INTRODUCTION

In 1986, the publishing house Książka i Wiedza (Book and Knowledge) published a collective work entitled Kobiety polskie (Polish Women). The introduction to it was written by Wojciech Jaruzelski, then The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR. When he addressed the Polish women, he emphasized their special role in the formation of the stabilization system Polish People's Republic. The text also includes a chapter by Danuta Markowska: Rola kobiety w polskiej rodzinie (The role of a woman in the Polish family). Markowska writes in it: “it seems that at the beginning of the socialist phase of our national biography of Polish women were characterized by the following attitudes: the ability to combine multiple responsibilities: family and domestic, professional, social; the tendency to test yourself in the multiplicity of tasks, the ability to do a very wide range of activities in the household alone, the desire to modify the division of labor in the family” (Markowska, 1986, p. 197).

She presents the view that makes it possible to distinguish the family context as the defining and decisive of women's position in the social hierarchy – from the first years of the new political system formation in Poland (after 1945). This is an observation that allows to polemic with a well-known claim, strongly propagated especially in the first phase of socialist reality (mentioned by the author), which identify women with female-workers for the country, builders of Stalinism and mothers
giving birth to model citizens.’ Markowska emphasizes that for most women, World War never wavered traditional family values, so much that women would be willing to abandon them in the name of the country’s economy. And although a large part of Polish women after 1945 really started working, they did not do it of their own will. As Dorota Pauluk writes, “it was primarily affected by a massive government propaganda campaign, developing the labor market and economic factors – women’s salaries were an important contribution to the family budget” (Pauluk, 2005, p. 32). In the context of Markowska’s considerations the pro-family attitude of post-war women seems more important; similarly building the value of “table community, home upbringing of a small child, family celebrating” (Markowska, 1086, p. 199), which was often accompanied by increased physical and mental effort, especially during a widespread scarcity. It is also important that post-war reality, although it requires special civic involvement from women, does not negate equally strong (if not stronger) involvement in family, marital and maternity matters (as Markowska concludes).

Markowska’s observations should be opposed to the theory of the Polish communist authorities, which emphasized its overarching participation in guaranteeing Polish women’s rights of civic and employee equality, from the early post-war years (equality between women and men was guaranteed by the Constitution of the Polish People’s Republic of 1952). Meanwhile, it is important to realize that presenting the Polish woman’s model (for example in the pages of the women’s magazine subordinate to the sovereignty of the Communist Party) as a single mothers working and raising children at the same time, a women who are almost a symbol of the nation’s survival, have become the cause for the consolidation in the Polish families of a model of matriarchal equality** that is not given away from power (Fidelis, 2006, p. 432). This means that the woman has not been razed to the rights of man, but for the first time in history, even given the opportunity to overtake him in the social hierarchy (through their involvement in family life and caring about her well-being, as Markowska writes). For example, women’s magazines never shown only women as victims of war, they were the winners of – they were able to earn money for the family when there were no husbands, take care of themselves, their parents, raise their children for patriotic youth. Moreover, on the pages of the same women’s magazines, men were never presented in the social role of their wives’ partners or guardians of their offspring. They were more often shown as war-warded heroes who needed extra care from their mothers and wives. Therefore, despite the declarations of the communist authorities, the nature of family-related roles did not change, but it deepened the model classifying women as sole persons responsible for maintaining family stabilization.

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* Several examples are to be cited: Sokół (2000, p. 66-85), Adamski (1970), Maliszewski (1980).
** In fact, the phrase “new matriarchy” should be used. This concept was developed by Małgorzata Fidelis and it refers to the idea of emancipation of women, through their “entering the public sphere not only as family carers, but also as the guardian of the nation” (Fidelis, 2015, p. 31).
All these factors constituted the post-war woman as the home sitter, not the work leader, and this is the main thesis of this article. The women’s role was not only to raise children and take care of the household but also to provide the family with financial conditions. In addition, women were also required to feel the so-called social motherhood, which required care for the country and its immediate surroundings (Klich-Kluczewska, 2011, pp. 99-101).

