized that the Polish nation has developed rich resources of teleological thought throughout its history. Scholarly work in this area has never stopped, even during the loss of independence by Poland. When creating the ideal of education today, it is worth referring to this teleological legacy, which in some parts is suitable for direct implementation, in others it allows for creative inspiration and can be applied after critical revision.

1. *Ideals of Education in Poland in the Interwar Period*

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the national aims of education were more exposed than in earlier periods. At the same time, the idea of interpersonal solidarity was invariably alive among Polish educators, because Polish teleological tradition included the construction of ideals of education that took into account the transnational dimension and universal values. It should be noted that among the thinkers of that time there were those for whom national affairs were of greater importance than universal human affairs, others considered them equally significant, while still others regarded nationality merely as a subordinate and constituent element of humanity as a whole[6].

In the interwar period, many authors developed the activities initiated in the earlier period, at the same time efforts were made to create new teleological models. During this time, two ideals were most often exposed – national education and state education. In the 1920s, the former predominated, whereas in the 1930s, the latter gained primacy. It is worth adding that they were not the only ones, as they coexisted with other, less popular teleological and pedagogical conceptions[7].

In Polish pedagogical thought, the national orientation was initiated by Stanisław Szczepanowski, an economist, publicist and social activist who lived during the partitions. He believed in the establishment of an independent Polish state through the authentic engagement of all Poles in every sphere of life, particularly in the fields of education and upbringing. Szczepanowski perceived national education as an instrument for the moral and economic regeneration of the nation. He envisioned the future Poland as a democratic state

[5] Smołalski, *Ideały wychowawcze w polskiej myśli pedagogicznej*, cit., p. 10.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 40.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 54.

and expected schools to fulfil the mission of providing egalitarian, popular, and civic education for the entire nation[8].

The proponents of the concept of national education included representatives of the political and scientific community, as well as active teachers and socio-educational activists. Among them were philosophers, historians, educators, sociologists, lawyers and doctors[9]. The importance, tasks, aims and content of national education were discussed and written by, among others: Zygmunt Balicki, Lucjan Zarzecki, Mieczysław Baranowski, Władysław Marian Borowski, Edward Gabryelski, Iza Janke. They drew attention to the role of education in preparing representatives of younger generations to fulfil their duties towards the nation and the state. For example, W. M. Borowski argued that:

> Based on the national tradition and the achievements of pedagogical knowledge, our education should create its own view of the matter of educating young generations, based on the assumption that the civilization of every society must emerge primarily from the creative forces of the national genius. Only in this way can a nation develop and enrich its own individuality, and at the same time contribute new elements to the cultural heritage of humanity. […] In the period of great transformation of the national existence, the greatest task of education is to adapt the young generations to the new conditions of political life and to enable them to undertake great efforts for the future of the Homeland[10].

The foundation for national pedagogy in Poland at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was laid by the views of Roman Dmowski (a leading ideologist and activist of the National Democratic Party) and Zygmunt Balicki (pedagogue, publicist, organizer and activist of the National League). They conditioned the way of understanding the ideal and the aims of education. R. Dmowski, representing political movement *the Endecja*, asserted that the nation constitutes the essential moral content of the state, while the state represents the indispensable political form of the nation. He was of the opinion that a nation can lose a state, yet it does not cease to be a nation as long as it preserves the moral bond with the tradition of its state. Z. Balicki, on the other hand, treated the nation as the highest good on earth. Therefore, he set two tasks for pedagogy and education. The first was to immerse the young generation so deeply into the traditions of the nation so that they would feel united with it. The second is the formation of positive patriotism, which would be expressed in the ideal of a soldier-citizen, whose most important qualities

[8] Araszkiewicz, *Ideały wychowawcze Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, cit., pp. 32-34.

[9] J. Falkowska, *Myśl wychowania narodowego w Galicji okresu autonomii. Twórcy i idee*, [*The Thought of National Education in Galicia of the Period of Autonomy. Creators and Ideas*], Toruń, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2013, p. 88.

[10] W.M. Borowski, *Ogólne zarysy wychowania narodowego*, [*General Outlines of National Education*], Warszawa – Lublin, Wydawnictwo M. Arct, 1918, pp. XII-1.

