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FAMILY HISTORIES **– A REFLECTION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIOGRAPHIC GENRE FORMS**

Abstract

The issues raised in the article focus on the ways of communicating family narratives from the perspective of reflection on this type of historical writing by the history of historiography. An expression of this reflection is the proposed classification of narrative strategies and genre types of narration within the set of family histories, and the conceptual category of *family histories*, which captures this set and opens the field for further discussions on the phenomenon of private family narratives.

Key words: *Family histories*, historical culture, narrative strategy of the image of the Past, family foto-histories, dynamic model of *family histories*, historiographic genre forms

THE SCOPE OF HISTORIOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AROUND THE IMAGE OF FAMILY HISTORIES

In the article, I justify and problematize the concept of broadening historiographic reflection to include numerous examples of private narratives that relate to the history of families. In the first step, I present a proposal to classify this collection, taking into account the narrative strategies used by the narrators, and to identify the genre forms of these statements. In the second step, I propose the use of a handy conceptual category of family histories, serving for the general characterization of the collection of the mentioned texts (diversified in terms of sources, interpretation and construction), creating historiographic genre forms with a subjective image of family history. Then the category of family histories is presented in the model of historiographic research on family memory

as a narrative practice. The model is a specific summary of the proposed reflection, and thus takes into account the classification of narrative strategies and genre forms of family history, and emphasizes that the adopted epistemological perspective, which is the basis for the conceptualization of the category of family history, comes from the area of research on historical culture and memory cultures¹.

The historiographic representation of family histories has many narrative versions, ranging from memoirs, through various types of family chronicles, to texts in the form of short stories and tales. Between the poles created on the one hand by a family chronicle, often written by specialists with scientific rigors close to a historical monograph, and on the other hand by a literary approach to the family past in a short story or essay, there is an area of mutual influences and interactions between historiography and literature, potentially interesting for researchers of both of these fields. Therefore, I will begin the problematization of the research field that has arisen as a result of long narrative practice and, at the same time, the tradition of writing down the history of families, with an important methodological reservation. The analyzed domain includes a collection of texts that for historians researching the history of families (about them, in a moment) is of an objective nature and is a potential source of information on various aspects of family life in the past. However, in the case of the historiographic reflection that I propose, the essence of the analysis of these texts concerns their narratives as one of the practices of intentionally remembering the past, as well as the authors of these narratives, so I am mainly interested in the subjective aspect of these texts². Therefore, the proper area of my present historiographic reflection does not include strictly historical studies devoted to the history of family, which are the result of research conducted by historians under various paradigms. On the other hand, I owe my sensitivity to various ways of expressing private histories and, as a result, drawing attention to the subjective voices of a given epoch, which I made a constitutive element in my concept of family histories, to the broad research approach of cultural historians.

So let me mention on the margin that we owe the broadening of historical research to include the problems of social demography, childhood history and private history, to the first family history researchers, with Philippe Aries at the forefront. Contemporary historians of family history would not achieve the intended effect if they did not reach for new kinds of sources, if they did not

¹ Miki Bal, *Introduction*, in: *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, ed. by Miki Bal (Hanover, London: University Press of New England, 1999), VII–XVII; Laurence Kirmayer, “Landscapes of memory: Trauma, narrative and dissociation,” in *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*, ed. by Paul Antezze, Michael Lambek (New York, London: Routledge 1996), 173–178; Paul Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, transl. Janusz Margański (Kraków: Universitas, 2007), 163–174.

² Violetta Julkowska, “Bohaterowie historyczni i bohaterowie domowi w pamiętnikach Polek w XIX i XX wieku,” in *Historia – Pamięć – Tożsamość. Postaci upamiętniane przez współczesnych mieszkańców różnych części Europy*, ed. by Maria Kujawska, Bogumił Jewsiewicki (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii UAM, 2006), 105–116.

create new research methods and look for new ways of reporting their results³. But it was Ariès' historical inquiries that paved the way in the search for sources specific to the history of family, namely private family narratives. Family history first required the validation of these sources, considered non-standard under previous research practices. The merit of Ariès and Georges Duby was undoubtedly the broadening of the repertoire of sources to include cultural texts, also iconographic materials and stories from the frontiers of literature⁴. New impulses for research in the field of social history in the 1980s and 1990s came from the area of interest in the cultural determinants of the process of remembering and memory practices. In the minds of researchers, the concept of the social framework of memory by Maurice Halbwachs emerged earlier, providing a new reading basis for considering the cultural and social context of collective memory, including the collective memory of family⁵. The Halbwachs' assumption that family remembering is derived from cultural resources and that it is conditioned by social circumstances in which the process of remembering takes place is now adopted by most researchers of memory, despite the fact that they differ in the ways of defining certain socio-cultural practices. On the other hand, research in social psychology and cognitive sociology shows that individual remembering is a type of social activity because it has a supra-individual basis in common reconstructions of the past, produced thanks to the community practices of remembering together⁶. Harald Welzer's concept of communicative memory extends this principle to the analysis of family histories passed down from generation to generation⁷. In recent years, research related to the history of family has shifted the interest of researchers from socio-cultural history, as a cognitive perspective appropriate to earlier structural studies, to new approaches proposed by the history of mentality, microhistory and historical anthropology⁸. On the basis of Polish historical research conducted around the history of family, there are now many proposals that testify to discovering new research topics and finding new ways of interpreting sources⁹.

³ Philippe Ariès, *Historia dzieciństwa. Dziecko i rodzina w dawnych czasach*, transl. Maryna Ochab (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Marabut, 1995).

⁴ *Historia życia prywatnego*, vol.1, ed. by Philippe Ariès, George Duby (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1998).

⁵ Maurice Halbwachs, *Spoleczne ramy pamięci*, transl. Marcin Król (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2008), 217.

⁶ *Collective Remembering*, ed. by David Middleton, Derek Edwards (London, New Delhi: Newbury Park, 1990), 23–45.

⁷ Harald Welzer, *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis. Eine Theorie der Erinnerung* (Berlin: Beck, 2008).

⁸ Ewa Domańska, *Mikrohistorie. Spotkania w międzyświatach*, 2nd edition (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2005).

⁹ Cf. *Rodzina, prywatność, intymność: dzieje rodziny polskiej w kontekście europejskim. Zbiór studiów*, ed. by Dobrochna Kałwa, Adam Walaszek, Anna Żarnowska (Warsaw: DiG, 2005); Agnieszka Jakuboszczak, *Rodzina i rodzinność szlachcianek wielkopolskich w XVIII wieku. Perspektywa kobieca* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii UAM, 2016); Anna Golus, *Dzieciństwo w cieniu różgi. Historia i oblicza przemocy wobec dzieci* (Gliwice: Wydawnictwo Helion, 2019); Anna Barzycka-Paździor, *Ojcowstwo w drugiej połowie*

In the context of the first degree research on family history outlined above, my proposal concerns the study of narratives produced by entities reporting their family history. So this is a research on a metahistorical level, on the interpretation and classification of a diverse group of texts, each of which is a different representation of family history. In my research, I recognize these texts not only as subjective sources for private history, but I see in them common genre features, subject to changes and modifications with time along with the historical change of generations and cultural changes. One of the fundamental features is the historically determined genre of this type of narrative. In addition, these texts are characterized by a large scale of the content and emotions conveyed as well as subjectivity resulting from individual worldview of the writers, but at the same time a peculiar palimpsest and polyphonic nature, so crucial for historical generational messages.

TYPES OF NARRATIVE STRATEGIES AND GENRE CONVENTIONS OF *FAMILY HISTORIES*

For the purposes of historiographic research, the representation of private narratives devoted to the history of family was included in the multifunctional category of family histories. The richness and diversity of this representation, subjected to preliminary research, allowed for the selection of three types of narrative strategy used by the authors of these texts. The first type of narrative strategy is an individual and at the same time free, full of expression and personal digressions reminiscence about the family's past. The second type of strategy is created through historical research based on the materials sought, or as a result of searching in the resources of family archives, collections of paintings and photographs, penetrating the former homes of families, including necropolises. This type of narrative activity most often manifests itself in the form of a chronologically ordered chronicle. The third type of narrative strategy is a historical story, taking the form of an intentional author's construction based on various available sources of information.

As part of the first strategy, private statements and egonarrations such as a diary, journal, memory and letter are apparently the genre form which have the oldest and most numerous representation among family histories. In turn, within the framework of the second type of strategy, already in the first half of the nineteenth century, a specific basic genre for the concept of family history from the point of view of its historiographic features emerged, namely: family chronicle. It can be represented by very different genre varieties, such as: a genealogical-heraldic monograph, mature in its historiographic form, or its early romantic version, reminiscent of a multi-threaded story about the history of the family with the narrator's digressive inclusions. Later varieties of the

family chronicle created several-generational family histories, combining elements of personal memories with a chronicle narrative based on source materials, or chronicles taking the essayistic form of memories about the family home, embedded in the cultural and historical landscape.