This theme seems to be particularly interesting in relation to the post-war women’s press, which did not remain indifferent to the political transformation and redefinition of ideas about the place of women in society. However, in various studies which take the case to differentiate the image of Polish women, in relation to different historical periods – the post-war period is not identified in Poland with the propagation of the mother-woman “image.” In the context of this period, historians write about Polish women as workers for the nation, a reconstructor of the country from war debris, or as a socialist leader. Their family is kind of background for the history of equality. It was not until the period after 1956, the so-called time – That is associated with propagating in the press the image of a Polish mother (Sokół, 2012, p. 21). It is also said that after 1956 the largest unemployment of women took place in Poland, and it was supposed to influence the press, which increasingly often wrote about the so-called “Returns to their homes.” It began to create a model of a woman who, after fulfilling its obligations to the country, should devote himself to the family. It should be noted, however, that this is an incomplete picture. There are still no studies, which based on the analysis of women’s magazines, would describe a characteristic way of presenting family themes already in the post-war period. The post-war period was special, especially when it comes to creating family ties and building social relations in the new reality. It must be firmly denied supposedly in the years 1945-1950 (this was the period when real press policy was shaped) family problems were not taken in the pages of women’s magazines, or that this topic was devoted only a little newspaper column than in previous years, for example pre-war (Kalinowska-Witek, 2014, pp. 180-182). Although mother’s newspapers did not go out in Poland right after the war (Sokół, 2003, p. 110), in practice the functions of the women’s thematic press were practiced in one women’s magazine – Moda i Życie Praktyczne published by the Czytelnik (Reader), Publishing and Educational Cooperative. It contained maternal sections, weekly menus for children, articles on youth education and infant care. Typical newspapers for mothers began to appear in People’s Poland only after 1951 (they were resumed pre-war monthly magazines: Pielęgniarka (Nurse), Położna (Midwife) and Twoje Dziecko (Your Children) – magazine addressed to mothers) (Sokół, 2003).

This article will be an attempt to draw attention to the attitude of the journalists of Moda i Życie Praktyczne published by the Czytelnik (Reader), Publishing and Educational Cooperative. It contained maternal sections, weekly menus for children, articles on youth education and infant care. Typical newspapers for mothers began to appear in People’s Poland only after 1951 (they were resumed pre-war monthly magazines: Pielęgniarka (Nurse), Położna (Midwife) and Twoje Dziecko (Your Children) – magazine addressed to mothers) (Sokół, 2003). This article will be an attempt to draw attention to the attitude of the journalists of Moda i Życie Praktyczne – the first women’s magazine in People’s Poland and the only one whose editors referred to the function of motherhood. The problems highlighted in it relate to the perspectives of organizing households, provisions and the ways of bringing up children and young people presented in the magazine. This kind of research perspective allows for a polemic with the myth of a socialist woman – a giant
devoted exclusively to her workplace. Considering also that *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* was a magazine read by 30% of men interested in family life and bringing up children (Sokół 2002, p. 12), and its one-off circulation could reach up to 500,000, it can be claimed that the contents presented in it had an impact not only on shaping the social role of women but also in their real position in families.

### The Attitude of the Women’s Press for the Maternity Problems in the Context of Post-War Women

As we may read in the magazine *Moda i Życie Praktyczne*: “The modernization of marriage is the same as what the woman’s modernization was: in professional work, in financial independence, in coordinating professional work and homework. Nothing better we can now bring to the marriage. This is our dowry. We must resist this” (*Praca zawodowa…*, 1948, p. 8). This fragment, printed in the *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* in 1948, in one of the headings devoted to family life, seems to perfectly illustrate the relationship of the newspaper to the role of women in marriage and motherhood. The magazine was a weekly, which was created two years before the popular *Przyjaciółka* (in 1946). The newspaper had post-war traditions, and its readers were large of war victims – first indigenous townsmen, then workers arriving from the countryside to cities in search of work and a better life. From the beginning of the publication, the magazine had the character of an advisor and a friend. The weekly approached the problems of motherhood and family maintenance with maximum pragmatism. Motherhood was presented in it as a duty to the “gift of birth,” but also a struggle for the survival of mother and child connected with it. Bringing up small children for decent youth was shown as an obligation to the state. The magazine described women’s war stories and their influence on shaping a new generation of Poles. The main idea of *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* contained even in the editorial from 1946, would be to help in finding a new reality. Typical articles addressed to mothers and printed in a magazine in the years 1946-1950 were texts on furnishing one-bedroom apartments with allocation preparing a dinner with just a potato or making a moisturizing cream with bacon and cologne. There were also issues related to the discipline offspring and patriotic education. Articles published in the journal were not only informative but also moralistic and emphasizes the important role mothers – those dedicated unique mission.