Balicki identified as: the ability to cooperate, discipline, camaraderie, solidarity, deep religiosity, physical strength, entrepreneurship[11].

In the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, the principles of national education were implemented by: Stanisław Grabski, Stanisław Głąbiński and T. Łopuszański, the latter of whom developed a program of national education aimed at building and consolidating the newly reestablished Polish state. He proposed that all levels of school administration, as well as every teacher, should be actively involved in implementing this new form of national education[12].

Significant changes in educational policy and pedagogical issues took place after the May Coup in 1926. Activists associated with Józef Piłsudski's *the Sanacja* political movement undertook efforts to construct a new educational ideal. Within the ministry, Stanisław Czerwiński and Kazimierz Pieracki[13] were responsible for developing a new system of education, referred to as *state education*. The principles of this system were widely discussed in the speeches and writings of *the Sanacja* politicians. One of the first was their presentation by Minister Gustaw Dobrucki in August 1927, who wrote that the main task of the school should be to educate the young generation to become physically and morally healthy, socially conscious, and creatively engaged citizens of the state[14]. The ideas of state education were also reflected in the views proclaimed by other politicians active at that time – Kazimierz Świtalski, Janusz Jędrzejewicz, Adam Skwarczyński. They were also supported by scientists, educators and pedagogues, among others: Jan Stanisław Bystroń; Zygmunt Mysłakowski, Kazimierz Sośnicki[15]. It is worth noting that the promotion of *the Sanacja's* educational ideology was also taken up by prominent figures of Polish literature, including authors such as: Henryk Sienkiewicz, Stefan Żeromski, and Stanisław Wyspiański[16].

An important reason why *the Sanacja* movement linked its ideology so closely with the state as the supreme category was the widespread twenti-

11 Araszkiewicz, *Ideały wychowawcze Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, cit., pp. 35-37.

12 A. Niedojadło, *Wychowanie narodowe i państwowe w szkołach powszechnych*, [*National and State Education in schools of primary education*], Tarnów, Wydawnictwo Diecezji Tarnowskiej Biblos, 2013, p. 84.

13 *Ibid*., p. 85.

14 *Okólnik Ministra Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego Gustawa Dobruckiego z dnia 25 sierpnia 1927 roku w sprawie regulaminu pracy wychowawczej w szkołach średnich*, «Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego», [*Circular of the Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment of Gustaw Dobrucki, dated 25 August 1927 on the regulations of educational work in secondary schools*], «Official Journal of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment» n. 12, 1927, item 208.

15 Niedojadło, *Wychowanie narodowe i państwowe w szkołach powszechnych*, cit., p. 96.

16 S. Łempicki, *Polskie tradycje wychowawcze*, [*Polish educational traditions*], Warszawa, Nasza Księgarnia, 1936, p. 137.

eth-century tendency across many countries to strengthen the role of the state. In Poland, the concept of *state education* was also intended to serve as a counterbalance to *national education*, which had been emphasized by the nationalist and conservative political movement associated with Roman Dmowski[17].

Those who advocated *state education* assumed that as a result of it, the individual must feel united with the state[18]. However, there were also authorities who preferred the term *civic-state education*. Such a position was presented, for example, by the Polish pedagogue and educational activist Hanna Pohoska, who considered the essence of this education to be the education of the individual and the collective to be conscious and creative citizens, who understand their duties towards the state, are able to fulfil them and feel a genuine need to do so[19].

The periodization of the process of creation and implementation of the educational ideology of the *Sanacja* political movement in practical educational activity was developed by F.W. Araszkiewicz, who distinguished the following three periods: the years 1926-1932, the time of developing the theoretical and statutory foundations of civic-state education, the development of the educational ideal and the formation of teaching staff for its implementation. During the years 1932-1935, the full implementation of the concept of civic-state education took place, along with the deepening of its theoretical foundations, as sanctioned by the 1932 acts. It was a time of dominance of state education; the years 1935-1939 were a time of turn, towards civic and national education. During this period, the realization of the ideal of education was associated with equal treatment of the idea of the nation, the state and the Catholic religion[20].