The third type of narrative strategy includes texts that are the most hybrid in terms of genres and which are diversified in terms of the manner of expression and narrative creation, but have a recognizable genre form of a historical story. At the same time, I treat story as the initial form of expression developed individually by the authors of the narrative in a countless number of forms, including literally mould stories that take family stories based on the canvas of family histories. These stories share a common feature, which is the authors' effort to construct a coherent family history out of often accidental elements provided by incomplete source materials, residual memories and even souvenir items. It happens that the narrators of these stories, facing the situation of an initial lack of written or spoken sources about the family, necessarily create a family history somewhat vicariously, by means of pictorial or photographic representation.

A particularly difficult challenge for contemporary narrators of family histories is dealing with the 20th-century representation of family histories, especially when the collected materials contain references to traumatic war experiences, relate to the death of relatives, or stories related to deportations or the Holocaust. After years of silence, the meager accounts of those who survived or those who speak as witnesses of witnesses constitute historically different narratives that go beyond the known categories, which create equally unique representations of family history. Family stories written in the shadow of mourning take on a symbolic meaning, because thanks to their subjective narrative not only a specific community is created based on a traumatic experience, but also a difficult to imagine and not fully possible process of filling the void left by relatives and generations that have passed away, is performed.

Private historical narratives belonging to the collection of texts that I define as a common conceptual category of family histories, represent various genre conventions characteristic of old and contemporary historical writing. The texts can be treated as historiographic representations of family histories and included in one conceptual category of family histories because they have an essential, common constitutive feature for this category, visible at the meta-narrative level. It consists in the fact that regardless of the type of narrative strategy used and the convention in which the history of family is presented, they create a historical image of this family. This image has the character of a subjective expression, which arises as a result of a narrative message that is complex in terms of content and structure, and which is the result of the reconstruction of remembered events, or processed subjective and objective sources, or secondary reports of witnesses. Most of the authors / narrators of these historical images of the family are characterized by an explicit awareness of the historicity of the time in which they lived and the awareness of enclosing in a private narrative an important historical message and at the same time identity, with a clearly expressed intention to pass it on for posterity.

Another important feature of family narratives is the strongly marked, permanent subjectivity of these narratives, which persists even after processing the source material into a new narrative form. Subjectively marked sources convey the mental, emotional and ethical load and are carriers of the awareness and identity of a specific historical generation, expressing opinions, views, evaluations or the will of specific people. Their status, seen from the perspective of the privacy of the information transmitted, is variable and depends on the degree of addressing the information and the type of a specific communication situation. The scale of information ranges from very private, even intimate, not originally intended for communication (confessions, intimate journals, memories covered by the confidentiality clause), to texts intentionally prepared for potential addressees and wider recipients, used to publicly communicate the sender's will (e.g. Dąbrowski's last will, known to his relatives and communicated in the diary of Bogusława Mańkowska's daughter; house classes schedule for the daughters of Antonina Chłapowska née Grudzińska, communicated years later in the memoirs of her granddaughter Antonina Chłapowska née Górska, which was used more widely by subsequent writers).

A phenomenon characteristic of some of the texts conveying the image of the family is the susceptibility to genre hybridity, which consists in combining the historical message with the form appropriate for historiographic genres and non-fiction. As a result, texts with a large cognitive, ethical and educational load are created, such as: biographies with a family thread, historical essays on family issues, contemporary small forms of family prose, biographical interviews and post-memory accounts. A separate genre with great cognitive and research potential are photo-histories, i.e. intentional connections between photography and narration, constituting a meaningful whole¹⁰.

CHARACTERISTIC OF *FAMILY HISTORIES* AS A MULTIFUNCTIONAL CONCEPTUAL CATEGORY

The concept of *family histories* as a research and interpretative category in the history of historiography aims to highlight and emphasize that private family narratives are a way to preserve and save from oblivion the communicative family memory. Narratives about family history are an important message that takes place during the transformation of family memory from its elusive, generational dimension (as "living history") to the fixed dimension, which has a chance to pass into the area of cultural memory¹¹. Thus, the symbolic and

¹⁰ *Foto-historia. Fotografia w poznaniu przeszłości*, ed. by Violetta Julkowska (Poznań: Wydawnictwo IH UAM, 2012); Marianna Michałowska, *Foto-Teksty. Związki fotografii z narracją* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2012).

¹¹ Por. Halbwachs, *Społeczne ramy pamięci*, 259–261; Jean Assmann, *Pamięć kulturowa. Pismo, zapamiętywanie i polityczna tożsamość w cywilizacjach starożytnych*, transl. Anna Kryczyńska-Pham, ed. by Robert Traba (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo UW, 2008), 64–71;

interpretable nature of family histories, as specific texts of culture, places them in the area of representation. This is what makes them a potential domain of research for a historian of historiography, providing an opportunity to problematize new issues. One of them is to look at particular types of narratives about the family in terms of the experience of the process of remembering, memory practices and testimony of the culture of memory of the authors of these narratives, which is enough to launch the analytical and interpretative perspective. Thus, placing private narratives in the area of historical writings and treating them as historiographic representations of family history gives these narratives subjectivity and a new meaning. The category of family histories, due to the subjective nature of the relationships it describes, seems to be particularly interesting and useful when it concerns the bordering area between the official and private image of the family's past. It concerns, among other things, ways of building the prestige of the family in family chronicles and techniques used to emphasize the family's merits and position at a specific historical moment. It also seems crucial to determine the essential motives and needs for which some of the family representatives play the role of historians or chroniclers of their own families, and to determine how they historicize the memory message contained in family chronicles. In detail, it concerns capturing the characteristic features exhibited by the authors of chronicles in the image of the family, traces of competition or mediation of the sphere of history and memory in these accounts, or showing in them the primacy of memory or the primacy of history¹².

Looking at the genesis of family histories in the area intensively exploited in the 19th century by literature, which provided historians with inspiration (as part of the narrative trend of historiography), I turned to historical works by a representative of this trend – Karol Szajnocha. In his narratives, he initiated a method of searching for individual motivations of people's actions by referring to private sources and processing them into a kind of family history. The scientist currents of later historiography abandoned this perspective, but it was again used today as part of an ethical turn. When talking about the tragic fate of his heroes, Szajnocha usually reached to the context of their private life, looking for answers to questions there, and at the same time changing the narrative perspective to a private one, he referred to the reader's experience and empathy¹³. The struggle in the family narrative with traumatic experiences related to the loss of loved ones is one of the more difficult challenges of the narrator, both in narrating the history of the 19th and 20th centuries (wars, uprisings, death sentences, deportations of families, labor and death camps). The material of family histories is then the accounts of exiles, victims of persecution and

Aleida Assmann, *Między historią a pamięcią. Antologia*, ed. by Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo UW, 2013); Krzysztof Pomian, *Historia. Nauka wobec pamięci* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2006), 175–187.

¹² Cf. Violetta Julkowska, *Historie rodzinne. Narracje – narratorzy – interpretacje* (Poznań – Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo IH UAM and Oficyna Wydawnicza Epigram, 2018).

¹³ Julkowska, *Historie rodzinne*, 146–166.

deportation as well as representatives of political and economic emigration. The family relations of Holocaust Survivors and their children's post-memory narratives are of a different nature, usually being an attempt to cope with the memory of the past, which still hurts in the present. The attempt to reconstruct the family history from before the Holocaust meant in many cases either facing the traumatic memory of the Survivors or facing their silence and the need to fill the void with a substitute account. On the other hand, family accounts of a post-memory nature, whose authors are the children of the Survivors, confirm the traumatic nature of these narratives, as well as the desire to transform individual post-memory into a narrative shared by witnesses with other people of a similar scale of post-memory experience¹⁴.

It is an important feature of most family histories to base the narrative on memories. The resulting stories are a construction that refers to the memory of the authors of the narratives, but also evokes memories of many other older and younger family members. Memory (*Gedächtnis*) is defined in the category of family histories as a conscious thought process, as knowledge derived from cultural resources, within which the experience of the past is transferred. On the other hand, individual remembering (*Erinnerung*) is a spontaneous experience, but grounded in common reconstructions of the past, created thanks to the fact that family histories are remembered together. This is the heuristic potential of family memory and the family histories created within its framework¹⁵. The narrative transfer of memory, which is both a source of knowledge about the past and its testimony, is a specific base material, subject to multiple interpretations and transformations in family histories passed on. This applies especially to those family histories that contain components belonging to "living history" functioning in the oral history version in the memory of three or even four consecutive generations of a given family, also referred to as communicative memory¹⁶.

The mechanism of transformation of stories about the past is explained by contemporary communication theories¹⁷, which emphasize the importance of the context in which the story about the family's past is remembered. The process of remembering means constantly generating new meanings as the story adapts to the context shared by the participants in that message. The social framework of memory, in which the family memory is shaped, is a kind of activity, the manifestation of which are various practices of remembering. Remembering is embedded in the present, so narratives are doomed to a continuous process of rewriting and giving stories more and more meaningful meanings, but at the same time stories about the past contain a certain contribution appropriate to their times, relatively permanent and thus identifiable.

¹⁴ Julkowska, *Historie rodzinne*, 184–198.

