Reviews

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Book review
Family in local and global contexts of security, Scientific editors: Ilona Urych, Cezary Smuniewski, Published by Akademia Obrony Narodowej (National Defence University), Warsaw 2015, pp. 354

According to "The Strategy of the Development of the Country to 2020. Active Society. Competitive Economy. Efficient State", the factors of growing importance for the modern and complex development of the nation and the state are the values and standards of behaviour accepted by the society allowing communication and cooperation. They predominantly determine the readiness to take a risk, as well as creative and innovative activities. Moreover, they exert a significant impact on the ability to cooperate and create social capital. They are also gaining greater importance as a development factor.[1]

This is essential in the contemporary world, in which political, social, economic or cultural transformations generate serious modifications in various

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[1] *Strategia Rozwoju Kraju 2020 r. Aktywne Społeczeństwo. Konkurencyjna Gospodarka. Sprawne Państwo*, (The Strategy of the Development of the Country to 2020. Active Society. Competitive Economy. Efficient State), adopted by the Council of Ministers on 25 September 2012, p. 17.

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groups' functioning, consequently having an impact on the level of personal safety and structural security. Family occupies an important place in this process since it is a unique social group on which generations of young people have been shaping. It is a primeval space of collective life in which social relations are recognized. When crises, including moral, interpersonal, social and even international ones, deepen, family, more and more often, is perceived as a rock and source of universal values, and even a cure for the numerous troubles of today's world. It is situated in the space of key notions which are crucial for the existence of man functioning in an organized community.

In the family, an individual shapes his/her ability and the way of creating and experiencing relations with others, and a fundamental approach for the common good and the nation. It means that family should be seen in an axiological conjunction with public, social and cultural security and safety. It is particularly important in modern times, about which Alain Finkielkraut wrote that "there is no truth or falsehood, stereotype or invention, beauty or ugliness, there is only an endless pallet of pleasure – different and equal".[2] Aggression, lust and greed, as Ireneusz Mroczkowski underlines, have become an ultimate criterion of anthropology and ethics for "the masters of suspicion".[3]

Thus, family plays a vital role in the process of creating anthropological foundations of national security. This soul-searching will obviously not take place without a fierce clash of family ethos attitudes with contemporary trends reflected in social and cultural transformations, as well as expectations of national community members.

The family, seen as a social category, remains directly connected with such issues as national heritage, patriotism, individual and national identities and attitudes supporting defence. These values play an important factor in joining a given society together which, when appropriately shaped in threat conditions, unites the nation around a single superior aim – defence of the independence. A morally strong society becomes a guarantee of cooperation, which is particularly significant in threat situations.

The contemporary national security system must face various challenges and threats, be prepared to take advantage of opportunities and respond to

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[2] A. Finkielkraut, *Porażka myślenia* (*La Défaite de la pensée* – The Defeat of the Mind), translated by M. Ochab, Warszawa 1992, p. 119.

[3] I. Mroczkowski, *Kondycja moralna człowieka ponowoczesnego* (Moral Condition of the Postmodern Man), „Roczniki Teologiczne" (2001) no 48, p. 27.

dangerous situations in times of normal functioning of the state, in (military and non-military) crisis situations, and in connection with the occurrence of specific threats. Consequently, national security architecture must also take into consideration an axiological dimension. The role of the state is to create development platforms through appropriate social, demographic and educational policies.

The aim of this publication is to seek answers to the question of the role of family in society in the context of reflection on security creation. Perceiving security as a continual task facing an individual and society, family should be treated in categories of the basic place in which one learns essential and necessary abilities of its creation.

The book fits in the current trend of security research taking into account its peculiar multidimensional and interdisciplinary character. The structure of the publication entirely captures the essence of the problem, in spite of the fact that the articles show a different methodological approach. The common and unifying factor is the reflection on security and family.

The book has a problem construction. It is divided into two parts. The first one entitled "Family in axiological and legal perspectives" is composed of seven articles, the other dedicated to sociological, pedagogical and psychological perspective consists of ten texts. The construction of the publication does not raise any concerns. However, the authors, representing different academic centers, in some cases, in detailed matters, had to look for a compromise between adopted assumptions and the need to pursue some specific problems. The authors work for: Warsaw University (Dr Tymoteusz Zych), Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Dr Mikołaj Gębka), Catholic University of Lublin (Rev. Assoc. Prof. Marcin Składanowski, Dr Dorota Gizicka, Dr Małgorzata Szyszka), Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich (Rev. Assoc. Prof. Kazimierz Rynkiewicz), University of Bialystok (Anna Chańko, MA, Emilia Wołyniec, MA), Pedagogical University of Cracow (Dr Paweł Sporek, Dr Marta Szymańska), Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow (Rev. Dr Paweł Marzec), Warsaw University of Technology (Rev. Dr Jacek Połowianiuk), Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW (Dr Iwona Błaszczak), National Defence University (Rev. Assoc. Prof. Cezary Smuniewski, Dr Ilona Urych), University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz (Dr Krzysztof Klimek), as well as Military Centre of Civic Education (Assoc. Prof. Aleksandra Skrabacz) and 10th Warsaw Vehicle Regiment (Dr Sylwia Fijałkowska). Their choice of articles was determined by the headline target which was to show interdisciplinary and multidimensional

reflection on security creation connected with problems of functioning in society, including the family, and to present a creative dialogue of security, family and society research.

The monograph, with its specific and interesting approach to the problems, significantly fills in the gap which exists in the Polish historiography in the security and family area. The solid editorial form must be underlined, since both the editors and publishing house contribute to it. The book is undoubtedly worth reading and deserves to be recommended. Readers may be surprised not only by the multitude of connections joining these categories but also by the numerous innovative accents.

The book also shows how important reflections on family are indeed in security sciences. Without these considerations, one cannot speak about personal and structural security. It must also be assumed that the discourse on family in security sciences is one of the most important topics for social, public, and cultural security which has crucial importance on creating an integrated national security system. It also remains a constant element conditioning democratic state security. There is no doubt that family functioning is directly connected with the functioning of the state and the created standard of its security.

Not only the quantity and quality give value to a substantial subject matter of the publication but also its assessment, analysis and drawing synthetic conclusions. The issues presented in the book appear very interesting. The monograph is a mature attempt of expression of the research questions included in it. Undoubtedly, it significantly contributes to the development of security sciences and acts as a point of reference for all those who are interested in social and cultural threats issues.