To sum up, it can be said that the educational ideal in the interwar period in Poland was a Pole-citizen-worker-fighter in the service of the homeland. Highly esteemed were such values as homeland, nation and state. The role of work for the good of the homeland was emphasized as well as the need to educate the young generation in respect for the good of the state and its authority, as well as towards all those who, with work, and when the circumstance

[17] A. Radziwiłł, *Ideologia wychowawcza sanacji i jej odbicie w polityce szkolnej w latach 1926-1939* (część wstępna, część pierwsza i zakończenie), [*The Educational Ideology of the Sanacja and Its Reflection in School Policy in the years 1926-1939* (Introductory part, Part One and Conclusion), «Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny», n. 1-2, 2014, p. 251.

[18] K. Jakubiak, *Wychowanie państwowe jako ideologia wychowawcza sanacji. Kształtowanie i upowszechnianie w periodycznych wydawnictwach społeczno-kulturalnych i pedagogicznych,* [*State Education as an Educational Ideology of the Sanacja. Shaping and Disseminating in Periodical Socio-cultural and Pedagogical Publications*], Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo WyŻszej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 1994, p. 46.

[19] H. Pohoska, *Wychowanie obywatelsko-państwowe, w:* S. Łempicki (red.), *Encyklopedia Wychowania* [*Civic-State Education*, in. S. Łempicki (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Education*], Warszawa, Nasza Księgarnia, 1934, Vol. I, p. 943.

[20] Araszkiewicz *Ideały wychowawcze Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, cit., p. 21.

occurred, through armed struggle – had fought to regain and preserve the nation's and the state's independence. Educated on these ideals and values, Polish youth passed the exam in their preparation for civic service to their homeland during World War II[21].

2. *The Role of the Family in Realizing Educational Ideals in Poland during the Interwar Period*

Already at the end of the nineteenth century, in publications devoted to national education, attention was paid to the importance of family in the upbringing and education of a child, while at the same time recognizing the need for its cooperation with school. And so Józef Dietl, one of the most outstanding reformers of public life in nineteenth-century Poland, commenting on the role of family, emphasized that the school should play the role of a substitute for parents. He claimed that parents have the exclusive right to raise their children. At the same time, he noted that some parents are not able to guarantee their children proper upbringing and education at home, which is why they send them to school and thus entrust them to the government, which should support family in carrying out educational tasks, and also organize school life in consultation with them. J. Dietl emphasized that in these circumstances the government becomes a kind of parents' representative, therefore it cannot ignore their opinions regarding the organization and operation of schools. He also emphasized the view that sending a child to a state school does not exempt parents from overseeing their child's upbringing and education[22]. He also proclaimed that, just as every family, the local community (which is an assembly of families *the gmina*) has the duty to raise the children living in its area, according to the needs and resources at its disposal. Consequently, it has the right to establish and maintain schools that correspond to those needs and capacities[23].

Similarly, a place in the upbringing and education of a child was attributed to the family by the pedagogue and theoretician of education, Bronisław Trzaskowski, who lived before Poland regained independence. He explained that the natural law gives rise to the influence of parents on the upbringing and education of a child and extends beyond family home and reaches all the environments in which the child finds himself/herself, including state school.

[21] *Ibid*., p. 284.

[22] J. Dietl, *O reformie szkół krajowych zeszyt I. Stanowisko szkoły, rada szkolna krajowa, język wykładowy*, [*On the Reform of National Schools, Issue I. The Position of the School, National School Council, Language of Instruction*], Kraków, Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1865, pp. 20-21.

[23] *Ibid*., p. 23.

Therefore, the government should share the management and administration of school with parents or their legal representatives. Like J. Dietl, he noted that both the family and the local community (the *gmina*) are obliged to raise and educate children. He argued that school, serving as a substitute for family, the community (the *gmina*) and the country, should be conceived as an institution that is familial, communal, and national in character. Trzaskowski applied these requirements in particular to lower schools, while in the case of secondary schools and universities, due to the preparation of students to perform representative social roles, he granted the government even greater influence[24].