¹⁵ Halbwachs, *Spoleczne ramy pamięci*, 217–261. Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, 163–174.

¹⁶ Assman, *Pamięć kulturowa*, 64–72.

¹⁷ Zuzanna Dziuban, "Pamiętanie," in *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci*, ed. by Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska, Robert Traba, Joanna Kalicka (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2014), 351–356.

Paul Ricoeur's phenomenological approach nuances thinking about the types of operations that are performed in connection with memory, because it links remembering and recalling with the daily experience of the individual, and also indicates the mediating activity of memory¹⁸. Family histories, based on generational polyphony of memories, are a complex narrative structure in the shape of a palimpsest, but the constant process of adapting the memory message eliminates and blurs this multi-layered nature. Another problem of the multilayered reminiscences that arise during the analysis of texts is the need to precisely identify narrators and the types that overlap in the narrative of family memory. In addition to the memory authors' own memory, which is activated as a record of their experiences, there is a memory that belongs to the resources of knowledge inherited from the past, and thus is part of their historical consciousness, but also sometimes historical knowledge acquired especially for the purposes of creating a family narrative. Many of the analyzed stories consist of subjective and individual memories, but are not limited to them. Family history is created by referring to communicative memory, which includes living memory passed down over several generations. This case is illustrated by the narratives presented in the family chronicles by Maria Czapska, Edward Raczyński and Dezydery Chłapowski¹⁹. According to Ariès, thanks to the writing of works devoted to the history of the family, the writers rethink their consciousness of the past²⁰, but the consciousness of earlier generations, the one recorded in family archives and in the preserved documents of ancestors, becomes part of these reflections. Preparation of a family history is, therefore, a kind of intellectual work which, carried out at a higher level of historical reflection, influences the shaping of historical culture. The historical culture in which the authors of family stories grew up turns out to be an element of the sense of identity of the authors of family stories as necessary as memory and consciousness. As Ricoeur notices, the exchange between the past and the future takes place only through the living present of a given culture²¹. The attitude to the past influences the way of formulating current and future goals and tasks. The phenomenon of transmitting historical knowledge taking place within family histories is by its nature an intergenerational transmission. The next generations, experiencing participation in events to an increasing extent, extend the possibility of formulating their own assessments and reflections. Generational and intergenerational communication circles arise, but the element that differentiates the groups of people that are referred to as a generation is participation in historical events²². Participation in

¹⁸ Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, 171–174.

¹⁹ Dezydery Chłapowski, *Chłapowscy. Kronika rodzinna*, ed. by Krzysztof Chłapowski (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 1998); Dezydery Chłapowski, *Potworowscy. Kronika rodzinna*, ed. by Krzysztof Chłapowski (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2002); Borys Conrad, *Kronika rodzinna*, transl. Irena Tarłowska (Warsaw: PIW, 1969); Maria Czapska, *Europa w rodzinie*, introduction Philippe Ariès (Warsaw: Res Publica, 1989).

²⁰ Czapska, *Europa w rodzinie*, 5.

²¹ Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, 399–403.

²² *Pokolenia albo porządkowanie historii*, ed. by Hubert Orłowski, transl. Izabela Drozdowska-Broering, Jerzy Kałóżny, Rafał Żytyniec (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Nauka i Innowacje, 2015).

a common experience of significant importance creates attitudes of mutual understanding, as was the case with generations taking part in wars and national uprisings. Great historical events that the community experiences together leave a lasting mark and shape a kind of collective view of the world, the consequence of which are shared attitudes and values that permanently and deeply shape the foundations of personality.

The generational differences result not only from the disproportion of the experiences, but also lie in the ontic shift, because the time of generational experiences is a different historical time for each generation. In it, the individual and collective identity of a given peer group is shaped in its significant historical framework. The memory of that time, the memory of the lived history, is an indispensable component of identity in an individual and at the same time generational and community dimension. The memory of people belonging to the oldest living generation now includes events from before the Second World War. Historical narratives specific to this generation contain elements of the narrative of one or two previous generations. Moreover, the memories of the oldest generation are passed on to at least two younger generations. Thus, the time period in which the living memory of generations comes to meet covers eighty years, sometimes even a century, i.e. the time of life of four generations. However, there are cases of a longer period of “living” memory transmission. An example from the analyzed source materials is the figure of General Dezydery Chłapowski. Born in 1788, at the age of 7, he survived the third partition of the Republic of Poland, and his generational experience was participation in the Napoleonic campaign and the November Uprising, as well as participation in organic work to preserve Polish national identity under the Prussian partition. The family tradition and the Piarist school in Rydzyna made him aware of the history of the pre-partition times, and thanks to his diaries written before his death (1879), he passed on to his sons and grandchildren the memories of his own generation. The encounter of “living history”, which stored the memory of several previous generations, lasted in the Chłapowski family uninterruptedly until the mid-twentieth century, when the general’s great-grandson, also Dezydery Chłapowski (1913–1997) wrote the family chronicle²³. In this special case, the encounter of memory and history covered more than one hundred years. Even in the 19th century, the sense of identity related to the knowledge of one’s own historical roots was limited almost exclusively to the political and social elite. From the point of view of historical sources, the basic material for the history of these families were documents confirming titles, rights and endowments, supplemented with oral transmission of the family tradition. In the case of great families, the public remembered mainly those who performed high state functions, took active part in historical events or performed specific missions. However, in the private circle, the written version of the events was rarely recorded, rather it was limited to repeated oral transmission, which in turn led to a constant modification of the repeated version of the story. Conscious work

²³ Chłapowski, *Chłapowscy*, 57–80.

on the history of one's own family began with the fashion for home silvas, diaries, reports, memories, journals. They were written quite en masse in the 17th century by representatives of the nobility educated in Jesuit colleges, which significantly expanded the circle of people as well as the scale and variety of events described in the then diary narrative.

Official historiography until the end of the 18th century was mainly interested in political history, limited to the history of ruling, prominent commanders and statesmen. Thus, official historiography upheld and consolidated the memory of the cultural and public dimension, while memoirs, mostly unpublished, managed to preserve the memory of the individual dimension of private history, including family history, until the 19th century. The historical works of Karol Szajnocha²⁴ were a signal of the changes that began to take place in the first half of the 19th century in the history of historiography, especially in its narrative trend. Family history appeared in the spectrum of historians' interest along with research initiated by the previously mentioned representatives of the New History, but the precursors of the new approach were historians of the Romantic era. The nineteenth century brought, for the first time, a change in the approach to the "heroes of history" as a result of the violent democratization of political life, social and moral changes that were increasingly difficult for historians to ignore. Paradoxically, the interest in the private dimension of history began with a change in the historical perspective as a result of civilization changes and their impact on social life. Gradually, non-political aspects of the story and another participant in the events were noticed. Changes in the approach to the past were often hampered by historians themselves, who hardly accepted the need to reach non-standard sources of information and the need to develop non-standard methods of describing reality in the form of a comprehensive picture of the past. At the beginning of the 19th century, competition appeared on the reading market in the form of historical novels, and at the same time it was a huge, positive impulse for historians, which in the long run significantly contributed to the development of historiography. This impulse turned out to be the narrative techniques developed by the mid-nineteenth century on the basis of the then developing realistic novel. A group of historians emerged who, using the inspirations coming from literature, developed a new, narrative model of presenting the past. They were primarily French historians of the Romantic era: Augustine Thierry, Paul de Barante, Jean-Charles Sismondi and Jules Michelet²⁵.

One of the clearer manifestations of subjectivity in family histories was the definition of the consciousness of one's past and, additionally, the presentation of the relationship between one's own past and the past of the community. The consciousness of the historical rooting of one's identity by weaving it into the thread of great history and, at the same time, family history appeared and consolidated in European culture as early as the 19th century. This conscious-

²⁴ Violetta Julkowska, *Historia dla wyobraźni. Recepcja i interpretacja pisarstwa historycznego Karola Szajnochy* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010), 325.

²⁵ Julkowska, *Historia dla wyobraźni*, 238–249.

ness was a manifestation of the historical culture of the writers, shaped under the influence of romanticism, and not only an expression of a desire to commemorate oneself and one's own times.

THE INTERPRETATIVE MODEL OF *FAMILY HISTORIES*

The category of family histories in the reflection proposed so far includes the available collection of family histories organized within three narrative strategies (memory, family chronicle, story). The interpretative scope of the category can, however, be extended to the context of historical culture, and thus to the historical and consciousness dimension of this collection of texts, but related to the authors of family histories. Then, the category of family histories will also include numerous signs of writing activity of authors of family histories, the common source of which is historical consciousness and the resulting stories. Going further, it can be assumed that all the remembrance activities captured by the authors of family histories are also a manifestation of a specific historical culture, that is, a kind of "handling" with the past of families. Proposing a categorical view of the phenomenon of commemorating family history in the form of creating a narrative image, I drew inspiration from the considerations on historical culture²⁶.