The magazine described the subject of motherhood from several perspectives. One of them contained in the articles relating to food. The editors of the newspaper took for granted that a good mother was first and foremost a good housekeeper. Food products during the post-war have fulfilled various functions. When journalists wrote about food, reference was made not only for the food alone. It was equally important to use food as a type of toilet product or cleaning product. The texts referring to the first function of food, i.e. the ingredient of the dish, discussed the economical pre-
paration of foods, the acquisition of food in various ways and ways of preserving the freshness of food. The newspaper also included topics related to the use of expired products, i.e. creating new dishes from them. There were recipes for apple cake with curdled milk, dumplings made of stale rolls or a broken roasting (Przepisy ze zsiadłego mleka, 1946, p. 9). A lot of columns were devoted to learning to secure products against deterioration – written, for example, how to maintain the freshness of the eggs (keep them in a pea) and butter (pour the cooled water). Moda i Życie Praktyczne also attempted to learn how to serve cheap and ugly dishes. In the fourth issue of 1946, an article titled Despite the ruins, we can eat tasty and cheap was publicized. It has opened a series of texts on the aestheticization of everyday life. The main idea of the series was that if we can’t have that, what we would like on the table, but try to enjoy the time spent together at the table with the family. Articles about an extraordinary serving of poor dishes were also published (rolmops or herring salad were presented in the paper as a “salon” dish from the pre-war European Hotel). An important rubric in the magazine was also characteristic of the post-war period recipes for dishes from two or three components, the main “hero” was Polish cod and potato. The potatoes were said to be “the best friend of man,” the journalists also devoted separate texts describing the history of their origin (Kariera ziemniaka, 1948, p. 11). In Moda i Życie Praktyczne the English product labels were also translated. These were delivered to Poland in UNRRA packages (in Moda i Życie Praktyczne for a long time was even a separate section UNRRA in our kitchen). The editors of the newspaper also came up with various recipes for using these foods in children’s meals. Food was also written in the health category. The advice was published on how to make a beetroot drink, suitable for anaemic children.

Secondly, the food was also described as products used for cleaning and hygiene in the child’s environment. This function of food was especially found in the women’s press in the first years of publishing after the war (1946-1947), when, due to the lack of other cleaning products, the vinegar diluted in water was used to wipe the floors, and juice from the cut onion was used to polish the windows. Vegetables (onions and potatoes – due to availability), bran and eggs had as a function of detergents. In the articles, which taught the kind of “vegetable cleaning” could be seen a warning – a few times to consider before you wipe the floor vegetable, which in turn can serve as dinner. In the same way, the editors wrote about the advice on the use of water from cooked potatoes (even for polishing silver dishes and cutlery) or potato peels (used to wash teapots and for kindling). The issue of cleaning rugs with bran and sauerkraut was also no different. Journalists advised that such thorough cleaning of dust should be organized only a few times a year, so as not to waste food.

Journalists of Moda i Życie Praktyczne also wrote a lot about home production of cosmetics and baby care items that can be made using food. Hygiene products, just like cleaning agents, have been proposed to prepare with commonly available food. In this way, the vinegar and salt solution was to be the skin firming, and the effective antiperspirant – undiluted vinegar (Moda i Życie Praktyczne, 1946a, p. 17). Also, the
skin of the child and the mother would be scrub using bran (Moda i Życie Praktyczne, 1946b, p. 16), and such treatment would be accompanied by the application of “mush from wild strawberries passed through the gauze” (Letnia kuracja kosmetyczna, 1946, p. 20). In the function of a simple cream for the baby bottom, bacon combined with boiling water and a delicate addition of cologne was recommended. This cream also had other uses (Moda i Życie Praktyczne, 1946b, p. 16).