Kazimierz Twardowski (1866–1938), a great patriot, one of the most outstanding Polish philosophers, and a university teacher, also emphasized the role of the family in the process of educating the younger generation in the spirit of love for the homeland. He wrote:

> There is no more beautiful and important task for parents than to raise their children to be healthy, strong, enlightened and courageous citizens, who love their Homeland from the bottom of their hearts, who know how to work for its good and glory, and to die for its integrity and freedom![25]

At the same time, Twardowski saw the need for cooperation between family and school, as well as the necessity for each student to work on self-improvement. At the same time, he noted that even the best parents cannot raise a perfect individual; which is why a young person after leaving family home must work on himself/herself, on his/her shortcomings and imperfections. It should complement and deepen the knowledge of the homeland and the history of the homeland acquired from family home and school[26].

Similar observations were made by the social and educational activist and teacher Aleksander Patkowski, who assigned a particularly important role in the education of the younger generation to the school of primary education and its cooperation with the family. At the same time, he showed that the will of parents can be a destructive factor in relation to school, especially when the level of material and ethical culture of the family differs from the average level of social culture of a given country. He also noted that sometimes it can be the other way around, i.e. school atmosphere may be characterized by a low level of environmental culture[27].

A wide range of pedagogical guidance, exposing the importance of family

[24] B. Trzaskowski, *Zarys organizacji szkół niższych*, [*An Outline of Lower School Organization*], Lwów, (ed. aut.) 1867, pp. 6-8.

[25] K. Twardowski, *O patriotyzmie,* [*About patiotism*], Lwów, Macierz Polska, 1919, p. 20.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 21.

[27] A. Patkowski, *Szkoła powszechna i regionalizm*, [*Primary School and Regionalism*], «Tygodnik Pedagogiczny», n. 3, 1926, pp. 72-73.

in education in the spirit of national pedagogy, was presented by the author of the educational handbooks, Stanisława Sarjusz-Wolska, who stated that:

> Education – that is, the development of the natural qualities, talents, drives, creative forces, the entire spiritual and physical nature of the young generation – as a historical process is a decisive factor in the future of the nation, its fate and existence[28].

She also noted that educational work is not confined to school, kindergarten and other institutions exclusively dedicated to it, but above all it takes place in family – the child's natural environment and in its immediate environment[29]. Emphasizing the educational values of the family, Sarjusz-Wolska wrote:

> Family is the primary form of human life relations. Founded upon the instinct of self-preservation, innate feelings of love, and altruism arising therefrom, it generates natural laws governing mutual obligations among its members and assigns a guiding role to parents, who protect and support their offspring. […] It is the first school of coexistence and cooperation. It liberates and educates mental and emotional forces of the spirit of the individual. It evokes gratitude and attachment to the environment, awakens elements of ethical and social feelings. And it should be a model of order and harmony, prevailing in the universe and indispensable for the existence and proper, creative development within any human community [...]. A strong foundation of the family, based on affection, truth, love, work, conscientious fulfilment of duties, and the absolute exclusion of selfishness, are at the same time the foundations of a strong and healthy society. […] A strongly organized family becomes not only a useful, cohesive part of the social whole and a bastion of civic virtues, but it is also a treasury faithfully preserving native culture and tradition, attachment to the homeland, and sometimes it is also a sanctuary that saves the persecuted language, religion and the dearest elements and national ideals[30].

Among the key educational tasks of family, Stanisława Sarjusz-Wolska included the following:

- engaging children as early as possible in important household or community activities and introducing them to responsibility for the undertakings they participate in;
- accustoming the child to self-service and to independently satisfying their own needs;
- developing the ability to cope with failures and adversities, as well as to remain prudent in situations of danger;

[28] S. Sarjusz-Wolska, *Zarys wychowania moralnego i obywatelskiego*, [*Outline of Moral and Civic education*], Warszawa, Skład Główny w Księgarni Towarzystwa Polskiej Macierzy Polskiej Szkolnej, 1927, p. 11.

[29] *Ibid*., p. 16.

[30] *Ibid*., pp. 62-63.

– sensitizing young people to the needs of others and awakening in them a willingness to offer help;
– shaping love for truth, honesty and conscientious execution of duties and instructions;
– developing respect and fondness of work as an essential moral factor and creative force, making the spiritual and material life of the individual more perfect, and multiplying the wealth of the natural world surrounding humans[31].