Therefore, the proposed model of family history is aimed at organizing thinking about specific manifestations of the activity of entities consciously commemorating the past of their families. This applies not only to the choice of a specific narrative strategy and writing practice, which I will return to, but also to the choice of a possible area of expression and actions by authors of family histories, which extend very widely between: the culture of memory, science and art. Appropriate representations of this activity are a consequence of the choices made by the subject in the areas of activity (diagram)²⁷. A representation specific to the area of remembrance are the different rituals and cultures of remembrance that the subject demonstrates in his family histories. On the other hand, the representation of the activity of the subject specific to the area called "science" in the model is the search, completion and interpretation of

²⁶ Jörn Rüsen, "Czym jest kultura historyczna. Rozważania nad nowym sposobem namysłu nad historią," in *Myslenie historyczne. Nadawanie historycznego sensu*, part I, ed. by Robert Traba, Holger Thünemann (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Nauka Innowacje, 2015), 151–180; Violetta Julkowska, "The History of Polish Reflection on the Didactics of History," in *Researching History Education. International Perspectives and Disciplinary Traditions*, ed. by Manuel Köster, Holger Thünemann, Meik Zülsdorf-Kersting (Schwalbach: Wochenschau, 2014), 133–149; Violetta Julkowska, "Świadomość historyczna," in *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci*, ed. by Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska, Robert Traba, Joanna Kalicka (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2014), 478–483; Violetta Julkowska, *Studium kultury historycznej polskiej emigracji we Francji w II połowie XIX wieku w: Florilegium Historicum Amicorum Munera*, ed. by Tomasz Maćkowski (Gdańsk: Uniwersytet Gdański, 2016), 185–196.

²⁷ Julkowska, *Historie rodzinne*, 48.

historical sources concerning the family, and on their basis producing critical texts that fit into the representation referred to in the model as “historiography”. Finally, the representation appropriate to the area most associated with the participation of creative expression of family history authors, referred to in the general model as “art”, is broadly understood literature, including non-fiction, historical essay, short story, and often a combination of narration with family photography, i.e. photo-history. The context of historical culture and historical consciousness not only aimed at enriching narrative strategies with new interpretative elements, but also made the proposed model of family histories historical and dynamic. Historical culture, understood as the entirety of the ways and practices of relating to the past in a given cultural present, introduces the cultural context of the times in which the analyzed family histories arose, and also refers to the historical culture of individual authors and authors of these texts. This fact introduces to the model of family histories a great variety of views on the past of families and at the same time creative invention in creating their representations. The relationships between the subject’s historical culture and the need to create a representation of the family’s past in the form of a specific genre or type of family history, captured in the course of research, justify thinking about making conscious choices along this path, while the model clearly shows the consequences of these choices.

Historical consciousness of the subject is shaped historically, i.e. in accordance with the cultural context of the epoch, becoming the foundation and basis for the subject to undertake activities in the framework of the practices of commemorating the past available at a given historical moment. Thus, the remembered past, seen from the perspective of the subjective literary activity of individuals, is represented in my concept of family histories as a dynamic combination of elements that are part of the historical culture of a given period and are based on the historical consciousness of individuals. Dependencies and relationships take place each time between the choice of the area of activity by an entity consciously related to the family past (Culture, Science, Art) and the choice of the matter from which the family history is built (memory, sources, artistic language). Within the scope of the choice of a given area, writing activity translates into the choice of representation of the past available and possible in a given area – these are the already mentioned cultures and rituals of memory, historiography, and products closer to literary and artistic culture. When choosing a narrative strategy (reconstruction of memories, critical research of the source material, artistic expression), the authors consequently decide on the choice of genre category and individual types of narration. Each of these choices is conditioned historically, consciously, culturally and competently by the subject.

The functionality of the model extends to the subjective and objective analysis of individual family narratives, because one of the key research problems is to identify the sources of the historical culture of entities writing family stories. This seems most accessible to memoirs, diaries, and journals, but also indirectly to other types of representations of the family history genres.

AREAS	CULTURE Memory	SCIENCE Historical sources	ART Artistic language
REPRESENTATION ACTIVITIES OF THE SUBJECT	Cultures of memory Rituals of memory	Historiography	Literature Photography
NARRATIVE STRATEGY OF THE IMAGE OF THE PAST	Reconstruction of memories	Critical analysis of the source material Constructing a narra- tive	Creative literary/artistic activities
GENRE TYPES OF NARRATIVES	Memory Diary Journal Memory Autobi- ographies with a family contex	Historical monograph Genealogical-heraldic chronicle History of the family Biography with a family context	Story Essay (sketch) Family tale Family story Novel (biographical) Family photo-histories tomb inscriptions

Diagram 1. Dynamic model of *family histories*. Author: V. Julkowska

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GENRES OF *FAMILY NARRATIVES*

DIARIES AND MEMORIES

Diaries are chronologically the first and most frequently represented category of works in which family histories appear. The main task of diary from the genre perspective is to present in a narrative form – a reconstruction of the subjectively remembered past²⁸. In their Old Polish beginnings, diaries were a kind of archives of the family memory of the nobility, following the example of silvas, and often becoming part of them²⁹.

The events of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Europe and in Poland, as well as social and moral changes taking place in front of each successive generation, strengthened the desire to preserve one's own experiences. Considering the dramatic circumstances often experienced by writers, I do not call this need a fashion, as some researchers do, but see it as a socially significant practice of commemorating their experiences, resulting from greater awareness of historical time and the awakening historical consciousness of the authors of the memories. A large group of authors among representatives of the nobility and townspeople found an interest in private writing as a form of

²⁸ Andrzej Cieński, *Z dziejów pamiętników w Polsce* (Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2002).

²⁹ Stanisław Roszak, *Archiwa sarmackiej pamięci. Funkcje i znaczenie rękopiśmiennych ksiąg silva rerum w kulturze Rzeczypospolitej XVIII wieku* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2004).

expressing these experiences. It is enough to mention that the diary of the shoemaker Jan Kiliński, the hero of the Kościuszko Uprising in Warsaw from Trzemeszno, written in Russian captivity and published by Tytus Działyński just before the outbreak of the November Uprising (anonymously in 1829), became for many decades a commonly known and read text, which was published in over a dozen of editions³⁰. However, a specific expression of social maturation and the awakening of historical consciousness are women's diaries, focused on the history of the family, but also on the context of historical events³¹. An example of the deliberate multithreading and complexity of a story in which family history is intertwined with great history is the diary by Wirydianna Fiszerowa, which is the subjective voice of the epoch at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries³². It is a story centered around people and events, in which the chronology plays the role of a framework order, and the course of political events in which historical figures from General Fiszerowa's closest circle are entangled sets the pace of the story. In this diary, relations and connections between persons are as important as the chronological frame, contributing to the synchronization of the author's narrative. Diary title: *My own and bystanders history. A tangle of serious, interesting and trivial matters [Dzieje moje własne i osób postronnych. Wiązanka spraw poważnych, ciekawych i błahych]* heralds a fully realized literary intention, namely to depict a turning point in the history of Poland (1768–1818) from a personal perspective, which, due to the author's numerous family connections, is a perspective that connects the spheres of private and public life. The intention to commemorate people and events was presented in the introduction, placing Fiszerowa among the narrators who are aware of the purpose of the critical narrative:

Wandering for sixty-two years on earth, where I saw the light of day, I will often come across momentous events, I will get lost in worthless descriptions, I will tell the truth, even if I have to be accused. [...] I realize that this thing is troublesome and that I could avoid its effects by lying in dialogue with myself! Write like that? It's better not to write³³.

The diary entries, despite their apparent similarity, differ significantly in the approach to the narrative reconstruction of the past remembered. Diaries have various narrative forms: strictly memoirist (memories), diarist (diaries) and autobiographical. The proper diaries are characterized by a comprehensive approach to the history of life or at least a large fragment which is given a linear

³⁰ Alina Hinz, "W kręgu mitologii postaci Jana Kilińskiego," in *Jan Kiliński. Historia i pamięć*, ed. by Violetta Julkowska (Poznań-Trzemeszno: Wydawnictwo IH UAM, 2015), 56–81; Violetta Julkowska, *Jan Kiliński. Historia i pamięć* (Poznań-Trzemeszno: Wydawnictwo IH UAM, 2015), 98–117.

³¹ Mariola Hoszowska, *Siła tradycji, presja życia: kobiety w dawnych podręcznikach dziejów Polski (1795–1918)* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2005).

³² Wirydianna Fiszerowa, *Dzieje moje własne i osób postronnych. Wiązanka spraw poważnych, ciekawych i błahych*, transl. Edward Raczyński (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Świat Książki, 1998).