A separate perspective, which presented the magazine’s view on the problems of motherhood, was the publication of advice on the education of children. Providing value meal while a shortage of food in the shops and organizing a clean angle for the baby, not an exclusive example, after parental representation of the subject in the journal. The issues related to resolving disputes with children seem to be just as important in the journal. Such advice was usually included in the editors’ responses to the lists of readers (the Między nami section). The readers complained about the children’s disobedience. The editors discussed with the readers how to give children smacking, punishing them verbally, dealing with babies “who slap their surroundings with love” (Moda i Życie Praktyczne, 1948, p. 15). The tone of journalistic expression was generally similar to mothers and ordered strict approach to unruly little ones. However, they were aware of the effects of excessive severity and constant punishment. “It happens that children who are nervous by nature even an innocent smack survive tragically. Parents should be aware that in this way can help to generate the child an inferiority complex which may remain in it for life. It is unacceptable to slap on the child’s cheek because it helps to kill the sense of personal dignity and humanity in it” – it was written in one journalistic article (Moda i Życie Praktyczne, 1948, p. 15). But what is interested in the first years of publishing the magazine editors ignored the subject of entirely on youth experienced the hardships of the occupation, to which the mothers have had the biggest problems in education. While infants devoted whole columns, youth experienced by fate, rebellious maturing during the war remained in the shadows, as if it was treated like adults. This problem was already signalled by Zofia Sokół, a researcher of women’s magazines: “After the war, serious educational problems emerged with children growing up and maturing during the five years of occupation when all values were reversed” (Sokół, 1998, p. 64). It arouses an impression of disproportion in the contemporary recipient, such ignoring of this topic by the editors. A drawback that can’t be overlooked is the lack of consistency and reliability in writing about youth. The journal eagerly raised about the youths patriotically minded, who despite his young age even serve the country with cleaning debris from the cities. The stories of young people who are professionally employed for economic reasons – to help them support their families – were skipped. Only in 1948, when the ZMP (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej – Polish Youth Unions) was opened, young people were encouraged to join the organization: its strengths were presented and the actions taken were reported.

Motherhood in Moda i Życie Praktyczne was also presented from the perspective of a mother who is trying to organize a space for the child free from feeling the effects
of war. The idea of such counselling was education regarding the development of the space surrounding the child. The editors also raised topics related to both the material sphere with which the child was in contact (toys, clothes, children’s furniture), and the intangible one that shapes the infant’s psyche (mothers were taught by the journal about the influence of sleep hygiene on the development of offspring). Both these spheres did not devote journalists the same amount of space in the journal. Much more attention was paid to the inclusion of instructional articles (for example, how to personally transform clothes into bigger ones, how to make a doll out of torn tights, how to buy a layette for a baby at a low cost) than to those dedicated to mother and child contact. This type of counselling was to have only a practical dimension, however, painstaking and often utopian planning menus for children, closets or shelves with toys can cause surprise even today. Journalists of Moda i Życie Praktyczne also wrote about how mothers can cope with the shortage and poverty: they taught how to make a stroller from the old boards (Wózki domowej roboty, 1947, p. 12), ran the teat disinfection course in the pages (Jak przechowywać smoczek, 1946, p. 17), illustrated how to arrange a baby cradle “to provide the child with proper development conditions, and the mother to facilitate her educational tasks” (Świat dziecka w domu, 1946, p. 22). The journal also provided a lot of illustrations and instructional infographics. In almost every issue, the Kącik krawiecki (Sewing corner) was printed, with clothing patterns for mothers and children placed in it. On the last pages of the magazine or on the so-called “the second cover” was also printed occasionally (e.g. before the beginning of the school year) guides on picking a rational children’s clothes (Racjonalna odzież..., 1949, p. 16). The magazine also gave the opportunity for consultation between readers. Mothers could submit requests to the editors and receive immediate help from other women.*

It said the above aspect of the immaterial sphere applicable to the education of children accompanied by disproportionate in relation to the practical rubrics. Articles about building the relationship between mother and child appeared in the journal rather sporadically and were undertaken in a hasty manner. Very often, such articles were simply written in the form of short stories about the fate of fictitious mothers who can’t cope with the difficulties of upbringing. In these type of texts, however, nothing was said directly. After thoroughly reviewing them can even come to the conclusion that such stories were used building the impression that the problems associated with childcare are just an abstract concept that does not apply to Polish women. Something much more important what has been written in the women’s press was the lack of financial resources that would allow the purchase of basic products or placing a child in a nursery or paying for a nanny – which would relieve

* In the case of Moda i Życie Praktyczne the editorial office accepted the letters, often reprinted them in columns, and then the answers to them addressed the author of the letter. In this way, a lot of impressive charity events were organized, for example, a collection of money for a violin for 16-year-old Wanda Wilkomirska, laureate of the International Instrumentalist Competition or exchange of toys between children of readers.
the mother in running the house. It is noteworthy, however, that the editorial team promoted the idea of actively spending free time with children. Journalists suggested mothers such planning weeks, months, and even the whole year, to allow for a short family trip, inexpensive vacation. Family recreation was shown in the journal as a way to merge ties, just as shared reading books or solving riddles and puzzles. In the journal, there were no articles encouraging people to talk to each other, share stories. The child was presented as an obedient parent entity and the mother as the governing body of the house.