S. Sarjusz-Wolska also emphasized the necessity for parents to supervise the biological maturation of the younger generation. She warned against the consequences of underestimating this matter. She wrote that ignoring it in silence and leaving it to random influences may be associated with a number of dangers and even cause harm to children. She explained that:

> […] that is, to deprive the matter of its proper seriousness in advance [...] and, leaving the child to himself/herself or under the sway of harmful influences, to push him/her to the pernicious ways of conduct, even into wrongdoing. […] The full blossoming of life is not self-indulging, licentiousness, debauchery, and the unrestrained pursuit of pleasure and excess. On the contrary, it is a high inner discipline – and a disciplined cooperation of all human powers subject to moral order. […] It is obvious that educators are under a serious obligation to maintain vigilant watchfulness, so as to protect children from improper stimuli, excitations, premature curiosity, and harmful habits[32].

Another significant representative of national pedagogy, who emphasized the importance of the family as an educational factor, was the Polish pedagogue and publicist Władysław Marian Borowski. He maintained that:

> Of all forms of human coexistence, it is family that most closely binds people together, unites them, and brings them closer to one another. […] Through its influence, it reaches the very core of human character and the entire structure of the human spirit. Family life awakens and develops spiritual capacities that could not come to fruition in any other form of upbringing or education. Learning here takes place almost unconsciously—not only through reason but also through the heart. […] It is mainly from the family that it depends what kind of person one will become in the future: whether an egocentric individual concerned solely with his/her own welfare, or one adapted to communal life and endowed with a sense of social responsibility[33].

Borowski was convinced that a person who experienced love in family life is capable of giving this affection to other people, thus achieving a higher level of ethics and socialization. That is why he claimed that family is rightly called the cell of social life in which man is formed. In turn, the set of these

[31] *Ibid*., p. 65.
[32] *Ibid*., pp. 66-67.
[33] Borowski, *Ogólne zarysy wychowania narodowego*, cit., pp. 265-266.

cells builds the tissue of the social organism that grows out of the family[34]. He argued that a well-functioning family is the most important school for an individual of his/her own upbringing and education, mastering selfish drives, getting used to concessions, patience and working for the good of others. It is the most important factor in social evolution. The rejection of family threatens the destruction of the bonds of communal life and exposes the individual to the experience of loneliness. Without family, a person becomes emotionally cold and incapable of higher feelings[35].

Like Sarjusz-Wolska, Borowski also regarded love, truth, and work as particularly valuable virtues and, at the same time, as the moral foundations of family life. Among these, he considered love the most important, explaining that the effectiveness of educational influences depends primarily upon it. He wrote that one can defend oneself against the unkindness and selfishness of strangers by seeking asylum in the family environment, but if we are dealing with selfishness, mutual hostility or indifference, then we lose the sense of security, experience loneliness, and even the loss of the meaning of life, which is the basis for suicidal acts[36].

According to Władysław Marian Borowski, marital love was of particular importance for the proper and harmonious functioning of the family environment. He wrote that:

> When it is strong and great, it illuminates all other feelings, adds brilliance, strength and intensity to them. Whoever is happy in this corner of one's heart carries the mood of a loving person into everything they do – into their work, their relationships with others, and the upbringing and education of their children. […] On the other hand, it is difficult to describe the desolation that arises in the human soul under the influence of indifference or, what is worse, mutual aversion in the marital relationship. Then our best feelings fall silent and fade away [...]. Sometimes even the purest and most spontaneous parental love degenerates. The situation of children in such families, where hatred, jealousy and suspicion prevail, is truly tragic[37].

Borowski also noted that sometimes the educational influence of parents is burdened with numerous mistakes, among which he listed: excessive indulgence towards the child, turning a blind eye to his/her mistakes and lack of consistency, granting children too much freedom, or failing to participate actively in their lives[38]. He emphasized the need for parents to use discipline based on moral elements in educational practices and close spiritual contact

[34] *Ibid*., p. 266.
[35] *Ibid*., pp. 266-267.
[36] W.M. Borowski, *Wychowanie narodowe,* [*National Education*], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo M. Arct, 1922, pp. 212-213.
[37] *Ibid*., pp. 213-214.
[38] *Ibid*., pp. 215-216.

between older generations and younger ones, which was to contribute to the latter's spiritual perfection[39].