³³ Fiszerowa, *Dzieje moje własne*, 3.

form. Written from a distant, decades-long time perspective in relation to events, and often from the perspective of the writers' decline in life, they provide images of the past perceived as burdened with a high risk of error and partially deformed, due to deliberate or unintentional creation of the image of the past. Thus, researchers of the past maintain an understandable critical distance towards this form of narrative, indirect and usually addressed sources. However, the characteristics of the subjective narrative of diaries are for researchers of memory and historians of historiography a valuable source record of the historical consciousness of a given epoch and a record of the manner of representing past experience. For the diaries are a kind of subjective vision of the past, in which the entire life experience of the author-narrator at the time of writing is contained. The writing assumption of the diary, present in the act of writing, steers the course of the narrative and makes it similar to a synoptic utterance³⁴. This is a narratively and epistemologically complex situation, because despite the chronological approach which suggests a linear record of events in historical time, the narrator's consciousness remains at the same mature level at each moment of this representation, resulting from the sum of lived experiences. It is rare to attempt an intentional reconstruction of the way of thinking appropriate for another historical time and for the narrator. Each example of this kind is a conscious creation at the level of constructing a memory, it is a kind of forgetting the past in the narrative. An example of using the strategy of retrospective "transfer" is the diary of Róża Raczyńska, supplemented with family memories of her son Edward³⁵. The memories of the mother were triggered at the request of the son and were originally intended to be a kind of autobiography, but eventually became a portrait of the mother, spoken in different voices and showing her life against the background of a family history, the aim of which was to "rip this heroic figure from oblivion". Róża in her written memories at the end of her life reaches to deep layers of memory and uses traces of memory to "reconstruct" episodic images of childhood:

The oldest memories of childhood are Krzeszowice. The lounge is shared. Here, the family comes together twice a day, here, after dinner, we are allowed to come to our little ones for strawberries, raspberries, cherries, or later plums and grapes, according to the season. We rarely come to the office, because this is where the grandmother sits and writes letters – a lot of letters, in a very unclear handwriting – but there the grandmother sometimes calls us for "scolding" when we were rude and there we stand contrite when she tells us about "our duties"³⁶.

Raczyńska uses the present tense as a function of *praesens historicum* in the constructed narrative to suggest a suggestive "transfer" of listeners to a different

³⁴ Dominik LaCapra, "Historia w okresie przejściowym. Doświadczenie, tożsamość, teoria krytyczna," transl. Katarzyna Bojarska (Kraków: TAIWPN UNIVERSITAS, 2009).

³⁵ Edward Raczyński, *Pani Róża. Z domu Potocka, synowa Zygmunta Krasińskiego, potem Edwardowa Raczyńska* (Warsaw: Literackie Towarzystwo Wydawnicze, 1977), 12.

³⁶ Raczyński, *Pani Róża*, 22

time-space dimension related to her childhood and youth. A narrative resembling a "dense description" fills this distant world of memories with "shape and color", providing in just a few sentences information about the spatial arrangement of the house, home habits and upbringing practices, everyday rituals and activities of the household members. In order to reflect the child's way of thinking, Raczyńska often consciously narrows down the spectrum of her own perception of the world of the past, focusing only on the remembered impressions and feelings:

One day, somewhere in November, because I see myself in a warm coat, my mother took me with her in a carriage, and old Wojciech, Grandma's servant, took me upstairs to Wawel, and then we walked up the large stairs and cloisters where soldiers stood and I knew that it is the castle of our kings, but that it was taken by those soldiers who need to be forgiven, but who I do not forgive – and we came to a small hall with many rifles hanging on the walls and where a soldier stood guard. There, old Wojciech put me on my feet, and a soldier opened the door for my mother – and straight, under one of the windows, I saw my father. Today I still remember how my heart was pumping at that moment³⁷.

In this case, the diary narrative is a deliberate writing procedure, showing the world from the perspective of a child, and the subsequent pages of the diary bear witness to the long process of the narrator's maturing to full awareness of herself as a person. For the researcher of the history of ideas or the anthropological trend of history, Raczyńska's diary is a valuable example of an induced subjective source, consciously created by the speaking subject.

The exile's diaries constitute a separate section, which also includes women's diaries from the 19th and 20th centuries³⁸. Women's diaries, written in the 19th century, testify to the heroic decisions of voluntarily accompanying their husbands in their exile, and they speak of family life in the difficult conditions of Siberia in the times of tsarist Russia. Jadwiga Ostromecka's diary is the story of a Polish family exiled to Tomsk after the January Uprising, written from the perspective of the exile's daughter, who grew up in exile and returned to the country years later, settling in Warsaw:

From the scraps of memories and my own experiences, as well as those based on the stories of my parents and my older sisters, I would like to compile a modest diary, which I pass on to my grandchildren as a souvenir. In the introduction, with my thoughts and heart, full of warm gratitude for a radiant childhood, I turn to my parents who, in the most difficult moments of their lives, were able to create a bright, warm family atmosphere for their four daughters: Maria, Gabriela, Jadwiga and Kazimiera, born in Siberian exile³⁹.

³⁷ Raczyński, *Pani Róża*, 25.

³⁸ Jadwiga Ostromecka, *Pamiętnik z lat 1862–1911*, elaboration Andrzej Brus (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2004); Ewa Solecka-Ostoja, *Kronika córki obszarnika. Podole – Kazachstan – Afryka – PRL – USA* (Krzyszowice: Wydawnictwo Kubajak, 2018); Maria Rożańska, *Urodziłam się w Żytomierzu. Wspomnienia*, preparation for publication Tomasz Grajewski (Lublin: Norbertinum, 2015).

³⁹ Ostromecka, *Pamiętnik z lat 1862–1911*, 27.

The narrator very accurately defines the components from which she constructs her story, being aware that it is a derivative of memories and stories passed on to her by her relatives. Her historical consciousness was strongly influenced by her home education and the cult of the heroes of the January Uprising, including her relatives. The historical culture of Ostromecka was strongly influenced by the friendship with the writer Eliza Orzeszkowa, which was expressed through many years of correspondence. The author of the diary herself consciously participated in the creation of the historical culture of the Polish exiles in Tomsk and Kazan. The Ostromecki Sisters owed the writer the choice of teaching profession, understanding it as a path of personal development, in the spirit of service to the country⁴⁰.

The diary accounts from the 20th century, which mention the forced deportations of the Polish population from the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic to Siberia and Kazakhstan, are completely different from the memories of the 19th-century exiles. The 20th century made the families of military personnel, officials and landowners the main victims of the total policy of the Soviet occupiers. In the diaries of women who lost their loved ones written many years later, a state of traumatic tension persists. On the other hand, in the memory of the families who managed to survive, deportations and living in inhuman conditions are remembered as a difficult time, but with a positive end. This type of account is represented by the memories of Ewa Ostoja-Solecka, who, as a child, was deported to Kazakhstan with her family, and then traveled with the army through Tehran to East Africa⁴¹. Years later, the author supplemented her own, episodic memories of the child with stories told by her grandmother, her mother's letters and her aunt's diary. Solecka's striving to prepare a credible narrative resulted from the narrator's awareness that her own memory was an insufficient source. Solecka focuses on an autobiographical performance, but at the same time creates a historical context filled with the history of her grandparents and parents, which in terms of identity roots her in the family history of the prewar period. It is an important gesture in the face of the loss of the continuity of one's own history and everything that constituted the social and economic status of the family, irretrievably lost as a result of the war and occupation. Years later, the experience of living in exile in her childhood and the decision to emigrate resulted in the need to emphasize her own historical and social identity, hence the idea for an auto-chronicle in which the author combines all detached life experiences into a narrative whole.

Another character has the moving story of Maria Rożańska née Butanowicz, deported to distant Siberia, where she lost her relatives, including her only son, and miraculously survived. For Maria, the need to reconstruct the past while writing memories in exile in recollections is a traumatic return to places and events:

⁴⁰ Ostromecka, *Pamiętnik z lat 1862–1911*, 108.

⁴¹ Solecka-Ostojka, *Kronika córki obszarnika*, 5.

After a long break, I resume my memories, which will be one streak of misfortunes that befell our homeland, all the nations of Europe, my life and my whole family⁴².

The narrative form of diary are memories, which differ in a more modest assumption and the pre-deliberate selectivity of the contents mentioned, as well as the limited chronological range of the presented memories. Although in their linguistic form the memories are focused on the narrator's own experiences, they do not exclude the moments of suspending the story and moving to general reflection, or even to retrospective digressions that recall images from the distant past. The narrative of memories, due to their intimate character, can be more associative and fragmentary than the story told in the diaries. The impulse for the creation of such detached fragments of memories, creating, from the point of view of the narrative, key moments for understanding the entire story, are emotions related to places and people close to them, accompanying return to home, expensive souvenirs or unexpected meetings. The memories then acquire the dimension of a deep, immediate feeling of a close relationship with the distant past. An example of such a reflective approach to the experiences lived during the war and occupation are the War Memoirs of Karolina Lanckorońska, written at the request of the High Representative of the Red Cross just after the end of the war⁴³. Although Lanckorońska focuses on a matter-of-fact relationship, giving testimony to her own experiences during the Soviet and German occupation, she comments on many events from the position of her knowledge and high humanistic culture, with concern for the future of world culture, but does not give up very personal reflections. When in December 1941, while traveling with a transport of gifts for prisoners, Lanckorońska accidentally ended up in Wodzisław, she realized that the local church contained the graves of her ancestors. She felt a great need to visit them, and the moment spent in the empty church gave an impulse for reflections that will come back to her much later, giving her inner strength in the most dramatic moments:

I stood in front of the black marble grave monument of Maciej, the voivode of Braclaw, my father's great-grandfather. I was reading, as if for the first time, a long Latin inscription praising the merits of the deceased who had passed away, broken by the fall of the Motherland. I read with increasing tension. This familiar to me inscription, similar to so many other contemporaries, has today acquired a poignant relevance for me, a distant grandson. In the period of the fall of my homeland, I was a soldier and I found myself here on a business journey. For a moment I couldn't cope with the awareness, for me at the moment a new one, of this unprecedented continuation of our tragedy. [...] On the same day, my stay in Wodzisław I recalled some unreal situation⁴⁴.