**CONCLUSION**

Motherhood is a topic that has been taken up in the Polish press for centuries. The rich periodical journalism of the pre-war period indicates that conversations about children, marriage, and family have long been of interest to readers. However, the regularity of publishing these magazines was disturbed by the Second World War. This war brought significant changes in the functioning of the Polish press system, especially in relation to the women's press. Of the several hundred women's titles published in Poland before the war, nothing remained, while in the new political and press reality after 1945, there was still the possibility of issuing only one title — *Moda i Życie Praktyczne*. This magazine was founded in 1946. For two years, it alone satisfied the “hunger of the women's press” in Poland (until *Przyjaciółka* appeared since 1948). This magazine also opened a new stage in the development of post-war thematic journals. In the *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* sections were published that prepared young women for the role of mothers before the thematic magazines concerning motherhood and family began to appear in Poland.

*Moda i Życie Praktyczne* was very ambitious about the subject of motherhood. The editors presented motherhood as a kind of mission to fulfill or a kind of stage in a woman's life that should be lived with dignity and deliberation. The aim of the magazine to help mothers was to provide them with as many practical tips as possible.

Until now, in various kinds of press studies, the post-war period was associated with the propagation in the press of a characteristic model of a woman: devoted first to the nation and later to the family. The turning point for perceiving the supremacy of motherhood over professional work in women's magazines was in 1956. This date is associated in Poland with the highest unemployment of women and the idea of “returning to home” of women who in 1945 began to work. These ideas were strongly propagated in the women's press. Meanwhile, an in-depth analysis of the contents of women's magazines can produce interesting conclusions, sometimes refuting established schemes. For the purpose of this article, the first years of the publication of the magazine *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* (1946-1950) were analyzed. Practical advice for mothers was presented in his pages, the family was shown in it as a social unit that defines a woman’s being. The way of writing about mothers was also interesting.
In *Moda i Życie Praktyczne* they were devoted mothers, even home-foremen who were able to cope without their husbands. It was their duty to earn a home, raise their children and performing household. The necessity of fulfilling these duties, however, influenced the shaping of the idea of a “new matriarchate” in the Polish consciousness. This idea predestined women to take on the role of family caretakers and guides of the nation.

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**PERSPECTIVE OF POSTWAR MATERNITY IN POLAND (THE EXAMPLE OF MODA I ŻYCIE PRAK TYCZNE IN THE YEARS 1946-1950)**

**Keywords:** *Moda i Życie Praktyczne*, maternity, postwar maternity

**Abstract:** This article is located on the border of family pedagogy and media studies. For pedagogy, it provides knowledge in the area of media history, including interesting content for post-war family researchers too. For the author of this article the source of knowledge is the feminine magazine – *Moda i Życie* (of which later emerged the popular *Kobieta i Życie* (*Woman and Life*)). The period considered is 1946-1950.
PERSPEKTYWA MACIERZYŃSTWA POWOJENNEGO W POLSCE (NA PRZYKŁADZIE „MODY I ŻYCIA PRAKTYCZNEGO” (1946-1949)

Słowa kluczowe: Moda i Życie Praktyczne, macierzyństwo, macierzyństwo powojenne

Streszczenie: Niniejszy artykuł mieści się na granicy pedagogiki rodziny i medioznawstwa. Pedagogice dostarcza wiedzy z obszaru historii mediów, w tym treści interesujących dla badaczy rodziny czasów powojennych. Celem przedstawionych wywodów jest ukazanie powojennego kontekstu funkcjonowania rodziny oraz obrazu kobiety i modelu macierzyństwa. Źródłem wiedzy dla autorki jest czasopismo dla kobiet Moda i Życie z lat 1946-1950 (z którego wyłoniła się późniejsza popularna Kobieta i Życie).