According to W.M. Borowski, apart from love, truth should reign in family life. He explained that truth is essential even for the proper functioning of looser forms of human association – such as political or commercial relationships. He emphasized that trust can only be gained by truthfulness, while lying brings with it suspicion, secrecy and hypocrisy. He noted that the one who seeks truth in the outside world must first of all be honest with himself/herself. A person who deceives oneself cannot be honest with others, and this brings with it moral losses for the individual and relationships with other people. Therefore, according to Borowski, education should arouse in a person from an early age a disgust for lying, humiliating oneself, destroying one's honour and dignity[40].

According to W.M. Borowski, the third factor, which also constituted the moral foundation of family life, was work. He explained that:

> [...] in the atmosphere of family life, everything should breathe with work. Only then will the child acquire ethical habits and become accustomed to active living[41].

Therefore, it is the responsibility of parents to form the child's conviction that work is an expression not only of the struggle for one's own existence, but also of service to the common social good. Observing parents and siblings was to serve as the best example of work undertaken for the benefit of others. Engaging the child in work from the earliest years, on the other hand, was to serve as an example of solidarity, contributing to the growth of the child's social awareness and the formation of a national spirit[42].

A great contribution to the development of national pedagogy in the interwar period in Poland was made by the teacher and academic lecturer Lucjan Zarzecki. He claimed that the development of the homeland and national culture can only be achieved by the nation. In education, he saw a process aimed at shaping values in accordance with the needs of social life and mitigating the effects of the partitions. Apart from the state and the church, it was the family that L. Zarzecki considered to be one of the most important factors determining the effectiveness of the educational process and regarded it to be a key link in the system of national education[43]. He claimed that no institutions or other artificial structure could replace the role of family in the process of upbringing and education. He wrote that:

[39] *Ibid*., p. 217.
[40] *Ibid*., pp. 217-218.
[41] Borowski, *General Outlines of National Education*, cit., p. 275.
[42] *Ibid*., pp. 276-277.
[43] L. Zarzecki, *O wychowaniu narodowem*, [*On National Education*], Warszawa, Zakład Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1917, p. 53.

As far as the current state of science is concerned, we can say with certainty that a good family has to the greatest extent all the qualities that are needed for a rational upbringing and education, especially in early childhood. No surrogates have been able to replace it, nor can they by their very nature do so. Apart from the educational technique, there must be... soul, with a whole range of natural affections, deeper layers of intuition not only of concepts, not only of knowledge[44].

This scholar added that:

Through family and school, young people are educated to become citizens. Within them, the social environment expands spiritually, grows into a nation and a state. Family and school are fundamental factors in the development of concepts: our nation and our state. […] Just as in a good family individual egoism slowly melts away under the influence of the warmth of love and the power of the unwritten law into activity of a higher order, the same thing continues to happen in a good school[45].

Therefore, Zarzecki emphasized the need for cooperation between family and school in the process of upbringing and education, but at the same time emphasized the need for school to strengthen family, in particular in terms of nurturing family values and ideals and preparing parents to function in parental roles, and most of all women to play the role of mother. He argued that:

Family is a fundamental factor in education, and if we rightly insist on cooperation between the family and the school, we must likewise expect the school to contribute to its reinforcement. A strong school has the proper moral atmosphere. Cultivating the elements of family life and its ideals, preparing individuals to fulfil the role of fathers and mothers properly, is not a trivial thing, nor is it something that, if properly established in terms of education, would have a completely small and bland impact. In this regard, the girls' school is particularly important, as nurturing the ideal of the mother–citizen there is of great significance[46].

L. Zarzecki noted that in Poland there are many people who understand the importance of family, but fewer who are able to fulfil family duties, and this is one of the reasons why families do not perform their tasks properly[47]. He regarded parents' associations operating at schools as a manifestation of support for school by family, but at the same time as an opportunity for family circles to exert influence on the school[48]. At the same time, he emphasized that the greater the participation of citizens in influencing school, the greater

[44] L. Zarzecki, *Wychowanie narodowe. Studja i szkice*, [*National Education. Studies and Sketches*], Warszawa, Towarzystwo im. Jana Zamoysiego, 1926, p. 250.