Lanckorońska's involvement in helping prisoners and cooperation with the Home Army were an expression of a sense of duty imposed on her by the

⁴² Rożańska, *Urodziłam się w Żytomierzu*, 44.

⁴³ Karolina Lanckorońska, *Wspomnienia wojenne*, introduction Lech Kalinowski, Elżbieta Orman (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2003), 12–13.

⁴⁴ Lanckorońska, *Wspomnienia wojenne*, 133–134.

history of her family. The choices she made consciously in the name of this story led her to political and humanitarian service, but ultimately to imprisonment in Lviv, then in Berlin, and finally to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Lanckorońska drew from an identity built on family history an unbelievable inner strength that was not broken even by waiting on death row. Conscious of the history of her ancestors, she treated it without exaltation as a legacy and a kind of fundamental obligation.

Journal, as one of the types of recollective narration, is a genre that captures reality in the form of a current account or a text based on stored notes. From the information content point of view, journal have the form with the greatest possible amount of detailed information, Therefore they are considered a source with a lower risk of error than other types of relations referring to the communication memory. However, journals are characterized by such a temporary record that it deprives notes of narrative distance, and thus the possibility of verifying the assessment of events from a longer time perspective, as is the case with other forms of memories. Journal reflects the fleeting states of tension in relations between people, so it is easier to capture intimate family scenes and the accompanying emotions. Although written *ex post*, journal, as closer to the events, works well as a literary form of catching events “hot” and commemorating them emotionally. A feature of journal is to be in close proximity to people, places and events, which gives writers the opportunity to focus on details.

The effect of closeness makes journal similar to the type of narrative that can be found in letters to loved ones, with the difference that journal is sometimes more intimate, because it usually remains a kind of self-reflection. In the case of publication, it is a circumstance that requires either a selection of fragments or the observance of the required time clause. From the historian’s point of view, journal is a source of valuable information, but for a reader who is not interested in details, this repetition related to everyday family life may prove boring. There are also interesting journals whose authors are keen observers of family and social life, and at the same time share their private thoughts and life wisdom. These include the diary of Maria Górska née Łubieńska⁴⁵ and Janina Żółtowska née Puttkamer⁴⁶. Both journals, although fundamentally different, are the records of active and traveling women, surrounded by interesting people. In the published version, both journals were only fragments of a larger whole that remained in the manuscripts. Both journalists had a real liking for systematically recording the current moments, as evidenced by the fact that the Journal of Maria Górska was kept in the years 1889–1920⁴⁷, and of Joanna Żółtowska

⁴⁵ Maria Górska z Łubieńskich, *Gdybym mniej kochała. Dziennik lat 1889–1895* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Książkowe Twój Styl, 1996).

⁴⁶ Janina Żółtowska z Puttkamerów, *Dziennik. Fragmenty wielkopolskie 1919–1933*, selection, elaboration and introduction Barbara Wysocka (Poznań: Wydawnictwo WBPi-CAK, 2003).

⁴⁷ It has been kept in the collections of the National Library since 1963 (reference number II.9777), and consists of 25 issues from the years 1889–1920. The publication covers 10 issues.

from her youth before the outbreak of World War I throughout the entire inter-war period⁴⁸. In both cases, the motive for these systematic notes was a conscious desire to perpetuate the ephemeral life of one's own and loved ones and the need for daily reflection:

I must write, I must write. When I stop taking notes in my journal, I feel called to write again and go back to taking note of the moments that pass and to painting the life that surrounds me. I do not know yet whether I am recreating the sunset of my world or its new morning, but I know and understand that if I do not pick up my incompetent pen, no one will replace me and the memory of people and houses will perish, but it must live⁴⁹.

Sometimes a diary, due to its subjectivity trait, may also take the form of an autobiography⁵⁰. This happens when, despite the built historical cognitive context and reconstruction of a broader picture of experienced events, the mainstream narrative focuses on the fate of the writer who remains at the center of the narrative, and the selection of information material is made only from his perspective. Autobiography is a genre form with a large load of subjectivity, including the way of creating one's own image and a tendency to subjective selection made in relation to the matter of memory⁵¹.

FAMILY CHRONICLES

Family chronicles occupy a special place among the genre forms representing *family histories*. Historiographically, these works are characterized by a rich source base, critically developed material and a complex narrative structure. The family chronicle, regardless of the historical extent of the story and the people described in it, is a private narrative, focused on the subject and collective hero of the family. This is the first criterion that distinguishes it from other types of family history. The title is not always a clue that is helpful in searching for a family chronicle, as evidenced by the chronicles by Edward Raczyński and Krzysztof Morawski, which pointing to the main seats of the family and their subsequent inhabitants, are nevertheless works with the features of a family chronicle⁵². On the other hand, two other books, contrary to their title, are

⁴⁸ The entire manuscript of the journal was deposited in the collection of the National Library under the reference number BN IV 10277 and consists of 44 notebooks numbered as subsequent volumes.

⁴⁹ Żółtowska, *Dziennik*, 165.

⁵⁰ *Autobiografia*, ed. by Maria Czermińska (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria, 2009).

⁵¹ Solecka-Ostojka, *Kronika*, 8.

⁵² Edward Raczyński, *Rogalin i jego mieszkańcy* (Poznań: Biblioteka Kroniki Miasta Poznania, 1991); Krzysztof Morawski, *Wspomnienia z Turwi* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1981); Krzysztof Morawski, *Z Krakowa i Wielkopolski* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Mayfly, 2016).

chronicles only in a conditional manner. It is about the *Family chronicle* [*Kronika rodzinna*] of Stanisław Helsztyński⁵³ and the chronicle of Borys Conrad⁵⁴. The first work is an autobiography of a professor of English philology at the University of Warsaw, set in the broad context of family history, referring to ancestors whose peasant origin is confirmed by documents from the 17th century. The presence of extensive family threads makes the autobiography lose its clarity, and due to the extensive excerpts from the diaries of Stanisław Skorupka's father and brother Wawrzyniec Skorupka, it takes on the character of a three-part family history, the more rare because it tells about the fate of the Wielkopolska peasant family⁵⁵.

The "family chronicle" of Boris Conrad, the older son of the writer Józef Conrad-Korzeniowski, raises many more doubts, which in fact includes Boris's childhood and youth memories, including memories of his stay in Poland in 1914. It is difficult to name the memories from 1968 a family chronicle due to the small chronological range (1899–1923) and the lack of historical references. Boris Conrad talked about his relationship with his father, about everyday life in the English countryside, and his narrative resembles a kind of memories with elements of family history.

Old family chronicles are a rare phenomenon, one of the oldest family chronicles by Waław Wężyk and Józef Weyssenhoff⁵⁶ is one of them. Family chronicles begin to appear more commonly only after World War II, which was directly related to the radical change in the functioning of landed gentry families, after the period of transformations made by communists. The feeling of the disappearance of the old world, also in the most sensible sense, related to the loss of landed estates, caused a strong need to preserve and commemorate what was past. A large representation of family chronicles was published in the years 1989–2016, including the chronicles of Dezydery Chłapowski (in a historical study by historian Krzysztof Chłapowski), Maria Czapska, Sławomir Leitgeber (devoted to Morawski), Ryszard Wiktor Schramm, Krzysztof Górski (in a study by Krystyna Górka-Gołaska)⁵⁷. Their legal and uncensored publication was possible only after the political transformation, as they mainly concerned the

⁵³ Stanisław Helsztyński, *Kronika rodzinna. Autobiografia* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1986).

⁵⁴ Conrad, *Kronika rodzinna*, 10.

⁵⁵ Tomasz Skorupka, *Kto przy Obrze temu dobrze, wspomnienia rolnika wielkopolskiego 1862–1935*, preface Stanisław Burszta (Warsaw: LSW, 1975); Wawrzyniec Skorupka, *Moje morgi i katorgi 1914–1967* (Warsaw: LSW, 1970).

⁵⁶ Waław Wężyk, *Kronika rodzinna*, elaboration and introduction Maria Dernałowicz (Warsaw: PIW, 1987); Józef Weyssenhoff, *Kronika Rodziny Weyssów Weyssenhoffów zestawiona podług Józefa Weyssenhoffa* (Vilnius: Weyssenhoff Józef, 1935).