[45] L. Zarzecki, *Wstęp do pedagogiki,* [*Introdution to pedagogy*] Lwów-Warszawa, KsiąŻnica Polska, 1922, p. 29.

[46] Zarzecki, *Wychowanie narodowe*, cit., p. 251.

[47] *Ibid*., p. 252.

[48] *Ibid*., p. 395.

the chances of bringing family and school closer together and the success of national education. He wrote that:

> Family can influence school not only through parental relationships, but also through the community, the Church, and local governments. Greater participation of all citizens in shaping school life is the broad path through which reconciliation and closeness between family and school can be achieved. The emancipation of the family spirit, so important for education, can only be truly felt at school, when this closeness is achieved [...] Any educational system will fail until family life, imbued with the spirit of citizenship, is established in society. In the educational system, family is a certain natural foundation, from which one should start and build upon it[49].

Like the supporters of national education, the advocates of state education noticed and appreciated the importance of family as a natural educational environment. They also supported the cooperation of the child's home and school in their educational efforts. They often treated family as the first level of patriotic and civic education and emphasized that without its participation in the process of education and support for the school, the state education system would not be effective.

For example, the pedagogue and philosopher Kazimierz Sośnicki classified family among social groups based on close bonds, and identified as its key aims – mutual assistance as well as the bearing and upbringing of children[50]. On the other hand, the academic teacher, educational theorist and didactician Zygmunt Mysłakowski, speaking about the family as an important environment of human life and development, drew attention to the naturalness and directness of interpersonal relationships, to the sharing of emotions and the adoption of ideals and attitudes[51]. An interesting position was taken by one of the main ideologists of *the Sanacja*, Adam Skwarczyński, who, while reflecting on the foundations of human actions presented family as a certain point of support, enabling a person to become rooted in life. He showed it as the organic cell of all social life, all work and all morality[52].

The importance of family and its cooperation with school for the future of the nation and the state was also pointed out by the pedagogue and academic teacher Mieczysław Ziemnowicz. He explained that:

> Social life exists wherever a social group arises, from its lowest organizational form, which is simply family, to the ever broader and higher structures, which are the communi-

[49] *Ibid*., pp. 395-396.

[50] K. Sośnicki, *Podstawy wychowania państwowego*, [*Basics of State Education*], Lwów -Warszawa, KsiąŻnica-Atlas, 1933, pp. 12-14.

[51] Z. Mysłakowski, *Rodzina wiejska jako środowisko wychowawcze* [*Rural Family as an Educational Environment*], Warszawa-Lwów, Naukowe Towarzystwo Pedagogiczne, 1931, p. 13.

[52] A. Skwarczyński, *Wskazania,* [*Indications*], Warszawa, Nakładem StraŻy Przedniej, 1934, p. 100.

ty, the state, the nation, the country, humanity as a whole. The striving of society towards a certain goal is, and must be, the striving of family, consciously or unconsciously. [...] School acts here as the mandate of family. Therefore, there cannot and should not arise a difference in the aims of school and family, because school in its essence works for family and society, while family transfers to school a part of its authority. [...] School must also become aware of this dependence, as well as the necessity of educating for life in an organization higher than family – for national life within the state[53].

This scholar emphasized that it would be best if all factors of social life, including family, shaped the atmosphere of state life, expressed in sacrifice for the state, based on an understanding of its essence, faith in the future and mission of the state, and stemming from the cult for the state. M. Ziemianowicz entrusted the leading role in this undertaking to teachers, who should first become ideological statesmen themselves in order to be able to effectively influence the minds and hearts of their students[54]. He further argued that the fulfilment of these educational tasks depended on the support teachers received from family environments, and therefore he wrote:

At the same time, we must make a fervent appeal to parents, as spokespeople of the family spirit, to be willing to understand the difficult tasks of the Polish teacher, resulting from this mission imposed on him/her by society. But understanding alone is not enough. It also takes a great effort on the part of the family to soar to the heights of objectivity[55].