⁵⁷ Chłapowski, *Chłapowscy*; Chłapowski, *Potworowscy*; Czapska, *Europa w rodzinie*; Stanisław Leitgeber, *Morawscy herbu Nałęcz I. 600 lat dziejów rodziny* (Poznań: Wydawn. „Panoptikos”, 1997); *Górcy herbu Boża Wola. Przodkowie i potomkowie generała Franciszka Górskiego*, ed. by Krystyna Górka-Gołaska, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo PTPN, 2000); Morawski, *Wspomnienia z Turwi*; Ryszard Wiktor Schramm, *Prywatna podróż pamięci* (Olszanica: Wydawnictwo BOSZ, 2003).

history of landowning families. The publishers of family chronicles are, apart from academic publishing houses, also private publishing houses. Another reason for the appearance of family chronicles in the early 1990s was the moment when representatives of the active generation left before 1939. The inevitable generational change mobilized families to make a commemorative effort. The authors of the family chronicles, unlike the diaries, are mostly men, and the accompanying deep awareness of the irreversibility of the effects of social and moral changes, changing the shape and former conditions of family life, significantly influenced the purpose of this type of account. In most cases, the chronicles are a testimony to the identity of landed gentry families and at the same time a testimony to the loss of their former world and their former status, and for this reason they not so much play a recollective but a commemorative role.

The narrative form of family chronicles is quite diverse, most often it is linked by the chronological order within individual branches of the family, which ensures the consistency of the family history. The genealogical trees provided in the appendices facilitate orientation in the complexities of connections and navigation in the text. In the case of families with a centuries-old tradition, the more common narrative and compositional strategy is to organize the narrative according to a double axis: place and time, i.e. the history of a given branch of the family and its ancestral seat (castle, palace, manor house or town with which the family history was related), and additionally yet a chronological view.

The narrative of chronicle is most often kept in the convention of a coherent account, which consists of the memoirs collected by the author of a chronicle, less often it is a loose combination of biographies, fragments of diaries and letters. An inseparable and extremely attractive element of family chronicles is the accompanying iconographic and photographic documentation, showing not only portraits of individual family members, but also depicting scenes from family life, celebrations and rituals accompanying anniversaries, weddings and funerals, and ways of spending free time. Photographic representations of houses, manors and family residences, together with their park and farm surroundings, are a permanent element surrounded by extraordinary archival care.

Chronicles, being a diverse historical representation of individual families, aspire to publications appreciated by historians through their permanent structural elements and narrative features and are considered the most historiographic among other forms of private historical writing. Due to their repetition, the features of family chronicles are easy to demonstrate as characteristic of this species. The constitutive features of family chronicles include:

- rich and varied archival database, gathered by representatives of the families – the real authors of the material for the family chronicles and the initiators of the entire project;
- applied formal rules for the critical elaboration of sources, along with a list of source materials or archives storing family documents
- information about the origins of the family, about the family coat of arms and the developed family tree, which is the criterion for including individual people in the chronicle

- biographies of family members given in the order resulting from the genealogical diagram, according to seniority with markings that refer to a place in the genealogical diagram
- narrative composition of the entire chronicle, problem-ordered according to individual branches of the family or according to family seats
- detailed information on family seats
- attachments in the form of cited documents, letters, notarial deeds, maps with the location of the property

Monographic works that meet the above criteria of content and structure are referred to as genealogical and heraldic monographs and are considered to be the most representative family chronicles, which are considered to be works that bring the private narrative of family histories closer to scientific historiography. Only some of the analyzed works belong to this group, and they are distinguished by taking into account a critical perspective and additionally high editorial standards. They are most often the work of family and professional researchers.

The nature of family chronicle changes when the decision to publish it is made due to the necessity to select the material. Family chronicle, which is a kind of private history in its version before publication, often has a form similar to Old Polish silvas, so it is a collection of texts with visible traces of additions, comments and notes, original letters and pasted photographs with the author's handwritten notes. As a result of editing, private narratives take a more conventionalized form, and often the collected material is subject to the decision of the family to select the most private materials⁵⁸. Some of the family chronicles, at the stage of preparing all materials for publication, gained editors in the person of professional historians, often also belonging to the family, which in several cases significantly contributed to increasing the level of scientific criticality of these editions and made the chronicles strictly historical works⁵⁹.

Many family chronicles, despite fulfilling their basic constitutive features, do not resemble classic chronicles at all. This is because they have a more intimate and family character, limiting the story being told to a close family over 3–4 generations. But not only this is a differentiator, because the second most important difference from the perspective of narrative effects is the mixed

⁵⁸ In the early 1990s, I had the opportunity to read the working typescript of the original two-volume family chronicle of the Chłapowski family, written by Dezydery Chłapowski, in the early 1990s, when I was looking for source materials to elaborate on the relationship between Mieczysław Chłapowski and Tadeusz Łopuszański's Rydzyna school. Henryk Świątkiewicz from Czempin, a regionalist, a friend of the author of the chronicle, Dezydery Chłapowski, an expert on the history of the Chłapowski family, made additions to the chronicle text at the request of the family. According to my knowledge, the published chronicle of the Chłapowski family underwent a significant selection of introductory material in the course of subsequent editorial preparations.

⁵⁹ I mean in particular the chronicles of: Górski edited by Krystyna Górską-Gołaska, Chłapowski and Potworowski edited by Krzysztof Chłapowski, Morawskis of the Nałęcz coat of arms and Potulicki edited by Sławomir Leitgeber.

narrative. It is a consciously applied narrative strategy, thanks to which the narrator's individual memory is introduced into the structure of the narrative, building the mainstream of family history, as is the case with family chronicles by Maria Czapka, Edward Raczyński, Wiktor Ryszard Schramm and Stanisław Helsztyński. These chronicles have a double perspective on the history of family: on the one hand, the historical context is built from available or searched sources, and on the other hand, subjective memories are interwoven directly from the narrators of these chronicles. The authors of chronicles referring to family memories appear in them in a double role: once as the owners of their family's memory archive and also as a source of subjective own memory, related to the memory of relatives.

A family chronicle, as is the case with Stanisław Helsztyński, a literary historian from Greater Poland, may become a kind of personal declaration about the place of his origin⁶⁰. Its author points out that he is at home in the area once inhabited by people close to him. In the ontological sense, the "family neighborhood" remains in the memory of the writers as a familiar place of everyday existence, being in the center of the world, to which one returns by making real journeys, but more often sentimental journeys, the advantage of which is the possibility of communing with loved ones who have left and returning to places irretrievably lost. Chronicles of this type are complemented by extremely vivid, even literary descriptions of the landscape of the family neighborhood, based on the knowledge of every hill, field, forest, meadow, river, which create a specific, because "cordial" topography of the area and are the background of the family stories told. In the chronicles of Helsztyński and Schramm, we can find examples of family stories inscribed in a specific cultural landscape, referring in their style to approaches known only in literature, including Polish essays of the interwar period⁶¹.

In Helsztyński, the description of the Middle Nadobrze and its semi-legendary history was woven into the mainstream of the narrative, as a memory of a teacher who awakened his passion for learning and sensitized him to the Greater Poland landscape, which influenced the author's strong identification with the peasant and Polish roots of his family living in the Gostynin region .

In turn, in the publication of the biologist and traveler Wiktor R. Schramm, the essay "To the East of Osława" is part of the memories that were consciously separated because they refer to a family journey along the "Bieszczady trails", which took place in 1954 and described less than two years later in the form of short prose. It is an attempt to combine the dynamically conveyed image of wandering through the lost homeland (the Schramms were displaced from their hometown of Olchowa in the fall of 1944) with the emotional attachment to their homeland constantly present in the layer of memories. The narrative

⁶⁰ Helsztyński, *Kronika*; Schramm, *Prywatna podróż pamięci*.

⁶¹ The essays of Stanisław Vincenz, Jerzy Stempowski and Bolesław Miciński alluded to cultural and civilization changes and at the same time were a nostalgic image of the homeland. Cf. *Kosmopolityzm i sarmatyzm. Antologia powojennego eseju polskiego*, selection and elaboration Dorota Heck (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, 2003).

performed by Schramm becomes a "presence in the absence", an attempt to find in the landscape of home pages, familiar places, experiences and emotions that remained there:

The closest to my little legs – and my heart – was Tarnawka (on the map only or high in the mountains, sometimes called Kalniczka). Here it was simply called "the river". It fell from under Chryszczata, from its dark forests, struggled through the Carpathian flysch with innumerable, chatty, merry skips to join the Oślawa river in Tarnawa Dolna. It was like a home for me. From the dam in Łuków to the ford – later the bridge – near Błazak in Tarnawa Górna, I knew every wicker and alder on the shore, every stone, every mat of gravel, every badunia and current, rustling under the high banks under Ostra Górka, Cisane Miejsce, Stara Gacia⁶².

The second part, written fifty years later, is of a different nature: *A Private Journey of Memory [Prywatna podróż pamięci]*, it is an attempt to reconstruct the history of Józefa Schrammowa's grandmother and the history of the Olchowa family estate. In the event of losing his father's archive, the author is forced to carry out a private source "investigation" in order to fully illuminate the family history⁶³.

Mixed constructions are closer to works of literary value, and the image of the reconstructed past takes the form of a story about the past. Such an effect is also achieved in his memoirs by Edward Raczyński, who did not construct a typical family chronicle, despite the fact that it meets most of the constitutive conditions. The interweaving of the autobiographical text of the diary of Róża Raczyńska's mother tilted the scales of his narrative towards creating a permanent monument of family memory from the material of "living history", associated with Krakow and Rogalin as places marked by the lives of several generations of Raczyński⁶⁴.

Europe in the family [Europa w rodzinie] by Maria Czapska⁶⁵ is a combination of memories and an essayistic image that forms the frame and canvas for a vast, epic story about the history of sword and distaff grandparents, i.e. four families involved in European history in the 18th and 19th centuries. The personal tone of the memories gives all the mentioned works an intimate character and makes statements about the past become part of the "living history" recalled by the authors.

In order for family chronicles to be created, they need time to search for materials that the authors use to support their memory, and time for conversations with many family members, and above all, time for reflection. At that time, full and rich versions of family chronicles are created, as exemplified by both excellent works by Krzysztof Morawski⁶⁶.

⁶² Schramm, *Prywatna podróż*, 12.

⁶³ Schramm, *Prywatna podróż*, 120–128.

⁶⁴ Raczyński, *Rogalin i jego mieszkańcy*.

⁶⁵ Czapska, *Europa w rodzinie*.

⁶⁶ Morawski, *Wspomnienia z Turwi*; Morawski, *Z Krakowa i Wielkopolski*.

FAMILY SHORT STORIES

Family histories often take forms that fall outside the criteria, and their syncretic and expressive nature results from the wealth of materials that make up the remembered image of the family. The analyzed private narratives surprise with their potential possibilities of transforming the form of expression. The example of family chronicles, which are close to autobiographical approaches, proves that there are many possibilities of forming a narrative in a manner adequate to the intended purpose. Also inspiring are the combinations in one text of several family voices coming from family representatives from different generations. Operating with source material opens up new possibilities of presentation and interpretation.

Many authors of family histories, referring to literary texts, poetry, and even the statements of philosophers, tried to represent in this substitute and indirect way certain emotional states and aesthetic preferences. Emotions in family short stories play a significant role because they show the type of relationships and relationships between people, as well as their attitude to places related to family life. The use of artistic means in such cases allows for a better understanding of the power of the emotional message. The hybrid structure of the essay allows the use of many strategies and artistic language at the narrative level that reinforce the message of the relevant historical content. The essay is not a new genre in the history of historiography and, together with a historical narrative, has already been used successfully by Karol Szajnocha, the Polish creator of this form of communicating historical content⁶⁷. As part of the Polish variety of narrative historiography, the historian from Lviv created precursor texts presenting family histories in a historiographic framework⁶⁸. Szajnocha developed a specific narrative concept for this type of history, which he successfully applied in the essays: *Mother of the Jagiellonians, Krzysztof Opaliński [Matka Jagiellonów, Krzysztof Opaliński]*, and in the historical short story *Avenger [Mściciel]*⁶⁹. Szajnocha's historical short stories introduce the multidimensional picture of the daily life of historical families, filled with both complicated personal relationships and connections between individual families. Szajnocha intertwined the private history of noble families with the great history of the Republic of Poland. What was new was the way he built these accounts, creating psychological characteristics and portraits of historical figures, based on an insightful description of their activities. The characteristics indicated the sources of motivation that guided these figures in action, serving to understand the decisions they made.

⁶⁷ Julkowska, *Historia dla wyobraźni*, 296.

⁶⁸ Julkowska, *Historia dla wyobraźni*, 338–347.

⁶⁹ Karol Szajnocha, "Opowiadanie o królu Janie III. Mściciel," in Karol Szajnocha, *Pisma* (selection) vol. II (Żyтомierz: Nakł. Księg. J. Hussarowskiego, 1860), 5–172; Karol Szajnocha, "Krzysztof Opaliński," in Karol Szajnocha, *Szkice historyczne*, vol. III (Warsaw: Nakładem i Drukiem Józefa Ungra, 1876), 57–211; Karol Szajnocha, *Matka Jagiellonów* (Warsaw: Gebethner i Wolff, 1918).

The story about the ancestors of Jan III Sobieski was presented in the short story *Avenger*⁷⁰, in the form of the stories of three related families from Kresy. By constructing a historical narrative on the non-standard source material discovered in the Lviv archives, Szajnocha reached for a private family narrative contained in letters, memoirs, wills, diaries, but also historical documents indirectly referring to specific families, creating the context of the era from other sources such as travel. From the very beginning, Szajnocha gave the shape of a family chronicle to his story about Sobieski's ancestors, resigning from the classic biographical form. With this sophisticated narrative, Szajnocha consciously built a historically deepened identity of the future king, placing him in the family history of the outstanding families of Żółkiewski and Daniłowicz, developed in the shape of a genealogical tree. The element that significantly fictionalizes the narrative is the involvement of Sobieski in the story of the family's doom and in the family mission to defend the homeland, passed on by Hetman Stefan Żółkiewski to the next generations. Due to the type of creative processing of the source material, the historical stories created by Szajnocha had an extraordinary power of inspiration, the best proof of which were the historical novels of Henryk Sienkiewicz. An in-depth analysis of the narrative structure of Szajnocha's historical texts shows how far these inspirations reached.

Materials classified as family histories and family heirlooms were also included in the historical workshop of later historians, becoming the source material for biographical works by Walerian Kalinka, who, at the request of the Chłapowski family, wrote the first biography of General Dezydery Chłapowski, as well as Adam Skałkowski, the author of the first biography dedicated to Jan Henryk Dąbrowski. Each of the above-mentioned authors dealt with the material specific to private history, which shows that it penetrated into the historiographic discourse in various ways as early as the 19th century. The basis of private stories are recollective narratives, the credibility of which in the historical workshop is additionally supported by correspondence, notarial deeds, accidental notes of various types or other family documents, such as intercourse, wills, instructions, and even anecdotes belonging to the family tradition. The source material is subjected by historians in the course of constructing the narrative to various adaptation measures, often on the verge of the historicity and literary nature of the approach.

ORAL FAMILY HISTORIES AND FAMILY PHOTO-HISTORIES

The genres appropriate to family history go back to oral testimonies as a form established in tradition and reaching deeply into the pre-literate tradition of oral expression. However, the historical changeability of forms of expression that adapt to the needs of the times and in this respect has brought new solutions. With the traumatic events of the last war, there was a need to deal with the

⁷⁰ Szajnocha, *Opowiadanie*, 5–172.

family memory not so much of the direct participants of the events, but their descendants. The topic of post-memory was initiated by Marianne Hirsch in her reflections, reflecting not only on the course of the transfer processes between generations, but also on who has the right to take care of the traumatic past of the generation with whom we have kept a "living bond", and which with the departure of the Witnesses becomes history. The problem of this inherited memory was referred to by Hirsch as post-memory⁷¹. In Poland, the representation of post-memory narrative are family short stories by Mikołaj Grynberg⁷² and Monika Sznajdermann⁷³, which are records of conversations conducted by children of Holocaust survivors. I explain the inclusion of these specific types of texts in family histories only in part by the author's decision, which gave them the subtitles of "family history" and "family stories". Another motive for this distinction was a specific type of subjective historical sources, evoked by Grynberg in the form of interviews and developed as a kind of oral history record. The family nature of these stories is also revealed in a dimension appropriate only to the stories of Holocaust survivors and the emotional memory of their children. For these children, who are experiencing the trauma of their parents and at the same time emotionally lonely, seeking empathy and support among others who feel similarly, short stories are a way of "creating" family histories that they are deprived of. Grynberg through his actions creates a kind of post-memory community, consisting of previously unknown people. Closeness is created by the interaction between telling and listening to each other about the experience that turns out to be shared. On the other hand, the example of Monika Sznajderman's work shows how important a role in the reconstruction of family history is played by photographs, which are often the only or primary historical material for researching the history of the family. In my analyzes, I refer to the category of testimony, which are private family photographs, and to the accompanying private family narratives, because the combination of text and photography constitutes a complementary whole defined by me as family photo-histories. In the concept of family histories, I included family photo-histories in the area of creative influence of the language of art (in this case photography) and the language of stories. Photography is the source of the impulse that triggers the story, stimulating memory and imagination. Family histories triggered by images require searching for auxiliary information of a contextual nature, because the overall context of the photography allows for external source criticism.

Translation Anna Topolska

⁷¹ Marianne Hirsch, "Pokolenie postpamięci," transl. Mateusz Borowski, Małgorzata Sugiera, *Didaskalia. Gazeta teatralna* 10 (2011): 28–36; Marianne Hirsch, "Żałoba i postpamięć," transl. Katarzyna Bojarska, in *Teoria wiedzy o przeszłości na tle współczesnej humanistyki. Antologia*, ed. by Ewa Domańska (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010), 247–280.

⁷² Mikołaj Grynberg, *Oskarżam Auschwitz. Opowieści rodzinne* (Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2018).

⁷³ Monika Sznajderman, *Falszerze pieprzu. Historia rodzinna* (Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2016).

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