Józef Mirski also addressed and further developed the issue of the family's role in the education of young generations of Poles. As a promoter of the so-called *new education*, he highlighted the need to shape a new pedagogical life in Poland. He included the cooperation between the family and the school among its important determinants[56]. He perceived the family as both a biological and economic institution, as well as a primary educational institution. He assigned it two basic functions: a caregiving function and a traditional one, associated with the transmission of key cultural values. He regarded family as an environment in which the process of humanizing the child[57] should take place, and he classified it among socio-cultural environments alongside such elements of the surrounding reality as the nation, the state, and the Church[58]. Mirski explained that:

[53] M. Ziemnowicz, *Rodzina a wychowane państwowe* [*Family and State Education*], Lwów-Warszawa, KsiąŻnica-Atlas, 1932, pp. 11-12.

[54] *Ibid*., pp. 36-37.

[55] *Ibid*., p. 38.

[56] J. Mirski, *Polska myśl wychowawcza,* [*Polish Educational Thought,*], «Oświata i Wychowanie», n. 10, 1930, p. 935.

[57] J. Mirski, *O postawie wychowawczej rodziców*, [*On the Educational Attitude of Parents*,], «Zrąb», vol. 22, 1935, pp. 61-82.

[58] J. Mirski, *Wychowanie i wychowawca,* [*Education and Educators*], Warszawa, Nasza Księgarnia, 1936, p. 32.

Since nurturing and tradition constitute [...] the most important fields of education from this standpoint family must be recognized as the most fundamental educational institution, alongside which only later-along with the growth of cultural content and cultural goods – the new educational institution, namely school, emerges [59].

Furthermore, Mirski observed that within family, in addition to unconscious educational influences, there are also conscious, rational influences, the quality, scope and value of which depend on the personal culture and propriety of the parents, their pedagogical awareness and skills[60]. That is why he particularly strongly emphasized the importance of cooperation between family and school, claiming that:

[...] the only proper form of education is home-school education, [...], it is not only a matter of the division of functions, but of the closest possible cooperation between family and school, between parental and professional educators. Only from such cooperation, the present forms of which are still far from ideal, will an integral type of education emerge, compensating for the shortcomings of the one-sided parental and non-parental educational attitude, and combining their advantages into a single, living whole[61].

It is worth adding that Mirski also advocated dissemination of educational knowledge in family environments and the education of future parents-educators, e.g. by establishing schools for mothers and fathers[62].

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that after Poland regained its independence, both the promoters of national and state education saw family as a natural environment for human life and development (in which learning takes place unconsciously), as well as the basic educational environment. They considered it as a social group, and sometimes also as a basic educational institution. They wrote that it constitutes the first level of patriotic and civic education, and therefore the possibility of realizing the preferred ideals of education, and thus the development of the nation and the state, depends on the quality of its educational functioning. They saw family as a place where the native culture (values, traditions, customs and language) was passed on to the young generation. They stressed that without family's participation in the educational process, no educational system can be effective. At the same time, they noticed that sometimes the educational influence of parents is burdened

[59] *Ibid*., p. 164.
[60] *Ibid*., pp. 165-166.
[61] *Ibid*., p. 187.
[62] *Ibid*., p. 193.

with numerous shortcomings. However, being aware of the fact that no institution or artificial structure can replace family in the process of education, they emphasized the necessity of supporting family through school and broader social environment. They saw the cooperation between family and school as an opportunity to improve its educational condition, i.e. to develop parents' awareness and educational skills. At the same time, they appealed to parents to be open to cooperation with school and teachers and to support them in educational efforts. Moreover, they acknowledged the need to educate parents in the field of fulfilling parental roles.

It should be noted that the educational ideals from the interwar period are to some extent still alive not only in Poland, but also in other European countries. In contemporary education, values such as homeland, nation, patriotism, and work remain invariably important alongside democracy, freedom and tolerance. Family continues to be the primary and most essential educational environment, having a permanent impact on the growth of the younger generation. It serves as a space for growth and development for young people, where they learn to cultivate themselves and contribute to the well-being of others. In addition, the improvement of cooperation between family and school continues to be an invariably important social and pedagogical issue. It seems that the scholarly achievements of the interwar period may serve as a source of inspiration in this regard, offering valuable insights found in scientific monographs, periodicals, and educational guides of that time. It is likewise valuable to take into account the international perspective and the lessons drawn from the experiences of other countries in this context.